

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO



VOLUME 113 • NUMBER 04

THESOUTHERNCROSS.ORG

APRIL 2024



Sparks of Smarts

Pages 10-11

'KNOWLEDGE BOWL': Academic Junior High Decathlon teams, like this one from St. Columba School, ran past sparkler and fog machines into the St. Augustine High School gym March 2 for the closing of this year's diocesan-level event. A record 34 teams participated in this year's decathlon, with a total of 308 students, a 55% percent increase from last year.



Inspire Renewal

Conference's focus is to help parishes to develop a culture of stewardship among faithful. **Page 3**



Early Start

Mass honors Catholic youth for their prayers, donations, sacrifices for the missions. **Page 4**



Spring Greening

Creation Care Ministry offers advice for sustainable practices. **Page 15**



Call of the Risen Christ

An Easter Message from Cardinal McElroy

Page 2

P.O. Box 81869
San Diego, CA 92138-1869

TELEPHONE: (858) 490-8266
E-MAIL: socross@sdcatholic.org
WEB: THESOUTHERNCROSS.ORG

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

PUBLISHER

Cardinal
Robert W. McElroy

EDITOR EMERITUS

Father Charles L. Fuld

EDITOR

Aida Bustos

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Denis Grasska

ADVERTISING/CIRCULATION

Donna Lightsey

CONTRIBUTORS

Roman Flores, Father Bernardo Lara, Ricardo Márquez, Sharon Mousel, Montserrat Ramírez

DESIGN

Pinomaki Design

Founded in 1912,
The Southern Cross
is the official newspaper of the
Catholic Diocese of San Diego.

The Southern Cross

(ISSN 0745-0257) is published monthly except the month of November by the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, 3888 Paducah Drive, San Diego, CA 92117-5349.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Southern Cross, P.O. Box 81869, San Diego, CA 92138-1869.

Periodicals Postage Paid at San Diego, CA.

TELEPHONE: (858) 490-8266.

EMAIL: socross@sdccatholic.org

WEB: thesoutherncross.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Monthly print subscription:
\$15 per year

CONTACT: (858) 490-8266;
dlightsey@sdccatholic.org



**DIocese of
SAN DIEGO**

The Diocese of San Diego runs the length of California's border with Mexico and serves more than 1.3 million Catholics in San Diego and Imperial counties. It includes 96 parishes and 14 missions, 49 elementary and secondary schools, Catholic Charities and various social service and family support organizations throughout the region. It also includes five historic sites, the most well known of which is the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission established in California by St. Junipero Serra in 1769.

MORE FOR YOU

This symbol indicates where readers may go online to obtain more information about the subject at hand, including additional photos, video and other content.



Message from Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

All-Embracing Call of the Risen Christ

The first appearance of the Risen Lord was to Mary Magdalene, she who in her faithfulness to Jesus had come early in the morning to stand in solidarity with the crucified Christ, even as she had stood in solidarity with Jesus as He hung on the cross.

The second witness to the Resurrection was Peter, running to the tomb to see if it was true that the Lord, whom he had both embraced and betrayed in life, was truly risen from the dead.

The next witnesses of the Resurrection were the disciples on the road to Emmaus, they who had sensed hope in the message of salvation that Jesus had brought into the world, but had lost that hope when Jesus was put to death and now were leaving Jerusalem, and their faith, behind.



In this Easter season, the Risen Lord reaches out to every one of us as pilgrims in this earthly city — in our moments of solidarity with Jesus Christ who has redeemed each and every one of us, in our moments of betrayal when we abandon the pathways of God, and in those moments when our faith and hope in the Lord

are failing, and we are filled with questions.

Easter is the supreme moment in human history when the reality of our mission on this earth is revealed to the whole of humanity — to proclaim the grace and the mercy and the love of our God which sustains us in this life and welcomes us to the next. Whether we are standing in solidarity with Christ at this moment in our lives, or rent by betrayal, or beset with doubts, the joy of Easter beckons to us all to recognize the glory of God's plan for our world, and to find peace beyond all understanding.

I pray for a truly blessed Easter for you and all those whom you love, and I pray that the transcending Risen Lord will be with you in abundance in these days.



VULNERABLE: Annunciation House has provided emergency services to immigrants like this family in El Paso, Texas, for decades. Catholic bishops across the country are voicing support for the shelter, which Texas is trying to close. This migrant was photographed on March 16, 2021.

Cardinal Supports Shelter's Help to Migrants in Texas

The Southern Cross



Annunciation House is a Church-based, nonprofit agency

in El Paso, Texas, that for 46 years has provided emergency assistance to immigrants.

It is currently helping refugees and asylum-seekers who have been released by U.S. immigration authorities and are awaiting a hearing on their claims.

The Texas Attorney General has attempted to shut down the organization, but his efforts have been stopped by state courts.

In a show of solidarity, Catholic bishops around the country have been voicing their support for the work being done by Annunciation House. The following statement was released by San Diego Cardinal Robert W. McElroy on March 21, the date El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz and local community organizers led a march and vigil.

"As Catholic bishops from across the country gather in Texas today in defense of religious liberty, the bishops of San Diego stand in solidarity and

prayer with them as we celebrate our Diocesan Chrism Mass this evening. The state of Texas is using governmental pressure to curtail the work of the Church in one of its most fundamental obligations: to feed the hungry, to shelter the homeless, and to provide drink to the thirsty. Our Lord tells us in the Gospel of Matthew that these are the criteria on which we will be judged at the end of our lives. No government can morally tell us to abandon or limit this mission. And no believer should be forced to choose between following the dictates of government and the duty to feed the hungry that our God has entrusted to them.

"We stand at a moment in our nation when the twin ends of Catholic teaching on immigration — the right to secure our borders and the obligation to provide generously and humanely for the immigrants who come to our shores — seem impossible to reconcile.

"The legacy of our nation demands that we find such a reconciliation, precisely by banishing the fears and polarization that warp our current national debate."

'Don't Ask Too Much' in Confession

By Justin McLellan



ROME — Catholics should not be afraid to bear their sins

before God whose mercy is a model for the Church's ministers, Pope Francis said.

"Put this in your mind and heart: God never tires of forgiving," the pope said during a Lenten penance service March 8. He then asked the approximately 600 people gathered at the parish of St. Pius V in Rome to repeat his words with him: "God never tires of forgiving!"

Before putting on a stole to personally hear confessions in the church, Pope Francis asked priests to "forgive always, like God who never tires of forgiving."

"Don't ask too much" during confessions, he told the priests, instructing them to "forgive everything."

"Let us always grant forgiveness to those who ask for it and help those who feel fear to confidently approach the sacrament of healing and joy," he said. "Let us put God's forgiveness back at the center of the Church."

Pope Francis asked people during his homily to "look at your sins, look at the bad things you have said and done."

"In silence, say to the Lord: 'Lord, if You wish, You can make me clean.' And He can," the pope said, quoting the leper who asks Jesus for healing in St. Mark's Gospel.

Pope Francis said he could imagine someone saying, "Oh, Father, I've committed a sin that is surely unforgivable."

"Listen," the pope responded, "God forgives everything because He does not tire of forgiving," rather, "we tire of asking for forgiveness."

Catholic News Service

Conference on Cultivating Our Gifts

By Denis Grasska



“Lord, what do You want of me?”

Anyone seeking an answer to that question — especially pastors, parish staff and ministry leaders — is encouraged to attend the upcoming Evangelization and Discipleship Conference, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 27, at Our Mother of Confidence Parish.

Sponsored jointly by the diocesan Offices for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry and Stewardship, the event aims to transform the local Church by fostering a “culture of stewardship” at parishes.

The upcoming conference is scheduled to begin with an opening prayer led by Auxiliary Bishop Felipe Pulido.

There will be a plenary session led by the nationally known speaker Koren Ruiz, founder and president of Corresponsables de Dios (Stewards of God).

Three breakout sessions will be led by Father Edmundo Zárate-Suárez, pastor of St. Jude Shrine of the West Parish; Maryanne Russell, director of evangelization and stewardship at St. Brigid Parish; and Father Efraín Bautista, pastor of Corpus Christi Parish in Bonita.

“Stewardship is the fruit of a lived relationship with God; it is discipleship in action,” explained Russell. “We experience a culture of stewardship in a community where its members are actively, generously and joyfully sharing their time, talents ... and material resources in the ways God has uniquely equipped and inspired each of them.”

Manny Aguilar, director of the diocesan Office for Stewardship, said that the conference is “about cultivating the gifts that we all have.”

“It’s important for us to identify those gifts and use those gifts,” he said.

Aguilar said that the diocese has worked successfully with Corresponsables de Dios in the Spanish-speaking community. This conference represents its introduction to the English-speaking community.

Bishop Pulido had the experience of collaborating with Corresponsables de Dios in fostering a stewardship culture at St. Joseph Parish in Yakima, Washington, when he served as pastor from 2011 to 2020.

The bishop recalled that Ruiz worked with the parish over a period of six months. He said that Ruiz helped to explain stewardship by comparing the parish to a house where siblings live together, each working and helping to pay the bills.

In a parish that has a culture of stewardship, said Bishop Pulido, parishioners feel a sense of “ownership.”

The bishop contrasted stewardship with fundraising.



HEADLINERS: Koren Ruiz, with wife Jessica, is seen leading praise-and-worship at a conference on Sept. 12, 2019, at Corpus Christi Parish. He will be the main speaker at an upcoming Evangelization and Discipleship Conference on April 27 at Our Mother of Confidence Parish.



SPEAKER: Father Edmundo Zárate-Suárez will lead one of three breakout sessions at the upcoming Evangelization and Discipleship Conference.

Fundraising can be a “one-time” thing, with parishioners asking how much money is needed and then handing over that amount, he explained. On the other hand, stewardship is “a way of life.”

“It’s sharing your time, your talent, and your treasure, whenever you get a chance, all the time,” the bishop said.

Russell said that St. Brigid’s commitment to stewardship goes back a long way.

She recalled how her pastor, Msgr. Steve Callahan, asked her in 2009 to coordinate the parish’s stewardship efforts. He had recently attended a conference that inspired him “to be more intentional about forming parishioners in a stewardship way of life.”

Russell’s breakout session is titled “All Are Welcome: Cultivating a Spirit of Hospitality in Our Parishes and

Beyond.” She said that, among other things, her parish improved its hospitality efforts, with a focus on personally welcoming new parishioners and improving hospitality at Mass and parish events.

“At St. Brigid Parish, we see two sides of the same coin,” she said. “On the one side, evangelization is the ‘what,’ as we help people encounter Jesus. Also on that side, you have discipleship; that’s the ‘why’ that proceeds from that encounter and choice to ‘drop your nets’ and follow Christ. On the other side, you have stewardship, which is the ‘how,’ or specific ways people carry out their unique path of following Jesus and bringing God’s love and provision to the world.”

“If you took a snapshot of our parish today,” she said, “I hope you would find a community where people feel welcomed as they are, are

provided opportunities to encounter Jesus, are formed and accompanied well, can discover and use their unique spiritual gifts, and are equipped and sent out on mission to bring Christ to the world.”

Father Rey Evangelista, pastor of St. Mary Star of the Sea Parish in Oceanside, also has experienced the challenges and rewards of embracing a stewardship mentality.

Before his parish participated in the diocese’s Stewardship Enhancement Initiative Program in 2022, he said, the parish needed “to re-boost our energy” in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Father Evangelista said that embracing a culture of stewardship means becoming active participants in the mission of the Church, “not just onlookers.”

As a result of the initiative, he said, parishioners came to know their “special role as true disciples and good stewards.”

“New ministries are developing, and new people are arriving,” he said. “The participation of our community and leaders has increased because they know how important it is to share their time, talent and treasure for our Church.”

The cost to attend the conference is \$20 and includes lunch. Registration is required.

For more information, contact Terry Campa at (858) 490-8232 or tcampa@sdccatholic.org.





Tender Hearts with a Mission

PHOTOS BY DAVID MAUNG

HARMONY: Students from the San Diego Diocese's elementary schools participated in the colorful Missionary Childhood Association Mass on March 12 at Good Shepherd Parish.

The Southern Cross



Every year, Catholic school students learn

about a country where missionaries are helping children in need. They are invited to put into practice their baptismal call to be missionary disciples.

After learning about the great needs of the world's poorest children, the students are encouraged to pray for them and to offer financial help so that they may know Christ and experience His care.

The diocese's Missionary Childhood Association Mass brings many of the students together during the Lenten season. This year, the liturgy was held on March 12 at Good Shepherd Parish. Around 350 students from 25 elementary schools turned out, many dressed in attire reflecting their cultural roots. They were accompanied by principals, teachers and chaperones, bringing the total to more than 650 people, said Sister Eva Rodríguez, a member of the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, who serves as director of the Missionary Childhood Association in the diocese.

Auxiliary Bishop Michael Pham, who celebrated the Mass, told the students that it was important to share the blessings in their lives with the needy.

"We recognize that everything comes from God," he told them. "And God, through the person of Jesus Christ, gives us so many blessings in our lives."



CELEBRATION: The Missionary Childhood Association teaches students that we are all brothers and sisters in God's family and enables them to help vulnerable children in mission countries. At the annual Mass, students participated in all aspects of the liturgy. Afterward, Auxiliary Bishop Michael Pham, assisted by Father Soney Sebastian, director of the Office for the Missions, recognized the 25 schools that participated.

For information about the Missionary Childhood Association, visit sandiegomissionoffice.org. See photo gallery at TheSouthernCross.org/MCA2024



Showers Available for Homeless

By Denis Grasska



Catholic Charities recently acquired three portable shower units.

Each has three compartments, which include a walk-in shower, a private area to dress and undress, a mirror, a sink and a paper towel dispenser.

Appaswamy “Vino” Pajanor, executive director of Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego, said that the showers will be used by unsheltered individuals, those living on the streets as well as immigrants.

The units can be towed by a truck or other vehicle. They have propane tanks that allow them to provide hot water.

Each unit has sufficient water to provide showers for 250 individuals per day. When hooked up to the water supply at a parish or other location, there is enough water for even more showers.

“This is a dream for Catholic Charities to work along with our parishes to provide care for those who are out on the streets,” Pajanor said, describing this as “true ‘Good Samaritan’ work.”

Since becoming the local leader of Catholic Charities five and a half years ago, Pajanor recognized the limited availability of showers as a missing piece in outreach to the unsheltered.



SHOWER-TO-GO: Three mobile shower units recently acquired by Catholic Charities will serve unsheltered individuals in the local community.

“Many of the parishes don’t have showers. They have restrooms, but no showers,” he said.

Pajanor was able to secure funding for the three units, which collectively cost almost \$200,000.

Pajanor hopes that the showers will be up and running sometime between Easter and Pentecost.

He said that some parishes already have expressed interest in hosting the showers on their campuses. The

agency is looking for additional parishes willing to commit to hosting them weekly or monthly.

Pajanor said that the units also can be deployed in response to natural disasters, such as the heavy rains and flooding last January that displaced many residents.

For more information or to partner with Catholic Charities on this initiative, email info@ccdsd.org.



Father Joe’s Served 13,000 Last Year

The Southern Cross



Father Joe’s Villages, San Diego’s largest homeless services provider, served nearly 13,000 neighbors in need during the 2023 calendar year.

The latest “Compassion in Action: Our Neighbors by the Numbers” report showed that the Catholic organization offered 366,805 nights of shelter beds to people in need in San Diego and helped almost 900 people experiencing homelessness exit to permanent or temporary housing.

Additionally, its medical staff provided care to 3,469 unique neighbors in 2023. This included 1,791 dental appointments, 1,594 psychiatric appointments, and 2,180 encounters with the Street Health outreach team.

Of the nearly 13,000 served, 1,051 were under 17; 821 between the ages of 18 to 24; 7,033 between the ages of 25 to 54; and 4,047 over the age of 55.

The agency is committed to helping all people in San Diego exit or avoid homelessness through wraparound services, including health care, affordable housing, and employment support.



AVE MARIA MUTUAL FUNDS



THE LARGEST PRO-LIFE CATHOLIC FUND FAMILY

1-866-AVE-MARIA (1-866-283-6274)
avemariafunds.com

Mutual Fund investing involves risk, principal loss is possible. Request a prospectus, which includes investment objectives, risks, fees, charges and expenses, and other information you should read and consider carefully before investing. The prospectus can be obtained by calling 1-866-283-6274 or it can be viewed at www.avemariafunds.com. Distributed by Ultimus Fund Distributors, LLC.

20-137-011523 | 14273264-UFD-1/14/2022

Major Expansion of JP Catholic Under Way

The Southern Cross



ESCONDIDO —
Renovations are under way on a 30,000-square-foot Creative Arts Academic Complex that will more than double John Paul the Great Catholic University's academic space.

The building, which the university purchased in 2016, will be divided into two separate buildings.

The Cinema Arts and Visual Arts programs will be housed in one building, with Performing Arts in the other. A courtyard between the two will serve as a venue for community events, outdoor performances, and student life activities.

The complex, which spans an entire city block in downtown Escondido, will house a sound stage, illustration studio, acting rehearsal studio, additional classrooms, computer labs and more.

Professor George Simon, chair of Communications Media, described the complex as "the most significant development in our campus' history." He said that it is going to "radically expand the campus in a really exciting way."

"The existing facility was limited in that a lot of the academic programs had to share space," explained Dr. Derry Connolly, the university's founding president.

As an example, he noted that the film



DOUBLING SPACE: The property at 131 S. Broadway in Escondido will be converted into a new Creative Arts Academic Complex for John Paul the Great Catholic University.

production sound stage has been serving double duty as rehearsal space for students in the acting program, which "is growing in leaps and bounds."

The university hopes to be holding classes in the new complex by next January.

"One of the key aspects of our curriculum is the feature film program," through which students collaborate to make feature-length films, said Simon. "This new building gives us the facilities that we need to really support that program as it continues to grow and

as we look forward to expanding our large-scale production capabilities."

John Paul the Great Catholic University, also known as JP Catholic, was founded in 2003.

The university combines hands-on programs, such as film, animation, design, music, acting, and business entrepreneurship, with a Catholic liberal arts education in theology, philosophy and humanities.

It opened in September 2006, welcoming a class of 30 students at a rented facility in Scripps Ranch that

served as a temporary campus.

In 2013, it relocated to a permanent campus in downtown Escondido, where enrollment has grown to 300, including international students.

After some delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, pre-construction prep work on the Creative Arts Academic Complex began in late January with major construction beginning on March 6.

Connolly said the combined cost of purchasing and renovating the building will be close to \$7.5 million.

The new complex will join a campus that already includes an academic building, administrative building, and student life center. Another building purchased in 2016, but yet unoccupied, will become St. Teresa of Calcutta Chapel "whenever God sends us the money" for the necessary renovations, Connolly said.

With regard to the Creative Arts Academic Complex, he hopes that it will serve as a place where some of the university's "extraordinarily talented" alumni can bring one of their professional projects — be it a feature film or a video game — and give current undergraduates the opportunity to collaborate with them on it.

For more information, visit jpcatholic.edu.





THE FRENCH GOURMET
Catering • Restaurant • Bakery • Wine Boutique
960 Turquoise Street • Pacific Beach

Prepared Meals Ready to Reheat at Home

Entertain with Ease
Hors d'oeuvres & Party Trays
The makings of
Delicious Parties or
impromptu get-together

Full Service Catering Dining Indoor & Patio Thur-Sun Bakery Open Daily

Order online or call
(858) 488-1725
thefrenchgourmet.com



Hot Prime Rib on Saturdays



Join us for
EASTER and MOTHER'S DAY Buffet Brunch
Call or go online to reserve



BEST OF LA JOLLA
FOR LA JOLLA RESTAURANTS



University of San Diego
Office of Planned Giving Presents
Bridges Academy
A Lecture Series Encouraging Lifelong Learning

APR 01	Professor Jesse Perez, Director USD Theatre Program The Importance of Interactive Movement
APR 12	Ms. Suzanne Smith and Ms. Sarah Bane, USD Curators A Guided Tour of the Permanent Print Collection
APR 26	Dr. Daniel López-Pérez, Professor of Architecture The Changing Landscape of Housing
MAY 06	Ms. Annette Ketner, Writer Writing the Memoir

Lectures are from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in Degheri Alumni Center 120 except the April 12 guided tour, which will be in Founders Hall

For more information and to register, call (619) 260-4815 or email cscimone@sandiego.edu.

Both parking and the lectures are free and easy!

Young Adults Take Pilgrimage at Border

By Denis Grasska

SAN DIEGO — Young adults prayerfully walked from the U.S.-Mexican border to a local parish in Coronado, where they attended the vigil Mass for Palm Sunday.

The fourth Annual San Diego Young Adult Pilgrimage, held March 23, was sponsored by the diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry in partnership with the nonprofit organization Modern Catholic Pilgrim.

Maricruz Flores, director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, reflected on the approximately 16-mile route that began at Friendship Park and ended at Sacred Heart Church.

“It is a contrasting environment that can help us reflect how great our community is, especially in San Diego, a city that is so diverse,” she said.

Will Peterson, founder and president of Modern Catholic Pilgrim, said that his organization presented a few different options when Flores’ office requested a full-day pilgrimage experience.

“This one along the coast in the southern part of the diocese, with its opportunity to engage directly with reflections on migration while walking the coast, became a clear favorite,” he said.

Two alternate joining points were available for those who preferred to make a shorter pilgrimage of either 10 miles or 1.5 miles.



WALK OF FAITH: The Annual San Diego Young Adult Pilgrimage, pictured here in a previous year’s iteration, is an opportunity for Catholics ages 18 to 39 to walk and pray together.

“During the season of Lent, we listen to the Gospel readings that speak about Jesus’ experience in the desert, His journey of 40 days walking and wondering,” said Flores. “This (pilgrimage) is the opportunity for us to walk as a community and pray for one another.”

“There is something powerful about walking on pilgrimage to the Palm Sunday Vigil Mass, because that is exactly what Christ did 2,000 years ago,” said Peterson. “He was making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover when the people greeted Him with

palms and hailed Him as the Messiah.”

Last year’s pilgrimage was a walk from Mission San Luis Rey to Prince of Peace Abbey, both located in Oceanside. In the two preceding years, the route was from The Immaculata Parish in Linda Vista to St. Brigid Parish in Pacific Beach.

This year, pilgrims drove themselves to Sacred Heart Church and were transported by bus to Friendship Park, where a brief prayer service was held.

About 5.5 miles into their journey,

the pilgrims took a break to pray and to use the restroom facilities at St. Charles Parish in Imperial Beach.

The pilgrims made another stop at the beach, where they enjoy whatever lunch they brought with them.

The penultimate stop was at Glorietta Bay Park in Coronado.

Upon arrival at Sacred Heart Parish, there was time for private prayer and the offering of intentions. Confession was available until 4:30 p.m., followed by Mass at 5 p.m. and a provided supper onsite.

What were Flores’ hopes for participants in this year’s pilgrimage?

“To meet other young adults from all over our diocese,” she said, “and to experience a journey that might be difficult, however a great opportunity to lift our struggles to God and know that there is a community supporting each other.”

Peterson said, “We at Modern Catholic Pilgrim strive always to create opportunities for pilgrims to have an ‘Emmaus encounter’ on pilgrimage, where a pilgrim recognizes the Risen Christ at the pilgrimage’s endpoint after walking, talking and praying with his or her brothers and sisters in Christ.

“The pilgrim should respond the same way the disciples did there at Emmaus — run back to the community to spread the Good News.”

Learn more about Modern Catholic Pilgrim at moderncatholicpilgrim.com.

HELP US FEED FAMILIES IN EXTREME POVERTY



**DIOCESE OF
SAN DIEGO**

**JUNE 8-9, 2024
CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

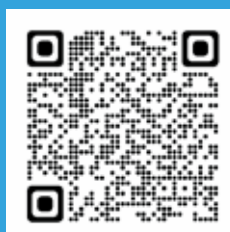


**MILLION MEAL
EVENT**

Organized by the deacons of the Diocese of San Diego

“For I was hungry and you gave me food...”
Matthew 25:35

**Sign up
today to
pack meals
and donate!**



sdcatholic.org/millionmeals

INFO: deaconmike@saintbrigidparish.org

(858) 361-1240

WHO WE SERVE
Meals will be delivered to Casa de los Pobres in Tijuana, and to the Philippines and Africa.

GOALS
Need 4,000 volunteers to pack
1.5 million meals and
raise \$375,000

Vatican Groups to Study Controversial Synod Issues

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has decided that some of the most controversial issues raised at the first assembly of the Synod of Bishops on synodality will be examined by study groups that will work beyond the synod's final assembly in October.

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, of the Diocese of San Diego, will be among the delegates returning to the assembly.

The possible revision of guidelines for the training of priests and deacons, "the role of women in the Church and their participation in decision-making processes and community leadership," and a possible revision of the way bishops are chosen all will be the subject of study groups.

Pope Francis approved the 10 groups and their topics; he asked the groups to make a preliminary report to the synod's second assembly in October and to give him a final report on their work by June 2025.

Pope Francis said that with the study groups working on issues requiring in-depth study, members of the synodal assembly will be able "to focus more easily on the theme I assigned to them at the time, and which can be sum-

marized in the question: 'How to be a synodal Church in mission?'"

Pope Francis named the 10 themes to be explored by the study groups:

- "Some aspects of the relationship between the Eastern Catholic Churches and the Latin Church"
- "Listening to the Cry of the Poor"
- "The mission in the digital environment"
- "The revision of the guidelines for priestly formation in a missionary synodal perspective"
- "Some theological and canonical matters regarding specific ministerial forms"
- "The revision of the documents touching on the relationship between Bishops, consecrated life and ecclesial associations"
- "Some aspects of the person and ministry of the Bishop — criteria for selecting candidates to Episcopacy, and judicial function of the Bishops"
- "The role of Papal Representatives (nuncios) in a missionary synodal perspective"
- "Theological criteria and synodal methodologies for shared discernment of controversial doctrinal, pastoral and ethical issues"
- "The reception of the fruits of the ecumenical journey in ecclesial practices"

Catholic News Service



PENTECOST MASS FOR ALL PEOPLES

May 18, 2024

11 a.m.-12:30 pm Mass • 12:30-2 p.m. Festival

Celebrated by

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

with Auxiliary Bishops Bejarano, Pham & Pulido

CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

5555 Del Mar Heights Road, San Diego, CA 92130

LET US CELEBRATE OUR UNIVERSAL CHURCH

ALL ARE WELCOME!



DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO



Send a card with a special message to those in

Hospice

"You are loved
You are in my thoughts
and prayers.
Let love give you courage
to travel this journey."

EIGHT MESSAGES AVAILABLE

Cards available at:
O'Connor's Church Goods

4780 Mission Gorge Place, San Diego, CA 92120
619-283-2306 | OConnorsChurchSupply.com



San Luis Rey Chorale presents:

Thanksgiving and Remembrance

A Choral Celebration

May 10 - 7:00 pm, \$25

May 11 - 2:00 pm, \$25

There will be an opportunity to present the names of loved ones as an offering before the concert begins.



www.sanluisrey.org

The Office for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry and Office for Stewardship Present:

EVANGELIZATION AND DISCIPLESHIP CONFERENCE

LORD, WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?



**VERY REV.
EDMUNDO ZÁRATE**



MARYANNE RUSSELL



KOREN RUIZ



**VERY REV.
EFRAÍN BAUTISTA**

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

OUR MOTHER OF CONFIDENCE PARISH

3131 Governor Drive | San Diego, CA 92122

Stewardship | Discipleship | Mission | Hospitality | Ministry | Service | Evangelization

OPENING PRAYER WITH:



Most Rev. Felipe Pulido
Auxiliary Bishop
Diocese of San Diego



**DIOCESE OF
SAN DIEGO**

DON'T WAIT, REGISTER TODAY!



The donation for the conference is \$20 and includes lunch. Space is limited, therefore registration is needed to participate.

To register: <https://www.sdcatholicdisciples.net/events/evangelization-discipleship-conference2024/>

For more information contact Terry Campa (858)-490-8232 or tcampa@sd catholic.org

Catholic Students' Joy of Learning Takes Center

By Denis Grasska



Deafening cheers reverberated through the

gym at St. Augustine High School shortly after noon on a recent Saturday. In the stands, some fans held signs and waved pom-poms to cheer on their favorite team.

Though it had the feel of one, this was no sporting event.

It was the 2024 Academic Junior High Decathlon, a “knowledge bowl” competition for Catholic school students in the sixth through eighth grades.

The event on March 2, which had begun with registration at 7:30 a.m., was entering its home stretch. Only the Super Quiz, the final contest of the day and the only one open to the public, remained before the awards ceremony that would reveal who would advance to the national-level competition.

Rachel Miller, who has coached St. Didacus School’s decathlon team for 12 years, reflected on why she loves it.

“It’s a basketball gym full of people cheering for kids who are getting social studies, and science, and math questions right. ... This is the only time (when) academics is a team sport,” she said.

St. Didacus School was one of 34 teams that competed in this year’s decathlon — an almost 55% increase from the 22 teams that participated last year.

Elizabeth Kramer is associate superintendent of the Diocese of San Diego’s Catholic schools and one of three regional coordinators for the local diocesan decathlon. She said that the 2024 event was “the largest ... that we’ve ever had.”

Some 308 students participated, up from 220 the previous year.

Established in 1989 in Los Angeles, Academic Junior High Decathlon came to San Diego in 1997 and has been a tradition ever since.

The decathlon consists of 10 events.

First is the Logic Quiz, a team event in which participants have one hour to solve 20 problems that involve visual/spatial, verbal and mathematical reasoning, as well as formal logic.

There are also eight individual subject tests for which one member of each participating team takes an hour-long multiple-choice test. The tested subjects include Current Events, English, Fine Arts, Literature, Math, Religion, Science and Social Studies.

Finally, there is the Super Quiz, another team event and the only part of the competition that takes place before an audience. It consists of 50 multiple-choice questions about Fine Arts, Literature, Religion, Science and Social Studies.

First through sixth place are awarded in each competition, as well as overall.



EXCITED: Valeria Gonzalez, a sixth-grader at Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy in Calexico, reacts with joy when her team receives second place in the Super Quiz Junior High Decathlon. The event was held March 2 at St. Augustine High School. Gonzalez won third-place in the individual subject test for Literature. The team also

Just before the awards ceremony, the lights in the gym were turned off. Each team was called into the gym by name. A spotlight followed them as they walked or jogged to their tables, a sparkler machine and fog machine making their entrance even more dramatic.

The team from St. Didacus entered this year’s competition with an impressive record, having twice taken first-place overall in the diocesan-level competition (2011 and 2013) and having consistently placed in the top six. They were fourth-place overall last year and had good reason to hope that their intense preparation for this year’s decathlon would be rewarded.

By the conclusion of this year’s awards ceremony, St. Didacus School had been named second-place overall, bested only by Stella Maris Academy. The school also took third place in the

Logic Quiz.

“I couldn’t be prouder of them,” Miller said. “They did everything that they possibly could have done.”

St. Didacus School also received three awards in the individual subject tests, with eighth-grader Aja Prince winning first place in Current Events, seventh-grader Mirrin Bush taking first in Fine Arts, and eighth-grader Monica Huynh receiving third place in Math.

“It was a bit stressful and nerve-wracking, but it was also really exciting,” Prince said of the decathlon.

Bush, who hopes to participate again next year, echoed those sentiments.

“I think it turned out how we wanted,” said Bush, whose younger sister Minka was also a member of the decathlon team.

She added that perhaps by trying “a little bit more,” the team can do even

better next year.

Both Prince and Bush went on to compete in the national competition, which was held virtually March 15 and pitted the winners of the San Diego Diocese’s decathlon against their counterparts from 18 other dioceses.

Bush also took first place in Fine Arts at the national level.

The St. Didacus team’s performance represented months of studying and practicing.

“Decathlon isn’t necessarily about being the smartest kid in the school,” said Miller. “It’s about being the hardest worker.”

Miller leads a Logic Club that begins meeting in late September, so that students can start familiarizing themselves with the types of problems that they will encounter in the decathlon’s Logic Quiz.

Those Friday afternoon sessions



SCHOOL SPIRIT: The cheering section for Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy shows support for the school’s Academic Decathlon team.



COACHING: Rachel Miller offers some final coaching to the team. Miller, Aja Prince and Savannah Ghebrezabher are also shown.

Stage



DAVID MAUNG

... at the conclusion of the diocesan-level Academic ... finished fourth-place overall.

continued this year until March 1, the day before the event.

In October, when the national Academic Junior High Decathlon organization released its topics and study packets, Miller said, she gave the students about a week to review the material and choose the subject that they wanted to study. Then, they were divided into teams.

Right before Thanksgiving break, the students took multiple-choice tests modeled after the real decathlon tests. Based on their scores, Miller chose her 10 team members and five alternates.

In January and February, in addition to the Friday logic practices, Miller also held Saturday morning practices. She would be at school from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and team members and alternates were expected to come in for a minimum of two hours during that

time — one hour to practice for their individual subject test and another to practice the two to three Super Quiz topics that they were assigned.

And that’s not even counting the hours that each team member spent in independent study.

Miller estimated that, between September and December, decathletes might be spending one to two hours a week studying. In January and February, she said, that might increase to as much as five to eight hours a week.

Mary Ellen Prince, Aja’s mother, offered a parent’s perspective on the decathletes’ commitment.

“Their dedication is crazy, and I couldn’t have done it,” she said. “So, I’m just so amazed by it.”

Tai and Mintra Bush also expressed pride in their daughter Mirrin’s first-place win and the effort that made it possible.

“I am so proud of my daughter. She studies so hard,” Tai said.

Mintra took a hands-on role in her daughters’ competition. She said she attended decathlon sessions and produced some practice quizzes.

As a participant in the individual



DAVID MAUNG

HEAVENLY HELP: Sixth-grader Jeb De La Rosa of St. Rose of Lima School, with rosary in hand, prayed right before the Super Quiz.

subject test in Fine Arts, Mirrin was required to read Isabel Kuhl’s book “50 Buildings You Should Know” and to have encyclopedic knowledge of its contents. Mintra read it, too, so that she could more effectively quiz her daughter on it.

Naysayers might wonder why kids would voluntarily sign up for extra studying and testing. After all, don’t they have enough homework?

But ask the decathletes themselves, and they’ll explain.

Among other things, there’s fellowship with classmates and the thrill of competition.

Eighth-graders James Botz and Joe Quinn felt that their hard work was worth it, and for reasons other than medals. Botz believes that he has better critical thinking skills, a larger vocabulary, and higher grades thanks to his participation; Quinn thinks it “put me ahead for high school.”

Monica Huynh, who received third place this year in the individual subject test in Math, agrees.

“It gives you a habit to study more,” she said. “Basically, when you go up to high school, you’re already going to have a habit of studying a lot.”

What are the St. Didacus School team’s aspirations for next year?

“First place,” a beaming Miller replied after this year’s event. “That’s where we’re headed is first. We can’t go anywhere else, but first.”

For more information, visit catholicajhd.org.



2024 Decathlon Winners

Stella Maris Academy in La Jolla won first-place overall at the 2024 Academic Junior High Decathlon on March 2, earning the right to represent the Diocese of San Diego at the national-level competition.

Rounding out the top six were: St. Didacus School; St. Patrick School, Carlsbad; one of two competing teams from Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy, Calexico; St. Francis of Assisi School, Vista; and Good Shepherd School, which was last year’s first-place winner.

Stella Maris Academy also took first place in this year’s Logic Quiz and Super Quiz.

The following were the first-place winners in the eight individual subject tests.

- **Current Events:** Aja Prince, St. Didacus School
- **Fine Arts:** Mirrin Bush, St. Didacus School
- **Math:** Catherine Soriaga, Stella Maris Academy
- **Science:** Carter Thomas, St. Patrick School, Carlsbad
- **English:** Natalia Martin, Mater Dei Catholic Elementary School (Blue Team)

- **Literature:** Eva-Arabella Tehrani, Mater Dei Catholic Elementary School (Gold Team)
- **Religion:** Gabriella Horejs, Good Shepherd School
- **Social Studies:** Kimathi Schmid, Stella Maris Academy

They, too, went on to compete in the national-level competition, which was held virtually on March 15. Winners there included the following:

- **Fine Arts:** first place, Mirrin Bush
- **English:** second place, Natalia Martin
- **Social Studies:** first place, Kimathi Schmid

St. Joseph Academy, located in San Marcos, was also among the national winners. Not a diocesan school, it competed among other independent Catholic schools to secure its spot at the national-level competition, where its Gold Team was named the second-place team overall, won first place in Super Quiz, and had one of its students, Reuben Regev, take third place in the individual subject test in Science.



DAVID MAUNG

... to the St. Didacus School team March 2. Pictured, from ... Minka Bush.



DAVID MAUNG

CHAMPIONS: Stella Maris Academy won first-place overall in the Academic Junior High Decathlon on March 2, earning the right to represent the Diocese of San Diego at the national-level competition two weeks later. Pictured, from left, are Kimathi Schmid, Mallory McNeill, Scarlette Nielsen, Vanessa Ayoub, Catherine Soriaga, Mae Sisitki and Evan Greene.

Local Italian Federation to Give Two Scholarships

The Southern Cross



SANTEE — When it comes to college tuition costs, every dollar helps.

That's why a local chapter of the Italian Catholic Federation (ICF) will be awarding \$750 scholarships to two worthy high school seniors.

"Our branch hopes to recognize and award students ... who may not otherwise afford to continue their education," said Debbie Reid, president of ICF Branch 449, which was established in 2019 and is based at Guardian Angels Parish in Santee.

"Continuing education is expensive, regardless of the type of school," she said. "So, if we can make a positive difference in a student's life, then our scholarship program is a worthy investment."

The Italian Catholic Federation is a national Roman Catholic fraternal organization composed primarily of persons of Italian ancestry and their spouses. But membership is open to all Catholics, regardless of ethnicity.

ICF Branch 449 will accept scholarship applications until midnight on Monday, April 22.

Applicants must be Roman Catholic, have a total cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 over the past three and a half years, be active in their parish and live within the Diocese of San Diego.

They also must provide a copy of their unofficial school transcript; a list of their extracurricular activities, volunteer service and/or employment; a copy of their acceptance letter or enrollment confirmation from a trade school, community college or four-year university; and a recommendation from a campus counselor.

Applicants are also required to submit a 250- to 500-word essay, reflecting on a time when their faith was challenged and how they resolved it.

"The ideal scholarship recipient would be a well-rounded student, not necessarily a student that has a 4.0-plus GPA," Reid said.

She said that the various application requirements, including extracurricular activities and community involvement, are intended to give the scholarship committee "a glimmer into the type of adult they may become."

Scholarship recipients will be notified in May.

For more information or to receive the application form, email Debbie Reid at Dreid@cox.net.

The completed application, in either PDF or Microsoft Word, should be emailed no later than midnight on April 22; the subject line should read "Attn: ICF 2024 Scholarship Committee."

In addition to ICF Branch 449's scholarship program, the national ICF organization offers its own scholarships. More information on these can be found at ICF.org.



UNIVERSAL: The diocese's annual Pentecost Mass brings together faithful from many cultures celebrating as one people of God, as depicted at last year's event on May 27.

Pentecost Mass for All Peoples Planned for May 18

The Southern Cross



Catholic cultural leaders are planning the

seventh annual Pentecost Mass for All Peoples, to be held on May 18 at Cathedral Catholic High School.

The event is a colorful feast of culture and faith that draws more than 2,000 from all races and ethnicities.

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will celebrate the Mass, with Auxiliary Bishops Ramón Bejarano, Michael Pham and Felipe Pulido, and dozens of clergy from across the diocese.

The leaders bring together the cultural communities present in the

diocese. They help to organize all the logistics of the event, which begins with a multilingual Mass that shares faith traditions and music from across the world. It's followed by a festival, where cultures share their history and samples of their native food and provide live entertainment.

This event allows the faithful to experience the beauty of the universal Church. The participating communities include African, African American, Brazilian, Chamorro/Guamanian, Chinese, Eritrean, Filipino, German, Hispanic, Indian, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Korean, Laotian, Native American, Samoan, Tongan and Vietnamese.

More information:
(858) 490-8306 or
adiaz@sdcatholic.org



BILINGUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY
Based in the Catholic Faith
Sliding fee scale, and various insurances accepted.



Mary L Hill
MA LMFT (Lic. # 83383)
760-687-9883

SPECIALIZING IN:

- Anxiety and Depression
- Parenting
- Bereavement and Loss
- Marriage & Family Relationships

maryleehillmft@gmail.com
www.maryleehillmft.com
1650 Linda Vista Dr. Ste. 210,
San Marcos, CA 92078

Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday



Jesus I Trust in You!

- Benediction
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Scripture
- Holy Hour / Chaplet of Mercy

April 7, 2023
2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS
7710 El Cajon Blvd, La Mesa 91942

GUEST SPEAKER:
WAYNE LEE

Wayne Lee is an educator, author and substitute, who will share his profound conversion story of God's infinite love and mercy to a prodigal son brought back to life.



Mary Elizabeth Accardi, LMFT
MARRIAGE, FAMILY & CHILD COUNSELOR
MFT LIC. #20751



2067 W. Vista Way, Suite 130
Vista, CA 92083

The Shops
1030 La Bonita Dr., Suite 130
Lake San Marcos, CA 92078
(760) 304-4522



LANR
FINANCE & REAL ESTATE

KATE ROMOSOD
REALTOR®
(858) 518-2344
Kate.Romosod@gmail.com
Cal BRE#01957292

Upon closing, \$500 will be donated on your behalf to the church you are registered at, and \$100 will be donated to "The Southern Cross," or any charitable organization of your choice.

Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated

Am I Called?

Do I think about being a Brother, Sister or Priest?


Does the idea come to me often?

Does the idea scare me?

I SHOULD CONTACT
Most Rev. Felipe Pulido
858.490.8389
cmaglang@sdcatholic.org

Sr. Kathy Warren
858.490.8289
kwarren@sdcatholic.org

SPONSORED BY:
San Diego Serra Club – North Coast
northcoast.serrasandiego.org



Diocese Raises Awareness of Child Abuse

The Southern Cross



Nearly 700,000 children are abused every

year in the United States, and five children die every day as a result of it. Sadly, over two-thirds are abused by a family member, and nine out of every 10 child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way.

It is because of such grim statistics that, for more than 40 years, April has been observed in the U.S. as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

In the Diocese of San Diego, efforts to protect children from abuse have been in place for more than 20 years.

In 2023 alone, more than 12,500 diocesan employees and volunteers received "Safe Environment" training to learn how to recognize and report child abuse.

The backgrounds of more than 1,700 employees and 8,800 volunteers active at parishes and schools in 2023 were screened. And 33,823 children in local Catholic schools and parish religious-education programs received age-appropriate Safe Environment training this year.

In August of 2019, Cardinal (then Bishop) Robert W. McElroy gathered all 2,500-plus employees of the diocese's parishes, schools and Catholic organizations for a historic meeting held at the University of San Diego.



RAISING AWARENESS: Joanna Alcaraz of the County of San Diego's Child Welfare Services delivered a presentation about child abuse Feb. 5 at Holy Spirit Parish.

He called upon all staff members to report suspected abuse, even if they aren't mandated reporters.

"Sadly, (child sex abuse is) still a reality that needs to be addressed," said Mary Acosta, the diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator.

She said that she recently received a call from someone breaking his silence about being abused over 20 years ago at age 7. This is not uncommon. As Victim Assistance Coordinator, her job involves connecting victim-survivors of clergy sex abuse with therapists, healing retreats, spiritual direction, and other supportive resources.

But the diocese's efforts to prevent child abuse aren't simply about making amends for sins of the past. Rather, they tap into the Church's timeless teachings about life and dignity.

"The first principle of Catholic social teaching upholds the truth that life is sacred and, being made in the image and likeness of God, has innate human dignity," said Acosta. "This includes children, who are among our most vulnerable, and at a fundamental level, need protection from abuses of all kinds as these harm them and impact their sense of personal worth."

Quoting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which identifies child abuse and neglect as "serious public health problems" that "can have long-term impacts on health, opportunity, and wellbeing," Acosta added that this is "something abuse survivors know well."

She said that, thanks to Safe Environment trainings, diocesan employees and volunteers are well-equipped to

recognize and report suspected child abuse that they may encounter in the families they serve. But she thinks that the average Catholic in the pews could benefit from more information.

That's why she is offering educational presentations to any parish or ministry group that would welcome one.

On Feb. 5, Acosta and a representative from the County of San Diego's Child Welfare Services gave a presentation on child abuse prevention and reporting for the Hispanic community at Holy Spirit Parish. About 110 people attended.

Acosta said that Child Welfare Services can provide speakers in various languages, including English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

In late March, local parishes were provided with National Child Abuse Prevention Month resources from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to promote awareness and encourage action.

Acosta is also preparing to launch the diocese's first social media campaign on this topic in conjunction with the month-long observance. Every week in April, the diocese will post information on its social media channels about child abuse, its prevention, and activities that parishes and individuals can do in commemoration of National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Acosta said local Catholics will be invited to post photos of themselves engaged in the recommended prevention activities, using the hashtag #sdchildabuseprevention.



CALL US TO REQUEST A FREE PROPOSAL

1-888-996-1212

littleflower.org/specialgifts



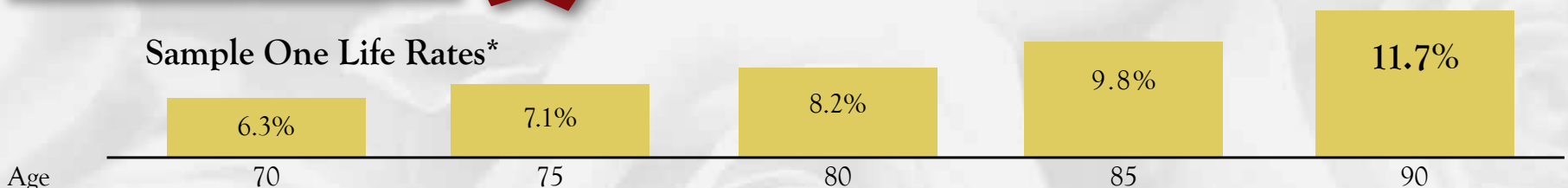
Secure Your Future

with a Gift Annuity through the Society of the Little Flower.

- A \$5,000 charitable gift annuity provides an 80-year-old individual with annual payments of \$410
- Little Flower gift annuities provide fixed payments for life
- Payments are primarily tax-free through life expectancy
 - Age 70 1/2+: IRA assets can be used to fund a gift annuity; (call us for the special rules)

Your gift helps those in need through Carmelite ministries and the education of seminarians

Sample One Life Rates*



*Rates are subject to change • Minimum age 60 • For U.S. residents only
Please call our office to learn the rates for two-life gift annuities.



Society of the Little Flower • 1313 N. Frontage Rd. • Darien, IL • 60561



Power of Forgiveness



Interacting with human beings — in the family, on the job, in the parish, in the world — continually exposes us to wounding each other emotionally with biases, snubs, humiliations and abuse due to race, gender, and differing political or religious beliefs. We frequently hurt each other and are oblivious to the territory where our hurtful words or actions fall.

In an encounter I once had with a prison inmate, I noticed the way he presented himself: “My name is Armandito,” or “Little Armand.” When I asked him where that name came from, he responded: “From my grandmother. She was the only one in my house that loved me and took care of me, and she lovingly called me Armandito. From my parents, the only thing I heard was: ‘Armando, you’re careless, you’re dumb, you have a bad character.’ I

Columnist

Ricardo Márquez



gave myself that new name because it reminds me of my grandmother, who still believes in me, and her love, which sustains me.”

If we were aware of the constructive and destructive power of our words, we would be more careful in using them. Some of our words have had a destructive effect on people for years, sometimes for a lifetime.

To forgive assumes an internal process of transformation, it’s something very personal and takes time. Each person reacts a different way to offenses. It has a lot to do with the model set by our parents, and the way conflicts were handled in the family or neighborhood.

In my country of Venezuela, I had the opportunity to attend an anniversary reunion of Jewish prisoners who had been liberated from Auschwitz. Two of

their testimonies called my attention.

One survivor shared the need to forgive two Nazi soldiers who had abused and murdered his family members. The profound pain of those memories, his powerlessness to get justice and his wish for revenge were asphyxiating him, didn’t let him sleep, made him ill. Only when he became aware of the damage that he was causing himself did he decide to let go of the hatred and to forgive. When he connected with gratitude of having survived and what he could still do for his children, he found purpose in his life. It was like climbing out of a hole and finding his way. A vision of what he could do with his life gave him new eyes and allowed him to leave behind the emotional blindness caused by his past.

“When we’re unable to change our world, we’re invited to change ourselves,” the Austrian psychiatrist Viktor Frankl tells us in his book “Man’s Search for Meaning.”

Another survivor expressed with moving honesty, “Don’t ask me, you who have not lived that experience, to forgive. I can’t forgive ...” I perceived

a profound pain, I dropped my moralizing and connected with empathy and compassion. Respect, time and accompaniment were the best I could offer him.

To forgive will always be a personal decision, a characteristic of the freedom we have to choose the attitude with which we will face our suffering.

The person who forgives and the forgiven enter a space of mutual awareness of their dignity, both see each other with another perspective, transcendent or supernatural; they mutually liberate themselves from emotional chains and experience peace, acceptance and joy generated by the gratitude of the forgiven and the love of the one who has forgiven.

It’s what Jesus invites us to do in the “Our Father,” a way to live in advance the joy of the “Kingdom” in Heaven, when the word “kingdom” indicates a state, not necessarily a political one, rather an emotional one of the joy created by fraternity, forgiveness and solidarity.

Ricardo Márquez can be reached at marquez_muskus@yahoo.com.

Life & Health Coaching

Are you looking to improve your health or life habits?

Reach out to Aireen Joy to support you.

Certified Life & Health Coach with a Catholic perspective.

Also supporting in grief and significant life changes.

619-820-0270

aireenjoycoaches@gmail.com

Aireen Joy Turner, M.Ed.

Newly Remodeled!

NAZARETH HOUSE

ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY

- Daily Mass
- Delicious Meals
- Quality Care with 24 hrs. Licensed Nurses
- Private Living Spaces with Scenic Patio Views

- Engaging Activities in a Welcoming Social Environment
- Beauty Salon
- Library

For information and to schedule a tour contact:

Amber Zendejas
DIRECTOR OF ADMISSION

Amber@NazarethHouseSD.org
619-563-0480

Scan for a Virtual Tour

NazarethHouseSD.org

6333 Rancho Mission Rd, San Diego, CA 92108
Lic # 372000400

INDEPENDENT LIVING | ASSISTED LIVING | HOSPICE CARE

Sustainable Lifestyles Can Bring New Life of Easter

By Christina Bagaglio Slentz



In our celebration of the Triduum and joy of the Easter season, we journey through the Paschal mystery of Jesus' passion, resurrection from the dead, and glorious ascension, by which Christ accomplishes the work of our salvation, so that we might enjoy everlasting life.

This pattern of suffering, death and resurrection is echoed throughout the natural world, and Jesus Himself frequently points to creation's Paschal rhythm — "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit" (John 12:24). In this repetition, we are invited, therefore, to recognize, as St. Gregory of Nyssa describes, "all the fullness of nature" bearing the image of God.

Collaborators with God's Will

Endowed with the responsibility of dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26-28), from the very beginning people are meant to share in the completion of creation "to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbors" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 307). However, as humanity has grown quick to use, consume, and carelessly throw away what we no longer see as useful, pollution and climate change have disrupted the rhythms of creation. Toxic landfills sicken those who cannot afford to live at a safe distance, microplastics plague creatures on land and sea, and an abundance of carbon emissions contribute to extreme weather, threatening the lives, livelihood, and displacement of millions.

Nevertheless, highlighting the life of Noah, Pope Francis argues, all it takes is "one good person" to take action in collaboration with God to open a path to salvation and restore hope ("Laudato Si," No. 71). The pope goes on to observe, in the biblical tradition, such renewal "entails recovering and respecting the rhythms inscribed in nature by the hand of the Creator."

Living with Less and Proper Disposal

Continuing with our coverage of the seven goals of "Laudato Si," this month's goal is "The Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles," which directs us to restore the earth's natural rhythms by living simply and using resources and energy responsibly. According to the "Laudato Si" Action Platform, sustainable lifestyle actions could include "reducing waste and recycling, adopting sustainable dietary habits (opting for a more plant-based diet and reducing meat consumption), greater use of public transport, active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single-use



items. Such behaviors contribute toward the harmonious completion of creation for our own good, that of our neighbors, and future generations.

But knowing "what to put where" can be one of the biggest barriers to adopting sustainable practices at home and at work. California legislation has pushed waste collection service providers to facilitate the diversion of as much trash as possible away from the landfill and into recycling or composting efforts. While differences have existed among providers as their equipment has caught up to the enacted policies, today, the rules for disposing items into the black trash, blue recycle, and green compost bins are fairly universal across the San Diego region:

- Green bin for organic waste — plant/yard trimmings, food, and paper (even soiled paper)
- Blue recycle bin — metal, glass, dry paper products, and HARD plastics with chasing arrow symbol
- Black trash bin — everything else, to include soft, flimsy plastics and rigid compostables that appear to be plastic

What NOT TO DO:

Do not put plastic bags in either the blue or green bin — they are not recyclable nor compostable and become tangled in the sorting machinery.

Similarly, do not put "tangles" such as hoses, Christmas lights, and wire coat hangers in the blue or green bins; these items go in the black bin.



Soiled diapers and dog waste bags must ALWAYS go in the black bin.

All types of batteries are considered hazardous waste in California and are not allowed in landfills. Battery and electronics recycling locations can be found at "I Love a Clean San Diego's Waste Free SD" site, wastefreesd.org.

Some key tips:

Stock your shelves with compostable items instead of single-use plastics, which cannot be recycled. Better yet, use real dishes and silverware!

- Compostable items that are rigid and look like plastic must go into the black trash bin, as they decompose at a slower rate than other compostables. They still offer the benefit of breaking down in the landfill, but cannot go through compost machinery alongside other organic items.
- Create labels for bins with pictures of the commonly used items in a space to make it easier for proper disposal.
- For large events, consider posting volunteers near trash receptacles to guide people gently to the right container.

Whether it's taking action in energy use, plastics use, consumption of red meat or some other area of environmental degradation, helping to restore harmony to the rhythms of creation draws us all closer to our Creator and each other. If you need any help in instituting these processes, please don't hesitate to reach out to the SD Catholic Creation Care Ministry at cslentz@sdcatholic.org.



Send pictures of your family or parish illustrating Care for Creation to cslentz@sdcatholic.org. We will post them on our Facebook and Instagram accounts.

sdcatholic.org/creation

Creation Care Ministry Explores a Theme Monthly to Inspire Action.



CHRISTINA BAGACIO SLENTZ

Brother's Ministry Is 'Healing the Earth'

By Denis Grasska



Brother James Lockman, OFM, serves as advisor to the Diocese of San Diego's Creation Care Ministry.

Creation Care Ministry

Brother James Lockman, OFM



Question: What role did the Catholic faith play during your formative years?

Answer: I was baptized Catholic as an infant, was an altar boy for four or five years, and went to Catholic school all the way through high school. I was a seventh-grader when the Second Vatican Council concluded in 1965, so, in my youth, I had one foot in the pre-Vatican II era and the other foot post-Vatican II.

When did you first encounter the Franciscans?

It was in 1966. I was 14 years old and a Boy Scout. I had set out to earn a Catholic Scouting emblem called *Ad Altare Dei*. One of the things that I had to do was to take part in a pilgrimage. So, two buddies and I rode our bikes up to Malibu to the Serra Retreat House, which belongs to the West Coast Franciscan Province. That's where I met the friars.

Father Hugh Noonan opened the door. He was a big guy, with a big smile and very welcoming. He had us come in, he showed us around, and that left an impression. I was struck by the Franciscans' joy.

How did you recognize a call to religious life?

As a graduate student at UC Davis, I had a religious awakening and got involved with the Newman Center.

In the summer of 1977, I went on

an eight-day retreat. The priest guiding me on the retreat told me that he thought I might have a vocation to religious life.

I explored the idea with my spiritual director. With her encouragement, I visited the Franciscan School of Theology, which was then in Berkeley but has since relocated to the University of San Diego campus. There, I met more Franciscans and became even more interested.

Do you remember when you fell in love with nature?

When I was 2 years old, I looked out the window into our back yard one morning and saw a peach tree in full bloom. I actually crawled out of the house, and my worried mother finally found me there beneath its branches.

Lockman *Continued on Page 17*



8:30am - 5:00pm

We're Open!

Thank you for your support through these times and we look forward to seeing you soon.



CALL
1.800.854.6567

VISIT
4780 Mission Gorge Place
San Diego, CA 92120

CLICK
OConnorsChurchsupply.com

#OC15








R. Neder Construction

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

R. Neder Construction, Inc. has been in business for 15 years, providing general construction services throughout San Diego County. We specialize in interior door, finish trim and custom carpentry. We are fully licensed, bonded and insured.

Contact Us for FREE ESTIMATES

Finish Carpentry | License #929258
Silvestre Vargas
619-823-8356 | silver@rnederconstruction.com

Lockman *Continued from Page 16*

The light was shining on the flowers in a way that was very beautiful. I still have a very vivid picture of that experience. Looking back, it was close to mystical.

What are the religious or spiritual dimensions of protecting the environment?

The idea of respect for God's creation isn't just a modern notion. I think that elements of this go back throughout our Judeo-Christian history.

Also, in the 13th century, St. Francis had a very strong sense that humans should think of each element of God's creation as our brother or sister. He composed the "Canticle of Creation," from which Pope Francis got the title of his environmental-themed encyclical "Laudato Si." The saint wrote this song, not only to give praise to God for all of creation, but also to address the environmental degradation that he

saw around him.

Care for creation is also tied to our concern for the poor. While richer countries might be able to protect themselves through mitigation of the effects of climate change, the consequences largely will be borne by the two-thirds of the world that is poor.

What types of ministries have you been involved in as a Franciscan?

After making my solemn vows, I was immediately appointed as our province's vocations director and served in that role for six years, beginning in the late Eighties.

I also had the opportunity to work in Brazil with an NGO that was focused on sustainable pathways for development in the Amazon. I did tropical forest research with them from 1995 to 2002.

Later, I was asked to serve as guardian and executive director of Mission San Luis Rey from 2006 to 2010. The

City of Oceanside's planning commission asked us to do a property development plan for the entire 50-acre mission. I was asked to apply my ecological knowledge to make it as green as possible. A commission member told me that the Franciscans were 100 years ahead of most other people in Oceanside in bringing ecological thinking into their development plans.

What is your current assignment, and when did that begin?

In 2010, I basically begged to get back into my field of applied ecology. I got a job with Tierra Data, Inc., a local firm that works on a variety of environmental projects, including natural resource management planning as well as biological monitoring for public works and development projects.

I was able to establish the restoration ecology division of the company. With my colleagues, we've done over 1,000 acres of habitat restoration

in San Diego County alone.

When I explain my work to my fellow friars, instead of using the technical words, I simply say that my ministry is healing the earth.

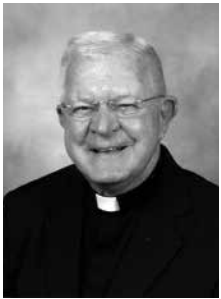
Can you talk about your work with the diocese on Creation Care Ministry?

Around 2015, Father Emmet Farrell asked to pick my brain about how "Laudato Si" could be implemented in the San Diego Diocese. Then, in 2021, he brought me in as a technical advisor for the diocese's tree-planting campaign, which planted/distributed more than 50 good-sized trees throughout the diocese.

In late 2022, I requested to go from full-time to part-time at Tierra Data. That made me more available to work with outside groups, including the diocese's Creation Care Ministry. Our Creation Care Ministry team has big plans for the upcoming year.

Obituary

Father Robert Gavotto, OSA



Augustinian Father Robert Gavotto died March 4 at Nazareth House San Diego. He was 86.

Born in San Diego,

he attended St. John the Evangelist School and St. Augustine High School, where he was a member of the Class of 1955.

He began formation as an Augustinian religious in 1956, entered the Augustinian novitiate in January 1957, and professed vows the following February.

He was ordained to the priesthood on March 14, 1964, in Rome.

In 1969, he earned a doctorate in canon law.

Father Gavotto served at his alma mater, St. Augustine High School, on several occasions. The most recent was as the school's chaplain for 12 years until his retirement in 2016.

Over the years, he held various leadership posts within the Augustinian order. For example, in the early seventies, he served in the Augustinian General Curia in Rome, where he was elected Secretary General and later Assistant General

of the Order of St. Augustine.

In 1977, he accepted the invitation of Bishop Leo T. Maher to be the vice chancellor of the Diocese of San Diego, as well as the director of the Office for Evangelization.

From 1980 to 1987, he was the pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in San Diego.

Father Gavotto's funeral Mass was celebrated March 11 at All Hallows Parish in La Jolla. Burial followed at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery and Mausoleum.

National Eucharistic Revival Supplement – April 2024

The Easter Season is about the joy of the Resurrection! During the Eucharistic Revival, we feel joy in the Eucharist just like the disciples on the Road to Emmaus experienced in the breaking of bread with Jesus.



THEME: THE JOY OF THE EUCHARIST

Eucharistic Saint



St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) was a lay woman who is best known for reconciling warring cities in Italy and bringing the pope back to Rome from his exile in France. She was gifted with intense visions of Jesus who told her how to reform the Church. When Catherine died at the young age of 33 she had lived her entire adult life on no food except the Holy Eucharist.

Back to Basics

EASTER DUTY: In order to emphasize that the Eucharist is the most important institution and reality of our faith, the Catholic Church actually *requires* the faithful to receive Communion during the Easter Season.



This practice is called the "Easter Duty" and is considered one of the five precepts of the Church: *You shall humbly receive your creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.* (Catechism, 2041–2043)

In an age where people receive the Eucharist frequently, this may not seem like a "duty" as such, but it is connected with another equally important precept: *You shall confess your sins at least once a year.* Thus, every year, the Church reminds each of us to keep our spiritual priorities in the proper order.

Calls to Action



Concern for Souls – The Eucharist gives us spiritual strength for our journey through life. Perhaps you know fallen away Catholics who are spiritually "starving" from being away from the Bread of Life for so long. Easter may be a time to invite them back to the joy of the Eucharist.

Evangelize – Make sure to be a teacher and evangelizer of the Eucharist to non-Catholics also by handing out prayer cards and materials for people to learn about this great gift of our Catholic faith.

"When we work hard, we must eat well. What a joy that you can receive Holy Communion often! It's our life and support in this life. Receive Communion often, and Jesus will change you into himself."
~ St. Peter Julian Eymard

National Eucharistic Revival News and Resources

Keep up to date on the National Eucharistic Revival at the Bishops' website: www.EucharisticRevival.org. For news on the upcoming Eucharistic Congress, go to www.eucharisticcongress.org. Also, get the *Eucharistic Revival Edition Prayer Cards* at www.SitStandKneel.com for great evangelization resources to spread the Eucharistic fire!

News Briefs

Parish Hosting Divine Mercy Celebration

St. Thérèse of Carmel Parish in Carmel Valley will hold a Divine Mercy Sunday celebration after its 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday, April 7.

The celebration will run from 12:15 to 1 p.m. and will include the recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet in song and the blessing of the Divine Mercy Image.

For more information, contact the parish at (858) 481-3232.

IVC to Hold Annual 'Evening of Gratitude'

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps-San Diego Region, part of a national organization providing community non-profit organizations with talented and experienced volunteers, will hold its annual Evening of Gratitude on Sunday, April 7.

The gala celebration will begin with a 4 p.m. Mass at St. Catherine Laboure Parish, followed by a reception, hosted wine bar, dinner, award presentations and a live auction. All proceeds will benefit the work of the IVC in San Diego.

The event recognizes the outstanding work of IVC's Service Corps members. It also will pay special tribute to the Sisters of Mercy, recipients of this year's Madonna Della Strada Award, and Jesuit Father Neal "Pepe" Wilkinson, who will receive the Sheila O'Malley Vision and Dedication Award.

All are welcome to attend, but early registration is required because seat-

ing is limited. To register, visit ivcusa.org/SanDiegoEOG2024. For more information, contact Curran Gaughan, regional director of the IVC, at (858) 822-9814 or cgaughan@ivcusa.org.

Miles Christi Offering Silent Retreats

OCEANSIDE — Silent weekend retreats, based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, will be preached by the priests of the Miles Christi religious order.

The next men's retreats will be during the April 19-21 and June 28-30 weekends.

The next women's retreats will be during the May 9-11 and June 21-23 weekends.

All of the retreats will be held at Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside.

For more information or to register, visit mileschristi.org/spiritual-exercises or call (858) 768-0872.

Event Offers Healing for Widowed, Divorced

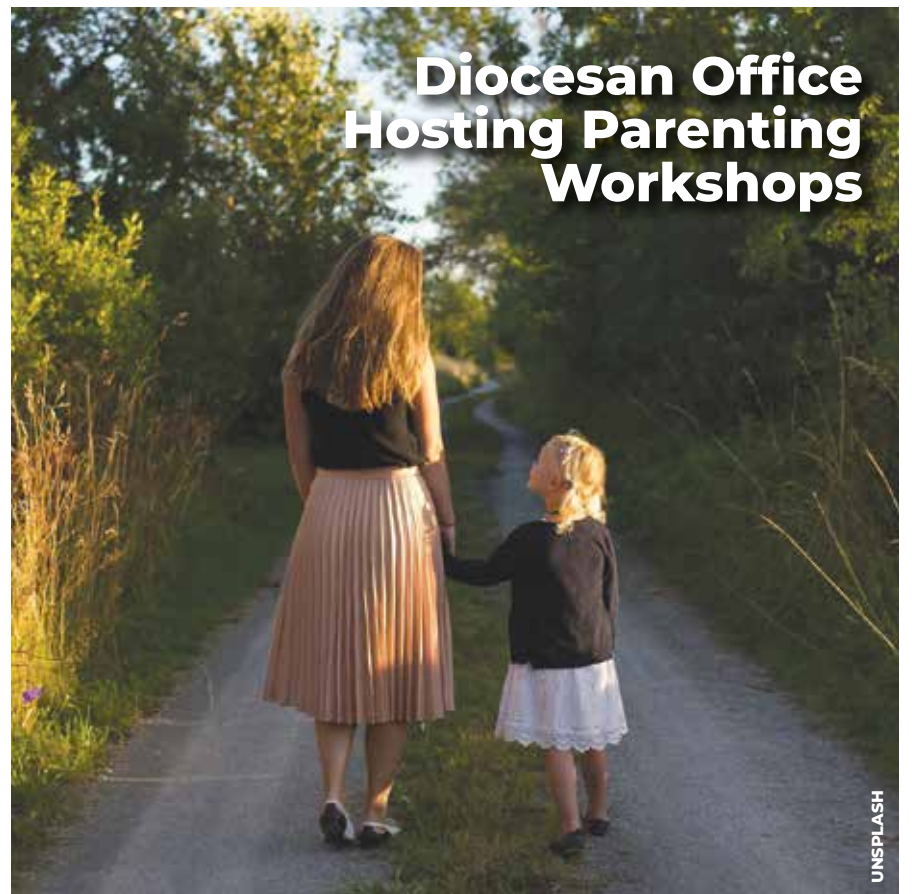
OCEANSIDE — If you are grieving the loss of your marriage through death, divorce or separation, you are invited to the next Beginning Experience Weekend.

It will be held from May 3 to 5 at Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside.

During the weekend, a trained team will lead participants through a healing and growth program.

Those who feel ready to move

Briefs *Continued on Page 19*



Diocesan Office Hosting Parenting Workshops

Parents and grandparents are invited to attend a Catholic Parenting Workshop Series, sponsored by the diocesan Office for Family Life and Spirituality.

The free workshops will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Wednesdays, April 10 to 24, at the diocesan Pastoral Center.

Child and behavioral psychologists and experts in their field will discuss the stages of child development (April 10; presenter: Dr. Mary Riddle), different parenting styles and their effectiveness (April 17;

presenter: Dr. Charles Farrow), and how to effectively mold one's household into a true "domestic Church" (April 24; presenters: John Prust and Janelle Peregoy of the Office for Family Life and Spirituality).

Simultaneous sessions will also be available in Spanish.

While parents are responsible for their own children, tables will be set up in the back where kids can play, color, or do their homework.

For more information, call (858) 490-8256. RSVP at tinyurl.com/parentingworkshopseries.



San Diego Catholic Worker ANNUAL DINNER AND AUCTION

Tasty Hors D'oeuvres, Amazing Spaghetti and Delicious Meatballs Dinner, Top It Off with Mouth-Watering Desserts

Music and Dancing to the "Let's Reminiscé" Band

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024, 6:30 P.M.

ST. MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH HALL

1945 Illion Street, San Diego, CA 92110 | Donation: \$25

Advance Payment via Paypal, at SanDiegoCatholicWorker.org, or

Send Donations to San Diego Catholic Worker Dinner

P.O. Box 127244, San Diego, CA 92112

Every Dollar You Contribute Helps Us Provide Meals for Hundreds of Hungry and Homeless People.

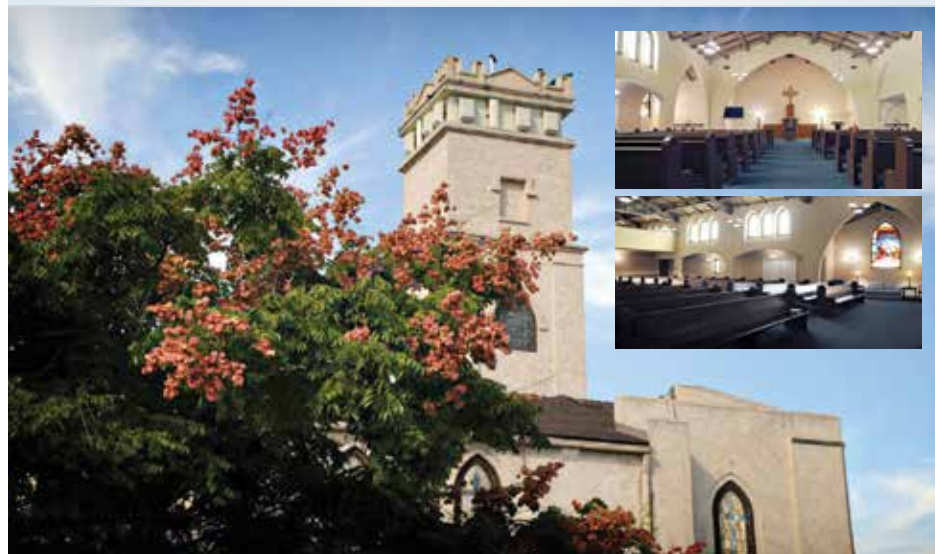
Catholic Workers Are Never Paid For Their Service.

ATTENTION ADVERTISERS — We appreciate your business. However, errors sometimes occur. Please read your ad the first day it runs. If you should find a mistake in your ad, please let us know right away, by calling (858) 490-8266. We'll be happy to make the necessary changes. Tear sheets are provided upon request.

LIMITS OF LIABILITY — The Southern Cross assumes no financial responsibility for errors or omissions of copy. It is the advertiser's responsibility to read ad proofs before publication and notify us of any errors. We reserve the right to adjust in full any error for which we are responsible by publishing a corrected insertion. Requests for adjustments must be made within 30 days of ad publication. All copy must be approved by the newspaper, which reserves the right to request changes or reject an ad. Publisher reserves the right to cancel any ad at any time. All advertising is subject to credit approval.



INTO THY HANDS, O Lord, we commend the spirits of these beloved ones who are gone before us into the realm of thy eternal happiness and peace. *AMEN*



Goodbody
MORTUARY
Since 1920

(619) 582-1700
goodbodymortuary.com

5027 El Cajon Blvd.
San Diego's Leading
Catholic Funeral Directors
FD LIC #790

Every Detail Remembered | Dignity

Receive Free Information with No Obligation by Contacting Us.

Briefs *Continued from Page 18*

through their feelings of grief, into the light of a new beginning and hope, are encouraged to attend this weekend.

For more information, email beginningexperiencesd@gmail.com or call (858) 748-2273.

Retrouvaille Offers Hope for Struggling Marriages

Retrouvaille is a program designed to help struggling marriages regain their health. It helps a husband and a wife rediscover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together.

The next English-language Retrouvaille weekend will be held May 3 to 5.

For more information about an upcoming Retrouvaille weekend, including the cost to attend, call (951) 259-9474 or visit helpourmarriage-sandiego.org.

Women's Retreat to Be Held at Whispering Winds

JULIAN — The Whispering Winds Women's Auxiliary will hold a women's retreat from May 17 to 19 at Whispering Winds Catholic Camp and Conference Center.

The theme is "Your Heart, His Home." The retreat will feature guest speaker Liz Kelly.

The cost to attend is \$200 for members of the Whispering Winds Women's Auxiliary and \$230 for non-members.

The retreat includes two nights' lodging, six meals, a Friday night social, live music, Sunday Mass with Msgr. Mark Campbell, and opportunities for quiet, personal meditation.

For more information, contact Linda Aguilera at laguilera@me.com. Register online at whisperingwinds.org/camps-retreats/womens-retreat.

Upcoming Day Retreat Based on Carmelite Spirituality

CHULA VISTA — The Garden of Carmel Confraternity of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is hosting its annual day retreat.

It will take place from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, May 18, at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Chula Vista.

The focus of the retreat will be on the importance of the virtues of humility and obedience.

Led by Carmelite Father Stephen Watson, the retreat will include spiritual conferences followed by Mass. After lunch, there will be small-group reflection.

RSVP by Monday, April 22. For more information, call (619) 302-0027 or (619) 646-7676 or email aespangilinan@gmail.com.

Special Needs Camp Seeking Volunteers

JULIAN — The annual Special Needs Family Camp, to be held this July at Whispering Winds Catholic Camp and Conference Center, is already sold out.

But the camp is still seeking adults (age 18 and older) interested in volunteering as a "Special Needs Buddy."

The Special Needs Family Camp seeks to remove any barriers that might prevent families with special-needs children from attending camp together. For that reason, special-needs campers are paired one-on-one with a "buddy" for the entire weekend. Buddies accompany their camper to special programs, family activities and mealtimes.

The camp is almost at capacity with female "buddies," but still needs male "buddies."

No previous experience with

special-needs children is required. All buddies will receive basic training from Whispering Winds staff. There will be a mandatory training at a date to be determined.

Buddies' service will run from 1 p.m., Friday, July 19, to 5 p.m., Sunday, July 21. Buddies will receive lodging for three days and two nights, six meals plus snacks, and a Family Camp T-shirt.

For more information, email matisse@whisperingwinds.org. Register at whisperingwinds.org/camps-retreats/special-needs-family-camp/volunteer-application-for-special-needs-family-camp.

Catholics Can 'Encounter' Jesus in Rancho Peñasquitos

Encounter, a Spirit-filled evening of inspiring music, prayer, Eucharistic adoration, a healing service and reconciliation, is held on the second Friday of each month at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Sponsored by the parish's Hearts of Fire Ministry, the event runs from 7 to 8 p.m.

For more information, email olmcheartsoffire@gmail.com.

Men Invited to Join 'Rosary Crusade'

The Men's Rosary Crusade gathers at 9 a.m., every first Saturday of the month, at the corner of 6th & Laurel in Balboa Park. All men are welcome.

The rosary intentions are for reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of America, for families and for the unborn.

For more information, email draguez@sbcglobal.net or call (619) 920-8363.

Priest Assignments

The Office of the Cardinal has announced the following assignments, effective July 1:

Father Sean Embury as associate pastor of Good Shepherd Parish

Father Daniel Holgren as associate pastor of Mission San Diego de Alcalá Parish

Father Ignatius Kipchirchir as pastor of St. Martin of Tours Parish

Father Oscar López as associate pastor of Resurrection Parish

Father Elmer Mandac as pastor of Good Shepherd Parish

Father Roldan M. Nuñez as pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish

Father Rogelio Pingol as associate pastor of Corpus Christi Parish



DONATE YOUR CAR

CarsForBabies.org

- **FREE Vehicle Pickup**
- **All Vehicles - Running or Not**
- **100% Tax Deductible**

BENEFITTING

Light and Life

Knights of Columbus

Call: **858-333-8751**

MOBILE ULTRASOUND

CHANGING LIVES

SAVING LIVES



Cristina and Peanut

Dear Friends and Family of Catholic Charities:

I hope this letter finds you well and filled with the spirit of compassion and generosity this Easter Season. As an advocate for the well-being of our community, I am writing to you on behalf of the countless women who are unhoused in our city who are facing the harsh realities of life on the streets. Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego has consistently demonstrated its commitment to serving those in need. I am reaching out to request your support for a cause that deserves our urgent attention- the mental health of women who are unhoused.

The Unseen Struggle: Mental Health on the Streets

Imagine facing the challenges of homelessness without a stable support system, a safe place to sleep, or consistent access to nourishing food. Add to that the often-overlooked struggle of maintaining mental well-being in the face of constant uncertainty and danger. Women who are unhoused are particularly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of living on the streets, where the harsh realities of survival exacerbate mental health issues.

Statistics reveal a sobering truth: a significant percentage of women who are unhoused experience mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. According to recent studies, nearly 40% of individuals who are unhoused in our city are grappling with mental health issues, making them more susceptible to substance abuse, victimization, and a perpetual cycle of despair.

The Dangers Women Face on the Streets

Life on the streets is fraught with danger, and women experiencing homelessness are disproportionately at risk. Sexual assault, human trafficking, and physical violence are haunting realities that women who are unhoused endure daily. The absence of secure shelter and protective resources only amplifies these threats, leaving women vulnerable and traumatized.

As a community, we cannot turn a blind eye to the silent struggles of these women. It is our moral imperative to extend a helping hand, providing not only immediate relief but also long-term solutions to break the cycle of homelessness and mental health challenges.

Our Call to Action: Your Support Matters

Catholic Charities Rachel’s programs have been focused on serving women exclusively for 40 years. We are committed to recognizing the trauma in the women we serve and providing all of our services from a trauma-informed, safety-focused perspective. Now, we seek your partnership in addressing this urgent matter. Your donation can make a meaningful impact on the lives of women who are unhoused, providing them with access to mental health resources, safe housing, and the support they need to rebuild their lives.

Your generosity helps women like Cristina who has struggled with mental health issues and drug abuse. With the support of Catholic Charities, she is now working, and living in her own home with her puppy, Peanut. Our team helped Cristina for over a year to combat the many barriers she needed to overcome, and we continue to support her on her journey as is our mission.

Together, we can create a future where every woman, regardless of her current circumstances, has the opportunity to regain her dignity, security, and mental well-being.

Your compassion and generosity can be the catalyst for change in the lives of women who are unhoused. Please join us in this crucial mission by donating today. Together, we can make a lasting impact and build a community where everyone is given the chance to thrive.

To donate or learn more about our efforts, please visit ccdsd.org/give or use the enclosed pre-paid envelope to send in your donation today.

Sincerely,

Appaswamy “Vino” Pajanor
Chief Executive Officer

Scan the QR code to donate.



- Cristina relaxing in her home.
- Cristina’s bed at Rachel’s Night Shelter



**Be the
"Good Samaritan"**

Support Catholic Charities initiative of Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Give Online Today:
ccdsd.org/giving

Mail Donations To:
3888 Paducah Drive
San Diego, CA 92117

Call to Give:
619-363-9774

Text YOUANDME to 44321