

Diocese of Las Vegas

DESERT CLARION



John Hazard and his wife Karen, parishioners at SJHM take a moment to pose for a photo with new friends during their visit to New Orleans to assist with the on going cleanup of Katrina

By JOHN AND KAREN HAZARD

An amazing thing happened, last September, as Karen and I began planning our annual anniversary trip for some relaxation and fun. God tapped us on the shoulder and invited us to do something quite different. It all began when Karen discovered an article on the United States Catholic Bishop's website. The Archdiocese of New Orleans was in need of volunteers to help with the Katrina Relief. We were amazed to discover that 13 months post Katrina; they were actively recruiting volunteers. Shortly after that, I was channel surfing and came across a documentary on the ghost town-like neighborhoods and the loss that continued to haunt the city. We couldn't ignore the need and the suffering and it was right here in

our own country. It was decided. We would spend three weeks helping others rebuild their lives and their homes.

We contacted Helping Hands through the Archdiocese of New Orleans and before we knew it, we were in our motorhome on our way to Louisiana. I must admit, as we journeyed to New Orleans, we began to be plagued with some doubts. What had we gotten ourselves into and would we be capable of doing the job (we didn't even know exactly what we would be doing)? We didn't know where we would be staying or what we would see when we got there. We decided that; if God had called us, He would give us what we needed to do the job...and we certainly had lots of people praying for us!! Father Ron Zanoni gave us a blessing at Mass the day before we left and

actually wondered if we had made the trip in vain. It wasn't until the next morning; when we reported to Helping Hands headquarters at St. Raymond's Church in Gentilly Parish, that reality set in. It took us days to absorb what we were seeing and experiencing. Neighborhood after neighborhood stood with empty, abandoned homes, trash was piled five feet high in front of houses that were being gutted, downed trees were not uncommon, weeds grew 6 feet high, FEMA writing and water marks remained on homes, 340 square foot trailers with four or five residents were parked in front yards. The most haunting of all was the absence of people in the neighborhoods. The only noise we heard were the hammers and voices of volunteers.

We felt a real sense of purpose

LV Catholic couple discover "Trusting the Voice You Hear" a wonderful reward

we felt like missionaries being sent from St. Joseph Husband of Mary to do God's work.

When we first arrived in New Orleans, we drove into town on Interstate 10 and from the freeway everything looked fairly normal...everyone coming and going ...the usual rush hour traffic. We didn't see any visible damage and

as we worked side by side with other volunteers of all ages from all over the country who had come to help. From the moment we arrived we felt welcomed, appreciated and a part of a very special network of faith-filled servants of God. We tore down walls, ceiling, cabinets, removed appliances, tubs, toilets and water heaters. We hauled out debris, swept up insulation, pulled out nails and left nothing but an empty shell behind. It was dirty messy work but we never heard a cross word or a complaint from anyone. Although we were surrounded by loss and felt moments of sadness, our hearts were filled with joy. Joy because we knew we were about God's work. We were helping to heal lives one house at a time.

The homeowners and people of New Orleans taught us the meaning of gratitude, They called us: "God's angels"... "He has sent you to give us hope." We will always remember their beautiful faces, hearts filled with gratitude, eyes brimming with tears and the thank yous from everyone who knew we were there to help. Healing is occurring through groups like Helping Hands. They are making God's love credible and we are proud and humbled to have been a part of this ongoing effort to rebuild homes and lives. Through Helping Hands, five thousand volunteers have gutted and cleaned more than

1,000 homes for the elderly, disabled and uninsured residents. Many more remain on the waiting list!!! New Orleans has a long road of recovery ahead.

Karen and I are so glad God tapped us on the shoulder that day in September and asked us to step out in faith. We realize now what a special gift He had waiting for us. Being God's ambassadors of hope and His helping hands was an experience of a life time. It has changed our lives, strengthened our faith and our marriage. How do we make sense of the devastation we saw? I don't really know. What we do know is what we witnessed... nothing can destroy the treasures of the heart, nothing can take away the spirit to survive... not when God stands beside us. We are indeed privileged, not because of what we have but because of Who God calls us to be... His humble servants.

We would like to invite you to become a part of a great team... Catholic Charities Helping Hands Program continues to provide help and create hope for those who have been impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Visit their website www.ccano.org to learn more about their programs, services and volunteer opportunities. Their need is extraordinary which gives us extraordinary opportunities to give of our time and talent. God does AMAZING things!!

St. Francis of Assisi gets topped off with titanium crosses

This story first appeared in the South Valley NEWS and is being republished with permission.

By CAROL P. HOLMES

After placement atop a church in the southern foothills of Henderson, two titanium crosses gleamed in the sunlight of a clear November morning.

On Nov. 21, the crosses were blessed by the Most Rev. Joseph A. Pepe, bishop of Las Vegas, before they were raised up to be placed on the new St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 2300 Sunridge Heights Parkway.

"The cross calls us all to live in the true example of Christ," Pepe said. "The crosses will be symbols of your church, may they also be symbols of your heart."

As the crosses were lifted by a crane and guided into place by Titanium Metals Corp. employee Terry Sharp, many joined in singing the hymn, "Lift High the Cross."

Although scaffolds are still visible and work remains to be done to complete the church, the placement of the crosses was evidence to parishioners that church doors will soon open for services.

Parish member Phyllis Joyce blinked backed tears during the ceremony. She said many small

and large fundraisers had been held to acquire money to build the church. She said the building project had helped bring a sense of community among Catholics.

The Rev. Gregory Gordon, parish priest for St. Francis of Assisi, said the bishop's vision of a new church was coming to fruition that day and it was made possible by the many families who had become a family of love. He thanked the city of Henderson for welcoming the church and Timet for making and donating the crosses.

Timet employees Ray Martinez, Jim McKeown and Danny Pipes created the crosses, with Pipes coordinating the project.

It wasn't the first time Timet had built a cross for public display in Henderson. Thanks to Timet, titanium crosses, including those on the campuses of St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, have become a symbol of the community.

According to Paula Avery, media representative for Timet, the cost of the crosses is overshadowed by the significance of being a partner in the community.

The blessing and raising of the crosses symbolized the fulfillment of long-awaited dream for a fast-growing parish that has been meeting in Twitchell El-

ementary School.

According to Karen Gordon, sibling to the church's priest, the parish has grown from zero to 2,500 families in less than two years. In November Karen Gordon said she hoped the church would be open for use by Christmas or at least by the first of the year.

"There's a tremendous need in the valley," she said. "The Henderson community is growing, and the Catholic community is growing with it."

The campus of St. Francis of Assisi is being built in three phases, church officials say.

The San Damiano Phase, which is near completion, includes the parish center, with liturgical space to accommodate 850 for Mass, three classrooms, three meeting rooms, kitchen, parish offices, gift shop, vestibule, sacristy, restrooms and storage space.

It also includes a piazza, covered patio with outdoor grills and outdoor classroom. In addition, the Padre Francisco Garces trail and bike path will be designed to connect Henderson parks and trails with the parish.

The San Francisco Phase will include a permanent church building to accommodate 2,000 people for Sunday Mass. It will also be



the site of the priests' residence.

The Mount St. Francis Phase will encompass the Catholic school, Mount St. Francis Academy, including 18 classrooms for grades kindergarten through eighth grade, parochial school office, library and computer/science center as well as a playground and ball fields.

While Father Gordon praised and thanked the families of the parish for helping the building effort, they, in turn, said he had a lot to do with the success.

In addition to the completion of the church, parishioners will also see the construction of the first Catholic school in Henderson on the 20-acre church campus.

Father Gordon said Henderson is long overdue for a Catholic school. It has close to a quarter of a million people and is the only city of its size in the country that doesn't have one.

Carol Holmes is a News correspondent.

BISHOP'S CORNER**JOSEPH A. PEPE****Bishop Schedule for
February 2007**

February 11 at 2:20pm -

Bishop Pepe celebrating Married Couples Jubilee Mass at the Guardian Angel Cathedral

February 16 at 7:00pm - Bishop Pepe celebrating 25th Anniversary Mass for the Southern Nevada Charismatic Prayer Group at Our Lady of Las Vegas

February 21 at 12:10pm - Bishop Pepe celebrating Ash Wednesday Mass at the Guardian Angel Cathedral

February 24 at 10:00am - Boy Scouts Award Ceremony at St. Peter the Apostle

February 25 at 2:30pm - Rite of Election at the Guardian Angel Cathedral

We're on the web at
www.lasvegas-diocese.org

TO RESPECT LIFE *Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer, STL*

The Dictatorship of Choice

Merck's lucrative human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is now being proposed as mandatory by twelve states for girls 11 years old and above. Yes, the word is mandatory. Remember that the culture of death is not a benign dictator: it becomes a tyrant as soon as it is able to enforce its will. Cynically, the whole premise of the culture of death is "freedom of choice," but if Merck and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have their way soon we will be bulldozing chemicals into little girls' bodies for no other reason than that their parents' generation has deprived them of a choice. Those who say that they don't want to force their morality on others are now having others' immorality forced upon them.

I have written before that this is not an innocuous little program to protect girls from disease. It is the newest program of fear-mongering that manipulates baby-boomer and Gen X mothers to "protect" their pre-adolescent kids from what they themselves know to be the ravages of the culture of sexual promiscuity. It leaves virtually no room for the moral approach of chastity before and during marriage and in fact denigrates that approach as unrealistic. While there are many reasons why this vaccine should be opposed and rejected, I object most strongly to its capacity to degrade human and sexual relations under the guise of real-world protection.

How is a mother to explain

this intrusion to her child? She may tell her girl that the chicken pox vaccine is necessary because even casual contact with other kids may infect her. But if the daughter asks the mother why she needs to get three shots for the HPV vaccine, mom would have to explain it in some disingenuous or crude way: "Well, honey, you may someday have sex with someone who has this disease, and you have to be safe." The reactions from the child may range from embarrassment to shock to horror. If mother says, "Your future husband may have this disease..." she will also have to explain why the girl would even want to marry someone with a disease and whether or not Daddy had that disease when she married him. Any way you slice it this shot is degrading to kids' relationships with their parents, their purity, and the sense of wonder that they should have toward the beauty of human sexuality.

And that's the point. The culture of death, like every despotic regime, enters into God's realm with haughty pretense and sullies it. It eventually establishes itself inside the temple as its own authority and mandates a new law contrary to both spirit and nature. Last time I checked, the Scriptures still say that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:9), but the CDC is rapidly squatting on another's property and soon will claim total ownership of the temple if these HPV vaccine "mandates" are any way

indicative of the future.

If parents want to assure that God's plan of sexual purity will set the agenda for their kids' future marriages and families, now is the time to change their culture. The only real response to these intrusions of the culture of death is to reject them and all their works and all their empty promises. We have to get and keep the tainted culture out of us and stop pretending that it is the "real world." Pre-adolescent girls getting expensive shots to protect them from sexually transmitted diseases is not "real," it's perverse. Creating a culture of life and purity will in no way be without its sacrifices—even heroic ones—but if our children's and family's integrity is not worth the sacrifice, what is?

One final question that has been asked by many and needs a clear answer: Would it be immoral for someone to take or administer this vaccine? No. The HPV vaccine is not made from aborted fetal cell lines and is not in itself an immoral substance. The Church is not in the business of manipulating consciences to make a point about the culture of death. The Church's point is that the real manipulators are sitting in the CDC and state legislatures and school boards, and we should insist upon our freedom from their unwarranted intrusions into God's temple.

*Fr. Thomas J. Euteneuer is
President Human Life International.
www.hli.org*

LIFE CHANGING EVENT *Fr. Albert Felice-Pace, O.P.*

Reflection on open heart surgery - a year later

"Why did this happen to me? All I was doing was watching a football game on TV?" That's a question I asked myself after I had an open heart surgery with five bypasses. But throughout the whole ordeal, I felt God's loving presence.

Things happen so fast - we do not have control over them. But as people of faith we trust in an all loving and caring God. Looking back at the events that happened so quickly and unexpectedly, I see the hands of God, guiding and directing all the moves.

The Saturday after Thanksgiving of 2005, when my Dominican Friars were away, I felt severe chest pain. I rested on my bed for a few minutes, but the pain increased. Fortunately, Fr. Bart from Tucson who was staying at Serra House, came over to our house. He was relaxing and sound asleep in our living room. God brought him to our house that afternoon so that he would take me to the emergency room. I woke him up and asked him to take to Sunrise Hospital, the closest hospital to our house.

When I was admitted to the emergency room I had some relief from the pain. The doctor told me that they are going to keep me overnight for observation. Fr. Bart stayed with me and started calling my Dominican brothers to let them know what happened. As the news started

to spread, people from the Newman community and my Dominican brothers started to call me or came to visit me. I came to realize the beauty of community. I thought of the motto of our Newman community: One Mind, One Heart. I felt the prayers and the love of the community.

The Dominicans came to visit me on Saturday and Sunday. Fr. Joe anointed me and gave me Holy Communion. Michael Piorier's song: Strength for the Journey kept running into my mind as everyone left my room. Yes, Jesus is with me, he is my strength as I have to face the unknown. More people came to visit me on Sunday - every person that came to visit me brought me good news of love and hope and courage.

On Monday I had the angiogram. I got the bad news (or is it good news?) that I needed to have open heart surgery with five bypasses. The surgeon, the cardiologist and others explained to me the procedures - the pros and cons of the surgery. More people came to visit on Monday. Now I received calls from my friends in Arizona and California. My Dominican brothers came again to visit me and once again anointed me and received Jesus, the strength for my surgery. I knew that I was going to be in good hands. I had plenty of words of support and encouragement. We

prayed together for the surgeons and the nurses that were going to operate on me. That night I went to sleep peacefully.

On Tuesday, the day of the surgery, a number of doctors and nurses came to prepare me for it. It came the time to be moved from my room to the operating theater. Every person that I met at the hospital was a person of faith - encouraging me, praying with me, caring for me. God's love and care was very evident. As I was left alone before the surgery, I knew that I am not alone. I knew that the Lord was with me. I prayed for the success of the surgery and the final words that I remember saying before the surgery were: Lord into your hands I commend my spirit. I felt peace of mind and reassurance that everything was going to turn OK.

When I woke up that Tuesday evening, I felt very uncomfortable because of the tube in my throat. As soon as they took the tube out, I felt better. And my cell phone rang. I have the Alleluia chorus as my signal on my cell phone. When I heard the Alleluia, I could not answer the phone but I felt that now is resurrection time.

I came to believe that the best Christmas gift that I ever received is the new lease on life. God in his loving kindness gave me a new life so that I will continue to minister to the People

of God for months and years to come.

When the surgeon asked me, in my follow up visits, if I am going to retire now, I told him that I have still work to do and I have a community that I need to take care of and they too want to take care of me.

I praise God for the success of the surgery and the new gift of life that I received from God. I believe in the power of prayer. Because of a good surgeon and lots

of prayers, I am back to a normal life. I come to know and believe that God is present even in the suffering and pain that one endures. God was with me throughout the whole experience.

Fr. Albert is Director of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Newman Community at UNLV. If you want to know what is going on at Catholic Newman Center at UNLV please check our website at <http://newman.unlv.edu>

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Lenten University at the Catholic Center



Lenten University 2007

“Journey Into Wholeness” Renew the Body, Mind & Spirit

Spend your time and energy in the exercise of keeping spiritually fit

1 Timothy 4:7A

To help prepare for the “soul work” of the forty days of Lent, the Department of Faith and Ministry Formation at the Diocese of Las Vegas is once again sponsoring “LENTEN UNIVERSITY”, a series of adult formation workshops designed to help us, as Christians, on our forty day journey through Lent.



Tuesday, March 6th

Tammy Amosson

presents

“**BODY** for Christ: Our Physical Bodies Depend on Spiritual Nourishment”

Come share ways we can enrich our life in healthy ways as the Body of Christ.

Tammy has a B.S. in Family Sciences, a minor in Addictive Disorders and a certificate in Youth Ministry Studies. She presents workshops, seminars and retreats across the nation with a message of hope and inspiration during all of life’s circumstances.

Amosson is the founder of ‘Seize the Day’, a support group for families who have children with seizure disorders, and ‘Mission Possible’, a community outreach program. She is the coauthor of WASH EACH OTHER’S FEET: HEALING THE SPIRIT WITH RELATIONAL MINISTRY and the author of THROUGH THE EYES OF LOVE: THE FIFTH GOSPEL (due out in 2007).

Tammy and her husband Brett are the proud parents of four children. Their greatest teacher has been life experiences. Their son Jacob was born with a seizure disorder and teaches the Amossons daily what is truly important in life.

According to Jesse Manibusan, Christian Musician and Entertainer, “*Tammy is incredibly engaging, enthusiastic, passionate, inspiring and overflowing with her love of Christ and the mission of the Gospel ... if your heart and soul aren’t moved, you might need to check your pulse.*”



Tuesday, March 20th

Mark Serna, O.S.B.

presents

“Coming Home: The **SPiRiT**’s Desire”

This presentation will examine the human heart’s desire for the life of the spirit, the inward voyage which marks every journey to the source and horizon of life. In addition, we will explore those practices that cultivate our link with spirit as Christian people.

Abbot Mark is a Benedictine priest and monk from Portsmouth Abbey, Rhode Island. He entered the monastery in 1979 and served as the monastery’s abbot from 1991 to 2005. After retiring from office, he lived with Fr. Thomas Keating and the Cistercian community of St. Benedict’s Monastery, Colorado.

He moved to Las Vegas, NV in January 2006 to assist his family, and served as Parochial Vicar at Christ the King Catholic Community through January 2007.

Currently Abbot Mark is the Associate Director of the Stillpoint Center for Spiritual Development in Las Vegas, NV. In addition, he is the Chairman of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue.



Tuesday, March 13th

Zoe DeBlasio, D.Min.

presents

“Putting on the **MIND** of Christ: Conversion in the Letters of Saint Paul”

Lent is a wonderful time to reflect on our relationship with Christ. How may we

become better disciples? Saint Paul tells us to “put on the mind of Christ” and calls us to conversion by witnessing to his own experience of Christ. This presentation will use the letters of Saint Paul to look at different types of conversion, the necessity for ongoing conversion in our lives, and our part in helping to “grow” the Body of Christ, the Church.

Zoe DeBlasio is a native of Pittsburgh, PA and long-time resident of Miami Beach, Florida and Rome, Italy. She is an associate of the Congregation of Saint Catherine de’ Ricci, O.P.

Her pastoral work has included work with battered women and children, prison ministry, and women’s work-release programs.

Zoe holds a B.A. in History, M.A. in Theology, and Doctor of Ministry degrees. She has taught Theology at Barry University and teaches for Regis University as Affiliate Faculty. Zoe currently serves as Director of Faith and Ministry Formation at St. John Neumann Parish, where she founded the Catholic Studies Series as part of catechist certification and adult faith formation. She also teaches Bible Study and Catholic Studies, in addition to directing the RCIA.

**For fees and registration information, please contact the
Department of Faith & Ministry Formation at (702)735-6044**

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Bricks Help Mark 40th Anniversary

One of the ways St. Viator School is marking its 40th anniversary is through a landscape beautification project.

"Our Corner of the Lord's Vineyard" will include a brick courtyard, pathways, trees, lighting, and seating. Besides celebrating the four decades, this will make the school campus and parish grounds more uniform in appearance, as well as creating a welcoming outdoor space for prayer and contemplation.

Vineyard Angels can donate bricks, along with stone seats, trees, and lampposts. Each donation is available for dedication.

If you would like more information on sponsoring part of St. Viator's "Our Corner of the Lord's Vineyard," please contact Mary Jane Marlow at 732-4477, ext. 100 or email her at stviatoroffice@yahoo.com.

Respect life

The 7th Annual Booksale benefiting the Diocesan Pro-Life Liaison Committee of Las Vegas will be held April 28th & 29th, 2007 at St. Viator's Parish Center. We

will ask for book donations and volunteers in the months ahead, in hopes of having the most successful sale yet.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month. If your parish does not have an active pro-life group, please join us at St. Viator Church in parish center- Fr. Anderson's Room at 7 p.m..

Marriage Encounter for Good Marriages

"The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy." Recharge your marriage with a worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend.

The scheduled weekends for 2007 are:

May 4-6

July 27-29

October 26-28

For more information contact Wayne & Marcia at 566-8753 or Nick & Lori at 433-1132

The Calix Society

Did you know that possibly the best kept secret in the Catholic Church is a wonderful organization called The Calix Society?

The "Credo" of the society succinctly tells the story: "Calix is an association of Catholic alcoholics who are maintaining their sobriety through affiliation with and participation in the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our first concern is to interest Catholics with an alcoholic problem in the virtue of total abstinence. Our second stated purpose is to promote the spiritual development of our membership. Our gathering today is an effort in this direction. Our conversation and our association together should be a source of inspiration and encouragement to each other, geared to our growth toward spiritual maturity. Our participation in all other spiritual activities of Calix, such as the frequent celebration of the Liturgy, reception of the Sacraments, personal prayer and meditation, Holy Hours, Days of Recollection and retreats, aid us in our third objective, namely, to strive for the sanctification of the whole personality of each member. We welcome other alcoholics, not members of our faith, or any others, non-alcoholics, who are concerned with

the illness of alcoholism and wish to join with us in prayer for our stated purposes."

The Las Vegas Unit meets the first Friday on the month at 11:00 am for Adoration, followed by a "bring your own lunch and drink" meeting from noon til 1:00pm, and the second Thursday of the month at 7:00pm for Mass, Followed by a meeting.

All meetings are held at St. Joseph Husband of Mary Catholic Church at 7260 West Sahara.

For more information, call Joe or Madge at 453-2417, Paul or Sharon at 645-8503 or Carol at 260-1006.

Introductory Centering Prayer Workshop

Contemplative Outreach of Southern Nevada, Saturday February 17, 2007 9am to 12:30pm at Christ the King Catholic Community 4925 S. Torrey Pines Dr. Activity Center Room 1 Lead By: Joanne Halt and Gard Jameson Certified Contemplative Outreach Presenters. To pre-register call: Joanne at 360-1027

Learn to Be Still this Lent.

Put the daily practice of atten-

tive surrender to God at the center of your Lenten journey. Jesus modeled withdrawing from daily concerns to give time just being in the Father's presence. Based on the teaching of Fr. Thomas Keating OSCO, founder of Contemplative Outreach International, leader of the renewal of contemplative spirituality for the past twenty-five years, this Christian meditation practice deepens our relationship with the living Christ. The source of Centering Prayer is the indwelling Trinity. The method is designed to facilitate the opening of mind, and heart to God as Ultimate Mystery, who is beyond all thought, all words, all images and all feelings. This introductory workshop will include a discussion of prayer as a dynamic relationship with God and the method of Centering Prayer will be taught. Other topics covered are the role of thoughts, emotions and distractions in Centering Prayer and a discussion of the long term fruits of a daily practice of Centering Prayer. Suggested donation is \$10 and six follow-up sessions will be available for those who want to do a group practice.

Diocesan Cathedral Choir extends invitation to participate



Marek Rachelski,

By special request of Bishop Pepe, the Diocesan Cathedral Choir is heartily inviting singers to participate in expansion of the choir.

Under the direction of Marek Rachelski, the Diocesan Cathedral Choir has openings for singers in all voice parts and is recruiting especially for vocalists to participate in the Cardinal's Mass in April, 2007

Current rehearsal schedule in Anderson Hall, Catholic Center, behind Guardian Angel Cathedral is Mondays 7:00 - 9:00 PM

The choir sings at Cathedral Masses regularly once each month. Liturgies are conveniently set for 2:30 PM on Saturday or 5:00 PM on Sunday at the Cathedral, purposely scheduled so as not to interfere with typical choir Masses at other parishes. They also participate whenever Bishop Pepe is presiding at liturgies including the Rite of Election, Chrism Mass, Married Couples Jubilee Mass, Ordinations, Holy Days, Special Occasions and the televised Midnight Mass.

"As we know, music is integral

to the Liturgy and the choir enhances and completes the musical offering," says Rachelski. "Participation in the Diocesan Cathedral Choir is a wonderful manner in which to serve your Bishop and participate in music making at a high level.

Membership is comprised of people from all parishes in the Diocese of Las Vegas who wish to take advantage of this opportunity to further develop their singing skills.

Singers from Las Vegas area churches have already partici-

pated in the 2005-06 inaugural season of the Diocesan Cathedral Choir, creating many beautiful liturgies and three wonderful concerts including a Lessons and Carols in December 2005, Mozart's Birthday in February, 2006, and May Songs in May, 2006 each with soloists and orchestra.

Seasonal singers (those who will participate only for a particular event or during a specific season) are encouraged, allowing for flexibility in membership.

Call at 565-5060

Nearly half the world's population lives on less than \$2 a day.

For Catholics, these are not just statistics. They are sisters and brothers who need our help.

The Catholic Relief Services Collection gives us an opportunity to help.

Through The Catholic Relief Services Collection, Catholics in the United States can support Church agencies that provide emergency relief in times of crisis, support long-term development programs, offer assistance to immigrants and refugees, and advocate for a more just and peaceful world.

"THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH, THE STARVING CHILD, THE BELIEVER IN JAIL, AND THE WOMAN WITHOUT CLEAN WATER OR HEALTH CARE, ARE NOT ISSUES, BUT

Jesus in disguise.

— Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Catholics

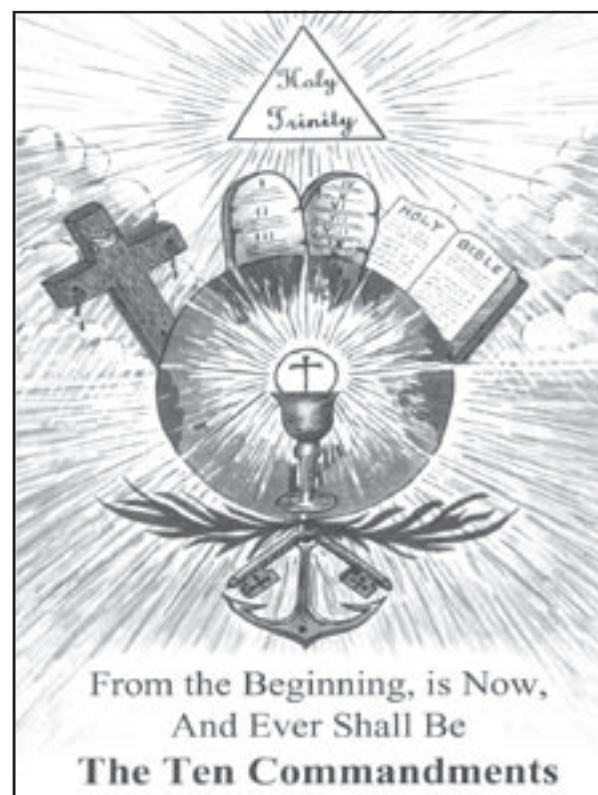
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NATIONAL COLLECTION DATE: Weekend of March 17-18, 2007

The Catholic Relief Services Collection supports Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, the UNHCR Office of Migration and Refugee Services and Department of Social Development and Work Force, and the Holy Father's Relief Fund.

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The Ten Commandments



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Order yours today while supplies last!

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"This book gives us concrete examples of how to live pleasing to Almighty God."

Rev. Gerard C. Hayes

Many presume to know the Commandments from Almighty God, but how can one presume to know the Ten Commandments when they have not taken the time to examine each one on its own?

You will be surprised as we were when you read what God demands of us in His Almighty Ten Commandments!

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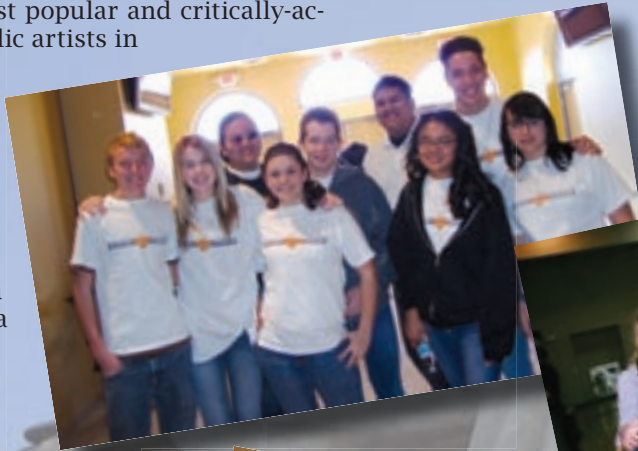
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CATHOLIC YOUTH RALLY '07

Over 500 participants from eleven parishes throughout the Diocese of Las Vegas were in attendance at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church on Saturday, January 20th for the annual Diocesan Youth Rally. The event began with mass celebrated by Bishop Pepe followed by a music and ministry program presented by one of the most popular and critically-acclaimed Catholic artists in the country, Matt Maher and his band. After the faith and fun filled music program, the day ended with a delicious pasta dinner.



SFA Columbian Squires have successful Drive

Columbian Squires Circle #4992 (St. Padre Pio Circle) Henderson, NV

The Squires decided to have a "Gently Used or New Jacket and Blanket drive" to help Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada. The Chief Squire Dylan Arredondo asked Father Greg Gordon pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish for permission to hold the drive. Father not only approved the drive, he announced it on Thanksgiving Day, and allowed Dylan, and Deputy Chief Squire Marc Philippi to talk at all the Masses the last weekend in November.

After two plus weekends of



gathering Jackets and Blankets, the final results were 202 jackets, 105 blankets, and 100 plus other items (sleeping bags, sweaters, etc) -- For the First Annual Jacket and Blanket Drive. Catholic Charities was happy with the contribution.



Christmas Midnight Mass Telecast, Live From Guardian Angel Cathedral

Again this year KLASTV Channel 8, in Las Vegas, televised live, the Christmas Midnight Mass from Guardian Angel Cathedral, with the Most Reverend Joseph A. Pepe, Bishop of Las Vegas as Celebrant.

The production team for the telecast was headed up by award winning producer, Michael La Rocca, who also serves as Principal Master of Ceremonies to the Bishop. Tsunami Studios Las Vegas was the production company that filmed the telecast.

Bishop Pepe was joined by three of our Las Vegas Seminarians: Sam Martinez, Shawn Dresden and Jesus Garcia, who served as acolytes. Music was

provided by the Cathedral Instrumental Ensemble and the Diocesan/Cathedral Choir, under the direction of Cathedral Musical Director, Debbie Cenna and assisted by Choir Director, Marek Rachelski. Station Casinos was the major sponsor for the telecast.

The 2005 Midnight Mass telecast came in second in the Neilson Ratings. Early rating projections place the 2006 telecast at number one.

You may purchase a DVD copy of the Christmas Midnight Mass for \$25 by contacting Tsunami Studios, 101 South Rainbow Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89145, (702) 525-2451.



Bishop Pepe prepares to Proclaim the Gospel during Midnight Mass.



Bishop Pepe blesses parishioners during the Concluding Rites of Christmas Midnight Mass at Guardian Angel Cathedral.

AROUND THE NATION

U.S. Bishops welcome President's support for comprehensive Immigration Reform

WASHINGTON (January 26, 2007) - Bishop Gerald R. Barnes, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, has applauded President Bush for advocating comprehensive immigration reform during the State of the Union address.

During his speech at the U.S. Capitol, President Bush called for "a serious, civil, and conclusive

debate so that you can pass -- and I can sign -- comprehensive immigration reform into law."

"The issue of immigration reform is ripe for federal action," Bishop Barnes said. "The nation has debated this controversial and complex social issue for several years now. In part because of inaction at the federal level, states and localities are moving to adopt their own laws in this area. Americans throughout the country strongly desire that Congress solve the problem of illegal immigration."

The U.S. Catholic bishops support a comprehensive immigra-

tion bill that includes the following elements:

- * An earned legalization program that allows undocumented persons to earn permanent residency;

- * A worker program that protects foreign-born workers and safeguards against the displacement of U.S. workers;

- * Family-based immigration reform that reduces waiting times for family reunification;

- * Restoration of due process protections for immigrants; and

- * Policies that address the root causes of migration.

U.S. Bishops remind Congress budgets reflect moral choices; urge funding to help poor and vulnerable

WASHINGTON —Calling the nation's spending decisions "not only policy choices but moral ones," the U.S. Conference of Bishops (USCCB) is urging Congress not to neglect the needs of the poor here and abroad as funding is appropriated for the new fiscal year.

"When setting priorities, Congress should seek to advance the

common good of all, which cannot be achieved unless the essential needs of the poor and vulnerable are met," Bishop Thomas G. Wenski, chairman of the USCCB international policy committee and Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, chairman of the USCCB domestic policy committee, wrote in a joint letter to senators.

Specifically, the bishops expressed concern that the Continuing Resolution for FY 2007 may reduce essential funding to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in developing countries. Noting that the United States has become "a leader of a major international effort to address these devastating diseases," the bishops urged Congress to approve \$4.36 billion—the amount proposed by the Senate Appropriations Committee—for morally appropriate HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis programs in FY 2007.

In the past few years, the bishops also write, Congress "has failed to fully fund the operation of the public housing system, leaving many local communities to increase rents for low income tenants, defer maintenance on an aging housing stock, and reduce important services to their residents."

They called on senators to approve the Senate Appropriations bill funding level of \$3.6 billion for the operation of public housing, \$15.9 billion for the Section 8 voucher program that serves 2 million low-income families, as well as a new voucher distribution formula that would better serve struggling families. The bishops also urged Congress to provide support for refugees and other vulnerable persons. They requested \$833 million for the Migration and Refugee Assistance account, \$55 million for the Emergency Refugee Migration Assistance account, and \$615 million for the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

"As pastors and teachers, we are convinced that the fundamental moral measure of our nation's spending policy is whether it enhances or undermines those most in need," the bishops said. "These are difficult times with few easy choices, but there are some right choices. In a time of war, mounting deficits, and growing needs, our nation's leaders must ensure that there are adequate resources to protect and enhance the lives and dignity of people who are poor and vulnerable both here at home and around the world."

Scholarships offered by Regis University

Regis University, a Catholic University, is offering 15 scholarships each semester for Catholic students in mission focused programs such as Religious Studies, Teacher Education and Marriage and Family Therapy. The Scholarship are offered on a first come basis.

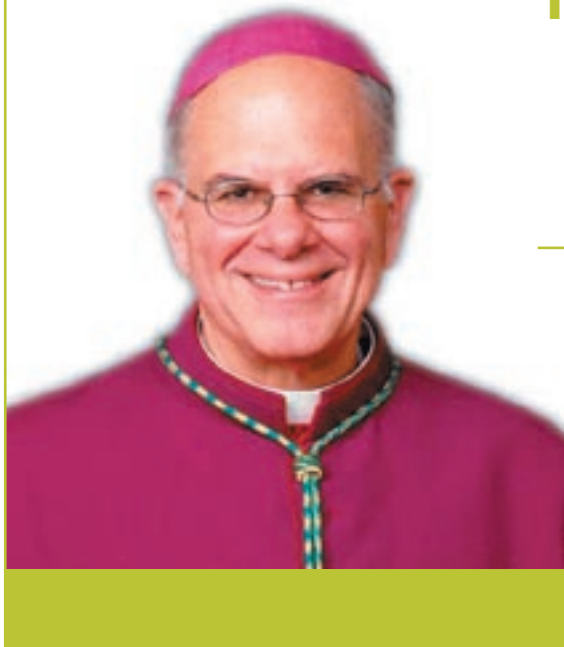
Call Regis Admissions at 702-990-0375 ext. 226 for more information.

Bishop Pepe in the spotlight

chaplain's chat

bishop joseph pepe
las vegas chapter

shepherding legatus in a growing city



There's no need for the Legatus chapter in Las Vegas to do any advertising for new members. The chapter's biggest fan and promoter is none other than its chief shepherd. Bishop Joseph Pepe says Legatus members have aided him tremendously in his efforts to minister to Catholics in one of America's fastest-growing cities.

How did you become a Legatus chaplain?

When I was ordained a bishop in 2001, the first letter I received was from my own bishop—Cardinal Bevilacqua—introducing me to Legatus and asking me to be the chaplain. From there, it took off because a lot of the people involved in diocesan activities were involved in Legatus.

What makes the men and women in your dynamic chapter so unique?

I think it's the tone of the city. People come here to take on great opportunities. One of the things they translate in those opportunities is to deepen and develop their faith. I find that in particular with Legatus people. They have a deep sense of their Catholic faith and their identification with the Church.

How has your chaplaincy affected you?

I'm impressed by the deep sense of commitment that Legatus members have, first of all to their families and their parishes. They're exemplary people. They're committed in so many ways to social outreach, helping with religious education and in other areas.

It amazes me that they have such a commitment to their families and their Church. They work at understanding their responsibilities and accepting the graces of their married lives. We have a lot of young couples in their 30s and 40s. They try to develop a real sense of what their vocation calls them to. I've also learned a great deal, spiritually, from members' selfless commitment.

Your diocese is growing quickly. Is it hard for the Church to keep pace?

It's been difficult because we are understaffed. We only have 29

priests incardinated to this diocese. There are 32 from other dioceses and a few retired priests. It comes to 76 priests serving 600,000 Catholics.

We're also under-Churched. We don't have enough parishes. One Eastern diocese with the same number of Catholics has 145 parishes. I have 28. We have a capital campaign to have people raise money so we can buy property, which is expensive. The money we're raising—about \$30 million—will only pay for seven parishes at most.

What challenges come with that?

One of the challenges is being able to reach out to people who are unchurched because they don't have the interest or time to go to church. If a parish is not available, they just don't go. Another area of concern is our homeless and immigrant population. This city lends itself to opportunity, so we see a lot of Central and South Americans. They have all sorts of pastoral needs.

Legatus members are involved on many levels. They really understand Christ's call in their personal lives and in bringing the Gospel to others. I'm grateful for that. They have been a great support for me in leadership. If I have needs, I don't even have to ask; they are there.

As a young priest, you worked on Katherine Drexel's cause for canonization. How did that influence you?

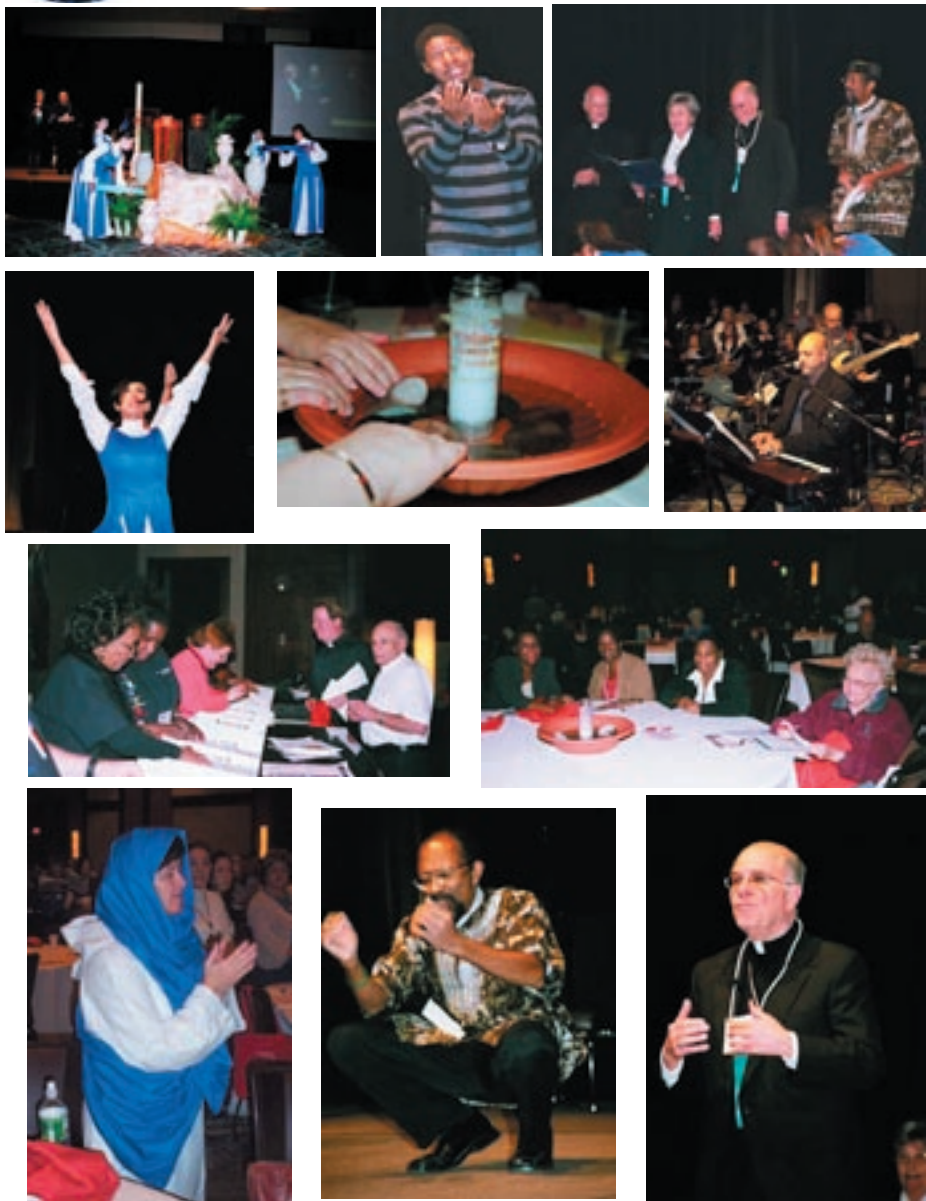
I was affected by the deep sense of commitment and love she brought to Native Americans and people in the southern states. She was from a wealthy banking family and gave it up to serve the missions in the South, to give people a Catholic education and formation. That has affected me in the sense that I'm trying to bring about a Catholic presence in the Las Vegas Valley that's grown so quickly. ■



Diocesan Conference 2006

Touch the Rock ~ Faithfulness Outpoured

SAVE THE DATE
Conference '07
Nov. 17 & 18, 2007



Conference 2006 is now a memory. Close to one thousand people from around the diocese gathered at Red Rock Hotel November 17th & 18th to celebrate faith and gain new insights into their spiritual lives. All of the conference speakers were given extremely high ratings by those who participated.

Msgr. Ray East touched the depths of our hearts. As one person expressed, "it was great to hear such a knowledgeable and down to earth message. He truly sent us on a mission..."

And to the closing panel discussion, many commented how truly inspiring it was and that it made Christ personal in their lives.

To feast on the music of John Angotti, a friend of our diocese, is always melody for our hearts. His original song, "Water From the Rock of Faithfulness" written for our conference, was well received. He has just recently recorded the piece and it will appear on his next album.

Thanks to the Diocesan Conference Committee, and all who participated. Thanks also, to the Red Rock Hotel Staff who many described as friendly, cordial and very helpful. That is reason to hold Conference 2007 back at Red Rock!

NET MINISTRIES



NET
 Team #8



Eight parishes throughout the Diocese of Las Vegas will be hosting NET Ministries during the month of February. NET (National Evangelization Team) is a Catholic Evangelistic outreach program based in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and have given nine months of their lives to travel throughout the United States to share their faith with a straightforward and personal presentation of the Gospel message and of how Jesus Christ has affected their lives. They use large group presentations, small group discussions, music, games, skits, prayer, personal testimonies, and the Sacraments.



"And now, as the living presence of the Risen Christ in our midst nourishes our faith and hope, I am pleased to announce that the next World Youth Day will take place in Sydney, Australia, in 2008. We entrust to the maternal guidance of Mary most holy, the future course of the young people of the whole world."

His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, 21 August 2005

The Diocese of Las Vegas will join other international youth around the world in celebrating World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney, Australia. This will be the seventh pilgrimage for the youth of the world. The spirit of this great location calls the young people of the world to gather and celebrate our life and faith.

Pilgrimage

A journey, especially a long one, made to some sacred place as an act of religious devotion.

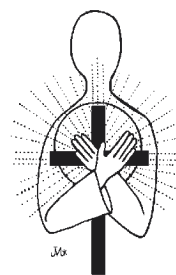
World Youth Day 2008 Schedule

- July 15 Opening Mass of welcome by George Cardinal Pell followed by concert
- July 16 - 18 Catechesis (teaching) sessions every morning and festival events in afternoon/evening
- July 17 Arrival and welcome of The Holy Father
- July 19 Pilgrimage walk to site of closing Mass, evening Vigil with The Holy Father; sleep out "under the stars"
- July 20 Closing Mass and concluding events

An informational meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 14th, 2007 at Bishop Gorman High School. This meeting is open to all who might be interested in going on the pilgrimage to Sydney, Australia. For more information, please contact Bridget Moore (702)732-1945 ext. 365 or Sister Pat McGinley at the Diocese of Las Vegas (702)735-6044.

RITE OF ELECTION

Sunday, February 25, 2007
 Guardian Angel Cathedral
 2:30 pm




On the first Sunday of Lent around the world, and especially from each parish in our diocese, many will gather to celebrate the Rite of Election. For Catechumens, this is the second step in Christian initiation. It closes the lengthy period of formation of the catechumens' minds and hearts.

The Rite of Election begins the period of final, more intense preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation during which the elect will be encouraged to follow Christ with greater generosity. This step is also called election because the acceptance made by the church is founded on the election by God, in whose name the Church acts.

This step is also called the enrollment of names, because as a pledge of fidelity, the candidates inscribe their name in the book that lists those who have been chosen for initiation.

As a faith community we surround them with prayer:

*Father of love and power
 it is your will to establish everything in Christ
 and to draw us into his all-embracing love.
 Guide the elect of Your church:
 strengthen them in their vocation,
 build them into the Kingdom of Your Son,
 and seal them with the Spirit of Your promise.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



APPLAUSE FOR THE DIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS

NCCYM 2006

(National Conference for Catholic Youth Ministry)

They came, they experienced, they loved it!

All 2600 participants from around the country arrived at the Riviera Hotel on November 29, 2006 for what turned out to be their most successful conference. Words of praise and gratitude echoed the halls of the Riviera. The compliments were directed to the 200 volunteers from all the parishes in our diocese who gave so freely of their time and generous support. You were miracle workers! Greeting at the airport and hotel, stuffing conference bags, selling our finery at the Diocesan Boutique ... all were woven together as a means of welcoming our guests like Christ.

In a letter from the National Office in Washington DC, Michael Theisen, Coordinator of the conference stated, "e-mails and phone calls continue to come in daily, many citing this event as 'one of the best ever held', which was made possible by the many hands share with us from the Diocese of Las Vegas. Sr. Pat McGinley, along with her numerous volunteers, provided us with whatever was needed and then some in making folks feel welcomed and supported in Las Vegas. NCCYM is indebted to you, Bishop Pepe and your Diocese for providing us with the great wealth of human and material resource that made our conference the success it was and we'd like to be able to give back to your diocese whatever support and assistance we can so that Las Vegas can continue its remarkable growth."

The spirit of the many volunteers was both that of giving and receiving throughout the conference. To witness the total enthusiasm and dedication of these 2600 youth ministers was a sign of joy and hope. They all go home and generously serve the young Catholic Church in our country with faithfulness and commitment.

