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# THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC

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Celebrating 30 Years serving the Diocese of El Paso

August 2021

## Bishop Seitz Ordains 17 Men to the Permanent Diaconate

By Fernie Ceniceros  
*Editor, Rio Grande Catholic*

Bishop Mark Seitz ordained 17 men to the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of El Paso at St. Mark Catholic Church on August 6th.

The Diocese had been forming the 17 men for the permanent diaconate over the last 5 years. Along with ordination to the permanent diaconate, these men will be receiving a Masters in Ministry studies from either St. Mary's Seminary in conjunction with St. Thomas Seminary, both located in Houston, Texas. These men all received their formation via long distance learning.

The original cadre of men that began formation to the permanent diaconate 5 years ago included an 18th member. Retired Lt. Ruben Flores, former EPFD chaplain and deacon candidate who passed with COVID-19 in January of this year. His wife will have a place along with the other 17 men in honor of what would have been his diaconate ordination.

"The Deacon candidates were all in the middle of their last formal retreat when they heard the news about Ruben Flores' passing from COVID-19," Deacon Jesus Cardenas, Director of the Permanent Diaconate said. "The candidates all decided that as a group they wanted to honor Lt. Flores with a place right along side them during this ordination," he added.

Deacon Cardenas expressed his joy at being able to add 17 more men to the permanent diaconate.

"These men have been working hard during the last 5 years to get to reach the summit of their formation through ordination," he said. "It's an exciting time for them and their families and we look forward to having them as ministers in our diocese," he ended.

The Newly Ordained Permanent Deacons are:

Daniel Bejarano, Luis Alberto Buena, Julio Cesar Diaz, Ruben Jasso Gomez, Dagoberto Gonzalez, Jose Marcos Gonzalez, Wade Stevens Horsch, Oscar Marruffo Machuca, Arturo Rolando Medina, Victor Adolfo Rubio, Andres Ruvalcaba, Lucio Alfonso Sandoval, Luis Angel Santos, Alfredo Lorenzo Solano, Karl Andrew Twichell, Carlos Omar Viesca, Rudy Ochoa Villegas



The Newly Ordained Permanent Deacons are: Daniel Bejarano, Luis Alberto Buena, Julio Cesar Diaz, Ruben Jasso Gomez, Dagoberto Gonzalez, Jose Marcos Gonzalez, Wade Stevens Horsch, Oscar Marruffo Machuca, Arturo Rolando Medina, Victor Adolfo Rubio, Andres Ruvalcaba, Lucio Alfonso Sandoval, Luis Angel Santos, Alfredo Lorenzo Solano, Karl Andrew Twichell, Carlos Omar Viesca, Rudy Ochoa Villegas. *Photo by Al Baeza*

## El Obispo Seitz Ordena A 17 Hombres Al Diaconado Permanente

Por Fernie Ceniceros  
*Editor, Rio Grande Catholic*

El Obispo Mark Seitz ordenó a 17 hombres al Diaconado Permanente para la Diócesis de El Paso en la Iglesia Católica de San Marcos el 6 de agosto.

La diócesis ha estado formando a los 17 hombres para el diaconado permanente durante los últimos 5 años. Junto con la ordenación al diaconado permanente, estos hombres recibirán una maestría en estudios ministeriales en el Seminario de Santa María o en el Seminario de Santo Tomás, ambos ubicados en Houston, Tex-

as. Todos estos hombres recibieron su formación a distancia.

El cuadro original de hombres que comenzó la formación para el diaconado permanente hace 5 años incluyó un miembro número 18. El teniente retirado Rubén Flores, ex capellán del EPFD y candidato a diácono que pasó con el COVID-19 en enero de este año, junto con su esposa, tendrá un lugar junto a los otros 17 hombres en honor a lo que hubiera sido su ordenación diaconal.

"Los candidatos al diaconado estaban todos en medio de su último retiro formal cuando se enteraron de la noticia del

fallecimiento de Rubén Flores de COVID-19", dijo el diácono Jesús Cárdenas, Director del Diaconado Permanente. "Todos los candidatos decidieron que como grupo querían honrar al teniente Flores con un lugar junto a ellos durante esta ordenación", añadió.

El diácono Cárdenas expresó su alegría por poder añadir 17 hombres más al diaconado permanente.

"Estos hombres han estado trabajando duro durante los últimos 5 años para llegar a la cumbre de su formación a través de la ordenación", dijo. "Es un momento emocionante para ellos

y sus familias y esperamos tenerlos como ministros en nuestra diócesis", concluyó.

Los diáconos permanentes recién ordenados son:

Daniel Bejarano, Luis Alberto Buena, Julio César Díaz, Rubén Jasso Gómez, Dagoberto González, José Marcos González, Wade Stevens Horsch, Oscar Marruffo Machuca, Arturo Rolando Medina, Víctor Adolfo Rubio, Andrés Ruvalcaba, Lucio Alfonso Sandoval, Luis Ángel Santos, Alfredo Lorenzo Solano, Karl Andrew Twichell, Carlos Omar Viesca, Rudy Ochoa Villegas.

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN

# You are an Expert in Prayer

I was recently watching a documentary with my wife about Paul McCartney on Hulu. Of the many interviews I've seen of Paul McCartney, he surprised me with a small tidbit of information while talking with his host interviewer, legendary rock producer Rick Rubin. In regards to songwriting, McCartney mentions the concept that becoming an expert in something requires 10,000 hours of practice. That piqued my interest; it made me wonder, have I spent 10,000 hours honing my skills on one thing in my life?

The answer quite honestly is I wasn't sure. When I was a teenager growing up, I know I spent hours on hours practicing drums. Any chance I got, I tapped away. If I wasn't tapping, I was



**Fernie Ceniceros**

beatboxing drum cadences with my mouth. I am sure my teachers didn't appreciate me doing that. So the ultimate question; Did I spend 10,000 hours at drum practice? I had to look it up to be sure.

As it turns out, 10,000 hours is just a little over a year, 1.141553 years to be exact. Having learned

that, I know for sure that I am most certainly not an expert in drumming. I am not selling myself short here. However, I will respond with this answer; Do you know how many amazing drummers there are? Maybe I am an expert in listening to drummers. Now that I am confident in.

So, contemplating becoming an expert after 10,000 hours of practice got my noggin thinking. I'm sure you see where this is going. The question - was I am expert in prayer? Having learned that 1.141553 years makes someone an expert, I suppose the logical conclusion is yes, I am an expert in prayer. I have most certainly spent the majority of my 43 years in prayer.

I wish I could say that having

learned this fact over the last few weeks, I would feel a sense of accomplishment in my life knowing that I have become an expert in praying to our Lord. But the reality is much the same as my reaction to learning. I have spent 10,000 hours drum practicing. There are so many people out there better at prayer than I am; we don't need to look further than the saints. My feeling is always this; I have so much to learn.

But that's just it in saying I have so much more to learn from those before me, is what forces me to reevaluate what my prayer life is at any given moment. I am almost sure that all experts in something are never truly satisfied with their expertise,

simply because they have enough courage to say, "I can learn more." So the conclusion here is simple, like many of you, I can confidently say, I am an expert in prayer..... and annoying my teachers with my drum tapping and beatboxing.

I leave you with this quote from St. Augustine, A Doctor of the Church. "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." St. Augustine was an expert in prayer. So when you find yourself concerned with your prayer life, rest easy knowing that you are an expert as well, and to be one, we have to continue to challenge ourselves to be better and that the Lord is always listening and always calling us to Him.

## Eres un Experto en Oración



Hace poco estuve viendo con mi mujer un documental sobre Paul McCartney en Hulu. De las muchas entrevistas que he visto de Paul McCartney, me sorprendió con una pequeña información mientras hablaba con su entrevistador anfitrión, el legendario productor de rock Rick Rubin. En lo que respecta a la composición de canciones, McCartney menciona el concepto de que convertirse en un experto en algo requiere 10.000 horas de práctica. Eso despertó mi interés; me hizo preguntarme, ¿he pasado 10.000 horas perfeccionando mis habilidades en una cosa en mi vida?

La respuesta, sinceramente, es que no estaba seguro. Cuando era adolescente, sé que pasaba horas y horas practicando con la batería. Siempre que podía, tocaba. Si no estaba tocando, estaba haciendo beatboxing con la boca. Estoy seguro de que mis profesores no apreciaban que hiciera eso. Así que la pregunta definitiva: ¿pasé 10.000 horas practicando con la batería? Tuve que buscarlo para estar seguro.

Resulta que 10.000 horas son

poco más de un año, 1.141553 años para ser exactos. Una vez que he averiguado eso, sé con certeza que no soy un experto en tocar la batería. No me estoy vendiendo mal. Sin embargo, responderé con esta respuesta: ¿Sabe usted cuántos bateristas increíbles hay? Tal vez sea un experto en escuchar a los bateristas, ahora que estoy seguro de ello.

Así que, contemplar la posibilidad de convertirse en un experto

después de 10.000 horas de práctica me hizo pensar. Estoy seguro de que ves a dónde va esto. La pregunta - ¿era yo un experto en la oración? Habiendo aprendido que 1.141553 años convierten a alguien en un experto, supongo que la conclusión lógica es que sí, soy un experto en oración.

Ciertamente, he pasado la mayor parte de mis 43 años rezando.

Me gustaría poder decir que habiendo aprendido este hecho en las últimas semanas, sen-

tiría una sensación de logro en mi vida sabiendo que me he convertido en un experto en orar a nuestro Señor. Pero la realidad es muy parecida a mi reacción al aprender. He pasado 10.000 horas practicando con el tambor. Hay mucha gente por ahí mejor que yo en la oración; no hace falta mirar más allá de los santos. Mi sensación es siempre la siguiente: tengo mucho que aprender.

Pero es que decir que tengo mucho más que aprender de los

que me preceden, es lo que me obliga a reevaluar lo que es mi vida de oración en cada momento. Estoy casi seguro de que todos los expertos en algo nunca están verdaderamente satisfechos con su experiencia, simplemente porque tienen el valor suficiente para decir: "Puedo aprender más". Así que la conclusión aquí es simple, al igual que muchos de ustedes, puedo decir con confianza, que soy un experto en la oración..... y que molesto a mis profesores con mis golpes de tambor y beatboxing.

Os dejo con esta cita de San Agustín, un doctor de la iglesia. "Nos has hecho para ti, Señor, y nuestro corazón está inquieto hasta que descance en ti". San Agustín era un experto en oración. Así que cuando te encuentres preocupado por tu vida de oración, descansa tranquilo sabiendo que tú también eres un experto, y para serlo, tenemos que seguir desafiándonos a ser mejores y que el Señor siempre nos está escuchando y llamando hacia Él.

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# Vaccination Is Essential to Catholic Ministry

This is an important time to speak to you directly about our Church's response during the current stage of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Especially concerning at this time is the resurgence of this terrible virus in the form of the Delta variant. If the Delta variant affects El Paso County and the other counties making up the Diocese, we can expect to hear that hospitals will again be filled with those who are suffering from the virus and that more people have died.

It doesn't take an epidemiologist to know that the areas with the highest levels of infections and deaths are also those places with the lowest numbers of those vaccinated. Reliable reports indicate that more than 90% of those hospitalized with Covid-19 and the Delta variant are unvaccinated. Those who have chosen not to be vaccinated due to the fear of side effects must now recognize that the risk of side effects pales in comparison to the risk of

death from the Delta variant.

Exercising my responsibility as your bishop, I have during this past year listened to the experts and, in consultations with our priests and other leaders, I have prayerfully considered the appropriate protocols for the Church. My guiding principle has always been that which guided Jesus in his ministry: He was always focused on the well-being of the human beings he came to serve. He healed and fed them. He taught that love of neighbor is second only to love of God and is, in fact, inseparable from the love of God.

For the sake of our brothers and sisters, I am requiring all those who are employed by the Church and all those who perform Church ministries including, but not limited to, catechists and Eucharistic ministers to be vaccinated. Those who cannot be vaccinated due to particular health issues may seek an exemption. There are two primary reasons for this requirement:

1. Those who serve the Catholic community have, by the nature of their service, close interaction with many others. The Church has a responsibility to do all in its power to keep others safe. I could not live with myself if I did not do all in my power to assure that the Church's ministry does not place others at risk.

2. Those who work and perform ministries in a special way represent the Church. We need to lead by example. Vaccines and, particularly, Covid vaccines have saved and are saving thousands of lives. We have a responsibility as Catholic Christians to act on behalf of the common good and not just for ourselves as individuals.

I am not requiring those who come to Mass or most other events at Church to be vaccinated, in part because that would exclude most children at this point, since the vaccine is not



Bishop Mark J. Seitz

yet available to them. However, I am requiring those who are unvaccinated (aged 3 or higher) to wear a face mask for their own protection and the protection of those in close contact with them. I am also monitoring the current situation so that if dangerous new variants continue to spread in our community, I may have to return to some former restrictions.

No one has a right to work for the Church or to carry out a particular ministry. Yet, I would certainly hope that Church workers and ministers are willing to follow these prudent direc-

tives in order to serve in the Church — out of love for God and charity for the people they serve. Refusing to serve because of disagreeing with a protocol is a sad commentary on one's level of commitment to the Body of Christ.

Let us rejoice that Jesus gave us the Church and come together in unity of belief and action in these challenging times, trusting that Lord and His Holy Spirit will guide us.

## La Vacunación Es Esencial Para El Ministerio Católico



Este es un momento importante para hablarles directamente sobre la respuesta de nuestra Iglesia durante la etapa actual de la pandemia de Covid-19.

Especialmente preocupante en este momento es el resurgimiento de este terrible virus en la forma de la variante Delta. Si la variante Delta afecta al condado de El Paso y a los demás condados que conforman la Diócesis, podemos esperar escuchar que los hospitales se llenarán de nuevo de personas que padecen el virus y que más personas han muerto.

No hace falta ser epidemiólogo para saber que las zonas con mayores niveles de infecciones y muertes son también los lugares con menor número de vacunados. Informes fiables indican que más del 90% de los hospitalizados con Covid-19 y la variante Delta no están vacunados. Los que han deci-

dido no vacunarse por miedo a los efectos secundarios deben reconocer ahora que el riesgo de efectos secundarios palidece en comparación con el riesgo de muerte por la variante Delta.

Ejerciendo mi responsabilidad como su Obispo, durante este último año he escuchado a los expertos y, en consulta con nuestros sacerdotes y otros líderes, he considerado en oración los protocolos apropiados para la Iglesia. Mi principio rector ha sido siempre el que guió a Jesús en su ministerio: Siempre se centró en el bienestar de los seres humanos a los que vino a servir. Los curó y los alimentó. Enseñó que el amor al prójimo es el segundo en importancia después del amor a Dios y es, de hecho, inseparable del amor a Dios.

Por el bien de nuestros hermanos y hermanas, exijo que se vacunen todos los empleados de la Iglesia y todos los

que desempeñan ministerios eclesiásticos, incluidos, entre otros, los catequistas y los ministros de la Eucaristía. Aquellos que no puedan ser vacunados debido a problemas de salud particulares pueden solicitar una exención. Hay dos razones principales para este requisito:

1. Quienes sirven a la comunidad católica tienen, por la naturaleza de su servicio, una estrecha interacción con muchas otras personas. La Iglesia tiene la responsabilidad de hacer todo lo que esté en su mano para mantener a los demás a salvo. No podría vivir conmigo mismo si no hiciera todo lo que está en mi mano para asegurar que el ministerio de la Iglesia no pone a otros en peligro.

2. Los que trabajan y ejercen ministerios de manera especial representan a la Iglesia. Tenemos que predicar con el ejemplo. Las vacunas

y, en particular, las vacunas COVID han salvado y están salvando miles de vidas. Tenemos la responsabilidad como cristianos católicos de actuar en nombre del bien común y no sólo para nosotros mismos como individuos.

No estoy exigiendo que los que vienen a la misa o a la mayoría de los otros eventos en la Iglesia sean vacunados, en parte porque eso excluiría a la mayoría de los niños en este momento, ya que la vacuna aún no está disponible para ellos.

Sin embargo, estoy exigiendo a los que no están vacunados (de 3 años o más) que lleven una mascarilla para su propia protección y la de los que están en contacto con ellos. También estoy vigilando la situación actual, de modo que si las nuevas variantes peligrosas siguen propagándose en nuestra comunidad, es posible que tenga que

volver a algunas restricciones anteriores.

Nadie tiene derecho a trabajar para la Iglesia o a desempeñar un determinado ministerio. Sin embargo, ciertamente espero que los trabajadores y ministros de la Iglesia estén dispuestos a seguir estas prudentes directrices para servir en la Iglesia, por amor a Dios y por caridad hacia las personas a las que sirven. Negarse a servir por no estar de acuerdo con un protocolo es un triste comentario sobre el nivel de compromiso de uno con el Cuerpo de Cristo.

Alegrémonos de que Jesús nos haya dado la Iglesia y unámonos en unidad de creencia y acción en estos tiempos difíciles, confiando en que el Señor y su Espíritu Santo nos guiarán.

## LIVING THE LITURGY

## Anointing A Sacrament For All The Sick, Not Just The Dying



Fr. Michael Lewis, STL

Though the celebration of many sacraments had to be delayed or cancelled out-right during the pandemic, I found in fact that I celebrated one sacrament far more frequently — the sacrament of anointing of the sick. One of the two sacraments of healing, it calls forth the grace of the Holy Spirit to strengthen a sick person, help them endure their illness, forgive their sins, and save them through faith. It is the powerful means by which the Church continues Christ's mission and example of healing the afflicted.

Though available to anyone whose health is "seriously impaired by sickness or old age," many Catholics confuse this sacrament of healing with the "last rites" reserved for the dying. This misunderstanding, however, often deprives a non-terminally ill person of receiving spiritual help and support in their moment of need. In other cases, priests are not contacted to administer the sacrament until the last moment, which all too frequently results in a person dying before having

received the sacrament's healing grace and spiritual comfort.

To be sure, before the Second Vatican Council, the sacrament was limited to the dying, and was called "extreme unction," or a person's "last anointing." However, the council sought to make it more widely available. As the rite explains, "Those who are seriously ill need the special help of God's grace in this time of anxiety, lest they be broken in spirit and, under the pressure of temptation, perhaps weakened in their faith. This is why, through the sacrament of anointing, Christ strengthens the faithful who are afflicted by illness, providing them with the strongest means of support."

The sacrament today is celebrated in the same way the apostles did (see James 5:14–15) — with the laying on of hands, the offering of a prayer of faith, and the anointing of the body with the oil of the sick. It can be celebrated in a hospital, in a church, or even in a person's home. Recipients are often newly diagnosed with a serious illness, newly admitted to the hospital, or about to undergo surgery.

The sacrament is not intended, however, to ward off illness or as protection for those who are generally healthy. Similarly, it is not a substitute for medical care, nor a cure-all. Rather, it provides "pastoral care" to the sick, which is indeed another name for the



sacrament and its associated prayers.

Though anointing is no longer reserved only for the dying, it does make up part of the collection of rituals and prayers commonly known as "last rites," but more properly called "pastoral care for the dying." In addition to the sacrament of anointing of the sick, a person who is able receives their last Communion, here called viaticum, or "food for the journey." The priest also prays the apostolic pardon, a blessing which grants

a plenary indulgence, or the full remission of any punishment that a dying person may have incurred due to the sins they committed. Often, another prayer is added, the Commendation of the Dying, where the soul of the person is entrusted to the loving and merciful care of God.

The pandemic revealed the difficulty that many family members had in locating a priest to anoint their sick loved one, and the diocese has responded by establishing the new Pastoral Care Hotline:

(915) 834-9006. Though families can always call their parish, they can also call this one number to obtain pastoral care for their sick loved one anywhere in El Paso County. Priests are generous with their availability, but are not always free to respond immediately. That is why we highly encourage families not to wait until the moment of death to call. We must give God the opportunity to bestow his healing grace through the sacrament, the grace that helps, strengthens and saves.

## La Unción Es Un Sacramento Para Todos Enfermos, No Sólo Para Moribundos

Aunque la celebración de muchos sacramentos tuvo que ser retrasada o cancelada durante la pandemia, descubrí que, de hecho, celebraba un sacramento con mucha más frecuencia: el de la unción de los enfermos. Es uno de los dos sacramentos de curación, que invoca la gracia del Espíritu Santo para fortalecer a la persona enferma, ayudarla a soportar su enfermedad, perdonar sus pecados y salvarla por la fe. Es el poderoso medio por el que la Iglesia continúa la misión y el ejemplo de Cristo de curar a los afligidos.

Aunque está disponible para cualquier persona cuya salud esté "seriamente comprometida por la enfermedad o por la vejez", muchos católicos confunden este sacramento de la curación con la "extremaunción" reservada a los moribundos. Este malentendido, sin embargo, priva a menudo a una persona no enferma en fase

terminal de recibir ayuda y apoyo espiritual en su momento de necesidad. En otros casos, no se contacta con los sacerdotes para que administren el sacramento hasta el último momento, lo que con demasiada frecuencia hace que la persona muera antes de haber recibido la gracia curativa y el consuelo espiritual del sacramento.

Ciertamente, antes del Concilio Vaticano II, el sacramento se limitaba a los moribundos, y se llamaba "extremaunción" porque era la última unción de una persona. Sin embargo, el concilio trató de hacerlo más accesible. Como explica el rito, "Los que están gravemente enfermos necesitan una ayuda especial de Dios en este tiempo de ansiedad, para que su espíritu no se quebre y para que, bajo el peso de la tentación, no se debilite en la fe. Por eso precisamente, Cristo, mediante el

sacramento de la unción, les da fuerzas a los fieles afligidos por la enfermedad, por medio de una ayuda solidísima".

El sacramento se celebra hoy de la misma manera que lo hacían los apóstoles (véase Santiago 5:14-15): con la imposición de manos, el ofrecimiento de una oración de fe y la unción del cuerpo con el óleo de los enfermos. Puede celebrarse en un hospital, en una iglesia o incluso en el hogar de una persona. Los destinatarios suelen ser personas a las que se les ha diagnosticado una enfermedad grave, que acaban de ingresar en el hospital o que van a ser operadas.

Sin embargo, el sacramento no está destinado a evitar la enfermedad ni a proteger a quienes están generalmente sanos. Del mismo modo, no es un sustituto de la atención médica, ni una cura para todo. Más bien proporciona

"cuidado pastoral" a los enfermos, que es de hecho otro nombre para el sacramento y sus oraciones asociadas.

Aunque la unción ya no está reservada sólo a los moribundos, forma parte del conjunto de rituales y oraciones comúnmente conocidos como "extremaunción", pero más propiamente llamados "cuidado pastoral de los moribundos". Además del sacramento de la unción de los enfermos, la persona que puede recibir la última comunión, aquí llamada "viático", o "alimento para el camino". El sacerdote reza también la indulgencia plenaria en artículo de muerte, que otorga la remisión total de cualquier pena en la que haya incurrido el moribundo por los pecados que haya cometido. A menudo se añade otra oración, la recomendación del alma, en la que se encomienda el alma de la persona al cuidado amoroso y

misericordioso de Dios.

La pandemia puso de manifiesto la dificultad que tenían muchos familiares para localizar a un sacerdote que ungiera a su ser querido enfermo, y la diócesis ha respondido estableciendo la nueva línea directa de cuidado pastoral: (915) 834-9006. Aunque las familias siempre pueden llamar a su parroquia, también pueden llamar a este número para obtener cuidado pastoral para su ser querido enfermo en cualquier parte del Condado de El Paso. Los sacerdotes son generosos con su disponibilidad, pero no siempre están libres para responder inmediatamente. Por eso animamos a las familias a no esperar hasta el momento de la muerte para llamar. Debemos dar a Dios la oportunidad de otorgar su gracia sanadora a través del sacramento, la gracia que ayuda, fortalece y salva.

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# Conventual Franciscans Celebrate 30 Years in El Paso

By Fernie Ceniceros  
Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

The Order of Conventual Franciscan Friars celebrated 30 years of service to the Diocese of El Paso with several events held on July 30th.

Around 30 plus friars were in attendance for the events held on July 30th. The visiting friars had an opportunity to visit all three missions in the El Paso Lower Valley during their visit.

"We had a bus that took them out to the missions, so that they had a physical representation of the history of the Southwest, especially the missions here in El Paso," Fr. Miguel Briseño, Pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel said. "So we went to San Elizario Mission, The Socorro Mission and we also stopped at the Tigua cultural center." He added. "We ended the tour with, a visual explanation of the Ysleta Mission and how we fit into the El Paso region."

Following the tour, the visiting friars all gathered for lunch where the friary on the property of Mt. Carmel Parish, was rededicated to the honor of St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

"The friars have ministered to the People of God in diverse ministries: (i.e., parish, university, tribunal, vocation), and from the very beginning, ministered to the Tigua People, a ministry to the Native Americans who had built up and worshiped in the Mission of San Antonio since 1682," Fr. Miguel Briseño said.



The Order of Conventual Franciscan Friars celebrated 30 years of service to the Diocese of El Paso with several events held on July 30th. Around 30 plus friars were in attendance for the events held on July 30th. The visiting friars had an opportunity to visit all three missions in the El Paso Lower Valley during their visit. *Photo by Al Baeza*

"So, we choose to dedicate our friary to St. Kateri Tekakwitha by renaming our friary in her honor and by building a sacred space where she and our beloved who died of the COVID pandemic will be honored. We choose to act by honoring our

past and moving forward with hope, knowing all our scars will be healed as well," he added.

A Mass was also held in which 3 men professed their solemn vows to the Order of Conventual Franciscans. The three men are Friar Alberto Bravo, Friar Pedro

Lopez, and Friar Jaime Zaragoza. All three men are home grown to the El Paso/Las Cruces region.

"It was very important to have the families of these three men be present for this great event in which they will dedicate the rest of their lives to the Conventual

Franciscans," Fr. Briseño said. "It was a great weekend in which we had much to celebrate, and we wanted to share it with the people we have saved for the last 30 years," he ended.

## Los Franciscanos Conventuales Celebran 30 Años En El Paso

Por Fernie Ceniceros  
Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

La Orden de Frailes Franciscanos Conventuales celebró 30 años de servicio a la Diócesis de El Paso con varios eventos realizados el 30 de julio.

Alrededor de 30 frailes asistieron a los eventos celebrados el 30 de julio. Los frailes visitantes tuvieron la oportunidad de visitar las tres misiones del Valle Bajo de El Paso durante su visita.

"Tuvimos un autobús que los llevó a las misiones, para que tuvieran una representación física de la historia del suroeste, especialmente de las misiones aquí en El Paso", dijo el padre Miguel Briseño, párroco de Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo. "Así que fuimos a la Misión de San Elizario, a la Misión del Socorro y también nos detuvimos en el centro cultural de Tigua". Añadió. "Terminamos el recorrido con, una explicación visual de la Misión de Ysleta y cómo encajamos en la región de El Paso".

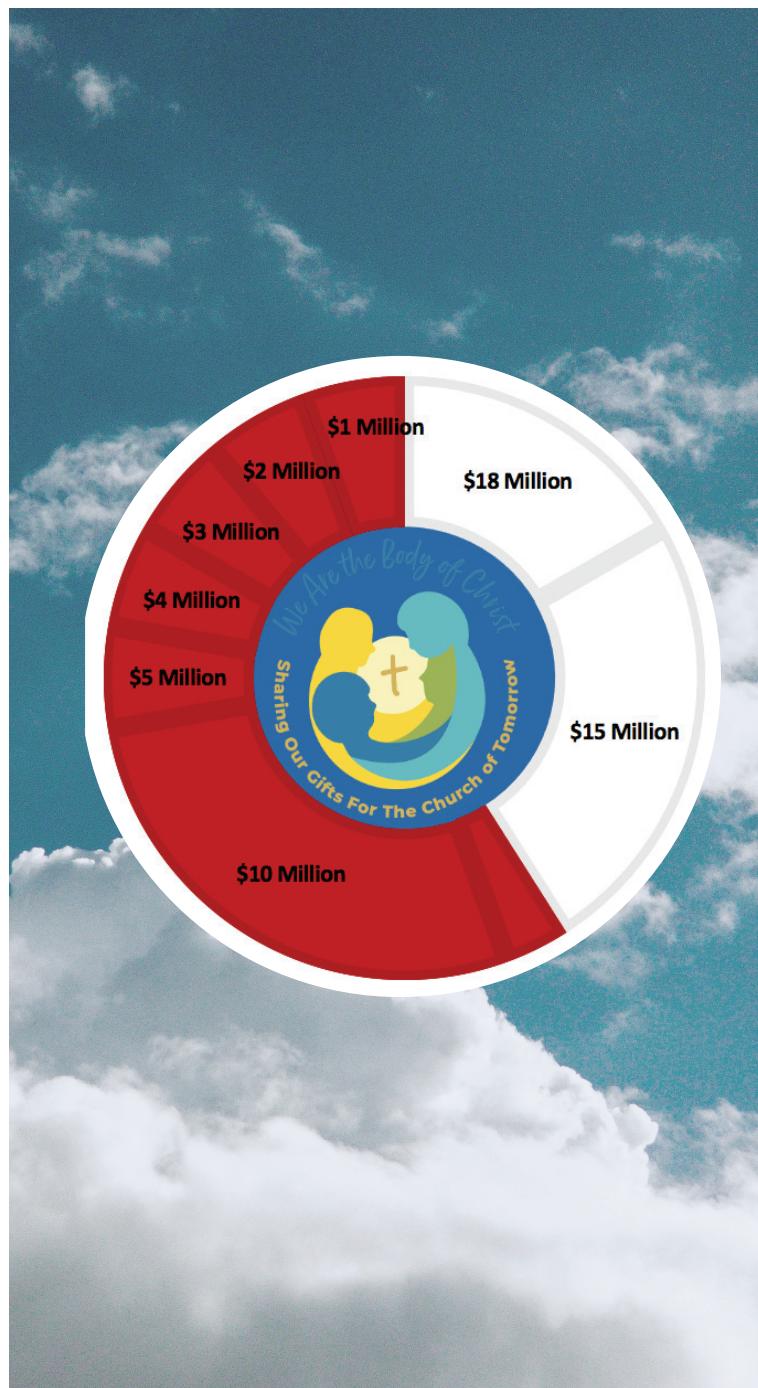
Después del recorrido, los frailes visitantes se reunieron para almorzar, donde el convento en la propiedad de la Parroquia del Monte Carmelo, fue rededicada en honor a Santa Kateri Tekakwitha.

"Los frailes han servido al Pueblo de Dios en diversos ministerios: (i.e., parroquia, universidad, tribunal, vocación),



Se celebró una misa en la que tres hombres profesaron sus votos solemnes a la Orden de los Franciscanos Conventuales. Los tres hombres son Fray Alberto Bravo, Fray Pedro López y Fray Jaime Zaragoza. Los tres hombres son locales de la región de El Paso/Las Cruces.. *Foto por Al Baeza*

# Together Look What We Have Accomplished



With the continued hard work and dedication to advance the mission of the Diocese of El Paso, the parishioners of the Diocese of El Paso have responded well to the We Are the Body of Christ campaign. The Campaign has raised \$10,708,870 in pledges from 4,281 gifts. Due to the current pandemic, 17 parishes are finalizing their campaign, and 16 parishes are preparing to launch in the fall. We are confident that we will reach our goal of \$18 million.

Your generous pledge enables Seminarian and Deaconate Formation, Catholic and Religious Formation, and the ability to strengthen our parishes and provide for Parish Emergency Assistance. We have a long way to go, and every dollar helps fulfill and ensure our dioceses' future needs.

Thank you for your continued support as we continue to respond to the evolving COVID-19

situation. Your health and spiritual wellbeing are of the utmost importance to us and our goal is to assist in any way we can during this ordeal. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your Pledge Fulfillment Specialist, Tina Edwards-Milam, 915-872-8412 ext. 137 or [tedwards-milam@elpasodiocese.org](mailto:tedwards-milam@elpasodiocese.org), with any questions or concerns.

[www.bodyofchristcampaign.com](http://www.bodyofchristcampaign.com)



## Juntos Miren Lo Que Hemos Logrado

Con el continuo esfuerzo y dedicación para promover la misión de la Diócesis de El Paso, los feligreses de la Diócesis de El Paso han tenido una respuesta positiva a la campaña Somos El Cuerpo de Cristo. La Campaña ha recaudado \$ 10,708,870 en promesas de 4,281 donaciones. Debido a la pandemia actual, 17 parroquias están finalizando su campaña y 16 parroquias se están preparando para lanzarla en el otoño. Confiamos en que alcanzaremos nuestra meta de \$ 18 millones.

Su generosa promesa permite la formación de seminaristas y diáconos, la formación católica y religiosa, así como la capacidad de fortalecer nuestras parroquias y proporcionar asistencia de emergencia parroquial. Tenemos un largo camino por recorrer, y cada dólar ayuda a satisfacer y asegurar las necesidades futuras de nuestra diócesis.

Gracias por su continuo apoyo mientras seguimos respondiendo a la cambiante situación del COVID-19. Su salud y bienestar espiritual son de suma importancia para nosotros y nuestro objetivo es ayudarle en todo lo que podamos durante esta difícil situación. Por favor, no dude en comunicarse con su Especialista en Cumplimiento de Promesas, Tina Edwards-Milam, al 915-872-8412 ext. 137 o [tedwards-milam@elpasodiocese.org](mailto:tedwards-milam@elpasodiocese.org), con cualquier pregunta o inquietud.

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## The Call to Holiness

by Karina Sandoval  
Stewardship Coordinator

"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the Master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." — Matthew 9:37-38 Now that parishes are open, there are many ways you can serve your church. Bishop Mark Seitz recently announced the loosening of pandemic Mass restrictions and the lifting of the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass effective August 1.

If you are able to attend Mass in person, rejoin your church community and make it vibrant again through your service. Sign up for ministry or get engaged

in the ministries you are already a part of, attend a retreat, and renew your involvement in small communities.

Volunteers, ministers, and prayer warriors can offer hope, especially following many months of social isolation during the pandemic. When you are engaged in ministry and parish life, and use your God-given gifts to serve, you bring the face of Christ and a pathway to holiness to everyone who enters the church.

The many ways you can serve include singing in the choir, taking Communion to the sick and homebound, joining a prayer group, hospitality ministry, St. Vincent de Paul Society, altar



ters. Visit [www.tepeyacstitute.com](http://www.tepeyacstitute.com) to learn more about formation programs, workshops, and retreats in English and Spanish, or call at (915) 872-8420.

It's important to note that anyone involved with direct service at the parish must be fully vaccinated for your own safety and to protect the people around you. If you haven't received your vaccine, visit [www.epcovidvaccine.com](http://www.epcovidvaccine.com) to register or call (915) 212-6843.

For more information on a life of Stewardship and building a Stewardship parish, contact Stewardship Coordinator Karina Sandoval at [ksandoval@elpasodiocese.org](mailto:ksandoval@elpasodiocese.org) or (915) 872-8412.

Por Karina Sandoval  
Stewardship Coordinator

Y dijo a sus discípulos: «La cosecha es abundante, pero los trabajadores son pocos. Rueguen, pues, al dueño de la cosecha que envíe trabajadores a recoger su cosecha.» Mateo 9:37-38. Ahora que las parroquias están abiertas, tendrás la oportunidad de servir a los demás por medio de la parroquia. El Obispo Mark Seitz anuncio recientemente la dispensa de obligación de asistir a Misa en domingo a partir del 1 de Agosto.

Si es posible que puedas asistir a Misa en persona, considera unirte de nuevo a tu comunidad parroquial, pregunta en tu parroquia sobre los ministerios disponibles o puedes involucrarte más en los ministerios en los que ya te encuentras, también puedes asistir a un retiro o renovar tu participación en las pequeñas comunidades.

Los voluntarios, ministros y los guerreros en oración, pueden ofrecer esperanza, especialmente después de tantos meses de aislamiento social durante la pandemia. El estar involucrado en el

ministerio y en la vida parroquial e usar tus talentos, te da la oportunidad de brindar a los demás el rostro de Cristo y aparte te dirige al camino de la santidad.

Las maneras en las que puedes servir a los demás es: en el coro, llevando la Eucaristía a los enfermos, unirte a un grupo de oración, o ministerio de hospitalidad, asistir en el ministerio de San Vicente de Paul, participar con los Caballeros de Colón y con las Hijas Católicas, trabajar por la paz y la justicia con los migrantes, investigar mas sobre el proyecto Gabriel, unirte a un

grupo de jóvenes y jóvenes adultos o participar en los ministerios familiares. Aprender sobre el catecismo de la Iglesia y enseñarlo a niños y jóvenes en los programas de Primera Comunión y Confirmación, o ayudar en la misa como ministro de Eucaristía y Lectura.

El Instituto Tepeyac continúa ofreciendo formación para los ministros. Visita la página web [tepeyacstitute.com](http://tepeyacstitute.com) para aprender sobre programas de formación, talleres, y retiros en Inglés y en Español, o llama al (915) 872-8420.

Es importante notar que cualquier persona que este involucrada en los ministerios parroquiales, debe de estar totalmente vacunado(a) para su seguridad y para proteger a los que están alrededor. Si aún no has recibido tu vacuna, visita la página web [epcovidvaccine.com](http://epcovidvaccine.com) o llama al (915) 212-6843.

Para mas información sobre una vida de Corresponsabilidad y el ministerio en Corresponsabilidad, contacta a Karina Sandoval, Coordinadora en Corresponsabilidad al [ksandoval@elpasodiocese.org](mailto:ksandoval@elpasodiocese.org) o al (915) 872-8412.

## Ser Santos

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FATHER!**

Fr. Miguel Angel Sanchez  
Fr. James Marcus McFadin  
Fr. Benjamin Flores-Ruiz  
Fr. Celimo A. Osorio  
Fr. Gerardo Francisco Salgado, OFM  
Fr. Gleem Carpe  
Fr. Esteban Sescon  
Fr. Jose Alberto Morales  
Fr. William J. Donnelly, MM  
Fr. Humberto Cruz, OAR

8/4  
8/5  
8/6  
8/12  
8/14  
8/14  
8/15  
8/21  
8/28  
8/31

**ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY**

Fr. Francisco Javier Rodriguez Roman, OFM	8/2/2001
Fr. Hector Diaz (Extern)	8/15/1965
Fr. Celimo A. Osorio	8/15/1987
Fr. Marciano Lopez-Solis, AA	8/15/2019
Fr. Tobias M. Macias, OSM	8/20/1994
Fr. Humberto Cruz, OAR	8/24/1996

**RETIRED PRIESTS BIRTHDAY (CORRECTION)**

Fr. Rodolfo Lacerna	8/12
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**ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY (RETIRED)**

Fr. Fidel Cervantes	8-14-1955
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**Diocese offers assistance for victims of sexual abuse**

Bishop Mark J. Seitz invites anyone who has been a victim of sexual abuse by a priest, deacon, religious, or any minister of the church, to contact the Victim's Assistance Coordinator, Mrs. Susan Martinez LCSW, at (915) 872-8465 or the Office of the Chancery, (915) 872-8407. The Church desires the healing of anyone that has been harmed.

**La diócesis ofrece asistencia a las víctimas de abusos sexuales**

El Obispo Mark J. Seitz invita a cualquier persona que haya sido víctima de abuso sexual por parte de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso o cualquier ministro de la iglesia, a contactar a la Coordinadora de Asistencia a las Víctimas, la Sra. Susan Martínez LCSW, al (915) 872-8465 o a la Oficina de la Cancillería, (915) 872-8407. La Iglesia desea la curación de cualquiera que haya sido dañado.

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\*PLEASE NOTE THAT DURING OUR CURRENT PANDEMIC, SERVICES ARE RESTRICTED TO ONLY 10 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE. EVERYONE MUST WEAR A FACE MASK AND SOCIAL DISTANCING IS REQUIRED.  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND COMPLIANCE.

# Don't Be A Stinker



Janet M. Crowe

"Hey! A skunk just ran across our front porch!"

That was the surprise and our exclamation on the first morning after the recent installation of one of those new doorbell cameras at our house. Luckily, we had muted the sound during the night, or our surprise would have come at O-dark-hundred in the morning rather than when we viewed the video after noticing the motion alert on our cell phones upon waking at a more reasonable hour of the morning.

However, a simple skunk sighting, it was not. As we continued to watch the video, we saw another much larger animal following the skunk at an easy loping gait, not chasing, just following along. We wore out our cell phone batteries trying to identify the skunk's companion. Stray dog? Coyote? Javelina? Fox? It seemed like none of those fit the image on our screens. I voted for Chupacabra but very few agreed with me.

Anyway, after watching the video several (as in – it's amazing that we wasted that much time on it) times, we got busy with our day. But a memory kept tickling the far corner of my brain. A skunk memory and our adventurous young son.

Years ago, while in elementary school, our son had, unfortunately, acquired the reputation



of being somewhat fearless, maybe even a bit of a daredevil. Such a noted character flaw might have resulted from the attempted leap off the monkey bars toward the school roof to retrieve a wayward ball, along with the bruised ribs that happened during that unsuccessful endeavor.

With such a reputation, it was no wonder that children easily coaxed him into engaging in sometimes risky activities. Combine that with a family of skunks that took up residence underneath one of the portable classrooms at school. The skunk family was usually very well behaved and only mildly aromatic if agitated by loud noises in the classroom above them. Actually, the skunks became the perfect method for the teacher to quiet the children from becoming too rowdy in their activities. Immediate calm ensued whenever she gave a quick reminder of the abrupt and

odiferous evacuation from the classroom on the day the class was preparing for the annual livestock and rodeo celebration by dressing up as cowboys and cowgirls and stomping around the classroom in their boots.

Like the skunk and possible Chupacabra that ran across our front porch in a friendly race around the neighborhood, the skunks and the school children managed a friendly, if maybe a bit standoffish, relationship – until that fateful day when the humane traps captured some members of the skunk family.

Now, to be fair, it really wasn't the children's nor the skunks' fault. After all, what adult organization postpones pickup of caged skunks on elementary school property near classrooms full of rambunctious children without expecting disastrous results?

Of course, our son's main competitor in all things daring and foolhardy found the cages

of skunks and immediately sought out our son with a "double-dog-dare you" challenge. The two boys were co-champs in the elementary recess activity of jumping over tires at the playground. Both boys could easily clear the largest of the tires in an acrobatic leap with plenty of air beneath their wings, so to speak. So, why should a simple jump over a couple of stacked wire cages be any threat to their courage?

Of course, it must be stated that our son rarely backed down from a challenge. In fact, the only time I can remember him declining a dare was the "I'll bet you can't eat all of your green beans before I finish mine" attempt on his parents' behalf to get some healthy food in his active body. He was so well-known for his audaciousness that his godmother embroidered a prayer for our son's guardian angel who was truly an overworked heavenly

protector.

So, why, on this day, with a "double-dog-dare" gauntlet tossed at his feet, did our son refuse the easy contest of who could better leap over the cages of skunks? He later told us that he was brave, but he wasn't stupid. The more the group of chanting children yelled taunts about his courage, the more he realized that it wasn't a smart thing to do. He admitted that he felt it would be difficult to live with the ridiculing comments, but he also wasn't sure he wanted to contend with the very real possibility of coming out on the stinky side of the contest.

For the first time ever – if we don't count the green bean attempt – our daredevil son listened to his guardian angel and walked away from a challenge and the often-disastrous consequence of peer pressure. Thankfully, it was the first of many times in his life that he has been able to stand up for what he believes and walk away from the temptation to fit in with the crowd.

Every time I see or smell a skunk, every time I pass a portable classroom building, and, apparently, when I watch doorbell video of skunks trotting through neighborhoods with friendly Chupacabras, I am reminded of the courage it takes to stand up to one's friends and do the right and smart thing, which sometimes means walking away from bad advice.

With school beginning this month, I pray that all of our children will remember that the stink of listening to peer pressure often takes a long and uncomfortable time to wear off.

## What Young People Could Most Profit From Hearing About Marriage



Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Young people today experience various pressures and expectations that can make them anxious. In a recent essay, Professor Timothy P. O'Malley, of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life, crisply describes some of the over-the-top pressures that graduating college students are likely to encounter in commencement addresses:

"Notre Dame students are told that their degree is not exclusively an accomplishment earned through the completion of credit hours but a pledge to change the world. They are charged by a commencement speaker to go cure cancer, secure a spot on the Supreme Court, end political polarization and corruption, and re-

new communities on the margins through being a transformative teacher.... In other words, the bar of anxiety is raised. The future is presented to these students as a series of endless accomplishments that they must complete to be judged as worthy by their alma mater..... No wonder students get drunk and hook up on weekends to escape the impending and seemingly impossible responsibility of changing the very arc of human history before they reach the age of thirty."

He notes that marriage and family life are seldom part of what commencement speakers at Notre Dame and other institutions of higher education propose to graduates. Students, he says, are "told, sometimes quite explicitly, to bracket out marriage and family life for the sake of their professional careers. And when the marriages and children of prominent commencement speakers are publicly raised on the commencement platform, they are always considered a lesser accomplishment."

Putting our human accomplishments into proper per-

spective can be challenging. We can be tempted, like many commencement speakers, to invert the relative order of their importance. In the face of unrelenting pressure to change the world, climb the career ladder, build a nest egg, acquire expensive homes, and travel the globe, we can easily convince ourselves that marriage and children are a hindrance.

But as we approach the end of life, we can often see with greater clarity what matters most.

I remember a chat I had with my father as he was declining in health. He had had a long career as an astrophysics professor at the University of Arizona. As we were talking about colleges, universities, and the world of academia, I mentioned how impressive his professional accomplishments had been, not only in teaching and research, but also in authoring various notable books with titles like "Radio Galaxies," "The Catastrophic Universe," and "Radio Astrophysics."

"Ah, the real achievement," he retorted, "what really matters, that would be the children."

He underlined that the demanding intellectual work and mountains of scientific output were insignificant compared to what he deemed his "real accomplishment" — the gift of his family. After more than 50 years of marriage and raising five children he signaled what authentic satisfaction and human fulfillment had come to look like for him.

The commitments we make and faithfully fulfill are a source of stability and strength, particularly against the backdrop of life's turbulence and uncertainty. While there are conflicts, boredom, trials, and other challenges, the consequential adventure of marriage and family life offers a fulfilling pathway toward human flourishing.

O'Malley notes that this is a narrative that young people are interested in: "They want to hear how to be happy, and they want this happiness not to be tied to their accomplishments." They want to be able to say, "I cannot control every dimension of the future, but I can dwell with this person for the rest of my days. I

can commit to a common project, to a hopeful future with this man or woman." This is an important message for us to pass on to younger generations, especially as they commence post-university life.

In a sense, marriage and raising a family are becoming revolutionary acts in today's world. They declare something positive and hopeful about the future and push back against the fear and insecurity that plague our human condition. They ground us in something beyond the passing security of worldly accomplishments and challenge us to a higher and more enduring goal.

*Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See [www.ncbicenter.org](http://www.ncbicenter.org) and [www.fathertad.com](http://fathertad.com).*



Padre Wilson Cuevas

Nos gustan estas palabras. Hace más de dos mil años, Jesús nos dio esta lección suprema, que irritó el orgullo judío: "Nunca hemos sido esclavos de nadie" Y lo dicen en plena ocupación Romana. Jesús sin embargo, va más profundo: "Todo el que comete pecado es un esclavo". Mientras no aceptemos esta verdad desnuda, la palabra libertad nos deja encadenados, según la constatación pesimista de san Pablo" "Se lo que debo hacer, pero no lo puedo hacer".

Cuál es la libertad que hace saltar estas cadenas? Jesús. "La verdad los hará libres" quiere decir: Yo, solo Yo, puedo hacerlos libres. Y con El podremos un día decir: SE LO QUE DEBO HACER Y LO HAGO!

Hoy más que nunca, vemos con tristeza y lamento, muchos pueblos y países engañados, dominados por las mentiras que creen son ciertas y piensan, hablan y actúan conforme a sus embaucadores y líderes mentirosos compulsivos, que repiten por todos los medios posibles sus mentiras y mucha gente termina creyéndolas como verdades. Sus conciencias ese "sancta sanctorum" del ser humano, donde tiene lugar otro enlace no menos importante ni tampoco menos delicado. Me refiero a la existencia entre la verdad y la caridad.

# La Verdad Los Hará Libres

No escasean las personas que hacen gala de decir siempre la verdad y de "cantarles las cuarenta" a cualquiera. Son muchos los que consideran que la verdad es crítica pura y dura e incluso solo se mueven en esa verdad los que se han puesto como insignia y lema el ser "anti" todo, ser críticos con todo y jueces absolutos. Esos amigos de la verdad son más bien amigos de los escándalos y como si fuera poco, generalmente presumen de lo que no tienen, pues si se investiga un poco se ve que están sometidos a otras sujeciones, siendo siervos de otros amos y marionetas trágicas de intereses grandes que los utilizan para hacer daño a través de sus mentiras, a esos a los que critican con tanta pasión.

Pero si ese es un extremo por evitar, hay otro no menos peligroso. Es el representado por aquellos que siempre están negociando con la verdad en nombre de la política, economía, la educación y la sociedad... Movidos por sus ambiciones e intereses de poder y económicos. Propician semi verdades y convierten en una caricatura o en una astuta mentira verdades esenciales para una sociedad sana y fuerte. La verdad debe ser forzosamente amiga de la caridad. Hay que decir la verdad porque solo esa verdad nos hace libres. Si se oculta la verdad nos hacemos cómplices del engaño o colaboradores en la destrucción del otro y de nuestra sociedad y seremos víctimas por estar inmerso en el error. La verdad más auténtica la que Cristo nos ha revelado es el amor. Por eso saber amar y por amor decir la verdad y decirla sin herir, en el momento oportuno, con pruden-

cia, sin ira y sin revanchismo, es fruto y consecuencia de esa sabiduría que emana de Jesús el Emmanuel.

Gandhi, logró la independencia de su país apoyado en dos fundamentos: La no violencia y la fuerza de la verdad. Acomodó el término "SATYAGRAHA" para sus protestas. "Satyagraha" significa: "Fuerza de la verdad". Verdad que para Gandhi era siempre alimentada por el amor. Amor, verdad y no violencia son las herramientas que se necesitan para vencer la injusticia y gozar de paz. Los que anhelamos un futuro mejor para el país donde vivimos, debemos cambiar las críticas por acciones de amor, verdad y no violencia. Muy bien expresa el salmo 15 al preguntar: Quién está con Dios y puede habitar en su templo: "El que anda sin tacha y obra la justicia; quien dice la verdad de corazón y no calumnia con su lengua; aquel que no daña a su hermano ni hace agravios a su prójimo... Quien obra así jamás vacilará. No te engañes con una fe sin buenos frutos. Es una farsa o un embeleco en el que pretenderes jugar con Dios y con tu vida y la de los demás..."

Me fascinan las palabras de Jesús: SEAN LIBRES, SEAMOS SIEMPRE LIBRES..." No es fácil ser libre. La libertad tan anhelada solo se disfruta cuando cambiamos el egoísmo por el amor, la mentira por la verdad y ante las cosas actuamos con un alegre desapego. No es fácil ser libre en un mundo engañoso, ávido de riquezas, sediento de poder y alejado de Dios. Para ser libre hay que casarse con la verdad como lo afirmaba Jesucristo. "Encontra-



reis la verdad y la verdad los hará libres" Esa verdad se identifica con El mismo Dios. Quien vive unido a Dios, relativiza todo lo demás y lo halla todo al no aferrarse a nada. Así podemos afirmar con Santa Teresa de Jesús: "Nada te turbe, nada te espante. Todo se pasa. Dios no se muda. La paciencia todo lo alcanza. Quien a Dios tiene nada le falta. Solo Dios basta". Somos libres cuando evitamos todo tipo de posesividad con las personas o las cosas. Seamos siempre libres, vivamos en la verdad. No engañes y no te dejes engañar. Como dice san pablo: "Analícenlo todo y quédate con lo bueno". Ojala, que quienes tengan la oportunidad de leer y compartir esta reflexión, seamos conscientes

que el precio de la verdad le costó la vida a Cristo. El precio de la verdad es muy grande. Cuál es? Si queremos vivir en la verdad no tendremos descanso durante nuestra vida, no seremos muy queridos y apreciados por muchos de momento y tendríamos que decidir si quiero seguir engañándome y engañando o aceptar el precio de vivir y decir la verdad y ser libres. Ojala nos decidamos por sanar nuestro mundo de las mentiras para que llevemos el tarjetón de "Siempre la Verdad" y no con el de "Siempre la Mentira. Dios nos ayude a ser valiente y a decidirnos por ser hombres y mujeres de verdad y en la verdad, para que seamos parte de la solución y no del problema.

## The Truth Will Set You Free

We like these words. More than two thousand years ago, Jesus gave us this supreme lesson that irritated Jewish pride: "We have never been anyone's slaves" And they say it in the middle of the Roman occupation. Jesus, however, goes deeper: "Everyone who commits sin is a slave." As long as we do not accept this naked truth, the word freedom leaves us in chains, according to the pessimistic observation of Saint Paul" "I know what I must do, but I cannot do it ." What is the freedom that makes these chains loose? Jesus. The truth will make you free" means: "I, only I, can set you free." And with Him we can one day say: I KNOW WHAT I SHOULD DO AND I DO IT!

Today more than ever we see with sadness and regret , many peoples and countries deceived, dominated by the lies they believe to be true and think, speak and act according to their tricksters and compulsive lying leaders, who repeat by all means possible their lies, and many people end up believing them as truths. Their consciences are the "sancta sanctorum" of the human being, where another no less important nor less delicate link takes place. I mean the existence between truth and charity.

There is no shortage of people who pride themselves on always telling the truth and "claim the "real and actual facts "to anyone. There are many who consider that the truth is only criticism, pure and simple, and even those who have set for themselves this insignia and motto move and live in that truth, that is, being "anti" everything, being critical of everything and absolute judges. Those true "friends" are rather friends of scandals and as if that were not enough, they generally boast of what they do not have, because if you investigate a little you can see that they are subject to others' influences, being servants of other masters and tragic puppets of great interests who use them to do harm through their lies, to those whom they criticize with so much passion.

But if that is one extreme to avoid, there is another no less dangerous. It is represented by those who are always negotiating with the truth in the name of politics, economics,

education and society... driven by their ambitions and interests in power and economics. They promote semi-truths and turn them into a cartoon or worse, cunning lies; but the real truth is essential for a healthy and strong

society. The truth must necessarily be a friend of charity. We must tell the truth because only that truth makes us free. If the truth is concealed we become accomplices of the deceit, or collaborators in the destruction of others and of society itself, and we will become victims by being immersed in error. The most authentic truth that Christ Himself has revealed to us is love. That is why knowing how to love and telling the truth and saying it without doing harm, at the right moment, with prudence, without anger and without revenge, is the fruit and consequence of that wisdom that emanates from Jesus the Emmanuel.

Gandhi achieved the independence of his country supported by two foundations: non-violence and the strength of truth. He used the term "SATYAGRAHA" for his protests. "Satyagraha" means: "the Force of Truth."

"Truth that for Gandhi is always fueled by love. Love, truth and non-violence are the tools that are needed to overcome injustice and enjoy peace. Those of us who long for a better future for the country where we live must exchange criticism for actions of love, truth and non-violence. Psalm 51 expresses this very well

when asking: Whoever is with God can dwell in his temple:

"He who walks without blemish and acts with justice; who speaks the truth from the heart and does not slander with his tongue; the one who does not harm his brother or does wrong to his neighbor ... He who acts like this will never waver." Don't be fooled by unfruitful faith. Is it a farce or a false charm in which you intend to play with God and with your life and that of others

... I am fascinated by the words of Jesus: BE FREE, LET US ALWAYS BE FREE ... "It is not easy to be free. The freedom so longed for is only enjoyed when we exchange selfishness for love, lies for truth, and when we face things with a joyful detachment. It is not easy to be free in a world that is deceptive, hungry for wealth, thirsty for power and distanced from God. To be free you have to marry the truth as affirmed by Jesus Christ. "You will find the truth and the truth will set you free."

That truth identifies with God Himself. Whoever lives united to God, realistically recognizes everything else and finds everything by not clinging stubbornly to anything. Thus we can affirm with Saint Teresa of Jesus: "May

nothing disturb you, and nothing frighten you, everything passes. God never leaves us . With patience everything is attainable. Whoever has God, lacks for nothing, God is enough."

We are free when we avoid all kinds of possessiveness with people or things. Let us always be free, let us live in the truth. Do not fool others and do not let yourself be fooled. As Saint Paul says: "Analyze everything and keep only the good things."

Hopefully, for those who have the opportunity to read and share this reflection, let us be aware that it was the price of truth that cost Christ his life. The price of truth is very costly. What is it? If we want to live in the truth we will have no rest during our lifetime, we will not always be loved and appreciated by many and we will have to decide if we want to continue deceiving and being deceived or accept the price of living and telling the truth and be free. Hopefully we will decide to heal our world of lies so that we carry the "Always the Truth" card and not the "Always the Lie" one.

May God help us to be brave and decide to be real men and women of truth, so that we may be part of the solution and not the problem?

# Office of Religious Formation Offers Training for Parish Catechists

By Natalie Eckberg  
Progress Coordinator

When most individuals think about the Office of Religious Formation for the Diocese of El Paso, they think about First Communion and Confirmation classes. But in reality, the small staff – which is comprised of two full-time and two part-time team members – assist in preparing individuals for a lifelong relationship with Christ.

"Catholic faith formation is a lifelong process of spiritual growth, increased understanding and commitment to the faith and traditions of the Catholic Church," said Verónica Rayas, Ph.D., Director of Office of Religious Formation. "Our desire at the Office of Religious Formation is to share as a community in the ministry of Christ, living as One Family and sharing in our One Faith. We hold dear the vital sacramental life of the Church, given to us by Christ, calling each of us to act justly, with love and mercy, living in communion with one another. Following Christ is a lifelong journey and we invite all to join us."

The Office of Religious



The Office of Religious Formation prepares 1,500 catechists, Parish Catechetical Leaders and coordinators who in turn serve approximately 20,000 children, youth and adults. Photo by Fernie Ceniceros

Formation is partially funded through the Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal. Through their work, the ministry leaders of the Office prepare 1,500 catechists, Parish Catechetical Leaders and coordinators who in turn serve approximately 20,000 children, youth and adults.

"We provide support to the religious formation programs of the parishes, to include Sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion or Confirmation," Rayas continued. "We provide

support for those programs and ensure they have the right tools and resources they need."

The shift from catechism to faith formation began in the 1980s and has informed the way in which the Office manages its duties and trains its leaders.

"The focus used to be on teaching the subject matter – but now it's about helping people create a life of faith and nurturing a relationship with Jesus," Rayas said. "It's a matter of looking at the whole person and looking back

on the specific religious practices of our ancestors and incorporating those cultural components. Those elements run in our blood and go back hundreds of years – and tying it into elements of our lives. For example, if you make cookies for someone because they are sad then you are loving and caring for them the way Jesus asked us to. Showing support for others helps us express our faith."

This shift has helped families understand that there is no "finish line," she continued.

"Before, once your child was confirmed it was done. They graduated," Rayas said. "Now, people are incorporating formation into their longer-term plans. It's not something to check off a list."

The Office hopes to launch a young catechist program, which will recruit and train post-confirmation youth to serve as non-traditional catechists on a monthly basis offering a large parish Confirmation gathering session. Young people will lead praise and worship, present the theme for the session, offer dynamics, activities, prayer and faith sharing on the topic.

Additionally, the Office is still

recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The team, like many, was forced to pivot and provided services in a way not previously anticipated. Training and services were moved to an online format, but Rayas is looking forward to increased in-person engagement.

"We are so grateful we were able to do what we could, but nothing replaces that sense of community," she said – especially for young people in need of emotional support.

"We've met so many kids who tell us, 'This is my second home,'" she said. "It tells us that youth are looking for a place to belong. We need to invest in programs for our young people – especially middle school aged, where they really start to question and can get lost. And we certainly want those young people to think of the church – not just any church but The Church – to be their home. Their spiritual home, where they will always be loved and accepted."

*To support the Office of Religious Formation and other ministries, make a donation to Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal at [www.2021progress.org](http://www.2021progress.org).*

## La Oficina De Formación Religiosa Ofrece Formación Para Los Catequistas

Por Natalie Eckberg  
Coordinadora de Progreso

Cuando la mayoría de las personas piensan en la Oficina de Formación Religiosa de la Diócesis de El Paso, piensan en las clases de Primera Comunión y Confirmación. Pero en realidad, el pequeño personal – que se compone de dos miembros del equipo de tiempo completo y dos de tiempo parcial – ayudan a preparar a las personas para una relación de por vida con Cristo.

"La formación de la fe católica es un proceso de crecimiento espiritual que dura toda la vida, que aumenta la comprensión y el compromiso con la fe y las tradiciones de la Iglesia católica", dijo la doctora Verónica Rayas, directora de la Oficina de Formación Religiosa. "Nuestro deseo en la Oficina de Formación Religiosa es compartir como comunidad el ministerio de Cristo, viviendo como una sola familia y compartiendo nuestra única fe. Apreciamos la vida sacramental vital de la Iglesia, dada por Cristo, que nos llama a cada uno de nosotros a actuar con justicia, amor y misericordia, viviendo en comunión unos con otros. Seguir a Cristo es un viaje de toda la vida e invitamos a todos a unirse a nosotros".

La Oficina de Formación Religiosa se financia parcialmente a través del Progreso: Catholic Ministry Appeal. A través de su trabajo, los líderes ministeriales de la Oficina preparan a 1,500 catequistas, líderes católicos parroquiales y coordinadores que, a su vez, sirven

a aproximadamente 20.000 niños, jóvenes y adultos.

"Proporcionamos apoyo a los programas de formación religiosa de las parroquias, para incluir la preparación sacramental para la Primera Comunión o la Confirmación", continuó Rayas. "Proporcionamos apoyo a esos programas y nos aseguramos de que tengan las herramientas y los recursos adecuados que necesitan".

El cambio de la catequesis a la formación en la fe comenzó en la década de 1980 y ha influido en el modo en que la Oficina gestiona sus tareas y forma a sus líderes.

"Antes se centraba en la enseñanza de la materia, pero ahora se trata de ayudar a las personas a crear una vida de fe y alimentar una relación con Jesús", dijo Rayas. "Se trata de mirar a la persona en su totalidad y de recordar las prácticas

religiosas específicas de nuestros antepasados e incorporar esos componentes culturales. Esos elementos corren por nuestra sangre y se remontan a cientos de años atrás, y los vinculamos a elementos de nuestra vida. Por ejemplo, si haces galletas para alguien porque está triste, entonces estás amando y cuidando de esa persona de la manera que Jesús nos pidió. Mostrar apoyo a los demás nos ayuda a expresar nuestra fe".

Este cambio ha ayudado a las familias a entender que no hay "línea de meta", continuó.

"Antes, una vez que tu hijo se confirmaba, ya estaba hecho. Se graduaba", dijo Rayas. "Ahora, la gente incorpora la formación a sus planes a largo plazo. No es algo para tachar de una lista".

La Oficina espera poner en marcha un programa de catequistas jóvenes, que reclutará y

formará a jóvenes post-Confirmación para que sirvan como catequistas no tradicionales, ofreciendo mensualmente una gran sesión de encuentro parroquial de Confirmación. Los jóvenes dirigirán la alabanza y la adoración, presentarán el tema de la sesión, ofrecerán dinámicas, actividades de oración y compartirán la fe sobre el tema.

Además, la Oficina sigue recuperándose de la pandemia del COVID-19. El equipo, al igual que muchos, se vio obligado a pivotar y prestar servicios de una manera no prevista anteriormente. La formación y los servicios se trasladaron a un formato en línea, pero Rayas está deseando aumentar la participación en persona.

"Estamos muy agradecidos de haber podido hacer lo que podíamos, pero nada sustituye ese sentido de comunidad",

dijo, especialmente para los jóvenes que necesitan apoyo emocional.

"Hemos conocido a muchos chicos que nos dicen: 'Este es mi segundo hogar'", dijo. "Esto nos indica que los jóvenes buscan un lugar al que pertenecer. Tenemos que invertir en programas para nuestros jóvenes, especialmente en la edad media, donde realmente empiezan a cuestionarse y pueden perderse. Y ciertamente queremos que esos jóvenes piensen que la iglesia – no cualquier iglesia, sino La Iglesia – es su hogar. Su hogar espiritual, donde siempre serán amados y aceptados".

*Para apoyar a la Oficina de Formación Religiosa y otros ministerios, haz un donativo a Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal en [www.2021progress.org](http://www.2021progress.org).*



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# 15th Annual Foundation of Faith Event: Ignite Your Hearts

By Sofia Larkin  
Major Gifts Officer

Some are ready to gather in large groups, some are not. We are going VIRTUAL in 2021 so that we can bring everyone together safely and joyfully. We're also offering an IN-PERSON VIP experience at The Manor at Ten Eleven, our Happy Hour Co-Hosts.

Keynote speaker Mark Hart, special guest Eduardo Verástegui, and musical guest Sarah Hart are going to IGNITE YOUR HEARTS.

The virtual event is set for Thursday September 23, 2021 at 7pm and will be live streamed on YouTube. The in-person VIP event begins at 5:30pm with cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres. It includes special seating for the virtual event with VIP attendees, swag bags, a tour of The Manor, photo opportunities, and more.

Registrations for the virtual experience are \$75 per household and include a surprise



swag bag and your code to "enter". Sponsors of \$1,000 and up will receive invitations to the in-person VIP experience with Mark Hart. Seating is limited.

This year, the Catholic Foundation will present Bishop Mark with the Dei Gratia Award honoring the Diocese of

El Paso Clergy and Religious for their heroic ministry during the pandemic.

The Dei Gratia Award, Latin for "By the Grace of God", recognizes an individual, couple, or organization for their servant leadership, outstanding contribution to the Diocese of El Paso and the Catholic com-

munity, and their dedication to being good stewards of God's grace.

If you're tuning in from Anywhere, USA, it will be easy to connect through the Internet, and we'll provide you with detailed instructions ahead of time. Getting registered to bid for the auction is easy. We'll send step-by-step instructions by email prior to event week. You'll receive notifications when you've been outbid and when you win.

If you're attending virtually or in person, you can look forward to a fun night with friends and family, an amazing auction that includes fabulous packages and the chance to contribute 100% of your donation to "Fund a Needs" that benefit St. Joseph's School and Fuel for West Texas. Celebrate the Steward of the Year, the Dei Gratia Award recipients, and enjoy our dynamic and talented guests. We're excited to announce our emcee, Natassia Paloma, an award-winning journalist and evening news

anchor for KTSM.

There are several sponsorship opportunities to choose from. Reach people throughout the Diocese of El Paso and across the United States. In addition, if you give a "Gift of 20" in the amount of \$200, \$2,000, or \$20,000 in celebration of the Catholic Foundation's 20th anniversary, you will also be recognized during the Foundation of Faith Event. Visit [fofevent.org](http://fofevent.org) for details.

#### Guest Biographies:

Mark Hart is a best-selling author, award-winning producer, and popular speaker.

Eduardo Verástegui is an actor, producer, businessman and philanthropist.

Sarah Hart is one of the leading figures in contemporary Catholic music today. Her songs of faith having touched the lives of thousands.

*Have questions? Please contact Major Gifts Officer Sofia Larkin at (915) 872-8412 or [slarkin@elpasodiocese.org](mailto:slarkin@elpasodiocese.org). Visit [fofevent.org](http://fofevent.org) to secure your spot today!*

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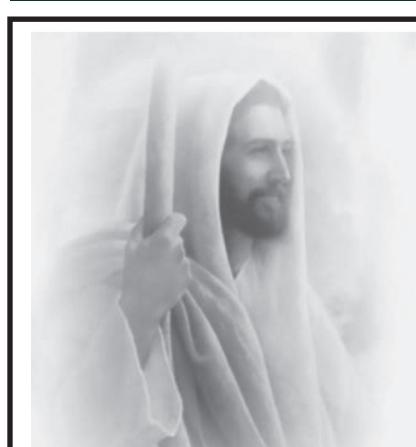
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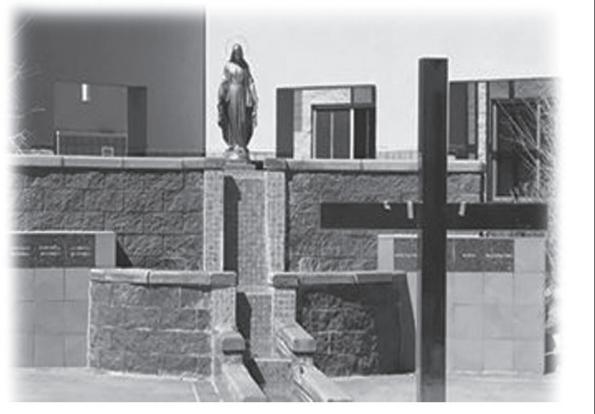
Wednesday - Friday 9 am - 12 pm

Saturday 3rd and 4th Saturday 10 am - 1pm

Saturday 5 - 6

Sunday 10 am - 2:30 pm & 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

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