

IS THIS ADDRESS
CORRECT?
IF NOT, CUT IT OUT,
CORRECT IT AND
SEND TO:
THE RIO GRANDE
CATHOLIC
499 ST. MATTHEWS ST.
EL PASO, TX 79907

THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC

Vol. 32, No. 11

The Official Paper of the Diocese of El Paso

November 2023

1st Half of Universal Synod Completed, Local Priest Participates



Diocesan Vocations Director and Judicial Vicar Fr. Ivan Montelongo translates a conversation between two youth participants of the worldwide Synod on Synodality and Pope Francis during a short break at one of the synodal sessions. Read more about the Synod on Synodality on Page 4. *Photo Courtesy of Vatican News Service*

Inside the RGC

What is Baby Bishop School? Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Celino explains in our Guest Editors column - Page 2

Honoring The Dead Thorough Our Prayers, Father Michael Lewis explains - Page 5

Diocesan Priests in the Diocese attend annual retreat in Mesilla, NM - Page 6

Foundation News and Updates - Page 10 & 12



GUEST EDITOR'S COLUMN - BISHOP ANTONY CELINO

Baby Bishop School

Baby Bishop School. Is there really such a thing? Yes, there is. They don't teach the newbies how to wear the zucchetto (the violet beanie) or the art of taking the mitre on and off during the Mass (although I think we all wish they would have covered that), but newly ordained bishops from all over the world do convene annually in Rome for a weeklong session of formation.

In 2000, then Pope John Paul II invited all newly ordained bishops from around the world to come together for a few weeks of prayer, renewal, and fraternity in Rome. He intended to introduce them to one another and to the different congregations and ministries that make up the Roman Curia. They made their first Ad Limina as bishops—their visit to pray at the tomb of Saint Peter. Since then, newly ordained bishops have gathered in Rome around the first or second week of September every year for a series of workshops. Today, the Holy See calls it “The Annual Course of Formation for New Bishops”. But bishops jokingly



Bishop Anthony C. Celino

call it “Baby Bishop School”.

This year, more than two hundred bishops gathered for two concurrent sessions. The theme was “The Ministry of the Bishop in a Synodal Church”. One was sponsored by the Dicastery for Evangelization for all mission bishops. The other, the session I attended, was sponsored by the Dicastery for Bishops and the Dicastery for Eastern Churches.

We started our days with morning prayer and Mass presided by one of the cardinal prefects, secretaries of dicasteries, or secretariats of the Roman

Curia. Think of dicasteries as departments and prefects as the heads of those departments.

We heard presentations in the morning and the afternoon from different dicasteries who introduced the work of their respective offices or issues they are dealing with and how they relate to the work of bishops. This was followed by a Post-Conference Fraternal Dialogue where participants had the opportunity to ask questions of the presenter or prefect. In the evening, we gathered for small group discussions organized by the language we speak. We visited Villa Stritch where all U.S. priests working at the Vatican live and enjoyed a festive dinner, and we visited the North American College, the U.S. seminary located in Rome.

Some of the highlights for me were meeting my fellow bishops from the United States Conference, Egypt, Ukraine, Brazil, Australia, India, England, and more. I experienced the universality of the Church through these bishops and through the coming together in prayer and the Eucharist, a true unity amid

our differences. Celebrating Masses at Santa Maria Maggiore and at the Basilica of St. Peter followed by a visit to his tomb was also a wonderful experience. Finally, and best of all, was the “Encounter with Peter”: meeting Pope Francis in person.

We were ushered into Clementine Hall behind the Basilica of St. Peter after Mass. Both excited and nervous, we awaited the pope's arrival in a hall covered in magnificent Renaissance frescoes. When he finally walked in, using a cane, and flashing a bright smile, Pope Francis immediately put us at ease with a bit of joking. At the end of the meeting, we were each given a few moments to introduce ourselves. I was in awe as I approached the Holy Father and managed a few words of gratitude in Spanish. When I shook his hand I said, “I'm the auxiliary of Monsignor Seitz in El Paso, Texas.” To which he responded, smiling, and nodding his head, “¡Es un gran obispo!” “He is a great bishop!”

During one Mass in the middle of the week the choir began to play “Here I Am, Lord” by

Dan Schutte. It's a popular song for ACTS communities during preparation, retreat, and for the Return Mass. As the seminarian choir started singing the familiar tune, the U.S. English-speaking bishops immediately chimed in loudly and with confidence. For one thing, we finally knew the words to something—most of the songs and liturgies to this point were either in Italian, Latin, French, or Portuguese. But it was bigger than that. As I got in line for communion, I felt the profound meaning of the song at this juncture in my life. Like many of my fellow bishops there, I did not seek nor aspire to this ministry and I was more than content with the task given to me as a priest and pastor of a parish. Yet the call came, inviting me to the ministry of bishop for our local community. I said, “Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.”

Escuela Obispo Bebé

La escuela del bebé obispo. ¿De verdad existe algo así? Pues sí. No enseñan a los recién ordenados a ponerse el zucchetto (el gorro violeta) ni el arte de ponerse y quitarse la mitra durante la Misa (aunque creo que a todos nos hubiera gustado que lo hicieran), pero los obispos recién ordenados de todo el mundo se reúnen anualmente en Roma para una sesión de formación de una semana de duración.

En el año 2000, el entonces Papa Juan Pablo II invitó a todos los obispos recién ordenados de todo el mundo a reunirse durante unas semanas en Roma para rezar, renovarse y fraternizar. Su intención era presentarles a los demás y a las distintas congregaciones y ministerios que componen la Curia Romana. Hicieron su primer Ad Limina como obispos: su visita para rezar ante la tumba de San Pedro. Desde entonces, los obispos recién ordenados se reúnen en Roma en torno a la primera o segunda semana de septiembre de cada año para celebrar una serie de talleres. Hoy, la Santa Sede lo llama “Curso anual de formación para nuevos obispos”. Pero los obispos lo llaman en broma “Escuela de Obispos Bebés”.

Este año, más de doscientos obispos se reunieron en dos sesiones simultáneas. El tema era “El ministerio del obispo en una Iglesia sinodal”. Una fue patrocinada por el Dicastery para la Evangelización, para todos los obispos misioneros. La otra sesión, a la que yo asistí, estaba patrocinada por el Dicastery para los Obispos y el Dicastery para las Iglesias Orientales.

Comenzamos nuestros días con la oración de la mañana y la misa presidida por uno de los



cardenales prefectos, secretarios de los dicasterios o secretarías de la Curia Romana. Piense en los dicasterios como departamentos y en los prefectos como los jefes de esos departamentos.

Escuchamos presentaciones por la mañana y por la tarde de diferentes dicasterios que introdujeron el trabajo de sus respectivas oficinas o los temas que tratan y cómo se relacionan con el trabajo de los obispos. A continuación tuvo lugar un Diálogo Fraternal posterior a la Conferencia, en el que los participantes tuvieron la oportunidad de formular preguntas al presentador o al prefecto. Por la tarde, nos reunimos para debatir en pequeños grupos organizados según el idioma que hablamos. Visitamos Villa Stritch, donde viven todos los sacerdotes estadounidenses que trabajan en el Vaticano, y disfrutamos de una cena festiva, y visitamos el North American College, el seminario

estadounidense situado en Roma.

Algunos de los momentos más destacados para mí fueron los encuentros con mis compañeros obispos de la Conferencia de Estados Unidos, Egipto, Ucrania, Brasil, Australia, India e Inglaterra, entre otros. Experimenté la universalidad de la Iglesia a través de estos obispos y de la unión en la oración y la Eucaristía, una verdadera unidad en medio de nuestras diferencias. Celebrar misas en Santa María la Mayor y en la Basílica de San Pedro, seguidas de una visita a su tumba, fue también una experiencia maravillosa. Por último, y lo mejor de todo, fue el “Encuentro con Pedro”: conocer al Papa Francisco en persona.

Después de la misa, nos condujeron a la Sala Clementina, detrás de la Basílica de San Pedro. Emocionados y nerviosos, esperamos la llegada del Papa en una sala cubierta de magníficos frescos renacentistas. Cuando

por fin entró, con bastón y una sonrisa radiante, el Papa Francisco nos tranquilizó de inmediato bromeando un poco. Al final de la reunión, cada uno de nosotros tuvo unos minutos para presentarse. Me quedé boquiabierto cuando me acerqué al Santo Padre y le dirigí unas palabras de agradecimiento en español. Cuando le estreché la mano le dije: “Soy el auxiliar de monseñor Seitz en El Paso, Texas”. A lo que él respondió, sonriendo, y asintiendo con la cabeza: “¡Es un gran obispo!” “¡Es un gran obispo!”

Durante una misa a mitad de semana, el coro empezó a tocar “Aquí estoy, Señor”, de Dan Schutte. Es una canción popular para las comunidades ACTS durante la preparación, el retiro y para la Misa de Retorno. Cuando el coro de seminaristas empezó a cantar la conocida melodía, los obispos de habla inglesa de Estados Unidos enseguida enton-

aron en voz alta y con confianza. Por un lado, por fin sabíamos la letra de algo: la mayoría de los cantos y liturgias hasta ese momento estaban en italiano, latín, francés o portugués. Pero la cosa iba más allá. Mientras hacía la cola para comulgar, sentí el profundo significado de la canción en esta coyuntura de mi vida. Como muchos de mis compañeros allí, no buscaba ni aspiraba a este ministerio y estaba más que satisfecho con la tarea que se me había encomendado como sacerdote y párroco de una parroquia. Sin embargo, llegó la llamada, invitándome al ministerio de obispo para nuestra comunidad local. Dije: “Aquí estoy, Señor. ¿Soy yo, Señor? Te he oído llamarme por la noche. Iré, Señor, si tú me guías. Llevaré a tu pueblo en mi corazón”.

INSEITZ INTO THE FAITH

Lessons of the Seasons

Fall has arrived in Texas. The seasonal changes here tend to be less distinct than those I remember from my childhood in Wisconsin. There the seasons seemed to turn with a startling decisiveness. Sunny warm days of summer would depart with the abruptness of the eviction of a guest who has overstayed his welcome—tossed out on his ear with his luggage flung behind him.

In Texas the seasons toy with one another. Just when summer seems to have departed for good she sneaks back in, leaving flowers, birds and people in a state of confusion. But ever so gradually fall gains the upper hand. She patiently asserts her power, bringing relief from summer's harsh glare. Cool nights and extended darkness tell trees it is time to

shed their leafy vestiture. Many leaves call attention to their imminent passing by turning a brilliant array of reds and oranges and yellows. Like a bonfire they blaze out and then descend to the earth as dying embers.

In Wisconsin I could smell the fall. Nature's compost wafted its aroma through the woods, perfuming the crisp clear air. Fall's fragrance transports me to former days and places. I remember when raking leaves was great fun. After we had furiously assembled them into vast mounds my brothers and sisters and I would take a running leap. Leaves flew as we disappeared in the pile. How we would delight in nature's embrace!

I remember walking through fields of waist-high weeds that had long-since turned brown and

brittle. They provided the superstructure for the golden-garden spider's architectural wonders. These spiders knew, as did we, that their days in the sun were numbered. Fall gave ample warning that the cold night of winter would soon take hold—that time in which all creation must rest.

Even now, in this place of seasonal ambiguity, fall's coming moves me, not only to look back, but to look forward. She still gives adequate signs that we all ought to recognize. In all of nature we see that dying is a part of life.

Fall is a reflective time, a preparation time. This season calls us to step back from our busy distractions and to absorb the life-changing message. Gently, persistently, she invites us to look with gratitude upon what



Bishop Mark J. Seitz



has been. Prudently, prophetically, she opens us to consider the transcendent hope to which the redeemed lay claim.

Observe with me the signs of fall. Welcome this word of God imprinted in the midst of our world. As you witness His work let the passing of this year speak to you of Him who is with us always and at all times. He is pres-

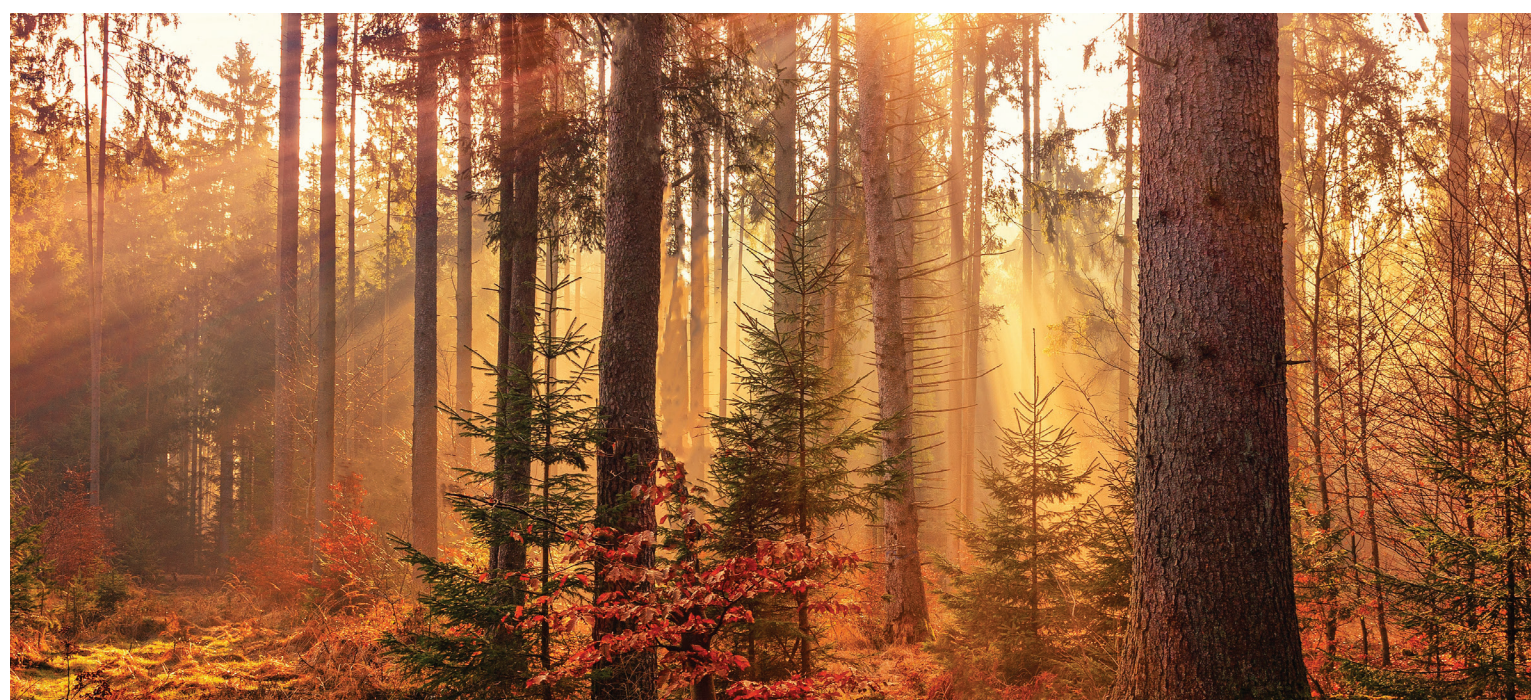
ent in our coming to birth, our living and our dying. He joins us in the changing of seasons; in the dark nights of winter and the bright new mornings of spring. All seasons belong to Him.

Lecciones De Las Temporadas

El otoño ha llegado a Texas. Los cambios estacionales aquí tienden a ser menos marcados que los que recuerdo de mi infancia en Wisconsin. Allí, las estaciones parecían cambiar con una decisión sorprendente. Los días soleados y cálidos del verano se marchaban con la brusquedad del desalojo de un huésped que ha abusado de su hospitalidad, echado de espaldas y con el equipaje a cuestas.

En Texas, las estaciones juegan entre sí. Justo cuando parece que el verano se ha marchado para siempre, se cuele de nuevo, dejando las flores, los pájaros y la gente en un estado de confusión. Pero poco a poco el otoño se impone. Afirma pacientemente su poder, aliviando el duro resplandor del verano. Las noches frescas y la oscuridad prolongada indican a los árboles que es hora de despojarse de su frondosa vestimenta. Muchas hojas llaman la atención sobre su inminente desaparición tiñéndose de una brillante gama de rojos, naranjas y amarillos. Como en una hoguera, se consumen y luego descienden a la tierra como brasas moribundas.

En Wisconsin podía oler el otoño. El abono de la naturaleza esparcía su aroma por los bosques, perfumando el aire fresco y limpio. La fragancia del otoño me transporta a días y



lugares pasados. Recuerdo cuando rastrillar hojas era muy divertido. Después de juntarlas furiosamente formando enormes montones, mis hermanos y yo dábamos un salto corriendo. Las hojas volaban mientras desaparecíamos en el montón. ¡Cómo nos deleitábamos con el abrazo de la naturaleza!

Recuerdo que caminaba por campos de maleza que llegaban hasta la cintura y que hacía tiempo que se habían vuelto marrones y quebradizos. Eran la superestructura de las maravillas

arquitectónicas de la araña del jardín dorado. Estas arañas sabían, al igual que nosotros, que sus días al sol estaban contados. El otoño les avisó de que pronto llegaría la fría noche del invierno, ese momento en el que toda la creación debe descansar.

Incluso ahora, en este lugar de ambigüedad estacional, la llegada del otoño me mueve, no sólo a mirar hacia atrás, sino a mirar hacia delante. Sigue dando señales adecuadas que todos deberíamos reconocer. En toda

la naturaleza vemos que morir forma parte de la vida.

El otoño es un tiempo de reflexión, de preparación. Esta estación nos llama a apartarnos de nuestras ocupadas distracciones y a absorber el mensaje que cambia la vida. Suave, persistentemente, nos invita a mirar con gratitud lo que ha sido. Prudente y proféticamente, nos abre a considerar la esperanza trascendente que reclaman los redimidos.

Observa conmigo los signos

del otoño. Acoged esta palabra de Dios impresa en medio de nuestro mundo. Mientras sois testigos de su obra, dejad que el paso de este año os hable de Aquel que está con nosotros siempre y en todo momento. Él está presente en nuestro nacimiento, en nuestra vida y en nuestra muerte. Se une a nosotros en el cambio de las estaciones, en las noches oscuras del invierno y en las mañanas brillantes de la primavera. Todas las estaciones le pertenecen.

THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC

499 St. Matthews St. • El Paso, TX 79907
Phone: (915) 872-8414 • Fax: (915) 872-8435

Publishers: Most Rev. Mark J. Seitz, D.D.
Twitter: @BishopSeitz
Most Rev. Anthony C. Celino, D.D.

Editor: Fernie Cenicerros
Twitter: @FCenicerrosphoto
Email: Communications@elpasodiocese.org

Layout: Fernie Cenicerros

Chief Photographer: Emily Montelongo
Billing and Administrative Assistant: Monica Posada
Spanish Translation: Fernie Cenicerros
Contributors: Janet M. Crowe,
Fr. Wilson Cuevas, Rev. Michael Lewis, STL

www.elpasodiocese.org
© 2023 by
THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC
All rights reserved

THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC (ISSN#1079-9621) is published monthly for \$12.00 per year by the Office of Communications, Diocese of El Paso, 499 St. Matthews St., El Paso, TX 79907, Phone: (915) 872-8414, Fax: (915) 872-8435. "PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT EL PASO TX." POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to: THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC, 499 St. Matthews St., El Paso TX, 79907

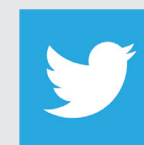
THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC is a monthly newspaper assisting the Bishop of the Diocese of El Paso by communicating the events and themes of the faith life of the local and universal church through news reports, features, columns and photographs. Articles and photographs become the property of THE RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC. If photos are on loan to the newspaper, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for their return.
Printer - PDX Printing.



@DioceseofElPaso



@ElPasoDiocese



@ElPasoDiocese

Fr. Ivan Montelongo Participates in Synod on Synodality in Rome

By Fernie Ceniceros
Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

The 16th General Assembly of the Synod on Synodality recently concluded its first session in the Vatican, marking a significant milestone in the Catholic Church's ongoing commitment to self-examination and renewal. The Synod, a gathering of clergy and laity from around the world, has delved into a broad range of topics, including Listening and Healing, The Face of a Synodal Church, Mission and Solidarity, Placing the Poor at the Center, Welcoming Migrants and Refugees, Combatting Racism and Xenophobia, Empowering the Laity and Recognizing Women, Listening to the Marginalized, and the Church's role in a digital world and culture.

Fr. Ivan Montelongo, a Priest of the Diocese of El Paso, was one of the 400 participants who gathered in Rome for this historic assembly. His reflections on the experience offer a unique insight into the significance of the Synod and its impact on those involved.

Fr. Montelongo shared, "The Synod Assembly has been a life-changing experience for me.



Fr. Ivan Montelongo was one of the 400 hundred people to participate in the Synod on Synodality in Rome in October of this year. *Photo courtesy of Fr. Ivan Montelongo*

It has been truly an honor to meet people from the Church throughout the world who bring with them the richness of their experience of Jesus and the Gospel. In the sharing in small groups and in coffee breaks, we got to share perspectives, know each other, and become sisters and brothers. I have learned from the way they live out their ministry. I have learned from the prayerful method that we have used for the discussions. But above all, I have learned that some of these cardinals, bishops, and lay leaders have an amazing sense of

humor and that they are normal people who very much love the Church and serve her with their whole heart."

Fr. Montelongo's words emphasize the profound sense of unity and communion that the Synod has fostered. Despite the diversity of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, the participants have come together to engage in dialogue and discernment, guided by their shared faith in Jesus and the Gospel.

"The first session of the Synod, held in October 2023, was dedi-

cated to discussing and discerning the topics outlined in the Instrumentum Laboris. This document compiles the themes that emerged from listening sessions conducted worldwide between 2021 and 2022. The Synod participants have worked diligently to prepare a Synthesis Report that captures the essence of their discussions and reflections. This report will be sent back to dioceses, parishes, universities, and other Catholic institutions across the world. It is in these local communities that the broader Catholic family will be invited to pray and discern together. The questions that will guide this discernment are fundamental: "What steps is the Holy Spirit inviting the Church to take? How is the Spirit inspiring us to live and bear witness to Christ," Fr. Montelongo added.

The Synod provides a framework for fostering a sense of mission, solidarity, and social responsibility, as well as addressing critical issues like welcoming migrants and refugees, combating racism and xenophobia, empowering the laity and recognizing women, and acknowledging the marginalized in our communities.

In a rapidly changing world, the Catholic Church must also grapple with the challenges of the digital age and evolving cultural norms. The Synod recognizes the importance of addressing these issues and adapting to the changing landscape while remaining steadfast in its commitment to the Gospel.

Fr. Montelongo's words resonate with the broader message of the Synod. He reminds us that the Church is made up of ordinary people who are deeply committed to their faith and the service of their communities.

"As the Synod continues its journey, it invites all Catholics to participate in this ongoing process of discernment and renewal, Fr. Montelongo added. "The Synod is a living testament to the Church's capacity for self-reflection and adaptation, and it holds the promise of a more inclusive, compassionate, and responsive Catholic Church. As we eagerly anticipate the next gathering in October 2024, the Synod provides a beacon of hope, demonstrating that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire the Church in its mission to be a living witness to Christ's love and mercy in the world," he ended.

El P. Iván Montelongo participa en Roma en el Sínodo sobre la Sinodalidad

Por Fernie Ceniceros
Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

La 16ª Asamblea General del Sínodo sobre la Sinodalidad concluyó recientemente su primera sesión en el Vaticano, marcando un hito significativo en el compromiso permanente de la Iglesia católica con el autoexamen y la renovación. El Sínodo, que reúne a clérigos y laicos de todo el mundo, ha profundizado en un amplio abanico de temas, como la escucha y la sanación, el rostro de una Iglesia sinodal, la misión y la solidaridad, la centralidad de los pobres, la acogida de emigrantes y refugiados, la lucha contra el racismo y la xenofobia, el empoderamiento de los laicos y el reconocimiento de la mujer, la escucha de los marginados y el papel de la Iglesia en un mundo y una cultura digitales.

El P. Iván Montelongo, sacerdote de la diócesis de El Paso, fue uno de los 400 participantes que se reunieron en Roma para

esta histórica asamblea. Sus reflexiones sobre la experiencia ofrecen una visión única de la importancia del Sínodo y su impacto en los participantes.

El P. Montelongo dijo: "La Asamblea del Sínodo ha sido una experiencia que me ha cambiado la vida. Ha sido un verdadero honor conocer a personas de la Iglesia de todo el mundo que traen consigo la riqueza de su experiencia de Jesús y del Evangelio. Al compartir en pequeños grupos y en las pausas para el café, hemos podido compartir perspectivas, conocernos y convertirnos en hermanas y hermanos. He aprendido de la forma en que viven su ministerio. He aprendido del método de oración que hemos utilizado para los debates. Pero, sobre todo, he aprendido que algunos de estos cardenales, obispos y líderes laicos tienen un increíble sentido del humor y que son personas normales que aman mucho a la Iglesia y la sirven con todo su

corazón."

Las palabras del P. Montelongo subrayan el profundo sentido de unidad y comunión que ha fomentado el Sínodo. A pesar de la diversidad de orígenes, culturas y experiencias, los participantes se han reunido para dialogar y discernir, guiados por su fe compartida en Jesús y en el Evangelio.

"La primera sesión del Sínodo, celebrada en octubre de 2023, se dedicó a discutir y discernir los temas esbozados en el Instrumentum Laboris. Este documento recoge los temas surgidos de las sesiones de escucha realizadas en todo el mundo entre 2021 y 2022. Los participantes en el Sínodo han trabajado diligentemente para preparar un Informe de Síntesis que recoja la esencia de sus debates y reflexiones. Este informe se enviará a diócesis, parroquias, universidades y otras instituciones católicas de todo el mundo. Es en estas comunidades locales donde se invitará a la

familia católica en general a orar y discernir juntos. Las preguntas que guiarán este discernimiento son fundamentales: "¿Qué pasos está invitando a dar el Espíritu Santo a la Iglesia? ¿Cómo nos inspira el Espíritu a vivir y dar testimonio de Cristo?"

El Sínodo proporciona un marco para fomentar el sentido de la misión, la solidaridad y la responsabilidad social, así como para abordar cuestiones críticas como la acogida de inmigrantes y refugiados, la lucha contra el racismo y la xenofobia, el empoderamiento de los laicos y el reconocimiento de las mujeres, y el reconocimiento de los marginados en nuestras comunidades.

En un mundo que cambia rápidamente, la Iglesia católica también debe afrontar los retos de la era digital y la evolución de las normas culturales. El Sínodo reconoce la importancia de abordar estas cuestiones y de adaptarse a un panorama cambiante, al tiempo que se mantiene

firme en su compromiso con el Evangelio.

Las palabras del P. Montelongo resuenan con el mensaje más amplio del Sínodo. Nos recuerda que la Iglesia está formada por personas corrientes profundamente comprometidas con su fe y al servicio de sus comunidades.

"A medida que el Sínodo continúa su camino, invita a todos los católicos a participar en este proceso continuo de discernimiento y renovación, añadió el P. Montelongo. "El Sínodo es un testimonio vivo de la capacidad de autorreflexión y adaptación de la Iglesia, y encierra la promesa de una Iglesia católica más inclusiva, compasiva y receptiva. Mientras esperamos con impaciencia la próxima reunión en octubre de 2024, el Sínodo ofrece un faro de esperanza, demostrando que el Espíritu Santo sigue inspirando a la Iglesia en su misión de ser testigo vivo del amor y la misericordia de Cristo en el mundo", concluyó.

Queen of Peace Parish Advent Retreat

Parroquia Reina de la Paz Retiro de Adviento

FREE

For More Information
915-584-5817

RSVP
tinalynn5@yahoo.com
or call the Parish Office

JOIN US

DISCERNING GOD'S WILL

DISCERNIMIENTO DE LA VOLUNTAD DE DIOS

Guest Speakers

English Session



Joelle Maryn

Actress | Speaker | TV Host

Spanish Session



Padre Mario Manríquez

parroquia de La Sagrada Familia, Ciudad Juarez

Begins at 8:30 a.m. (with Bilingual Mass) Ends at Noon

Saturday 2 December, 2023 | 8:30 AM | 1551 Belvidere St.

Honoring the dead through our prayers, rituals, and laying them to rest



Fr. Michael Lewis, STL

Throughout the month of November, Catholics honor in a special way those who have gone before us in death. Our loving remembrance begins with the Solemnity of All Saints on November 1, when we honor all the exemplars in faith who we believe to be with our Lord in heaven. We continue with the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day) on November 2, when we pray for all those who have died, in faithful hope that our prayers can hasten their membership among the "company of saints."

We pray for the dead because we believe in the communion of all Christ's members — those of us here on earth, and those who are now beyond it. Our prayers can bring spiritual help to those who've gone before us, but they also can bring consolation and peace for we who remain. As one



of the prefaces to the Eucharistic Prayer says, we believe that, in death, "life is changed not ended." So too is our spiritual connection to our loved ones.

Our prayerful concern for the dead typically begins immediately after death. Priests and deacons are often called to offer prayers of commendation in the moments after a person dies at home or in a hospital. These prayers ask for God's pardon and protection as they pass "through the gates of death," and are the first to express our hope that the person who was united with Christ in a death like

his, may also share in his Resurrection.

We continue our prayers in the three parts of the funeral rites: the vigil, the funeral liturgy, and the committal at the cemetery. Though commonly called a "rosary," the Vigil for the Deceased is actually a fuller service of Scripture, prayer, song, and remembrance that more people are able to actively participate in. Typically celebrated at the funeral home, the vigil is the most appropriate place for recollections and remembrances by family members and friends.

The funeral liturgy, most often

celebrated as a Mass, is the high point of the funeral rites. During it, we praise and thank God for Christ's victory over sin and death, we commend the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, and we seek strength and consolation through the hope of resurrection. Then, as we receive Holy Communion, "all are given a foretaste of eternal life in Christ and are united with Christ, with each other, and with all the faithful, living and dead," as the funeral ritual explains.

Finally, the Rite of Committal is the last act of the Christian community in caring for the body of the deceased. In committing the remains of our loved ones to their final resting place, we mark our separation from them in this life. Though a sad farewell, it is also hopeful, as we pray that Christ, who "hallowed the graves of those who believe" through his own burial, may restore us to eternal life through his Resurrection.

Sadly, some deceased loved ones still await their committal to their place of rest, as their cremated remains continue to be stored in relatives' homes. Even worse, some companies offer to turn the cremated remains of loved ones into jewelry to be worn. However,

none of these practices treat the cremated remains of a body with the respect we ordinarily give to the human body from which they come. Though the Church allows its members to be cremated, we must treat cremated remains with the same dignity and care we would a body — with a proper burial or entombment. In the same way we would not display a body or casket in our home, nor scatter body parts from the air, we shouldn't do the same with a loved one's cremated remains.

Thankfully, our diocesan Catholic cemetery, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Cemetery, has a program to bury or entomb the cremated remains of loved ones who, for whatever reason, have not yet been laid to rest. They will receive a proper and dignified burial, and a minister will celebrate the prayers and rituals the deceased have a right to as Christians. You can call (915) 860-0606 for more information. In this way, as the funeral ritual reminds us, we underscore the spiritual bond that continues to exist between the living and the dead, and we proclaim our belief that all those who believe will be raised up and reunited in heaven, where death will be no more.

Honrar a los muertos a través de nuestras oraciones, rituales, y darles sepultura

A lo largo del mes de noviembre, los católicos honran de manera especial a quienes nos han precedido en la muerte. Nuestro cariñoso recuerdo comienza con la Solemnidad de Todos los Santos, el 1 de noviembre, cuando honramos a todos los ejemplares de la fe que creemos que están con nuestro Señor en el cielo. Continuamos con la Conmemoración de Todos los Fieles Difuntos (Día de los Muertos) el 2 de noviembre, cuando rezamos por todos los que han muerto, con la fiel esperanza de que nuestras oraciones puedan acelerar su ingreso en la "compañía de los santos".

Rezamos por los muertos porque creemos en la comunión de todos los miembros de Cristo: los que estamos aquí en la tierra y los que están ahora más allá. Nuestras oraciones pueden aportar ayuda espiritual a los que se han ido antes que nosotros, pero también pueden traer consuelo y paz para los que quedamos. Como dice uno de los prefacios de la Plegaria

Eucarística, creemos que, en la muerte, "la vida no se acaba, se transforma". Así es también nuestra conexión espiritual con nuestros seres queridos.

Nuestra preocupación en la oración por los muertos suele comenzar inmediatamente después de la muerte. Los sacerdotes y los diáconos suelen ser llamados a ofrecer oraciones de encomio en los momentos posteriores a la muerte de una persona en su casa o en un hospital. Estas oraciones piden el perdón y la protección de Dios al pasar por "las puertas de la muerte", y son las primeras que expresan nuestra esperanza de que la persona que estuvo unida a Cristo en una muerte como la suya, pueda participar también en su resurrección.

Continuamos nuestras oraciones en las tres partes de los ritos exequiales: la vigilia, la liturgia funeral y el sepelio en el cementerio. Aunque comúnmente se le llama "rosario", la Vigilia de Difuntos es en realidad un servicio más completo

de Escritura, oración, canto y recuerdo en el que pueden participar activamente más personas. Celebrada normalmente en la funeraria, la vigilia es el lugar más apropiado para los relatos de recuerdo de los familiares y amigos.

La liturgia funeral, que suele celebrarse en forma de misa, es el punto culminante de los ritos exequiales. Durante ella, alabamos y damos gracias a Dios por la victoria de Cristo sobre el pecado y la muerte, encomendamos al difunto a la tierna misericordia y compasión de Dios, y buscamos fuerza y consuelo a través de la esperanza de la resurrección. Luego, al comulgar, "todos reciben un anticipado goce de la vida eterna en Cristo, en quien se unen unos a otros, junto con todos los fieles, vivos y muertos", como explica el ritual funeral.

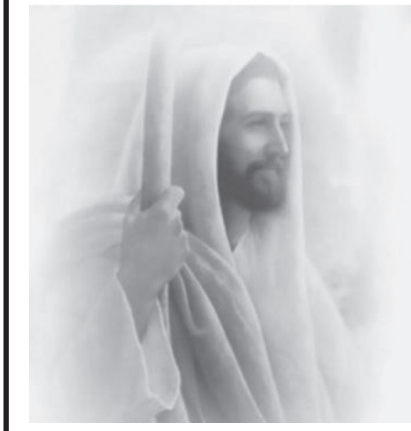
Por último, el rito del sepelio es el último acto de la comunidad cristiana en el cuidado del cuerpo del difunto. Al entregar los restos de nuestros seres queridos a su lugar de descanso

final, marcamos nuestra separación de ellos en esta vida. Aunque es una despedida triste, también es esperanzadora, ya que rezamos para que Cristo, que santificó los sepulcros de los creyentes con su propia sepultura, nos devuelva la vida eterna con su resurrección.

Lamentablemente, algunos seres queridos fallecidos siguen esperando su traslado a su lugar de descanso, ya que sus restos cremados siguen almacenados en las casas de los familiares. Y lo que es peor, algunas empresas ofrecen convertir los restos cremados de sus seres queridos en joyería. Sin embargo, ninguna de estas prácticas trata los restos cremados de un cuerpo con el respeto que normalmente damos al cuerpo humano del que proceden. Aunque la Iglesia permite que sus miembros sean cremados, debemos tratar los restos cremados con la misma dignidad y cuidado que daríamos a un cuerpo: con un entierro o sepultura adecuados. De la misma manera que no exhibiríamos un cuerpo o un

ataúd en nuestra casa, ni esparciríamos partes del cuerpo por el aire, no deberíamos hacer lo mismo con los restos cremados de un ser querido.

Afortunadamente, nuestro cementerio católico diocesano, el Cementerio de Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo, tiene un programa para enterrar o sepultar los restos cremados de los seres queridos que, por cualquier razón, aún no han sido enterrados. Recibirán un entierro adecuado y digno, y un ministro celebrará las oraciones y los rituales a los que los difuntos tienen derecho como cristianos. Puede llamar al (915) 860-0606 para obtener más información. De este modo, como nos recuerda el ritual funeral, subrayamos vínculo espiritual que aún existe entre vivos y muertos, y proclamamos nuestra creencia de que todos los que creen resucitarán y se reunirán en el cielo, donde la muerte no existirá más.




The Shepherd's Corner

Gifts & Books

Hours of Operation:
Monday & Tuesday 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
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

St. Luke Catholic Church

930 E. Redd Road, El Paso Texas 79912



Diocesan Priests attend Annual Retreat at Holy Cross in Mesilla, NM



Gathering in Grace: Diocesan Priests of El Paso finding solace and renewal at the annual priest’s retreat in late October 2023 at Holy Cross Retreat Center. Priests in attendance gathered for a group photo at the conclusion of their daily mass. *Photo by Fernie Cenicerros*



Fr. Glen Carpe prays during Holy Mass at the annual priest’s retreat at Holy Cross Retreat Center in October 2023. *Photo by Fernie Cenicerros*



Fr. Angel Maldonado presides at Holy Mass during the annual priest’s retreat at Holy Cross Retreat Center in October 2023. *Photo by Fernie Cenicerros*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FATHER!

- Fr. Francisco “Frank” Hernandez Nov 1
- Fr. Marciano Lopez-Solis, AA Nov 2
- Fr. Emanuel Alcazar Nov 19
- Fr. Hung T. Nguyen, SJ Nov 20
- Fr. Kevin O’Neill, FSSP Nov 30

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

- Fr. Alfonso Bonilla, OP Nov 15, 1997
- Fr. Flavio Alberto Hernandez, OFM Nov 15, 1970
- Fr. Peter Precourt, AA Nov 20, 1976
- Fr. Mount Joseph Selvan Durai Raj, SJ Nov 24, 1993
- Fr. Pablo Matta Nov 25, 1990
- Fr. Francisco Javier Lopez Camarena, OFM Nov 27, 1994



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.



915.544.6688

PDX Printing proud printer of the Rio Grande Catholic

PDX Printing is a full service commercial print shop.

In addition to newspapers, we print and bind books, programs, brochures, carbonless forms, flyers, posters, letterhead, envelopes, business cards and much more.

Call us and allow us to bid on your printing needs.

208 Octavia St., El Paso, TX 79901

We Are the Body of Christ

Sharing Our Gifts for the Church of Tomorrow



Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo

Compartiendo Nuestros Dones para la Iglesia de Manana

On May 6, 2013, we had the blessing of Pope Francis appointing The Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz, D.D., as the sixth Bishop of the Diocese of El Paso, Texas. He was installed on July 9, 2013.

As someone who once said: "I have learned through the years that following Christ is an adventure filled with totally unexpected dips and turns. When you give your life to His service you better learn to enjoy the ride."

And as a prelate serving the borderland community, whose sister city is Ciudad Juárez Chihuahua México, the bishop immediately focused on many activities. But his heartfelt commitment for him and his team of priests was to increase the number of seminarians, given that at the time, there were only 6 seminarians in school. For this process, it took him just under 4 years to recruit 32 young men to discern a journey to the priesthood. Unfortunately, the Diocese did not have the sufficient funds to send all these seminarians preparing for the priesthood.

Bishop Mark was determined to succeed in this task of educating and preparing as many seminarians for the future of the Diocese of El Paso. And he did! Since his arrival, there are 28 seminarians who have become priests in the Diocese of El Paso, yet this job is not done yet! **THE NEED FOR FUTURE PRIESTS CONTINUES!**

The We Are the Body of Christ Capital Campaign was launched by Bishop Mark for the needs of our Diocese, as Bishop Mark had a vision into the future, for us all. He wants to make sure that our faith does not fail, that our Sunday Consecration does not stop and that El Paso's Catholic community has a solid foundation for our future needs as Catholics.

Therefore, it is imperative that we continue supporting and fulfilling our commitment to this cause. **JESUS CHRIST'S CAUSE!**

If you have not fulfilled your commitment, or you have questions or concerns, please call Martha Marmolejo at: 915-872-8412 ext. 137 or email me at mmarmolejo@elpasodiocese.org.

Overall statistics of the We Are the Body of Christ as of September 30, 2023
TOTAL PLEDGED: \$14,624,470 - TOTAL COLLECTED: \$5,516,557
TOTAL BALANCE: \$9,107,913

El 6 de mayo de 2013, obtuvimos la gran bendición del Papa Francisco al nombrar al Reverendísimo Mark J. Seitz, D.D., como sexto Obispo de la Diócesis de El Paso, Texas, quien fuera instalado el 9 de julio de 2013. Como alguien que dijo una vez: "A lo largo de los años he aprendido que seguir a Cristo es una aventura llena de altibajos totalmente inesperados. Cuando entregas tu vida a Su servicio, es mejor que aprendas a disfrutar el viaje".

Y como prelado al servicio de la comunidad fronteriza, cuya ciudad hermana es Ciudad Juárez Chihuahua México, el señor obispo se centró inmediatamente en muchas actividades. Pero su compromiso más sincero para él y su equipo de sacerdotes fue aumentar el número de seminaristas, dado que en ese momento sólo había 6 seminaristas en la escuela. Para este proceso, le llevó poco menos de 4 años reclutar a 32 jóvenes para discernir un camino hacia el sacerdocio. Desafortunadamente, la Diócesis no tenía fondos suficientes para enviar a todos estos seminaristas a prepararse para el sacerdocio.

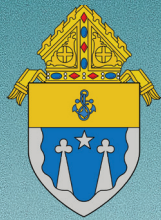
El Obispo Mark estaba decidido a tener éxito en esta tarea de educar y preparar a tantos seminaristas para el futuro de la Diócesis de El Paso, como le fuera posible. ¡Y lo hizo! Desde su llegada, ha habido ya 28 seminaristas que se han convertido en sacerdotes en la Diócesis de El Paso, ¡pero este trabajo aún no ha terminado! **¡CONTINÚA LA NECESIDAD DE FUTUROS SACERDOTES!**

La Campaña Capital Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo fue lanzada por el Obispo Mark para las necesidades de nuestra Diócesis, ya que él tuvo una visión futura para todos nosotros. El desea asegurarse de que nuestra fe no falle, que nuestra Consagración dominical no se detenga y que la comunidad católica de El Paso tenga una base sólida para nuestras necesidades futuras como católicos.

Por lo tanto, es imperativo que sigamos apoyando y cumpliendo nuestro compromiso con esta causa. **¡LA CAUSA DE JESUCRISTO!**

Si no ha cumplido todavía con su compromiso, o tiene preguntas o inquietudes, por favor llame a Martha Marmolejo al: 915-872-8412 ext. 137 o envíe un correo electrónico a mmarmolejo@elpasodiocese.org.

Estadísticas Generales de Somos El Cuerpo de Cristo a la fecha del 30 de Septiembre del 2023
PROMESA TOTAL: \$14,624,470 - RECOLECTADO TOTAL: \$5,516,557
BALANCE TOTAL: \$9,107,913



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
EL PASO

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CEMETERY

The only Catholic cemetery in the El Paso area was established to serve the needs of our Catholic Community in their time of mourning and need. We help guide our families with end-of-life arrangements with pastoral care during your time of greatest need.

Facilities and Services include an intimate chapel for on-site services, a place for the interment of cremated remains in our columbarium or the chapel, and we also offer traditional in-ground burials or in our mausoleum. Mt. Carmel's peaceful grounds are maintained by environmentally responsible reclaimed water.

401 S. Zaragoza Road • (915) 860-0606

<https://www.elpasodiocese.org/our-lady-of-mt-carmel-cemetery.html> • mtcarmel@mtcarmeelp.org

SIDEWALK JESUS

Can Gratitude win over Grumpiness?



Janet M. Crowe

“Seriously!” shouted Anna. “Why is this happening?”

“What’s wrong?” asked her husband Sam.

“Everything’s gone wrong today,” Anna complained. “Traffic, construction, cars zooming up to cut in front of everyone in line. No sugar for my coffee, dishwasher is broken. Is that mold on the fruit for the salad I promised to bring to tonight’s potluck dinner? What else...”

“No!” interrupted Sam. “Never ask that because things can always get worse!”

“Are you sure?” whined Anna.

We’ve all had days like that. We can all list volumes of trials or minor tribulations that ruin a good mood and cause dark clouds to smother our ability to turn our frowns into smiles. So, how do we go from a grouchy mindset of “every silver lining has a cloud” to be able to even look for that silver lining?

One way is to look for what we want to find. When something bad happens, don’t expect something even worse to come along. Instead, look for the good.

Occasionally (don’t ask my

husband how often that is), I get as grumpy as a bear just out of hibernation with no food in sight. That’s when everything anyone does hits a nerve and persistently darkens the cloud hovering over my head, shooting lightning bolts and thundering at anyone who crosses my path.

The only way out of this stormy mood is to make myself look for the blessing rather than the curse, so to speak. When I can drag my head and my mood out of the dungeon into which I’ve cast myself, I try to follow every grump, complaint or criticism with three things for which I am grateful. Mentally, I raise my eyes to Heaven and try to find three reasons to thank God. Those reasons don’t even need to be related to the reason for my grumpiness. I just take a deep breath and let it out slowly, then I force myself to search my heart for three blessings.

I mean, after all, I know that I have been abundantly blessed in my life. I know this! I recognize it. But sometimes, I not only forget, I think I actually prefer to wallow in irritability and maybe even a bit of self-pity. But I don’t want to stay there. So, I try.

At times, it takes a bit more effort and I must sit back, close my eyes, and really focus my thoughts on the ways that God has showered my life with joy, happiness, and even miracles. That’s when the petulance begins to melt away, and slowly the sunshine and rainbows re-



place the storms in my heart.

At times, I wonder why I get so cranky. As a child, I was usually happy. My favorite movie was the Disney version of Pollyanna (a book by Eleanor Porter for those born in this millennium).

“When you look for the bad, expecting to find it, you surely will!” That is the message, as paraphrased, from both the book and the movie, that I tried to follow.

Then, life got more complicated and as an adult I have had to reteach myself, again and again, to try to follow that principle in my daily life.

Criticizing a pregnant teenager rather than recognizing the miracle she has been given and finding a way to help her with her struggles. Snapping at a noisy child rather than appreciating the joy of life he is showing us. Being annoyed with an elderly person because

we have heard the same story or question several times instead of listening with our hearts at what was and still is important to him. And, of course, allowing my temper to boil over rather than having patience with those I love – spouses seem to be such easy targets for bad tempers, don’t they. These are opportunities to rediscover the blessings in life and revel in those joys while banishing the destroyer of happiness to somewhere far away.

It’s not always as easy as it sounds though. That’s when I remind myself that we will find what we look for. Watch for things to criticize and there will be plenty. Search for the positive things in life and we will be surprised that they outnumber the bad, even on a bad day.

What does “finding what we look for” mean? Take traffic, for example. White seems to be the most common color for cars

today. However, red is certainly not uncommon, and there are a lot more blue or green cars than one might think. Start looking for blue cars and it might be surprising how many blue cars will suddenly appear.

Once we make a habit of looking for reasons to smile rather than frown, we will find them. To further paraphrase the Disney and Eleanor Porter quote, “When we look for the good, expecting to find it, we surely will.”

Then that brings us to the message behind our search – being grateful to God for filling our lives with so many reasons to be happy. However, I have never felt competent at showing my gratitude to God. “Thank you, thank you, thank you, Lord,” seemed a rather hopeless prayer. So, I recently asked my family if they knew any “good” prayers of thanksgiving.

My big brother came to my rescue: “You know that God looks into your heart when you say thank you and hears your sincerity. That is all that is required. You don’t need someone else’s words.”

So, here goes. “Thank you, O Lord my God, for not only giving me many opportunities to cast aside my grumpiness but, more importantly, even more occasions to search and to rediscover again and again the countless ways You make my life wonderful. Thank You, dear Lord.”

Happy Thanksgiving to all! May your blessings be tripled!

Should Law Enforcement Have Access to Your Newborn’s Blood?



Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Many parents and concerned citizens would probably be surprised to learn that their children’s blood samples are being accessed by law enforcement agencies without their knowledge or consent.

In 2021, the State Police of New Jersey sought access to a blood sample from the Newborn Screening Laboratory, a sample belonging to a child who had been screened nine years earlier as a newborn. They wanted to perform DNA analysis so they could try to connect the child’s father to a crime committed nearly 25 years earlier.

Filed away for a long time, these original paper medical forms, with spots of dried blood on them, contain the DNA of newborns. By obtaining the child’s bloodspot sample without a warrant, the State Police were

able to maneuver around the requirement to establish probable cause before seeking a warrant for a mouth swab from the suspect. The DNA results obtained from the child’s blood were used to submit an affidavit of probable cause, and a warrant was then issued for a mouth swab from the father. Following the analysis of his swabbed DNA, he was criminally charged.

Every baby born in New Jersey — and most other states as well — is required by law to be tested for a number of diseases and disorders, often within 48 hours of birth, as part of a newborn screening program. By pricking the heel of the baby, hospitals and medical facilities collect blood samples from virtually all newborns in the U.S. Many states retain the dried blood samples after the initial testing has been completed. Upwards of four million newborns are tested annually.

The goal is to identify a range of conditions and diseases in newborn babies, in the hope of reducing their severity through early treatment. One of the most notable success stories involves a condition called phenylketonuria (PKU). When babies with PKU eat foods containing phenylalanine — an essential amino acid

found in many common foods — they can suffer permanent brain damage. Before standardized newborn blood screening, families discovered that their child had the condition only after the child developed brain damage. With the advent of newborn screening for PKU in the 1960s, families could be told whether their child had the condition right after birth. They could then use a special diet to prevent permanent brain damage from occurring.

Notwithstanding the praiseworthy and commendable project of trying to improve health outcomes for newborns, these blood spot samples are often collected without getting informed consent from a newborn baby’s parents, and in some states, the samples may be retained and stored afterwards, even for decades. Many parents are unaware not only of the existence of the screening program but also that blood was drawn from their newborn. It can come as a shock to discover that their family’s genetic privacy may have been violated when law enforcement receives access to their child’s stored blood sample without their knowledge or consent and without a warrant.

When it comes to the ethics of blood testing programs, parents are entitled to full transparency,

including complete and accurate information about why their baby’s blood is being drawn. Those states that retain and store samples after the completion of immediate testing also have an ethical duty to inform parents of this practice and be sure that parents have an opportunity to provide informed consent not only for the immediate testing of their newborn, but for any subsequent uses of the blood sample, including possible future scrutiny of the sample by law enforcement, or by biomedical researchers.

The fact that our DNA and our genetic code contains important personal information about us means that our individual “bio-informatics” should not be used or brokered by others without our awareness and consent. Medical confidentiality should be reasonably safeguarded as part of initiatives like the Newborn Bloodspot Screening Program. Legislative mandates requiring such newborn screening should thus allow parents to opt out, not only of the testing itself in the face of serious reasons, but also of long-term storage and subsequent uses of their newborn’s biological samples, including by law enforcement.

Informed consent is also

becoming important in the face of an ever-growing number of direct-to-consumer genetic testing options, like 23andMe and Ancestry.com. Companies should assure that customers can retain real control over their data. Genetic privacy is a subset of medical privacy, and even those who upload their DNA data to genetic genealogy databases should have the opportunity to provide consent for retention of their data and for disclosure of these data to any third parties.

Informed consent serves as an essential bioethical principle in biomedicine today by providing a concrete safeguard for the dignity of those receiving medical treatments, or otherwise involved in human medical experimentation or research. It should not be contravened without due process and substantial reason.

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 Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.nbcen-center.org and www.fathertad.com.

Contemos Nuestros Días



Padre Wilson Cuevas

“Enseñanos a calcular nuestros años para tener corazón prudente” (Salmo 89,12)

Algo de lo que aprendemos en la infancia es a leer, escribir y contar. Muy pronto nos damos cuenta de que debemos contar bien, para evitar el peligro de cometer costosas equivocaciones. Pero la vida también cuenta, pues la forma en que vivimos traerá sus resultados tarde o temprano; por esa razón, la oración del salmista contenida en este versículo es práctica y oportuna. Cuando cumplimos años de vida, de estar en un trabajo o ministerio, aniversario de matrimonio o al celebrar el día de los difuntos; es bueno pedirle al Señor con todo el corazón: “Enseñanos a contar nuestros días, de tal manera que traigamos al corazón sabiduría para vivir”.

Porque hemos de contar nuestros días? Porque son nuestra más valiosa posesión. Porque son la vida misma. Porque son pocos. (Sal. 89, 9-10). Porque no podemos recuperar lo que hemos desperdiciado. Porque la forma como lo usemos será lo que recibamos. Porque un día tendremos que dar cuenta a Dios de ellos. Cuantos días han pasado ya por nuestra vida? Según nuestra apreciación material, un anciano ha visto pasar muchos y un joven pocos, pero ante el autor de la vida esta forma de contar no

tiene mucho valor (Is, 54,8-9). No sabemos cuántos días nos quedan en este mundo y quizás sea mejor que no lo sepamos. Lo que sí sabemos es que la vida es muy frágil y debemos vivirla con sabiduría y prudencia. Que cada día que Dios nos concede estemos dispuestos a vivirlos con gratitud, fe, amor, gozo, servicio y humildad. Y que Dios nos enseñe a contar nuestros días con verdadera sabiduría.

Cuando nace un hombre, dice San Agustín, se pueden hacer todas las hipótesis: Que posiblemente será bello, quizás feo; acaso rico, quizás pobre; vivirá muchos años, posiblemente no, será inteligente o lento para aprender; tendrá buena salud o será muy enfermo, será muy alegre, o vivirá triste, será extrovertido o será tímido, será muy espiritual o indiferente en su vida de fe. Pero, de nadie se dice: Quizás morirá o quizás no. Esta es la única cosa absolutamente cierta de la vida. El temor de la muerte esta clavado en lo más profundo de todo ser humano y comienza a manifestarse apenas el niño se asoma a la edad de la razón y del conocimiento. Esa es la expresión del más potente de los instintos humanos, el instinto del auto conservación. Si se pudiera oír el grito silencioso, que surge de la humanidad entera, se escucharía el bramido tremendo: “No quiero morir!”

Nuestra cultura y la educación que recibimos en nuestro hogar nos enseñan a prohibir el pensamiento de la muerte. Aprentar que no existe o que existe solo para los demás, no para nosotros. Planeamos, nos afanamos, nos desesperamos por llenarnos de cosas, de reconocimientos, cosas



de nada, precisamente como si en cierto momento no deberíamos dejarlo todo y partir. En una ciudad después de la guerra a surgido un barrio de lujo, los constructores han decidido que allí no debería haber ninguna iglesia y el motivo es porque el toque a muerte de las campanas y vista de los funerales podría perturbar la tranquilidad de los inquilinos. Pero el pensamiento de la muerte no se deja arrinconar o quitar con estas pequeñas sutilezas. Entonces solo nos queda reprimirlo y es lo que hace la mayoría de nosotros. Pretendemos exorcizar el miedo.

Los seres humanos, desde que el mundo es mundo nunca han cesado de buscar remedios contra la muerte. Uno de estos, típicos del Antiguo Testamento, se llama prole: Sobrevivir en los hijos. Otro es la fama “no morir del todo” canta un poeta pagano, hacer monumentos o estatuas. En nuestros días se va difundiendo un pseudoremedio: La doctrina

de la reencarnación. “El destino de los hombres es que mueran una sola vez y luego ser juzgados” (Hebreos 9,27). La doctrina de la reencarnación es incompatible con la fe cristiana, que en su lugar profesa la resurrección de la muerte. Es útil, necesario y sirve pensar en la muerte ante todo para prepararse y morir bien. Saber que a como se vive se muere. El árbol de la parte que se inclina, una vez cortado caerá. Pero, todavía más, sirve para vivir bien con más calma y sabiduría.

Recuerdo, la anécdota de un anciano haciendo su testamento con el notario. Ya al final le dice: Para acabar, mi última voluntad es que me entierren con música. A lo que respondió el notario: No faltaba más, señor Garcia, pero concréteme una cosa: En esa ocasión, que música le gustaría escuchar? En esas circunstancias, al difunto le vale cualquier música, menos el himno nacional, porque debe

escucharlo de pie. Cuantas ofrendas por los muertos son solo para consuelo e incluso para ostentación de los vivos. Si queremos de verdad ayudar a nuestros difuntos, en lugar de ofrecer a Dios lo que nos agrada a nosotros, debemos ofrecer lo que le agrada a Él. Si no vivimos de acuerdo con la voluntad del Señor, si estamos en pecado, peleados por la herencia del difunto, si no vamos a Misa los Domingos, si no hemos vuelto a confesarnos ni a comulgar por muchos años... En memoria de nuestro ser querido hacer una buena confesión, la vuelta a la amistad con Dios, ofrecer Misas por su eterno descanso y hacer buenas obras en su memoria son casi siempre el mejor y más valioso sufragio que podemos ofrecer por nuestros queridos difuntos.

Let Us Count Our Days

“Teach us to count our years, that we may have a wise heart” (Psalm 89:12).

One of the things we learn in childhood is how to read, write and count. We soon realize that we must count well, to avoid the danger of making costly mistakes. But life also counts, for the way we live will bring its results sooner or later; for that reason, the psalmist’s prayer contained in this verse is practical and timely. When we celebrate years of life, of being in a job or ministry, marriage anniversary or when celebrating the day of the dead; it is good to ask the Lord with all our heart: “Teach us to number our days, so that we may bring wisdom to our heart to live”.

Why should we count our days? Because they are our most valuable possession. Because they are life itself. Because they are few (Ps. 89:9-10). Because we cannot recover what we have wasted. Because how we use it will be what we receive. Because one day we will have to give an account to God for them. How many days have already passed in our life? According to our material appreciation, an old

man has seen many and a young man few, but before the author of life this way of counting does not have much value (Is, 54,8-9). We do not know how many days we have left in this world and perhaps it is better that we do not know. What we do know is that life is very fragile and we must live it with wisdom and prudence. May we be willing to live each day that God grants us with gratitude, faith, love, joy, service and humility. And may God teach us to count our days with true wisdom.

When a man is born, says St. Augustine, one can make all the hypotheses: That he will possibly be beautiful, perhaps ugly; perhaps rich, perhaps poor; he will live many years, possibly not; he will be intelligent or slow to learn; he will be in good health or very sick; he will be very happy or sad; he will be extroverted or shy; he will be very spiritual or indifferent in his life of faith. But, of no one it is said: Perhaps he will die or perhaps he will not. This is the only absolutely certain thing about life. The fear of death is nailed in the deepest part of every human being and begins

to manifest itself as soon as the child reaches the age of reason and knowledge. It is the expression of the most potent of human instincts, the instinct of self-preservation. If one could hear the silent cry, arising from the whole of humanity, one would hear the tremendous bellow, “I don’t want to die!”

Our culture and the education we receive at home teach us to forbid the thought of death. To pretend that it does not exist or that it exists only for others, not for us. We plan, we strive, we despair to fill ourselves with things, with recognitions, things of nothing, precisely as if at a certain moment we should not leave everything and leave. In a city after the war an upscale neighborhood has arisen, the builders have decided that there should be no church there and the reason is because the death knell of the bells and the sight of funerals could disturb the tranquility of the tenants. But the thought of death cannot be cornered or removed with these little subtleties. So we can only repress it, and that is what most of us do. We try to exorcise the fear.

Human beings, ever since the world has been a world, have never ceased to look for remedies against death. One of these, typical of the Old Testament, is called progeny: Surviving in children. Another is the fame “not to die at all” sings a pagan poet, to make monuments or statues. In our days a pseudoremedy is spreading: the doctrine of reincarnation. “The destiny of men is that they die once and then be judged” (Hebrews 9:27). The doctrine of reincarnation is incompatible with the Christian faith, which instead professes the resurrection from the dead. It is useful, necessary and useful to think about death first of all in order to prepare oneself to die well. To know that as one lives one dies. The tree of the part that bends, once cut down, will fall. But, even more, it serves to live well with more calm and wisdom.

I remember the anecdote of an old man making his will with the notary. Already at the end he said to him: To finish, my last will is that they bury me with music. To which the notary replied

The notary replied: Of course,

Thanking Donors for Their Support to Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal

By Tina Edwards-Milam,
Annual Appeal Director

In the heart of our Catholic community, and on behalf of our ministries, there lies a profound and eternal gratitude to all who have chosen to support the mission of our ministries through their sacrificial generosity and prayerful support to the Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal.

The Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal has been blessed with the unwavering commitment of countless donors throughout the years, whose contributions have had a transformative impact through the ministries of the Diocese of El Paso. In this feature, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated individuals whose kindness and faithfulness have enabled our ministries to continue their sacred work.

“It is because of you our ministries can make a difference.”

At the heart of any ministry lies the desire to bring hope, love, and faith to those in need. The Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal embodies this spirit and is at 85% of its goal, thanks to the selflessness of our donors. Your contributions, whether large

or small, have been the lifeblood of our ministries, empowering each ministry to reach out and touch the lives of so many. Our ministries can fulfill their mission through your sacrificial giving and continue to be a beacon of light in the community.

The generosity of our donors goes beyond mere financial support; it reflects the depth of their faith and their commitment to living out the teachings of Jesus. By supporting our ministries, our donors have become instruments of God’s love, allowing our ministries to assist those who need it most. Our donors’ sacrificial giving and prayerful support are a testament to their dedication to the values of compassion, unity, and charity, which lie at the core of our Catholic faith.

The impact of our donors’ support can be seen in the lives of countless individuals who have received help through our ministries. Whether providing support for our seminarians, education for our deacons and lay leaders, or comfort for the grieving, our donors’ contributions have been a source of strength for many. In their selflessness, our donors have become partners in our mission, sharing in the joy of



making a difference in the lives of others, therefore being the face of Jesus.

We also want to acknowledge the great sacrifices made by our donors. Many have chosen to give from their resources, making sacrifices in their own lives to support our ministries. These acts of selfless giving, kindness, love, and devotion are profoundly moving and serve as a reminder of the power of faith and the sense of purpose that unites us all.

Moreover, we appreciate our donors’ trust in us to be good stewards of their gifts. By con-

tributing to the Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal, they have demonstrated confidence in our ability to carry out our mission effectively. We take this trust seriously and are committed to being lifelong good stewards of the resources we receive, ensuring that every donation is used wisely to maximize its impact.

On a final note, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated priests and lay leaders whose unwavering commitment and support have been instrumental in making the Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal a resounding success. Your tireless efforts and

deep faith have truly enriched our communities, and we are immensely thankful for your leadership and dedication to our ministries. Together, we continue to make a positive impact in the lives of many.

In conclusion, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all our donors for their sacrificial generosity and unwavering support to the Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal. Your kindness and faithfulness have enabled us to carry out the mission of the Church, bringing hope, love, and faith to those in need. Your generosity reflects the enduring values of our Catholic faith, and we are profoundly grateful for your partnership in this sacred work.

Together, we will continue to impact many lives positively, and we are eternally grateful for that.

For more information or to donate, please contact Tina Edwards-Milam, Annual Appeal Director, at 915-872-8412, tedwards-milam@catholicfoundationelpaso.org or visit 2023progress-cma.org today.

Agradecimiento A Los Donantes Por Su Apoyo A Progress: Campaña Del Ministerio Católico

Por Tina Edwards-Milam,
Annual Appeal Director

En el corazón de nuestra comunidad católica, y en nombre de nuestros ministerios, existe una profunda y eterna gratitud hacia todos aquellos que han elegido apoyar la misión de nuestros ministerios a través de su generosidad sacrificial y su apoyo en oración a Progreso: Campaña Católica para los Ministerios.

Progreso: Campaña Católica para los Ministerios ha sido bendecida con el compromiso inquebrantable de innumerables donantes a lo largo de los años, sus contribuciones han tenido un impacto transformador a través de los ministerios de la Diócesis de El Paso. En este artículo, nos gustaría expresar nuestro más sincero agradecimiento a las personas que, con su amabilidad y fidelidad, han hecho posible que nuestros ministerios continúen su sagrada labor.

“Es gracias a ustedes que nuestros ministerios pueden seguir haciendo la diferencia”.

En el corazón de cualquier ministerio está el deseo de llevar esperanza, amor y fe a los más necesitados. Progreso encarna este espíritu y está en 85% de su meta, gracias a la abnegación de nuestros donantes. Sus contribuciones, ya sean grandes o pequeñas, han sido la línea de sangre de nuestros ministerios, permitiendo a cada uno de ellos llegar y tocar las vidas de tantas personas. Nuestros ministerios pueden cumplir su misión gracias al sacrificio de nuestros donantes y seguir siendo una luz brillante en la comunidad.

La generosidad de nuestros donantes va más allá del mero apoyo financiero; refleja la profundidad de su fe y su compromiso de vivir las enseñanzas de Jesús. Al apoyar nuestros ministerios, se han convertido en instrumentos del amor de Dios, permitiendo que nuestros ministerios ayuden a quienes más lo necesitan. El sacrificio de nuestros donantes y su apoyo en la oración son testimonio de su dedicación a los valores de compasión, unidad y caridad, que

constituyen el núcleo de nuestra fe católica.

El impacto del apoyo de nuestros donantes puede verse en las vidas de innumerables personas que han recibido ayuda a través de nuestros ministerios. Las aportaciones de nuestros donantes han sido una fuente de fortaleza para muchas personas, ya sea para ayudar a nuestros seminaristas, formar a nuestros diáconos y líderes laicos o consolar a los dolientes. En su desinterés, nuestros donantes se han convertido en socios de nuestra misión, compartiendo la alegría de marcar la diferencia en la vida de los demás, siendo así el Rostro de Jesús.

También queremos reconocer los sacrificios realizados por nuestros donantes. Muchos han elegido dar de sus recursos, haciendo sacrificios en sus propias vidas para apoyar nuestros ministerios. Estos actos de entrega desinteresada, bondad, amor y devoción son profundamente conmovedores y sirven como recordatorio del poder de la fe y el sentido de propósito que nos

une a todos.

Además, agradecemos la confianza que nuestros donantes depositan en nosotros para que seamos buenos administradores de sus donativos. Al contribuir a Progreso, han demostrado su confianza en nuestra capacidad para llevar a cabo nuestra misión con eficacia. Nos tomamos muy en serio esta confianza y nos comprometemos a ser durante toda nuestra vida buenos administradores de los recursos que recibimos, asegurándonos de que cada donación se utiliza sabiamente para maximizar su impacto.

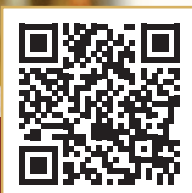
Por último, queremos expresar nuestra más sincera gratitud a nuestros abnegados sacerdotes y líderes laicos, con su inquebrantable compromiso y apoyo han sido decisivos para que Progreso sea un éxito rotundo. Sus incansables esfuerzos y su profunda fe han enriquecido verdaderamente nuestras comunidades, y estamos inmensamente agradecidos por su liderazgo y dedicación a nuestros ministerios. Juntos, seguimos teniendo un impacto

positivo en las vidas de muchas personas.

En conclusión, extendemos nuestro más sincero agradecimiento a todos nuestros donantes por su sacrificada generosidad e inquebrantable apoyo a Progreso: Campaña Católica para los Ministerios. Su bondad y fidelidad nos han permitido llevar a cabo la misión de la Iglesia, llevando esperanza, amor y fe a los necesitados. Su generosidad refleja los valores perdurables de nuestra fe católica y estamos profundamente agradecidos por su colaboración en esta sagrada labor.

Juntos, continuaremos impactando positivamente en muchas vidas, y estamos eternamente agradecidos por eso.

Para más información o para donar, por favor contacte con Tina Edwards-Milam, directora de la Campaña Anual, en el 915-872-8412, tedwards-milam@catholicfoundationelpaso.org o visite 2023progress-cma.org hoy mismo.



NOURISHING
our **FAMILY**
of **FAITH**

NUTRIENDO
nuestra
FAMILIA
de **FE**

GOAL: \$1,900,000

\$

PLEDGE

\$

PAID

AS OF

Make Your Donation Today!
¡haga Su Donación Hoy!

2023PROGRESS-CMA.ORG

CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW FOR 2024!

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>NEW! PILGRIMAGE</p> <p>MARIAN SHRINES BARCELONA - MONTSERRAT - ZARAGOZA LOURDES - LOYOLA - BURGOS SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA FATIMA - LISBON</p> <p><i>Bishop Tony Celino & Fr. Marcus McFadin</i></p> <p>\$5,399 Includes R/T Air from El Paso Based on Double Occupancy September 5 - 16, 2024</p> <p>EXPERIENCE THE HEALING WATERS OF LOURDES. TOUR THE AMAZING SAGRADA FAMILIA. PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSION OF FATIMA. PRAY AT THE BLACK MADONNA OF MONTSERRAT.</p>  | <p>NEW! PILGRIMAGE</p> <p>STEPS OF ST. PAUL GREECE</p> <p>NEW TRAVEL DATE! Includes a 3 Day Aegean Sea Cruise NEW TRAVEL DATE!</p> <p><i>Fr. Beto Lopez</i></p> <p>ATHENS - THESSALONIKI - PHILIPPI - DELPHI METEORA - CORINTH - MYKONOS - CRETE EPHEBUS (HOUSE OF MARY) - SANTORINI +</p> <p>Walk in the footsteps of St. Paul as we explore the treasures and beauty of this magical country.</p> <p>October 8 -18, 2024 \$5,299 Includes R/T Air from El Paso Based on Double Occupancy</p>  | <p>NEW! PILGRIMAGE</p> <p>SHRINES OF NORTHERN FRANCE</p> <p>PARIS - CHARTRES - LISIEUX MONT SAINT MICHEL - ORLEANS CHAMBORD - LYON - ARS - NEVERS VERSAILLES - PARIS</p> <p><i>Fr. Mariano Lopez</i> October 8 -18, 2024 \$5,499 Includes R/T Air from El Paso Based on Double Occupancy</p> <p>EXPERIENCE THE SITES OF PARIS. WALK ALONG THE SANDS OF NORMANDY BEACH. VISIT THE AMAZING MONT SAINT MICHEL. VIEW THE INCORRUPT BODY OF ST. BERNADETTE. SEE THE PALACE OF FRENCH KING (VERSAILLES)</p>  |
|---|--|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>NEW! CHRISTMAS 2024!</p> <p>EUROPE CHRISTMAS MARKETS PRAGUE - VIENNA - BUDAPEST DECEMBER 5-13, 2024 - \$3,449 INCLUDES ROUND TRIP AIR FROM EL PASO HOTELS - LOCAL GUIDE & DRIVER - 11 MEALS</p>  | <p>NEW! OCEAN CRUISE</p> <p>AN AMAZING 14-DAY MEDITERRANEAN, GREEK ISLES, FRANCE & TURKEY CRUISE!!!</p> <p>BARCELONA - GIBRALTAR - MARSEILLE - FLORENCE - ROME - NAPLES SANTORINI - ISTANBUL - ATHENS - AND MORE!! August 3-17, 2024 - Starting at \$2,899 Per Person <i>Fr. Ben Flores - Mother Cabrini</i> SUN PRINCESS - THE NEWEST LUXURY SHIP IN THE PRINCESS CRUISES FLEET! THIS SHIP WILL SELL OUT QUICKLY! CALL TODAY FOR FURTHER DETAILS.</p>   |
|---|---|

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>NEW! CULTURAL TOUR</p> <p>CUBA!</p> <p>JUST ANNOUNCED! DETAILS ARE STILL BEING WORKED OUT. LOOKING AT OCTOBER 2024 THIS WILL SELL OUT QUICKLY. VERY LIMITED SPACE IV'E BEEN THERE TWICE - AMAZING! IF YOU MIGHT HAVE AN INTEREST IN THIS TOUR, PLEASE CONTACT ME AND YOU WILL RECEIVE DETAILS AS SOON AS THEY ARE AVAILABLE. SHOULD HAVE DETAILS MID NOV. NO OBLIGATION JUST NEED TO KNOW IF ANY INTEREST</p> | <p>LAST CALL! OCEAN CRUISE LAST CALL!</p> <p>2 Oceans & 1 Canal! PANAMA CANAL CRUISE Ft. Lauderdale to Los Angeles 8 Ports in 15 Days Colombia - Panama - Costa Rica Nicaragua - Huatulco & Puerto Vallarta, Mexico March 6 - 21, 2024 (16 Days) From \$1,419 Per Person VERY LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE!</p>   | <p>NEW! OCEAN CRUISE</p> <p>HOW WILL YOU RING IN 2025??? New Year's Eve Cruise Round trip from Galveston 3 Ports in 7 Days Cozumel - Costa Maya and Roatan, Honduras Dec. 29 - Jan 4, 2024/2025 From \$777.00 Per Person Cruise Only - Air Not Included</p>   |
|--|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>LAST CALL!</p> <p>FINAL DATE TO BOOK! DEC. 15, 2023</p>  | <p>SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT! - LIMITED OPPORTUNITY!</p> <p><i>Best of Britain - England - Wales - Scotland Featuring the Famous Edenburg Castle Military Tattoo!</i> <i>Fr. Frank Lopez - St. Matthew Parish</i> AUGUST 10 - 20, 2024 - \$3,799</p>   | <p>LAST CALL!</p> <p>FINAL DATE TO BOOK! DEC. 15, 2023</p> <p>FOR MORE INFORMATION - CONTACT Travel with Kerry 12653 Tierra Alzada Dr. El Paso, Texas 79938 915-591-4246 (Talk/Text) Kerry@TravelWK.com</p>  |
|---|---|--|

Maximizing Year-End Charitable and Financial Goals

By **Tony Herrera**,
Major Gifts Officer

Giving through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) can be a spiritually enriching experience for individuals who wish to align their financial resources with their Catholic faith and values. It allows them to live out their Catholic beliefs, fulfill religious obligations, and make a positive impact on the world while enjoying the potential tax benefits of their generosity.

The act of giving through QCDs can be a profound expression of one's spiritual journey and commitment to making the world a better place with not only their time and talent, but also their treasure that God has blessed them with.

So, what exactly is a QCD?

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a specific type of charitable giving strategy that allows individuals who are at least 70½ years old to make tax-free distributions from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) directly to qualified charitable organizations. It also allows those who are required to take RMDs each year beginning at age 73—even if they don't need or want the funds. There is an annual cap of \$100,000 per taxpayer per year on the amount that can be donated through a QCD. This limit applies to the

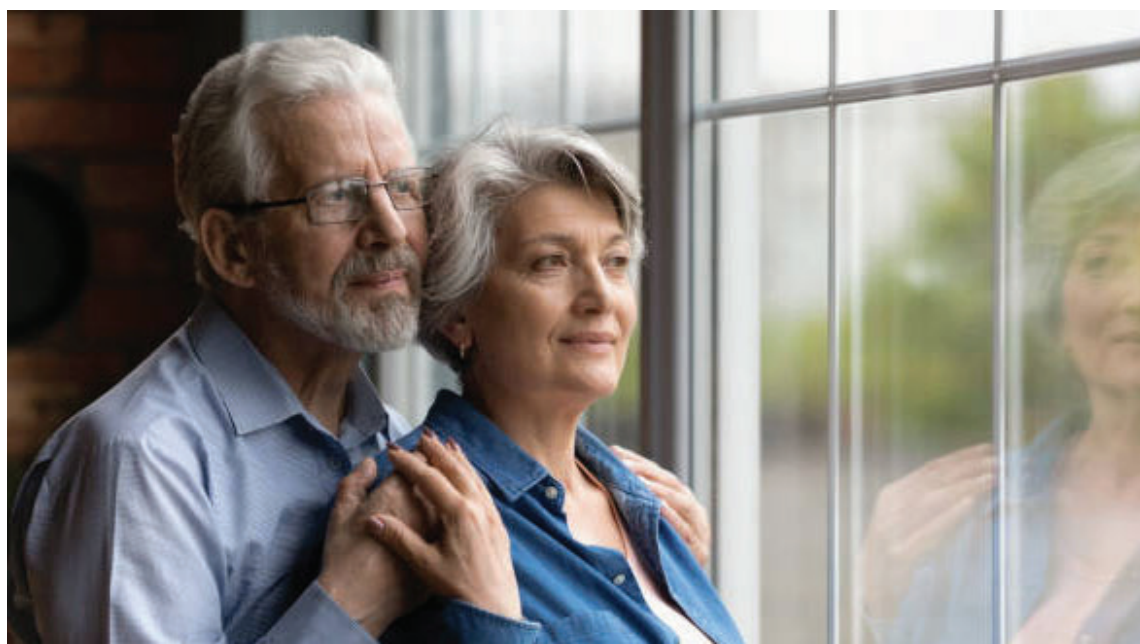
aggregate of QCDs made to one or more qualified charities within a calendar year. QCDs can only be made to qualified charitable organizations, which typically include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, religious institutions, educational institutions, and certain other charitable entities and the funds must be withdrawn from your account by the December 31st deadline.

Here are some ways in which the spiritual side of giving through QCDs can be explored:

1. **Stewardship:** The Catholic faith emphasizes the concept of stewardship, where individuals are seen as stewards or caretakers of the resources and blessings they have received from God. Giving through QCDs can be seen as a way of fulfilling this stewardship responsibility by sharing one's financial blessings with those in need.

2. **Tithing and Generosity:** Tithing, the practice of giving a portion of one's income to the church or charitable causes. QCDs provide a tax-efficient way to tithe by directing funds directly from an IRA to the Catholic Foundation, a parish, ministry or charity.

3. **Supporting Your Home Parish:** Many people find spiritual fulfillment in supporting their local parishes. QCDs can be used to make significant contributions to these organizations, helping



them maintain their church and any related need that arises.

4. **Legacy and Impact:** Many individuals view their legacy as an extension of their spiritual journey. Giving to God what God has given them. Using QCDs to support causes they believe in allows them to leave a lasting impact that reflects their spiritual values. This can be a way to ensure that their beliefs and values continue to influence the world even after they are gone.

5. **Prayerful Decision-Making:** Some individuals approach QCDs as a prayerful decision. They may seek guidance through prayer and reflection to discern

which charitable organizations or causes to support. This contemplative process can deepen the spiritual connection to the act of giving.

As the year draws to a close, embracing a QCD not only serves to reduce your taxable income but also provides essential support to the Catholic Foundation, the Diocese of El Paso, your parish, or a ministry that is close to your heart.

It's important to note that tax laws can change, so it's advisable to consult with a qualified tax advisor or financial planner to ensure that you are following the latest rules and regulations

when considering a QCD as part of your charitable giving and retirement planning strategy.

If you would like to learn about how your QCD can make a profound impact on furthering the causes you hold dear, like Seminarian Education, Catholic Education, Retired Priests, or your parish, please contact Tony Herrera, Major Gift Officer at (915) 479-9100 or email thererra@catholicfoundationelpaso.org. Don't let this valuable opportunity pass you by; consider making a QCD before the year's end to maximize both your philanthropic and financial goals.

Your Stewardship Parish Journey

By **Karina Sandoval**,
Stewardship Coordinator

The Catholic Foundation's Stewardship Coordinator Karina Sandoval attended the 61st International Catholic Stewardship Conference in October in

Orlando, FL. to continue learning about the latest trends in Parish Stewardship and to provide Stewardship tools to the Diocese of El Paso.

The International Catholic Stewardship Conference is organized by the International

Catholic Stewardship Council. The ICSC has been an important resource since 1952 to the Catholic Church by helping to foster an environment in which Stewardship is understood, accepted and practiced. For more information about the International Catholic

Stewardship Council and Stewardship Parish resources please visit www.catholicstewardship.com.

Stewardship is a way of life of thanking God for all His blessings by returning a portion of the time, talent, and treasure allotted to us. The message of Stewardship in our Church is essential to continue the work of evangelization as we are experiencing a decline in Mass attendance across the United States; a decline that has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

How to support your Stewardship Journey in Your Parish?

Stewardship is essential to our faith, not only do we need to learn about the importance of being a good steward, but we also need to seek resources, support, and instill the practice of Stewardship in ourselves and our loved ones. The following is a list of recommendations to support your Stewardship Journey:

- Reflect on how you spend your time and whether it is demonstrating your love for God and your blessings. Ask yourself if you are being productive and helping others.

- Conduct a Self-Evaluation by writing down the ways in which you are committing your time, talent, and treasure back to God for your blessings, in your day-to-day life.

- Your Parish: Recognize your parish's unique and wonderful gifts and programs. Are you involved in lay ministry, youth ministry, music ministry, a be-

reavement ministry, Bible study, teaching Catechism or helping to feed the poor? Try different ideas to see what works, try, try, and try again.

- Church Family: Our ministry work is important to recognize that we are all in this together, we are a family, your parish is a family. Are you a joyful and active member of your parish? Are you supporting the needs of your parish? Seek ways on how can you give back to your church family.

- Spirituality and prayer: It's vital that spirituality and prayer are part of every day life. Consider taking a few minutes every day to pray for others. Use encouraging words and actions to help those that need God in their lives and bring them closer to Him.

- Your Family: Are you being a good example for your family and loved ones by living a stewardship way of life? Take time to share love and acts of kindness with your family and friends. Attend Mass regularly and pray together often.

For more information on Stewardship practices and how you can make a difference, please contact your parish or reach out to Karina Sandoval with questions at ksandoval@catholicfoundationelpaso.org or at 915-872-8412.



WE NEED TO TALK...

ESTATE and END OF LIFE

Planning Seminar

NOVEMBER 15, 2023

ST. FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI • 7-9 PM

2200 VISTA DEL SOL DRIVE • EL PASO, TX 79936

DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM



INTRODUCING
FREEWILL

FREE | Open to the Public

HAVE YOU PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE?

RSVP:

Elizabeth Milan (915) 872-8412 or emilan@catholicfoundationelpaso.org

CATHOLICFOUNDATIONELPASO.ORG