

THE

RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC

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Afghan Refugees Arrive in Fort Bliss

By Christopher Velsquez
Staff Writer

As tens of thousands of a new refugee population from the war-torn country of Afghanistan arrive within the United States, El Paso finds itself in the familiar position of being prepared to receive and provide aid to those in need.

"We have been so focused on our near neighbors and their needs, and now we are being called to have a similar love and compassion for our brothers and sisters from across the world," said Bishop Mark Seitz.

The urgency to provide immediate assistance to Afghans who aided the American forces in Afghanistan comes following a U.S. troop withdrawal, resulting in the swift conquering of the Afghan government by the Taliban. In the aftermath of the humanitarian crises unfolding in Afghanistan, the USCCB released a statement saying that "For the past few weeks, staff from the USCCB, Catholic Charities, and other partners have been at Fort Lee in Virginia, assisting the U.S. government in the welcoming and resettlement of SIV applicants and their families. We will continue that work as long as necessary until those who are in harm's way are brought to safety."

As part of Operation Allies Refuge, Fort Bliss was selected as one of four military installations to house Afghan Refugees. In a tweet on Aug. 21, Congresswoman Veronica Escobar said, "Today, I visited Fort Bliss, Texas and what I witnessed filled my heart with hope and pride. Thank you to our brave service members and staff for working around the clock to ensure our nation honors its commitment to help our Afghan allies escape violence."



The urgency to provide immediate assistance to Afghans who aided the American forces in Afghanistan comes following a U.S. troop withdrawal, resulting in the swift conquering of the Afghan government by the Taliban. In the aftermath of the humanitarian crises unfolding in Afghanistan. Photo Courtesy KVIA.com

Marisa Limón Garza, Deputy Director for The Hope Border Institute, a diocesan migrant rights group that brings the perspective of Catholic social teaching on the realities of the borderland, welcomes the refugees and the church's involvement in providing aid. "We are always thrilled to be part of a community that stands so strongly in its commitment to welcome migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees and so we certainly have been advocating

for the welcome for as many Afghan refugees as possible to our Country as well as to our area."

"What I do wish was a little different was extending the same welcome to other people that we see on our Southern border and giving them the same kind of opportunity and safety net that is being provided to the Afghan community. We look forward to the day when all of the people on the globe have access to legal process like Asylum seekers and can seek protection in the U.S."

Garza said regarding ongoing efforts to push for people to have more access to the right to seek asylum as part of their legal rights in being internationally recognized.

For Afghan refugees settling into the United States does not have one clear path as everyone has a unique set of circumstances. "It's going to be complicated with the speed at which they had to evacuate. It is going to be difficult and definitely not an easy process. My hope is that they

will have the support of communities like El Paso to make that process a little bit easier." Melissa M. Lopez, the executive director of the Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services in El Paso said.

Those who would like to offer support for the refugees can contact the Diocesan Office of Peace and Justice at 915-872-8422 or via email at mraposo@elpasodiocese.org.

Los Refugiados Afganos Llegan A Fort Bliss

Por Christopher Velsquez
Escriptor del personal

A medida que decenas de miles de una nueva población de refugiados del país devastado por la guerra de Afganistán descienden a los Estados Unidos, El Paso se encuentra en la posición familiar de estar preparado para recibir y proporcionar ayuda a los necesitados. "Nos hemos centrado tanto en nuestros vecinos cercanos y en sus necesidades, y ahora estamos

llamados a tener un amor y una compasión similares por nuestros hermanos y hermanas de todo el mundo", dijo el obispo Mark Seitz en su programa semanal "InSeitz into the Faith".

La urgencia de proporcionar refugio inmediato a los afganos que ayudaron a las fuerzas estadounidenses en Afganistán se produce tras la retirada de las tropas de EE.UU., que dio lugar a la rápida conquista del gobierno afgano por los talibanes. A raíz de la crisis

humanitaria que se está produciendo en Afganistán, la USCCB ha emitido un comunicado en el que afirma que "durante las últimas semanas, el personal de la USCCB, Catholic Charities y otros socios han estado en Fort Lee, en Virginia, ayudando al gobierno estadounidense en la acogida y el reasentamiento de los solicitantes del SIV y sus familias. Continuaremos ese trabajo todo el tiempo que sea necesario hasta que los que están en peligro sean puestos

a salvo".

Como parte de la Operación Aliados Refugio, Fort Bliss fue seleccionado como una de las cuatro instalaciones militares para albergar a los refugiados afganos. En un tuit del 21 de agosto, la congresista Verónica Escobar dijo: "Hoy visité Fort Bliss, Texas, y lo que presencie me llenó el corazón de esperanza y orgullo. Gracias a nuestros valientes miembros del servicio y al personal por trabajar sin descanso

para garantizar que nuestra nación cumpla con su compromiso de ayudar a nuestros aliados afganos a escapar de la violencia."

Marisa Limón Garza, subdirectora de The Hope Border Institute, un grupo diocesano de derechos de los migrantes que aporta la perspectiva de la doctrina social católica sobre las realidades de la frontera, se congratula de los refugiados y de

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EDITOR'S COLUMN

20 Years Ago

Twenty years is a long time to remember one event like yesterday; however, when the event changed the lives of tens of millions of Americans, I would be hard-pressed not to forget the exact events of that dreaded day in September of 2001.

That morning started like most of my mornings did as a 23-year-old seminarian, late to Mass at 7 am. As I usually did, I rushed as I woke up that morning, put myself together and ran down the hall at St. Charles to attend Mass in the chapel with Fr. John Telles, our seminary rector. Once Mass was over, I can vividly remember walking by our community TV and debating whether I should watch a little TV or join my



Fernie Ceniceros

brother seminarians for breakfast. For some reason, I passed the TV and joined everyone for breakfast.

I recall that particular breakfast being an unusual breakfast in which we all joked and laughed and enjoyed our breakfast. I particularly remember that this breakfast went a little longer than

usual simply because we enjoyed each other's company. I think we ended up sitting there for an hour or so just chatting, being that we didn't need to be in classes that morning since most of us didn't have a class to rush off to on Tuesday mornings.

As we finished breakfast, we all went about our business in our rooms, which meant I needed to read for whatever class I had at that time. As I walked into my room, I picked up my cell phone and realized I had almost 20 missed calls from everyone, My parents, my brother, my godfather, almost everyone I knew. I didn't even have time to check my voicemails when my down-the-hall neighbor, the now Fr. Jose Morales, yelled at those of

us that were there to come to his room immediately. It was almost 10:00 am—his radio, in a matter of seconds, told us the news, America was under attack. I vividly remember looking at each other with fear and then, without a beat, rushing to the community television.

At that point, Fr. John had already beat us to the TV at which he was already watching with dismay, the absolute destruction of the day. At this point, only one tower was left standing, and within minutes we watched it collapse. I could not believe my eyes. Immediately I asked myself, what does this mean for us. Our lives have changed.

Bishop Ochoa held Mass that day at noon at the Pastoral

Center; what I remember most about that Mass was that we had to have a TV on in the room, just in case something else happened we needed to be aware of, this was the most surreal experience of my life.

In the days and weeks and years following, I continually thought about that day and all that we lost. The people we lost and the innocence of the era that just disappeared. On this 20th anniversary of the attacks of September 11th, I would like to ask us all to unite in prayer for those that we lost that day, and those that we have lost since as a result of the events of that day, that even now, 20 years later, we still see and feel repercussions.

Hace 20 años

Vinte años es mucho tiempo para recordar un acontecimiento como el de ayer; sin embargo, cuando el acontecimiento cambió la vida de decenas de millones de estadounidenses, me sería difícil no olvidar los acontecimientos exactos de aquel temido día de septiembre de 2001.

Aquella mañana comenzó como la mayoría de mis mañanas como seminarista de 23 años, tarde para ir a misa a las 7 de la mañana. Como solía hacer, aquella mañana me apresuré al despertarme y corrí por el pasillo de San Carlos para asistir a la misa en la capilla con el padre John Telles, nuestro rector del seminario. Una vez terminada la misa, recuerdo vivamente que pasé junto a la televisión de nuestra comunidad y me debatí entre ver un poco de televisión o unirme a mis hermanos seminaristas para desayunar. Por alguna razón, pasé de la televisión y me uní a todos para desayunar.

Recuerdo que ese desayuno en particular fue un desayuno inusual en el que todos bromearon y reímos y disfrutamos de



nuestro desayuno. Recuerdo especialmente que ese desayuno se alargó un poco más de lo habitual simplemente porque disfrutamos de la compañía de los demás. Creo que acabamos sentados allí durante una hora

y así, simplemente charlando, ya que no teníamos que estar en clase esa mañana, ya que la mayoría de nosotros no tenía una clase a la que ir corriendo los martes por la mañana.

Cuando terminamos de

desayunar, todos nos fuimos a nuestras habitaciones, lo que significaba que yo tenía que leer para la clase que tenía en ese momento. Al entrar en mi habitación, cogí el móvil y me di cuenta de que tenía casi 20 llamadas perdidas de todo el mundo, mis padres, mi hermano, mi padrino, casi todos los que conocía. Ni siquiera tuve tiempo de comprobar mis mensajes de voz cuando mi vecino del piso de abajo, el ahora padre José Morales, nos gritó a los que estábamos allí que fuéramos a su habitación inmediatamente. Eran casi las 10:00 de la mañana y su radio, en cuestión de segundos, nos dio la noticia de que Estados Unidos estaba siendo atacado.

Recuerdo vivamente que nos

miramos los unos a los otros con miedo y luego, sin pensarlo dos veces, corrimos a la televisión comunitaria.

En ese momento, el padre John ya se había adelantado a nosotros para ir al televisor, en el que ya estaba viendo con consternación, la destrucción absoluta del día. En ese momento, sólo quedaba una torre en pie, y en pocos

minutos vimos cómo se derrumbaba. No podía creer lo que veían mis ojos. Inmediatamente me pregunté, qué significa esto para nosotros. Nuestras vidas han cambiado.

El obispo Ochoa celebró la misa ese día a mediodía en el Centro Pastoral; lo que más recuerdo de esa misa es que teníamos que tener un televisor encendido en la sala, por si acaso ocurría algo más de lo que tuviéramos que estar pendientes, fue la experiencia más surrealista de mi vida.

En los días, semanas y años siguientes, pensé continuamente en ese día y en todo lo que perdimos. La gente que perdimos y la inocencia de la época que simplemente desapareció. En este 20º aniversario de los atentados del 11 de septiembre, me gustaría pedirnos a todos que nos unamos en oración por los que perdimos ese día, y por los que hemos perdido desde entonces como consecuencia de los acontecimientos de ese día, que incluso ahora, 20 años después, seguimos viendo y sintiendo las repercusiones.

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INSEITZ INTO THE FAITH

It Takes a Community to Teach the Faith

It is that time of the year in which we begin Religious formation programs in our parishes. Since the COVID-19 virus began over a year ago, most parishes had to change the way they offer these formation programs. I am very grateful to the catechists and parents who have remained faithful to their calling and obligations as parents.

Some of our catechists have decided to remain home for health concerns, and this challenges our parents and parishes to do more to nurture the Catholic faith at home. I am confident that the parish religious formation offices can offer needed

resources to help families.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, reminds us that home is the first place for the religious formation of our children. The role of the parish is to support and offer help to families. It seems to me that during these trying times of the pandemic, it becomes even more important for families to engage in a greater effort to pray together, to study the Catholic faith together, and to be of service in helping others in need. This will be of great benefit for our families and for our parishes.

I also encourage those who would like to teach the faith as catechists to contact your local parish and inquire about becoming

catechists. I pray that soon, we can offer a full formation program in our parishes for the children and keep parents and families involved in the faith formation process. For this reason, I urge everyone who can to get the vaccine as soon as possible as it will allow you to assist our children and to keep them safe.

I continue to be concerned that everyone involved in any volunteer effort in the Church, but especially in faith formation, to take the required safe environment VIRTUS training and to be UpToDate in their status. We must do everything we can to assure the safety and protection of



Bishop Mark J. Seitz

all our children. Please contact your Parish/School Safe Environment Coordinator if you need assistance with your renewal.

God has blessed our diocese with many wonderful, dedicated catechists who want to assist

parents in their religious duty to teach their children about Christ and our Catholic Faith. Even during these trying times, the Spirit is guiding us to learn how to better offer creative ways to form disciples for Christ.

Se Necesita Una Comunidad Para Enseñar La Fe



Es esa época del año en la que comenzamos los programas de formación religiosa en nuestras parroquias. Desde que comenzó el virus COVID-19 hace más de un año, la mayoría de las parroquias tuvieron que cambiar la forma de ofrecer estos programas de formación. Estoy muy agradecido a los catequistas y a los padres que han permanecido fieles a su vocación y a sus obligaciones como padres.

Algunos de nuestros catequistas han decidido quedarse en casa por motivos de salud, y esto desafía a nuestros padres

y a las parroquias a hacer más para alimentar la fe católica en casa. Estoy seguro de que las oficinas de formación religiosa de las parroquias pueden ofrecer los recursos necesarios para ayudar a las familias.

Nuestro Santo Padre, el Papa Francisco, nos recuerda que el hogar es el primer lugar para la formación religiosa de nuestros hijos. El papel de la parroquia es apoyar y ofrecer ayuda a las familias. Me parece que durante estos tiempos difíciles de la pandemia, es aún más importante que las familias se comprometan a un mayor esfuerzo

para rezar juntos, para estudiar la fe católica juntos, y para estar al servicio de ayudar a otros en necesidad. Esto será de gran beneficio para nuestras familias y para nuestras parroquias.

También animo a los que quieran enseñar la fe como catequistas a que se pongan en contacto con su parroquia local y se informen sobre cómo convertirse en catequistas. Rezo para que pronto podamos ofrecer un programa completo de formación en nuestras parroquias para los niños y mantener a los padres y a las familias involucrados en el proceso de for-

mación en la fe. Por esta razón, insto a todos los que puedan a vacunarse lo antes posible, ya que les permitirá asistir a nuestros niños y mantenerlos seguros.

Continúo con la preocupación de que todos los involucrados en cualquier esfuerzo voluntario en la Iglesia, pero especialmente en la formación de la fe, tomen el entrenamiento requerido de ambiente seguro VIRTUS y estén al día en su estado. Debemos hacer todo lo posible para asegurar la seguridad y protección de todos nuestros niños. Por favor, póngase en

contacto con el Coordinador de Ambiente Seguro de su Parroquia/Escuela si necesita ayuda con su renovación.

Dios ha bendecido a nuestra diócesis con muchos maravillosos y dedicados catequistas que quieren ayudar a los padres en su deber religioso de enseñar a sus hijos sobre Cristo y nuestra fe católica. Incluso durante estos tiempos difíciles, el Espíritu nos está guiando para aprender a ofrecer mejor maneras creativas de formar discípulos para Cristo.

By Dylan Corbett
Director, Hope Border Institute

Beginning September 20, the Catholic Church in the United States celebrates National Migration Week, which concludes on September 26 with the World Day of Migrants & Refugees.

The Church around the world has celebrated the World Day of Migrants & Refugees since 1914. It is an occasion to express our care and concern for vulnerable people on the move, to pray for them and to increase awareness about the challenges and opportunities that migration brings.

This year, in his 2021 Message for the World Day of Migrants & Refugees, Pope Francis asks us to consider what kind of world and what kind of church we would like to see when we finally emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has touched us all in many ways. Perhaps we've experienced the terrible loss of a loved one. Many of our families have experienced a loss in income and anxiety about what tomorrow might bring. We've

World Day of Migrants & Refugees



felt the pain of not being able to celebrate the Eucharist together. And all of us have felt some degree of isolation.

In the pope's Message, he reminds us that God calls and redeems as a People. We experience the grace of salvation as a WE, united in Christ who died

and rose 'so that all may be one' (Jn 17, 21). We are called to become neighbors, showing to one another the same love and mercy which God has shown to us. Nowhere is this more clear than when we gather together at the Eucharistic table.

But experiences like pandem-

ic, Pope Francis points out, show us that this WE, willed by God from the beginning of Creation, is still 'broken and fragmented, wounded and disfigured'. Too many people in our world are still excluded from enjoying a dignified life.

And in our brokenness, the pope notes, 'the highest price is being paid by those who most easily become viewed as others: foreigners, migrants, the marginalized...'

As we re-imagine life after the pandemic, we should ask how our communities and our parishes can be more welcoming towards those forced to live on the peripheries, including migrants forced to leave their families and communities because of poverty and persecution. How can we walk with them in order to build a wider WE?

Here are three things you and your parish can do:

1) Parishes can organize volunteers to help vulnerable migrants together with Annunciation House, a local organization that provides humanitarian aid to people on the move in our

community. (www.annunciationhouse.org)

2) Donate to the Border Refugee Assistance Fund, a fund organized by our bishop and the Hope Border Institute, which helps migrants in Ciudad Juarez with health care, food and other basic necessities. (www.hopeborder.org)

3) Get involved in the Catholic Church's Justice for Immigrants Campaign by writing to elected leaders in support of immigration reform. (www.justiceforimmigrants.org)

Walking with those on the margins, like people on the move, is one powerful way to bring about the WE God calls all of us to help build. This type of work transforms us, revitalizes our parish and our community and gives us more welcoming and joyful hearts.

Working together, we can make sure that life after the pandemic is a little less lonely and a little more just for everyone.

For more ways to get involved, visit the Hope Border Institute at www.hopeborder.org.

Jornada Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado

Por Dylan Corbett
Director, Hope Border Institute

A partir del 20 de septiembre, la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos celebra la Semana Nacional de la Migración, que concluye el 26 de septiembre con el Día Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado.

La Iglesia en todo el mundo ha celebrado el Día Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado desde 1914. Es una ocasión para expresar nuestro cuidado y preocupación por las personas vulnerables en movimiento, orar por ellas y aumentar la conciencia sobre los desafíos y oportunidades que trae la migración.

Este año, en su Mensaje Para la Jornada Mundial Del Migrante y Del Refugiado 2021, el Papa Francisco nos pide que consideremos qué tipo de mundo y qué tipo de iglesia nos gustaría ver

cuando finalmente salgamos de la pandemia de Covid-19.

La pandemia nos ha afectado a todos de muchas formas. Quizás hemos experimentado la terrible pérdida de un ser querido. Muchas de nuestras familias han experimentado una pérdida de ingresos y ansiedad por lo que el mañana podría deparar. Hemos sentido el dolor de no poder celebrar juntos la Eucaristía. Y todos hemos sentido cierto grado de aislamiento.

En su Mensaje, el Papa nos recuerda que Dios nos llama y nos redime como Pueblo. Experimentamos la gracia de la salvación como un NOSOTROS, unidos en Cristo muerto y resucitado 'para que todos sean uno' (Jn 17, 21). Estamos llamados a ser prójimos, mostrándonos unos a otros el mismo amor y misericordia que Dios nos ha mostrado. En ninguna parte es esto más

claro que cuando nos reunimos en la mesa eucarística.

Pero experiencias como la pandemia, señala el Papa Francisco, nos muestran que este NOSOTROS, querido por Dios desde el principio de la Creación, todavía está "roto y fragmentado, herido y desfigurado". Demasiadas personas en nuestro mundo todavía están excluidas de disfrutar de una vida digna.

Y en nuestro quebrantamiento, señala el Papa, 'el precio más elevado lo pagan quienes más fácilmente pueden convertirse en los otros: los extranjeros, los migrantes, los marginados ...'

Al volver a imaginar la vida después de la pandemia, deberíamos preguntarnos cómo nuestras comunidades y nuestras parroquias pueden ser más acogedoras con aquellos que se ven obligados a vivir en las periferias, incluidos los migrantes que se

ven obligados a dejar sus familias y comunidades debido a la pobreza y la persecución. ¿Cómo podemos caminar con ellos para construir un NOSOTROS más amplio?

Aquí hay tres cosas que tú y tu parroquia pueden hacer:

1) Las parroquias pueden organizar a voluntarios para ayudar a los migrantes vulnerables junto con Annunciation House, una organización local que brinda ayuda humanitaria a las personas en movimiento en nuestra comunidad. (www.annunciationhouse.org)

2) Donar al Border Refugee Assistance Fund, un fondo organizado por nuestro obispo y el Instituto Fronterizo Esperanza (Hope Border Institute), que ayuda a los migrantes en Ciudad Juárez con atención médica, alimentos y otras necesidades básicas. (www.hopeborder.org)

3) Participa en la Campaña Justice for Immigrants Campaign, de la Iglesia Católica, escribiendo a los líderes electos a favor de la reforma migratoria. (www.justiceforimmigrants.org)

Caminar con los marginados, como las personas en movimiento, es una manera poderosa de lograr el NOSOTROS que Dios nos llama a todos para ayudar a construir. Este tipo de trabajo nos transforma a nosotros, a nuestra parroquia y a nuestra comunidad y nos da un corazón más acogedor y alegre.

Trabajando juntos, podemos asegurarnos de que la vida después de la pandemia sea un poco menos solitaria y un poco más justa para todos.

Para conocer más formas de participar, visita Hope Border Institute en www.hopeborder.org.

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la participación de la Iglesia en la prestación de ayuda. "Siempre estamos encantados de formar parte de una comunidad que se mantiene tan firme en su compromiso de acoger a los inmigrantes, a los asilados y a los refugiados, y por eso hemos defendido la acogida del mayor número posible de refugiados afganos en nuestro país y en nuestra zona".

"Lo que sí me gustaría que fuera un poco diferente es extender la misma acogida a otras personas que vemos en nuestra frontera sur y darles el mismo tipo de oportunidad y red de seguridad que se está proporcionando a la comunidad afgana. Esperamos el día en que todas las personas del mundo tengan acceso a un proceso legal como los solicitantes de asilo y puedan buscar protección en Estados Unidos". Garza dijo con respecto a los esfuerzos en curso para presionar para que la

gente tenga más acceso al derecho de solicitar asilo como parte de sus derechos legales al ser reconocidos internacionalmente.

Para los refugiados afganos establecerse en Estados Unidos no tiene un camino claro ya que cada uno tiene un conjunto de circunstancias únicas. "Va a ser complicado con la velocidad a la que han tenido que evacuar. Va a ser difícil y definitivamente no es un proceso fácil. Mi esperanza es que cuenten con el apoyo de comunidades como El Paso para hacer ese proceso un poco más fácil," dijo Melissa M. López, directora ejecutiva de los Servicios Diocesanos para Migrantes y Refugiados en El Paso.

Quienes quieran ofrecer su apoyo a los refugiados pueden ponerse en contacto con la Oficina Diocesana de Paz y Justicia en el 915-872-8422 o por correo electrónico en mraposo@elpasodiocese.org

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SEASON OF CREATION 2021/EL TIEMPO DE LA CREACION 2021

Pope Francis has declared the period of September 1st (World Day of Prayer for Our Common Home) to October 4th (Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi) the SEASON OF CREATION. This is a time for us to pray and act to care for our common home; to work to help cut back excess CO₂ emissions, reduce global warming, stop the destruction of our planet, and the exploitation of the poor and marginalized. As findings in a new UN report about climate change indicates code red for humanity, this season of creation becomes even more urgent. Celebrating the 6th anniversary of the Encyclical LAUDATO SI by Pope Francis, the season of creation 2021 theme is "A Home for All? Renewing the OIKOS of God." Oikos means home in Greek.

Find out more about this season of creation 2021 and how to participate at www.seasonofcreation.org

El Papa Francisco ha declarado el periodo del 1º de septiembre (Jornada Mundial de Oración por el Cuidado de la Casa Común) al 4 de octubre (Fiesta de San Francisco de Asís) el TIEMPO DE LA CREACION. Es un tiempo para rezar y actuar por el cuidado de nuestra casa común; de trabajar para ayudar a disminuir el exceso de dióxido de carbono en la atmósfera, de reducir el calentamiento global, parar la destrucción de nuestro planeta y dejar de explotar al pobre y marginado. Este tiempo de creación es ahora aún más urgente en este momento cuando las Naciones Unidas han presentado un reporte sobre el cambio climático que indica código rojo para la humanidad. Celebrando el sexto aniversario de la encíclica LAUDATO SI de Papa Francisco, el tema del tiempo de la creacion 2021 es "Una Casa para todos? Renovar el OIKOS de Dios." Oikos significa hogar en griego.

Descubra más sobre este tiempo de creación 2021 y como participar al www.seasonofcraetion.org

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October 19 - 28, 2022 (10 Days)

Medjugorje - Mostar - Split - Ancona - Assisi - Rome

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Marian Shrines

October 24 - November 4, 2022 (12 Days)

Barcelona - Lourdes - Fatima - Santiago de Compostela

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Holy Land

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Turning to the Eucharist, With Hearts Full of Hope to Support Seminarians

By Tina Edwards Milam
Pledge Fulfillment Specialist

This past year and a half has certainly been different than any of us could have ever anticipated. Yet we know God is still with us, now more than ever before. We hear, time and time again in the scriptures, of God's closeness to His people in times of trial, and how He redeems us, and how His faithful people rejoice in God's love and care for them. It is in this good soil that the hope of our Catholic Faith depends on our support to ensure our Faith is passed down to our future generations.

The "We Are the Body of Christ" campaign is designed to raise funds for seminary education and diaconate formation, Catholic education and religious formation, and financial assistance for parish emergency needs and expansion. Together, we are ensuring the future of our Catholic Faith.

Raised in a Catholic environ-



Raised in a Catholic environment, Vicente Cobos, a seminarian and local El Pasoan, believes in the mission of the We Are the Body of Christ campaign. *Photo by Fernie Ceniceros*

ment, Vicente Cobos, a seminarian and local El Pasoan, believes in the mission of the We Are the Body of Christ campaign. Vicente's words and dedication to his vocation are an inspiring testimony to his calling and desire to serve the Diocese of El Paso.

"The Will of God has placed me in the right place today," Cobos said. "I am grateful to

God for the gifts He has given me - the gift of my vocation, the advantage to study at this diocese, the gift of meeting so many beautiful people during parish visits, and for the witness and the faith of all the faithful." Vicente is currently attending the University of Saint Mary of the Lake - Mundelein Seminary and started his discernment two years

ago and like most seminarians, is grateful for the opportunity. "My education and the education of my brother seminarians would not be possible without the spiritual prayers and support we receive from you and the financial support we have received through the campaign. Without your generosity, our formation would not be possible," said Cobos. "As a family that supports each of its members, the support you provide through the We Are the Body of Christ campaign helps us so that one day we will serve you as priests. From the bottom of my heart, I am so grateful to the people of our diocese who support me and my brother seminarians in so many ways. Your faith and the example of your lives inspire us to strive for holiness and to continue to grow in God's love to be able to serve you one day." Cobos also stressed the importance of turning to the Eucharist and the need for support to continue his journey, "Christ God wants to

walk with us in the Eucharist. We cannot say that thank you enough to all the people who donate and help us as we prepare both spiritually and monetarily to fulfill God's will in our lives. Our vocation would not be possible without each of you."

Vicente is truly a blossom in the good soil and we are humbled by the continued sacrificial generosity and support which is helping to form our future priests. Our seminarians need this essential formation and education in order to serve the expected 45 to 50 years of priesthood, in which they will touch so many lives with God's grace. We are thankful for Vicente and his willingness to serve and ask you to support the future education and formation of our seminarians as they continue to discern their vocation to the priesthood.

To donate, or for more information, go to www.bodyofchristcampaign.com or call (915) 872-8412.

Recurriendo A La Eucaristía, Con El Corazón Lleno De Esperanza Para Apoyar A Los Seminaristas

Por Tina Edwards Milam
Especialista de Promesas

Este último año y medio ha sido ciertamente diferente de lo que cualquiera de nosotros podría haber anticipado. Sin embargo, sabemos que Dios sigue estando con nosotros, ahora más que nunca. Escuchamos, una y otra vez en las Escrituras, la cercanía de Dios a su pueblo en tiempos de prueba, y cómo Él nos redime, y cómo su pueblo fiel se regocija en el amor y el cuidado de Dios por ellos. Es en esta buena tierra donde la esperanza de nuestra Fe Católica depende de nuestro apoyo para asegurar que nuestra Fe sea transmitida a nuestras futuras generaciones.

La campaña "Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo" está diseñada para recaudar fondos para la educación

del seminario y la formación del diaconado, la educación católica y la formación religiosa, y la ayuda financiera para las necesidades de emergencia y la expansión de la parroquia. Juntos, estamos asegurando el futuro de nuestra fe católica.

Criado en un ambiente católico, Vicente Cobos, seminarista y habitante de El Paso, cree en la misión de la campaña Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo. Las palabras de Vicente y su dedicación a su vocación son un testimonio inspirador de su vocación y deseo de servir a la Diócesis de El Paso.

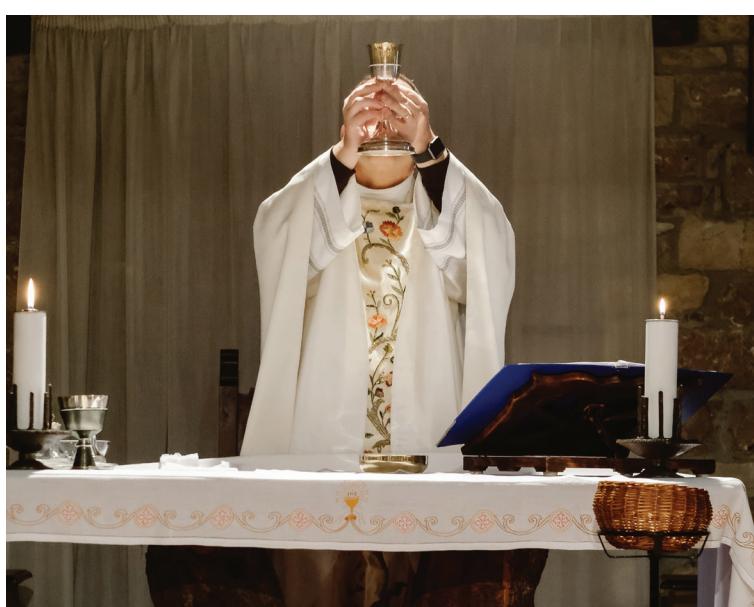
"La voluntad de Dios me ha colocado hoy en el lugar adecuado", dijo Cobos. "Estoy agradecido a Dios por los regalos que me ha dado: el regalo de mi vocación, la ventaja de estudiar en esta

diócesis, el regalo de conocer a tantas personas hermosas durante las visitas a las parroquias, y por el testimonio y la fe de todos los fieles". Vicente asiste actualmente a la Universidad de Santa María del Lago - Seminario de Mundelein y comenzó su discernimiento hace dos años y, como la mayoría de los seminaristas, está agradecido por la oportunidad. "Mi formación y la de mis hermanos seminaristas no sería posible sin las oraciones y el apoyo espiritual que recibimos de ustedes y el apoyo financiero que hemos recibido a través de la campaña. Sin su generosidad, nuestra formación no sería posible", dijo Cobos. "Como una familia que apoya a cada uno de sus miembros, el apoyo que nos dais a través de la campaña Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo nos ayuda

a que un día os sirvamos como sacerdotes. Desde el fondo de mi corazón, estoy muy agradecido a la gente de nuestra diócesis que nos apoya a mí y a mis hermanos seminaristas de muchas maneras. Vuestro fe y el ejemplo de vuestras vidas nos inspiran a luchar por la santidad y a seguir creciendo en el amor de Dios para poder serviros algún día." Cobos también destacó la importancia de acudir a la Eucaristía y la necesidad de apoyo para continuar su camino, "Cristo Dios quiere caminar con nosotros en la Eucaristía. No podemos decir que gracias a todas las personas que donan y nos ayudan mientras nos preparamos tanto espiritual como monetariamente para cumplir la voluntad de Dios en nuestras vidas. Nuestra vocación no sería posible sin cada uno de vosotros".

Vicente es realmente un florecer en la buena tierra y nos sentimos humildes por la continua generosidad y apoyo sacrificado que está ayudando a formar a nuestros futuros sacerdotes. Nuestros seminaristas necesitan esta formación y educación esenciales para poder servir durante los 45 ó 50 años previstos de sacerdocio, en los que tocarán tantas vidas con la gracia de Dios. Estamos agradecidos por Vicente y su voluntad de servir y les pedimos que apoyen la futura educación y formación de nuestros seminaristas mientras continúan discerniendo su vocación al sacerdocio.

Para donar, o para más información, vaya a www.bodyofchristcampaign.com o llame al (915) 872-8412.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FATHER!

Fr. Fulgencio Mayorga, EXTERN	9/13
Fr. Donald J. Adamski, OFM Conv.	9/17
Fr. Alfonso Bonilla, OP	9/19
Fr. Jose Vera-Perez, OFM	9/18
Fr. Ronald W. Eid	9/23
Fr. Richard Sotelo, SJ	9/30

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

Fr. Joe Molina	9/2/1995
Fr. Jesus Antonio Esponeda Quintana(OAR)	9/6/1961
Fr. Robert Edward Mosher, SSC	9/18/1982

RETIRED PRIESTS BIRTHDAY (CORRECTION)

Fr. Blake Fry	9/8
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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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LIVING THE LITURGY

Devotions Are A Worthy Practice, Just Not During Mass



Fr. Michael Lewis, STL

Whenever we worship together in the liturgy, we live out the Church's maxim of *lex orandi, lex credendi*: the way we pray expresses what we truly believe. From the rituals, prayers, and symbols of a child's baptism, to the rituals, prayers, and symbols of a funeral Mass, the liturgy has developed over the centuries to authentically express our complex theological beliefs about Christ, the Eucharist, the Paschal Mystery, salvation, and eternal life — just to name a few. From the very beginning, the Church, inspired by the Holy Spirit, has safeguarded this deposit of faith and has had

the duty of determining the most appropriate way to celebrate and express these truths in the liturgy.

But just as liturgical prayer is not the only way to pray, the liturgy is also not the only way to express our belief. That is why liturgical prayer has always developed alongside the personal piety of the faithful, that is, the individual practices of prayer and devotion that grow and develop from the hearts of the faithful. Among these are the rosary, novenas, veneration of the saints, and Eucharistic adoration.

Though some worthy devotions and pious practices have become widespread and popular, and have even achieved a semi-official status, they do not share the same standing as liturgical and sacramental rites. As St. John Paul II explains, "Popular piety can neither be ignored nor treated with indifference or disrespect because of its richness and because, in itself, it represents a religious atti-

tude in relation to God. However, it has to be continually evangelized, so that the faith which it expresses may become more mature and authentic. The pious exercises of the Christian people and other forms of devotion can be accepted and recommended provided that they do not become substitutes for the liturgy or integrated into the liturgical celebrations. An authentic pastoral promotion of the liturgy will know how to build on the riches of popular piety, purify them and direct them towards the liturgy as an offering of the people."

Because every liturgical celebration is an action of Christ and of his Body, the Church, the liturgy is a sacred action surpassing all others. That is why, as John Paul says, devotions should neither be incorporated into the liturgy, nor be seen as equivalent to the liturgy. Indeed, inserting our own pious practices during the liturgy often competes with or confuses

the authentic belief that the liturgy is designed to express.

Take, for example, the practice of exclaiming the words of St. Thomas, "My Lord, and my God," during the elevations of the host and chalice at Mass. Though promoted as an indulgence by St. Pius X to express, in silence, one's true belief in the Eucharist, it was essentially replaced by the "Mystery of Faith" acclamation in the liturgy after Vatican II. While the former pious exclamation was a statement of one's individual faith, the present liturgical acclamation is the people's united prayer directed to Christ in his Body and Blood on the altar — "Save us, Savior of the world," as one of the three options implores. In this acclamation, the members of the assembly together express their shared faith in the Eucharist in anticipation of the Communion they will share a few moments later.

Continuing this pious practice regardless may seem trivial and

innocuous, yet it introduces a unintended shift in focus — from communal prayer to private prayer — during the high point of the liturgy, the Eucharistic Prayer, during which members of the assembly are supposed to unite their hearts and minds with the priest as he offers the prayer for all present. Further, the original indulgence is no longer attached to the exclamation, because the superabundant grace inherent in the Mass and other sacraments cannot be further enriched by any pious practice or devotion.

Rather than insert devotional or pious practices into the liturgy, we should all strive to understand better the beliefs and theological truths that our liturgical rituals, prayers, and symbols already convey. In this way, our prayer will truly express our belief, and our beliefs will be truly expressed in the way we pray.

Las Devociones Son Una Práctica Digna, Pero No Durante La Misa

Cada vez que rendimos culto juntos en la liturgia, vivimos el axioma de la Iglesia de *lex orandi, lex credendi*: la forma en que rezamos expresa lo que realmente creemos. Desde los rituales, las oraciones y los símbolos del bautismo de un niño, hasta los rituales, las oraciones y los símbolos de una misa de funeral, la liturgia se ha desarrollado a lo largo de los siglos para expresar auténticamente nuestras complejas creencias teológicas sobre Cristo, la Eucaristía, el Misterio Pascual, la salvación y la vida eterna, por nombrar sólo algunas. Desde el principio, la Iglesia, inspirada por el Espíritu Santo, ha salvaguardado este depósito de la fe y ha tenido el deber de determinar el modo más apropiado de celebrar y expresar estas verdades en la liturgia.

Pero, al igual que la oración litúrgica no es el único modo de rezar, la liturgia tampoco es el único modo de expresar nuestra

creencia. Por eso, la oración litúrgica se ha desarrollado siempre junto a la piedad personal de los fieles, es decir, las prácticas individuales de oración y devoción que crecen y se desarrollan desde el corazón de los fieles. Entre ellas están el rosario, las novenas, la veneración de los santos y la adoración eucarística.

Aunque algunas devociones y prácticas piadosas dignas se han extendido y popularizado, e incluso han alcanzado un estatus semi-oficial, no comparten la misma posición que los ritos litúrgicos y sacramentales. Como explica San Juan Pablo II, "Esta piedad popular no puede ser ignorada ni tratada con indiferencia o desprecio, pues es rica en valores y expresa de por sí la actitud religiosa ante Dios; pero tiene necesidad de ser evangelizada continuamente, para que la fe que expresa llegue a ser un acto cada vez más maduro y auténtico. Tanto los actos piadosos del pueblo cristiano, como

otras formas de devoción, son acogidos y aconsejados mientras no suplanten y no se mezclen con las celebraciones litúrgicas. Una pastoral litúrgica auténtica sabrá apoyarse en las riquezas de la piedad popular, purificarlas y orientarlas hacia la liturgia como contribución de los pueblos."

Porque toda celebración litúrgica es una acción de Cristo y de su Cuerpo, la Iglesia, la liturgia es una acción sagrada que supera todas las demás. Por eso, como dice Juan Pablo II, las devociones no deben incorporarse a la liturgia, ni considerarse equivalentes a ella. De hecho, insertar nuestras propias prácticas piadosas durante la liturgia a menudo compite o confunde la creencia auténtica que la liturgia está diseñada para expresar.

Tomemos, por ejemplo, la práctica de excluir las palabras de Santo Tomás, "Señor mío y Dios mío", durante las elevaciones de la hostia y el cáliz en la Misa.

Aunque fue promovida como una indulgencia por San Pío X para expresar la verdadera creencia en la Eucaristía, fue esencialmente reemplazada por la aclamación del "Misterio de la Fe" en la liturgia después del Vaticano II. Mientras que la antigua exclamación piadosa era una declaración de la fe individual, la actual exclamación litúrgica es la oración unida del pueblo dirigida a Cristo en su Cuerpo y Sangre sobre el altar: "Salvador del mundo, sálvanos", como implora una de las tres opciones. En esta exclamación, los miembros de la asamblea expresan juntos su fe compartida en la Eucaristía en preparación de la Comunión que compartirán unos momentos después.

Continuar con esta práctica piadosa a pesar de todo puede parecer trivial e inocuo, sin embargo, introduce un cambio involuntario de enfoque — de la oración comunitaria a la oración privada — durante el punto álgido

de la liturgia, la Plegaria Eucarística, durante la cual se supone que los miembros de la asamblea unen sus corazones y sus mentes con el sacerdote mientras éste ofrece la oración por todos los presentes. Además, la indulgencia original ya no va unida a la exclamación, porque la gracia sobreabundante inherente a la Misa y a los demás sacramentos no puede ser Enriquecida por ninguna práctica piadosa o devoción.

Más que insertar prácticas devocionales o piadosas en la liturgia, todos deberíamos esforzarnos por comprender mejor las creencias y las verdades teológicas que ya transmiten nuestros rituales, oraciones y símbolos litúrgicos. De este modo, nuestra oración expresará verdaderamente nuestra creencia, y nuestras creencias se expresarán verdaderamente en la forma en que oramos.

Collection for the Catholic University of America and Diocesan Scholarship Appeal

There will be a Special Offering on Saturday, September 18 and Sunday, September 19, 2021 for the Collection for the Catholic University of America and Diocesan Scholarship Appeal.

The Catholic University in Washington, D.C. is unique as the national university of the Catholic Church and the only higher education institution founded by the U.S. Bishops and chartered by the Vatican. As such, it has a special responsibility to educate future leaders for our Church and for our nation. In this sense, the Catholic University of America belongs to all of us in the Church, regardless of where we live.

Half of the funds collected will be given to the Catholic University of America. The other half of the funds are used here in El Paso to provide scholarships to a number of worthy students in our diocesan schools.

On the weekend of September 18 and 19, 2021, please take the opportunity to contribute to this worthy cause which benefits our Catholic schools. Thank you for your support.

La Ofrenda Especial para la Universidad Católica de América y la Petición Diocesana para Becas

Habrá una Ofrenda Especial Anual el sábado, 18 de septiembre y el domingo, 19 para la Universidad Católica de América y la Petición Diocesana para Becas.

La Universidad Católica de América en Washington, D. C. es una institución educativa que fue establecida por los obispos estadounidenses y es la única universidad en los Estados Unidos que tiene la facultad pontifical y cuyos estatutos fueron aprobados por el Vaticano. Como tal, tiene una responsabilidad especial para educar los futuros líderes de nuestra Iglesia y de nuestra nación. Es lógico decir que la Universidad Católica de América nos pertenece a todos los miembros de la Iglesia independientemente de donde habituemos.

La mitad de los fondos recaudados es para la Universidad Católica de América. La otra mitad de los fondos se utiliza para proporcionar becas a estudiantes necesitados en nuestras escuelas diocesanas aquí en El Paso que provee becas a muchos estudiantes beneméritos.

En el fin de semana del 18 y 19 de septiembre del 2021, por favor dé se la oportunidad de contribuir a esta digna causa la cual benefician a nuestras escuelas católicas. Gracias por su apoyo.

Winning Gold



Janet M. Crowe

Four years to prepare for an event seems like more than adequate time to excel at one's sport. However, many athletes train much longer than four years to become the best in their field. We witnessed this last month in the Olympics and again carrying over into this month with the Paralympics. People from countries and cultures around the world gathered together not to simply compete against one another but also to strive side by side "with" one another, hoping to win out over the others, yes, but, more importantly, hoping to give everything they have inside of themselves to surpass their own former achievements.

However, is all that effort really relevant for the average person sitting on the couch, comfortably watching other people sweat and strain and push themselves to greater successes? We are, of course, proud of our nation's athletes and the medals they earned because that gives us a sense of personal pride in our country for

winning more medals than other countries. But on a personal note, what can we take away from all the competitions, trials, training, and effort that we didn't really do?

The background stories. The failures. The getting up and doing it again and again. And the joy.

In one of the competitions, I noticed that two young foreign athletes were not only pushing themselves extremely hard but their coaches seemed more intent on correcting than encouraging. How sad! There was no happiness, no joy, even though they were winning. Other athletes failed to reach the podium but were quick to congratulate their teammates and were simply proud to be participating in the Olympics and Paralympics – the two biggest world competition platforms.

That is how life should be lived. With joy. No matter whether our efforts are successful or fall well short of the goal, we should challenge ourselves to live each day with happiness and joy at being able to participate in this game we call Life.

So many background stories told of hardships and tragedies overcome, and not just overcome but triumphed over more than the tragedy itself but triumphed at successfully becoming even better than before. How can someone with a missing leg believe



life to be better than when he or she had two healthy legs? They can because they have triumphed over the tragedy by not just accepting the loss of a leg but by standing up to the challenge of making for themselves a life better than most people could imagine.

How many times must someone compete before winning gold, silver or bronze? How often must one pick one's self up and keep going before becoming a success? For the athlete and for the average couch-sitting person, the answer is the same – every minute of every day is a challenge, but we are all winners when we not only pick ourselves up and keep trying but, more importantly, when we reach down

and help someone else along their own personal race. Then the joy and happiness come naturally to both the person who receives the assistance and the person who stands taller by leaning down to help someone else up.

All of us have different background stories which are often filled with trials and difficulties. Many small challenges can even appear to be impossible to defeat but, when we do not allow ourselves to be defeated, we are able to win over adversity and become stronger for each succeeding trial.

When will we let go of the stones that trip us up rather than carrying them around to drop along our own path? When will we help others to let go of their

stones, making us both stronger to conquer our own obstacles and cheer other's successes as well? How can we refuse to try when we witness individuals who have lost arms and legs but who prefer to do more rather than less by becoming true athletes who are winners no matter where they placed in their competition?

Today is the day. The competition is Life. Let's be the team who cheers each other's successes and feels joy at simply participating. We can try our best at Life today and then tomorrow we'll begin again. We can all win when we help each other to get back up after falling down. Take my hand and I'll take yours! Together, we'll win more than gold!

The Moral Analysis of Boxing



Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

In 1996 when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic flame on international television, the issue of sports-induced brain damage was raised to new prominence. One of the greatest boxers in history, his evident frailty and overt Parkinson's tremors led many to question the sport of boxing and its future. Since then, countless other athletes, not only from the world of boxing, but from football, hockey, mixed martial arts, soccer and beyond, have shared tragic stories of debilitating sports-related concussions.

Although many sports involve the risk of unintentional injuries, boxing for many raises the issue to an entirely different level. Indeed, it is important for us to inquire about the intended purpose or goal of boxing.

Literature describing the ancient practice of the sport of boxing makes it clear that Greek

athletes sometimes suffered permanent injuries or even died during tournaments. During Roman gladiatorial boxing events, they basically fought to the death. Any sporting activity where the declared goal would be to kill one's opponent would, of course, automatically raise serious moral objections.

Modern boxing has no such goal, though certain elements of bodily harm and violence continue to characterize the sport, with an average of 10 boxing deaths occurring each year since 1900. Among the more serious forms of harm that can occur from competitive boxing is physical damage to the brain. From January of 1960 to August of 2011, for example, 488 boxing-related deaths were reported, with approximately 65 percent of those deaths involving grave neurological damage.

If the goal of a professional boxing match is "just" to knock out the opponent to gain victory, the purpose of the competition itself still raises moral concerns, because participants are striving to inflict potentially serious harm to their opponent's brain by causing a concussion, a type of traumatic brain injury.

Suffering a concussion can result in a panoply of symptoms and problems, including fuzzy thinking, painful vision, harmful reactions to light, difficulties

with memory and learning, and loss of the ability to focus. Sometimes repetitive brain trauma can result in progressive neurodegenerative disease with significant symptoms arising years later, including dementia.

Our ability to recognize and understand traumatic brain injury is continuing to improve with time. Several proteins, released by nerve cells when they are damaged following a concussion, can often be detected as "fluid biomarkers" either in the blood or in the cerebrospinal fluid. Testing for the presence of these proteins can aid in identifying and confirming even mild traumatic brain injuries that may not be obvious on first assessment.

Neurologists, of course, are among the first to emphasize that a concussion represents a serious medical condition. Treatment options generally remain limited, and tend to include the need for extended time to allow the neurological impairment to heal.

Young athletes can be so desperate to compete, nevertheless, that they will say they are fine after suffering an injury even when they are not, and seek to return to the competitive event. A second insult to the brain, without allowing for full healing of the first, can significantly increase the risk for prolonged symptoms.

Considering the intensity of competitive pressure, particularly

among young people who may have a limited ability to consider the consequences of their actions and the potential future effects of injuries, the question arises whether there isn't a broader moral obligation in the community to "save players from themselves" and for those around them to refrain from applying undue pressure to perform on young athletes. Regrettably, undue pressure to participate sometimes arises from parents and coaches, and outside mediators are sometimes needed to assure that young people's best interests are protected.

One element of responsible gamesmanship in today's sporting events involves the development and use of appropriate gear to protect athletes from accidental harm. Another involves the establishment of rigorous penalties for players and teams that intentionally seek to cause harm to their opponents during competitions and tournaments.

For the sport of boxing, however, such measures reveal a contradiction. If one were to completely protect a boxer, for example, with appropriate body padding to avoid injury, the sport would lose much of its energy and appeal, since causing injury is central to the process of engagement. If one were to be penalized for intentionally seeking to harm the other boxer,

as may be done for other sports like hockey, again, boxing would become eviscerated of much of its core.

There are obvious meritorious considerations to boxing, like the intense training, personal discipline, and resilience involved, all of which are clearly valid on their own terms. St. Paul even uses the analogy of boxing to describe the way we should exercise heroic discipline in the Christian life (1 Cor 9:25-27).

But while there are various elements that can attract us to the sport, the violent goal of the engagement remains gravely problematic at a moral level. The sport of boxing not only risks serious impairment and even death, but poses many uncomfortable questions for us regarding our own appetites as spectators, and our willingness to allow for certain elements of brutality and even barbarism in the practice of sporting events.

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.ncbcenter.org and www.father tad.com.



Padre Wilson Cuevas

Ser sencillo es lo que te hace grande. Si pudiéramos ver el mundo con los ojos un niño, veríamos la magia de todo.” Solo se ve con el corazón lo esencial es invisible a los ojos” Esto se lee en El principio, a propósito de la importancia de las pequeñas cosas que pasan desapercibidas aunque sean esenciales. Esos gestos tan propios de la verdadera amistad que a veces se reducen a una breve sonrisa, a un silencio compasivo, a una mirada cómplice que lo expresa todo. Cuando esos detalles son vividos de manera sostenida en el tiempo, proporcionan una existencia dichosa, además de ser el fermento de las grandes hazañas, aunque no lleguen al gran público.

Es el caso de tantas historias de amistad que conocemos de aquí o de allá o hemos vivido en primera persona que generan lo mejor del corazón humano. Todos tratamos de realizar algo grande en la vida, sin darnos cuenta de que la existencia brilla en los gestos sencillos; la belleza interior de amor, de cualquier forma de amor incluida la amistad, es imposible que no traiga consecuencias. Una amistad no crece por la presencia de las personas sino por la magia de saber que aunque no las ves, las llevas en el corazón. El amor no se oye, se siente, por eso no hay que decirlo, hay que demostrarlo.

Cuando llega el dolor, la amistad es capaz de dejar atrás los lastres más negativos. Detrás de cada persona valiente y decidida, hay una historia que la hirió y la hizo más fuerte. Los errores no se niegan se asumen. La tristeza no se llora, se supera. El amor no se grita, se demuestra. La vida te da la oportunidad de escribir, corregir y mejorar tu historia todos los días. Lo esencial como la lealtad en la amistad, solo se ve con el corazón en las actitudes de alegría, sana complicidad y confianza. Es algo que no está al alcance del dinero ni del poder. Por mucho que una persona nos agrade a primera vista por lo que tiene, lo verdaderamente importante es el interior de su persona. Nos atrae o nos repela de verdad por lo que es. La mirada superficial que tenemos a veces sobre la realidad impide captar las verdades profundas que pasan inadvertidas porque cada uno ve lo que sé ha educado para ver.

Lo esencial es ver con el corazón y descubrir la importancia de las experiencias mas allá de los cinco sentidos. Los ojos del corazón trascienden los parámetros sensoriales para captar lo verdaderamente importante; y entonces los sentidos se convierten en medios que canalizan dichos sentimientos en forma de un abrazo, un beso, una caricia, una sonrisa, palabras de amor y aprecio por el otro. Y todos sabemos que al realizar estos gestos lo que se busca no es el contacto físico de manos o abrazos, sino el anhelo de sentir el cariño de la amistad que traspasa lo sensorial hasta llegar al fondo del alma. “Lo que hace importante tu rosa es el tiempo que le has dedicado a ella”, dice el zorro al principio, entristecido al ver una hilera de



rosas como la suya al llegar a la tierra.

No espere tenerlo todo en la vida. Ya tienes la vida para disfrutar todo. En la vida todo se transforma siempre y somos grandes cuando hacemos valiosa la vida al entregarle nuestro tiempo, con sabiduría, con bondad, que es lo inteligente. Todos en principio creemos en el regalo de la amistad como algo esencial. Por eso es preciso que cuesta labrar una relación de confianza y es por eso que nos hiere tanto la deslealtad. No guardes rencor a nadie. No vale la pena guardar cosas innecesarias en tu corazón. La vida se encarga de darle a cada uno lo que se merece. No esperes encontrar buenos amigos, se tu un buen amigo, tanto que todos los que te conozcan deseen ser tu amigo. La amistad es una forma de amor que Dios nos

regala mediante la posibilidad de experimentar que nos sentimos queridos y aceptados por encima tantas veces, de lo que nos queremos y aceptamos nosotros mismos. El primer paso de cualquier amistad siempre viene de Dios y en muchas ocasiones el segundo y el tercero... Dando y recibiendo lo mejor de sí mismos. No pasemos por alto lo esencial en la amistad, en las cosas que nos pasan y las que están a nuestro entorno...

Un policía acudió a la escena de un accidente ocasionado por un automovilista de esos que pegan y corren. La víctima una mujer de mediana edad, logró calmarse al cabo de un rato y el policía pudo entonces interrogarla. Se fijo usted en el numero de la placa del automóvil que la atropello, señora? Le pregunto. No me fije, contestó la víctima, pero

la que manejaba el automóvil llevaba un sombrero rojo, adornado con flores, un traje sastre gris y una blusa blanca... Muchas personas pasan por la vida sin observar las cosas importantes, el objetivo verdadero de su existencia. Se distraen tanto en detalles y en cosas sin importancia que olvidan completamente lo que la vida realmente es. Si deseas mantenerte en las mejores condiciones para trabajar con Dios, cerciórate de que mejoras tu vida mediante la reflexión, la oración y el servicio a los demás. “Dormía y sonaba que la vida era alegría, me desperté y vi que la vida no era más que servir y servir era alegría” Seamos siempre diligentes y no pases por alto lo esencial. Que es hoy lo esencial en este tiempo de la Pandemia?

Attention With The Essentials

Being simple is what makes you great. If we could see the world through the eyes of a child, we would see the magic in everything. “You only see with the heart, what is essential is invisible to the eyes” This is read in The Little Prince, about the importance of the little things that are unseen even though they are essential. Those gestures so typical of true friendship and that sometimes are reduced down to a brief smile, a compassionate silence, a knowing glance -that expresses everything.

When these details are lived in a sustained way over time, they provide a blissful existence, in addition to being the source of great feats, even if they do not reach the general public.

Such is the case in history of so many stories of friendship that we know from here or there or that we have experienced ourselves that generate the best of the human heart. We all try to achieve something great in life, not realizing that existence shines in simple gestures; the inner beauty of love, of any form of love, including friendship; it is impossible for it not to bring consequences. A

friendship does not grow by the interaction of people but because of the magic of knowing that even if you don't see them, you carry them in your heart. Love is not heard, it is felt, that's why you don't have to say it, you have to show it.

When pain is experienced, friendship is capable of leaving behind the most negative burdens. Behind every brave and determined person, there is a story that caused hurt but made that person stronger. You do not deny mistakes, you own responsibility for them. Sadness is not wept over, it is overcome. Love is not shouted, it is expressed and demonstrated. Life gives you the opportunity to write, correct, and improve your entire story every day. What is essential to loyalty in friendship is only seen with the heart in the joyful attitudes, healthy complicity and trust. It is something that cannot be gained with money or power. As much as a person pleases us at first sight for what he may have, what is truly important is the inside of that person. It either attracts us or repels us accordingly. The superficial look that we sometimes have on reality

prevents us from capturing the deep truths that go unnoticed because everyone sees what they have been taught or trained to see.

The essential thing is to see with the heart and discover the importance of the experiences beyond our five senses. The eyes of the heart transcend sensory parameters to grasp what is truly important; and then the senses become means that channel these feelings in the form of a hug, a kiss, a caress, a smile, laughter, words of love and appreciation for the other. And we all know that by making these gestures what is sought is not the physical contact of hands or hugs, but the desire to feel the love of friendship that transcends the senses to the bottom of the soul. What is important to your rose is the time you have devoted to it, said the fox to the Little Prince, crushed when he saw a row of roses like his bequeathed to the earth.

Don't expect to have it all in life. You already have life to enjoy everything. In life everything is always being transformed, and we are better when we make life valuable by giving

it our time, with wisdom, with goodness, which is the smart thing to do. In principle, all of us believe that the gift of friendship is essential. That is why it is necessary to forge and establish a relationship filled with trust, and that is also why disloyalty hurts us so much. Don't hold a grudge against anyone. It is not worth keeping inconsequential things in your heart. Life itself takes care of giving everyone what they deserve. Do not expect to find good friends, be a good friend so that everyone who knows you may want to be your friend. Friendship is a form of love that God gives us as a gift for the possibility of experiencing the feeling of being loved and accepted so many times above everything, and what we love and accept about ourselves. The first step in any friendship always comes from God and on many occasions the second and third as well... Giving and receiving the best in each of us. Let us not overlook the essential, in friendship, in the things that happen to us, and those that are around us.

A police officer went to the scene of an accident caused by

a “hit and run” motorist. The victim, a middle-aged woman, managed to calm down after a while and the policeman was then able to question her. Did you notice the license plate number of the car that hit you, ma'am? he asked her. I did not notice, the victim answered, but the person who was driving the car wore a red hat, adorned with flowers, a gray tailored suit and a white blouse ... Many people go through life without observing the important things, the true goal of their existence. They get so distracted by small details and unimportant things that they completely forget what life is really about. If you want to remain in the best condition to work with God, make sure that you improve your life through reflection, prayer and service to others. “As I slept I dreamt that life was pure joy. When I awoke I saw that life was nothing more than serving, and serving was joy “Let us be always diligent and do not overlook what is essential. Especially what is essential today during this time of the Pandemic?

Faith, is like a little seed. If you plant it, it will grow

By Natalie Eckberg
Progress Coordinator

It is in this way that some of our Diocesan ministry leaders serve as gardeners of the soul. This is certainly true for those that focus on faith formation, such as Friar Mario Serrano, OFM Conv. Friar Serrano acts as Director of the Catholic Campus Ministry (CCM), which serves the UTEP and Sul Ross campuses. The ministry relies on Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal for a portion of its funding.

"These students are the future of the Church," said Serrano. "They are in a place where they are discerning what they want to do. When we think about college students and discernment, we – as a society – are used to think about their professions and course of study. But in this ministry, we aren't just focused on their career – the focus is on what are they being called to do with their life, and how they want to live their life."

CCM ministers to almost 30,000 people in El Paso and 3,000 people at Sul Ross State University. Activities include meetings, Mass, reconciliation, presentations by community and organization leaders, participation in campus activities, retreats, meals, service and social justice projects, helping members receive sacraments if they have not yet obtained them, social

gatherings and more.

"One of the first things the students learn is that living their faith isn't simply about participating in the sacraments and checking into Sunday mass," Serrano said. "It's about being intentional in your day-to-day. For example, where I eat, what I do, how I engage in conversation and the words I use – it all matters. One time, some of the students wanted to go eat at (a restaurant featuring women scantily clad), and I had to tell them: 'Is there any other place where we can go? A place that doesn't objectify the women and focus on their sexuality?'"

That conversation is indicative of the kind of dialogue that often happens between Friar and his students.

"We have to be okay with any conversation that comes up and be truthful and authentic," he said. "Like in this situation. When I came to Catholic Campus Ministry, I made it clear to them that I would be there to discuss whatever was important to them – and that includes sex. Sexuality is a gift and the focus of my conversation with them is: 'How do we use this gift? Are we upholding our dignity and the dignity of others?' And if the answer is no, then we need to be accountable to the version of ourselves that we want to be. Because we are here – especially during this critical time for stu-



Catholic Campus Ministry Volleyball team photographed during 2021 Summer Slam Jam Volleyball Tournament. *Photo Courtesy of Catholic Campus Ministry.*

dents – to grow in wisdom."

During the pandemic, Serrano had to engage in creative and innovative ways to communicate with his students – but also to remind the community of his work with students. The ministry makes it a point to visit parishes in the Diocese regularly to conduct outreach. Focus is also

on fun social activities as well. Interested adults can help with monetary donations, serve as mentors, invite students home for the holidays and more. Visitors are welcome as well.

"All are welcome and I do mean all are welcome," Friar said. "All belong. You don't have to be Catholic or be what

some say 'a good Catholic.' You don't have to have a good prayer life. We aren't a bunch of holy rollers. We are sinful people who seek the truth together. And I'm not the one who holds the truth together. We are on this journey together."

La fe es como una semillita. Si se planta, crecerá

Por Natalie Eckberg
Cordinadora del Progreso

Es así como algunos de nuestros líderes ministeriales diocesanos sirven como jardineros del alma. Esto es ciertamente cierto para aquellos que se centran en la formación de la fe, como Fray Mario Serrano, OFM Conv. Fray Serrano actúa como Director del Ministerio Católico del Campus (CCM), que sirve a los campus de UTEP y Sul Ross. El ministerio depende de Progress: Catholic Ministry Appeal para una parte de su financiación.

"Estos estudiantes son el futuro de la Iglesia", dijo Serrano. "Están en un lugar donde están discerniendo lo que quieren hacer. Cuando pensamos en los estudiantes universitarios y en el discernimiento, estamos acostumbrados, como sociedad, a pensar en sus profesiones y en sus estudios. Pero en este ministerio, no nos centramos sólo en su carrera - el enfoque es en lo que están siendo llamados a hacer con su vida, y cómo quieren vivir su vida".

CCM atiende a casi 30.000 personas en El Paso y a 3.000 personas en la Universidad Estatal de Sul Ross. Las actividades incluyen reuniones, misa, reconciliación, presentaciones de líderes comunitarios y de organizaciones, participación en

actividades del campus, retiros, comidas, proyectos de servicio y justicia social, ayuda a los miembros para que reciban los sacramentos si aún no los han obtenido, reuniones sociales y mucho más.

"Una de las primeras cosas que aprenden los estudiantes es que vivir su fe no consiste simplemente en participar en los sacramentos y asistir a la misa dominical", dijo Serrano. "Se trata de ser intencional en su día a día. Por ejemplo, dónde como, qué hago, cómo entablo una conversación y las palabras que utilizo: todo eso importa". Una vez, algunos de los estudiantes querían ir a comer a (un restaurante con mujeres con

poca ropa), y tuve que decirles: '¿Hay algún otro lugar al que podamos ir? Un lugar que no cosifique a las mujeres y se centre en su sexualidad?'"

Esa conversación es indicativa del tipo de diálogo que suele darse entre Fraile y sus alumnos.

"Tenemos que estar de acuerdo con cualquier conversación que surja y ser sinceros y auténticos", dijo. "Como en esta situación. Cuando llegué a la Pastoral Universitaria Católica, les dejé claro que estaría allí para hablar de lo que fuera importante para ellos, y eso incluye el sexo. La sexualidad es un don y mi conversación con ellos se centra en: '¿Cómo utilizamos este don? ¿Estamos

defendiendo nuestra dignidad y la de los demás? Y si la respuesta es no, entonces tenemos que rendir cuentas a la versión de nosotros mismos que queremos ser.

Porque estamos aquí -especialmente durante esta época crítica para los estudiantes- para crecer en sabiduría".

Durante la pandemia, Serrano tuvo que emplear formas creativas e innovadoras para comunicarse con sus alumnos, pero también para recordar a la comunidad su trabajo con los estudiantes. El ministerio se esfuerza por visitar regularmente las parroquias de la diócesis para realizar actividades de divulgación. También se centra en

actividades sociales divertidas. Los adultos interesados pueden ayudar con donaciones monetarias, servir de mentores, invitar a los estudiantes a casa para las vacaciones y más. Los visitantes también son bienvenidos.

"Todos son bienvenidos y quiero decir que todos son bienvenidos", dijo Friar. "Todos pertenecen. No tienes que ser católico o ser lo que algunos dicen 'un buen católico'. No tienes que tener una buena vida de oración. No somos un grupo de santones. Somos personas pecadoras que buscan la verdad juntos. Y yo no soy el que mantiene la verdad unida. Estamos juntos en este viaje".



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6th Annual Dei Gratia Award Recipient Announced

By Sofia Larkin
Major Gifts Officer

Diocese of El Paso Clergy and Religious will be honored as the 2021 recipients of the Catholic Foundation's Dei Gratia Award for their extraordinary and heroic ministry during the pandemic.

They have been unrelenting in their commitment and service to others during COVID-19, and continue to accompany us during these still uncertain times.

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 our Catholic community, and dedication to being good stewards of God's grace.

The Dei Gratia Award will be presented to Bishop Mark J. Seitz during the virtual 15th Annual Foundation of Faith Event: Ignite Your Hearts on Thursday, September 23 at The Manor at Ten Eleven.

Priests, deacons, and men and women religious practiced heroic

ministry during the pandemic, and went out of their way to respond to God's call to "Ignite Your Hearts". They prayed with us, blessed us, taught us, counseled us, and accompanied us. Some even gave their lives.

Help us celebrate the Diocese of El Paso Clergy and Religious with your participation at the 15th Annual Foundation of Faith Event.

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.

"We will show the world all



Diocese of El Paso Clergy and Religious will be honored as the 2021 recipients of the Catholic Foundation's Dei Gratia Award for their extraordinary and heroic ministry during the pandemic. *Photo Courtesy of the Catholic Foundation*

that love has done." — Sarah Hart

Have questions? Please contact

Major Gifts Officer Sofia Larkin at (915) 872-8412 or slarkin@catholicfoundationelpaso.org.

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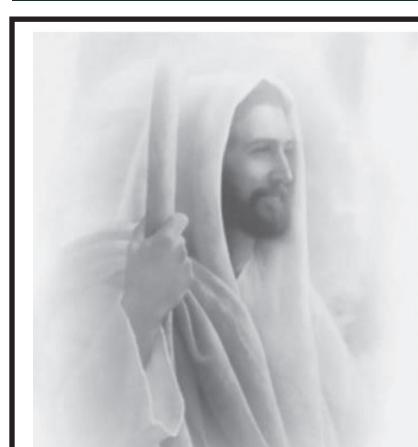
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Saturday 5 - 6
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St. Luke Catholic Church
930 E. Redd Road, El Paso Texas 79912



The 2021 Steward of the Year Contest is Underway.

By Karina Sandoval
Stewardship Coordinator

The Catholic Foundation invited pastors, diocesan ministry directors and Catholic school principals to nominate an individual who they believe used their gifts and talents to their fullest potential, and generously helped those in great need in our community. Because the pandemic presented a myriad of opportunities to serve, the Catholic Foundation expanded the criteria to seven categories.

Steward of the Year 2021 categories:

1) St. Toribio Romo, patron saint of Mexican migrants and "border crossers," this category recognizes the service to refugees and immigrants.

2) St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), the "mother of the poor" this category recognizes the service to the ones who had difficulties during the pandemic, e.g. food pantries, delivery of food to the homebound.

3) St. Teresa Benedict of the Cross (Edith Stein), who loved and nurtured those around her during the Nazi occupation, this category recognizes the service to the ones who suffered the loss of their loved ones due to Covid-19 virus.

4) St. Juan Diego, Our Lady's messenger of hope, this category recognizes the communications and evangelization ministry.

5) St. John of God, patron saint of the sick, nurses, and hospitals, this category recognizes the urgent service to the sick.

6) St. John Baptist de la Salle, patron saint of teachers, this category recognizes the service of religious formation catechists and Catholic school teachers.

7) Blessed Carlo Acutis, A young devout Catholic who loved computers and video games, this category recognizes the service by and to youth and young adults.

The Steward of the Year and category winners will be announced on the Catholic Foundation's website and social media, (catholicfoundationelpaso.org) and during the 15th Annual Foundation of Faith Event: Ignite your Hearts on Thursday, September 23, 2021. The Steward of the Year will receive a gift card to a restaurant, and the respective parish, ministry, or Catholic school will receive \$1,000. Category winners will receive \$50 each.

For more information about the 2021 Steward of the Year contest, please contact Karina Sandoval, Stewardship Coordinator at the Catholic Foundation at ksandoval@elpasodiocese.org, or at 915-872-8412.

Stay tuned to the October issue of the Rio Grande Catholic to read about the 2021 Steward of the Year and category winners.

STEWARD OF THE YEAR 2021

THE PANDEMIC PRESENTED A MYRIAD OF OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE SO WE HAVE EXPANDED THE CRITERIA TO INCLUDE SEVEN CATEGORIES TO CHOOSE FROM.



ST. TORIBIO ROMO

Ministry of Refugees and Immigrants



ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA (MOTHER TERESA)

Ministry to the Poor



ST. TERESA BENEDICT OF THE CROSS (EDITH STEIN)

Ministry of Bereavement



ST. JOHN OF GOD

Ministry of Health



ST. JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

Ministry of Education and Religious Formation



ST. JUAN DIEGO

Ministry of Communication and Evangelization



BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS

Ministry of Youth and Young Adults



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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.