Time for confession

Extended hours for sacrament of reconciliation offered
March 30-31 at 36 parishes across the archdiocese

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

MIA MI | Whether your last confession was two weeks ago or 20 years ago, you will have an expanded opportunity to avail yourself once again of this healing sacrament March 30-31 — the weekend of Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. For the second year in a row, the Archdiocese of Miami will host a Reconciliation Weekend, during which Archbishop Thomas Wenski has asked parishes to expand the hours during which they offer the sacrament of reconciliation and bring in extra priests to hear people’s confessions.

"Last year, it was estimated that some 8,000 people went to confession during the Reconciliation Weekend," Archbishop Wenski said. "The purpose of this weekend is to encourage our people to rediscover the tender mercies of Our Lord in the sacrament of penance and to give them added access to this sacrament."

Thirty-six parishes throughout Miami-Dade, Broward and Monroe counties will offer confessions Friday, March 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., and Saturday, March 31, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Confessions will take place as regularly scheduled in all the other parishes of the archdiocese.

As Archbishop Wenski put it, "This Weekend of Reconciliation is not meant to replace scheduled celebrations of the rite of reconciliation in our parishes, but rather to make this sacrament of God’s mercy more available to our people."
Divine Mercy graces coming

Events planned for next three months include Masses, visit by Mercy Sisters from Poland

MIAMI | The Divine Mercy devotion has been described by some Church leaders as “not just one more devotion, just another booklet or picture,” but more precisely as “God’s final devotion to us.” It is a devotion that dates back to a 1931 revelation to St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun and mystic who recorded the revelations in her 699-page diary, “Divine Mercy in My Soul.” Blessed John Paul II canonized St. Faustina in April 2000 and declared the Sunday of Divine Mercy a special feast day for “pilgrims to flock to from all the countries of the Americas.” On the feast day itself, which falls this year on April 15, the apostolate will host an all-day event on the grounds of Hacienda Guadalupe, 6401 S.W. 125 St., Miami. The day will include Mass, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, veneration of the Divine Mercy image, praying of the chaplets of Divine Mercy and Benediction, followed by a Catholic music concert.

The grounds of the hacienda will open at 10 a.m. In addition to the religious celebration, the day also will feature lots of entertainment for the whole family, including a Paso Fino horse show at noon and a variety of kiosks offering everything from food and beverage to Divine Mercy religious articles. Finally, May 4-6, the Congress of Divine Mercy will take place, beginning with a Mass to be celebrated Friday, May 4, 7 p.m., by Archbishop Thomas Wenski at St. Mary Cathedral, 7525 N.W. Second Ave., Miami. The Mass will be followed by Faustinum ceremonies directed by the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy from Poland and Boston, who are traveling to South Florida especially for this event. The Faustinum is the lay association of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. The sisters who are coming are Sister Salvatrizce Musial of Poland, Sister Donata Farbaniec, sister superior of the congregation’s convent in Boston, and Sister Caterina Esselen of that same convent. “They are wonderful servants and merciful ladies who love merciful Jesus, and St. Faustina, of course, is their champion,” said Deacon de los Reyes, who encouraged everyone in the archdiocese to take part in the Mass.

The sisters will be present throughout the congress as it continues on Saturday and Sunday, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., at Sun Life Stadium, 2269 Dan Marino Blvd., Miami Gardens. Saturday’s activities will begin with the recitation of the rosary followed by Mass celebrated by Bishop Martin Igwe Uzouku of Minna, Nigeria. Throughout the weekend, homilies and speakers will focus on Jesus’ message to the world as recorded in St. Faustina’s diary. Also featured is a eucharistic procession, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, chaplets, praise and worship music, and Benediction. The weekend will close with Mass celebrated by retired Miami Auxiliary Bishop Agustín Roman.

There is a $25 donation for this event which will feature simultaneous translation from English to Spanish and Spanish to English. Bus transportation is also available. For reservations and more information on all of these events, visit www.dmsanctuary.org or call the Divine Mercy House of Prayer at 305-267-9061.

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Enriquecido con 47 fotografías, este libro fue escrito para conmemorar el 60 aniversario de la ordenación sacerdotal de los hermanos, la cual celebraron juntos en la basílica de San Pedro en el Vaticano.

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NEW TRANSLATION OF ROMAN MISSAL: NINTH IN A SERIES

‘The mystery of faith’

MSGR. RICHARD ANTALL
Special to the Florida Catholic

Perhaps one of the most noticeable changes in the new English translation of the Latin rite has to do with the acclamation that responds to the consecration.

“The mystery of faith,” the priest says. What could be more important than that? Meditating on the memorial acclamations gives us new insights into the mystery of the Eucharist, which is at the heart of our faith.

Before talking about the changes, however, it is worthwhile to think about this part of the Mass. First of all, what is happening? The insertion of an “anamnesis” (literally a “remembrance”) of the people was a change brought in at the Second Vatican Council. It was a liturgical borrowing from one of the Oriental rites. The words are addressed by the people to Jesus. That should make us pay close attention, since in the Eucharist we almost always address the Lord.

A priest once commented on this. He said that when the consecration was completed he felt happy because he was no longer the center of attention. Christ was present and so now the priest could cede him his place. It made me realize that the acclamation is part of a personal conversation with the Lord.

That is why it is natural that the acclamation that was perhaps the most popular in use has been eliminated: “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” The reason it has been changed is because those three phrases are declarations, not prayers. They are in the third person, not the second. The Latin originals are like an exclamation that speaks directly to the Lord Jesus. Two of them say, “Domine, salvator mundi” (Savior of the world).

In the new translation, the response of the people has three options instead of the four that were used before. The three are:

• “We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection, until you come again.”
• “When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again.”
• “Save us, savior of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.”

These can be unpacked theologically and merit our meditation. Each one is spoken to Jesus and recapitulates the deep mystery of our redemption by means of his cross and resurrection. This is what the old acclamation declared, that Christ died for us, that he rose again and that we await his return in glory. Since the resurrection was the definitive proof of Christ’s divinity, the acclamations implicitly speak about the mystery of the Incarnation.

They also show that our memorial is not just about events from the past. Swiss priest Pascal Deschieux illustrated this by a particularly appropriate comparison. When a husband and wife celebrate their anniversary, this is not just about the past. The fact that they are celebrating the date has to do with their ongoing relationship. Although anything is possible in the absurd and anarchic way people live nowadays, it is not likely that a couple not committed to each other would memorialize the day they were joined together if it did not have a meaning in the present. The two of them remember the past, but the event they celebrate has ramifications in the present and for the future.

In a similar way, the community of faith remembers the most important event in human history, the sacrificial death of Jesus the Christ, not just to look toward the past. The present action — the memorial — is about our relationship with Christ now. It refers back to the past, speaking about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Nevertheless, there is a clear reference to the future in all three acclamations.

The three acclamations are equivalent but at the same time complementary. The first offers a panorama of salvation history. It mentions proclaiming the past, specifically, the death of the Lord. Then it speaks of “professing,” which refers to the present. Finally it speaks of the future, “until you come again.” This makes explicit what the other two acclamations contain implicitly.

The second acclamation speaks directly of the Eucharist, eating the bread and drinking the cup. This is practically a citation of 1 Corinthians 11:25: “Every time, then, you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.” Past, present and future are found as elements, but the acclamation has the unique advantage of being scriptural and referring to the eucharistic banquet in a concrete way.

The beginning of the third acclamation, “Save us, savior of the world,” has poetic assonance and in fact the prayer can actually stand alone, independent of the eucharistic canon.

The passion of Christ is more explicitly referred to by the reference to the cross. It also contains the theological idea of “freedom” which is actually a metaphor for redemption. I find this third option the most beautiful.

Msgr. Richard Antall is a priest of the Diocese of Cleveland who spent the past 20 years as a missionary in El Salvador. He has written three books of theological reflections rooted in his work among the poor.

Renowned for leadership development in justice, science, business and ministry, St. Thomas University is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. Its academic expansion now includes unique degrees in global entrepreneurship, intercultural human rights and undergraduate science research conducted in state-of-the-art laboratories. A small-class size, private university is the competitive advantage that allows students to reach their highest potential. Financing is easy as 1-2-3. Just get started by calling the Admissions Office at 800.367.9010 or email signup@stu.edu www.STU.edu
A Protestant pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who lived in Nazi Germany and was executed by Hitler just a few weeks before the end of the war — wrote a book called “The Cost of Discipleship.” He was highly critical of the state of the church in Germany at the time of the Nazi takeover. He felt that too many Christians came to believe in a false idea of what Christian living was about. The Gospel was no longer seen as demanding because too many came to believe in what he called “cheap grace.”

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal conversion. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace to this world. It crosses, grace without Jesus Christ who, while risen, still carries the wounds of His Passion. We cannot save ourselves; only God can save. But God will not save us against ourselves. Too often, we hear spoken or expressed in so many words certain attitudes that hide this counterfeit version of grace. The first attitude is expressed in the phrase: “God accepts me just as I am. Certainly, God loves us just as he finds us — he does not love us because we are good — Jesus died for us while we were still his enemies. Yet, because God loves us, we can become good. God desires our conversion — he expects us to turn to him and not stay “just as we are.”

Another attitude disguising this “cheap grace” approach to the spiritual life is expressed in saying: “I am saved — period! It doesn’t matter what I do — if I do good, just because; if I do evil, just because. The result is going to heaven anyway.” Or we say, “I can’t do any better; God understands.” As if God doesn’t care if we do not overcame our resentments of our sinful habits. Cheap grace, indeed.

Similar to this attitude, one that we sometimes hear from the young, but also too often from the not-so-young: “This is a stage I need to go through until I’ve really dealt with my issues. God is patient.” Oh, yeah. God is patient — but will your wife be at patient when you go through this “stage” with another woman? All this is counterfeit grace — a grace that requires no effort, no struggle on our part. Yet, real grace is costly grace.

It is costly because it cost a man his life, and it is grace because it gives man true life. It cost God the life of his son: “You were bought with a price, and what has cost God so dearly cannot be cheap food.

As Christians, we are engaged every day in a spiritual warfare — to resist temptation and do what is right, what is pleasing to God. Cheap grace tells us we can give up the battle, that we don’t have to fight, to struggle. Why should we not give up the battle? Because it is only in the battle that we will experience God’s grace.

Sometimes we try, and we find that truly “we can do all things through him who strengthens us.” Sometimes we try and fail, and realize that this realization only makes us realize that we need to set the battle to the Lord who dying destroys our death and makes our resurrection in his realization only makes us realize what we must not stop fighting. God is patient.

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Pilgrims’ helpers

2 volunteers have worked behind the scenes for Cuba trip

MIAMI | It’s Cuba, so it’s complicated.

Nobody knows that better than the two young women who have spent the past month and a half gathering the paperwork and answering the phone calls of the nearly 1,000 people who expressed an interest in joining the Archdiocese of Miami’s pilgrimage to the island for the visit of Pope Benedict XVI.

As of now, a total of 310 people have paid to go and are awaiting entry visas from the Cuban government. Much of the behind-the-scenes work of getting them there has been done by Aileem Acosta, 28, and Leysi Lorenzo, 24, sisters who left Cuba only a few years ago themselves.

Acosta obtained a scholarship to study in Italy for three years. Lorenzo obtained a scholarship to study in China at age 19 — she is proficient in Mandarin — and did study in China for a year while she was in Italy.

“We grew up in the same parish,” Acosta said of her husband.

Both sisters were very involved with the Church in Cuba, as were their parents, who joined Nativity Parish in Hollywood as soon as they arrived in South Florida.

“Both of us were catechists for a long time,” said Acosta. “My parents were leaders in pastoral ministry to families.”

They are not of the generation that experienced persecution personally but “my grandmother had to hide to take my dad to church,” said Acosta, calling her “one of those grandmother-pillars of the faith who never separated themselves from the Church.”

But a measure of how things changed on the island from the early 1960s — when open and often vicious persecution was the norm — to the mid-1980s — when the Cuban Church’s ENEC process propelled it out of the catacombs — is the fact that the family already was active in their parish when Pope John Paul II visited in 1998.

“That was before and an after the pope’s visit,” Acosta said. “At the level of Church, the five years of preparation for the visit were very beautiful. After his visit, Christmas was celebrated for the first time. It was a great flowering of the Church, a very important moment.”

Many people who had received their sacraments in secret — such as her father — also returned to the open practice of their faith.

“It was a very big step to allow the person who represented the Church to enter the country and speak about peace, love and liberty,” said Lorenzo. “After the pope’s visit, everyone attended catechism classes and (they were not afraid) to say it at school.”

“This pope has a great mission (ahead of him),” said Acosta. “I sense that there is an awakening of civil society in Cuba,” and many people are hoping that Benedict XVI’s visit will lead not only to new hope for the faith but also “for many other things.”

COCONUT GROVE

• St. Hugh
3489 Royal Road
305-444-8363

CONFESSIONS
April 2, 7:30 p.m.; April 5 (Holy Thursday), 5-6 p.m.

HOLY THURSDAY
6 p.m. Lord’s Supper; 9 p.m. midnight eucharistic adoration

GOOD FRIDAY
3 p.m. Stations; 4 p.m. Via Crucis en Español; 3:30 p.m. Passion; 7:30 p.m. Célébration de la Pasión del Señor

EASTER VIGIL
8 p.m. (Bilingual)

EASTER
English: 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m.
Spanish: noon, 6:30 p.m.

MIAMI

• St. Thomas the Apostle
7377 SW 64 St.
www.stamiami.org
305-665-5600

CONFESSIONS
April 2-4, 7:30 p.m.; April 7, noon-2 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY
5:30 p.m. (Saturday Vigil), 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m. (Spanish); 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m.

MASS, TUES., WED. OF HOLY WEEK Masses
6:15 a.m., 8 a.m., 7 p.m.

HOLY THURSDAY
4 p.m., Santa María (Spanish); 8 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper (Meditation Garden); all-night adoration following the Mass.

GOOD FRIDAY
10 a.m. Via Crucis (Church, Spanish); noon Veneration of the Cross with Holy Communion and Scripture readings (Church); 2 p.m. sorrowsful mysteries of the rosary (Church); 3 p.m. novena to the Divine Mercy, Stations of the Cross (Church, Bilingual); 8 p.m. live re-enactment of the Passion, Veneration, holy Communion (Meditation Garden). (Visit the tomb of Jesus, Good Friday afternoon, Holy Saturday, and the empty tomb on Easter)

HOLY SATURDAY
11:30 a.m. novena to the Divine Mercy (Bilingual); 2 p.m. blessing of the Easter baskets (Adoration Chapel)

EASTER VIGIL
8 p.m.

EASTER
6:30 a.m. sunrise Mass (Outdoors, Meditation Garden); 9 a.m., 9:30 a.m. (Church; 9:20 a.m. (Family Center), 11 a.m. (Church), 11 a.m. (Family Center), 12:30 p.m. (Church, Spanish); 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m. (Church)

MIAMI BEACH

• St. Joseph
8670 Byron Ave.
cwilliamson@stjoemiami.org

EASTER VIGIL/VIGILIA PASCUAL
8 p.m. (Multilingual)

EASTER
English: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. Spanish: 12:30 p.m., 6 p.m.
Polish: 3:30 p.m.

MIAMI SPRINGS

• Blessed Trinity
4020 Curtiss Parkway
www.blessedtrinity.org
305-671-5780

BILINGUAL PENANCE SERVICE
Mon., April 2, 7 p.m.

APRIL 3
10 a.m. Chirism Liturgy (St. Mary’s Catholic Church)

HOLY THURSDAY/JUEVES SANTO
No morning Mass. 8:30 a.m. morning prayer (English); 7:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper (multilingual celebration)

HOLY FRIDAY/VIERNES SANTO
8:30 a.m. morning prayer (Spanish); noon Via Crucis en Español; 3 p.m. Stations of the Cross (English); 6 p.m. Lord’s Passion (English); 7:15 p.m. solemn procession (with all of our parishioners); 8 p.m. “Along with Our Lord’s Cross” (Bilingual)/Célébration de la Pasión del Señor (Spanish)

HOLY SATURDAY/SABADO SANTO
8:30 a.m. morning prayer (English); noon traditional blessing of Easter meal

EASTER VIGIL/VIGILIA PASCUAL
8 p.m. (Multilingual)

EASTER
English: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. Spanish: 12:30 p.m., 6 p.m.
Polish: 3:30 p.m.

TAVERNIER

• San Pedro
89500 Overseas Highway
305-852-5372

CONFESSIONS
April 5-6, 6-6:45 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY
5:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross; 7 p.m. Passion

HOLY SUNDAY
No confessions

EASTER VIGIL
5 p.m.

EASTER
Morning services only
7 a.m. sunrise Mass (Church); 9 a.m. (Church, Children’s choir); 9:35 a.m. (William’s Hall); 11 a.m. (Church); 11:05 a.m. (William’s Hall)

HOLY SUNDAY
8 p.m. Easter Vigil Mass (Bilingual)

EASTER
English Masses: 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 5:30 p.m.
Spanish Masses: 12:30 p.m., 7 p.m.
Archbishop Thomas Wenski pours holy water on the ground on which a new respect life office will be built. He kicked off the 40 Days for Life campaign in front of abortion clinics and also blessed the ground where the new office, Our Lady of Hope Exempted, will be located during a candlelight vigil Feb. 23. The new office will be on the grounds of the Marian Center. The Life Teen group from St. Stephen Parish in Miramar provided the music for the event. See story, www.miamiamich.org. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Which came first?

A clarification to the story ‘Key West church now a minor basilica’

The February 2012 article, “Key West church now a minor basilica,” refers to the newly named minor basilica of St. Michael the Archangel in the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee as “the oldest parish in Florida,” and St. Mary Star of the Sea as the “second oldest” church in the state. Several readers have pointed out that the designation of “first” or “oldest” parish should belong to the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine, where Mass was first celebrated on Sept. 8, 1565. St. Augustine is the “oldest permanently occupied European settlement in what is now the United States of America,” and that Mass also marked the beginning of the cathedral parish.

For clarification, the Florida Catholic turned to Florida’s pre-eminent Church historian, Michael Gannon. He wrote:

“Upon the restoration of Spanish rule over East Florida in 1783, the parish of St. Augustine was restored one year later and it has existed uninterrupted until the present day. But though the St. Augustine parish was the first to be founded in what are now the United States and Canada, it would not today be Florida’s oldest parish in continuous existence. That honor, by three years, belongs to St. Michael’s, Pensacola. For that reason it is best to refer to St. Augustine as the first parish in what are now the U.S. and Canada.”

St. Michael’s in Pensacola is then the “oldest continuously operating parish in Florida,” canonically established in 1781, “when a chaplain with the victorious Spanish forces celebrated the conquest of West Florida with a Te Deum,” Gannon writes. “He was Capuchin Franciscan Father, later Bishop, Cirillo Antonio Sieni, known also as Cyril de Barcelona. Prior to the military campaign, the bishop of Santiago de Cuba had appointed him his vicario, or vicar forane, over West Florida. With that authority, Father Cirillo canonically erected in Pensacola the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel, which has lasted from 1781 to the present day without interruption.” That makes St. Mary Star of the Sea, Key West, the “third oldest” parish in Florida.

Gannon notes: “Father Michael J. McNally, the historian of the Church in South Florida, states that the first recorded Mass in Key West was celebrated by a priest from Havana in 1846. Father John F. Kirby was sent to the island from Savannah in 1851. Between 1850 and 1852, resident Catholics built a small wood-frame chapel north west side of Duval Street, between Fleming and Eaton Streets. On Feb. 28, 1852, Bishop Francis X. Garthland of the Diocese of Charleston, Sc.vannah dedicated the chapel as a parish under the title St. Mary, Star of the Sea.”

As for St. Mary Star of the Sea being the site of Florida’s first Catholic church, Gannon disagrees.

The first Catholic schools in Florida and beyond were the scores of catechetical centers established by the Franciscan missionaries in the hinterlands north and west of St. Augustine during the late 16th and the entire 17th centuries. The second notable school was the college-level seminary that the friars opened at St. Augustine in 1685. That was the first academic school in what is now the U.S., antedating by more than a quarter-century the educational foundations in English and Dutch colonies to the north. Then one must take notice of the first free school in the U.S. opened by St. Augustine’s pastor, Father Thomas Hassett, in 1786. Lasting 34 years, the school enrolled both white and free black boys.”

Gannon continues: “In 1860, five sisters of the Order of Mercy from the Diocese of Hartford and three Christian Brothers from Canada opened, respectively, a girls’ academy and a boys’ day school at St. Augustine. Finally, in 1866, eight Sisters of St. Joseph, an order in Le Puy, France, arrived in St. Augustine to open a school for freed African-American children; that school, later named St. Joseph Academy, has existed continuously to the present day. There are few records, shows, no fewer than five Catholic schools or school systems were founded in Florida prior to the start of Key West’s contribution to education.”

Now that those questions are settled, feel free to read up on each church’s history by going to their websites: www.stmichael.pdiocese.org; www.keywestcatholicparish.org.

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Archbishop leads Holy Week services

Following is the schedule of special Holy Week services at St. Mary Cathedral, 7525 N.W. Second Ave., Miami:

• Palm Sunday, April 1, Sunday Masses: 9:30 a.m., English; 7:30 a.m. Kreyol; 10 a.m. English with choir, celebrated by Archbishop Thomas Wenski, noon Spanish.

• Tuesday, April 3, 10:30 a.m., Archbishop Wenski will celebrate the annual Chrism Mass with blessing of oils and renewal of vows of all archdiocesan priests.

• Wednesday, April 4, 7:30 p.m., musical service of tenebrae performed by cathedral choir.

• Holy Thursday, April 5, 7:30 p.m., trilingual Mass of the Lord’s Supper celebrated by Archbishop Wenski and followed by eucharistic adoration.

• Good Friday, April 6, noon service of the Lord’s Passion; 3 p.m. Stations of the Cross; 7:30 p.m. trilingual service of the Passion celebrated by Archbishop Wenski, followed by procession of the Sorrowful Mother.

• Holy Saturday, April 7, 7:30 p.m. confessions; 8 p.m. trilingual Easter Vigil Mass celebrated by Archbishop Wenski with blessing of the new fire and sacraments of initiation.

• Easter Sunday, April 8, 6:30 a.m. English sunrise Mass; 8 a.m. Kreyol Easter Mass; 10 a.m. English Easter Mass with choir; noon Spanish Easter Mass. For more information, call 305-759-4531.

Learn to be better parents

The archdiocesan offices of family life and catechesis have joined forces to present “Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Youth,” a daylong conference aimed at helping parents lead their children toward a vibrant faith. The conference will take place Saturday, March 31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Holy Rosary-St. Richard Parish, 7500 S.W. 152 St., Palmetto Bay. The conference will focus on what parents can do to help their children toward a vibrant faith that embraces discipleship, and what the Church is doing to partner with parents and support families. To reserve a space, call 305-762-1107 or 305-762-1140, or email familylife@theadom.org.

Learn about Gregorian chant

Ave Maria University’s Department of Music and the Florida Chapter of the Church Music Association of America will present Musica Sacra Florida, a Gregorian chant conference, Friday, April 13, and Saturday, April 14, at Ave Maria University on Florida’s west coast.

This two-day workshop will present beginning, intermediate and advanced musicians with rehearsals and lectures that will enrich their knowledge of Gregorian chant and its use in the Roman Catholic liturgy. This workshop is ideal for choir members, parish music directors, music students, teachers, parents, seminarians, priests, deacons and anyone who is interested in learning about the heritage of sacred music within the Roman Catholic Church.

A Missa cantata in the extraordinary form of the Latin rite will be offered on Friday evening and a closing Missa cantata in the ordinary form will be celebrated on Saturday evening. Registration fees — due March 30 — are $60, or $55 for clergy and students with ID. Carpool from Miami/Fort Lauderdale to the conference are also available. For brochure and tentative schedule, go to www.musicasacra.com/florida.

Students seek DVDs for troops

The Support Our Troop (SOT) Club at Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy High School in Southwest Ranches is collecting new or gently used DVDs for sailors and marines. The SOT Club members will sort through the DVDs, package them up and deliver them April 26 during Fleet Week, accompanied by their adviser, Gregory J. Cosgrove, Archbishop McCarthy High’s government and economics teacher and a retired special forces lieutenant colonel.

Items can be dropped off at the school office, 5451 S. Flamingo Road, Southwest Ranches. For more information, call 954-434-8820 or go to www.mccarthyhigh.org.

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Catholic Nutrition Center Saves Lives — Before, After Results are Breathtaking

Children like Carmen are what keep Ana Alemán going even on her worst day. She found baby Carmen lying in an old milk crate on a side street in El Progreso, Honduras. Abandoned by her family, the frail infant’s skin clung to her bones. She was severely malnourished — nearly dead.

Ana, the director of Prince of Peace Nutrition Center, rescued her and brought her back to her ministry for treatment.

Now Carmen is a happy, healthy toddler. The care she received at Prince of Peace Nutrition Center has literally saved her life.

seeing tiny children with skeleton-like bodies and desperate mothers begging passersby for help, she decided to open the nutrition center that now provides life-saving care to dozens of malnourished children whose destitute parents cannot afford to feed them.

“We see so many sad cases coming here. It is truly heartbreaking,” she says. “Children are the most tragic victims of poverty. They are helpless to protect themselves, and their impoverished parents are simply incapable of caring for them.”

At the nutrition center the children are provided with five daily meals, and they remain under close supervision until they are nursed back to health. Meanwhile, their mothers are taught how to prepare nutritious meals using inexpensive foods available locally. This training insures that the children don’t relapse into the same malnourished state they arrived in once they leave Prince of Peace.

“The mothers are thrilled to see their children recover,” Alemán says. “After seeing their children suffer, it is also a relief for them to have solutions — ways of warding off malnutrition with the training they’ve received.”

“A Texas native, Alemán came to Honduras 18 years ago on a mission trip, and she never left. Moved to tears after

Alemán explains that the mothers who bring their children to the nutrition center are living at the most severe levels of poverty — typically living on less than $1 per day. They are also uneducated and may be providing their children with poor food choices, leading to vitamin deficiencies and other health problems. Such babies come in to the center weighing little more than a newborn even though they may actually be nearly a year old.

As Cross Catholic Outreach (CCO) continues its range of relief work to help the poor overseas, its efforts are being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S. and abroad.

“We’ve received an impressive number of endorsements from Bishops and Archbishops — more than 60 at last count,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. “They’re impressed by the fact that we’ve done outreaches in almost 40 countries and that we undertake a variety of projects: everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor.”

Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis sent one of the more recent letters of encouragement, writing: “It is my hope that this ministry will continue to flourish and reach as many people as possible. I will inform the priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis of the important work that Cross Catholic Outreach does and elicit their prayerful and financial support for the service you provide to the less fortunate around the world.”

In addition to praising the work CCO accomplishes, many of the Bishops and Archbishops are also impressed by the unique collaborative relationship Cross Catholic has with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum in Rome. This allows the charity to participate in the mercy ministries of the Holy Father himself. In his praise of CCO, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati underscored this unique connection.

“Cross Catholic Outreach’s close collaboration with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum is a source of encouragement,” the Archbishop said. “The Holy See has unique knowledge of local situations throughout the world through its papal representatives in nearly two hundred countries and through its communications with Bishops and others who care for the poor and needy in every corner of the world.”

CCO president, Jim Cavnar, explained the significance of this connection.

“Our collaboration with Cor Unum allows us to fund outreaches in virtually any area of the world and we have used that method in special cases — to help the victims of natural disasters, for example,” he said. “It only represents a small part of our overall ministry, but it can be a very important benefit in those situations.”
Escaping the Deadly Cycle of Poverty
Cross Catholic Outreach Celebrates Success of its Global Mission

Mercedes Nuez’s day begins at 6:30 a.m. when she enters Guatemala City’s huge, rat-infested dump. The single mother will spend the next 13 hours wading through piles of steaming garbage in search of items that she can sell for a few cents to one of the city’s recyclers.

The work is backbreaking. With each breath of methane gas rising from the trash, she feels as if her lungs may burst — but she keeps going because she knows that if she stops her daughters won’t eat tonight.

For Nuez and the nearly 2,000 poor families who live off this massive garbage dump, a hard life is all they know.

“I never went to school... maybe they can escape the life I have had to live.”

Mercedes Nuez, worker on the Guatemala City dump

“Life is very hard here. The days are long, and there aren’t many sources of help for people like me,” says Nuez, who has been working in the dump since she was 14 years old. “I never went to school, but I am thankful my girls are getting an education. Maybe then they can escape the life I have had to live.”

The education Nuez is talking about is an after-school program created to help the city’s poor. Their school, on the edge of the dump, is an important ray of hope in the otherwise beleaguered community.

“Thanks to donations from compassionate Americans, this educational center is able to provide a whole world of possibilities to children who have only known the eight filthy blocks that surround the garbage dump,” explains Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a U.S.-based charity helping to support schools in impoverished communities worldwide.

Cross Catholic Outreach is a firm believer in helping the poor through educational programs. Independent research backs up the value of their approach.

“Study after study has shown that investing in basic social services for children is a key to alleviating their poverty,” Cavnar adds. “By providing education along with food and medical care, we help break the cycle of poverty that’s dominated the lives of families for generations.”

And the alternative is shockingly bleak for those who do not benefit from an education.

For example, the illiterate poor typically live on $2.50 or less a day, and their living conditions are both dangerous and a health threat. An recent study by UNICEF found that, 24,000 children die each day because of poverty. One in three lack adequate shelter, while one in five don’t have clean water to drink. If an education can bring better conditions and opportunities, it is literally saving lives.

“There are undoubtedly practical reasons to do what we are doing to educate the poor, but that’s only one of our motivations — our desire to manifest God’s love is another important reason,” Cavnar says. “God called us to help our neighbors and to show Christ-like compassion by meeting their needs. By helping people like Mercedes Nuez and her children we are serving God and following Christ’s teachings.”

Cavnar highlighted Cross Catholic’s outreach to 8-year-old Humphrey as another example of how the charity puts its faith into action.

Humphrey and his siblings, Nancy, 5, and John, 4, were abandoned by their family. They lived for almost three years by themselves in a dilapidated, one-room shanty in the middle of the notorious Kibera Slum of Nairobi, Kenya.

To call their life “difficult” would be an understatement. Humphrey wasn’t even in third grade yet, but he was forced to juggle work and school in a desperate attempt to support his younger siblings. He and the younger children often went without food.

Fortunately, the struggling children were discovered by a group of Catholic nuns who provide food, educational opportunities and spiritual counseling to AIDS orphans and vulnerable children living in the slum.

With financial support from Cross Catholic Outreach, they were able to give the fledgling family the help they needed.

“Without the help we provided, these children probably would not have survived,” Cavnar says. “Thankfully, they now have a safe place to live, clothes to wear, plenty of food to eat, and they are able to attend school every day. Their suffering is over.”

Cavnar explains that life-saving programs like this wouldn’t exist without the support Cross Catholic receives from its generous Catholic donors in the U.S.

“Our Catholic benefactors are vital to the success of our work. Without them, we would not be able to support Catholic outreaches in Africa, Central America, the Philippines and elsewhere,” Cavnar says. “Our success is only possible because of their generous spirit. They are the heroes in this story.”

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross Catholic Outreach and its work with ministries overseas, use either the enclosed postage-paid brochure or send donations to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00846, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.

How to Help:
Your help is needed for Cross Catholic Outreach to bring Christ’s mercy to the poorest of the poor. Use the enclosed postage-paid brochure to mail your gift or send it to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00846, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.
CONCERTS

St. Pius X Concert series: St. Pius X, 2511 N. Ocean Blvd., Fort Lauderdale. $10 in advance, $15 at the door. 561-238-4757.

"Shades of Green: Songs of Ireland," Sunday, March 18, 4 p.m.

"The Music of Broadway," Sunday, April 22, 4 p.m.

Tenebræ: John Stainer’s "Crucifixion," Sunday, April 22, 4 p.m., Cathedral of St. Mary,

Ireland," Sunday, March 18, 4 p.m.

St. Theresa’s of Avila: "Our Lady of Assumption," Friday, March 30, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., St. Thomas University, 16041 N.W. 37 Ave., Miami Gardens. "Apocalypic Literature in the Old Testament," by Dr. Stephen Cook, Catherine M. McKinley Professor of Old Testament Language and Literature, Virginia Theological Seminary, cjrulio@jhu.edu.

Father Hoyer and Father Enrique

"Learning to Trust in God Again," Monday, March 26, 7:30 p.m., St. Vincent de Paul, 1125 S.W. 107 Ave., Miami, with Dominican Father James Sullivan. ABBA spiritual mission, March 26-28, 7:30 p.m., Mother of Our Redeemer, 12125 S.W. 107 Ave., Miami, led by Father Carlos Miiyares. 305-938-8319.

"Sábado por la Cruz y Resurrección," 26-28 de marzo, 7:30 p.m., Iglesia de St. John Neumann, 12125 S.W. 107 Ave., Miami, con el Padre Miguel Gonzalez. 305-255-6642.


"Fire It Up!" a retreat for all ages, Friday, April 27, 5-9:30 p.m. Saturday, April 28, 6:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. St. Bernadette, 7450 Stirling Road, Davie. $20/adults, $10/teens, $35/family rate, includes meals, materials. 954-436-9254, FriendsOfGodPray@aol.com.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Andy Hurst memorial fish fry/auction, Friday, March 23, 5:30 p.m., St. Sebastian, 2000 S.E. 25 Ave., Fort Lauderdale. $15/adults, $10/children under 12. 

"Life in the Spirit seminar, March 23, 7-10 p.m., March 24, 8:50 a.m.-5 p.m., St. Bernard, 6279 Sun-set Blvd., Coral Gables. missio@stbernardmiami.org.


"Learning to Trust in God Again," Monday, March 26, 7:30 p.m., St. Vincent de Paul, 1125 S.W. 107 Ave., Miami, with Dominican Father James Sullivan. ABBA spiritual mission, March 26-28, 7:30 p.m., Mother of Our Redeemer, 12125 S.W. 107 Ave., Miami, led by Father Carlos Miiyares. 305-938-8319.

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MASSES/PRAYER SESSIONS

Legion of Maria Acies 2012, sábado, 24 de marzo, Curia Hialeah North, 12190 S.W. 56 St., Iglesia Inmar- culada Concepcion; sábado, 31 de marzo, Curia Broward, 8:30 a.m., Iglesia de la Inmaculada Concepción de Pembroke Pines. 1-800-242-4122

Rosario a la Virgen de la Caridad, miércoles, 28 de marzo, 7 p.m., Gesu Church, 107 Pines of Second St., Miami. Exposición de la aparición de la Virgen en la Bahia de Nipe y cantos a la Virgen de decena y decena del Rosario. 305-379-1424, www.gesuchurch.org.

New rector at St. Vincent seminary

Father David Toups, a priest of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, has been named the new rector of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. He succeeds Msgr. Keith Brennan, a priest of the Diocese of St. Augustine who has served as rector since 2005. Archbishop Thomas Wenski, chancellor of the seminary and chairman of its board of trustees, made the announcement during a vespers service Feb. 24.

The seminary, founded in 1963, is operated jointly by the seven dioceses of Florida. It is a free-standing, graduate professional school of theology and one of only two bilinguial, multicultural, major Catholic seminaries in the United States. The seminary has more than 460 alumni, most of whom are serving today in parishes throughout Florida. Archbishop Wenski is among the alumni.

Father Toups is originally from Seattle and was ordained a priest in June 1997 by Bishop Robert N. Lynch of the Diocese of St. Petersburg. He currently serves as pastor of the King Parish in Tampa and has also served as director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Father Toups has degrees from the Pontifical North American College, Pontifical Gregorian University and St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami. He also served as professor of theology and dean of students at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary.
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Take I-75 and I-75 toward Naples to Exit 80, then right, follow signs to Ave Maria

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