INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

TWO PRIESTS ORDAINED

Newly ordained Father Cletus Omode blesses a fellow Nigerian-American, Patricia Igwe, at the reception which followed his ordination June 23 at St. Mary Cathedral. Archbishop Thomas Wenski ordained two new priests: Father Omode, the first graduate of the Redemptoris Mater Seminary to be ordained for the archdiocese; and Indian-American Father Biju Vells, who grew up in Miami’s St. Louis Parish. See story on Page 2.

FORTNIGHT FOR FREEDOM


NUN RUN

Recent college grads took part in a “nun-run” from Florida to New York May 31-June 5 to attend the final profession of vows of members of the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. Along the way, they stopped to visit members of other religious orders along the East Coast. See story on Pages 6-7.

Synod: Feedback, volunteers needed

Though listening sessions are over, Catholics’ voices can be heard through focus teams

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

MIAMI | The listening sessions are over. But Archbishop Thomas Wenski still wants to hear from South Florida Catholics.

As explained during the 11 sessions he attended (and a 12th sponsored by individual parishes), the most important contribution to the archdiocesan synod is the feedback form. Those who attended the listening sessions were asked to fill them out, whether they spoke up in front of the archbishop or not.

In all, 2,077 feedback forms were submitted by the 3,360 people who participated in the listening sessions. (Some submitted only one per couple or family.)

Now those forms are waiting to be filled out online by every other Catholic who wants to make his or her joys, concerns and hopes for the archdiocese part of the synod agenda. (Go to www.synodmiami.org or request that a form be mailed to you by calling the Synod Office at 305-762-1088.)

Those forms will be tabulated and studied by the synod focus teams beginning in October and in turn will form the basis for the priorities decided on by the synod leadership team — priorities that by late 2013 will turn into a pastoral plan for reaching out as “disciples in faith, missionaries of hope” to fellow Catholics and the rest of the South Florida community.

Synod Director Rosemarie Banich is keeping everyone informed about the progress of the synod via her “Synod Snapshot,” which is blasted via email every Friday to all subscribers to the archdiocesan website, www.miamiarch.org. (To subscribe, just click on “My Account” on the top-right corner of the home page.)

She is also seeking a lot of focus team members. “We’re going to need around 300 people,” she said.

PLEASE SEE SYNOD, 9

Wearing jeans and Harley-Davidson shoes after riding to the Keys on his motorcycle, Archbishop Thomas Wenski listens to the comments of a man at the first Synod listening session, held in Spanish June 15 at Immaculate Conception Parish in Hialeah. About 250 people took part to express their opinions on what the Church in Miami is doing right; what it needs to do better; and what they wish to see it do in the future. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)

Archbishop Thomas Wenski listens to the comments of a man at the first Synod listening session, held in Spanish June 15 at Immaculate Conception Parish in Hialeah. About 250 people took part to express their opinions on what the Church in Miami is doing right; what it needs to do better; and what they wish to see it do in the future. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)

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Three Indian-American girls, wearing saris and each carrying a traditional plate bearing a candle and flowers, led the entrance procession. They represented Father Biju Vells, 34, the Indian-American shepherd. They pounded drums and sang Nigerian hymns during the procession into Mass.

A deep personal experience of Christ’s love took me out of hell," he said. "I was only later that I became terrorized and alarmed because everything was robbed of meaning and sense. There was nothing to build on except the hollowness of myself and my pride. This brought me to the brink of throwing everything away, even life. "A deep personal experience of Christ’s love took me out of hell," he said.

Through a serious journey in the life of faith of the Christian community, by means of the Neocatechumenal Way and his family, he was guided back, he said, first to the faith, then to a priestly vocation. I see clearly that my vocation is a fruit of this experience. I am a concrete witness," he said. "His family, who lives in Nigeria, was unable to attend his ordination because of problems obtaining visas."

Father Omode served his pastoral year at three Colorado parishes. He served as a deacon at St. Cecilia Parish in Hialeah and St. Rose of Lima Parish in Miami Shores, where he has been assigned to be a parochial vicar.

Father Vells served his pastoral year at St. Andrew Parish in Coral Springs, and served as a deacon at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, also in Coral Springs. He has been assigned to serve at his home parish, St. Louis. ■

Newly ordained Father Biju Vells blesses Lila Angadicheril, once a nurse at Mt. Vernon Hospital in New York, who was in the operating room when he was born. Archbishop Thomas Wenski ordained two new priests for the Archdiocese of Miami June 23: Nigerian-born Father Cletus Omode, the first graduate of the Redemptorist Mater Seminary to be ordained for the archdiocese; and Father Vells, who was born in New York and grew up in Miami’s St. Louis Parish. (MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

ORDINATION IS A ‘DREAM COME TRUE’

Two priests — one Nigerian, one American — ordained for archdiocese

MARLENE QUARONI
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI | Two new priests, ordained June 23, celebrate the diverse cultures in the Archdiocese of Miami.

‘Such diversity doesn’t divide us, it enriches us,’ said Archbishop Thomas Wenski during their ordination Mass.

Nigerian-Americans dressed in native attire came to witness the ordination of a native son, Father Cletus Omode, 35. They pounded drums and sang Nigerian hymns during the procession into Mass.

Ordination is a ‘dream come true’

One day he was waiting to speak at a patient who was being visited by the Baptist Hospital chaplain. "As I was waiting there he lifted up the Eucharist, and at that moment I felt that God was telling me that what I was doing was great, but he had something better in store for me. That turned out to be the priesthood."

Father Omode was born in the state of Kaduna, Nigeria. He attended elementary, high school and a polytechnic institute in Nigeria. He was born a Catholic but said he never understood the words “gift of faith” until a critical moment in his life. "I began to reject belief itself," he said. "It was only later that I became terrorized and alarmed because everything was robbed of meaning and sense. There was nothing to build on except the hollowness of myself and my pride. This brought me to the brink of throwing everything away, even life."

"A deep personal experience of Christ’s love took me out of hell," he said.

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Maria Jerkins retires
Headed black Catholics’ office for 18 years, founded Mbofra Ne Nyame children’s choir

‘Every child that’s been in Mbofra Ne Nyame and has gone through it to the end has graduated from college or is in college presently. It’s only because of Maria that Mbofra Ne Nyame exists.’

Rosetta Rolle Hylton

‘I have a book to write,’ she said. “Let’s keep things moving on and always remember me in your prayers.”

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Spiritual leaders: Fr. Peter West, Human Life International and Fr. Denis Wilde, Priests for Life

14 night cruise aboard Celebrity Silhouette round trip Rome visiting Italy, Egypt, Israel, Turkey and Greece.

NOV. 17 – DEC. 1

For more information and registration forms please visit www.FaithfulTravels.org or contact Suzanne Taskowitz, Travel Ministry coordinator 305-453-0007.

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CORRECTION
An article in the May 2012 edition incorrectly spelled the name of the parishioner who is writing a history of St. Mary Star of the Sea in Key West, the oldest parish in the archdiocese and the first archdiocesan church to be elevated to the rank of basilica. The parishioner’s name is Robert Bernreuter.

MIAMI | It was not supposed to turn into another job.
After her first retirement, Maria Jerkins wanted to minister. But her appointment as director of the Office of Black Catholic Affairs in 1994 turned into full-time work which she could not even after she stopped getting paid.

“Maria carried on when there was no funding,” said Sister Beth Worley of the Sisters of St. Joseph, archdiocesan chancellor for administration. She was referring to the archdiocesan cutbacks that took place in 2009 and eliminated all funding for the Office of Black Catholic Affairs — a setback that did not deter Jerkins.

With her team of volunteers, she made sure that the ministry carried on. She always had a smile, no matter what,” Sister Worley said during a luncheon gathering July 10 where Jerkins’ co-workers honored her as she embarks on her second retirement.

The Miami native and convert to Catholicism spent the first half of her professional life as a teacher and principal in Miami-Dade County public schools. This June, she concluded 18 years as director of the Office of Black Catholic Affairs.

She was the third director of the office, which was founded by Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy in 1989. The office grew out of the Office of Lay Ministry and Adult Faith Formation.

It is not travel for travel’s sake: “It isn’t just Maria that you see in the office. Behind Maria is a whole team of volunteers, people who are working to carry on her legacy,” said Reeves-Jackman, a parishioner at St. Philip Neri in Miami Gardens who worked as a training manager for BellSouth and AT&T for the last 36 years.

During a gathering July 10 to honor her 18 years as director of the Office of Black Catholic Affairs, Maria Jerkins, who retired, listens as fellow co-workers praise her. (ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)
When I was a young seminarian, the rector, before dismissing us for our summer break, would admonish us: “Miami has everything. There’s no vacation from a vocation.” This was certainly wise advice—we were after all still seminarians even when away from the structured environment of the seminary with its fixed times for prayer and studying. And, I think this is wise counsel to all of us Catholics even as we plan for vacations that take us from our homes and parishes. There can be no vacation from our fundamental Christian commitment. “Fidelity to weekly Mass attendance is inextricably linked to that vocation.”

When I was bishop in Central Florida, I was edified by those Catholics who came to the many attractions of that area and sought out Sunday Mass even though they were far from their homes. The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. was our parish church. Queen of the Universe still welcomes thousands of such visitors each week. The priests of the Shrine provide an important service to these vacationers in making the Sacrament of Penance readily available to them and providing them the opportunity of participation in Sunday Mass. (And, when I had the occasion to celebrate Mass there, I often met many of you from South Florida.)

While there might not be a Shrine Church like Mary, Queen of the Universe, at our particular vacation destination, we too must make every effort to make sure that we attend Mass on Sunday. Participation in the Sunday Eucharist is an obligation for every practicing Catholic—and vacationers are no exception. Finding a place to attend Mass while far from home may often not be easy, but with the help of some advanced planning we can usually and one who we may go. The website, www.MassTimes.org, has a listing of Mass schedules in parishes throughout the United States. Also, parishes at our resort in the day in which we commemorate his love for us in the Sunday Eucharist. If we are serious about our Christian commitment, we must neglect to recharge our spiritual batteries in the central act of our worship, the source and summit of all Christian life: the Mass. There can never be a vacation from our vocation.

Archbishop Wenski is on vacation. This column was originally published in July 2010.

Broward County Silver Knight winners

This story, which appeared in the June edition, contained the wrong information about the Broward County Silver Knight winners. The corrected information follows.

Florida Catholic staff

MIAMI | Four archdiocesan high school students—one in Miami-Dade, three in Broward—won Silver Knights in their respective fields of excellence this year, and 10 others were recognized with honorable mentions. All three Broward winners this year were from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale:

• Elise Marie Babay in art. Elise, who has Type 1 diabetes, was honored for starting a chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation at St. Thomas and for raising money for diabetes research. She also played volleyball, served as a campus minister and led the National Art Honor Society.

• Joshua Venkataraman in drama. Joshua complemented his starring roles onstage with a project called “Enrichment is Elementary” which collected books, used computers and printers for Deerfield Park Elementary, a magnet school for the performing arts which serves a high percentage of underprivileged children.

• Caroline Enkataraman in voca- tional technical. Caroline started a Knitting for the Needy club at St. Thomas in 2009 to knit more than 600 blankets and scarves they then distributed to the homeless, soldiers in Iraq, children in foster care and the elderly in nursing homes.

The six Broward students who received honorable mentions were:

• From St. Thomas Aquinas High School: Rachel Picollo in general scholarship; Jourdan Black in journalism; Lorenzo Montalli in new media; Dean Sage in social science; and Meredith Leigh Frazer in world language.

• From Archbishop McCarthy High School in Southwest Ranches: Miranda Mila in athletics.
Collegians teach, learn from campers in Little Haiti

MARLENE QUARONI
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIA M | Illinois State University student Maureen Reilly led the way through St. Mary School’s breezeway as a group of “Mary and the Saints” campers followed her. “St. Lucy, St. Lucy, St. Lucy,” repeated Reilly and the St. Lucy camper group she led, as they imitated a train chugging along to another station in their scavenger hunt.

Reilly and 33 other ISU students came to the Little Haiti school at the end of June on a mission: to serve about 100 kids at a weekend religious-oriented camp. The college students are members of the John Paul II Catholic Neumann Center in the Diocese of Peoria, Ill., where Sister Silvia Tarafa of the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary serves as director.

Sister Tarafa and her fellow religious Sister Michelle Fernandez, vice principal of St. Mary School, came up with the idea for the college students to work with St. Mary’s students during the summer. “We hope that this will be the start of an annual summer camp,” said Sister Tarafa, who has been the Neumann Center’s director for four years. “We have Bible studies, socializing, mission trips and help students make fundamental decisions about their lives at the Neumann Center,” she said.

The campers, divided into 12 groups, each named after a young saint and led by the college students, ranged from Pre-K through eighth graders, with six groups coming in the morning and another six in the afternoon, at a cost of $10 per child.

“The idea of the camp is to reinforce the Gospel Scriptures into their activities throughout the day,” said Sister Tarafa. “We have sports, arts and crafts, music and dancing. Morning sessions begin with Mass and afternoon sessions end with reciting the rosary.”

At the end of the week, each group performed a skit depicting the life of the group’s saint.

“We want the kids to learn that God doesn’t keep adversity out of our lives, but he shows us how to live through adversity in a Christian way,” said Sister Tarafa.

She gave an example of a sixth-grader at St. Mary School who was the only survivor in her family during the earthquake. She lost her brother and was the only survivor in her Cranston class. What do you do with that kind of anger?


The college students paid their own airfare. The women stayed with the sisters at their convents while the men stayed with lay associates of the religious community. The Servants also provided food and transportation to St. Mary School.

Amelia Misiak, 20, an ISU elementary education major, said she took advantage of the opportunity to teach and to learn. “I have time,” she said. “I might as well use it for God. I want to show young kids the love the Lord has for them. I’ve learned so much here. The kids are teaching us about what it means to have a childlike faith. Jesus said unless you become like children you won’t enter the kingdom of God.”

Misiak, whose parents are Polish immigrants, said the Neumann Center helped her to fall in love with her faith and to make friends while being away from home. “The center’s like a second home to me now,” she said.

The Sunday before the camp started, the sisters treated the students to a trip to Bahia Honda in the Florida Keys. Misiak and several of the other college students had never seen the Atlantic Ocean.

“We enjoyed the beach, the scenery and attended Mass at San Pedro Church on Plantation Key where I met Father Henryk Pawelec, the church’s pastor and a Polish immigrant like my parents,” Misiak said.

Camper Derrick Forbes, 12, called the college students his big brothers and sisters in Christ. “They’re role models,” said Derrick. “We’re learning a lot about the Church and we’re having fun at the same time. We’re even writing a rap song about Jesus.”

Scarlet Paniagua, 5, holds a booklet, “In the School of Mary and the Saints,” which contains prayers and songs, as she dances to a song in the book.
College students, campus minister and recent graduates spend a week visiting convents between Florida and New York

The newly professed Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal cut their “wedding cakes” at the reception.

was the first time ever at a final profession, but there was also the fact that Cardinal Timothy Dolan would celebrate the ceremony. Dolan is the archbishop of New York, and even in person, it was from a distance. As we watched from the church, a cut pulled up to the sidewalk and a driver had to make a sharp step back to not run into the cones that were covering the parking spot. He then proceeded to greet everyone who was outside.

The newly professed Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal cut “wedding cakes” at the reception.

The ceremony, which took place during Mass, seemed to us that despite the chaos, God is still

Sister Francesca and the other four sisters making their final vows.

We all exchanged glances. This was the man whom we had read about, whose forgiveness in support of religious freedom gave us hope, and whose sense of humor made him all the more approachable and relatable.

From the moment that we walked into the Poor Clares of Meriden, Conn. From the moment that we walked into the Poor Clares of Meriden.

But we were determined to go.

Like the rest of us, Ducker had dreamed of going to Cardinal Dolan. When she told him, he put his arm around her and walked with her through the front doors.

"We need to realize that abstraction or politics, but I really admire Cardinal Dolan," she said.

"I am a pretty active person, so I really liked the idea of being part of a religious community that

"It's actually the more extroverted and

"I am a pretty active person, so I really liked the idea of being part of a religious community that

Despite the stereotypical image of contemplatives as shy and antisocial, they were anything but boring.


Sisters Francisca of the Renewal have many ministries and apostolic endeavors which allow all to see the virtues and gifts each of them has. One such endeavor is the Land Program, a community-service program in which young adults learn to work with the land while reading teachings on the Church. The farm consists of a chicken coop, gardens, vegetables and orchard. Being the city girls we are, we stopped to look at everything. We stood under a weeping willow tree, compared the chicken coop, petted the goats, looked at the fruit tree, and even period their behemoth bunny with this trio. Our nun-run led us to see not all religious sisters’ lifestyles. Their sisters work as teachers, counselors, or whatever they studied, and all of their work was at the community in keeping with the Franciscan vows of poverty and obedience. Many of the sisters we visited throughout our trip were college graduates and professionals, such as Mother Dolores of the Poor Clares, who was a cancer survivor, or Sister Catherine of the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal, who was an Olympic skater.

Other sisters express their unique vocations to the public by means of their vocation after moving from Haiti to Fort Lauderdale when she was eight and is part of the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal.

We were eating breakfast at a little terrace in front of the hotel. Sister Francesca was seated with us that all of Florida native had never seen such a scene. The birdfeeder was full and all people were jumping up in shock and exclaimed, “You fools to see our beautiful!”

Sister Francesca Mary Theresa she considered marriage an ice cream, or watching a movie, before discerning religious life.

Sister Francesca Mary Theresa she considered marriage an ice cream, or watching a movie, before discerning religious life.

The newly professed Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal and the Poor Clares from Charlotte, N.C., pose together.

Nun-run participants pose with the Poor Clares from Charlotte, N.C.

For me, the Florida diocese is, to my holy mother St. Clare, to observe in my heart, to our holy father St. Francis, to our holy mother St. Francis and St. Clare … I … vow and promise poverty and in chastity. It is part of the renewal of the Church.

“I am a pretty active person, so I really liked the idea of being part of a religious community that

‘We love America’

St. Stephen concludes ‘Fortnight for Freedom’ with Mass, prayers for religious liberty

MARLENE QUARONI
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIRAMAR | On the day that the United States celebrated its 200th birthday — July 4, 1976 — Oblate Missionary Father Alejandro Roque became a U.S. citizen. “I was one of 10,000 people who swore allegiance to the U.S. at the Miami Beach Convention Center,” said the pastor of St. Stephen Parish after celebrating a “Fortnight for Freedom” Mass July 3. “This country opened its arms to me and my brother when we fled Cuba with the help of the Peter Pan airlift. Four years later we were reunited with our parents in Miami.”

The U.S. bishops called for the Fortnight for Freedom — 14 days from June 21 to July 4, Independence Day, — as a two-week period intended for prayer, study and activities to defend recent challenges to religious liberty. June 21 is the vigil of the feasts of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, both martyrs who remained faithful to God in the face of persecution by political power. St. Stephen was one of a number of archdiocesan parishes that celebrated special Masses, prayer services and candlelight processions to mark the fortnight.

“Faced with the tribulations of our times, Catholics will use their greatest weapon, which is prayer,” Father Roque said in his homily. “One of the reasons that we became a nation is the freedom to practice our religion.”

However, unless changes are made in the Health and Human Services mandate requiring employers to include contraception and sterilization coverage in employees’ health plans, the Catholic Church will have to go against its beliefs because of the Affordable Care Act, Father Roque said.

“Abortion and contraception is spelled ‘S-I-N,’” he said. “George Washington must be turning over in his grave.”

Father Roque went on to quote the words of past presidents: Washington, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

“If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it,” quoted Father Roque from a 1789 letter Washington wrote to the Virginia United Baptist Churches.

“No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of civil authority,” wrote Jefferson in an 1809 letter to New London Methodists.

“The equal right of every citizen to the free exercise of his religion according to the dictates of conscience is held by the same tenure with all our other rights,” Father Roque quoted Madison writing in a “Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessment.”

“We the people of faith must speak out. God will do the rest,” Father Roque said.

The 200 or so people at the event carried large and small U.S. flags. Many wore red, white and blue, Uncle Sam top hats, and one person wore a Statue of Liberty costume. They sang patriotic songs and church hymns, from “God Bless America” to “Yankee Doodle,” while praying for the U.S.

Desiree Bolanos carried a statue of the Virgin Mary. “She is the patron of the U.S. Our Lady prays and intercedes for us. I am praying for the culture of life,” said the mother of four children. “Babies have a right to life.”

Father Roque stopped at the north, south, east and west corners of the church parking lot to pray for various groups: soldiers, the president and his cabinet, representatives and senators, and the cities surrounding St. Stephen Parish.

“This is a little corner of God’s kingdom,” he said. “The drivers honking their horns as they pass by on 441 love their country. We are telling the world out there that we love America and we want to keep it the way our forefathers created it.”

The “Fortnight for Freedom” campaign has ended but the U.S. bishops are continuing their efforts to modify the Health and Human Services mandate that requires Church institutions — such as charities, schools and hospitals — to provide contraceptive services to their employees as part of the Affordable Care Act. To show your support, and keep up with the latest information, text the word “FREEDOM” to 377377; or go to www.usccb.org, click on the “Issues and Action” tab and then “Religious Liberty” on the left-hand side of the page.

Desiree Bolanos prays during the outdoor Mass while holding a statue of the Virgin Mary, patroness of the United States. More than 200 people turned out July 3 to celebrate a Mass and take part in a eucharistic procession through the parking lot of St. Stephen Parish in Miramar as part of one of the concluding ceremonies for the Fortnight for Freedom that took place in a number of archdiocesan churches. (PHOTOS BY MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

HEALTH CARE LAW STILL NEEDS FIXING

Archbishop Wenski responds to Supreme Court ruling that Affordable Care Act is constitutional

Archbishop Thomas Wenski issued the following statement June 28 in response to the Supreme Court ruling that the Affordable Care Act, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in March 2010, does not violate the U.S. Constitution:

HEALTH CARE LAW STILL NEEDS FIXING

The Supreme Court decision does not address the fundamental flaws in the health care law.

HEALTH CARE LAW STILL NEEDS FIXING

The decision upheld the “individual mandate,” i.e. that individuals can be required to purchase health care. The U.S. bishops had not weighed in on that issue on one side or the other. For more than 40 years, we consistently advocated for universal health care that kills no one and covers everyone.

The Affordable Care Act, also called Obamacare by its critics, fails in this regard. Contrary to long-standing federal policy, it allows for federal funds to pay for elective abortions; it does not have necessary language to protect rights of conscience (hence, the unprecedented violation of religious liberty of the Health and Human Services mandate that would force religiously sponsored institutions to purchase a product that violates their conscience). It also excludes millions of immigrants from participation in the new exchanges created by the law even if they were to purchase health services with their own money.

The Supreme Court decision today in no way eliminates the urgent need to correct these fundamental flaws for they, in reality, undermine the Affordable Care Act’s stated goal of promoting access to basic life-sustaining health care for everyone, especially for those most in need.
SYNOD: Volunteers needed for focus teams

FROM 1

So far, the Synod Office has only 30 applications for synod focus teams. “We’re actually embarking on a whole recruitment campaign,” Banich said.

“We have the members of the leadership team recommending people. Next month, the archbishop will be asking all of the pastors to nominate parishioners. And I’m going to be reaching out to all the lay movements and ministry groups just as I did when we were promoting the listening sessions.”

The deadline to apply for membership in a focus team is Sept. 14. Team members have to commit to attending monthly meetings between October 2012 and February 2013, and doing some serious homework in between.

“It’s a big commitment, but it’s also a very special opportunity to be part of a historic moment for the archdiocese,” Banich said.

The application forms for focus teams also are posted online at www.synodmiami.org.

During a Creole-language synod session at Notre Dame d’Haiti Church in Miami, Carla Justafort, 7, with the help of Michaelle Desir, asks Archbishop Thomas Wenski why some churches were closed and says she is glad some have reopened. Carla and Desir are both from Holy Family Parish in North Miami. (MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

SYNOD: BY THE NUMBERS

Here is the tally, as of July 12, of estimated participants at the listening sessions and the number of synod feedback forms that have been submitted.

<table>
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<th>Total</th>
<th>In English</th>
<th>In Creole</th>
<th>In Spanish</th>
<th>In Italian</th>
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<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
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In Spanish:
- Immaculate Conception, Hialeah: 300 feedback forms, 400 participants
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Kendall: 293 feedback forms, 500 participants
- St. Michael the Archangel, Miami: 209 feedback forms, 300 participants
- San Isidro, Pompano Beach: 133 feedback forms, 200 participants
- Blessed John XXIII, Miramar: 49 feedback forms, 60 participants

In Creole:
- Notre Dame d’Haiti, Miami: 188 feedback forms, 300 participants
- St. Clement, Wilton Manors: 86 feedback forms, 150 participants

Thank you! Gracias! Mési anpil!

Many thanks to everyone who attended a Synod listening session. Your opinions were heard and appreciated.

Thank you to the 11 host parishes that extended such generous hospitality:

**San Pablo**
Immaculate Conception
Church of the Little Flower
Our Lady of Lourdes
St. Rose of Lima
St. Michael the Archangel
Notre Dame d’Haiti
St. Maximilian Kolbe
St. Clement
San Isidro Mission
St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Many thanks also to Radio Paz for its support of the Synod.

Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Cena bailable, sábado, 28 de julio, 8 p.m., organizada por la comunidad colombo-venezolana de la parroquia Santa María Auxiliadora. Redecorer, 8445 N.W. 186 St., Miami, en el auditorio de la escuela. $25/persona. 305-829-6414.

Summer fun runs, Tuesdays and Thursdays through Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m., Miami Springs Community Center, 97th Street and Park Avenue. Organized by Archbishop Curley-Notre Dame Prep. Free. Four people of all ages and ability levels. 305-751-8637.

Flea market, Saturdays, July 28, and Aug. 18, 8 a.m., St. Stephen, 2000 S. State Road 7, Miramar. Spaces: $25, can be rented on church office. ststephenparish@ gmail.com. 954-587-1100.


Garage sale, Saturday, Aug. 18, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., St. Andrew, 9590 N.W. 29 St., Coral Springs. Hosted by Council of Catholic Women. Drop-off merchandise only on Friday, Aug. 17, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. No large furniture, computers, monitors or keyboards accepted. 954-227-1640.

FAITH EDUCATION

Matrimonio 2000, domingo, 29 de julio, 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Iglesia de San José, 4500 S.W. 101 Ave., Miami. Para parejas que llevan años de casados por la Iglesia y quieren convalidar su matrimonio por la Iglesia Católica. $50/pareja. 305-383-8152.

Respect life workshop, Saturday, Aug. 11, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Blanchard Park, 701 W. 77 St., Hialeah. Learn what the Church teaches about the critical life issues. R.S.V.P: 954-227-0923.

Camino del Matrimonio, 11-12 de agosto y 15-16 de septiembre, South Florida Retreat Center, 7700 S.W. 56 St., Miami. Programa arquidiocesano de preparación matrimonial en español para las parejas que desean contraer matrimonio en la Iglesia Católica, basado en la Teología del Cuerpo del Papa Juan Pablo II. 305-226-6646.

Pre-Cana (parish sponsored), Friday, Aug. 17, 10-7 p.m.; and Saturday, Aug. 18, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Our Lady of Lourdes, 12921 S.W. 142 Ave., Miami. Marriage preparation for engaged couples preparing for first marriages and engagements, and couples remarrying in the Catholic Church. Cost: $200 per couple, includes Friday evening reception and refreshments, breakfast, lunch and snacks on Saturday, all workbooks, handouts and other learning materials, and rentals for www.CatholicHoneymoon.org. 305-386-4121, ext. 717.

Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI), 7350 S.W. 58 St., Miami, 305-279-2333: • “Ciencia y Fe”, 7 de agosto-4 de septiembre, 6:30 p.m. Taller en el Instituto Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología en el que los padres participan con sus hijos de 12 a 18 años en el estudio de la fe. 305-383-4030; • “Misas en la parroquia Matrimonio”, sábado, 28 de agosto, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. en el Instituto Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología en la parroquia de San José. • “Preparación Matrimonial por internet”, para parejas con circunstancias especiales que no les sea posible asistir en los programas en las parroquias. Para más información, comuníquese con la Pastoral Familiar de la parroquia de San José. 305-735-1942.

Miércoles de la Virgen de Lourdes, 11291 S.W. 142 Ave., Miami. Una experiencia valiosa para parejas en su preparación para el matrimonio. 305-974-8453.

SPiritual

Peregrinación Nuestra Señora del Carmen 2012, 11-12 de agosto, Comisión Nuestra Señora del Carmen de la Archidiócesis de Miami, Florida. De la parroquia Mother of Our Lady of Lourdes, 11291 S.W. 142 Ave., Miami. Una valiosa experiencia para parejas comprometidas con su matrimonio, y que desean edificarlo a diario. Para matrimonios casados por la Iglesia o por lo civil. 305-898-9721.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Virtual workshops help parejas comprometidas con su matrimonio. Solicítate un instructor o instructora que trabaje con mujeres y hombres que desean mejorar sus habilidades de comunicación, y que desean edificar su matrimonio. 305-248-3215, www.castosporamor.com.
When he knew he wanted to be a priest:
At age 18, and then again at 34: “Every couple of years I would have the urge to go back but I would say, no, I’m enjoying my life.” Finally, while working at a hotel in Florida, a Jewish lady who knew nothing of his background said to him, “Have you ever thought of becoming a priest?” A year later, “I made a deal with God. I’ll call (the seminary). They’ll tell me I’m too old. And then you’ve got to leave me alone.” It didn’t work out that way: “If God wants you, God gets you.”

What he would be doing if he had not become a priest:
“I would be doing hotel management, which I loved.”

What he does on his days off:
“I like to be able to sleep late in the morning and go out to dinner or lunch with friends.”

Favorite TV series:
“The Daily Show with Jon Stewart”

Favorite priestly assignment:
“I love the parish because it’s varied. I’ve had it where I’m burying somebody in the morning and marrying somebody in the afternoon. … In parishes, people let you into their lives at the most difficult and joyous moments. And this is a great gift of being a priest.”

Greatest disappointment:
“That there is still war in the world. I’m a big advocate of peace. I just see absolutely no sense to the violence.”

Greatest joy:
“My family.”

Most difficult aspect of being a priest:
“It seems there are not enough hours in the day to do everything. And those are the days you’re going to get these sick calls and have to go to the hospital. That’s when I remember the saying, ‘If you want to make God laugh, make a plan.’”

His description of the ideal priest:
“A man of prayer, a man with a sense of humor, and a man who can recognize Christ in everyone.”

Priestly stereotype that should be discarded:
“Ascribing any super human attributes to a mortal man is not really a good strategy. Priests are human like everybody else.”

What the seminary did not prepare him for:
“They can’t really prepare you for diocesan priesthood because their training is structured as if you were entering a religious community — prayer together, etc. Your schedules are so busy (as a diocesan priest) that to try to plan morning and evening prayer together every day, that’s not reasonable.”

Favorite type of music:
“Classic Motown: The Supremes, Temptations, Four Tops”

Person he most admires:
“My grandmother … an incredible woman. She was a tiny little thing, lived to be 96 years old and she just had this wisdom.”

Hers was the first family funeral he celebrated as a priest.

Thing he most fears:
“Spiders — I’m allergic to them.”

Father Michael Grady traveled to Hollywood, Calif., in March 2011 to preside at the wedding of a former student.

FATHER MICHAEL GRADY
Administrator, St. Jerome, Fort Lauderdale

Born Dec. 7, 1956, in Sacramento, Calif., Father Grady is the third of five brothers (the youngest is deceased). His father served in the Air Force and the family moved often. Father Grady entered the seminary for his then home Diocese of Providence, R.I., right after high school. He obtained a bachelor’s degree in political science and philosophy from Providence College, studied a year at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, and nearly two years at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., before leaving the seminary. In order to support himself, he got a job as a desk clerk at a hotel in the nation’s capital and “kept getting promoted” until becoming regional director of marketing for a national chain, a position which ultimately brought him to South Florida.

In 1991, he returned to the seminary, entering St. Vincent de Paul in Boynton Beach. He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Miami on May 14, 1994, and has served as associate pastor at St. Gregory in Plantation and Nativity in Hollywood, as well as teacher and assistant principal at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale. He was named administrator of St. Jerome in June 2011.
Prada heads Building Office

The Archdiocese of Miami has hired David Prada as senior director of the Building and Properties Office, effective July 2. Prada obtained a degree in architecture from Cornell University in 1994 and has been employed for the past four years as vice president of project development for Miami-based LEMARTEC Engineering and Construction. Before that, he worked as architect/program manager for Brown and Brown Architects in Miami. Prada will be responsible for planning and directing the oversight of building projects including construction, renovations, additions and maintenance at the more than 200 entities of the archdiocese. He is already familiar with some of those projects because between 1996 and 2012 he was involved in the planning or construction of several archdiocesan facilities, including multipurpose buildings at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Doral and St. Katharine Drexel in Weston; and additions at St. Louis Covenant School in Pinecrest and St. Timothy Church in Miami. He is a member of the Agrupación Católica Universitaria, a catechist at Corpus Christi Parish in Miami and part of the music ministry at St. Louis Parish.

Catholic Volunteers seek teachers

Catholic Volunteers in Florida has immediate openings for several teaching positions in Miami. Volunteers receive a monthly living allowance, health insurance and housing. Orientation starts Aug. 29, and the volunteer year ends July 15, 2013. To apply or for information, please call or email Valarie Amica: vanmica@gmail.com or 407-426-7771.

Weekly Mass begins at airport

On Aug. 18, the Archdiocese of Miami will begin celebrating a weekly, Saturday vigil Mass at Miami International Airport. The Mass will be celebrated at 7 p.m. in the airport chapel, located in North Terminal D, Level 4.

In a letter to Miami-Dade Aviation Director José Abreu, Archbishop Thomas Wenski expressed his “deepest gratitude to the Aviation Department, and most especially Mr. Manuel Gonzalez and Mr. Melvin Payne who have worked diligently so that the archdiocese can make available Mass in the airport chapel on Saturdays at 7 p.m.”

The archbishop said the archdiocese “is happy to provide this service weekly to the passengers and employees at Miami International Airport. This spiritual support — made possible through the cooperation of the Aviation Department — is an intangible amenity for the people passing through MIA. In the words of Pope Benedict to airport chaplains at a meeting held in Rome a few days ago, this presence at MIA will serve ‘as a reminder never to show indifference to those one meets, but to treat them generously and lovingly.’”

Newspaper wins Missions award

“"No matter what, the Church is there,” the story of a mission trip to Haiti with the archdiocesan missionary group Amor en Acción, has been awarded first place in the annual journalism contest sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

The story, written by Ana Rodriguez-Soto, Miami editor of the Florida Catholic, won in the category "Visits to the Missions," which is part of the contest named for the late Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara, who served as national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith from 1966 to 1979. The story was published in the October 2011 edition of the newspaper. "These finely crafted journalistic works provide readers of the Catholic press with an eyewitness account of the blessing of the Church’s presence among the poor of the missions, a profile of a missionary hero, and ‘good news’ stories about young people coming to see their responsibility as missionaries, as well as glimpses into the lives of missionaries and the lesson that we’re all part of that life-giving service half a world away,” said Oblate Missionary Father Andrew Small, director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S.

Those receiving first-place honors in the newspaper and magazine categories this year will participate in a mission visit organized by the Pontifical Mission Societies.