Team time
As end of Synod listening sessions nears, volunteers sought for focus teams

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

MIAMI | Hey, South Florida Catholics: The archbishop is still listening.

Archbishop Thomas Wenski may not be physically present as he was at the 11 Synod listening sessions that took place at the end of June, but the Synod staff is continuing to collect online feedback forms until Sept. 30.

The archbishop was scheduled to be present at two more listening sessions that were planned for young people: Sept. 18 at St. Thomas University for college students and young adults; and sometime in November for teens and members of parish youth groups. Another listening session was scheduled for members of lay and apostolic movements Sept. 19 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Charity in Miami. (Look for coverage on the archdiocesan website.)

A few parishes have hosted their own Synod listening sessions with the pastors standing in for the archbishop. Holy Redeemer and St. Philip Neri parishes in Miami teamed up for a listening session Aug. 8 that focused primarily on the joys, concerns and dreams of black Catholics. Other parishes that also hosted listening sessions in August were St. Patrick on Miami Beach and St. Agatha in Miami. Still another session — this time at the parish level — was set for Sept. 22 at St. Kevin in Miami. In the meantime, the Synod leadership team (see box for members) has continued to meet. At their August session the members started mapping out the areas that will be the focus of study for as many as 18 focus teams.

”Now the second phase of the Synod is under way,” wrote Synod director Rosemarie Banich in a recent Let’s Talk blog posted on the archdiocesan website. “The responses provided on thousands of feedback forms have been entered into a database and sorted by topic.”

Once those focus areas have been finalized, teams of volunteers from the diocese will gather in groups of 18 to take the Synod process to the local level, where they will visit parishes to hear from the faithful. The Synod leadership team is expected to meet again in late October to decide on the final focus teams.

The role of the archdiocese’s Synod leadership team is to serve as a steering committee for the overall work of the Synod. The team members are:

• Archbishop Thomas Wenski
• Vilma Angulo, former director of religious education at St. Gregory and St. Agatha parishes in Broward County and a member of St. Bonaventure Parish in Davie
• Michelle Dukler, campus minister at St. Augustine Church and Catholic Student Center in Coral Gables
• Mother Adela Galindo, founder of the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus in Miami
• Manny Garcia-Tuñón, a partner at a Miami engineering and construction firm
• Soledad Guarini, a member of St. Agnes in Key Biscayne
• Deacon Jorge González, spiritual director of the lay marriage preparation program at the Our Lady of Consolation Church and a member of St. Timothy Parish in Miami
• Father Reginald Jean-Mary, pastor of Notre Dame d’Haiti Church in Miami
• Deacon Steven Lee, a real estate attorney and member of Gesu Parish in Miami
• Father José Luis Méndez, pastor of Corpus Christi Parish in Miami
• Sister Rosalie Nagy of the Carmelites of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles, currently serving as principal of Archbishop Coleman Carroll High School in Miami
• Mgr. Pablo Navarro, pastor of St. John Neumann Parish in Miami

Serving as coordinating staff for the leadership team are:

• Rosemarie Banich, director of the Synod
• Dan Celucci, Father Bill Dickinson, Barbara Eckert, Christina Hammon and Anna Ker, all of the Catholic Leadership Institute

Archbishop Thomas Wenski crowns an image of Our Lady of Charity Sept. 8. Nearly 9,000 people gathered to celebrate the feast and mark the 400th anniversary of Our Lady’s presence among the Cuban people. See story in English and Spanish, Pages 8-9. (ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)
Participants reminisce, organizers honored at Mass marking John Paul II’s Miami visit

MARLENE QUARONI
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI | Marta Altamirano arrived at Tamiami Park early in order to see Pope John Paul II up close. She was one of a quarter-million people in the crowd.

“We arrived at one o’clock in the morning and already there were crowds at the park for the 10 a.m. Mass,” said Altamirano, who was reminiscing after attending a Mass at St. Mary Cathedral Sept. 9 marking the 25th anniversary of Pope John Paul II’s visit to Miami. The visit occurred on Sept. 10-11, 1987.

“I was with a family that I worked for. We staked out a spot next to the fence where the pope would pass by in his popemobile with Archbishop Edward McCarthy. We brought drinks, sandwiches, sleeping bags for the kids and beach chairs. Throughout the morning people were praying and singing. It was an experience I will never forget.”

Like many others at the commemorative Mass, Altamirano wore the papal colors, a yellow blosse and white pants. She looked over the photos taken of Pope John Paul II when he visited the cathedral, the chair he sat on and the kneeler he knelt on in the chapel. Altamirano said she did not want to miss any of the papal visit in 1987. Besides going to Tamiami Park, she was outside the cathedral and along Biscayne Boulevard as he passed by the evening of Sept. 10. “I followed him everywhere when he was in Miami,” she said.

Regina Renaud, 40, remembers waiting outside the cathedral as a 15-year-old with her mother.

“The patio was jam-packed with people and news media were everywhere,” she said. “Pope John Paul II stepped outside the cathedral, he addressed the crowd in Creole. I got chills. I thought, wow, that is really the pope!”

Maria Faustina Sellaro, who was born in Poland, held a red and white Polish flag at the commemorative Mass. Like others who came to the Mass, she waited to touch a relic containing John Paul II’s blood. It was on display near the cathedral altar during and after the Mass.

“The colors of the Polish flag are also the symbols of the Divine Mercy, blood and water,” she said. “Pope John Paul II was a great promoter of the Divine Mercy and, coincidentally, he died on Divine Mercy Sunday.”

Sellaro was baptized in Czestochowa, a Polish national shrine. She said she has another connection to the late pope.

“Neither my parents nor godparents had chosen a baptismal name for me,” she said. “A nun standing nearby suggested the name Faustina. Faustina was the first saint I was associated with.”

Danuta Walach and Richarda Scott, dressed in native Polish attire, brought the offertory. The cousins were confirmed by Pope John Paul II in 1966 in Rabka, Poland.

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Josie Castro looks at papal memorabilia on display at St. Mary Cathedral. Archbishop Thomas Wenski celebrated a Mass Sept. 9 at the cathedral recalling the Sept. 10-11, 1987, visit of Pope John Paul II to Miami. Present at the Mass were some of the people who spent months planning and handling the logistics of the visit. (PHOTOS BY MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

During the Mass, Archbishop Thomas Wenski recognized several people involved in coordinating the papal visit in 1987. Sister Lucia Cecottiti, of the Sisters of St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo who work at the Marian Center, was responsible for bringing the elderly and handicapped to the papal Mass at Tamiami Park. As Archbishop Wenski put it, she “attended to every detail. No one was excluded due to age, infirmity or handicap and everyone was treated with the greatest care. … When told she would have to find the means to pay for the special transportation needed for her guests, Sister raised an eyebrow and coolly informed the director that ‘Divine Providence has already taken care of that need, thank you.’”

Msgr. Jude O’Doherty, pastor of Epiphany Parish in Miami, directed the overall preparation for the papal visit with the assistance of Father Kenneth Whittaker, now pastor of Our Lady of Mercy in Deerfield Beach, and Father Daniel Kubala, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle in Miami.

“Both Archbishop McCarthy and Msgr. O’Doherty, workaholics with seemingly impossible standards, got what they wanted,” said Archbishop Wenski. “They coordinated with the Vatican, the White House, county and city government, security for a pope and a president, Ronald Reagan, who came to greet the pope, use of a public university, hundreds of invitations, thousands of volunteers, and always the reminder that this was a pastoral visit and everything would be done to reflect that reality.”

Lucia Comas’ skills of organization and management — as a teacher at Msgr. Edward Pace High School in Miami, principal at St. Patrick School in Miami Beach, and

PLEASE SEE POPE, 13

Posing for a photo with Archbishop Thomas Wenski after being acknowledged for their work in preparing for the pope’s visit are, from left, Msgr. Jude O’Doherty, pastor of Epiphany Parish in Miami; Lucia Comas; Darwin Fuchs; Retired Miami Police Maj. Dean DeLong, and Father Kenneth Whittaker.
Mass to go at MIA

Anne Dibernardo
Florida Catholic correspondent

Miami | Airports usually conjure up images of people swiftly moving through ticket counters and kiosks in an effort to get to their next stop. Now there is an alternative to the hustle and bustle—a spiritual oasis for those seeking Jesus Christ.

Situated on the fourth level of Concourse D at Miami International Airport, Radio Paz, a weekly Mass to be offered by the archdiocese at the airport. Father Cid was aided by Deacon Dennis Jordan of Blessed Trinity Parish in Miami Springs, who serves as chaplain at MIA, and Deacon Tony Perez of Corpus Christi Parish in Miami. Even Blessed Trinity’s cantor, Salvador Rendone, was on hand with his portable keyboard.

About 13 people attended the Sunday vigil Mass, which is being celebrated each Saturday at 7 p.m. Most of the participants were members of the faithful who were eager to show their support for the new initiative. Father Cid said the archdiocese hopes to draw commuters and airport employees who might not otherwise have the opportunity to fulfill their Sunday obligation due to conflicting work schedules.

The goal of celebrating Mass at the airport is “to remind people that no matter where they are, Christ is present, and there is the Church, loving them and at their service, every close to them in order to accompany them on their journey of life,” Father Cid said.

“In a globalized world where many are traveling, it is easy for one to be forgetful of the fact that one is not a stranger, but part of our family of humans, which is our family,” said the priest, who also serves as general director of Radio Paz, the archdiocesan radio station. “There cannot be any stronger presence than the holy Mass.”

Sensitve to the possibility that some people may have to catch a flight, Father Cid preached an abbreviated homily. The weekly Mass is expected to last approximately 45 minutes, depending on whether or not people need to rush off to catch a flight.

One stranded passenger who took comfort in the chapel was Barrington Blake. He was heading home to Brooklyn, N.Y., but his trip was delayed. Instead of roaming around the busy airport, he looked for the chapel and took part in the first Mass.

Another attendee was Juan Carlos Prado of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Weston. “I found the opportunity to come to Mass at the airport on Saturday because I wanted to experience how Mass would be with different people,” he said. “It was good to talk after the Mass to find out others’ experience, where they are going.”

Prado added that he believes the Mass will be better attended once more people find out about it.

The weekly Mass will be publicized by an announcement made through the airport P.A. system prior to Mass, as well as through emails to employees, and a note to airlines and concession partners, explained Marc T. Henderson, media relations manager for the Miami-Dade Aviation Department.

Henderson said he considered the first Mass a success, and he wants employees to know that once they get off work or are on a break, they are welcome to stop by the chapel.

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Send today for your free Novena prayer folder and medal of St. Jude. Visit us for you hope and strength.
Do we need a Year of Faith? You betcha!

Next month, the universal Church begins a Year of Faith. It begins on Oct. 11, the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, and the 29th anniversary of the promulgation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. At the same time, in Rome, the Holy Father will convene a special Synod of Bishops from around the world to consider the “New Evangelization for the transmission of the faith.”

The “New Evangelization” is addressed not to people who have never heard of Christ, but to people who think they have. It is addressed to those who live in the countries of Christian heritage but who seem to be “tired of it.” We live at a time when many people will define themselves as “spiritual” but not “religious” and thus construct for themselves “made-to-order” creeds in which they protest to believe in Jesus (expressed sometimes very vaguely) but not in the Church. Thus, we find people who say they believe but do not belong; and as we see sometimes in many Catholics in public life (but not exclusively among them), we find those who belong but who apparently do not believe.

For several Sundays this summer we heard excerpts of Jesus’ great discourse on the Eucharist found in Chapter 6 of John. The “hard saying” that the Gospel refers to is Jesus’ declaration: “My Father is the truth.” Jesus said that the bread in his hands is really “real drink.” John tells us that many of his disciples asked: “Who can accept it?” and from that day no longer walked with him.

Today, people might find other teachings of Jesus even “harder” to accept than that about Jesus’ real and abiding presence in the Holy Eucharist. Certainly, many find the teachings about marriage and the mutual fidelity of spouses equally hard and difficult to accept. That we are all called to chastity is a “hard saying” for all of us, cellulites, married couples, young people who are courting and for those struggling with same-sex attractions. Among Jesus’ teachings, there are other hard sayings to which people can and do say, “Who can accept it?” And so, do we need a Year of Faith to betcha?

The challenge of this Year of Faith — and of the New Evangelization — is how do we present the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, as a great life-affirming “yes” so that many people see it as a big bunch of “nos”? How do we present it with the excitement when not people identify with Jesus is not to change those “hard sayings” but to allow those “hard sayings” to change us. For the real hardness is not found in Jesus’ words — for they have in them Eternal Life; the real hardness is found in our hearts.

May this Year of Faith arouse in each one of us and in every believer the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope. At the same time, let us pray that our witness of life may grow in credibility.
Thousands expected at ‘Two Hearts’ congress

More than 3,000 people from all over the U.S., Latin America and Europe are expected to participate in the second International Congress in honor of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, with the theme “In the End My Immaculate Heart Will Triumph.” The congress will take place Oct. 12-14 at the DoubleTree Miami Mart Airport Hotel, 711 N.W. 72 Ave., Miami, with the presence of the official pilgrimage image of Fatima and relics of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque from Paray-le-Monial, France.

There also will be renowned speakers from many countries, including: Archbishop Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki of Livy, Ukraine, former secretary of Blessed John Paul II; Archbishop Ermelindo Garcia of Santiago de Cuba; Msgr. Slawomir Oder, postulator for the cause of beatification of John Paul II; Msgr. Eduardo Chavez Sanchez, postulator for the cause of St. Juan Diego; Franciscan Father Ermelindo DCapa, former secretary of Padre Pio, Dr. Maria Defesare, a cardiologist and expert on the eucharistic miracle of Lanciano, the Shroud of Turin and the Veil of Manoppello; and Mother Adela Galindo, foundress of the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary who are organizing the congress.

The congress will open 5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 12, the first day of the Year of Faith, with Archbishop Thomas Wenski celebrating the opening Mass at 8 p.m. Sessions will continue Saturday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is $45 per person for the entire weekend. Friday is free, and priests, religious and children up to age 14 will be admitted free. Simultaneous translation also will be provided.

To register, visit www.piercedhearts.org or corazones.org. For more information, call 305-444-7437 or email congreso@corazones.org.

Barry hosts forum on death penalty

Barry University’s Center for Community Service Initiatives will launch its Deliberative Dialogue Series with a forum on the “Death Penalty: Are Eyes for an Eye?” The forum will take place Friday, Sept. 25, 2:30-4 p.m., at the university, 11300 N.E. Second Ave., Miami Shores. Herman Lindsey, a former death row convict who was exonerated, will join students, faculty and staff to share his experiences. The Deliberative Dialogue Series is a sequence of moderated discussions aimed at working toward a common understanding of social issues, identifying practical solutions and promoting workable public policy. The event is open and free to the public. For more information, call 305-899-3896 or email service@mail.barry.edu.

SYNOD: Archdiocese is looking for 400 people for focus teams

The archdiocese will be assigned to study them in order to come up with a plan that the archdiocese can put into action.

According to Banich, focus team members will be asked to “study the most current research related to that area of ministry and confer with Pastoral Center and other ministry leaders” before making their recommendations. Their work will conclude sometime in February 2013, when their recommendations will be forwarded to an integrated planning team that will come up with the final Synod document.

“Remember that in order to create a pastoral plan that is attainable, it must be very specific, and cannot contain more initiatives than the archdiocese can realistically accomplish,” Banich wrote in her blog. In the meantime, the archdiocese is looking for about 400 people to join the various focus teams. Self-recommendations are welcome. But the archdiocese also has been meeting with archdiocesan pastors to ask them to recommend parishioners who are knowledgeable about the different focus areas and would be willing to make the time commitment necessary to work on a team.

“This is another opportunity for people to be a part of the Synod,” wrote Banich.

The Synod team members will be in place by Oct. 13, when they will be commissioned to serve by Archbishop Wenski at the 5 p.m. Mass at St. Mary Cathedral. The Mass also marks the kickoff of the Year of Faith in the archdiocese, and everyone is welcome to attend.

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DREAMers outreach and office blessing

On Saturday, Sept. 29, beginning at 10 a.m., Catholic Legal Services will host an outreach event for those students known as DREAMers — who may qualify for temporary legal status under the deferred action program announced by the Obama administration this past June. The event will take place on the campus of St. Stephen Parish, 6801 S.W. 21 St., Miami, which is also the location of Catholic Legal Services’ Brookwood office. Archbishop Thomas Wenski will be on hand to bless the office, which will be opening an open house for the public that morning. The outreach event will continue until 3:30 p.m. All those who qualify will receive immigration consultation and form preparation at no cost, provided by Legal Services staff members and volunteer attorneys. The Department of Homeland Security charges $465 for the application. This event is part of an ongoing outreach that will continue to be scheduled in parishes throughout the archdiocese for the next two years. For more information on what documentation DREAMers need to bring with them, call 305-373-1073 or email accaracco@ccsmiami.org.

Filipinos celebrate San Lorenzo Ruiz

The Filipino Apostolate of the archdiocese invites the community to the 17th annual celebration of the feast of San Lorenzo Ruiz, which will take place Sunday, Sept. 30, 3 p.m., at St. Mary Cathedral, 7525 N.W. Second Ave., Miami. The Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Thomas Wenski and Father Jets Medina, parochial vicar at St. John Neumann Parish. It will be followed by a light reception featuring Filipino foods. For more information, call Janet at 954-981-7843, Karen at 786-547-6796, or Noel at 305-979-9854.

For the most up-to-date information about the Synod — as well as forms for applying to be a focus team member and for submitting feedback — go to www.synodmiami.org. Also there are photo albums of various Synod events and links to Synod director Rosemarie Banich’s ongoing Synod Snapshot reports.
Miami’s Venezuelans pray for fair elections back home

Community leaders organize voter transportation to the nearest Venezuelan consulate — in New Orleans

TOM TRACY
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIA | Concerned about the future of their country, Venezuelans in South Florida are set to pray for their homeland and for fair elections ahead of Venezuela’s upcoming presidential contest set for Oct. 8. They said the upcoming election is crucial for most of Latin America because Venezuela has been pivotal in the region for more than a decade as the Hugo Chavez government has forged strong ties with new left-leaning presidencies in neighboring countries and has maintained strong ties with Cuba.

"The churches are asking people to vote and asking the Venezuelan government to respect the will of the people," said Elio Aponte, president of the Organization of Venezuelans of South Florida and thousands more in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina with no option but to travel to the Venezuelan consulate in New Orleans to cast their ballots if they want a say in the Oct. 7 election.

Observers argue that the consulate’s closure was meant to punish Florida’s vocal critics of the current president and to improve his chances of adding a third term to the presidency he first assumed in 1999. This July, Human Rights Watch issued a formal report saying human rights (including independent TV and print media freedoms) have suffered substantially under Chavez’s efforts to consolidate power.

The voter delegation is planning to meet for a Mass and a send-off to New Orleans on Friday, Sept. 28, at 8 p.m., at the Shrine Our Lady of Charity in Miami. Buses are expected to depart two days before the election. Some voters are planning to fly or make private travel arrangements.

"This is inexcusable, not opening a voting center here in Miami," said Beatriz Olavarria, who is handling logistics for what may be a large-scale effort to transport registered voters from South Florida to New Orleans, home to the nearest Venezuelan consulate some 1,000 miles away. She has a website — http://miami7octubre.blogspot.com — with information about transportation alternatives to New Orleans and local events to get out the vote.

"It is their duty to do and right to vote," Olavarria said. "Outside of Venezuela it is a genuine voice and no one is afraid to vote. So we do have a responsibility to act here in this comfort zone.

Gisela Parra, a former judge in Venezuela who was granted political asylum in the United States in 2006 and now lives in Miami, said Venezuela’s decision to close the regional consulate violates the country’s constitution, election laws and international treaties.

"The constitution of Venezuela sets that the electoral of Venezuela is independent and autonomous, and therefore the closure of the consulate shouldn’t prevent that they place a polling station in Miami," she said. "It is unconstitutional and illegal, and also a serious violation of political rights, political participation and the suffrage of Venezuelan voters."

Ernesto Ackerman, who conducts voter drives for the nonprofit Independent Venezuelan-American Citizens, acknowledged that 20,000 voters may not affect the election’s outcome, but that it is important for people to cast ballots. He also expressed concern about the disruption that the consulate’s closure has caused for many businesses and the daily life of Venezuelans seeking visas and other assistance.

"I used to do a million dollars in sales a year in Venezuela and now I am doing $100,000, but I really don’t care. I want democracy and liberty for my country," he said.

"I predict that the people in Venezuela will go out to vote, but what will happen after? Tyranny doesn’t go away, and so the challenge will be to recuperate democracy," he said.

The Venezuelan-American population in the U.S. has swelled to an estimated 200,000, probably peaking during the mid-2000s and now is likely divided among Miami and other commercial districts near Miami International Airport.

"It is very sad to see what is happening there because we Venezuelans have never been migrant people — to the contrary we have received people from all over the world ourselves and it was a great country to live in," said Javier Manrique, who holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas and is a fellow at Harvard University’s Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

In Miami, Manrique is a spokesman for the Interamerican Institute for Democracy and a member of St. Bonaventure Parish in Davie.

"The brain drain has been horrible: a whole generation of talented graduates came here and their children have been born in U.S.," said Manrique. "I don’t think they will be attracted to go back to Venezuela if they have their homes here and their children in school here."

Comparisons between Venezuela and Cuba are common in Florida, especially given the close relations between the nations, but unlike the case in Cuba, Chavez has allowed a political opposition to exist and has not closed down Catholic schools or expelled priests, according to Cuban-born Angel Castillo, a Miami lawyer, former legal affairs reporter for the New York Times and former assistant managing editor for news at the Miami Herald.

"Venezuelans still have a hope that full democracy will return to their country, and that they will be able to return home, Castillo added. "I hope they are not massively disappointed by future developments."

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REMEMBERING
9/11

Archbishop Thomas Wenski celebrated a Mass Sept. 11 at St. Martha in Miami Shores to commemorate the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, the Pentagon and the crash of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa. Present at the Mass were representatives of the Miami Shores police and Miami-Dade County firefighters from Station 30 in Miami Shores, as well as a local resident who serves in the Marines.

Artifacts from 9/11 occupy a prominent place on the side of the altar, including a bolt from the Twin Towers, ashes from the site, an American flag and the helmet of Franciscan Father Mychal Judge, the New York Fire Department chaplain who was the first certified victim of the attack.

Cpl. Luque Barrientos of the U.S. Marine Corps, a 2003 graduate of St. Rose of Lima School in Miami Shores, carries the processional cross into the Mass, followed by members of the Knights of Columbus.

II International Congress in Honor of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

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Memories of the Miami Shores Police Department Honor Guard sit in the front pew of St. Martha Church during the Mass.

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October 12-14

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Sat. 9 a.m.-10 p.m.
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His Excellency Thomas G. Wenski
Archbishop of Miami

His Excellency Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki
Archbishop of Lviv, Ukraine
Former secretary of Bl. John Paul II
Together with Cardinal Dziwisz

His Excellency Dionisio Garcia Ibanez
Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba
Msgr. Slawomir Oder
Postulator for the cause of beatification
and canonization of Bl. John Paul II
Rome, Italy

Msgr. Eduardo Chavez Sanchez
Postulator for Saint Juan Diego
Mexico D.F., Mexico

Fr. Ermelindo DiCapua, OFMCap.
Former Secretary of St. Padre Pio
San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy

Dr. Marina DeCesare-Cardiologist
Expert on the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano,
the Holy Shroud of Turin, and the Veil of Manoppello
Chieti, Italy

Patricia Talbot
Cuenca, Ecuador

Mother Adela Galindo, SCTJM
Foundress of the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary and FPH-Miami, Fla.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

For more information and registration visit www.piercedhearts.org
**Queen of her people**

Image of Our Lady of Charity is crowned on 400th anniversary of its discovery

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO

**FLORIDA CATHOLIC**

**SEPTEMBER 2012**

To celebrate the 400 anniversary of the shrine of Our Lady of Charity, Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami celebrated Mass and crowned the image of Our Lady of Charity inside the American Airlines Arena Sept. 8, as thousands gathered to watch the annual Mass of Celebration, which has taken place every year in Miami since 1961.

**360° Panorama**

The annual Mass was followed by a free concert featuring two generations of Cuban-born artists who have emigrated to the U.S. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FL)

**QUEEN OF HER PEOPLE**

Above and right, nearly 9,000 people gather at the American Airlines Arena Sept. 8 to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Charity and mark the 400th anniversary of her appearance among the Cuban people — both in Cuba and in exile — as a spiritual guide. The annual Mass was followed by a free concert featuring two generations of Cuban-born artists who have emigrated to the U.S. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FL)

**QUEEN OF HER PEOPLE**

**Florida Catholic**

**SEPTEMBER 2012**

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**360° Panorama**

The annual Mass was followed by a free concert featuring two generations of Cuban-born artists who have emigrated to the U.S. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FL)

**QUEEN OF HER PEOPLE**

Above and right, nearly 9,000 people gather at the American Airlines Arena Sept. 8 to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Charity and mark the 400th anniversary of her appearance among the Cuban people — both in Cuba and in exile — as a spiritual guide. The annual Mass was followed by a free concert featuring two generations of Cuban-born artists who have emigrated to the U.S. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FL)

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Hablando de paz

Obispos colombianos se reúnen en Miami con expertos católicos para seguir abogando por la paz

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

KENDALL | Buscando nuevas maneras de apoyar el proceso de la paz en su país, 17 de los 80 obispos colombianos se reunieron en Miami del 20 al 23 de agosto.

Durante tres días de trabajo intensivo, aprendieron de teólogos y expertos católicos veteranos de otros conflictos alrededor del mundo. Su estancia culminó con una misa la noche del 23 de agosto en la Parroquia de Our Lady of Lourdes en Kendall.

“Esto es bastante excepcional”, dijo Mons. Héctor Fabio Henao, director de Caritas Colombia y del Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social de la conferencia de obispos colombianos. Añadió que es “primera vez que viene un grupo así a reflexionar”.

Explicó que la reunión en Miami permitió “un espacio de reflexión y de encuentro entre los obispos”, a los que los miembros de la comisión de paz de la Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana autorizó para asistir algún tiempo.

Los guías durante sus días de trabajo en Miami — y los que auspicieron la reunión — fueron expertos del Catholic Peacebuilding Network (Red Católica de Construcción de la Paz) y del Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (Instituto Kroc para Estudios sobre la Paz Internacional), basado en la Universidad de Notre Dame en Indiana, así como representantes de Catholic Relief Services, la organización de ayuda humanitaria internacional de los obispos católicos de los EUA, y teólogos del Catholic Theological Union en Chicago.

El Arzobispo Thomas Wenski de Miami sirvió de anfitrión, junto con el SEPI (Instituto Pastoral del Sur-este), donde los obispos se alojaron y se reúnen durante su estadía.

La ciudad de Miami era un lugar lógico para la reunión debido a su proximidad y conexión a Latinoamérica, a los muchos colombianos que ahora viven aquí, y porque el arzobispo Wenski “conoce a Colombia”, según Mons. Henao.

“El arzobispo Wenski es una persona clave en estos asuntos para los obispos estadounidenses”, añadió Gerald Powers, director de Estudios Católicos por la Paz en el Instituto Kroc.


“Decir paz es decir también guerra y dificultades”, dijo Mons. Luis Augusto Castro, arzobispo de Tunja y antiguo presidente de la Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana, quien caracterizó la reunión como “una escuela de paz”.


Mons. Fabio Suescún, ordinario militar para Colombia, a la izquierda, y Mons. Julio Cesar Vidal, obispo de Cucuta, bendicen la comida antes del comienzo de la recepción en honor de los obispos colombianos en Our Lady of Lourdes. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)

Feligreses de Our Lady of Lourdes rezan durante la misa. Una cuarta parte de los obispos colombianos - 17 de 80 - se reunieron en Miami del 20 al 23 de agosto para reflexionar sobre cómo mejor acompañar el proceso de la paz en su país.

Mons. Rubén Salazar Gómez, arzobispo de Bogotá y presidente de la Conferencia Episcopal de Colombia, fue el celebrante principal de la misa de los obispos colombianos en la Parroquia de Our Lady of Lourdes en Kendall. A su lado está el Obispo Fernando Isen, de Pueblo, Colo., antiguo párroco de Our Lady of Lourdes, quien sorprendió a sus antiguos feligreses al asistir a la misa.
Speaking of peace

Colombian bishops meet in Miami with Catholic experts to continue advocating for peace

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

KENDALL | Seeking new ways to support the peace process in their country, 17 of the 80 Colombian bishops met in Miami August 20-23.

During three days of intensive work, they learned from theologians and Catholic experts, veterans of other conflicts throughout the world. Their stay culminated in an evening Mass Aug. 23 at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Kendall.

"This is pretty exceptional," said Msgr. Héctor Fabio Henao, director of Caritas Colombia and of the National Secretariat for the Social Apostolate of the Colombian Catholic bishops’ conference. He added that this is the "first time that a group this large comes together to reflect."

He explained that the Miami meeting enabled "a space for reflection and encounter among the bishops," all of whom were members of the peace commission of the Colombian bishops’ conference. He added that this is the "first time that a group this large comes together to reflect."

Their guides during the days of work in Miami — and those who sponsored the meeting — were experts from the Catholic Peacebuilding Network and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, based at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, together with representatives from Catholic Relief Services (the international humanitarian aid organization of the U.S. bishops’ conference), and theologians from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami served as the host, together with SEPI (Southeast Pastoral Institute), where the bishops stayed and theologians from the Catholic, and later enjoyed a reception with representatives from the Catholic Peacebuilding Network and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, based at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, together with representatives from Catholic Relief Services (the international humanitarian aid organization of the U.S. bishops’ conference), and theologians from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

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Archbishop returns for Holy Spirit Mass, finds campus ministry activities growing

BLANCA MORALES
Florida Catholic correspondent

CORAL GABLES | Two years ago, newly installed Archbishop Thomas Wenski had a vision for the Catholic community at the University of Miami.

This year, at the Mass of the Holy Spirit celebrated at St. Augustine Church and Student Center, the archbishop noted the growth of the parish's Catholic Campus Ministry. “He’s very pleased with what’s happening here,” said Msgr. Michael Carruthers, pastor of St. Augustine and chaplain of the campus ministry.

The archbishop’s vision was that “the fire of enthusiasm and deepening encounter with Christ grow among students and faculty,” and he looks forward to seeing student leaders grow more and more in discipleship and leadership.

The archbishop also expressed the wish for campus ministry to be built up in such a way that St. Augustine Catholic Student Center could open its doors to students from other colleges in the archdiocese, particularly those from schools that do not have any Catholic campus ministry activities.

Michelle Ducker, who directs UM’s Catholic Campus Ministry, said about 70 students are active now at the weekly events, and about 300 come for Sunday evening Mass. Five students serve on the ministry’s executive board, four are committee chairs, two are ministry liaison sons, two are retreat leaders and 12 serve on an outreach team.

Holy Spirit Masses are a tradition in which university communities seek the Holy Spirit’s blessing, guidance and inspiration for the academic year. Along with Archbishop Wenski, concelebrants at the Sept. 9 Mass included Father David Zirilli, archdiocesan vocations director, and Father Luis Rivero, archdiocesan director of campus ministry, along with Msgr. Carruthers and Father Eric Zegeer, parochial vicar at St. Augustine.

In his homily, Archbishop Wenski reminded students and faculty that Christ is “the model to whom you must look so that your academic activity becomes an effective service of the human longing for an even fuller knowledge of the truth.” He also said that academia is one place where culture wars are waged.

Zack Yanez, a lay student at St. John Vianney, said he was impacted by the archbishop’s words. “His homily tonight was one of his best ones he’s given,” he said. “It spoke to me personally.”

“I really liked the affirmation that reason and faith are more than comparable; they are complementary,” said James McKeown, a UM graduate student.

McKeown, who grew up attending a nondenominational church in Minnesota, noted that Christianity must be communal, and that the Catholic Church “seems like the best place to find that.” Through the parish and campus ministry’s outreach he is beginning to find that sense of community away from home.

Community-building is another key focus of the campus ministry. At the reception following Mass, students had the opportunity to make new friends as well as take a moment to chat with Archbishop Wenski, who lingered to meet with them.

“He was very focused on wanting to talk to them,” said Msgr. Carruthers. “He was so comfortable and relaxed, he looked like he was enjoying himself, reaching out to the students and joking with them.”

“The joy was so palpable, so present in everything; in the participation, in the prayerfulness, music and reception afterwards,” Msgr. Carruthers added. “There was such a tremendous burst of joy that was a fruit of the Holy Spirit. I found it very beautiful to see, and it was a witness to me of the good things God is doing here.”

‘Burst of joy’ at UM
Cursillo hosts regional encounter

The Cursillos de Cristiandad Movement of the Archdiocese of Miami will host the Region VII Fall Encounter in Miami next month in three languages: English, Spanish and Vietnamese. This regional encounter will take place Friday, Oct. 19, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and continue Saturday, Oct. 20, from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Casa Emmaus, 1625 SW 112 Ave., Miami. The event will close Saturday evening with dinner and a fiesta. Speakers will come from Texas, Jacksonville and Charlotte. The reg- istration form may be downloaded at www.cursillomiami.org/events. For information, call Clarinda at 305-710-0121 or Antonio at 305-302-0860.

Latin Low Mass: A workshop for priests

The Archdiocese of Miami, in collaboration with the Fraternitas Sacerdotalis Sancti Petri, will host an “Extraordinary Form Workshop: Learning the Low Mass,” at St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami during the week of Oct. 9-12. These series of workshops will provide an excellent opportunity to explore and learn about the riches of the Latin rite’s liturgical and spiritual patrimony, which Pope Benedict XVI reiterated five years ago when he promulgated the apostolic letter “Summorum Pontificum.” In that letter, the pope stated that “the Roman Missal promulgated by St. Pius V and reissued by Blessed John XXIII is to be considered as an extraordinary expression of (the Church’s) Lex orandi, and must be given due honor for its venerable and ancient usage.” For more information about this event, please contact btafssp@gmail.com.

40 Days of Prayer before Election Day

The archdiocesan Respect Life Office is asking the community to join in 40 Days of Prayer from Sept. 11-Oct. 19, on behalf of the United States. This is a call for prayer and fasting while staying away from anything that contributes to the visit,” which he met with great generosity and hospitality, grow and respond to his or her spiritual companionship since 1987. SCP Classes combine lecture with course work that is experiential and personal and intimate relationship with God while learning to foster authentic spiritual growth in others. Program participants meet Monday evenings throughout the school year at the university, 16401 N.W. 37 Ave., Miami Gardens. Tuition costs $350 per semester, plus a one-time $30 registration fee. Contact the Center for Wholistic Spirituality at 305-628-6765 for more information.

Guidelines for voter registration drives

Anyone wishing to host a voter registration drive at an archdiocesan site must advise the Office of the Chancellor for Administration in advance. Parishes may be vulnerable due to a new third-party voter registration law in Florida, which involves fines being assessed against those conducting the drives if signed applications are not turned over to the County Supervisor of Elections within four days. It is archdiocesan policy that all voter registration drives on parish property must be arranged with and conducted by the local County Supervisor of Elections to avoid any legal challenges. Voter registration deadline is Oct. 9 for the general election. It is recommended that all pastors review the 2012 Election and Political Activities Guide available at: www.flaccb.org/electionactivities/EPAG/2012/EPAG/2012_booklet_spanish.pdf.

Learn to be a spiritual companion

St. Thomas University offers a spiritual companionship certificate for anyone seeking to deepen, grow and respond to his or her personal and intimate relationship with God while learning to foster authentic spiritual growth in others. Program participants meet Monday evenings throughout the school year at the university, 16401 N.W. 37 Ave., Miami Gardens. Tuition costs $350 per semester, plus a one-time $30 registration fee. Contact the Center for Wholistic Spirituality at 305-628-6765 for more information.

Is the Spiritual Companionship Program right for you?

1. Do you seek spiritual growth?
2. Do you believe you may have a gift of listening?
3. Do you believe you are called to help others grow spiritually, but you would benefit from training?
4. Would you enjoy learning in an open, supportive environment with others who are committed to the spiritual path?

Contact the Center for Wholistic Spirituality at 305-628-6765 for further information.

Contemporary Biblical Scholar Series

Come join us in our NEW Contemporary Biblical Scholar Series. We meet EVERY OTHER TUESDAY evening from 7-9 p.m. at St. Thomas University for a one-year Scripture study, open to people of all faiths.

For more information please e-mail Dr. Joan Reisinger jreisinger@st.edu or call 954-434-7676.

REGISTER NOW to reserve your space!

Spiritual Companionship Certificate Program

Our three-year Spiritual Companionship Program (SCP) has been preparing women and men in the ministry of spiritual direction and spiritual companionship since 1987. SCP Classes combine lecture with course work that is experiential and process oriented. During these three years of growth and study, students are assisted in discerning the form in which their personal spiritual gifts may be used to companion others.

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Contact the Center for Wholistic Spirituality at 305-628-6765 for further information.
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Golf tournament, Friday, Sept. 28, Biltmore Golf Club, Coral Gables, followed by banquet, auction, awards, dance. Proceeds benefit restoration of St. Theresa School. $250/person, includes guest; $1,000/foursome. 305-798-1141.

Cena bailable, sábado, 29 de septiembre, St. Anthony, 5000 S.W. 102 Ave., Miami. Música en vivo. $30/persona. A beneficio de la parroquia. 305-238-2487.


Flea market, Saturday, Oct. 6, 8 a.m., St. Stephen, 2000 S.E. 7th Road, Miramar. Spaces: $25. 305-546-0395.

AROUND YOUR COMMUNITY

Salon Varela/Ermita de la Caridad, Women, Road 7, Miramar. Spaces: $25. 351-7103.


Oktobfest, Friday, Oct. 19, 5:30 p.m., St. Sebastian, 2000 Marietta Drive, Fort Lauderdale. Traditional German fare, German dance band, alpine rock-climbing wall, children’s field games. Adults: $15; children: $10. 954-524-9344.

Golf classic, Friday, Oct. 19, 8:30 a.m. shotgun start, Miccosukee Golf and Country Club, 6401 Kendale Lakes Drive, Miami. $125/golfer includes breakfast, lunch, greens fees. Benefits St. Timothy School scholarship fund. golfsttimmschool.org. 786-299-2188.

Golf tournament, Friday, Oct. 19, 11 a.m., Archbishop Curley Notre Dame 6-12 Prep, 4949 N.E. Second Ave., Miami. $175/player. alumnet.md. $351-7103, ext. 19.

Flea market, Saturday, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Mother of Our Redeemer, 8445 N.W. 186 St., Miami. Petting zoo, face painting for kids. Free admission. $15 to register classic cars for “Best in Show” competition. Proceeds benefit parish. 305-525-9510.

International food celebration, Sunday, Oct. 7, St. Bernard, 8279 Sunset Strip, Sunrise. Dishes from U.S., Caribbean, Central and South America, Philippines. Fun for the whole family. Spaces for rent. 505-stbernardoffice@gmail.com, 305-469-0395.


Faith education

Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI), 770 S.W. 56 St., Miami, 305-224-6300.

• Fundamentos de Teología, 24 de septiembre al 12 de noviembre, lunes y jueves, 7-9:30 p.m., St. Joseph University Chapel. $125 includes study materials. 561-368-6565.

Contemporary Biblical Scholar Series, every other Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., St. Thomas University, 16401 N.W. 37 Ave., Miami Gardens. Learn to interpret Scripture, integrate Scripture with Christian living and prayer, and join a community of learners who also want to understand God’s word. jrsinger@sttu.edu, 954-434-7676.

Respite life workshop, Saturday, Oct. 6, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Our Lady of Lourdes, 11291 S.W. 142 Ave., Miami. Learn what the Church teaches about the critical life issues. 954-981-2922.

Father Robert Barron’s “Catholic Medicare: Living the Fray” online workshops.

Experiencia Pre-Cañá, viernes 5 de octubre, 7-10 p.m., sábado, 6 de octubre, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Little Flower, 185, Dicken St., Hollywood. Fin de semana de preparación matrimonial para parejas que desean casarse en la Arquidiócesis de Miami, incluyendo primeros matrimonios, parejas vueltas, casa en la iglesia católica, catolicadones, y aquellas con uniones previas que vuelven a casarse tras haber recibido la nulidad. Inscripción $200 por pareja, incluye comidas y meriendas. 305-762-1148/1157, family@thehadom.org, www.miamicatholic.org/familylife.

Camino del Matrimonio, 13 y 14 o 27 y 28 de octubre, Southwest Pastoral Institute (SEPI), 7700 S.W. 56 St., Miami. Fin de semana de preparación matrimonial para parejas que desean contraer matrimonio en la Iglesia Católica, basado en la Teología del Cuerpo, del Papa Juan Pablo II. 305-226-4664.

Matrimonio 2000 para cónjuges, domingos, 21 de octubre, 8:15 a.m.-5:30 p.m., St. Timothy, 5400 S.W. 102 Ave., Miami. Preparación para matrimonios que llevan años de casados por lo civil y no han recibido el sacramento del matrimonio. 305-821-8002.

CONCERTS


RECREATIONAL EVENTS

Florida Catholic  September 2012

ONE CALL DOES IT ALL

Flights, Transportation, Lodging, Meals, Virtus workshops help people recognize signs of sexual abuse and stop abusers. Sessions are free, and required for all employees and volunteers in schools, parishes and entities of the Archdiocese of Miami. Due to the subject matter, children are not allowed. To register online, visit www.virtusonline.org; click on the yellow “organization”; view list of schools, parishes and entities of the Archdiocese; and volunteers in schools, parishes and others. 212-42488.

Access to the Holy Sites

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spp@comcast.net, 305-431-5959.

Car show, Saturday, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Mother of Our Redeemer, 8445 N.W. 186 St., Miami. Petting zoo, face painting for kids. Free admission. $15 to register classic cars for “Best in Show” competition. Proceeds benefit parish. 305-525-9510.

Concerts


Recreational events

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www.holylandpilgrimages.org 1-800-566-7499 info@holylandpilgrimages.org
Knights of the Holy Land

Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher unites members with Christianity’s ancient places of origin

This photo taken by John Dietl, a Knight of the Holy Sepulcher, during a recent trip to the Holy Land, shows the site of the tomb of Jesus in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. (COURTESY PHOTO)

This photo was taken by John Dietl, a Knight of the Holy Sepulcher, during a recent trip to the Holy Land, showing the site of the tomb of Jesus in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher.

Florida Catholic correspondent

TOM TRACY

MIA MIA | In May of this year, during a private tour of the Holy Land that he undertook at the urging of friends, financial planner John Dietl recalled how his driver and guide pulled the car over alongside a stretch of the Jordan River.

“We prayed a little bit and talked while further down the river there were two men fishing, and I said to my guide, ‘This is tremendous, like Christ calling his apostles to come follow him. It all hit me at that site,’ ” said Dietl, an extraordinary minister of holy Communion and member of the parish of the St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Pembroke Pines.

Despite his own safety concerns about traveling to Israel, and after overriding the concerns of his sons, Dietl pressed on and said he immediately felt at ease after arriving in the Galilee region. His faith-enriching experience there connected Scripture with a new understanding of the Holy Land’s geography, history and people.

“Everything makes more sense when reading the Bible,” Dietl said. “I was there and I saw it, and that means a lot. I also took close to 500 pictures.

“I wouldn’t say I’ve become a holy person because of it, but I am satisfied with a better understanding of the region at the time of Jesus, and of the Catholic religion,” he added.

Dietl’s experience in the Holy Land was the result of a longtime friend in Sarasota who sponsored a private tour of the Holy Land this year and a Dominican priest at the archdiocese of the Holy Land, shows the site of the tomb of Jesus in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. (COURTESY PHOTO)

“TOM TRACY Florida Catholic correspondent

The order currently has 52 lieutenancies: 24 in Europe, 15 in the U.S. and Canada, five in Latin America and six in Australia and the Far East. At present, the total number of active members in the order is around 23,000.

The Miami Archdiocese has about 100 members with another 20 candidates in the process of formal acceptance, according to Bernard Wolff, president of the Miami section of the Southeastern Lieutenancy, who in his semi-retirement is pursuing a doctoral degree in higher education administration at Barry University.

According to Wolff, members can participate in about four annual activities, including a regional conference with investiture ceremony for new members, a day of reflection, a local Mass and dinner with the archbishop, and an invitation to tour the Holy Land with expert guides such as New York-born Fransiscan Father Peter Vasco, president of the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land and a leading voice for the Christian presence in the Holy Land.

At special Church events, the knights and ladies of the order can often be seen in their ceremonial dress: white cape and berets for the knights, black cape and mantillas for the ladies, and the signature five-fold cross, also known as the Jerusalem or Holy Land cross, as well as other decorations including the pilgrim’s shell for members of the order who travel to Jerusalem and meet the Latin Patriarch. Every five years, members can advance through the “ranks” through participation in the order’s activities.

Currently, Cardinal Edwin Frederick O’Brien, until recently the archbishop of Baltimore, serves as the order’s Grand Master in Rome. The order’s name corresponds to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, which most Christians believe marks the location of Christ’s crucifixion and tomb and Christianity’s most important place of pilgrimage since the fourth century.

“We don’t actively recruit people and are not elitist by a long shot, but to be considered a candidate a member of the order has to know you and see that you are a practicing Catholic, involved with a local parish,” Wolff said.

In Europe, membership is sometimes associated more with noble family heritage, but joining always requires a recommendation from the local bishop and a candidate’s pastor.

Members are encouraged to cultivate their faith through learning the historic Christian presence in the land of Jesus’ birthplace through material and other support. The Christian exodus from historically Christian towns such as Bethlehem has been well-documented and owes to a variety of sociopolitical factors affecting the region.

“There is a horrible decrease, almost a diaspora of Christians out of the Holy Land, and the idea is to try to keep these people in place,” Wolff said. “Now we see Lebanon is suffering a dramatic decrease in the number of Christians.”

Pope Benedict XVI visited Lebanon earlier this month, Sept. 14-16.

“When people think of Arabs they may think of Muslims, but there are many Arab Christians: We have them here in Miami with Lebanese and Syrian Catholics. Many of the (hardships) that are apportioned out to Muslims (in the Middle East) extend to Catholics, including discrimination of Catholics,” Wolff said.

Margaret Binder, a 20-year member of the order who bears the title Lady Grand Cross, and whose husband, Bob Binder, is a longtime deacon at St. John Neumann Parish in Miami, finally made a long-anticipated journey to the Holy Land after her retirement as a speech language pathologist.

“We went without a worry, and it was wonderful, a well-planned tour, very spiritual and I learned so much,” she said. “We realized the purpose of the order and believe in the Holy Land, the Catholic presence there and so we support it. Those sites where Jesus walked and taught and began our Church are very important and sacred to Catholics.”

Wolff said the order in Miami is now focused on developing the quality of the local gatherings of members, to increase opportunities for social and spiritual development. “I know what we do the states is more for spiritual development and camaraderie,” he said. “We hope to sponsor a morning of reflection late this year and a Dominican priest at Tulane University in New Orleans may give that talk.”

Posing for a photo in their traditional attire after a recent Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral are, from left, Knights of the Holy Sepulcher Sir John Dietl, Sir Jose Jaen, Sir James Kelly, and Sir Bernard Wolff. (TOM TRACY / FC)
September 2012

Dear friend in Jesus our Lord and Savior:

The Apostolate of Divine Mercy of the Archdiocese of Miami invites you to be part of the beautiful project to be built for the benefit of all peoples in the Americas – from Canada to Argentina and Chile.

Please, help us build, with the blessing of our Archbishop, His Excellency Thomas G. Wenski, the Divine Mercy Sanctuary of the Americas in South Florida.

We are the only community in the whole country where peoples from all of our countries have come to stay and have established their homes. We are also the hub of the Americas where all come to visit us and enjoy our sunshine State of Florida. The Divine Mercy Sanctuary will be a blessing not only to our community but to all who come and will visit it. The Devotion to the Divine Mercy and its message is rapidly spreading throughout the world and especially throughout our western hemisphere. Many wish to visit the Sanctuary in Lagiewniki, Kraków, but do not have the financial resources.

The Sanctuary in Southwest Miami will provide pilgrims the opportunity to visit the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and to venerate the Image of our Merciful Jesus, an original painting, painted in front of the Divine Mercy Image at the Sanctuary in Kraków, by a famous local painter, Boleslaw Szpecht, with the authorization of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy (St. Faustina’s Congregation), brought to Miami in 1999. Pilgrims will also enjoy the stain glasses of Merciful Jesus, Blessed John Paul II and various advocations of our Blessed Mother, surrounding the main chapel, and venerate the relic of St. Faustina that has been with us since the year 2000.

They will also be able to meet and share with the Sisters of Saint Faustina’s Congregation who we hope will be with us tending and serving the visitors.

We have already purchased the land. It is located on SW 40th Terrace from 84th Court to 85th Avenue. Our total budget is $3.3 million and so far we have received pledges and donations in the approximate amount of $300,000.

You may send your donation to: Apostolate of Divine Mercy / First Citizens Bank / 221 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables, FL 33134 / Routing No. 053100300 / SWIFT: FCBTUS33 / Building Fund Account No. 001070041742; or use our postal address: P. O. Box 140399, Coral Gables, FL 33114-0399. You may also write to us at the same postal address and we will send you our Divine Mercy Sanctuary Brochure which provides more information about the project.

With all our love and affection in our Merciful Jesus,

Deacon Rafael de los Reyes
Spiritual Director