ELECTION 2012

Catholics seeking to vote their conscience will find plenty of election information inside, Pages 8-13

STAFF REPORT

MIA MI | The trilingual ballot for Nov. 6 runs to 10 pages in Miami-Dade County — and that’s not including municipal contests which will be added in many cities. In addition to the usual legislative races, there are county amendments and statewide amendments and, of course, the election of a U.S. president.

The Catholic Church does not take positions on specific candidates or support either political party. But it does have a right to speak out about moral issues and help Catholics understand how each candidate’s position compares or contrasts with Catholic social teaching and Catholic social values.

Inside this edition, readers will find six pages of information to help them prepare for this election, including:

- The views of each presidential candidate on topics of interest to Catholics, as compiled from their public records or statements.
- Archbishop Thomas Wenski’s column calling local Catholics to vote in accordance with their conscience.
- Archbishop Wenski’s views on why the Catholic Church in Florida supports a “yes” vote on Amendments 6 and 8 to Florida’s Constitution.

The staff at the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops also takes considerable time and effort each election year to ask every single candidate for Florida Legislature and U.S. Congress questions pertinent to the Church and its followers. The questions involve topics such as abortion, immigration, education, religious freedom, marriage, poverty, housing, death penalty and care for members of vulnerable populations. Unlike some other polls, the questions specifically target issues that will likely come up before the congressional and legislative bodies during the upcoming session. This Candidate Questionnaire is sent to all candidates listed on the ballot for the offices of Florida House and Senate, and U.S. House and Senate.

Mike McCarron, executive director of the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the role of the Candidate Questionnaire Project is not to endorse candidates, but to act as a tool for voters to examine their conscience, get to know their candidates better, and perhaps fuel voters to contact candidates on why they answered (or did not answer) as they did. The project also works to educate candidates on issues of importance to the Catholic Church in Florida.

Due to space limitations, the answers submitted to the Candidate Questionnaire Project are not printed in this edition, but they are available online at the Florida bishops’ website, www.flbishops.org/CQP/2012.

You can view the responses of candidates in your area one of two ways:

- All candidates are found under the listing, Candidate Responses. Click on “all candidates” or one of four offices available: U.S. senator, U.S. representative, Florida senator, Florida representative.
- Under the Parish Resources section are bulletin inserts available in English and Spanish. These responses are broken down by the candidates of districts within each of Florida’s seven dioceses. Therefore, if you are a resident within the Miami Archdiocese — Miami-Dade, Broward and Monroe counties — all your representatives will be listed in the bulletin insert as Miami Archdiocese. The inserts are available in a PDF format. The Florida Catholic also has compiled a listing of candidate websites. Visit www.thefloridacatholic.org and click on the Informed Voter logo.

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Willing to serve

More than 600 commissioned for Synod teams at Mass opening Year of Faith in archdiocese

MIAMI | Marie Marino knows what Synod focus team she will be serving on — the one on the priest-hood. It may seem strange that a laywoman would be selected for that team, but Marino does seem like an expert on the subject. Her son is Father Chris Marino, rector of St. Mary Cathedral.

“I’ve gone through Father Marino’s 20 years as a priest, his nine years at the seminary and many seminarians as guests who turned into priests. I’m more than sympathetic with the problems they have today in their lifestyle,” said Marino as she sat in the front pew of the cathedral Oct. 13 waiting for the start of Mass that would kick off the Year of Faith in the archdiocese and at the same time commission her — and about 600 others — to serve on the Synod focus teams.

Like many of those in the cathedral that evening, Marino had not exactly volunteered to serve on a focus team. “I was recommended. I never volunteered,” she said.

Unlike many of the others, however, she at least knew what focus team she would be serving on.

“They haven’t told me,” said Raymond Felipe of Annunciation Parish in West Hollywood. He is a former Catholic school principal who now teaches economics and also served as a missionary in the Ukraine. So he put down he would be willing to serve on teams dealing with overseas missions, Church finances or education.

“The archbishop called and

PLEASE SEE SYNOD, 7
‘Not just a club’
Members of the Order of Malta are expected to serve the poor

This article is part of an ongoing series about papal and chivalric orders active in the archdiocese

TOM TRACY
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI | In the early hours of the last Saturday in September, Nick Silverio of Christ the King Parish in Perrine was awakened by a phone call from a distressed young mother in the Tampa area. She had given birth at home hours before and wanted help.

What happened next is that the baby boy in question became No. 181 in the list of babies that have been brought to safety by Silverio’s Safe Haven for Newborns and a hotline which assists at-risk mothers and babies.

“I told her she could leave the baby at a fire station or a hospital with no questions asked,” said Silverio, who previously ran a software company and since 2001 has been dedicated to running Safe Haven in the memory of his wife, who died following a car accident.

The Tampa woman went straight to the nearest fire station, which transported the baby to All Children’s Hospital in Tampa.

Father Patrick O’Neill, center, is flanked by Knights of Malta Mark Wolff, left, and Dr. Jose Centurion at St. Mary Cathedral in December 2011. (TOM TRACY | FC)

at a time of high concern about abandoned babies and resulting infant fatalities.

“The mother then called back to say ‘thank you’ and that things went as she hoped. She took our suggestion for counseling and we arranged for that in Tampa through a Christian organization,” said Silverio.

In four instances over the years, a mother later took steps to be successfully reunited with her child.

Silverio’s Catholic faith and consistent dedication to charitable works brought him in touch years ago with members of the Order of Malta, which includes some 150-160 men and women from Key West to the Palm Beach area.

An ancient and sovereign entity tracing its roots back to its presence in the Holy Land in 1048, the Order of Malta remains true to its inspiring principles, contained in the motto “Tutio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum” — defense of the faith and assistance to the poor and the suffering.

The motto becomes reality through the voluntary work carried out by members — called dames and knights following their investiture — through humanitarian assistance and medical and social activities.

Nick Silverio, a Knight of Malta and founder of Safe Haven for Newborns, poses with one of his success stories, baby Vincent, born in 2007 and placed for adoption. (COURTESY PHOTO)

FIND OUT MORE
• Donations for the “Cuchara de Amor” (Spoon of Love) project that provides meals for Cuba’s poor and elderly can be sent to: Asociacion Cubana de la Sosberana y Militar Orden de Malta, 2950 S.W. 27 Ave., Suite 300, Miami, FL 33133.
• To find out more about the Cuban Association of the Order of Malta, visit www.ordenemalta-cuba.com.

The Miami woman went as she hoped.

Mariana O’Naghten participate in the pilgrimage to El Cobre with Thomas Wenski, Archbishop of Miami, and founder of Safe Haven for Newborns.

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MIAMI | While the economic downturn has been a hardship for Americans, it also had an impact on the most vulnerable in Cuba: the elderly, who increasingly struggle to fend for themselves, according to Edward Chacón, a Coral Gables resident and president of the association, which supports mission projects and charitable outreach in several Caribbean and Central American countries, as well as in Miami.

The Cuban Association of the Order of Malta provides financial aid to a network of 60 parish-based soup kitchens across the island of Cuba, along with several health clinics, religious education and seminary programs. But local fundraising to support these programs has been hampered by the global financial crisis affecting so many in Florida.

Financial hardship here translates into worse hardship in Cuba, where many depend on cash remittances from family abroad to help make ends meet. Cubans with no outside help are finding it hard to put food on the table with Cuba’s local economy in stagnation.

“People with relatives in Cuba know these facts and they want to give something back to these poor communities,” said Chacón, born and raised in Havana, whose family founded a small town named Santa Maria del Rosario in the outskirts of the Cuban capital. They were also active members of the Order of Malta for many generations.

With more than 100 members in South Florida, Washington, D.C., Spain and elsewhere, the Cuban Association of the Order of Malta traveled throughout the island last year, and again for the papal visit this year, led by Miami Archbishop Thomas Wenski.

In 2011 especially, the Malta knights and ladies explored firsthand the situation of the elderly and

From left, Dames of Malta Alina Suarez, Maria Cristina Diaz and Mariana O’Naghten participate in the pilgrimage to El Cobre with members of the Order of Malta and Archbishop Thomas Wenski.

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO| FC

reach out to Cuba’s elderly

Cuban Association of Malta says many seniors struggle to fend for themselves

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NEWsbriefs

St. Thomas U. professor named to Pontifical Council

St. Thomas University has been recognized once again at a global level for its leadership in intercultural human rights, as Professor Roza Pati has been appointed a member of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace by Pope Benedict XVI.

The council, a Vatican body dedicated to the promotion of social justice, has as its main goal advocating peace and justice around the world consistent with the Gospel and the Church’s social teaching. In her new role as a member of the Pontifical Council, Pati will help identify “the signs of the times,” and contribute to developing solutions that uphold the dignity of all human beings. She will continue to foster global dialogues to promote justice, which, as Pope Paul VI said, is indispensable to the attainment of true world peace.

“This is a significant appointment and a recognition of the global impact Professor Pati has had through her writings and her speeches around the world on human rights issues such as human trafficking, a recognition of her status as a leader in global human rights,” said Douglas Ray, dean of St. Thomas’ School of Law.

Pati, who was born in Albania, was a member of parliament there and served in the cabinet as Secretary of State for youth and women. A public servant and a scholar, Pati teaches at St. Thomas University Law School and serves as executive director of the graduate program in intercultural human rights, as well as director of the Human Trafficking Academy.

Local high schools rank among top 50

Two South Florida Catholic high schools — Archbishop McCarthy in Southwest Ranches and Belen Jesuit Prep in Miami — have been recognized as among the top 50 Catholic high schools in the U.S. in 2012. And a third — Cardinal Gibbons High School in Fort Lauderdale — was recognized for excellence in the category of civics education. This is the seventh time McCarthy, an archdiocesan high school, and Belen, operated by the Jesuits, made the Catholic High School Honor Roll since the recognition program began in 2004. Originally conceived by the Acton Institute, the Cardinal Newman Society has assumed responsibility of this year for compiling the honor roll.

Selection to the honor roll means a high school is outstanding in all three areas of the competition: Catholic identity, academics and civics education. The goal of the honor roll program is to recognize and encourage excellence in Catholic secondary education. The honor is now given once every two years. Gibbons made the Top 50 in 2005. In all, eight of the 13 Catholic high schools in the archdiocese have been recognized as being among the Top 50 since 2004.

Archbishop Wenski to speak at FIU

Archbishop Thomas Wenski will be the featured speaker at a lecture sponsored by Florida International University’s Department of Religious Studies and the TAK Honor Society. The lecture is part of the Program in the Study of Spiritualitv sponsored by FIU’s School of International and Public Affairs. The archbishop’s topic will be “Spirituality and the Contemporary Roman Catholic Church.” The lecture will take place Wednesday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m., at FIU’s Modesto Maidique Campus (main campus), in SIPA 125. The event is free and open to the public.

Immaculata-LaSalle students promote ‘Restless Heart’

The Key Club students of Immaculata-La Salle High School have worked to bring “Restless Heart,” the new movie of St. Augustine’s life, to the big screen in Miami. They want to bring this great story to the community and their peers in order to help people learn from and grow in their faith as St. Augustine did. Screenings will take place Thursday, Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m., or Saturday, Oct. 27, 3 p.m., at the Paragon CocoWalk Theatre, 3015 Grand Ave., Coconut Grove. Tickets may be purchased online at www.lslroyals.com; look under the “News” section and click to purchase. For more information, email Elena.Capablanca@lslroyals.com.

RCIA forum set for Orlando

The North American Forum on the Catechumenate will host a “Beginnings Plus Institute” in English and Spanish, Jan. 23-26, 2013, in the Diocese of Orlando. This institute provides excellent initial formation for those new to RCIA ministry, and ongoing formation for those with some years of experience in this ministry. Registration deadlines are Nov. 23 for early bird or no later than Dec. 26. To register, go to www.naforum.org and click Calendar/Beginnings Plus/Orlando.

9-Day Holy Land Pilgrimage

Travel back in time to the ancient Holy Land and birthplace of Jesus and Christianity. Follow in the footsteps of Jesus for the spiritual experience of a lifetime.

No other tour offers as much meaning and value.

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Vote as faith-filled, loyal citizens

As we approach a very important general election, I remind those of you who are citizens of this great nation and eligible to vote that voting is not only your right, it is your duty. As Scriptures teach us, we are our brother’s keeper, and voting responsibly is one way to promote the common good of our brethren in society.

The welfare and future of our nation’s communities depend on the people we elect to serve in public responsibilities. No bishop or priest will tell you for whom to vote — however, as your pastors, we do genuinely try to guide our people through the maze of complex moral issues that underline the public policy positions espoused by the different candidates and their party platforms.

For this reason, we make available to you the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Candidate Questionnaire which details where candidates stand on important issues that may come before them. At the same time, while we are not taking a position on the other amendment initiatives, we strongly urge you to support both Amendment 6 (Yes), which will enable the legislature to restore rights of parents and prohibit public funding of abortion, and Amendment 7 (Yes) on religious liberty that would protect faith-based groups’ freedom to serve in accordance with their beliefs.

Besides what is available through your parish bulletin, additional information can be accessed on both the Archdiocese of Miami’s website, the www.miamiarch.org, and the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website, www.FLACC.org.

While some may resent this particular exercise of our teaching ministry, I would hope that most Catholics of good will would welcome these interventions. All of us need help in making difficult decisions.

As Catholics we have good counsel in our Church teachings on our civic responsibility to pursue the common good, as well as in prayer. These are important elements that help one arrive at the best prudent decision.

Our system of checks and balances built into our governing structures by our Founders reflected an understanding of the human person founded in our Judeo-Christian tradition.

And whether as citizens or as elected officials, if we are to be faithful to the truth about the human person, we must oppose uncompromisingly any policies and laws that undermine the common good, precisely because they originate in a defective understanding of the human person.

For this reason, the Church — clergy and laity — while agreeing to disagree on other matters of prudent judgment, cannot but oppose the evils of abortion, euthanasia, fetal stem-cell research, human cloning and so-called same-sex “marriage.” In these areas, there can be no other legitimate Catholic position.

Beyond these fundamental issues, and clearly related to them, is the issue of religious liberty which must be defended from current attempts to undermine it by limiting people’s freedom to serve in ways congruent to their faith and morals.

As Catholics, we best contribute to our democratic process by voting as faith-filled and faithful citizens; that is, in a way coherent to our Catholic beliefs and teachings. Whether you can vote or not, I ask you to pray; and if you are eligible to vote, then I ask you to do so with an informed conscience.

A medida que nos acercamos a unas elecciones generales muy importantes, los recursos a aquellos de ustedes que son ciudadanos de esta gran nación y con derecho a votar que el voto no es sólo su derecho, es su deber. Como las Escrituras nos enseñan, debemos ser los guardianes de nuestros hermanos (Génesis 4:9), y una forma de promover el bien común de nuestros hermanos es votando de una manera responsable.

El bienestar y el futuro de las comunidades de nuestra nación dependen de las personas en las que confiamos las responsabilidades públicas. Ningún obispo o sacerdote les dirá por quién votar. Sin embargo, como pastores sinceramente tratamos de guiar a nuestro pueblo a través del laberinto de complejas cuestiones morales que subyacen a las posiciones políticas abogadas públicamente por los diferentes candidatos y sus plataformas parciales.

Por este motivo, ponemos a su disposición el Cuestionario de Candidatos que ha preparado la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de la Florida y que detalla la postura de los candidatos respecto a temas importantes. Aunque no estamos tomando una posición sobre las otras enmiendas, les insto a que apoyen tanto la Enmienda 6 (Sí) que permitirá a la legislatura restablecer los derechos de los padres y prohibirá que los dólares públicos financien abortos, y la Enmienda 8 (Sí) sobre la libertad religiosa que protege la libertad de las organizaciones religiosas para servir en nuestro Estado. Además de lo que está incluido en su boletín parroquial, puede encontrar información adicional en la página web de la Arquidiócesis de Miami, www.miamiarch.org, como en el sitio web de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de la Florida, www.FLACC.org.

Mientras que algunos quizás se sientan molestos por este ejercicio particular de nuestro ministerio de enseñanza, es de esperar que la mayoría de los católicos de buena voluntad reciban con agrado estas intervenciones. Todos necesitamos ayuda al tomar decisiones difíciles.

Como católicos tenemos una buena guía en las enseñanzas de nuestra iglesia sobre nuestra responsabilidad cívica de buscar el buen común. También tenemos la oración. Estos son elementos importantes que nos ayudarán a todos nosotros a llegar a la decisión más prudente.

El sistema de controles y equilibrios incorporado en las estructuras gubernamentales nos permite fundar esta nación refleja un entendimiento de la libertad humana a través de nuestras instituciones, que protegen el sistema de control y equilibrios que nos permiten tomar decisiones con prudencia. Como católicos tenemos un derecho a participar en el proceso político, que incluye votar de manera coherente con nuestras creencias y prácticas cívicas. Deben votar o no, los que piden, y si son elegibles, para evitar que alguien muestre con quien nos unimos.

As Catholics, we best contribute to our democratic process by voting as faith-filled and loyal citizens; that is, in a way coherent to our Catholic beliefs and teachings. Whether you can vote or not, I ask you to pray; and if you are eligible to vote, then I ask you to do so with an informed conscience.
Test of Fire’ made in South Florida

Viral video created by local Catholics to remind others about ‘non-negotiable values’

ANNE DIBERNARDO
Florida Catholic correspondent

PEMBROKE PINES | Since it was posted this past March, the compelling ‘Test of Fire’ video has drawn more than 2 million views on YouTube.

What many people might not know, however, is that the video’s creators — and the founders of the lay organization that produced it, Catholics Called to Witness — are South Florida parishioners.

The video is meant to inspire Catholics to live their faith by engaging in the public arena and voting their Catholic values.

Packaged with a pulsating musical score and top-notch production values, the three-minute video resembles a trailer for a million-dollar blockbuster film. It fades in and out of two scenes — an 18th-century workshop where a blacksmith forges iron into words depicting some of today’s campaign issues, and a pensive woman walking down a corridor toward a voting booth.

The video emphasizes that Catholics across the nation will have an opportunity to shape the future for generations to come. It begins with the message, “This November, Catholics across the nation will be putting the test to the test,” and concludes with the words: “Your vote will affect the future — and be recorded in eternity. Will you vote the values that will stand the test of fire?”

“There are some things that have eternal consequences. While we can buy a home here on earth, that is not going to have eternal consequences. But life, marriage, religious liberty and family — these are things that do have eternal consequences. These are the things that last through fire, and are made to last forever,” said Adriana Gonzalez, who along with her physician husband, Manuel, founded Catholics Called to Witness.

The Gonzalezes have seven children, ages 6 to 21, and are members of St. Edward Parish in Pembroke Pines. Adriana, who home-schools the children, said she has never been politically active but became a champion of parental rights following a deep spiritual encounter in 2009.

She was shocked when the video went viral, but said it emanated from a nudge in her heart to get out there and do something. “These issues affect everything — family, Church and the nation,” said Gonzalez.

In response to that nudge, she and her husband called a meeting in their home last year which was attended by 35 people who also shared their passion.

“We didn’t know exactly what we were doing at first,” she said, but then she remembered a September 2011 commentary on LifeSiteNews.com about Pope Benedict XVI and what he thought the principal focus should be for Catholic voters.

According to the commentary, the Holy Father said, “As far as the Catholic Church is concerned, the principal focus of her interventions in the public arena is the protection and promotion of the dignity of the person, and she is thereby consciously drawing particular attention to principles which are not negotiable.”

Some of those non-negotiable values cited by the pope were: respect for human life and its defense from conception to natural death; the family built upon marriage between a man and a woman; the freedom to educate one’s children; and the promotion of the common good in all its forms.

“He’s not saying that other things are not important, but he is saying that these are the things that we cannot compromise,” said Gonzalez. “As Catholics we cannot disagree on life, we cannot disagree on marriage between a man and a woman, and we cannot disagree on the right of parents to educate their children.

This message also resonated with the group and became the foundation for our organization,” she continued. “We, like so many Catholics, had the realization that something out there is not quite right in society and even in the Church and with many Catholics among us. With passion we want to listen and we want to follow Pope Benedict’s calling to be engaged and do something about it.”

In February 2012, Catholics Called to Witness was formally incorporated and the video was produced. The metaphor of the “test of fire” is not meant to imply the fire of hell but something that endures, such as metals like gold or iron.

“The way the video came together makes it ‘obvious that God’s hand was in it,” said Gonzalez. “We did so little. It was not something that we invested time, energy or effort into. The making of the video was just a sudden inspiration that began with a suggestion from a friend who said we should do something to package our message quickly.”

The Gonzalezes knew very little about the video-making process but called their friend Jeremy Wiles at Creative Labs. Wiles, who is also a champion of parental rights, had produced a parental rights video, “Overruled.”

Wiles told her that he would come up with a script. Within a few days, the inspiration for the video emerged in a very vivid, very specific dream which he said he knew was from the Lord: He dreamt about the woman at the voting booth and the old-fashioned blacksmith forging the words and tossing them into the fire. He woke up, wrote it all down and emailed the script to the Gonzalezes without mentioning anything about the dream.

“We loved it,” Gonzalez said, sharing another intriguing piece of the story. “The amazing thing that happened is how we found the (blacksmith). It should be noted here that the (blacksmith) couldn’t be more modern; he had to look old-fashioned.”

Gonzalez turned to a friend named Rick who lives in Vero Beach for help, but he did not know anyone who fit that description. Meanwhile, the next day, her brother-in-law, Doug, called and said he had found their blacksmith.

“We thought it was strange since we had not told anyone but Rick about the search,” Gonzalez said.

But just so happened that Doug had gone to see Rick about another matter, and the conversation turned toward Doug’s friend, Steve Middleton, who has an old-fashioned home and a barn and blacksmith shed “that looks like something out of the 1800s.” It was then that Rick told Doug, “You have got to call Adriana.”

It turned out that Middleton, who is also a devout Catholic, fit the role perfectly and agreed to use his shed for the production.

“People tell us that whatever marketing strategy we used, it was excellent … but that was so not me — it was God’s hand,” Gonzalez said.

Father Denis Wilde of Priests for Life has said, “Test of Fire’ cuts to the core of who we are and what our society needs to see to reclaim and restore the basics of our human and national meaning — marriage, defense of innocent life, and religious freedom.”

Gonzalez said she has a good rapport with Archbishop Thomas Wenski, who has seen the video. After the election, Catholics Called to Witness plans to produce more videos to inspire and educate the laity about why compromise is not an option on non-negotiable values.

“We don’t want to have to cramp for each exam. This way, by the time the test comes, everyone is prepared. Everybody is cramming now, but that’s not the ideal,” Gonzalez said. “Hopefully we will have done our job the next time the test comes around. The space in between elections is so critical because it is the time of deep growth. What is going on in political life is downstream from culture. If we can really deepen in the Church, it affects culture and affects the political culture.”

To watch “Test of Fire’ and obtain more information on Catholics Called to Witness, visit www.cc2w.org.

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Saint Bartholomew Catholic Church
is honored to invite you to our
50th Anniversary Luncheon

1 p.m., Saturday, November 3, 2012
at Signature Grand, Davie, FL
$32.00 per person

50th Anniversary Mass
with Archbishop Thomas Wenski
5 p.m., Saturday, November 3, 2012
at the Church

Contact the Church Rectory to purchase luncheon ticket or for memorial and sponsor opportunities.

St. Bartholomew Catholic Church
8005 Miramar Parkway, Miramar, FL 33025, 954-431-3600

October 2012 www.thefloridacatholic.org
MALTA
FROM 2

the order carries out these activi-
ties in more than 120 countries.

Based in New York City, from small
beginnings, the American Associa-
tion has grown to ap-
proximately 1,700 knights and
and dames throughout several
states. Some South Florida Catho-
lics of Cuban descent are members
of a separate Cuban Association
of Malta which traces its regional
organization to Cuba. (See story,
Page 2.)

The order includes both
knights and dames from around
the world, and its official name is
Sovereign Military Order of the
Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem,
of Rhodes and of Malta — but it
is referred to in conversation
simply as the Knights of Malta.

One thing unique to the order
is that it has diplomatic relations
with more than 100 countries
(although not the U.S.) and per-
manent observer status at the
United Nations. Its diplomatic
posts are “neutral, impartial and
non-political,” aimed only at
supporting the order’s charitable
activities.

The American association
holds its annual investiture of
new members in St. Patrick’s
Cathedral in New York City
each November. Members are
encouraged to take periodic pil-
grimage retreats to places like
Lourdes, France.

“Every single person I have
met in Malta is committed to
their faith and giving back, to
working together,” said Silverio,
who will give a presentation on
his Safe Haven work to several
hundred members of Malta who
will gather in New York next
month. “To sum up the Knights of
Malta God sent us to do some-
thing either large or small but it
all matters.”

In Coral Gables, a longtime
dame of Malta, Grace Colross of
Little Flower Parish, said she has
enjoyed the Malta-sponsored so-
cial gatherings and fundraisers
and volunteering at the Marian
Center School and Services and
Opa Locka, which assists handi-
capped and disabled youths.

“Malta helps so many people
from Haiti to South America
to Homestead to Pahokee, and
if it wasn’t for us some of these
people would be having a very
tough time,” Colross said. “We
do what we do out of the love in
our hearts and it comes back to
us tenfold.”

Colross and her late husband,
Tim Colross, also a knight of
Malta, were invested some 15 or
20 years ago and had gone on pil-
grimage to Lourdes. Colross now
hosts an annual pre-Christmas
gather-together and a Mass at her
home for local members of Mal-
ta. The Malta Association in Flor-
da has celebrated each year by
Father Patrick O’Neill, who has
been active in the order. He
served for 23 years as director of
the Ecumenical and Interfaith
Office of the Church diocese, and is
the president of the New Hope Foun-
dation serving the rural poor in
Florida.

The American Association of
Malta also has a regional priest-
chaplain, Dominican Father
Dave Caron, a past director of
Mission and Ministry at the Uni-
versity in Miami Hills, and newly
named president of Aqui-
nas Institute of Theology in St.
Louis.

The Order of Malta is not just
an association or an honorary
society, according to Andy Vis-
cichio a member of St. Jude
Parish in Boca Raton who was
invested as a knight of Malta in
2008. It is a working order of
the Church and members are ex-
pected to serve the poor.

“Our ancient texts refer to ‘Our
Lord the Poor’ and ‘Our Lord the
Sick,’ and so it’s not just a club.
When you are invited to become
a member you are expected to
serve,” Vissichio said. “All the
members of Malta roll up their
sleeves and do the work of the poor.” He is
deply involved in prison minis-
try both at Palm Beach County
Jail and by serving on the pris-
on ministry committee at the
American Association of Malta.

Prison ministry has become
a kind of “signature ministry”
of Malta, he said. “Volunteer efforts
regionally have brought thousands of copies
of the Bible and other prayer mate-
rail to inmates around the coun-
voy. The prison ministry volun-
teers have personal encounters
with the inmates when possible,
and the Bible distribution is a
chance to serve the poor with
a growing number of incarcerated
men and women.

“There is a conversation that
place at that moment, and
we sit together and talk about
the inmate’s issues,” he said.
“We can identify what it takes for
him or her to return to the faith,
to Christ, to the Church or help
them to just start thinking about
a return.”

“It is a door-opener to a con-
ter that takes place, a con-
versation that may not have
happened had the inmate not
for a Bible,” Vissichio said. “It is
always gratifying to do God’s
work and that is why we are in
Malta.”

For more information about
the Order of Malta, go to www.order
ofmalta.int. For more information on
Safe Haven see www.asafehavenfornewborns.com.

CUBA
FROM 2

poor in towns throughout Cuba. For
Chacón, the papal pilgrimage was
his second trip back to Cuba since
leaving in 1961.

“In Cuba the elderly are very
poor, same as everyone else in the
island,” he said. “Our soup kitch-
ens are for people 70 years of age or
greater, and of course there is a lot
of turnover.”

The Order of Malta’s soup kitch-
ens and services are overseen by
the local priest or pastor in charge.
In order to participate and receive
help, a study is made to ensure that
only very impoverished seniors can
access these programs, he said,
which offer breakfast and lunch
days a week. “At times, we also
send them away with food for the
weekend. When possible we have a
place for them to watch television,
and through the Catholic Church we
provide a simple service like a hair-
cut.”

The association is hoping to find
a means to double the number of senior citizen support centers in
Cuba, including a medical compo-
nent to support medical care for
elderly with diabetes. In late October,
the association will host its annual
White Cross Ball, a gala fundraiser
supporting Malta’s charitable work
in the region. The guest of honor
will be Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez
Maradiaga of Honduras, who serves
as president of the Rome-based
Caritas International.

The Catholic Association of Malta
has an annual budget of about
$250,000. The organization’s lead-
ership said that between $3,600
to $5,000 can support each elderly
center in Cuba for one year. The
Malta projects in Cuba comply with
the Cuban Assets Control Regula-
tions of the U.S. Department of
the Treasury, and have obtained all
necessary licenses.

“These people are between 70
and 90 years old, without family,
living alone, with no financial or
other assistance,” said Juan Calvo,
a Knight of Malta and spokesman
for the Cuba Association.

The feeding centers are sus-
tained through cash purchases
made in the island and are docu-
mented and monitored by the local
councils, he said. In contrast, send-
ing food directly to Cuba has proven
complicated.

“Our centers are not only a place
to meet for a meal, but also a gath-
ering place for the seniors to meet
other people like themselves,”
Calvo said, adding the programs
are nourishment not only for the
stomach but the overall well-being
of senior citizens. “It shows what
the Catholic Church wants to do
in terms of helping the poor and eld-
ery, bringing people in contact with
the local priests and have spiritual
support as well.”

The Cuban Association is hoping
to find area donors who are able to
support about 20 elderly Cubans
a year with a donation of $1,000, ac-
cording to Calvo, a native of Cuba
who emigrated to Venezuela and
then the United States. He made
his first visit back to the island in 52
years during Pope Benedict XVI’s
pilgrimage to Cuba in March.

In Miami, the Order of Malta
also supports outreach programs
and religious education at St. John
Bosco Parish and St. Ann Mission
in Homestead. Archbishop Wenski
recently succeeded the late Bishop
Agustín Roman as head chaplain to
the Cuban Association of Malta.
Catechetical day set for Nov. 3

Three longtime catechists to be honored at 34th annual conference for religious educators

STAFF REPORT

MIAMI | The 34th annual archdiocesan Catechetical Conference, sponsored by the Office of Catechesis, will take place Saturday, Nov. 3, from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Archbishop Edward McCarthy High School, 5451 S. Flamingo Road, Southwest Ranches.

This is the largest annual gathering of catechetical teams, parish Catholic school teachers, catechetical leaders, youth ministers and parish religious educators in the archdiocese. This year's theme, "Agents of the New Evangelization," is connected with the Year of Faith, the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the promulgation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Topics to be presented include Scripture, catechesis, adult formation, Catholic morality, liturgy, social justice and many other areas of interest appropriate for inter-generational parish ministry. Archbishop Thomas Wenski will celebrate the opening Mass of the conference at 8 a.m.

New this year, three Lifetime Catechetical Leadership awards will be given to "three amazing catechetical leaders who have dedicated their lives to the catechetical ministry," said Peter Ductram, archdiocesan director of catechesis. The three are being recognized for their "outstanding ministry, faithful service, joyful commitment and visionary leadership in the catechetical ministry of the Archdiocese of Miami."

Those being recognized are:
• Sister Maria del Carmen Alvarez, a Claritian Missionary born in Asturias, Spain, who professed her first vows Sept. 24, 1957. In 1974 she was sent to the United States to join the other sisters who already lived in Miami. Our Lady of Mercy in the ministries of music and religious education in two parishes — St. Benedict in Hialeah and, for more than 30 years, Corpus Christi in Miami.
• Anne "Annie" M. Gardner, who was born in New York and raised in Miami. She graduated from Barry University, and returned there to earn a Master of Arts degree in religious education administration. She was later awarded a Master of Arts degree in theology from St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. She has been the pastoral assistant and director of religious education at St. Sebastian Parish in Fort Lauderdale since 1985, and prior to that worked at St. Clement in Wilton Manors.
• Patricia Murphy Solenski, who was born in Philadelphia and has been a resident of Fort Lauderdale since 1976. She and her late husband, Gerald, were married for 37 years and had three children. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Barry University in educational leadership and theology, and has served as director of religious education for both St. Anthony Parish and School since 1980. In 1984 she was the recipient of the Pro Ecclesia medal from Archbishop Edward McCarthy. From 1985 to 1988 she took part in the first archdiocesan synod. In 1990 she was appointed to the archdiocesan pastoral council and she also has been a longtime member of the National Catholic Catechetical Leaders Association and the National Parish Catechetical Directors of the National Catholic Educational Association.

To find out more about the conference and register online, visit www.miamicatechesis.org or call 305-762-1107.

SYNOP

FROM 1

I’m honored,” said Andy Gomez, special assistant for international affairs at the University of Miami and senior fellow at the university’s Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies. He said he was interested in serving on the team that will study the social mission of the Church, “which I think is crucial, or education, which is even more important.”

“I don’t know (what team I will serve on) because I like everything so much,” said Silvia Galan of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Miami, sister of the late bishop of Brownsville, Texas, Cuban-born Enrique San Pedro. Galan has been a catechist for 19 years and said she is interested in life issues, Church doctrine, liturgy and religious life.

“I received this (faith) so I have to give it away,” she said of her willingness to serve.

Galan did not take part in the first archdiocesan Synod, which took place from 1985 to 1988. “I think I was having children, so at that time I couldn’t do much,” she noted. “I wasn’t planning on doing it (now) but then I got pregnant.”

Marilé Lopez of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Miami also got a call — from Archbishop Thomas Wenski and Sister Elizabeth Wooley, the archdiocese’s chancellor for administration. Lopez is not sure why they called her, other than that she is a practicing Catholic with five children who have all gone to archdiocesan schools.

Aside from their involvement with their parish and their children’s schools, she and her husband also are involved in civic activities. They have worked with the Year of Faith, the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the promulgation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

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Plenary indulgences are granted for the “temporal punishment of sins” — that is, time in purgatory — and also are applicable to the souls of the faithful deceased. The Year of Faith runs from Oct. 11, 2012, to Nov. 24, 2013.

Seminarians carry the archdiocesan banner and processional cross during the recessional at the end of Mass at St. Mary Cathedral Oct. 13. More than 600 people who have been selected as members of Synod focus teams, along with their family and friends, gathered for the Mass where Archbishop Thomas Wenski commissioned them for Synod service, while at the same time opening the Year of Faith in the archdiocese. (ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)
Know the Positions of the Presidential Candidates

In keeping with its mission, the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops (FCCB) aims to educate and inform Catholics about a wide range of issues. The information listed here has been compiled from policies, public statements, official and campaign websites and other resources to help voters inform their consciences before heading to the voting booth. The issues appear here in alphabetical order for informational purposes only and do not represent a complete list of issues that may be of importance to Catholics. The FCCB neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office. The underlined text below indicates a hyperlink to the source. Go to www.flaccb.org to view these links.

**DEMOCRAT**

**President**

**BARACK OBAMA**

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**ABORTION**

On the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* in 2012, Obama said, “I remain committed to protecting a woman’s right to choose and this fundamental constitutional right.”

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**DEATH PENALTY**

In his 2006 book *Audacity of Hope* (pgs. 57-58), Obama wrote, “While the evidence tells me that the death penalty does little to deter crime, I believe there are some crimes – mass murder, the rape and murder of a child – so heinous ... that the community is justified in expressing the full measure of its outrage by meting out the ultimate punishment. On the other hand, the way capital cases were tried in Illinois at the time was so rife with error, questionable police tactics, racial bias, and shoddy lawyering, that 13 death row inmates had been exonerated.”

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**EDUCATIONAL CHOICE**

A 2011 statement from the Executive Office of the President stated, “Private school vouchers are not an effective way to improve student achievement.” The Obama administration “strongly opposes expanding the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program and opening it to new students.”

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**EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH**

Obama’s 2009 Executive Order revoked previous presidential directives that limited federally funded experimentation on human embryonic stem cells. His order expands eligible federally funded research to all stem cell lines, including those derived from human embryos created for research purposes.

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**FREEDOM OF RELIGION**

In Jan. 2012, the Obama administration’s Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a mandate that all employers – except for a limited group of religious employers – must provide health insurance coverage for contraception, sterilization and abortion causing drugs. Many religious institutions, including Catholic hospitals, K-12 schools, universities, and charities, are not exempt.

In the recently decided U.S. Supreme Court *Hosanna-Tabor* case, the Obama administration’s Equal Employment Opportunity Commission argued against a Lutheran school’s right to a ministerial exemption from the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. The exemption recognizes religious institutions’ constitutional right to choose who is hired or retained to do religious work. The Supreme Court rejected the administration’s argument 9-0.

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**REPUBLICAN**

**Former Governor**

**MITT ROMNEY**

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**ABORTION**

At a 2011 debate, Romney said he is “firmly pro-life...and I believe in the sanctity of life from the very beginning until the very end.”

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**DEATH PENALTY**

While governor, Romney filed legislation to reinstate capital punishment in Massachusetts and “make the death penalty available for the most heinous of crimes.” In his April 28, 2005, letter to the legislature, he stated the proposed death penalty statute would be “as narrow and as foolproof as humanly possible” and provide “protections to the accused while at the same time offering an appropriate punishment for the most atrocious murders.”

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**EDUCATIONAL CHOICE**

Romney’s proposal, entitled “A Chance for Every Child,” states, “A Romney administration will expand the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, offering more students a chance to attend a better school and providing a model of parental choice for the nation.”

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**EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH**

As governor, Romney vetoed a bill to fund human embryonic stem cell research. Regarding research on unimplanted embryos created for reproductive purposes, Romney stated in a 2007 debate, “It’s fine for that to be allowed, to be legal. I won’t use our government funds for that.” His campaign website states, “Stem cell research is a great scientific frontier, and it must be pursued with respect and care... Quite simply, America cannot condone or participate in the creation of human life when the sole purpose of its creation is its sure destruction.”

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**FREEDOM OF RELIGION**

In a Feb. 2012 op-ed, Romney wrote regarding the HHS mandate of his “strenuous objection to this liberty- and conscience-stifling regulation.” He stated, “On day one ... I will eliminate the Obama administration rule that compels religious institutions to violate the tenets of their own faith.”

Of the Supreme Court’s *Hosanna-Tabor* decision, Romney said, “Fortunately that was struck down by the court 9-0. We are very fortunate [to have people] who are willing to stand up for religious tolerance and religious liberty and the First Amendment of this Constitution in this country.”

These comments, policies and statements are snapshots from each candidate’s public career and campaigns. The research was conducted using www.whitehouse.gov, www.barackobama.com and www.mittromney.com, as well as other websites. The platforms of the political parties can be viewed at www.democrats.org and www.gop.com. The underlined text indicates a hyperlink to the source. Go to www.flaccb.org to view these links.
**HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR UNINSURED**

Part of Obama’s Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act seeks to increase access to health care for the previously uninsured and states that “no American can be discriminated against due to a pre-existing condition.” The federal health care reform plan requires nearly everyone to purchase health insurance and imposes a tax for failure to comply.

**IMMIGRATION**

The White House website states Obama’s commitment to an immigration policy that includes: “responsibility by the federal government to secure our borders; accountability for businesses that break the law by undermining American workers and exploiting undocumented workers; strengthening our economic competitiveness by creating a legal immigration system that reflects our values and diverse needs; and responsibility from people who are living in the United States illegally.”

The Obama administration’s Department of Homeland Security issued a policy of deferred action for “certain young people who were brought to the United States as young children, do not present a risk to national security or public safety, and meet several key criteria.”

According to Romney’s campaign website, his plan to address immigration includes: “attract more highly skilled immigrants; make the temporary worker visa system functional; secure our borders, discourage illegal immigration and enforce the law; cut red tape that is keeping immediate families apart.”

In response to the Obama administration’s policy of deferred action, Romney said, “With regards to these kids who were brought in by their parents through no fault of their own, there needs to be a long-term solution so they know what their status is.”

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

According to his White House website, Obama has “built a broad coalition to pressure Iran to abandon its nuclear program, including unprecedented sanctions by Congress, the UN Security Council, and a host of other nations and regional bodies.” In April 2012, Obama said, “…the best way to resolve this issue is diplomatically, and [it is] my belief that we still have a window in which to resolve this conflict diplomatically. That window is closing, and Iran needs to take advantage of it. But it is absolutely the right thing to do for the U.S. government, working in concert with … the rest of the world community, to pursue this path.”

According to his campaign website, Romney’s strategy “will be to end Iran’s pursuit of a nuclear weapon, eliminate the threat of Iranian nuclear terrorism against the United States and our allies, and prevent nuclear proliferation across the Middle East.” According to the website, his strategy includes four parts: a credible military option, a fifth round of tougher sanctions, support for the Iranian opposition, and a commitment to the on-time completion of a fully capable missile defense system.

**MARRIAGE**

In May 2012, Obama said, “I believe that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.” He said that marriage should be decided at the state level, where people are “arriving at different conclusions at different times.” The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is a law adopted by Congress that states that, for federal government purposes, only one man and one woman may be parties to a lawful marriage. In Feb. 2011, Obama said that his administration will no longer defend the DOMA in court.

In May 2012, Romney said, “I do not favor marriage between people of the same gender, and I do not favor civil unions if they are identical to marriage other than by name. My view is the domestic partnership benefits, hospital visitation rights, and the like are appropriate but that the others are not.” According to his website, as president he would “not only appoint an attorney general who will defend the Defense of Marriage Act – a bipartisan law passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton – but he will also champion a Federal Marriage Amendment to the Constitution defining marriage as between one man and one woman.”

**POVERTY ASSISTANCE**

A 2011 report from the Obama administration entitled “Creating Pathways to Opportunity” said of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as food stamps, “President Obama also enhanced and expanded the [program] to ensure that the 45 million individuals that participate each month continued to have the means to put food on the table. The Recovery Act investments in the SNAP program kept an additional 3.9 million people, including 1.7 million children, above the poverty line in 2010.”

In a Jan. 2012 debate, Romney said of food stamps, “These programs, all these federal programs that are bundled to help people and make sure we have a safety net, need to be brought together and sent back to the states and let states that are closest to the needs of their own people craft the programs that are able to deal with their – the needs of those folks.” He said food stamps were “certainly on the list” of programs. “Let’s get the money back to the states the way the Constitution intended and let states care for their own people in the way they feel best.”
Amendment 6 boosts parental rights

ARCHBISHOP THOMAS WENSKI

Our nation continues to be divided over abortion. The Catholic Church’s position in opposition to the liberal abortion regime initiated in our country since Roe v. Wade has been clear and unwavering. Despite the public dissent of some “cultural” Catholics, no Catholic can assert that support for legalized abortion is coherent with Catholic teaching. Nevertheless, both those who identify themselves either as pro-life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect the life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life or pro-choice should be able to agree that parents’ first responsibility is to nurture and protect life.

Florida state law honors the rights of parents by requiring a parent’s consent if their minor child should need medication as simple as an aspirin at school, or some other medical treatment. Parental consent is also required for even mildly invasive physical procedures such as tattoos or body piercing. Yet a full surgical procedure like an abortion, which can result in permanent health or psychological damage or even death to their minor child is exempted from this requirement. Further more, any medical care that might be required as the result of complications from an abortion would be the financial responsibility of the parents.

Amendment 6 will allow the legislature to restore the privacy right to parents, which will have the ultimate effect of enabling a family to decide together such a personal decision as health care for their minor child without the interference of government. It is unfair to parents to both hold them responsible by law for their child’s health, while on the other hand removing their ability to consent to treatment that puts the life and health of their child at risk.

Amendment 6 would also prohibit the use of state tax funds for abortion. Any number of national surveys confirms that a majority of Americans feel exactly the same way — including a significant number of those who while identifying themselves as “pro-choice” agree that taxpayers shouldn’t be forced to pay for someone else’s abortion.

Amendment 6, which bolsters the rights of parents to be involved in medical decisions affecting their minor children, should be supported by all Floridians whether or not they describe themselves as “pro-life” or “pro-choice.”
ARCHBISHOP THOMAS WENSKI

On Nov. 6, the citizens of Florida will have an opportunity to correct a historic injustice by voting “Yes” on Amendment 8. If approved by 60 percent of voters, our Florida Constitution will be more aligned with the U.S. Constitution and, at the same time, will allow religious entities to continue to participate in public programs.

Today, our Florida Constitution includes the language of the so-called Blaine Amendment, a relic of 19th-century anti-Catholicism. In 1875, Congressman James Blaine, influenced by the anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic nativism of the 19th century, sought to amend the U.S. Constitution to effectively shut down Catholic schools, which were being built in great numbers as an alternative to “Protestant” public schools. While he failed in that endeavor, he succeeded in having a similar amendment incorporated in their state constitution in 1968.

The current state constitution and the Florida’s history of anti-Catholicism have been on display for many years. In 2002, when I was Bishop of St. Petersburg, I had an opportunity to work with Catholic Charities, the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops and other faith-based organizations to direct the education of children in poor conditions. I quickly learned that the Florida Constitution of Education would not allow us to do so. Federal court decisions ruled that our efforts would not be constitutional under the U.S. Constitution.

In 2012, I was privileged to work with my fellow bishops and other faith-based organizations to introduce Amendment 8 to the Florida Constitution. It is a constitutional amendment that says, “No revenue of any kind shall be used in aid of any ‘sectarian institution’.” These faith-based organizations do not go into the collection plate to support efforts at evangelism. They are essentially payments for services rendered — most lines, more effectively and efficiently than if done by a state agency itself.

The present Blaine language, found specifically in Article I, Section 3 of the Florida Constitution, now states that “no revenue of the state … shall be taken directly or indirectly in aid of any … sectarian institution.” The extension of this “no aid” provision to faith-based social service and health agencies places in jeopardy the delivery of care from Catholic hospitals and nursing homes, Catholic Charities, etc. — in state programs that serve the common good. These faith-based or church-sponsored institutions have a long history of collaboration with various state programs. State monies do not go into the collection plate to support efforts at evangelism. They are essentially payments for services rendered — most lines, more effectively and efficiently than if done by a state agency itself.

Recent decisions by appellate courts invoking the Blaine language give us reasons for real concern. For example, recently, in Secular Humanists v. McNeil, a faith-based substance abuse and transitional housing program has come under challenge, and the courts have determined that if the operator is indeed a religious entity, its contract will violate the so-called “no aid” provision of the Florida Constitution.

Florida’s Constitution should not require discrimination against religious institutions simply because we (or “they”) are religious. Floridians deserve the opportunity to benefit from programs with a secular purpose run by religious entities. Hospitals and nursing homes caring for Medicaid beneficiaries and other faith-based service providers that comply with all the established requirements should be allowed to serve. The church and state have worked well together throughout Florida’s history, and must remain free to do so going forward. Vote “Yes” on Amendment 8!

La Enmienda 8 rectificaría una injusticia

ARZOBISPO THOMAS WENSKI

El 6 de noviembre, los ciudadanos de Florida tendrán la oportunidad de rectificar una injusticia histórica al votar “Sí” sobre la Enmienda 8. Si la enmienda es aprobada por el 60 por ciento de los votantes, nuestra Constitución de Florida será más coherente con la Constitución de los Estados Unidos, y, al mismo tiempo, permitirá que las entidades religiosas sigan participando en los programas públicos.

Hoy, la Constitución de Florida incluye el lenguaje de la llamada Enmienda Blaine, una reliquia del anticatolicismo del siglo XIX. En 1875, el congresista James Blaine, influenciado por el antiinmigrante y antecatólico nativismo de la época, trató de enmendar la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. La Constitución de Florida es una reliquia de la historia de la Florida, y debe seguir siendo libre de hacerlo en el futuro. ¡Vote “Sí” sobre la enmienda 8!
Conozca el punto de vista de los candidatos presidenciales

En concordancia con su misión, la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de la Florida / Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops (FCCB) tiene por propósito educar e informar a los católicos acerca de una amplia variedad de temas. La información que se incluye aquí ha sido recopilada a partir de normas, declaraciones públicas, sitios web oficiales y de campaña y otros recursos, para ayudar a los votantes a informarse antes de ingresar a la cabina electoral. Los temas incluidos, que aparecen según su orden alfabético en inglés, son para propósitos de información solamente y no representan un listado completo de temas que pueden ser importantes para los católicos. La FCCB no respalda y tampoco se opone a ningún candidato a un cargo público. El texto subrayado a continuación indica la presencia de un hipervínculo a la fuente de donde se extrajo la información. Visite a www.flacctb.org para ver estos enlaces.

DEMÓCRATA
Presidente
BARACK OBAMA

ABORTO

En el aniversario de Roe v. Wade en el año 2012, Obama declaró: “Continúo comprometido con la protección del derecho de la mujer a elegir y con este derecho constitucional fundamental”.

En su libro del año 2006 La Audacia de la Esperanza (pág. 62), Obama escribió: “Aunque los hechos afirman claramente que la pena de muerte no contribuye a disminuir la delincuencia, creo que hay algunos crímenes –asesinatos en masa, violación y asesinato de un menor– tan atroces... que la comunidad tiene derecho a expresar su ultraje imponiendo la pena capital. Por otra parte, en aquellos tiempos los juicios con pena de muerte en Illinois estaban llenos de errores, de tácticas policiales cuestionables, de prejuicios raciales y de trucos sucios de los abogados, que trece presos condenados a muerte habían sido exonerados”.

Dos declaraciones del año 2011 de la oficina ejecutiva del presidente indicaba que “los cupones para las escuelas privadas no son una manera eficaz de mejorar los logros de los alumnos”. La Administración Obama “se opone rotundamente a expandir el Programa de Becas de Oportunidad del Distrito de Columbia y abrirlo a nuevos alumnos”.

El decreto ejecutivo de Obama del año 2009 revocó directivas presidenciales anteriores que limitaban la experimentación con células madre embrionarias humanas financiada con fondos federales. Su decreto expande la investigación elegible con financiamiento federal a todas las líneas de células madre, incluyendo aquellas que se derivan de embriones humanos creados para fines de experimentación.

De acuerdo con su misión, la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de la Florida / Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops (FCCB) tiene por propósito educar e informar a los católicos acerca de una amplia variedad de temas. La información que se incluye aquí ha sido recopilada a partir de normas, declaraciones públicas, sitios web oficiales y de campaña y otros recursos, para ayudar a los votantes a informarse antes de ingresar a la cabina electoral. Los temas incluidos, que aparecen según su orden alfabético en inglés, son para propósitos de información solamente y no representan un listado completo de temas que pueden ser importantes para los católicos. La FCCB no respalda y tampoco se opone a ningún candidato a un cargo público. El texto subrayado a continuación indica la presencia de un hipervínculo a la fuente de donde se extrajo la información. Visite a www.flacctb.org para ver estos enlaces.

REPUBLICANO
Ex Gobernador
MITT ROMNEY

ABORTO

En un debate del año 2011, Romney manifestó que tiene “una firme postura a favor de la vida... y creo en el carácter sagrado de la vida desde el primer momento y hasta el instante final”.

Cuando fue gobernador, Romney presentó un proyecto de ley para restablecer la pena de muerte en Massachusetts y “disponer de la pena de muerte para los crímenes más atroces”. En su carta del 28 de abril del año 2005 a la legislatura, manifestó que el estatuto sobre pena de muerte propuesto sería “tan restringido e infalible como fuera humanamente posible” y brindaría “protecciones al acusado a la vez que proporcionaría un castigo apropiado para los asesinatos más atroces”.

La propuesta de Romney, denominada “Una Oportunidad para Cada Niño”, indica que “una Administración Romney expandirá el Programa de Becas de Oportunidad del Distrito de Columbia, lo que ofrecerá a una mayor cantidad de alumnos la posibilidad de asistir a una escuela mejor y proporcionará un modelo de opción de los padres para toda la nación”.

OPCIÓN EN MATERIA DE EDUCACIÓN

En enero del año 2012, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS) de la Administración Obama emitió un mandato que dispone que todos los empleadores, salvo un grupo limitado de empleadores religiosos, deben brindar cobertura de seguro médico para la anticoncepción, la esterilización y los servicios de aborto de los empleados, salvo un grupo limitado de empleadores religiosos, deben brindar cobertura de seguro médico para la anticoncepción, la esterilización y los servicios de aborto de los empleados.

El decreto ejecutivo de Obama del año 2009 revocó directivas presidenciales anteriores que limitaban la experimentación con células madre embrionarias humanas financiada con fondos federales. Su decreto expande la investigación elegible con financiamiento federal a todas las líneas de células madre, incluyendo aquellas que se derivan de embriones humanos creados para fines de experimentación.

LIBERTAD RELIGIOSA

En un artículo de opinión editorial de febrero del año 2012, Romney escribió acerca del mandato del HHS, manifestando su “energía oblicuación a esta disposición que opime la libertad y la conciencia”. Agregó que “el primer día de mi mandato... eliminaré la norma de la Administración Obama que obliga a las instituciones religiosas a infringir los principios de su propia fe”.

En el caso Hosanna-Tabor, Obama dice “Afortunadamente, el tribunal rechazó los argumentos 9 a 0. Nos enorgullece contar con personas que están dispuestas a defender la libertad religiosa, y la libertad religiosa, además de la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de este país”.

**PRESIDENTE OBAMA**

**ACCESO AL CUIDADO DE SALUD PARA PERSONAS SIN SEGURO MÉDICO**

Parte de la Ley de Protección al Paciente y Cuidado de Salud Asequible de Obama busca mejorar el acceso al cuidado de salud para las personas que anteriormente no contaban con seguro médico, y declara que “no se permite la discriminación de cualquier estadounidense debido a una condición preexistente”. El plan de reforma federal del sistema de salud requiere que casi todas las personas compren un seguro médico y grava con un impuesto por no cumplir con este requisito.

El sitio web de la Casa Blanca manifiesta el compromiso de Obama de una política de inmigración que incluya lo siguiente: “responsabilidad de parte del gobierno federal para asegurar nuestras fronteras; responsabilidad de parte de las empresas que infringen la ley al menoscabar a los trabajadores estadounidenses e importar a los trabajadores indocumentados; fortalecimiento de nuestra competitividad económica al crear un sistema de inmigración legal que refleje nuestros valores y nuestras diversas necesidades; y responsabilidad de parte de las personas que viven en los Estados Unidos de manera ilegal”.

El Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los EE.UU. de la Administración Obama emitió una norma de acción diferida respecto de “determinados jóvenes que llegaron a los Estados Unidos cuando eran niños, que no presentan un riesgo respecto de la seguridad nacional o la seguridad pública, y reúnen varios criterios clave”.

**EX GOBERNADOR ROMNEY**

Como gobernador, Romney firmó una ley estatal que creaba la cobertura de cuidado de salud para todos los ciudadanos de Massachusetts. Como presidente, Romney dijo que emitirá “dispensas... a los cincuenta estados” respecto de la Ley de Cuidado de Salud Asequible y luego “trabajar” con el Congreso para revocar la legislación en su totalidad lo más rápidamente posible”. Romney propone buscar “políticas que le den a cada estado el poder de crear una reforma del cuidado de la salud que sea la mejor para sus propios ciudadanos”. De conformidad con el sitio web de Romney, él cree que este libre mercado puede “prohibir la discriminación contra individuos con condiciones ya existentes que mantienen cobertura continua”.

Según el sitio web de la campaña de Romney, su plan respecto de la inmigración incluye: “atraer a nuevo talento; hacer que el sistema de visas para trabajadores temporales funcione; asegurar la frontera, desalojar la inmigración ilegal y hacer cumplir la ley; eliminar los trámites burocráticos que están manteniendo a las familias inmediatas separadas”. Su plan también daría a “los jóvenes inmigrantes ilegales que fueron traídos a los Estados Unidos de niños... la oportunidad de hacerse residentes permanentes y eventualmente ciudadanos, sirviendo honorablemente a las fuerzas armadas de los Estados Unidos” y comprende “resolver la situación de los 11 millones de inmigrantes ilegales en los Estados Unidos en una manera civil y resoluta que respete el estado de derecho”.

En respuesta a la norma de acción diferida de la Administración Obama, Romney manifestó: “En lo que respecta a estos niños que fueron traídos por sus padres sin tener ellos la culpa, debe existir una solución a largo plazo de modo que sepan cuál es su estatus”.

**SEGUROS INTERNACIONALES**

Según el sitio web de su campaña, la estrategia de Romney “será poner fin a la búsqueda de un arma nuclear por parte de Irán, eliminar la amenaza del terrorismo nuclear iraní en contra de los Estados Unidos y nuestros aliados y prevenir la proliferación nuclear a lo largo y ancho del Medio Oriente”. Según el sitio web, su estrategia consta de cuatro partes: una opción militar creíble, una quinta ronda de sanciones más fuertes, respaldo a la oposición iraní y un compromiso respecto de la finalización a tiempo de un sistema de defensa de misil capaz.

En mayo del año 2012, Obama manifestó: “Creo que las parejas del mismo sexo deberían poder casarse”. Afirmó que el matrimonio se debería decidir “a nivel estatal, en donde las personas "arriban a diferentes conclusiones en función del género". Obama también dijo que "no se debe prohibir la discriminación de cualquier estadounidense debido a una condición preexistente". El plan de reforma federal del sistema de salud requiere que casi todas las personas compren un seguro médico y grava con un impuesto por no cumplir con este requisito.

En mayo del año 2012, Romney dijo: “No estoy a favor del matrimonio entre personas del mismo sexo y tampoco de las uniones civiles si son idénticas al matrimonio a excepción del nombre. Mi opinión es que los beneficios de una pareja doméstica, los derechos a las visitas en el hospital y otros similares son apropiados, pero los demás no”. Según su sitio web, como presidente él “no solo nombrará a un Fiscal General que defenderá la Ley de Defensa del Matrimonio—una ley bipartidista aprobada por el Congreso y promulgada por el Presidente Clinton—el también impulsará una Enmienda Federal sobre el Matrimonio a la Constitución definiendo el matrimonio como la unión entre un hombre y una mujer”.

**MATEMÁTICA A LOS POBRES**

Un informe de la Administración Obama del año 2011, denominado “Creando Caminos Hacia la Oportunidad” manifestó lo siguiente acerca del Programa Complementario de Ayuda a la Nutrición (SNAP), comúnmente conocido como el programa de cupones para alimentos: “El presidente Obama también mejoró y expandió el programa para garantizar que los 45 millones de personas que participan cada mes continúen teniendo una manera de llevar comida a su mesa. Las inversiones de la Ley de Recuperación en el programa SNAP mantuvieron a 3.9 millones de personas adicional, incluidos 1.7 millones de niños, por encima de la línea de pobreza en el año 2010”.

En un debate en enero del año 2012, Romney dijo lo siguiente acerca de los cupones para alimentos: “Estos programas, todos estos programas federales juntados para ayudar a las personas y asegurarse de que tengamos una red de protección social, se deben reunir y enviar de regreso a los estados, a fin de permitir que los estados, que están más cerca de las necesidades de su gente, diseñen los programas que puedan atender las necesidades de esa gente”. Agregó que los cupones para alimentos sin duda se encontraban “en la lista” de programas. “Dejemos que el dinero regrese a los estados de la manera en que pretende la Constitución y dejemos que los estados cuiden a su gente de la manera que sientan que es mejor”.
Medical care for the poor

St. John Bosco Clinic marks 20 years of serving Miami’s poor and undocumented

BLANCA MORALES
Florida Catholic correspondent

St. John Bosco, which is part of the Florida Association of Free Clinics, resulted from a collaboration between Mercy Hospital and Manolo Reyes, the renowned Miami news broadcaster, and Dr. Pedro Jose “Joe” Greer, Miami’s “doctor to the homeless.” Reyes served as the clinic’s first administrator and Greer as the founding medical director.

Originally located on the grounds of St. John Bosco Parish in Little Havana, where Msgr. Emilio Vallina, then pastor, provided the space, the clinic was founded to aid uninsured individuals in Miami-Dade.

Now, however, the bilingual clinic, which moved to its current location five years ago, serves patients of any background or nationality — whether undocumented or American — as long as they are below poverty level.

The clinic was sponsored by Mercy Hospital until last year, when the hospital was sold. Mercy Foundation, a separate nonprofit fundraising organization, now sponsors the clinic’s services through donations.

“Jesus loves you.”

The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask an attorney to send you free written information about his or her qualifications and experience.
Several archdiocesan churches and a local Catholic high school are continuing the Church’s tradition of sponsoring and promoting fine arts by scheduling concert series beginning this fall. The parishes and concert dates are as follows:

- **Cathedral Arts Series**: St. Mary Rosemary 5725 N.W. 4 Ave., Miami, will kick off its series on Sunday, Nov. 4, 3 p.m., with the Bossa Nova Chorale of Nova Southern University. On Wednesday, March 27, 2013, 8 p.m., the cathedral choir and Schola will perform a Tenebrae concert, allowing listeners to experience the compelling drama of the Passion story. Finally, on Sunday, April 14, 2013, 3 p.m., a “Serenate Musical” of beloved Italian, American, and Spanish melodies will be performed by soprano Dora Cardona, tenor Carlos Manuel Santana, and pianist Rosemary Stone.

- **Epiphany Church**, 8235 S.W. 34th St., Miami, will kick off its series Tuesday, Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m., with the trumpet/organ duo of Brian Neal and Thomas Schuster performing Baroque masters, Eastern chants and Leccuna melodies. On All Souls Day, Friday, Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m., a special Mass will be celebrated with music from Mozart’s “Requiem.” On Wednesday, Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m., the Epiphany choir and orchestra will celebrate the miracle of the Incarnation with a program of carols and classical music. On Friday, Jan. 25, 2013, 7:30 p.m., virtuoso organist Alice Zhang will perform opuses by Bach, Guiliou, Dupre and Liszt in collaboration with violinist Fang Gao. The Aurryn String Quartet from Germany will perform masterpieces by Mozart, Beethoven and Schumann on Wednesday, March 27, 7:30 p.m. And the Epiphany choir and orchestra will conclude the season with selections from Verdi and Wagner operas. All the programs are free. For more information, call 305-667-4911 or go to www.epiphanycatholicchurch.com/music.php.

- **St. Martha-Yamaha Concert Series**, 9301 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, will begin Sunday, Nov. 11, 3 p.m., with recorder superstar Piers Adams and England’s The Red Priest playing Bach, Vivaldi and more. On Saturday, Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m., composer/pianist/Pulitzer Prize-winner William Bolcom and his wife, Joan Morris, will present their stylings of 20th-century classics, holiday songs and Bolcom’s own work. On Sunday, Jan. 27, 2013, 3 p.m., German opera diva Helen Donath and her husband, conductor/pianist/magician Klaus Donath, will give an intimate presentation of the music that has made them famous throughout Europe. On Sunday, March 17, 2013, 3 p.m., the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin will perform as part of their U.S. tour. And on Saturday, April 27, 2013, 7:30 p.m., Cuban-born, award-winning pianist Juana Zayas will perform the works of Schumann, Ginastera, Leccuna and Gershwin’s “Cuban Overture” with concert series artistic director Paul Posnak. General admission is $10 for each concert or $20 for Blue Circle, and all include a post-concert reception with the artists. Tickets may be purchased online at www.saintmarthaxis.com or by calling 1-800-595-4849.

- **Belen Jesuit Cultural Series** will kick off its second season on Saturday, Oct. 27, 8 p.m., with a performance by three-time Grammy-nominated Cuban music group Tiempo Libre. On Tuesday, Dec. 11, 8 p.m., two-time Grammy-nominated Miami-based Seraphic Fire will perform “Silent Night: Candlelight Christmas Concert.” Latin singer Carlos Ponce will perform with the Belen Jesuit jazz band on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2013, at 8 p.m. followed in March by the Steinway & Sons Piano Festival. On March 28, 2013, 7 p.m. and on Saturday, March 9, 8 p.m., Flammento Puro returns, directly from Seville, Spain, for an encore performance with world-renowned dancer Lucia Palicio. All performances take place at Belen’s Roca Theatre, 500 S.W. 127 Ave., Miami, and admission ranges from free to $55 depending on the concert. For information, call 786-621-4177 or visit www.belenjesuit.org.

### CAREER OPPORTUNITY: STAFF WRITER

Cross Catholic Outreach seeks strong creative writer to communicate the ministry’s work among the poor of developing countries to a Catholic market here in the USA. Must be able to write from a strong Catholic perspective, with the purpose of motivating donors to fund projects.

### Education Requirements:

- BA/BS in Journalism or Communications

### Experience Requirements:

- Minimum 2 years professional writing experience
- Experience writing promotional or marketing copy preferred
- Experience writing for the web helpful.

### Computer Skills Required:

- MS Word and MS Excel
- Working knowledge of Adobe InDesign and Photoshop a plus

### Other requirements:

- Ability and willingness to travel internationally.

### Essential Responsibilities:

1. Provide insightful, creative, faith-minded writing on a regular basis in a variety of formats.
2. Write promotional, advertising and fundraising material as required.
3. Write weekly blogs, website material and social media material as required.
4. Write letters, scripts, speeches and editorials for staff members as required.
5. Select photos and other pertinent material to enhance writing. Work with graphic artists to create effective marketing material as required.
6. Meet deadlines for assignments as required.
7. Engage in on-going research on global issues related to Cross, Christianity, poverty, etc. for Cross’ websites.
8. After traveling, write and file Harvested Stories and Trip Notes in the library in a timely matter.
9. Write in accordance with the in-house Cross Style-Guide handbook.
10. Provide support to all departments to ensure that all material reflects cohesive and consistent “voice” of Cross.
11. Proof and edit all written communications.

### Position Summary:

This is a full-time, in-house position based in our South Florida (Pompano Beach) office. Some international travel is required.

Submit your resume to riles@crosscatholic.org

www.CrossCatholic.org
Paying off its $6.4 million debt

MIAMI | Imagine getting a $6.4 million gift for your birthday.

That is just what happened to St. John Bosco Parish on its 50th anniversary, when Archbishop Thomas Wenski decided to pay off the parish debt.

“That was a big surprise,” said Father Juan Carlos Paguaga, pastor, recalling the moment at the beginning of September when he opened a letter from the archbishop. “An other piece of paper from the archbishop,” he said to himself, “thinking it would mean more work.”

But no — the letter stated that due to the “good performance of the Archdiocese of Miami investment portfolio” and the generosity of donors to the ABCD campaign, the archbishop had decided “to pay in full the bank debt still owed” by the parish, a total which combined with other debts to the archdiocese amounted to $6.4 million. “I thought it couldn’t be true,” said Father Paguaga, who showed the letter to his secretary to see if she understood the same thing.

Then he called Sister Elizabeth Worley, archdiocesan chancellor for administration, and asked, “Is this for real?”

Yes, she responded, and “you should be grateful to God for all the love the archbishop has for the people.”

The feeling is mutual, and those people, humble and hard-working, faithful and determined, were able to thank him in person when the archbishop came to Little Havana Oct. 11 to celebrate the Mass marking the 50th anniversary of St. John Bosco Parish. Nearly 1,000 parishioners, both current and former, turned out to celebrate the anniversary of the parish in Little Havana. (ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)

The archdiocese’s gift to St. John Bosco Parish:

“Thank God for this corner of Miami,” said Ernesto Frias, referring to the church whose golden dome rises above the neighborhood. Shortly after Father Paguaga became pastor, the old garage building was demolished, a victim of age, roof leaks, tornado failures and Hurricane Wilma.

“We paid what we could” of the debt while trying to keep current with monthly expenses, added Elvira Frias.

Although they have grown old and are now members of other parishes, many of the first parishioners continue to contribute what they can to keep the parish afloat, said her husband Ernesto.

Some returned for the 50th anniversary celebration, among them 91-year-old Francisco Delgado, one of 19 people who attended the first Mass in 1962. “No else is left,” he said.

Nearly 500 people — both former and current parishioners — also attended the Oct. 13 gala marking the parish’s 50 years — a dinner dance that Father Paguaga insisted would not turn into a high-priced fundraiser, so that everyone who wanted to participate could “come and celebrate.”

“The parish remains very much alive and continually rejuvenated,” said Father Paguaga, referring to the many ministries that are active in the church. The Civic-Patriotic School is now called the Learning Center but continues to serve the same function — caring for and educating children after school until their parents get out of work. Catechism classes are offered Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays in order to accommodate the 500 or so children enrolled. The parish also has a youth group, a charismatic group, an Emmaus group and the Knights and Ladies of the Blessed Sacrament, who fill the church each Thursday evening for Mass, a procession and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

This is a mission because here we serve everyone,” said Ernesto Frias, who remembers that he and his wife both shed tears when they learned the parish’s debt had been paid off.

“Thank God for this corner of Flagger and 13th,” said Archbishop Wenski at the start of the 50th anniversary Mass — a corner where the biblical citation that encircles the mural of Jesus atop the church’s main altar is turned into a daily reality: “Come to me, all who are tired and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

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16 YOUR MIAMI COMMUNITY

Florida Catholic October 2012
El Arzobispo Thomas Wenski predica la homilía durante la misa por el 50 aniversario de St. John Bosco.

Cristóbal Mendoza, presidente del Comité de Nicaragüenses Pobres en el Exilio, ahora numera 100,000 en la ciudad de Miami, 40,000 de ellos en la Pequeña Habana.


"Aquí le han llamado la catedral del exilio. Por aquí hemos pasado de todas las guerras, de la guerra civil, de los sandinistas en Nicaragua. Y de la guerra entre los "contras" y los "pros", se la da servicio a todo el mundo", dijo su esposa de Ernesto.

"Aquí nos reuníamos en martes para discutir el progreso de la guerra entre los "contras" y los sandinistas en Nicaragua. Y de ahí también, a las 3 de la mañana un día en 1983, salieron 100 niños y 30 madres nicaragüenses rumbo a Washington, D.C., para pedirle al gobierno norteamericano que les diera permiso de trabajo a los refugiados del país centroamericano que estaban en los Estados Unidos."

El Padre Vallina nos despidió, celebró una misa y nos dio la bendición. El Padre Vallina nos despidió, celebró una misa y nos dio la bendición.

Parroquianos de St. John Bosco aplauden al Arzobispo Thomas Wenski, mostrando su gratitud por la liquidación de la deuda parroquial. Más de 1,000 personas asistieron a la misa celebrando el 50 aniversario de la parroquia en la Pequeña Habana, un "lugar sagrado" para refugiados tanto de Cuba como de Nicaragua y otros países de Latinoamérica. (PHOTOS BY ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO | FC)
COMMUNITY EVENTS


South Dade harvest festival, Saturday, Oct. 27, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Catholic Charities’ South Dade Child Development Center, 28520 S.W. 148 Ave., Leisure City. $2/adult; free for children. www.cadc.md/pagecontent/ upcomingevents.


Craft show, Sunday, Nov. 4, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., All Saints, 1000 W. Oakland Park Blvd., Sunrise. Sponsored by the parish’s Council of Catholic Women. 305-754-6024.

Flea markets, Saturday, Nov. 10, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Blessed John XXIII, 16800 Miramar Parkway, Miramar, 954-392-5062, and St. Stephen, 2000 S. State Road 7, Miramar. 954-987-1110.

“Keep the Lights On” dinner and silent auction, Wednesday, Nov. 14, 5-9 p.m., St. Agnes Parish center, 100 Harbor Drive, Key Biscayne. Benefits St. Hugh’s New Life Family Center, a unique interfaith program for homeless families operated by three Catholic Charities with support from the Episcopal parishes and Jewish Federation. Tickets: $50, see www.commmongroundtorvo.com/cadm2012keephelightdinners.html.

HIV/AIDS awareness, Saturday, Nov. 24, 7:30 p.m., St. Bartholomew, 805 Miramar Parkway, Miramar. Information in Creole/English about HIV/AIDS and other diseases affecting the Haitian and parish communities, followed by music/dance. $25 donation. 954-662-9652, letang@comcast.net.

FAITH EDUCATION

Respect life workshop, Saturday, Nov. 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., St. Agnes, 100 Harbor Drive, Key Biscayne. Learn what the Church teaches on critical life issues. 954-158-292.

Father Robert Barron’s “Catholicism,” Tuesdays through Dec. 18, 8:30-10 a.m.; Thursdays through Dec. 20, 7-8:30 p.m., Minor Basilica of St. Mary Star of the Sea, 1010 Windsor Lane, Key West. 305-294-1018, adultfaithths@gmail.com.

“Town and Gown” lecture, Monday, Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m., St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, 1701 S. Military Trail, Boynton Beach. Professor Sixto Garcia will present “Christ, Grace and the Law in Franciscan Vitoria’s Doctrine of the American Conquest.” Free. 561-732-4424, ext. 151, or www.swp.edu.

Spirituality in the contemporary Church, Wednesday, Oct. 24, 7-9 p.m., FIU Main campus-SIPA 125, 11200 S.W. Eighth St., Miami. Featured speaker: Archbishop Thomas Wenski. Sponsored by FIU’s School of International and Public Affairs, Department of Religion Studies and TAK Honor Society. Free. spirituality@fiu.edu.


Funeral director: Eric Mas-Riveros

MAMMOTH COMMUNICATIONS CO.

Schools


“Treasures of the Faith,” Thursdays, 7-9 p.m., St. Agatha, 1111 W. 17th Ave., Miami. Learn more about God, prayer, spirituality, the Bible, the saints, with reflections on Scripture. 410-08. Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Miami. Information: 305-491-2900, ext. 108.


SCHOOLS

Open houses:


First Communion with Aunmil Choe, 8711 S.W. 112th Ave., Miami. Information: 305-931-4642.

SADDLEBRED MIDDLE SCHOOL

Open house: Monday, Oct. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Saddlebred Middle School, 5015 S.W. 33rd Ave., Miami. Information: 305-931-4643.

SADDLEBRED HIGH SCHOOL


SADDLEBRED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Open house: Tuesday, Oct. 23, 6-7 p.m., Saddlebred Junior High School, 5015 S.W. 33rd Ave., Miami. Information: 305-931-4643.

SADDLEBRED MIDDLE SCHOOL

Open house: Thursday, Oct. 25, 6-7 p.m., Saddlebred Middle School, 5015 S.W. 33rd Ave., Miami. Information: 305-931-4643.

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MIA MI | You might call them the “guardian angels” of the archdiocese’s children.

At the very least, they make sure that employees, parents and volunteers are well-versed in the awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse, in order to keep children safe in the Church.

The volunteers, known as Virtus facilitators, were honored Oct. 6 during a Mass of appreciation celebrated by Archbishop Thomas Wenski at St. Mary Cathedral. “Most of you who are here at this Mass work as volunteers in your parishes to provide Virtus trainings for all those who, through their work in our parishes or our schools, are in contact with children and/or vulnerable adults,” said Archbishop Wenski during the homily. “I, as archbishop of Miami, am grateful for what you do so well and with such dedication to assure a safe environment for our children when they come to one of our parishes or schools.

Virtus is a training program that helps parents, teachers and anyone who works with children to recognize signs of inappropriate behavior and to implement five steps to protect children. The training is required of all employees, as well as clergy, religious, or volunteers working or serving in any capacity in a parish, school or entity of the Archdiocese of Miami.

The training sessions — along with background checks of employees and volunteers — are part of the commitment made by the U.S. bishops to keep children safe, as stated in the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which the bishops approved in June 2002. Virtus is the training program selected for use in the Archdiocese of Miami.

“The first half of the program teaches awareness of the problem. It teaches you not only the nature of child sexual abuse but of predators, and it is very intense because you hear from the predators themselves,” said Jan Rayburn, Safe Environment coordinator for the archdiocese. “The second part of it is the prevention aspect. It emphasizes to everyone that this is absolutely a preventable crime. It can be prevented and we give them five steps to help them prevent this from happening.”

Facilitators go through 12 hours of training before being able to lead Virtus sessions. They dedicate a lot of time not only giving training sessions, but also maintaining their own training up to date and preparing to lead the sessions, which can last up to three hours in English and often between four and five hours in Spanish.

“We do this to create awareness and to be attentive to the children we are protecting,” said Francisco Anduiza, parishioner and facilitator at Good Shepherd Parish in Miami. “At the end of each class a lot of the participants come to us and tell us how much they’ve truly learned, especially about awareness.”

“One thing that helps parents and volunteers is a book that takes them on a step-by-step tour of what they learned, especially about awareness and recognizing signs of inappropriate behavior and what to do about it,” said Jan Rayburn. “And we also have access to everything online.”

“Virtus is a training program for our children when they come to one of our parishes or schools.”

The Archdiocese of Miami has more than 100 facilitators, and Virtus trainings have been offered for the last 10 years, culminating in nearly 1,700 sessions and 100,000 people trained. The archdiocese has more than 100 facilitators, and about 50 of them took part in the Mass. Each of the facilitators was given a crystal award as a token of appreciation, and one facilitator, Mara Goldin from St. Jerome Parish in Fort Lauderdale, received a guardian angel medal with an inscription of gratitude from the archbishop.

The Archdiocese of Miami ranks 18th nationwide for number of Virtus sessions held (out of 121 Catholic dioceses that use Virtus), 12th nationwide for number of adults trained in Virtus, and eighth nationwide for number of facilitators trained to teach Virtus.

“This Mass of appreciation was so important for us to arrange,” said Rayburn. “We wanted to do this for sometime but were looking for the right moment. It was Archbishop Wenski who said this week would be perfect because Tuesday was the feast of the Guardian Angels — and these people are guardian angels in our archdiocese.”

Virtus sessions are continually added to the online archdiocesan calendar of events. To register to attend a session visit www.virtusonline.org, or to read more about the Safe Environment Policy of the Archdiocese of Miami, visit www.miamiarch.org/virtus.
40 Days to end abortion

Broward vigil exhorts faithful to prayer, fasting, peaceful activism through Nov. 4

ANNE DIBERNARDO
Florida Catholic correspondent

FORT LAUDERDALE | “If I had seen (people holding pro-life) signs out there when I was getting an abortion, I would have taken a brochure,” said Tewannah Aman, 40 Days for Life outreach co-coordinator, during her testimony at the 40 Days for Life kickoff rally held Sept. 24 at the Holy Cross Hospital Conference Center auditorium in Fort Lauderdale. Aman’s tearful testimony is just one of the many testimonies mobilizing both men and women to get involved in the peaceful campaign to end abortion.

When Aman was 18, she caved in to the pressure of those who told her that abortion was the only option. She said that if she had been given a chance to pick up a pro-life brochure detailing the alternatives, things would have probably turned out differently for her.

“There was no one telling me not to do it and that there was another side. I was confused and didn’t know about the ramifications,” she said. “God sent me here to be a voice. God is good — I am a testimony. I suffered and don’t want others to do the same. God can heal and restore,” she added.

At first, Aman struggled with the invitation to get involved with 40 Days for Life as she mentally scrolled through the overwhelming litany of chores and commitments she already had. But then she realized, “How could I not get involved?”

The 40 Days for Life campaign unites the faithful in a 40-day vigil of prayer, fasting, and peaceful activism, usually in front of abortion facilities. The multidenominational nationwide initiative seeks to restore a culture of life and bring an end to abortion.

“40 Days for Life is a local event with a national footprint,” said Karen Guinhta, the prayer vigil’s communications co-coordinator.

40 Days for Life is held two times a year, in the spring and in the fall. Earlier this year, South Florida kicked off its first 40 Days for Life prayer vigil on Ash Wednesday in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. However, this fall, only one campaign is being held: in Broward County at All Women’s Center, located at 2100 E. Commercial Blvd.

The vigil began on Sept. 25 and will conclude Nov. 4. It will run each day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Support is still needed to fill the many available spaces, especially during the late morning and early afternoon. All Women’s Center was selected as ground zero for this event because it is one of the most aggressive abortion facilities in Broward County. In Broward alone, more than 12,000 abortions are performed every year — that is 33 a day, more than the average size of a Broward County classroom.

This fall, 40 Days for Life prayer vigils are being held in 314 cities located in 49 states and Washington, D.C., seven Canadian provinces, and four overseas nations.

Between 2004, when the vigils began, and 2012, more than 535,000 people of faith have joined together to pray and fast for an end to abortion. More than 190,000 people have taken to the streets, forming peaceful prayer vigils outside Planned Parenthood centers and other abortion facilities, and at least 5,928 children have been saved from abortion.

The Broward vigil’s prayer coordinator, the Rev. Jim McGarvey, a Sunrise-based minister with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, emphasized that “the advocates of abortion are not our enemy.” He called them “casualties of Satan’s deception and schemes.” He implored everyone to pray for repentance, pointing out that 43 percent of Protestants and 27 percent of Catholics are pro-abortion. He also cited the many Biblical illustrations of how God used a period of 40 days throughout time to bring about major transformations.

“We are equipped with God’s power for this battle,” Rev. McGarvey said, emphasizing that abortion is a Gospel issue. “The battle will be either won or lost depending on the Church’s response.”

Vigil coordinator Andi Guzman invited people to sign up and invite friends to fast or pray from home. “We need help while we’re standing out there,” Guzman said.

There are four ways to support 40 Days for Life: prayer volunteers, vigil participation, community outreach and leadership. To find out more, visit www.40daysforlife.com/fortlauderdale or contact 40 Days for Life Catholic co-coordinator Colleen Riley at 954-465-3471 or clife14@bellsouth.net.

ARICA CABRAL, left, from St. Timothy Parish is one of hundreds of faithful who attended the annual Life Chain Oct. 7 on U.S. 1 in Coral Gables to pray for life. (ANGELIQUE RUHI-LOPEZ/FC)