



# The Mustard Seed

Catholic Center 1000 Pinebrook Road Venice FL 34285

*Pastoral Bulletin**Vol. 4, No. 22**November 17, 2006***ANNOUNCEMENTS****Office of the Bishop**

Bishop John J. Nevins announces the following clergy appointments:

**Reverend David Troncoso** appointed Parochial Vicar of Sacred Heart Parish, Bradenton, Florida, effective Nov. 2.

**Reverend Piotr Zugaj** appointed diocesan representative to the American Red Cross Spiritual Care Response Team effective Oct.24, while retaining all other appointments.

**Presbyteral Council**

**Update on Bishop Nevins' Birthday Celebration.** The members of the Birthday Celebration Committee, Father George Ratzmann, Father Ed Pick, Father Gerry Finegan, Father Jerry Carosella, Mary Campo, Sister Carmella Decosty, Father Don Henry and Joe Lucero, met and started the planning stage for the actual celebration for Jan.17, 2007. Since so many priests and men and women religious will be traveling a distance, the committee decided to begin the prayer service at 4 p.m. rather than 5 p.m. More details and an invitation will be forthcoming.

**Office of the Chancellor**

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Bishop W. Thomas Larkin** and peace and consolation for his family. Bishop Larkin, second Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, died at his home Saturday, Nov. 4 following a long illness. A brief biography, newspaper tributes and remembrances of his 59 years of priesthood may be found on the St. Petersburg website: [www.dioceseofstpete.org](http://www.dioceseofstpete.org).

**Reverend David Banks**, 59, of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, died suddenly Thursday morning, Nov. 9. Father Banks was Pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Homosassa, Florida for the past ten years. Funeral Mass was celebrated by Bishop Robert Lynch on Thursday, Nov. 16.

**Mrs. Dolores Senk**, mother of **Reverend Christopher Senk**, Pastor of Saint Isabel Parish, Sanibel, died Nov. 13. The Funeral Mass was celebrated on Thursday, Nov. 16, at 11 a.m. at St. Isabel Church. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Mrs. Senk and consolation for her family.

Please pray for **Reverend Charles Mallen, C.Ss.R.**, Director of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat and Spirituality Center, who is at home recovering from a minor illness.

**Reverend Robert G. Tierney**, Parochial Vicar of St. Joseph Parish, Bradenton, is ill with leukemia. Please keep him in prayer.

**Annual Retirement Fund for Religious** - Please insert the attached letter by Bishop Nevins in your Dec. 2/3 bulletin.

**Office of the Vicar for Religious**

It is projected that by the year 2023 the retirement funds for religious will be wiped out and religious orders will be facing more than \$20 million in unfunded liabilities. This projection was reported to the bishops at their June meeting and prompted them to extend the time of the Annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection.

Until 1972, religious were excluded from Social Security because their earnings belonged to their respective order and not to them individually. After Congress past the law enabling them to enroll, religious orders sold off property to raise the fee to enroll their members, thus further reducing their assets.

But since the income basis for their enrollment was low and the formula for calculating benefits is based on dollar amounts contributed and number of years of contribution to S.S., the benefits received when they become eligible for S.S. is well below the average. ( Most women religious receive about \$250 per month.) The national average is about \$1,000 per month.

With the tremendous inflation in health care, the problem is enormous. Religious orders are using a variety of strategies to deal with retirement funding needs, and the yearly collection helps enormously to meet the challenge.



### Office of Worship and Ministries

**Christmas Eve Masses** - Christmas falls on Monday this year, thus Christmas Eve is on Sunday. There should be a distinction between the 4th Sunday of Advent Masses done on Sunday morning and the Christmas Eve Masses beginning no earlier than 4 p.m. Sunday evening. It may be helpful to remind your assembly that going to one Mass on Sunday does not satisfy the obligation for the 4th week of Advent and for Christmas.

Please note that **Jan. 1, 2007** is not a Holy Day of Obligation this year since it falls on a Monday.

The marriage program "**To Trust Again**" is available for couples contemplating marriage in the Catholic Church if one or both of the parties has experienced a prior marriage. However, the prior marriage needs to be investigated first. Only if the prior marriage is declared invalid will one or both parties be allowed to marry in the Catholic Church. It is important that all priests and deacons preparing couples for marriage have them attend the marriage preparation sessions. There is a wealth of information offered to help prepare them. The program will be held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Osprey on January 27, 2007. If you need additional information please call Betty K. at 941-484-9543.

The **Liturgical Newsletter** for the Advent/Christmas Season was sent to all pastors. The newsletter can also be found on the diocesan Web site:

[http://www.dioceseofvenice.org/pdffiles/pdf\\_worship/liturgynewsletter2006.pdf](http://www.dioceseofvenice.org/pdffiles/pdf_worship/liturgynewsletter2006.pdf)



### Respect Life Department

The December 2006 edition of the **Word of Life** series provided by the USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities is available on the Internet at: <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/December2006WOL.pdf>. WOL features Intercessions for Life and Bulletin Briefs. The Spanish version is at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/December2006WOLSP.pdf>.

People who have experienced the **death of a child** have a particularly difficult time around Christmas. A Mass of Remembrance can help them deal with their grief. The Feast of Holy Innocents on Dec. 28 is especially appropriate for a Mass of Remembrance for children. We encourage you to designate one of your regularly scheduled Masses for such a remembrance and have the celebrant preach a bereavement homily. A few copies of the special *Book of the Innocents* published by the USCCB are available with no charge through the Respect Life Department while they are available. The book is particularly appropriate for such a Mass. Please call Marina Kopko at 941-441-1112 if you plan to have a Mass of Remembrance or if you would like a *Book of the Innocents* to use in your parish.

**National Night of Prayer for Life - Dec. 8** - Friday, Dec. 8 has been designated as the 17th annual National Night of Prayer for Life, the coordinated effort across the United States to pray for God to bring an end to abortion in America. In our time zone, prayer begins at 9 p.m. and continues until 1 a.m. Parishes are encouraged to participate in their own way, even if it is done earlier in the day, as the pastor determines the time most appropriate for his particular congregation. As you work together with your Respect Life Representative, one suggestion is to involve as many parishioners as possible by inviting various parish organizations to be responsible for one hour, i.e., to lead five decades of the Rosary and the other prayers. These organizations could include: Knights of Columbus, Council of Catholic Women, Holy Name Society, Legion of Mary and prayer groups. Please contact your Parish Respect Life Representative or the diocesan Respect Life Department at 941-441-1112 for further information.



### Communications Department

As a way of saying Thank You for your support, the *Florida Catholic* newspaper is offering parishes a **FREE ad in the Christmas Directory**, which will be published Dec. 15. The ad will list parish information and schedules for the Christmas season. Since we serve almost 500 parishes, we are asking parishes to please write to Rosemary Novak at [Rnovak@thefloridacatholic.org](mailto:Rnovak@thefloridacatholic.org) and she will e-mail you the form to fill out for the free Christmas Directory ad. Deadline for submission is Nov. 30. Thank you.

## BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please publish the following in your parish bulletins:

### Department of Communications

**“Music for Everyone” 2006-2007 Concert Series** – St. Thomas More Parish, Sarasota, is hosting a concert series featuring a variety of performances. For tickets, call 941-923-1691. No tickets will be sold at the door.

- The fourth concert, The Christmas Concert, will feature the choirs of St. Thomas More, directed and accompanied by Alex Dilan. Among Sarasota’s most beautiful choral groups, the choirs are well-known for their a capella and gospel renditions as well as traditional church music. A sing-a-long of favorite carols will be one of the highlights of the evening. Cantors Dora Cardona and Sara Jeffrey will solo as well. Performance is Sunday, Dec. 3, 7 p.m.

The Dreams Are Free School at Bishop Nevins Academy is pleased to present **Rick Lavoie** on Friday, **Dec. 1**. Lavoie is a nationally recognized expert on learning disabilities in children, and will lead a day-long conference open to the public. **“Information and Inspiration for Parents and Teachers of Children with Learning Disabilities”** will offer insights into the social issues children face, the challenges of developing social skills and positive peer relationships. The cost is \$65 per person and group rates are available by contacting Family Living Magazine, 941-922-5437. For more information, visit the website [www.parentingconference.com](http://www.parentingconference.com).

### Please publish weekends of Dec. 16-17 and 23-24:

**Christmas Mass on television** – Bishop John J. Nevins will celebrate the Mass on Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25 at 9 a.m. on WWSB-TV, ABC 7 (Northern Diocese) and 9:30 a.m. on WFTX -TV, FOX 4 (Southern Diocese). Please check local listings for cable channel or view over the air via antenna. Free subscriptions to the Leaflet Missal are available on request to the Diocese of Venice Department of Communications, 1000 Pinebrook Road, Venice FL 34285-6426, 1-941-484-9543, [zoeller@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:zoeller@dioceseofvenice.org). Following the Mass on WWSB only, stay tuned at 9:30 a.m. for a Christmas special brought to you by the Diocese of Venice.

**Mother of God House of Prayer December program schedule:** All programs suggested donation: \$25 and from 9:30 to 2:30 unless otherwise noted. For information call: 239-728-3614

- **Dec. 1 - 3 DIRECTED RETREAT WEEKEND** Suggested donation: \$150  
Time: 7 p.m. Friday to 1 p.m. Sunday
- **Saturday, Dec. 2 THE STRUGGLE OF CHANGE AND THE GIFT OF SURRENDER**
- **Tuesday, Dec. 5 COME AND SEE DAYS OF REFLECTION**
- **Saturday, Dec. 9 ADVENT DAY RETREAT**
- **Thursday, Dec. 14 COME TO THE QUIET PERSONAL RETREAT DAY:**  
\$25 or \$50 with 1/2 hour Spiritual Direction session
- **Saturday, Dec. 16 DAY OF RECOLLECTION**  
**TOPIC: COMING HOME: WHO ARE MY MOTHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS?**
- **Thursday, Dec. 21 AGING WITH GRACE** 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Suggested donation \$15

### Office of Hispanic Ministries

The Solemn Celebration of the **Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe** will be held on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 1:30 PM in Spanish. Mass is followed by a procession. ( Reception immediately afterwards)

**"Mananitas"** (Caroling) to Our Lady of Guadalupe will be held the evening of Dec. 11 at St. Jude Catholic Church beginning at midnight and leading into Dec. 12.

### Respect Life Department

If you're struggling after an abortion, don't struggle alone. For confidential help, call **Project Rachel** in Florida toll-free at 877-908-1212 or email [project.rachel@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:project.rachel@dioceseofvenice.org).

**Did You Know?** In their November 2005 statement, *A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops state: "Our goal is not just to proclaim a position, but to persuade Catholics and others to join us in working to end the use of the death penalty." The entire statement may be found online at: <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/penaltyofdeath.pdf>. For further information, please contact the diocesan Respect Life Department at 1-941-484-9543.

The first **Gabriel Project Hour of Prayer for Life** will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 6, 3 - 4 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel Church, Siesta Key/Sarasota. Eucharistic Adoration will be followed by Benediction and will be observed every First Wednesday of the month. Everyone is invited to pray for the development of Gabriel Project, a one-on-one mentoring program for women in stressful pregnancies. For information, call the Sarasota Gabriel helpline, 941-735-5758.

**Caregivers Seminar:** Handling issues of caring for the elderly or those with chronic illness will be the topic of a presentation by Helen Hunter, ACSW, CMSW on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Columbkille Parish, Ft. Myers, in collaboration with Mother of God House of Prayer, Alva. All are welcome. To register, please call Parish Nurse Chris McBride at 239-489-3973, ext. 231.

#### Northern Deanery

**Death Penalty Speaker** - The death penalty committee of St. Thomas More Parish, Sarasota, is hosting a special speaker and proponent to abolish the death penalty, Sister Margaret Fish, a Sister of St. Joseph, 7 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 29, in the Parish Life Center. All are welcome to join them on this very important issue. For further information, call Juanita Ghiotto at 941-921-2034 or Shane O'Neill at 941-927-6313.



#### Office of Vocations

The Franciscan Sisters of Allegany will be hosting a **Come and See Retreat for women who are considering religious life** and are between the ages of 19 and 45. It will take place December 1-3 at St. Clare Convent in Tampa. For more information or to register please contact Sr. Mary McNally at 813-870-6314, [FSAvoc@aol.com](mailto:FSAvoc@aol.com) or [www.AlleganyFranciscans.org](http://www.AlleganyFranciscans.org).



#### Tribunal

Are you currently in a marriage which the Catholic Church does not recognize as valid? Have you or the person you hope to marry been previously married and divorced? If so, the Tribunal for the Diocese of Venice wants to help in assessing your situation. Please contact your parish for additional information or contact the Tribunal directly at 941-484-9543.



#### Peace and Justice Office

The LEAVEN Conference, which is the Bishop's annual Catholic Social Teaching event, is scheduled for Saturday, March 10, 2007. St. Joseph parish in Bradenton will host the conference. Bishop Dewane will be the keynote speaker and will celebrate Mass. The conference will feature several workshops addressing current social issues, helping participants become familiar with Catholic Social Teaching and become more effective Christians in social justice action. Display tables from Catholic organizations, parishes, and publishing companies with materials on peace and social justice, will also be available. For additional information, please contact the Diocesan Peace and Justice Office by phone 941-484-9543 or e-mail [peace&justice@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:peace&justice@dioceseofvenice.org).



#### Office of Stewardship and Development

**Tax-free Charitable IRA:** A new law, enacted for 2006 and 2007, allows you to transfer up to \$100,000 from your individual retirement account to charity. You must be 70 ½ years old. If married, each spouse can transfer up to \$100,000 from his or her IRA. ***Use this opportunity to make an outright gift to your parish, or create an endowment in your family name with the Catholic Community Foundation*** to benefit your parish. For more information call Mary Campo, Director of Development, 941-441-1117, or stop by your parish office.



#### Office of the Vicar for Religious

(For the weekend of Dec. 2/3)

One Catholic family reports that, altogether, its members received 177 years of education from women and men religious. The family calculated that the cost of the education that laid the foundation for much lifelong professional success averaged \$410 a year. Today, the cost of skilled nursing care for elderly religious averages more than \$48,500 a year, a pretty steep price for men and women who ministered for people and did not count the cost. Please respond generously to the Retirement Fund for Religious appeal Dec. 9/10.

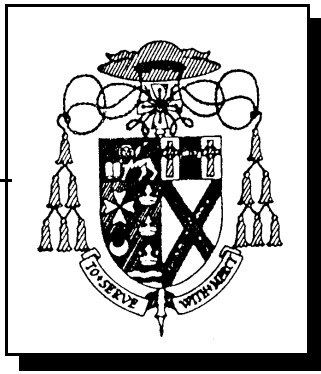


#### Catholic Charities

**The 5th Annual Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal** is asking for your support to provide services to people in need in our southwest Florida communities. Catholic Charities serves all who seek help regardless of race, religion or national origin. Everyday Catholic Charities assists people who are facing problems they are unable to solve alone. Your contribution enables Catholic Charities to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and give the aid their clients require. Send your donation to the Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal to share in these works of mercy. Of every dollar donated, Catholic Charities uses 93 cents for direct services. Please send donations to Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal, P.O. Box 1805, Venice, FL 34284-1805 (941-484-9543).

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***The Mustard Seed*** is an official publication of the Diocese of Venice, published bi-weekly on Fridays by the Department of Communications. Notices of general interest will be considered for publication. Send copy to: Department of Communications, 1000 Pinebrook Road, Venice FL 34285 OR via e-mail (preferred method) to: [newsletter@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:newsletter@dioceseofvenice.org) no later than **seven days prior** to publication date. The pastoral bulletin is available at [www.dioceseofvenice.org/specialissues/parishbulletin.cfm](http://www.dioceseofvenice.org/specialissues/parishbulletin.cfm)



**DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA**  
**Office of the Bishop**

November, 2006

Dear Pastor/Administrator:

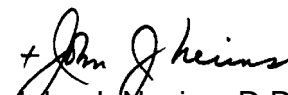
More than 37,000 of our nation's men and women religious are past age 70, and the total cost of their support exceeded \$925 million in 2005. Because the assets of most religious institutes are not adequate for their retirement needs, parishes are asked to support the **Annual Retirement Fund for Religious**.

This annual collection greatly assists religious institutes in addressing critical elder care issues. In the past, the appeal has evoked unsurpassed generosity among Catholics who have donated nearly than \$500 million, but it does not meet the actual cost of elder care which *each year* exceeds that amount and continues to escalate.

Many of our men and women religious continue to minister well into their 70s and 80s to help alleviate this situation. These religious brothers and sisters, who have educated many of us and who have asked little in return through the years, need us now and I encourage you to respond with generosity. The accompanying letter, addressed to your parishioners, is to be included in your parish bulletin of December 2/3, the weekend preceding the collection.

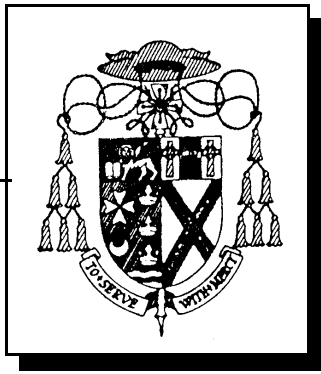
May Almighty God grant you every grace and blessing.

Sincerely in Our Lord,

  
John J. Nevins, D.D.

Bishop of Venice in Florida

NOTE: The collection is to be taken up the weekend of December 9/10 and the proceeds sent to the Finance Department of the Diocese no later than January 15, 2007.



***DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA***  
***Office of the Bishop***

December, 2006

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

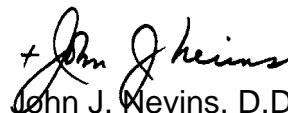
Your generosity in responding to the Annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection in past years has exceeded all expectations. Even with this unsurpassed generosity, the annual cost of elder care continues to escalate. More than 37,000 of our nation's men and women religious are past age 70, and the total cost of their support exceeded \$925 million in 2005.

Religious institutes continue to be challenged to meet escalating health care costs of medicines, therapies and skilled nursing care. With the wage earning capacity waning and fewer vocations to take the place of wage earners, the situation is critical. Many religious institutes have divested themselves of property and spent down the resources they had.

**The Annual Retirement Fund for Religious** contributes mightily to the challenges faced by these institutes of men and women religious. More than 95% of every dollar donated is assigned directly to these retirement needs.

Thank you for contributing generously when the Annual Retirement Fund for Religious is taken up in your parish the weekend of December 9/10. May Almighty God, who is never outdone in generosity, reward you for your response to this appeal.

Sincerely in Our Lord,

  
+ John J. Nevins, D.D.

Bishop of Venice in Florida