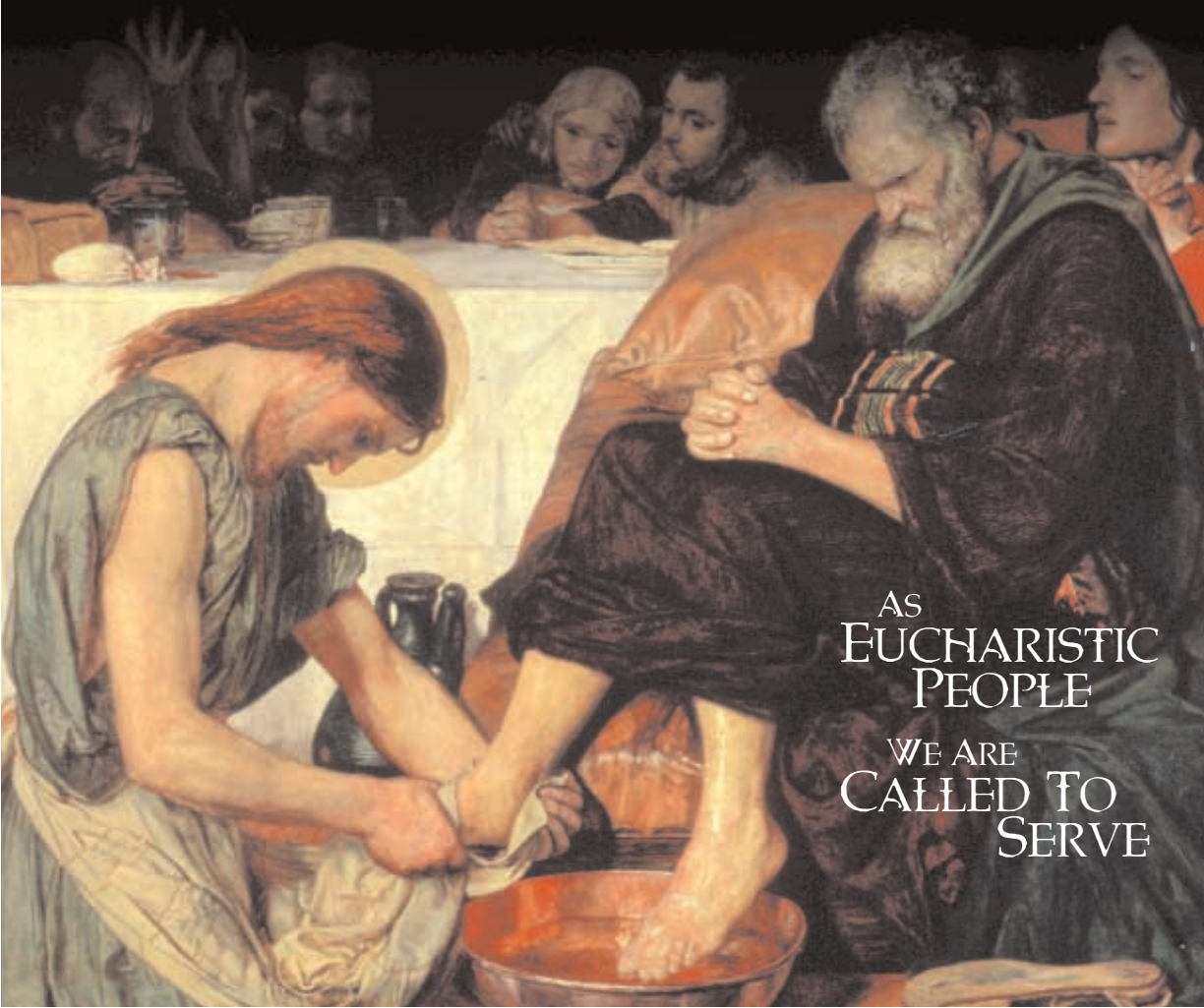


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The St. Augustine CATHOLIC

Volume IX • Number 5 • April/May 2000

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THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION OF THE DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE, INC.

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Member of the Catholic Press Association 

Publisher

Most Reverend John J. Snyder

Editor

Kathleen Bagg-Morgan

Associate Editor

Chelle Delaney

Contributing Writer

Natalie R. Cornell

Editorial Assistant

Jennie Myers

Production

The Dalton Agency

Printer

Allied Printing, Inc.

Diocesan Editorial Board

Kathleen Bagg-Morgan
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To learn more about the diocese, see our homepage at: www.dosaonline.com



Kathleen Bagg-Morgan

As the Jubilee of the year 2000 leads us into the third millennium, so too does *The St. Augustine Catholic*. Our theme for this issue is the Eucharist in preparation for celebrating the diocesan Eucharistic Congress June 10 at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. Background on the Eucharistic Congress is included along with a schedule of the day-long events planned. Please review the schedule and look for posters and brochures in your parish with information on how to register. Deadline is May 25 and you can also register online at: www.dcf.org.

Celebrating the Mass is central to who we are as Catholics and for some attending Mass in their parish community isn't always possible so television Mass has expanded its coverage area to reach more of our homebound parishioners. Here is our new schedule: Fernandina Beach – Fridays at 9:30 a.m. on Media One cable channel 7; Gainesville – Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. on Cox Cablevision channel 8 and Sundays at 11 a.m. on WCJB-TV broadcast channel 20; Jacksonville - Sundays at 5 p.m. on Media One cable channel 7; Palm Coast - Sundays at 9 a.m. on Palm Coast Cablevision channel 8; and in St. Augustine Sundays at 8 p.m. on Time/Warner Cablevision channel 3. A free subscription to the Leaflet Missal is also available for the homebound by calling 262-3200, ext. 108 in

Jacksonville or 1-800-775-4659, ext. 108 outside Jacksonville.

Inserted in the magazine this issue is a pamphlet entitled *Managed Care: Moral Dilemmas and Potential Solutions* written by the Bioethics Commission of the Diocese of St. Augustine. Members of the Commission studied the managed care system of healthcare both in Florida and in the United States and have prepared this overview that answers questions about basic coverage, medical healthcare costs, patient choice, home care, medications, denial of coverage and patient or client selection to name a few. Additional copies can be obtained by calling Bill Tierney at Catholic Charities at (904) 262-3200, ext. 125.

I hope you enjoy this issue and all of us at *The St. Augustine Catholic* wish you a blessed and joyous Easter.

HBM



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EUCHARIST: GIFT AND THANKSGIVING

A message from Bishop John J. Snyder



During this Great Jubilee Year we celebrate and focus on the Eucharist. Bishop John J. Snyder discusses the meaning of Eucharist and how central the Eucharist is to our faith and lives.

Often we only think of receiving the Eucharist. But it isn't a question of just receiving the Eucharist but a question of giving the Eucharist. The reality is that having received Jesus, we are called upon to go out and share his love. It's not something that can be contained within a church or a building; it really begins to live when the individual has received the Lord in communion and goes out and shares the love.

The Eucharist is the wonderful gift of Jesus to each of us and Jesus is the gift of a loving father. So whenever we talk about Eucharist we're talking about gifts, about sharing,

The Eucharist can never be just a personal gift. It is not mine, it is ours. We can even draw that parallel when we pray, it is not my father, it is Our Father.

When we receive a gift the normal reaction is to say "thank you." So the best "thank you" we can give for the gift we have received is to go out and do something for someone else.

We can also look at gift in another way. Each of us has individual gifts or talents — none of us have the exact same gifts. But there is one gift that every one of us has and that's the gift of presence. Being able to be present to another person, really present. Being ready to listen, to be there for a person particularly when they struggle, to be reaching out. That presence is what can make a difference in anyone's life.

It's so vitally important to realize that salvation is a gift, faith is a gift. We don't earn that particular gift or reward. It's just an outpouring of God's love to us and it's up to us to be open to God's love. If we really sense and come to an appreciation of God's love for us, we want to go out and share that love and that is what we call good works.

The word Eucharist really means thanksgiving; and our celebration is a thanksgiving. It's a thanksgiving to God the Father through the gift of his son and it's the returning of that gift, Jesus to his father in the celebration. So everything about Eucharist is gift and thanksgiving.

Eucharist is about living out these words, "Do this in memory of me." Because, as you know, when Jesus was at that Last Supper, as described in John's

Gospel, he got up from the table, put an apron around his waist and he got down and washed the feet of his disciples. Jesus said to them: "I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do." (John 13:15)

What Jesus was really teaching them as he washed their feet was about Eucharist. Not just about the institution of the Eucharist but how to live the Eucharist.

I think the very fact that Jesus took the bread, broke it, and blessed it and then gave it to his disciples was lived out fully when he was broken on the cross and gave his life for us. So there is a sense in the Eucharistic celebration of Jesus continuing to give himself to us.

We also are called to be broken, broken in many different ways in the sense of not being self-centered, not just making ourselves the center of the world, but going out and being willing to give of ourselves in the service of others. Service is the key component of Eucharist.

In appearance, Eucharist always looks like bread, a wafer, and it always looks like wine. So here we have the Lord of Heaven and Earth and the Redeemer of the World and what does he take as symbols? Something as commonplace as a piece of bread and the fruit of the grape. They are nothing out of the ordinary, nothing that would be considered earth shaking. God's precious gift comes to us in such a simple form so that we would not be fearful of approaching to receive Him: Jesus who humbled himself to become one of us and to become human. Our Eucharist today also continues that

mystery of Jesus giving himself to us, humbly, in the most ordinary way.

Another mystery that the Eucharist embraces is the Paschal Mystery, the dying and rising of Jesus. We see that

this gift and mystery for granted. Then we lose the luster, the spark, the energy, of the Eucharist's ability to transform us — and the Eucharist should transform us. Because when you think of God

naked you clothed me. And the disciples' response was, "when Lord, did we do this?"

Jesus' response was that whenever you do this for the least of our brothers or

"THE EUCHARIST CAN NEVER BE JUST A PERSONAL GIFT. IT IS NOT MINE. IT IS OURS."

dying and rising as inseparable. It isn't just the mystery of his death on the cross but that through his dying he gave life.

In that Paschal Mystery there's a lesson for all of us. When we die to self, when we are not self-centered, we are life givers.

But this is an evolving lesson. I think it is still evolving for me. In no way do I think I have exhausted the mystery of God's love and what it's about. We should keep discovering and we should keep rediscovering.


Unfortunately, we can, at times, take

coming into our midst and then sharing himself with us as the bread of life and the food of salvation, I think that has to constantly move us and call us to deeper experiences.

Hopefully, as God's love continues to unfold in my life, I will be growing in an awareness of what the Eucharist really means — that we're touching Jesus.

Think back on the 25th chapter of Matthew. Jesus speaks about when I was hungry, you gave me food, when I was thirsty, you gave me drink, when I was

sisters you do it for me. They didn't know they were doing it for Jesus. So when we we touch a sister or brother with love or concern, it doesn't mean we're really conscious of touching Jesus but the reality of the Gospel is that when we do it, we are really touching Jesus.

So, to become Eucharist means taking the Lord within us, out of the church, into the community, through our actions and attitudes. Living the Eucharist is to experience the joy and blessings of Christ's love. 

MISSION NEWS



Each day, in her diocese in Tanzania, Sister Gratiana travels — sometimes as far as 100 miles — to visit with the close to 200 persons who are suffering with AIDS there. Primosi Mujemula is one person with whom Sister Gratiana visits. "When the pain is very strong," he says, "I pray. Then it does not hurt so much."

Throughout the Missions, Religious Sisters just like Sister Gratiana bring help and hope — offer the healing love of our Lord — to so many: the sick, the abandoned, the orphan, the elderly.

This Lent won't you be with these Sisters in their work, through your prayers and through your gift to the Propagation of the Faith?



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Ministry of Mothers Sharing



By Elizabeth Dorsey-Culkeen

The journey of a lifetime truly begins with a single step for mothers in the Diocese of Saint Augustine. It is within the journey of the "Ministry of Mothers Sharing" or MOMS that women of the diocese have found spiritual growth. In 1986, Sr. Paula Hagan, OSB, and a group of women at St. Timothy's Parish in Mesa, Arizona formed the concept of mothers sharing their ministry with other mothers. From that gathering, MOMS has grown to be active in more than 75 dioceses and retreat centers in the United States, Canada and Ecuador.

Throughout our diocese, mothers of all ages and backgrounds are involved in MOMS groups. The ongoing peer ministry starts with a series of eight structured sessions, including prayer rituals and study. A staff liaison supervises the scheduling of the sessions, the childcare ministry and training of leaders on the core team.

Donna Simons, a member of Christ The King Parish in Jacksonville for 17 years and mother of four, first became involved with MOMS through an invitation from her pastor. New to the Jacksonville area, she was seeking to become more involved in her new parish, and to grow spiritually. She was appointed MOMS Regional Coordinator

a year ago. Simons is confident that "God has a dream for me, and this ministry is it."

A mother of two and parishioner at St. Paul Parish in Jacksonville Beach, Barbara Markowski has been in MOMS since 1996 when she was hoping to connect with her parish. Markowski, the staff liaison at St. Paul's, says she "has realized other women are on the same spiritual and personal journey" as she is.

According to Markowski, "all women have the tendency to nurture their families, children and husbands and not take the time to think of themselves. Through prayer and the program's sessions MOMS teaches how mothers must nurture their own souls and selves." MOMS is a ministry which gives support and guidance to God's center in the family.

MOMS is a "wonderful, safe place that offers a very moving, spiritual experience," says Paula Gonzalez, parish coordinator at St. Luke Parish in Middleburg. "It is a spiritual group that taps into the woman's individual spirituality. It brings God into daily life."


Each MOMS group commands a high degree of confidentiality and, as a result, trusted friendships are formed. Many of the women remain devoted and together become active within their parishes after

completion of the MOMS journey. The women find that although they have been parishioners for many years, a different parish community is now available through newly found friends and networking opportunities.

The feeling of community has been remarkable at St. Paul's in Jacksonville Beach. Women who have completed a MOMS journey have continued their ministry by becoming active in the parish's religious education program, bible school, RCIA, and scripture studies. Typically the women who go through the MOMS journey are younger to middle-aged women, with young children, looking to connect with other mothers. However, coordinators encourage older women to be active to share their wisdom and support. MOMS is designed to encourage prayer, friendship and support between women of all ages.

Lisa McQuagge of Queen of Peace Parish in Gainesville was "a stay-at-home mom seeking to get to know others in her parish" when she received an open invitation to MOMS after Mass. She believes the ministry is "a motherhood connection of our faith enhanced by spirituality." McQuagge is her parish MOMS coordinator and leads the team of women who organize the sessions and promotional events. On May 11, Queen of Peace will hold their second reunion Mass celebrating MOMS graduates.

At St. Luke Parish, Gonzalez encourages MOMS graduates to become prayer sponsors for new members. The prayer sponsors pray for the participant and often send a note or make a small sacrifice in their name. The MOMS participants tell Gonzalez that "knowing someone is praying for them makes a difference." She says, "they can feel the presence of someone praying for them throughout their journey."

As families throughout the country are preparing to celebrate Mother's Day, May 14, we are blessed in the Diocese of St. Augustine to celebrate mothers everyday through the Ministry of Mothers Sharing. 

Elizabeth Dorsey-Culkeen is a member of San Juan del Rio Parish in Jacksonville.

THE CELEBRATION

Understanding Why We Do The Things We Do

By Kathleen Bagg-Morgan

When we come together to celebrate Sunday Mass, we are part of a tradition that is nearly 2000 years old. It is a tradition that is marked by ritual. But how often do we ask ourselves why we celebrate the Mass the way we do?

On June 10 people of the Diocese of Saint Augustine will gather for a Eucharistic Congress as part of the local celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000.

In preparation for that gathering the following is a brief explanation of the Mass that will hopefully not only remind us of the reasons behind the various actions of the Mass, but also deepen our appreciation of the Eucharist and enrich our participation in the eucharistic celebration.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

“The purpose of these rites is to make the assembled people a unified community and to prepare them properly to listen to God’s word and celebrate the Eucharist” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 24*). The introductory rites include the Entrance Song, a Greeting by the priest, the Penitential Rite, the Gloria and an Opening Prayer.

The celebration of the Eucharist opens with an Entrance Song to introduce the priest and ministers to the assembly while also becoming a visual sign of a community gathered in faith. After venerating the altar and greeting the assembly, the priest (as presider) in the Penitential Rite, invites those gathered to reflect on the all-embracing mercy of God. In Matthew 5: 23-25, Christ called for the reconciliation with others before offering sacrifice. Therefore, this rite is concluded with the assembly praying

together for the forgiveness of sins.

The Gloria follows as an ancient hymn of praise, full of joy and life. Its theme is the reconciliation of God and humankind in peace and love. It is not said or sung during Advent or Lent. Its absence from the liturgy during these seasons deepens our preparation and anticipation of the coming of Christ into our lives at Christmas and Easter.

With the words “Let us Pray,” the priest in the Opening Prayer invites the assembly to observe a brief silence for them to realize that they are in God’s presence and to call to mind their own petitions.



LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Liturgy of the Word includes readings from the Bible, selected thematically as appropriate to the Mass and usually consisting of a reading from the Old Testament – First Reading, a psalm in which the congregation responds to the verses – Responsorial Psalm, a reading from one of the apostles in the New Testament – Second Reading, and a reading from a Gospel.

When the Scriptures are read in the church, God himself is speaking to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, is proclaiming the Gospel.

During the Homily the biblical texts of the readings are explained further and the priest shows how God continues

to share himself everyday in the lives of all present. The priest then leads the assembly in the Profession of Faith where the priest and assembly recite together the Nicene Creed. It summarizes the faith community’s search for an ever-deepening understanding of Jesus and his message.

General Intercessions, also known as the Prayer of the Faithful, follow with the assembly functioning as priest by interceding for the needs of all people. This prayer forms a logical conclusion to the Liturgy of the Word.



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the sacrifice and paschal meal that makes the sacrifice of the Cross continuously present in the Church when the priest, representing Christ the Lord, carries out what the Lord did and handed over to his disciples to do in his memory.

As part of the Preparation Rite there is the Gathering of the Gifts followed by the procession and Presentation of the Gifts by families or individuals recalling the ancient custom in which people brought the offerings of bread and wine from their homes.

At the altar the priest then prays over the Gifts. While slightly elevating each of the gifts, a prayer of praise by the priest is followed by an acclamation by the assembly. In mixing the water with wine, the priest asks God to share his

OF THE MASS



divine nature, just as Christ shared in human nature by becoming man. The washing of hands is symbolic of the need for inner purity. In concluding the Preparation Rite, the invitation becomes a petition to God to accept the offering and bless all present who are now united with it.



The Eucharistic Prayer is the high point of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is here that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ, demonstrating God's abiding love. Recalling the words and actions of our Lord at the Last Supper, the priest and the assembly join themselves with Christ to acknowledge the works of God and to offer the sacrifice. As the priest raises the bread and the cup in a

gesture of offering, the Eucharistic Prayer concludes with the final doxology. Here, the priest offers praise to God the Father through Christ, who now gives himself in the form of the Eucharist. The assembly assents by acclaiming, "Amen."



With a spirit of reconciliation, the people of God make final preparation for the eucharistic meal in the Communion Rite by fully expressing their oneness with Christ. It is here that the assembly offers one another the Sign of Peace. Exchanged according to local custom, the Sign of Peace is a natural result of a desire for reconciliation just expressed in the Lord's Prayer. In sharing this sign with one another, the priest and




assembly affirm that the risen Christ is the source of all peace. They also recognize the oneness of being united in his body.

The Breaking of The Bread is an important symbol of the assembly's oneness in the Eucharist. As the bread is broken, the priest reenacts the gesture of Christ at the Last Supper. In so doing, the priest invites the assembly to share in the Eucharist thereby becoming one body in Christ.

Communion is an extravagant gift and in the Communion Procession it calls for an extravagant response. To the proclamation "The body of Christ" we must proclaim "Amen!" In this way our Communion is both a receiving and a giving. Remember: "Be what you see and be what you are. Though many, one in Christ."

THE CONCLUDING RITE

The Concluding Rite of the Mass focuses upon the sending forth of the community to translate into deeds the words and actions of the liturgical celebration. What has been celebrated must now be revealed in the words and deeds of the members of the assembly as they deal with others and the events of their lives. The celebrant's final instruction, in the Blessing, brings all the rites of the Mass into focus: "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord." 



IN MEMORY OF ME...

What Is A Eucharistic Congress?

As the Jubilee of the year 2000 leads us into the third millennium, it induces us to contemplate with new eyes the Incarnation of the Son of God in such a way that we will experience the constant renewing grace that flows from this, both personally and as a community, and go forward in a new life, driven by the breath of the Spirit, toward the Source of Life. We believe in fact that "Christ is your Son before all ages, yet now he is born in time. He has come to lift up all things to himself, to restore unity to creation in the Father's design, and to lead mankind from exile into Your heavenly kingdom," writes Pope John Paul II in his apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente (On the Coming of the Third Millennium)*.

In order to highlight Christ's living and saving presence in the Church and in the world, on the occasion of the Great Jubilee, Pope John Paul II has decided to hold an International Eucharistic Congress in Rome this June. For this

reason, the Holy Year implies making a strong awareness of the Eucharistic mystery, the center of the whole life of the pilgrim Church in time. These are not two separate events since one gets its full meaning in the light of the other. The Eucharist, in fact, is the memorial living presence of Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and always, and the Church gratefully celebrates the bi-millennary memory of his birth.

Here in the Diocese of Saint Augustine, Bishop John J. Snyder has convoked a Eucharistic Congress to take place June 10 at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. The day-long Congress will be complete with the Catholic community gathering together in prayer, catechetical sessions, the celebration of Mass, vespers and benediction. In preparation for the Congress, the diocesan Jubilee Year 2000 Committee has prepared the following questions and answers for reflection. A schedule of events for the Congress is also available on the next page.

What is a Eucharistic Congress?

A Eucharistic Congress is an assembly of parishes of a diocese, region, nation or even the entire world joining with one another to develop a more profound understanding of Eucharist. As a Eucharistic Congress the Church joins in the deepest profession of the Eucharistic mystery and expresses its worship publicly in a bond of unity.

What are the essential components of every Eucharistic Congress?

Each Eucharistic Congress should first have a catechetical aspect, seeking to study and explore the Eucharistic Mystery. Equally important is the encouragement by experience and teaching of the "full, conscious and active participation which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy." Finally, the aspect of mission must be emphasized, by which the Eucharistic celebration lead us "to the various works of charity, mutual help. . . and missionary activity and the various forms of Christian witness."

What activities occur at a Eucharistic Congress?


At the heart of every Eucharistic Congress is the celebration of the Eucharist itself, the source and summit of the entire Christian life. Celebration of the Word of God and conferences explore the various aspects of the Eucharistic Mystery suggested by the theme of the Congress, "In Memory of Me." Opportunities for common prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament support an interiorization of these themes. The Congress gives a public and ritual dimension to the Eucharistic faith.

Several catechetical sessions have been developed for the Congress that are both age appropriate and reflect the multi-cultural nature of our church. Session titles include: *Living the Mystery We Celebrate, Initial and On-Going Catechesis for the Eucharist, The Importance of the Eucharist in the Lives of the Young People, The Eucharist as the Table of Justice, Renewing Sunday Worship, Living as Eucharistic Families and All Are Welcome.*

Who may convoke a Eucharistic Congress?

Pope John Paul II, as Bishop of Rome, has scheduled an International Eucharistic Congress in Rome for June 18-25, 2000. Bishop John J. Snyder has convoked a Eucharistic Congress in the Diocese of Saint Augustine for June 10, 2000. Bishop Paul Tanner convoked the last Eucharistic Congress in our diocese in 1975.

Where can I obtain additional information about the Eucharistic Congress?

Brochures for the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress will be available in all parishes in coming weeks. In addition, information will be available on the diocesan website: www.dosaonline.com/ upcoming events. Or you can call the Eucharistic Congress information line at 262-3200, ext. 331 in Jacksonville. For callers outside the Jacksonville area call 1-800-775-4659, ext. 331. 

Schedule of Events For Eucharistic Congress

University of North Florida Center Jacksonville June 10, 2000

UNF University Center

9:00 a.m. Gathering and Exhibits of diocesan, parish, and related ministries, services

Part I Focus on the Eucharist

10:00 a.m. Introduction and Morning Prayer

11:00 a.m. Catechetical Sessions (registration required)

12:30 p.m. Lunch and View Exhibits (A donation of \$5 for box lunch must be ordered at registration)

Part II Preparation for the Liturgy

2:00 p.m. Mandatum

3:00 p.m. Procession to UNF Arena (bus service will be available)

UNF Arena

Part III Celebration

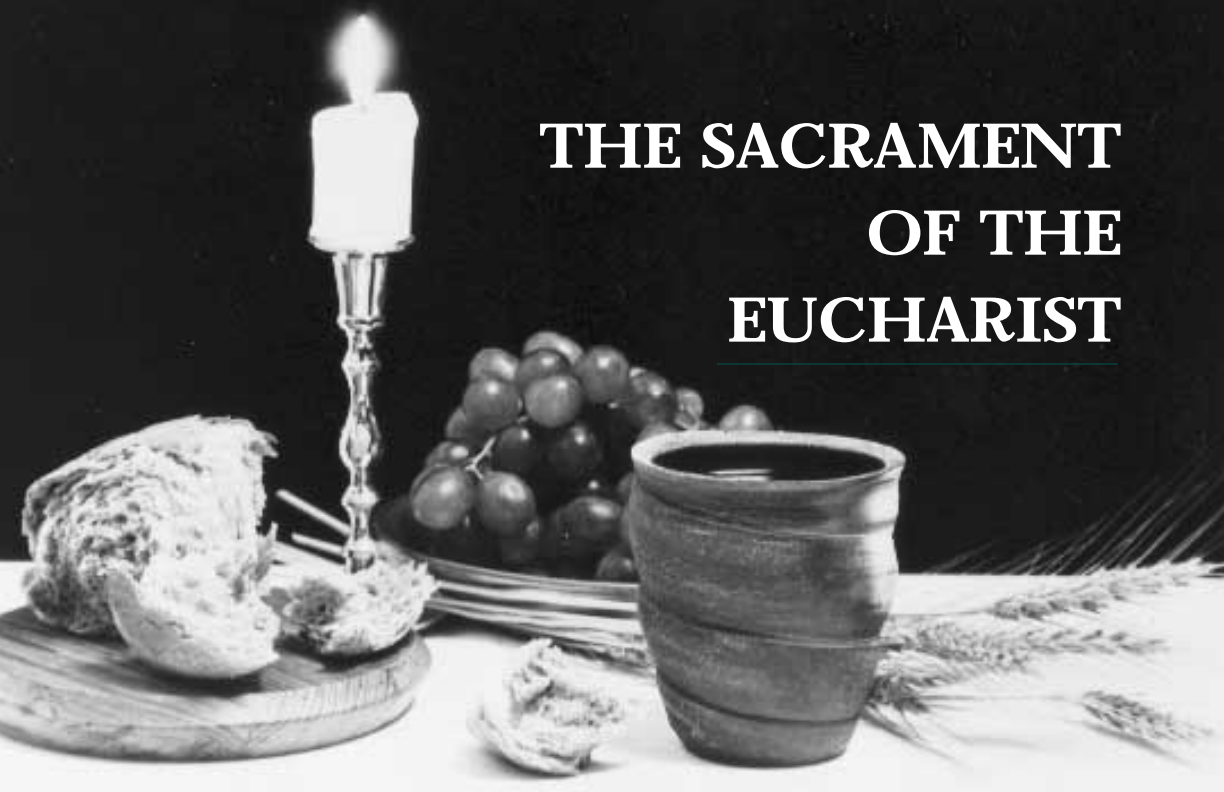
4:00 p.m. Pentecost Vigil Eucharist

Part IV Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

6:30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction

Registration by mail, FAX or online at www.dcf.org by May 25. Child care (ages 2-7) will be available from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Individuals with special needs (handicapped access, visual or hearing impairment) please indicate when registering.



THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

WHAT HAPPENED TO MY DEVOTION?

By Thomas Richstatter, O.F.M.

What happened to Benediction, kneeling for Communion, and silence in church? I have been going to Mass and receiving holy communion for nearly fifty years. As I look back over that half century I see that I no longer practice many of the devotions and signs of reverence for the Eucharist that were so dear to me in my younger days! What happened to my devotion to the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist?

I have spoken about the Eucharist to many parish groups across the country. And as I listen to the questions and comments of people at these talks, I pick up their concern regarding the changes in eucharistic devotion. Many have experienced changes in their own

devotion or witnessed it in others, and they sometimes worry that something important has been lost.

I hope that describing the changes in my Eucharistic devotion will help many other Catholics to understand and appreciate their own eucharistic devotion and see the reason for some of the changes in the devotional practices of their parishes. I'll admit here at the beginning that I am more than a just little scared to talk about my eucharistic devotion. I have been a priest for over 25 years and this is certainly not the first time I have talked or written about the Eucharist. Yet it is always difficult to talk openly about something so intimate and so important to me personally and you personally.

Changes in devotion to the Eucharist affect me, as they affect you, much more deeply than many other changes in my life that may also be the result of changes in understanding and inner conviction.

In order to understand the Sacrament of the Eucharist adequately, I believe that my understanding and my piety must include three images: Good Friday, Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday.

Good Friday: The Holy Sacrifice Of The Mass

Good Friday was the main image that shaped my eucharistic devotion when I was a child. When I entered our parish

church the first thing I saw was a larger-than-life crucifix. Being at Mass was like kneeling at the foot of the cross on Calvary. My silent reverence at Mass reflected the reverence of Mary and John at the death of Jesus.

"Christ becomes really present in the Eucharist so that we may really become his body."

I learned about the Mass and the sacraments from a little book called the *Baltimore Catechism*, which most Catholics my age remember. I remember Question 357: "What is the Mass?" I memorized the answer: "The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Law in which Christ, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an un-bloody manner under the appearance of the bread and wine." Even though I did not understand the full meaning of these words, the mention of "sacrifice," "priest," "offering," "blood" brought to my mind the image of Good Friday and permanently associated the Eucharist with Jesus dying on the cross.

My devotion to the Sacrament was shaped by the image of kneeling at the foot of the cross, gazing at the sacrifice of Jesus, and expressing gratitude for so great a love and sorrow for sins which caused so great a suffering. The image of Good Friday remains an essential element of my understanding of the Eucharist: but while it is essential it is not enough.

Holy Thursday: Eucharist As Sacred Banquet

When I was in grade school, I was one of those "strange" children who went to Holy Communion each morning (and ate breakfast from a little paper bag during first period). If "Good Friday" was the dominant image in my understanding of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the image of Holy Thursday and the Lord's Supper was never absent. I remember as an altar server kneeling for hours (it seemed like hours) and staring at the picture of the Last Supper carved on the front on the altar at St. Anthony's in Wichita. But it was only during the

1950s and 60s when more and more people began to receive Holy Communion during Mass that the image of Holy Thursday gradually began to play a larger role in my understanding of the Eucharist.



During the 70s the parish with which I celebrated began to use a host for the Eucharist that looked and tasted more like real bread. People began to receive Communion in their hands and to drink from the cup. Mass began to be more like a meal. Altars began to look like tables. The prayers of the Mass and the songs we sang spoke openly about eating and drinking, about meals, suppers and banquets. All of these things caused the image of Holy Thursday to be added to the image of Good Friday in helping me understand the sacrament of the Eucharist. To the image of "kneeling at the foot of the cross" I added the image of "sitting with Jesus and the disciples at the Last Supper, listening to his words, sharing the bread and the cup."

Easter Sunday: Union With The Risen Lord

If the addition of the Holy Thursday image to Good Friday enriched my understanding of the Eucharist, the addition of the Easter Sunday image has helped me even more. When St. Paul experienced the Risen Lord at his

conversion, he experienced a Christ who was so identified with us that to persecute the Christian was to persecute Christ.

Not just once, but three times the experience is described in the Acts of the Apostles. In chapter nine we see Saul (not yet "St. Paul") terrorizing the followers of Jesus when suddenly, one day on the road to Damascus, Saul "fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' He said, 'Who are you, Sir?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.'" (Acts 9:4-5)

The experience revealed to Paul that Christ cannot be separated from his members. The Risen Lord is so united to the Christian that what we do to one another, we do to Christ.

This was the very point that was at issue in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, the earliest written account we have of the Last Supper.

Paul reproaches the Corinthians for celebrating the Eucharist without recognizing the Body of Christ. They were trying to remember Christ without remembering his body, which includes the poor and the "unacceptable."

Paul reminds us of an awesome responsibility. Coming forward at Mass to receive Holy Communion is a promise that we will treat each person who receives the bread and drinks the cup as a member of our own body! It is no longer "us and them" but "us." Sharing the meal is a promise that we will treat them, indeed as we would treat all men and women as Christ would treat them, indeed as we would treat Christ himself.

Balancing Good Friday, Holy Thursday And Easter Sunday

Balancing the images of Good Friday, Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday (sacrifice, banquet, unity of creation) is not an easy task. Sometimes I feel like a juggler at the circus trying to keep three objects in the air at once. I am no good at juggling three objects. Yet I think the church is asking us to keep all three of these ideas balanced in our minds. ⇨

Jesus, Church, Eucharist: Sacrament Of The Invisible God

At the Eucharist when we hear the Holy Thursday words "do this in memory of me," we are told to do not only what Jesus did at the Last Supper but also what Jesus did throughout his entire life: to heal, to teach, to comfort, to be an ambassador of reconciliation. (2 Cor 5:16-21)

We, the Body of Christ, are certainly expected to be part of this sacrament. And this stretches my idea of sacrament. I now see that, along with Jesus, we who form the church are instruments of grace; we are the ordinary way God graces today's world. As Jesus is the sacrament of the invisible God, we who are baptized into Christ become the sacrament which is the church, indeed, Vatican II speaks of Jesus' 'body', the church, as the universal sacrament of salvation" (*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, #48).

It is at the liturgy and particularly at the Eucharist when the full reality of Christ becomes visible. This means that not only does the Body and Blood of Christ become present under the appearances of bread and wine. But the Body of Christ, the Church, also becomes visible for all to see. The liturgy is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and real nature of the true church" (Constitution on the liturgy,#2). The Eucharist is not only one of the seven sacraments, it is in a sense the sacrament – for it contains all that we are, all that the church is, all that Jesus is and says of God.

What Has Happened To My Eucharist Devotion?

One way of answering this question is to say that formerly my devotion stopped short; it went only "halfway." My devotion was focused on the first transformation: the transformation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. I had forgotten the warning of St. Paul and did not recognize the second

transformation: the transformation of the Christians into Christ. This second transformation is the purpose of the first: Christ becomes present in the Eucharist so that we may really become his Body. This is precisely what the Eucharistic Prayer III is saying when it pleads, "Grant that we, who are nourished by his body and blood, may be filled with His Holy Spirit, and become one body, one spirit in Christ."



Each time I get up and go to holy communion I give a sign to the community that I am committed to all that the Eucharist stands for – I am committed to "do this" in memory of Jesus – to live as he lived, to live no longer for myself but for his Body.

I can't stop halfway: I can't celebrate the transubstantiation of the bread and wine without celebrating Christ's presence in my brothers and sisters. Some Christians still separate the two. I am reminded of the man who asked me "Father, why do I have to shake hands with all those people before holy communion? I don't know those people; and the ones I know I don't even like."

I remember with nostalgia the magnificence of Solemn High Mass during Forty Hours devotion. I remember the weariness in my little altar boy arms trying to light the dozens of candles on the altars, the smell of the incense, the glitter of the spotlights on the gold threads in the priests' vestments. I remember the monstrance with its jewels which I imagined to be diamonds and rubies and emeralds. The memory is vivid; as a child this was the most glorious

thing I had ever seen: the most beautiful room; the most elegant movement; the richest attire. Where did it all go?

If Forty Hours and Solemn Benediction were high points of the liturgical year then, what is the high point now? The Easter Vigil perhaps? There we experience nervous catechumens sitting around a fire, hearing the stories of creation and salvation -- water splashing, wet feet slipping on tile floors, clothes being changed rapidly with the whir of hair dryers in the background, the smell of the oil of confirmation, breaking bread and sharing a cup for the first time with these new members of the parish. Where did the beauty go? Where is the grandeur? What has happened to my devotion?

Where Did The Beauty Go?

I can only say that I am getting a new perspective. I see a new beauty and a new grandeur. It takes a different eye to see my God in the faces of my sisters and brothers with whom I share the broken bread. But there is true beauty there, and I find that beauty can still move me to tears of joy and devotion. Today I judge whether a liturgy is a "good" or "bad" not by the number of candles that are lit, nor by the cost of the vestments, nor by whether or not I like the singing.

Today a "good" liturgy is one which transforms me and my fellow parishioners in such a way that men and women of today's society will see the full implication of the sacrament of the Eucharist. And they will say of us as they said of the first Christians, "see how they love one another! There is no one poor among them!" 🙏

Rev. Thomas Richstatter, OFM, has a doctorate in liturgy and sacramental theology from the Institut Catholique of Paris. A popular writer and lecturer, Father Richstatter teaches courses on the sacraments at St. Meinrad (Indiana) School of Theology.

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Tim Cusick To Be Ordained To Priesthood



Tim Cusick's plans changed about six years ago when he had a conversion experience.

Up to then, Cusick had planned a career in a technical field. At Georgia Institute of Technology, he earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a master's in science management.

His "conversion experience" led him to the seminary – the Theological College at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

For the past two years, while attending the seminary, Cusick has also been assisting at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington. First, he assisted in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. "One of my favorite aspects of RCIA is Scripture Reflection with the group."

Washington's diverse population has made it particularly interesting. Cusick said he became very involved in the efforts of the people in the group – who are working in corporations, politics, government and international agencies – to bring their faith into their daily work life.


He has also become involved in St. Matthew's Young Adult Group where, he said, he's enjoyed working

with young men and women who are learning how to follow their faith in their personal relationships and, like the RCIA group, bring their faith into the workplace.

Last year, in April of 1999, Cusick was ordained to the diaconate. One of the highlights of being a deacon, Cusick said, was receiving the vows of a couple in Washington who, after completing the RCIA process with him, had decided to get married.

But Washington isn't Tim Cusick's home. Jacksonville is. Cusick's the son of Pat and Marlise Cusick of Holy Family Parish in Jacksonville. He is also graduate of Jacksonville's Bishop Kenny High School.

Cusick has great expectations for his priestly ministry. "I'm looking forward to living my life in union with God. I've had wonderful experiences in the past six years. I want to share with others the presence of God that I have experienced."

Tim Cusick will be ordained a priest at 10 a.m. on May 20 at the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Augustine. 

-Chelle Delaney

Ordinations To Diaconate

Alberto Esposito and Michael Morgan, 54, will be ordained to the diaconate on June 3 at the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Augustine. Bishop John J. Snyder will preside.

Morgan is attending Pope John XXIII Seminary in Weston, Mass. Morgan's call to the priesthood is considered a second-career vocation. Morgan says that he's taking his lead from the apostles who also embarked on a second-career vocation as they followed in Christ's footsteps.

Esposito, 37, is attending St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach. His family lives in St. Augustine. The ordinations will be at 11 a.m. on June 3.



Morgan



Esposito

Sr. Flynn Professes Final Vows

At a ceremony that included friends, family, parishioners and members of the Sisters of St. Joseph community, Sister Stephanie Flynn professed her perpetual vows in a ceremony at the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Augustine on March 19. Bishop John J. Snyder presided at the ceremony.

Sister Stephanie is the daughter of John Flynn of Salem, Mass. and the late Patricia Flynn. She received her BA degree from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton and an MS degree from St. Thomas University in Miami.

Before entering the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Augustine in 1993, Sister Stephanie taught at schools in Florida and Massachusetts.

Sister Stephanie lived in St. Augustine for three years while in the congregation's formation program. Sister Stephanie is a teacher at St. James school in North Miami.



SERVING AT THE WEDDING

***“I...did not come to be served,
but to serve...”*** (Matthew 20:28)

By Jean Roach

I have seen the wedding ceremony from many different perspectives. I have been a bride's maid and a matron of honor more times than I can count. I have also been a mother of the bride, a mother of the groom, and once, long ago, the bride. Belonging to a student parish, I have been asked to participate in a lot of weddings. I have had the privilege of reading the chosen Scriptures or of being Eucharistic Minister for several couples.

All the weddings have been special and each has held a significant meaning to me. However, when my friends and I are reminiscing about weddings, there is one that stands out from all the others. It is one that is forever etched in my memory. In one simple silent act, the bride and groom gave us the definition of marriage. They demonstrated for all in attendance what marriage was to be for them and what it could be for everyone.

Tom and Lori were the groom and bride. I first met them at a dinner in St. Augustine right after the Rite of Election for RCIA at the Cathedral with the Bishop. Tom was becoming fully initiated into the Catholic Church that year. Both were students. Tom was in law school and Lori was studying advertising. I mistook them for a married couple. Lori smiled a look of gratitude and whispered in my ear, "Some day!" It is the one and only time I have ever seen Tom flustered and without words.

We became friends and a year or so later, an invitation to their wedding arrived in the mail. Lori has reminded me

that their wedding was exactly one month after the death of my younger son and they were afraid I might not attend. I have no recollection of feeling sad at the wedding. The only explanation I have is that I believe God uses community, especially weddings, to distract us from our sadness.

It began as an ordinary wedding day for those attending. Several of us from our parish met in the church parking lot and began the three-hour ride to the town where Tom and Lori were to be married. It poured rain from the minute we left and never let up the entire day. All of us had to make a mad dash from the car to the church. I felt sorry for the bridal party who had to process in such rain.

I remembered that someone had once told me that, in some cultures, rain on a wedding day is considered a blessing, a gift from God. In my heart, I spoke to the Lord, "If that is really true, if rain on a wedding day is a sign of blessing, Tom and Lori will be blessed beyond their wildest dreams!"

I cannot remember their readings, the homily, or the music. I only remember feeling love and very glad that I was there with dear friends. Tom and Lori vowed to love each other "all the days" of their lives.

Then once again, all of us made a mad dash through the rain to the church hall for the reception. The afternoon continued much the same as other receptions I have attended with its own unique touches of decorations and food and drink. We were friends enjoying

being with one another and celebrating the beginning of Tom and Lori's new life.

Late in the afternoon, in the middle of socializing, I noticed that someone was trying to get our attention. The music stopped. Conversation ceased. Everything and everyone became quiet. For me, even time seemed to stand still. It was as if I was watching a movie in slow motion.

A chair was set in the middle of the dance floor. Next, a basin, water and a towel were brought in. Tom and Lori took turns sitting in the chair. Then they did what Jesus did for his disciples the night of the Last Supper before he was crucified. They washed one another's feet. The message of Jesus resounded in the silence:

"Jesus rose from the meal and took off his cloak. He picked up a towel and tied it around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet and dry them with the towel he had around him ... After he had washed their feet ... He said to them: 'Do you understand what I just did for you? ... If I washed your feet — I who am Teacher and Lord — then you must wash each other's feet. What I just did was to give you an example: As I have done, so you must do.'" (John 13:3-15)

Jean Roach is a member of St. Augustine Church and Catholic Student Center in Gainesville. Her story has appeared in Catholic Digest.



Counselor Denis Newman oversees a mock peer mediation with eighth grade students (from left) Donna Smith, Danny Arvesu and Joe Calabrese

Conflict Resolution is all about: **FIGHTING FAIR**

What do you do when your best friend finds a new group of buddies and doesn't want to eat lunch with you any more?

Or, what do you do when you loaned your friend a book and the book gets damaged?

At St. Patrick's Interparish School in Gainesville, middle-school students are resolving these kind of conflicts through peer mediation.

"Conflicts are a part of everyone's life," said Denis Newman, a school counselor at St. Patrick's. Learning how to resolve life's skirmishes involves skills that help kids now and throughout their adult lives, Newman added.

"The whole idea is communication so the disputants can understand each other's positions and feelings."

Students are nominated to become peer mediators and work to help students resolve their conflicts.

Eighth-grader Morgan Chapman said, "Peer mediation skills have helped me work better with my teachers as well as my peers."

When a conflict arises between two students, they agree to participate in a

peer mediation session held during "club time" on certain school days.

During the sessions students exercise the basic skills of listening, communicating and fighting fair, Newman says. Fighting fair means:

- focusing on the current problem and not bringing up past grievances or disputes;
- attacking the situation, not each other;
- telling the truth;
- respecting each other's feelings; and
- avoiding "fouls."

Feelings are important Newman said because, "Conflict is anger," but anger could include other feelings, for example, embarrassment. "If you can identify your feelings, it helps a lot," she said.

This also helps the other person to understand why the incident happened in the first place, she said.

Fouls include snickering, name-calling, sneering, bossing. "To act this way or to bring up the past just escalates the conflicts," Newman said.

The disputing students talk out their problems. The peer mediators are there to

help improve the communication. They must be non-judgmental; their role is to identify the problem and help the disputants brainstorm for solutions.

Sessions are confidential. "The kids pretty well adhere to this," Newman said. "They agree to this when they're nominated and take it pretty seriously."


Another eighth-grader, Amber Mills, said, her peer mediation skills help her to help others solve their problems.

Most students prefer using peer mediation rather than having their disputes referred to the administration. And the program is evidently making a difference because there are fewer referrals for bad behavior, she said.

However, Newman said, "We don't mediate when there is a victim," explaining that this would imply a bully. But she said, "This is rare. In most instances both parties have some responsibility for the conflict or problem."

So what happened to the girl whose best friend wouldn't eat lunch with her? The girl with the new friends agreed to eat lunch with her old friend once a week. They both liked the resolution.

And the case of the borrowed book that was damaged? The owner and the borrower agreed to split the cost of a new book.

Working towards peace is an individual and community effort. Everyone at St. Patrick has signed a peace pledge, called the "School Pledge of Nonviolence," and everyone is learning about conflict resolution. Saints are used as examples, Newman said, and "Christ is our example of the ultimate peacemaker." 

— Natalie R. Cornell



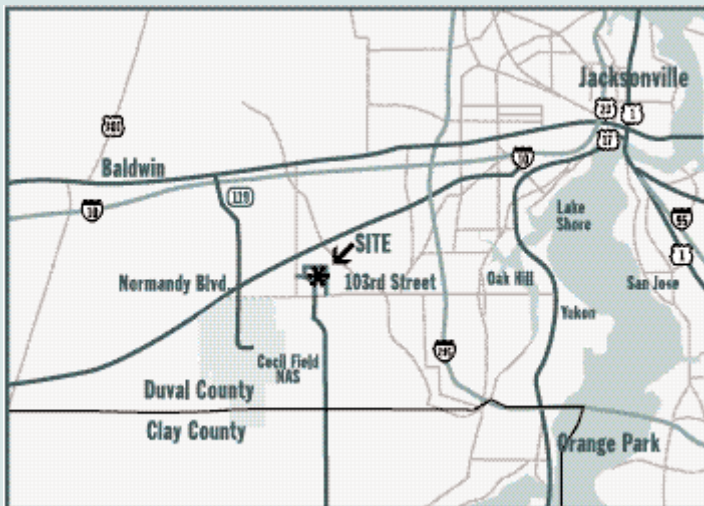
DIOCESE BUYS LAND FOR NEW HIGH SCHOOL

The Diocese of St. Augustine purchased a 75-acre site on Feb. 17 to build a new Catholic High School for 1,000 students on Jacksonville's Westside. When the planned high school opens its doors, it will be the first Catholic high school built in Jacksonville since Bishop Kenny High School was established in 1952 on the city's Southside.

"We are greatly indebted to the Boyd family who sold us the property, said Bishop John J. Snyder. "Their generosity will enable us to build the new high school and provide future students with a Catholic secondary education.

"Bishop Kenny High School is already at capacity, with more than 1,600 students; and there is a waiting list," he said. "But now, we have the ability offer families who live in the west section of the greater Jacksonville area an opportunity for a Catholic education. For many it may also mean a shorter commute."

The only other Catholic high school in the 17-county diocese is St. Joseph Academy in St. Augustine. It was founded in 1874 by the Sisters of St. Joseph and has an enrollment of 357 students. Because its location – on State Road 207 near highway US 1 – is convenient to St. Johns County's high population growth corridors, demand in the area for a Catholic education is expected to be strong. Therefore, the diocese plans to almost double St. Joseph's enrollment to 600 with a proposed



two-phase expansion and renovation project. The anticipated date for completion of phase one is August next year.

Meanwhile, the purchase of the land at the proposed Brannan Field/Chaffee Roadway at 103rd Street (see map) for a high school on the Jacksonville's Westside means that the diocese can move forward with its plans for two new high school campuses in the diocese. Another high school is also being planned for a 65-acre tract in Gainesville, west of Interstate 75 at N.W. 39th Avenue, which the diocese has owned since 1983.

Each of these projects would be constructed in phases and tentatively, the projected completion of the new high school in Jacksonville would be 2002 and the one in Gainesville 2004.



Bishop Snyder and members of the Boyd family, brothers Bill and Charles (right), signed and sealed all the paperwork for the sale of the 75-acre site to the diocese in mid-February.

School Superintendent Patricia Tierney said the next step is to seek bids from architects and to raise money for the new schools. To build a high school facility to accommodate 1,000 students is estimated to cost \$16 million, Tierney said.

– Chelle Delaney



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RESPECT LIFE OFFICE HONORS YOUTH'S CONCERN FOR LIFE



Poster art by Francesca Cirillo from Assumption Catholic School

Students from throughout the diocese reflected on the theme of "The Jubilee Year and You: Celebrating Life" in posters and essays for the annual contest sponsored by the diocesan Respect Life Office. Students who received awards are:

Students Enrolled in Catholic Schools in the Poster Category Were:

Level I Grades K-2: Winner: Francesca Mehr, San Juan del Rio, Grade 2. Honorable Mention: Samantha Lennon, Assumption school, Grade 1

Level II Grades 3-5: Winner: Matthew Bond, St. Joseph School, Grade 4. Honorable Mention: Francesca Cirillo, Assumption School, Grade 5.

Level III Grades 6-8: Winner: Erik Voss, Sacred Heart School, Grade 6. Honorable Mention: Jason Batton, St. Paul, Jacksonville Beach, Grade 6.

Students Enrolled in Catholic Schools in the Essay Category Were:

Level II Grades 3-5: Winner: Lauren Richburg, St. Joseph School, Grade 5. Honorable Mention: Anthony Veal, Sacred Heart School, Grade 5.

Level III Grades 6-8: Winner: Matthew Carroll, St. Patrick School, Jacksonville, Grade 8. Honorable Mention: John Gibson, St. Joseph School, Grade 7.

Students Enrolled in Christian Formation Programs in the Poster Category Were:

Level I Grades K-2: Winner: Laura Yadon, St. Catherine Parish, Grade 1. Honorable Mention: Tomas Evans, Immaculate Conception Parish, Grade K.

Level II Grades 3-5: Winner: Christine Hutchins, Cathedral Parish, Grade 4. Honorable Mention: Andrea Yadon, St. Catherine Parish, Grade 4.

Level III Grades 6-8: Winner: Josie Giardina, St. Catherine Parish, Grade 6. Honorable Mention: not applicable.

Students Enrolled Christian Formation Programs in the Essay Category Were:

Level II Grades 3-5: Winner: Nicholas Labell, Corpus Christi Parish, Grade 5. Honorable Mention: Rebecca Ucciardo, San Juan del Rio Parish, Grade 4.

Level III Grades 6-8: Winner: Siobhan McCallus, Corpus Christi Parish, Grade 7. Honorable Mention: Lindsey Ferguson, Cathedral Parish, Grade 7.



Jubilee Day For Women Celebrated Beginning Of Diocesan Women's Commission

Worldwide, Pope John Paul II designated March 25 as the Jubilee Day for Women 2000 in order to recognize and to celebrate the different ways women have said "yes" to God and to remember women for their contributions to church and to society. So it is not coincidental that the jubilee day in March was on the Feast of the Annunciation.

In our diocese the celebration was marked by the start-up of the diocesan Women's Commission and the commissioning of its members by Bishop John J. Snyder. The day began with Mass in the Tanner Chapel at Bishop Kenny High School in Jacksonville and was followed by a reception.

Members of the commission are: Natalie R. Cornell and Mary L. Monahan of Gainesville; Donna C. Darby, Sr. Beverly DiStefano, OP, Laura M. Kraus, Kathleen P. McHugh, Ellen O. Middleton, Marcia E. Quinlan-Rogero, Diane P. Royal, Mary V. Sieredzinski and Donna M. Simons, all of Jacksonville; Jeri A. Hurtt of Middleburg; Carmencita P. Cuevas and Laura L. Mahoney of Orange Park; and Patricia L. Gill and Marie W. Parnly of St. Augustine.



Queen of Peace Parish in Gainesville has begun a new building project for a new church and school. Grades Pre-K and kindergarten are to open in August of this year and the church dedication is scheduled for Spring 2001. For the traditional turn of the shovel to start off the project there were more than 400 parishioners and visiting pastors from Gainesville's other Catholic parishes. From left, are: Father John Gillespie, pastor of the St. Augustine Church and Catholic Student Center; Contractor Chuck Perry, School Principal Sister Nancy Elder, IHM, Father Jeff McGowan, pastor of Queen of Peace; Fathers Jose Edgar and John Patrick, both of Queen of Peace, and Father Roland Julien.

Congratulations To The First Graduates

Twenty-two students in the eighth grade class will be the first to graduate from Annunciation Interparish School in Middleburg. The ceremony will be June 3. Principal Susan Altieri, who helped found the school, said "Parents have helped us grow and develop. It's been rewarding to see the students grow and take on more responsibilities." The school was founded in 1993 and is the the first Catholic school in Clay County. The school serves the parishes of Sacred Heart in Green Cove Springs, St. Catherine in Orange Park and St. Luke in Middleburg. Enrollment is 320.

Jubilee 2000 Faith And Sharing Retreat

This is the Jubilee celebration for persons with disabilities, and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Enjoy fellowship, spiritual direction and great food. This year's retreat leaders are Father Ron Camarda and Sister Patricia O'Hea, RSM. It will be June 4-9 at Camp St. John at Marywood. For details, call the Ministry to Persons with Disabilities at (904) 356-0810.

Students Complete LIMEX

Eleven participants in the LIMEX (Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension), Loyola University at New Orleans, completed their certificate or masters programs. Their achievement was celebrated at a blessing ceremony by Bishop John J. Snyder on Feb. 20 at the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Augustine.



Students from the Diocese of St. Augustine who completed the program are from left: Sharon Kelly Toth; Elizabeth Crowell, RN, BSN; JoAnne Eichelberger; Maureen Matthes (now of Tampa), Jane Ackerman (now of Boynton Beach); Bernadette Crawford; Ariel Nagales; and Sr. Rea Wurmnest, SSJ; and Bishop Snyder. Not pictured are James Scott, Anthony Colichio and Joanne Davis, all of Jacksonville.

To learn more about LIMEX, there will be an information night in May. See calendar listing for May 17 on page 20.

Helping Kids Attend Camp Help Parents

The camps, "I Am Special," "Promise," and "Care" are residential summer camps for children with disabilities to be held in June, July and August. These camps provide a week of outdoor experience, supervised activities, entertainment and nurturing for children with special needs. They also allow parents a week of much needed respite. A large percentage of the children require financial aid to meet the \$150 camping fee. Please help make a difference by sponsoring a child for a week of camp or volunteering your time. All donations are gratefully accepted and can be sent to: "Camp I Am Special", Diocese of St. Augustine, P.O. Box 24000, Jacksonville, FL 32241. Call for more details: (904) 356-0810. The camp schedules are: Camp "I Am Special": June 11-16, June 18-23; Camp "Promise": July 16-23, July 23-28 and Aug. 13-18; Camp "Care": Aug. 6-10.

Father Cyprian Visits St. Pius V

Benedictine Father Cyprian Davis celebrated the children's Mass at St. Pius V Parish recently during a recent visit to Jacksonville. The children quickly warmed to his question-and-answer-style homily as they discussed preparations for Easter and Black Catholic history in the United States.



A monk at St. Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Ind., Father Davis is the author of *The History of Black Catholics in the United States* Father

Davis told the children that the first Black Catholics in the United States came from Florida. They were brought here by slave traders and evangelized by the Spanish who discovered Florida, he said.

Volunteers Needed For Crusade

The Diocese will be participating in the Billy Graham Crusade this fall in Jacksonville and will be providing counselors. If you are interested in volunteering as a counselor or assisting in other areas, please call 262-3200 ext. 140, or (800) 775-4659 ext. 140.

Seeing Through The Darkness



Courtesy of The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

If you were to meet Sister Elizabeth Fiorite, OP, you would be drawn to her openhearted humor and joyful demeanor. Not unusual for a nun, perhaps, but then you might notice how carefully she navigates unfamiliar terrain. If you met her at the Cummer Art Museum of Art & Gardens in Jacksonville for her monthly class "Women of Vision," you might be struck with the realization that she and her 11 companions can barely see.

How does one deal with losing one of our most precious senses? Since 70 percent of the blind and low-vision population are over the age of 65, it is something some of us or our loved ones might face.

Perhaps that is why it is so comforting to know how well these women have adapted as they enjoy tactile art presented by Jean Hall Dodd of the Cummer staff and write their memoirs with the help of Mary Sue Koeppel, the editor of *Kalliope*, an international women's literary magazine based in Jacksonville.

As they gather at the table together, the camaraderie is evident in laughter and smiles. The group enjoys each others' company. And it would not exist if Sister Elizabeth had not lost her sight in 1990, and met these women at ILAB (Independent Living for the Adult Blind) as she was learning skills to adapt to her new condition. She is currently helping others at ILAB as an employee. Her efforts have also been recognized statewide. She was honored for her Women of Vision program with the 1999 Innovator of Year award by the Florida Association of Education for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Sister Elizabeth says, "People who are handicapped, especially the blind, are invisible. We are often overlooked, and many of us suffer a blow to self-esteem. So the underlying goal is to enhance the self-esteem of these women."

Sister's example shows how unexpected hardship can bring unexpected purpose, community, and love. For it was in semidarkness that Sister Elizabeth Fiorite found a new and special vocation. Amazingly, it is often in darkness that we see most brightly the blessings of God.

— Kathleen McHugh

APRIL

- 9 Scouting Sunday**
Presentation of Scouting Medals
President: Bishop John J. Snyder
Sunday, 3 p.m.
Cathedral-Basilica, St. Augustine
Call (904) 355-1100
- 13 Men's Scripture Evening #3**
Living The Scriptures
Leader: Fr. Edward Booth
Thursday, 7-9 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
Call (904) 358-7409
- 14-Engaged Encounter**
- 16** Friday, 6 p.m.-Sunday, 2 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 308-7474
Register online at: www.dcf.org
- 17 Seder Meal Prayer & Celebration**
Leader: Sr. Edith Paschall, SSJ
Monday, 6-8 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525
- 19 Chrism Mass**
President: Bishop John J. Snyder
Wednesday, 11 a.m.
Cathedral-Basilica, St. Augustine
Call (904) 355-1100
- 22 Pasqua Celebration**
Many Faces In Our Father's House
Youth celebrate the Jubilee
Noon to midnight
Mission Nombre De Dios
St. Augustine
Call Linda (904) 276-9597
- 24 32nd Annual CYO Golf Tournament**
Monday, noon; Shotgun, 1 p.m.
San Jose Country Club,
Jacksonville
Call (904) 355-1100
- 27 Secretaries Retreat**
Developing Strengths and Living With Weakness
Leader: Fr. Tom Walsh
Friday, 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525
- 28-Our Greatest Challenge Today:**
- 30 Gospel Simplicity**
Leader: Fr. John Phillips
Friday, 7:30 p.m.-Sunday, 11 a.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525

MAY

- 8- Mid-Week Retreat For Seniors**
- 11 Journey to Wisdom and Knowledge**
Leaders: David Nowak and
Sr. Kathleen Power, SSJ
Monday, 5:30 p.m.-
Thursday, 11 a.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525
- 5- Marriage Encounter**
- 7** Friday, 6 p.m.-Sunday, 2 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 308-7474
Register online at: www.dcf.org
- 12-Engaged Encounter**
- 14** Friday, 6 p.m.-Sunday, 2 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 308-7474
Register online at: www.dcf.org
- 17 Butterfly Gardening Retreat Day**
Leaders: Pat Jeremiah and
John X. Linnehan
Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525
- 17 Loyola Institute for Ministry
By Extension: Information
Session**
Wednesday, 7-9 p.m.
Catholic Center
Call (800) 775-4659, ext. 117
- 19-How To Forgive Yourself, Others
And God**
Leader: Sr. Catherine Cahill, OSF
Friday, 7:30 p.m.-Sunday, 11 a.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525
- 20-Pre-Cana**
Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
St. Vincent's Medical Center
To register (904) 308-7474
Register online at: www.dcf.org

- 21-Biblical Studies Seminar-2000**
- 24 Mark's Gospel: A Vivid Narrative
of Jesus' Ministry**
Leader: Rev. Stephen Bosso
Sunday-Wednesday 7-9 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 287-2525

JUNE

- 2- Marriage Encounter**
- 4** Friday, 6 p.m.-Sunday, 2 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 308-7474
Register online at: www.dcf.org
- 2- Retrouvaille/Rediscover**
- 4 Program for troubled marriages**
Friday, 6 p.m.-Sunday, 2 p.m.
Marywood Retreat Center
To register (904) 308-7474

**American Bishops' Overseas
Appeal Provide Hope In The
New Millennium.**



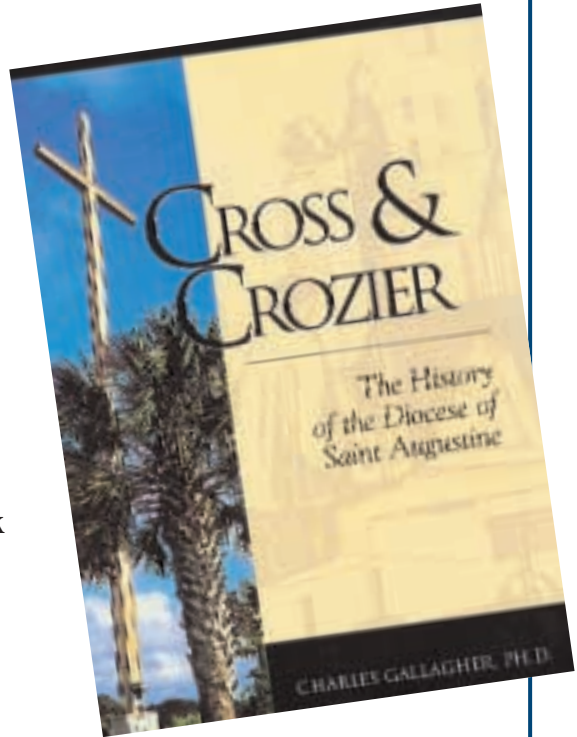
Photo by Martin Leuders

The seedlings from this Tanzania tree nursery will help reverse widespread deforestation in East Africa. Catholic Relief Services, which receives support from the American Bishops' Overseas Appeal, funds agricultural and small enterprise development projects around the world that empower the rural poor and enhance human dignity. The appeal, which is held this year on May 14 also supports the work of the Holy Father's Relief Fund and the U.S. Catholic Conference's Migration and Refugee Services and Department of Social Development and World Peace.

CROSS & CROZIER:

THE HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

This illustrated popular history of the Diocese of Saint Augustine, written by Charles Gallagher, Ph.D., begins with the voyage of three small ships under the command of Juan Ponce de Leon, who explored the “New World,” to the present as we usher in a new millennium. The book includes a section on the histories of the parishes of the diocese.



“My hope is that this book, as it commemorates the years of change, struggle and triumph for the people of the Diocese of Saint Augustine, will find a prominent place in our homes, our parishes and our schools,”
said Bishop John J. Snyder.

LOOK FOR YOUR COPY OF THE BOOK AT YOUR PARISH GIFT SHOP