

# Catholic Diocese of Brownsville

# Year in Review 2010

## Bishop Flores Installed as Diocese's New Shepherd



Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, and Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, escorted Bishop Daniel E. Flores to the cathedra and presented him with the pastoral staff during the Installation Mass on Feb. 2.

Bishop Daniel E. Flores was installed as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Brownsville on Feb. 2 at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle-National Shrine.

Thirty bishops from the United States and Mexico; two cardinals, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and Adam Cardinal Maida of the Archdiocese of Detroit and more than 200 priests from the dioceses of Brownsville, Corpus Christi and other dioceses, witnessed the installation.

Cardinal DiNardo presided over the installation Mass and papal nuncio Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, read the official decree from Pope Benedict XVI announcing the appointment.

In his homily, Bishop Flores addressed those who play a role in the lives of children. "Parents and grandparents, uncles and aunts, teach the next generation by how they speak and how they act. We must spend time with our young people, giving them the good counsel that comes from a life of familiarity with the Gospel. What we seek to hand on is the true meaning of the word love. In the Gospel of Christ, love is a gift and an offering."

## New Permanent Deacons Ordained

The Diocese of Brownsville welcomed 23 new permanent deacons at an ordination Mass celebrated by Bishop Daniel E. Flores on Dec. 18 at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle - National Shrine. The Mass marked the first time in 20 years that a permanent deacon is ordained for the diocese.

The deacon candidates completed four years of intensive training. Permanent deacons, who can be married, are ministers of the Word, which means they can proclaim the Gospel during Mass and preach and teach in the name of the Church. Their sac-



ramental ministry includes baptizing, conducting prayer services, serving as an official Church witness to marriage and conducting funerals.

The new permanent deacons are Gerardo Aguilar, Martin Arteaga, Mitch Chavez, Ramiro Davila, Paul Escobar, David Espinoza, Francisco

Flores, Reynaldo Flores, Javier Garcia, Oscar Garcia, Silvestre Garcia, Jose Gonzalez, Gilbert Guardiola, Crawford Higgins, Amando Peña, Rudy Sepulveda, Graciano Rodriguez, Gerardo Rosa, Ray Thomas, Nicolas Trujillo, Catarino Villanueva, Armandin Villarreal and Luis Zuniga.

### **Catholic Faithful Collect \$268,395 to Assist People in Haiti**

When major disasters strike, Catholic communities around the world are among the first to respond with aid. Following the earthquakes that hit Haiti on Jan. 12 and Chile on March 1 Catholic Relief Services responded immediately.

Locally, parishes throughout the Diocese of Brownsville participated in a special collection the weekend following the earthquake on Jan. 12. To date the Diocese has sent a check for \$268,395.60 to Catholic Relief Services to assist the people in Haiti.

### **15h Annual Mother-Daughter Program**

Mothers and daughters spent an afternoon exploring the grace of God's special gift to girls and women during the Family Life Office's 15th annual Mother-Daughter program on Jan. 24 in San Juan. Mothers and their daughters, ages 10-12, learned about God's plan for women through the gift of fertility and sexuality and the holiness of chastity in a loving and supportive environment.

### **Diocese Insight Films 100th Episode**

Diocese Insight, a half-hour program on KMBH-TV which features news, information and interviews about the Catholic Church in the Rio Grande Valley, reached a milestone when taping the 100 episode. The 100th episode featured an interview with Bishop Emeritus Raymundo J. Peña who reflected on his 14 years of ministry as the shepherd of the Diocese. The show aired on Jan. 10. The show hosted by Brenda Nettles Riojas, Diocesan Relations Director, began airing weekly on Dec. 16, 2007.

### **Sister Charles Anne Honored with Spirit Award**

The Catholic School Office of the Diocese of Brownsville presented Sister Charles Anne Solomon with the Diocesan Spirit Award at a dinner on Jan.29 in Harlingen.

The recipients for each of the twelve Catholic schools in the Diocese are as follows: Dianne Marie Holder, St. Anthony School, Harlingen; Ed and Judy Bailey, Our Lady of Guadalupe School, Mission; Juan Carlos and Claudia Patricia Alvarado, St. Luke School, Brownsville; Carlos and Cynthia Garza, Oratory Schools of St. Philip Neri, Pharr; Albert Aldana, San Martin De Porres School, Weslaco; Lydia De Leon Gonzalez, St. Joseph School, Edinburg; Tony Chavez, St. Joseph Academy, Brownsville; Enedelia Varela, Incarnate Word Academy, Brownsville; Al and Sonja Cortinas, Immaculate Conception School, Rio Grande City; Brother James David Concannon, Guadalupe Regional Middle School, Brownsville; Dr. Joseph Caporusso, Our Lady of Sorrows School, McAllen; Karla Margarita Garza, St. Mary's Catholic School, Brownsville.



### **“Cherish Life” Event Draws Valley Residents to Show Support for Life**

Hundreds of Catholics in the Diocese of Brownsville – and all Rio Grande Valley residents gathered together on Jan. 24 at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle in San Juan - National Shrine to pray for an end to abortion. Part of a nationwide event drawing hundreds of thousands, the Valley commemoration was held in response to the 37th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision that made abortion legal in the United States.

### **World Marriage Day Honors Couples**

Couples who celebrated a wedding anniversary of 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 and more years were honored on Feb. 13 during a World Marriage Day Celebration sponsored by the Family Life Office of the Catholic Diocese of Brownsville.

Couples from all over the Valley were invited to attend a special Mass of thanksgiving at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle National Shrine in San Juan. The Most Reverend Bishop Daniel E. Flores celebrated the Mass and gave a blessing to these couples who bear witness to God's love through their love and commitment to each other through the Sacrament of Matrimony.

### **Vocations Day Sponsored for Fifth Graders**

Approximately 302 fifth graders from the Catholic Schools of the Diocese participated in a Vocations Day on March 4 in San Juan. The Vocations Day is coordinated by the Catholic Schools Office and the Office of Vocations.

### **Cyclists Ride Historical Trail**

Two hundred cyclists participated in the sixth annual Oblate Trail Ride on May 15. The bicycle tour with 12, 25, 50, 62.5 and 115-mile routes along Military Highway 281, followed an area the Oblates of Mary Immaculate traveled by horse more than 100 years ago to celebrate Mass in the remote communities along the Rio Grande River.



### **New Priest Ordained for the Diocese**

Luis Fernando Sanchez was ordained a priest for the service of the Diocese of Brownsville by Bishop Daniel E. Flores on May 29 during a Mass at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville. Sanchez, 30, the son of Jose and Elia Sanchez, is the oldest of four children.

### **La Primera Piedra for San Cristobal Magallanes & Companions Parish**

Bishop Daniel E. Flores, presided at the blessing and ground breaking ceremony for the first of several buildings planned for the parish on June 27 at the corner of Santa Engracia St. and West Military Highway in Mission. The parish hall, which is the first building scheduled to be constructed, will also serve as the sanctuary until a church building is constructed for San Cristobal Magallanes & Companions Parish.

The parish includes two mission churches, Our Lady of Fatima Church in Granjeno and Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Madero. Father Craig Carolan currently holds Sunday Masses at the mission churches and daily Masses at the community center in the Sharyland Plantation subdivision.

### **Growth Spurs Construction of New Church**



Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg held a ground-breaking ceremony on Aug. 21 to commemorate the construction of a new 19,348 square-foot church building. Bishop Daniel E. Flores celebrated Mass and led the ground-break-

ing festivities. The bishop was joined by Father Robert Charlton, pastor of Sacred Heart Church and parochial vicar Father Richard Lifrak, both of whom are members of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The new church will seat about 922.

### **Welcome Life Conference**

The "Welcome Life Conference," held on Aug. 22 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in McAllen, opened eyes and hearts to the pitfalls of the birth control pill and to the benefits of Natural Family Planning. The theme of the conference was, "After fifty years of the pill, has it given us a better life? Addressing the great moral issues of our times!"

Many ideas developed from the conference, which was sponsored by the Diocese's Respect Life Apostolate, and co-sponsored by the offices for Family Life, Health Ministry and Catechesis. Local physicians are reflecting on forming a Rio Grande Valley chapter of the Catholic Medical Association and an upper Valley obstetrician/gynecologist is considering converting his practice to be in compliance with the Church's teachings.

### **To Jesus through Mary**

#### **700 Take Consecration Journey**

Monfort Father Hugh Gillespie traveled across the Rio Grande Valley in August, visiting several parishes to promote Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary in the spirit of St. Louis de Montfort. His time in the Valley culminated with two large events, a Marian conference at San Martin de Porres Church in Weslaco and a Consecration Mass and ceremony at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in McAllen, with more than 1,000 in attendance.

About 700 faithful from around the diocese completed 33 days of prayer and spiritual exercises during the summer through classes for Total Consecration to Jesus Through Mary, based on Montfort's teachings as well as a book written by Father Gillespie. The classes and events were sponsored by Real Men Pray the Rosary, a McAllen-based apostolate that promotes prayer, family and community.

### **Conference Brings Together Prison, Jail Ministry Volunteers**

Bishop Daniel E. Flores spoke to approximately 80 prison and jail ministers at their annual conference on Aug. 7 at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Harlingen. The bishop encouraged volunteers to look for Jesus in the faces of the people who are incarcerated. Oftentimes, he said, the inmates may be angry about their situation and may have lost hope – yet we must learn to tolerate this misdirected anger and bad temper in the name of He who sent us.

### **New Rector Assigned to Basilica**

Father Amador Garza was named rector of the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle - National Shrine effective Sept. 1.

*Focus on Marriage: Sacrament of Enduring Love*

### **Thousands Attend Catechetical Convocation**

More than 1,000 religious educators attended the Diocese of Brownsville's annual Catechetical Convocation on Sept. 18 at the McAllen Convention Center.

Bishop Daniel E. Flores, who wrote the theological reflection for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for the 2010 Catechetical Sunday, delivered the keynote address in English and Spanish, focused on Matrimony: Sacrament of Enduring Love.

### **Catholic Campus Ministry at STC Campus**

During the fall semester, the diocese established a Catholic Campus Ministry at South Texas College, Pecan Campus. The mission of Catholic Campus Ministry at STC is to foster an on-campus community of spiritual, social, and educational development amongst Catholic students and faculty, as well as any young adult interested in the Catholic faith.

The Diocese of Brownsville currently has Newman Centers at The University of Texas – Pan American in Edinburg and The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College. In more recent years, Newman Clubs have formed at Texas State Technical College and at South Texas College.

### **Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Honored**

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Harlingen, a historic church in Harlingen, celebrated 100 years as a faith community with the three-day Fiesta de Amistad on Oct. 8-10 on the church grounds. The City of Harlingen issued a proclamation for Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in honor of the occasion. This vibrant community grew out of small chapel, which was blessed and dedicated on Oct. 10, 1910. It was the first organized Catholic community in Harlingen.

### **Amor Conference for Marriage Sponsor Couples**

More than 100 couples attended the AMOR Conference on Oct. 10 at the Bishop Marx Auditorium in San Juan. The husband-wife teams serve as sponsor couples in their parishes, preparing other couples for the Sacrament of Marriage.

### **Religious Leaders Call for Support of "Humane Immigration Reform"**

The Most Reverend Daniel E. Flores, Bishop of the Diocese of Brownsville, in solidarity with other prominent denominational leaders joined Valley Interfaith to call for Immigration Reform at an Interfaith Immigration Convocation on Oct. 13 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic

Church in McAllen. During the convocation, religious leaders presented, "Principles of Humane Immigration Reform," a document that they collectively support.

### **Basilica Marks Milestones**

It was a time of celebration and reflection as the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle – National Shrine marked two major milestones with a two-day celebration on Oct. 22 and 23. Oct. 23 marked the 40th anniversary of the



plane crash that destroyed the original shrine. Though the shrine and most of its contents were lost when the pilot intentionally flew the plane into the structure, none of the 100 people in the church and the 100 more in adjacent cafeteria were hurt or killed. The image of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle and the Blessed Sacrament were also rescued unharmed from the flames.

The festivities also marked the 30th anniversary of the current basilica, which was blessed and dedicated on April 19, 1980.

The highlight of the two-day celebration was the crowning of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle during a Mass on Oct. 23 celebrated by Bishop Daniel E. Flores. Bishop Flores bestowed a new crown on Our Lady that was created by local jewelry designer Juan Saulo Valdez of McAllen. The crown is fashioned out of gold and silver pieces that were left in the basilica's Miracle Room by pilgrims over the years. The crown features 40 stars, one for every year since Our Lady's manifestation in 1970.

### **Juan Diego Academy Breaks Ground on New Science & Math Building**

Bishop Daniel E. Flores, presided at the blessing and ground breaking ceremony for the new Science and Math buildings planned for the High School Oct. 29 at 5208 S. Hwy 494 in Mission, near the historic La Lomita Mission.

The school is scheduled to open with its inaugural freshman class in fall 2011, utilizing buildings that formerly housed the St. Joseph and St. Peter Seminary. Future plans call for the construction of a gymnasium and the reconstruction of the old St. Peter Novitiate for use by the school (including restoration of the historic façade).

### **Pastoral Council Convened, Members Appointed**

Bishop Daniel E. Flores appointed 22 lay members to the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The Diocesan Pastoral Council reflects the diocesan church and is composed of laypersons as well as religious and clergy. Its purpose is to advise the bishop about pastoral tasks, to study, to weigh, and to suggest courses of action regarding them (Code of Canon Law, cc. 511, 512). The pastoral council springs right out of the Second Vatican Council. It embodies the themes of the active participation of the laity, their co-responsibility for the church's mission, and the need for collaboration in ministry.

The Bishop and Luis Zuniga, director of Pastoral Planning, provided an orientation on Nov. 6 in San Juan for the lay members appointed to the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The first meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council is scheduled for February 2011 in which the council will start working on a mission statement and recommend to Bishop Flores pastoral strategies for the next ten years based on the needs of the catholic faithful of the diocese.

### **Sharing Basket Feeds 5,000 Families**

Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in partnership with News Channel 5 and Peter Piper Pizza provided meals for more than 5,000 families for Thanksgiving. The meals were provided through their annual Sharing Baskets event, which provides food for families in need just in time for Thanksgiving.



### **New Church Dedicated for St. Pius X**

Parishioners from St. Pius X in Weslaco joined together on Dec. 9 for the dedication of a new church for the parish. Bishop Daniel E. Flores celebrated the Mass and was joined by Bishop Emeritus

Raymundo J. Peña and several priests in the Diocese. The celebration began in the old church with a procession to the new building for the dedication.

### **New Mission Church Blessed in Sullivan City**

Bishop Daniel E. Flores blessed a new church in Sullivan City on Dec. 12, the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The church named Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe is a mission of Our Lady Queen of Angels in La Joya.

### **Guadalupe Health Center Moves to Brownsville**

The Guadalupe Health Center, which operated in Harlingen since 2007, moved to a new location in Brownsville at 955 W. Price Rd. next to the offices for Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. The center will continue to serve residents in Harlingen on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at space provided at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.

The free center that operates under the guidance of the Diocese of Brownsville completes almost 3,000 medical visits a year and serves patients who don't have health insurance and who don't qualify for government health programs.

### **Oblate Community Departs**

#### **St. John the Baptist Church in San Juan**

After serving St. John the Baptist Church in San Juan for more than 80 years, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate announced in September that they no longer have priests available to staff the parish due to declining numbers of Oblates in the United States province and the aging of the Oblate clergy. The Oblates have served the parish since the original chapel was built in the 1920s.

"The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate have served an integral role in the history and growth of the Catholic faith here in the Rio Grande Valley," said Bishop Daniel E. Flores. "We are saddened that the Oblate community is no longer able to send priests to serve the parish community of St. John the Baptist in San Juan but we understand the reasons for the Provincial's decision, and we are grateful for the spirit of generosity with which the Oblates have worked in the Diocese."

Father Gerald W. Frank was appointed pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in San Juan, effective Nov. 28, the first Sunday of Advent.

### **Protecting God's Children**

More than 14,000 volunteers in the Valley who work with children and young adults at the parishes have completed the Protecting God's Children program. Walter Lukaszek, coordinator of the program for the Diocese of Brownsville, said training continues year round.

Also, to educate children, Touching Safety lessons are presented each fall and spring to students who attend Religious Education. Also, parishes include a parent presentation of either Protecting God's Children or a Touching Safety mini lesson for all parents in the sacramental programs.

### Group Serenades Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York

Twenty students and alumni from the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College and members of the Brownsville



Catholic community serenaded Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on Dec. 11, leading into the Dec. 12 Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas.

St. Patrick's Cathedral is the largest gothic-style Catholic Cathedral in the United States and has been recognized throughout its history as a pre-eminent center of Catholic life in this country, according to the cathedral's Web site.

### Golden Jubilees

**Msgr. Juan Nicolau**, who was ordained a priest on the Spanish island of Mallorca in 1960 and arrived in the Rio Grande Valley as a missionary priest in 1967 at the invitation of then-Bishop Humberto Cardinal Medeiros, marked his Golden Jubilee on Dec. 17. He was incardinated to the Diocese of Brownsville in 1972.

Msgr. Nicolau, 73, is currently the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in McAllen. He previously served at St. Helen Church in Rio Hondo, Christ the King Church and St. Luke Church in Brownsville and the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle - National Shrine.

**Brother Tony Quinn** of the Congregation of Christian Brothers who is serving at Guadalupe Regional Middle School (GRMS) in Brownsville, Texas as the sixth-grade English teacher and reading coach, celebrated his Golden Jubilee, 50 years in the religious life.

### Missionaries of the Holy Spirit and Holy Family Expand Colonia Evangelization Initiative

The Missionaries of the Holy Spirit and Holy Family expanded the Colonia Evangelization Initiative, a new outreach effort in the Diocese that serves as a resource for parishes whose territory includes substandard subdivisions known as "colonias," to include San Felipe de Jesus in Brownsville. The sisters also work with Saint Mary Church in Santa Rosa and Our Heavenly Father in Olmito.

### Bishop's Dinner Nets \$60,000

Each year, the Bishop's Dinner raises funds for a need in the Catholic community. This year parishes joined together on Dec. 2 at the Corinthian Events Center, in Mission to provide a "Big South Texas" welcome to Bishop Daniel E. Flores, who was installed on Feb. 2 as the sixth bishop of Brownsville. This year's dinner proceeds are designated for youth and spiritual formation.

### Catholic Charities Highlights Volunteer Opportunities

Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley hosted an ACTS and Cursillo Movement reunion on Dec. 10 at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle - National Shrine. The more than 1,500 people who attended the event were informed about the many volunteer opportunities that exist within Catholic Charities. Serving others is central to both ACTS and the Cursillo Movement. Bishop Daniel E. Flores delivered the keynote address.

### We remember those who died in 2010



**Deacon Mariano Juarado**, 80, entered eternal rest on July 14, 2010, at his residence in Edinburg surrounded by his family. Born in Gomez Palacios, Durango, Mexico, Deacon Juarado had lived in Edinburg since 1993. He served as a deacon in the Diocese of Brownsville for 21 years.

He is survived by his wife, Maria Teodora Jurado of Edinburg; nine sons, five daughters, a sister, and a brother, 32 grandchildren, 60 great grandchildren; and 3 great great grandchildren.



**Deacon Paul Michael McArdle**, 76, died on June 24 after suffering a heart attack. Deacon McArdle made history becoming the first permanent deacon in the United States. He was ordained on May 24, 1970, serving 31 of his 40 years as a deacon in the Brownsville area.

Deacon McArdle was assigned to the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville at the time of his death.

Deacon McArdle is survived by his son John McArdle and his wife Ann; daughter Maria Rodriguez and her husband, Oscar; daughter Paula McArdle and daughter Patrice Resendez and her husband Mike and nine grandchildren, Kelli, Sean, Mia, Oscar, Francisco, Noah, Emma, Annie and Isabella.