

The Catholic Voice

JANUARY 2024 • VOLUME 62 • ISSUE 1

Celebrating Our Catholic Schools

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK
IS JAN. 28 - FEB. 3



**WALK A MILE
IN HER SHOES**
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PRIESTS**
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Editor's note

Go to school. It just might make your day.

As Catholic School Week approaches the last week of January, may I humbly suggest a visit to your parish school, or a nearby parish school, if the opportunity presents itself.

I had an early opportunity: St. Paul School was participating in Ruby Bridges Day. As a child of the '60s, I recalled her story and how sad it made me. My children, born in the '80s and '90s, read about her. And we had conversations ... many, many conversations.

An energetic first-grade teacher introduced her school community to a grant that brought a video, purple banners, bags and curriculum materials.

The students brought the enthusiasm. The San Pablo Police Department brought the protection for the journey in the form of two police vehicles. Traffic may have backed up behind the earnest procession, but I heard no honking horns.

Once back on their San Pablo campus, the students sat down to a well-earned hot dog lunch. The first-graders didn't seem to mind sharing their table with a woman and her notebook.

But first, introductions. One wanted me to know the name of everyone at the table. Then she asked me a question: Where's your mother?

It made me think of my mother's room mother days, when she'd tell me how much she enjoyed seeing the children so happy. Valentine's Day may have been her favorite.

I had my room mother days, too, including an overnight on the Balclutha, where the only word I could use with the students I supervised was, "Avast." I couldn't tell them what to do; only to stop and think about what they were doing.

The students at St. Paul School thought about what they were doing and expressed it in words and pictures. And in how they treated one another.

It was a sight to behold.

Michele Jurich, Editor, *The Catholic Voice* ▲

Dear parishioners and friends of the Diocese of Oakland,

As we come to the final days of our liturgical year, looking forward to the feast of Christ the King, I want to take this opportunity to update you on the good work happening in our Diocese and what are moments of hope going forward into Advent and our new year. I would also like to update you on where we are in the bankruptcy process.



BY BISHOP MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ has been bishop of the Diocese of Oakland since May 25, 2013.

In September, we saw a most extraordinary gathering of our faithful at the Cathedral of Christ the Light. Our Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Congress brought nearly 2,000 Catholics to our Cathedral for several days, and together we worshiped, adored and glorified Jesus Christ, body, blood, soul and divinity. I know our Diocese is blessed and will continue to be blessed by our dedication to Our Lord and Savior in the gift of the Eucharist.

In many ways, the Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Congress is a beacon for us. Not only did we experience God's tremendous sacrificial love for us in those days, I believe we have also seen a glimpse into our future, of being the Body of Christ that witnesses God's salvation for all.

As Christ's ambassadors, we are creating places where people can come to know Jesus Christ and He can come to know them. Our parishes and schools and our St. Vincent de Paul Societies and Catholic Charities locations are all sacred places – beacons of Christ's mercy.

This purpose and hope are the heart of our Mission Alignment Process. We are taking stock of the gifts given to us by God, both temporal and our own talents, and understanding how we can be more effective in bringing about tremendous fruit in our Diocese.

We are committed to addressing the current reality in our Diocese, a reality happening not just here, but throughout North America and in many Christian denominations. It is a dual challenge of declining engagement by Catholics and a decline in priestly and religious vocations, resulting in underutilized parish resources and facilities. In our Diocese, for example, we have 25% fewer priests than in 1985 and Mass attendance has dropped precipitously, almost in half, since 2010. It is essential we focus on our mission to serve people where they are now ... and not where they were

“

AS CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS, WE ARE CREATING PLACES WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME TO KNOW JESUS CHRIST AND HE CAN COME TO KNOW THEM. OUR PARISHES AND SCHOOLS AND OUR ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETIES AND CATHOLIC CHARITIES LOCATIONS ARE ALL SACRED PLACES – BEACONS OF CHRIST'S MERCY.”



“

I ASK FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO WORK WITH ME AND OUR PASTORS IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS AS WE DETERMINE HOW BEST TO “RIGHT SIZE” OUR PARISHES TO SERVE THE FAITHFUL AND ALL WHO COME TO US SEEKING CHRIST’S TENDER LOVE. THIS EFFORT WILL REQUIRE US TO REIMAGINE HOW WE USE OUR FACILITIES AND OTHER RESOURCES. ... THIS CHALLENGE WILL REQUIRE US TO PUT ASIDE OUR PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THE WHOLE DIOCESE AND THE FUTURE OF OUR BELOVED CHURCH.”

in 1965 (when most of our parish facilities were built). We cannot afford to maintain structures that no longer serve our mission.

We filed for bankruptcy because we believe this process is the best way to support a compassionate and equitable outcome for survivors of abuse, while ensuring we continue to provide the essential services and support so crucial to our parishioners and communities.

Since the initial filing, we have continued our important spiritual work while moving forward with the Court supervised proceedings. The September 11 deadline for survivors of clergy sexual abuse to file claims has passed, closing the period established by the bankruptcy court for all claims to be filed.

As a result, there are now 407 claims to resolve through the bankruptcy process. Now that we have a defined claim universe, the Diocese can begin working with both the creditors’ committee and our insurers on a plan to equitably compensate the survivors.

The next steps include entering into mediation with the creditors’ committee and insurers, conducted by court-appointed mediators. Mediation will serve as an essential path by which claimants will receive compensation through the bankruptcy process.

I ask for your commitment to work with me and our pastors in the upcoming months as we determine how best to “right size” our parishes to serve the faithful and all who come to us seeking Christ’s tender love. This effort will require us to reimagine how we use our facilities and other resources. All will be impacted by these changes; yet I promise all will be able to be part of a faith community where we can celebrate the sacraments, pass on the faith to our children and offer works of mercy to those individuals in need. This challenge will require us to put aside our personal preferences and work together for the good of the whole diocese and the future of our beloved Church.

Please join me, too, in praying for the survivors of clergy sexual abuse and their continued healing. My prayer is that all Catholics in the Diocese of Oakland live our lives as true witnesses of the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

You, the priests and the people of our Diocese, are generous, faithful, and full of good will. Thank you for your continual support for Christ and His Church.

Wishing you every grace and blessing,

The Most Reverend
Michael C. Barber, S.J.
Bishop of Oakland ▲



CELEBRATING OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK IS JAN. 28 - FEB. 3

At St. Paul School, A Lesson in Welcoming Everyone

BY MICHELE JURICH | PHOTOS BY DOMINIQUE GHEKIERE-MINTZ

With the professional assistance of a pair of San Pablo Department vehicles, the students at St. Paul School — from pre-schoolers to eighth-graders — walked a mile in the shoes of a Civil Rights icon.

Calling out “Ruby Bridges!” with emphasis and eloquence, the students joined in a nationwide remembrance of the little girl in Louisiana who was the first African American elementary school student to enroll in a formerly all-white school.

She was all of 6 at the time.

So it was perhaps fitting that it was the first-grade teacher at St. Paul who led the celebration of Ruby Bridges Day.

Kayla Sullivan, in her second year as the first grade teacher, is a member of AAA.

The AAA provides materials for Ruby Bridges Day. It’s customary at some schools to walk to school that day; at St. Paul the walk began after the students had arrived at school.

Kayla had secured a grant to cover the expenses of the day.

The students prepared in advance. First-graders wrote words about Ruby Bridges. What it must have been like for the little girl to take those steps in 1963.

The classroom opportunities “to see how brave she was and to put themselves in her shoes,” as Kayla said, were designed for the various age groups. First-graders colored a picture and surrounded it with words that they thought described Ruby Bridges.

“Smart,” “Brave” and “Believes in God” were noted on one of the students’ pages.

The teachers’ commitment to their students glowed. When asked, Kayla offered, “I tell them, ‘Your kids are my kids until they’re sent home.’”



of the Diocese of Oakland

ALAMEDA COUNTY

ALAMEDA

1 ST. JOSEPH

1910 San Antonio Ave.
510.522.4456
stjosephalameda.org

2 ST. PHILIP NERI

1335 High St.
510.521.0787
spnalameda.org

BERKELEY

3 SCHOOL OF THE MADELEINE

1225 Milvia St.
510.526.4744
themadeleine.com

CASTRO VALLEY

4 OUR LADY OF GRACE

19920 Anita Ave.
510.581.3155
olgschool.org

DUBLIN

5 ST. RAYMOND

11557 Shannon Ave.
925.828.4064
straymondschool.org

FREMONT

6 HOLY SPIRIT

3930 Parish Ave.
510.793.3553
holyspiritschoolfremont.com

7 OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

40374 Fremont Blvd.
510.657.1674
olgweb.org

8 ST. JOSEPH

43222 Mission Blvd.
510.656.6525
stjosephschoolfremont.org

HAYWARD

9 ALL SAINTS

22870 Second St.
510.582.1910
ascshayward.org

Older students wrote on the Chrome books.

It's a lesson, too, about inclusion and welcoming everyone, which seemed like the way the diverse community lives every day.

On this day, after the long walk, the students were treated to a hot dog lunch, paid for by some of the grant money. They sat outdoors at tables with a covering that was just right for the occasionally rainy day.

The students' joy at each other's company was palpable.

After lunch, they headed to the yard for some games. ▲



LEARN MORE

St. Paul School is a Lumen Christi Academy. For additional information of the school, visit <https://st-paulschool.org/>



RY SCHOOLS

10 ST. BEDE

26910 Patrick Ave.
510.782.3444
stbedecatholicschool.org

11 ST. CLEMENT

790 Calhoun St.
510.538.5885
sclements.school.org

12 ST. JOACHIM

21250 Hesperian Blvd.
510.783.3177
stjoachimschool.org

LIVERMORE

13 ST. MICHAEL

345 Church St.
925.447.1888
smsliv.org

NEWARK

14 ST. EDWARD

5788 Thornton Ave.
510.793.7242
stedcs.org

OAKLAND

15 ST. ANTHONY

A Lumen Christi Academy
1500 E. 15th St
510.534.3334
stanthony-oakland.org

16 ST. ELIZABETH

A Lumen Christi Academy
1516 33rd Ave.
510.532.7392
saintelizabeth.us

17 ST. LEO

4238 Howe St.
510.654.7828
stleothegreat.org

18 ST. THERESA

4850 Clarewood Drive
510.547.3146
sttheresaschool.org

PIEDMONT

19 CORPUS CHRISTI

1 Estates Drive
510.530.4056
corpuschristischool.com

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510.357.8772
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21 ST. FELICITAS

1650 Manor Blvd.
510.357.2530
stfelicitas-school.org

22 ST. LEANDER

451 Davis St.
510.351.4144
stleandercatholicschool.org

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23 ST. JOHN

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510.276.6632
stjohnslz.org

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24 HOLY ROSARY

25 E. 15th St.
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holyroscatholicsschool.org

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3886 Chestnut St.
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stagnesconcord.com

26 DE LA SALLE ACADEMY

1380 Galaxy Way
925.288.8200
dlshs-academy.org

27 ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

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925.682.5414
sfaconcord.org

28 QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS

A Lumen Christi Academy
2391 Grant St.
925.685.8700
qasconcord.org

DANVILLE

29 ST. ISIDORE

435 La Gonda Way
925.837.2977
stisidore.org

EL CERRITO

30 ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

11156 San Pablo Ave.
510.234.2244
stjohnec.org

LAFAYETTE

31 ST. PERPETUA

3445 Hamlin Road
925.284.1640
stperpetua-school.org

MARTINEZ

32 ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

A Lumen Christi Academy
604 Mellus St.
925.228.4140
stcatherinemartinez.com

PINOLE

33 ST. JOSEPH

1961 Plum St.
510.724.0242
stjosephpinole.com

PITTSBURG

34 ST. PETER MARTYR

A Lumen Christi Academy
425 W. Fourth St.
925.439.1014
stpetermartyrschool.org

PLEASANT HILL

35 CHRIST THE KING

195B Brandon Road
925.685.1109
ctkschool.org

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871 Sonoma St.
510.232.2283
stdavidschool.org

RODEO

37 ST. PATRICK

907 Seventh St.
510.799.2506
stpatrickschoolrodeo.org

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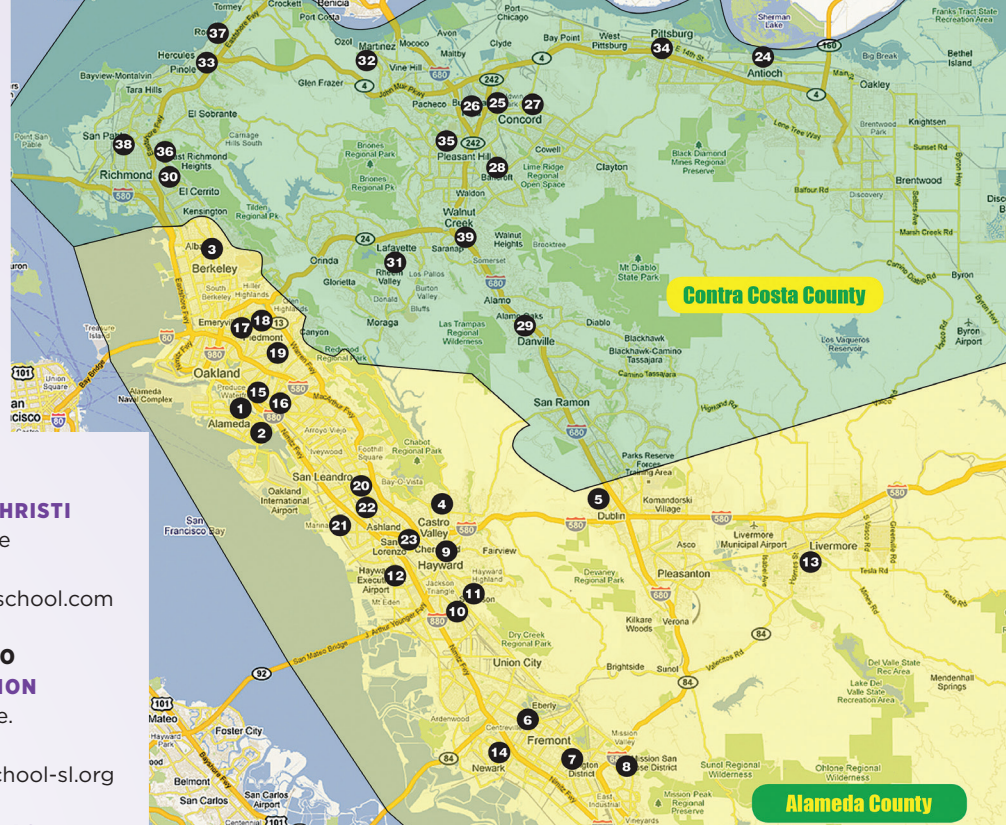
38 ST. PAUL

A Lumen Christi Academy
1825 Church Lane
510.233.3080
st-paulschool.org

WALNUT CREEK

39 ST. MARY

1158 Bont Lane
925.935.5054
st-mary.net ▲





AS TOLD BY
PRINCIPAL ALISON WILKIE

PHOTOS BY DOMINIQUE GHEKIERE-MINTZ



It is my honor to continue to live out the charism of the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, who began St. Michael School 110 years ago.

The tiles in our entry hallway represent some of our legacy families who are still actively present in our school community. The Concannons, a founding family, are represented today by our TK and 5th grade teachers, Mrs. Lessard and Mrs. Merry, who are mother and daughter.

Many alumni choose to return to St. Michael School to bring their own children to our school, and some of them like the Gandolfo family go back multiple generations.

Each of those generations are steeped in the Dominican Sisters charism pillars, which are the foundation of our school: Community, Service, Study and Prayer.

As the principal, it is most important to me that our Catholic faith is at the heart of every decision. When you walk through our school campus, you can feel the love of Christ surrounding you, especially in the warm spirit of our community. You can see the hands of Christ in the main entrance hallway, when the display shelves are overflowing with items like diapers and wipes during October for Respect Life month, which are donated by our school community for the St. Michael Church Community Care ministry.

You can hear the voice of Christ through teachers praying with their students or staff offering caring words of encouragement to parents, students and each other. Our students know the beauty of Christ through their Catholic curriculum across all subject areas.

Thirteen years ago, Sister Emmanuel Cardinale, OP retired as the last Dominican Sister of San Rafael principal. Seven years ago, I came to a school with 120 students registered.

Recommitting ourselves to our Mission of Excellence strengthened by our Catholic faith with a Catholic Liberal Education curriculum focus, providing the tools such as Education in Virtue program from the Dominican Sisters, Mary Mother of the Eucharist to help our students live a virtuous life, and inspiring our teachers, staff, parents, and School Board with the philosophy of the *Duc in Altum* Collaborative, along with the support of both our Pastor, Father Carl Arcosa, and the Diocese of Oakland Superintendent Team led by Dr. Andrew Currier, all helped to grow our school to 193 students today.

I humbly envision continuing to expand our school into a second-century of Catholic School excellence in Livermore.

All Saints Day at St. Michael School

**CATHOLIC LIBERAL EDUCATION
IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED**



EVANGELIZATION – THE SHARING AND PASSING ON OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

At St. Michael School, all that we do is rooted in our mission of being a Christ-centered community. Vanessa Silva, first grade teacher, is our Diocese of Oakland St. Francis de Sales award recipient. She is an exemplary teacher who models the vocation of a Catholic School educator.

“

Vanessa Silva, first grade teacher, is our Diocese of Oakland St. Francis de Sales award recipient. She is an exemplary teacher who models the vocation of a Catholic School educator.”

Her thematic curriculum units are well crafted, blending religion, literature, writing, history, science, math and the arts. Her first grade students live out our Mission of academic excellence strengthened by our Catholic faith in all subject areas to the best of their ability.

Her communication with parents, her support of fellow teachers and staff and as a member of the school's leadership team, and her relationship-building with students all create an extraordinary first grade experience for both students and parents.

This certainly was the case for a current second-grader. After learning all about the Catholic faith in first grade by actively living out the Catholic liturgical year, learning about many different Saints and Bible stories, and learning to apply that knowledge to her life, the now second-grader decided that she wanted to be baptized into the Catholic faith. After speaking with her parents regarding her decision, they contacted Ms. Silva to ask her a very special question. Her former student had asked that Ms. Silva be her godmother.

During a school-sponsored Sunday Family Mass, she was baptized along with three fellow classmates, with Ms. Silva standing right beside her as her Godmother. Ms. Silva was also present at her goddaughter's First Holy Communion, and she prayed with her in our school's St. Thomas Aquinas Oratory, when her goddaughter's grandmother was in hospice care. And Ms. Silva was there to pray with her goddaughter and to wipe away her tears when her goddaughter's grandmother passed away.

Ms. Silva's grace-filled presence with her students, parents, and with the St. Michael School community exemplifies our school's commitment to being a Catholic school.



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ORATORY – A BLESSING ON OUR CAMPUS

At St. Michael's School, we are blessed to have our St. Thomas Aquinas Oratory on our campus. Having been founded 110 years ago by the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, naming the Oratory after St. Thomas Aquinas was the perfect match.

Today, classes go once a week to pray, sometimes to offer prayer intentions, or to say the rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Occasionally, they may go as a class to hear a Bible story and have a thoughtful discussion about the story.

They may go to celebrate Mass, which is most special for our little ones to be in this intimate, sacred setting. A class may also visit the Oratory to be with the Blessed Sacrament during adoration.

On any given Wednesday afternoon, you may find the teachers and staff praying and supporting one another during a faculty meeting.

And every Thursday afternoon, before school dismisses for the day, you'll find a group of parents praying the rosary with the Blessed Sacrament during adoration.



ALL SAINTS DAY TRADITION

We have a tradition of the second-graders leading the All Saints Day Mass. Each student chooses a saint. They research the saint to learn about how they should come dressed, and they come prepared to do some public speaking as they share about their saint. By allowing

the students to choose the saint themselves, they tend to choose a saint that has meaning for them – a saint that represents their culture or ethnic background or perhaps the saint's name from baptism. The Second Grade Saints begin the Mass walking in during the entrance procession.

PARTICIPATION AND APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

Father Carl Arcosa began his homily asking who wants to be a Saint – of course, all students and faculty eagerly raised their hands. Students are encouraged to fully participate in the homily by sharing how they apply their knowledge of the Catholic faith to their everyday life.



LEARN MORE

Visit www.smsliv.org



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屋崙天主教教區華人牧民中心主辦
Chinese Pastoral and Cultural Center Presents

甲辰年農曆新春彌撒及敬祖儀式
2024 Lunar New Year Mass and Veneration Ceremony to Ancestors

主祭 CELEBRANT
屋崙教區主教
The Most Reverend Michael C. Barber

日期 DATE
二零二四年二月二十四日(星期六)下午二時正
February 24th, 2024 Saturday 2PM

地點 PLACE
屋崙基督之光主教座堂
The Cathedral of Christ the Light
2121 HARRISON STREET, OAKLAND, CA 94612

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WORLD DAY OF THE SICK 2024



FEBRUARY 10
SATURDAY

THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT
2121 HARRISON ST., OAKLAND

VOCATIONS

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS SUPPORT SEMINARIANS

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, representing the six Courts of the Oakland Diocese, attended the All Saints Day Mass at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland. After the Nov. 1 Mass, they met with Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ to present him a check for \$6,000 toward the education and other expenses of the seminarians of the Diocese of Oakland. Many individual seminarians have been supported over the years with monthly stipends and, of course, with prayer. ▲



Back row: Lorine Bakowsky, State First Vice-Regent and Regent of Court Mary Queen of the World, San Leandro; member Anna Friedeberg of Court St. Raymond; Laura McQuoid, Regent of Court Sr. Emmanuel Cardinale, Livermore. **Front row:** District Deputy Maureen Laubacher, member of Court St. Raymond; Dina Bargas, Vice-Regent, Court St. Raymond; Stephanie Antonio, Regent, Court St. Raymond, Dublin; Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ; Marie Jose Murray, Regent, Court St. John Baptist de LaSalle, Concord; Rosanne Ortland, Regent Court St. Mary Margaret, Pittsburg; Nita Volker, District Deputy, member of Court St. Raymond.

20 YEARS IN SAN FRANCISCO

Because Women Deserve Better than Abortion.®

WALK for LIFE

WEST COAST

20TH ANNUAL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 2024 • CIVIC CENTER PLAZA • SAN FRANCISCO

Rally: 12:30 PM
CIVIC CENTER PLAZA
Info Faire: 11:00 AM
Saturday, January 20, 2024

Rally starts at Civic Center Plaza, walking down Market Street (2 miles). Walk ends at Embarcadero Plaza.

BART stations at both locations. Ample parking.

Register and info:
(415) 658-1793 | email: info@WalkforLifeWC.com

WalkforLifeWC.com

NO MORE SECRETS

Survivors of Clergy Sexual Abuse
Diocese of Oakland

**How can we help?
Let us know.**

510.267.8334



He is Calling

PRAY FOR OUR 2023-2024 SEMINARIANS



REV. MR. JUAN CARLOS PONCE
Theology 4
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



REV. MR. JOHN PAUL RABAGO
Theology 4
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



ALVARO SANTAMARIA
Theology 4
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



GARRETT MCGOWAN
Theology 3
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



AIDAN CAMERON-SMITH
Theology 3
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



HUY MINH NGUYEN
Theology 3
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



ANTONIO ESPINOZA
Theology 1
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



RODOLFO QUINTEROS
Theology 1
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



ERIC RUIZ
Theology 1
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



OMAR LARA
Pre Theo-2
Josephinum College
Columbus, OH



DIOCESE OF OAKLAND



JOSE ORTEGA
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Completion Program
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STEVEN ELLISON
Propaedeutic Year
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



JUDAS OCHOA
Propaedeutic Year
St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, CA



FR. MATTHEW MURRAY
Director of Seminarians



FR. CARL ARCOSA
Director of Vocations



MOST REV. MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ
Bishop of Oakland

"Lord Jesus, as You once called the first disciples to make them fishers of men, let your sweet invitation continue to resound: Come, follow Me! Give young men and women the grace of responding quickly to Your voice. Support our bishops, priests, and consecrated people in their apostolic labor."

SAINT JOHN PAUL II



OAKDIOCESE.ORG/VOCATIONS

vocations@oakdiocese.org (510) 267-8356

GOPRIEST.COM



A FEW WORDS ABOUT VOCATIONS

For me, what makes a vibrant church or parish is the yes and response of young men and women, the people to serve our Lord.

—FATHER CARL ARCOSA, VOCATIONS DIRECTOR

Our Lord needs help in taking care of the people that are members of his Church. So Christ from the beginning has called people to help him.

Our Lord himself said, “Pray to the master of the harvest that he will send workers into the vineyard.” So we have to pray, “Lord, please send workers in the vineyard of the Diocese of Oakland.”

— BISHOP MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ

“When you see young people you think would make a good priest or nun, encourage them.”

— BISHOP MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ

Vocation ultimately comes from the Lord choosing us, calling us by name and introducing us into the great adventure that is sharing the Gospel. We are called by name. That’s why we begin the baptismal right asking, “What is your name?”

... Vocation really means, “Lord, how can I put myself at the service of my brothers and sisters?”

— FATHER MATTHEW MURRAY,
DIRECTOR OF SEMINARIANS

We have a responsibility to foster the faith which has been given to us; a trust that was meant to be given away ... As St. Francis of Assisi said, “Go forth now, Brothers, and preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary, use words.”

— FATHER KEVIN SCHINDLER-MCGRAW, OFM CONV



We cannot do the work of vocations without the support of everyone. For those who give financially, thank you so much. For those who are encouraging people to not only consider a particular type of vocation – priesthood, Religious life – that’s good. Just encouraging people to be close to the Lord, witnessing to their faith and encouraging other people to do that, that’s how you help support vocations, that’s how you help inspire people to follow the call of the Lord.

— FATHER MATTHEW MURRAY ▲

See
the video at
[Vimeo.com/886622276](https://vimeo.com/886622276)

Support the Seminarians of the Diocese of Oakland

Please consider giving to the special collection on Jan. 7, 2024



► *Donate at your parish*

► *Donate online*

Donate at oakdiocese.org/diocesan-donation select “seminary education”

► *Donate by check*

Mission Advancement, 2121 Harrison St., Suite 100, Oakland CA 94612 In note: Seminarians

Soon after their ordination as transitional deacons, Rev. Mr. John Paul Rabago and Rev. Mr. Juan Carlos Ponce are surrounded by their brother seminarians. The transitional diaconate is the step before the priesthood.

Photo by Chuck Deckert

“Pray the LORD of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (Matthew 9:38)



St. Bede School:

Honoring vocations, welcoming visitors

In honor of National Vocations Week, St. Bede School in Hayward had a series of guest speakers: Father Luke Leighton, a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal; Deacon John Paul Rabago, the transitional deacon at the school; Deacon Juan Carlos Bermudez, a permanent deacon from St. Clement Parish in Hayward; and Sister Faustina Pham, principal at St. Felicitas School in San Leandro.

Students in third through eighth grade attended the speakers' talks.

Father Luke heard Jesus speak to him when he was a teen. Jesus said, "Do what makes you truly happy, and that will make me happy." A few years later, in college, he heard the same words from Jesus. That is when he decided to become a priest.

Deacon John Paul Rabago explained the differences between transitional and permanent deacons.

Deacon Juan Carlos Bermudez shared that we should always be listening for the call from God, because God knew

us before we were born. Before our parents knew us, God knew us.

Sister Faustina spoke to the students about her call to Religious life as a member of the Quinhon Missionary Sisters of the Holy Cross. She shared the three vows she made: poverty, chastity and obedience. ▲

COURTESY PHOTOS

Sister Faustina Pham ►

◀ Father Luke Leighton, CFR

▼ Deacon Juan Carlos Bermudez

St. Bede students in third through eighth grade attended talks on vocations; here the students are pictured with Deacon John Paul Rabago, who serves at their parish.



Our Lady of Grace School:

Feeding the hungry

Many Our Lady of Grace School families spent a Sunday morning volunteering with the non-profit Kids Against Hunger. This organization packages and ships highly nutritious and life-saving meals to starving and malnourished children in developing countries and in disaster situations, as well as to children in need in the United States.

The group, which included 60 students, staff, parents,

grandparents, uncles, aunts and friends, packaged more than 7,500 meals that were scheduled to be sent to Haiti.

The Castro Valley school community is so proud of the students, ranging between TK and fifth grade, who took their responsibility of packaging the food very seriously. They understood this food would help feed hungry children in another part of the world. Their smiles were priceless! ▲



COURTESY PHOTO

St. Edward School:

Celebrating 60th anniversary

Sister Rosaleen Stoiber, OP started off the anniversary celebration of St. Edward School the same way she started the school day in 1963. She rang the bell.

Former students, families, teachers and staff members joined the current students and families, teachers and staff members on Oct. 14 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Newark school.

More than 300 people were present at the celebration, which included a commendation presented by Newark Mayor Michael Hannon, as the community celebrated 60 wonderful years rooted in the Dominican tradition and charism.

Student entertainment included Dancing through the Decades; songs by the School Choir; and music by the Strings ensemble, which included ukulele, violin and guitar.

Alumni served a variety of food and treats. Generous donors provided raffle prizes.

The school is currently raising funds for a new lunch patio. Contact Emelyn Magpoc at emagpoc@csdo.org for details. ▲

St. Edward first-graders danced the Macarena. ▶



The St. Edward School Choir performed for more than 300 guests at the Newark school's 60th anniversary celebration. ▼



Principal Tina Cruz poses with Sister Rosaleen Stoiber, OP, who served as the first principal of St. Edward School in Newark, which opened in 1963.



COURTESY PHOTOS



◀ Filomena Saraswati Giese and Maria Ligia Britto, sisters from Goa who emigrated to Berkeley and El Cerrito, advocated for the canonization of St. Joseph Vaz.

St. Joseph Vaz

HOW TWO SISTERS IN THE DIOCESE OF OAKLAND AIDED THE MISSIONARY FROM GOA'S CENTURIES-OLD CAUSE FOR SAINTHOOD | BY FILOMENA SARASWATI GIESE

January 16 is the Feast of St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz, who was born in Goa, India, and served as a missionary under persecution in Mangalore, Kanara and in Sri Lanka in the 17th century. He was canonized in 2015 by Pope Francis.

This is the story of how a Catholic family in the Diocese of Oakland figured prominently in his canonization.

In 1978, my sister Maria Ligia Britto and I, immigrants in Berkeley and El Cerrito whose family was originally from Goa, India, were discussing why Goa still had no canonized saints after almost five centuries of Catholicism in the former Portuguese colony in India – especially since the Cause of then-Venerable Father Joseph Vaz had been started in 1713.

Missionary work of the Portuguese and of native Goans in Asia

In the 15th century, the Portuguese sailed eastward to find the fabulous riches of India. In 1498, the Portuguese admiral Vasco da Gama landed in India. In 1510, the Portuguese admiral Afonso de Albuquerque conquered Goa on the southwest coast of India from Adil Shah, the Muslim ruler. It was Portugal's first colony and outpost in India and later for its entire spice empire in Asia.

The Portuguese also established Goa as the missionary capital of their empire.

Franciscan missionaries were brought on their first sailing vessels to establish the Catholic faith. They made the first conversions in Goa, building the Portuguese-style churches and convents that one still can see in Old Goa and other parts of Goa.

Later the Portuguese brought the Dominicans and Jesuits to Goa. The famous St. Francis Xavier came to Goa for a very short period and went on to other Portuguese territories to preach the Gospel in their Asian outposts.

But little is heard that, early on, the Goan converts asked to have a native clergy that later did much of the missionary work in Asia and Africa.

The European missionaries were reluctant to establish a native clergy, but the king of Portugal financed the building of the College of St. Paul, a seminary for their education.

St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz was one of these native Indian missionaries. He successfully evangelized in the territories the Portuguese lost to Dutch conquest in India and Ceylon. The Dutch were Calvinists, who persecuted the Catholic converts made by the Portuguese and banned all priests and missionaries from entering those areas.

Why no native Indian saints?

Many Goans, like our family, wondered why, in 1978, there wasn't a single canonized Indian saint from Goa or any other part of India where

Catholicism had spread. They decided to engage themselves in the Cause of then-Venerable Father Joseph Vaz, who went to Ceylon from Goa in 1687 to minister to the abandoned Catholics under Dutch Calvinist persecution in Ceylon. His Cause had been stalled at the Vatican for almost 300 years.

Getting the attention and approval of the pope

To preserve the memory of St. Joseph Vaz and support his Cause, Maria Ligia and I began the tradition of yearly Feast Masses in the Diocese

of Oakland in 1978. At first, this was in our homes and the homes of supporters of the idea of making a Goan saint. Later, Masses were organized in churches in San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, other East Bay cities and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

We collected signatures for petitions to three popes, Pope St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict and Pope Francis, expressing the interest of Indian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan Catholics around the world for action on his Cause.

In 2014, we took a petition and signatures to Rome. The postulator, Father Thomas Klosterkamp, OMI, said that at that juncture, the pope decided that the Cause had sat without action for too long — three centuries — of a very great saint who worked under persecution.

He asked for proof that there was international devotion to Blessed Joseph Vaz so that he could canonize him without the need of a final miracle, as was done in the case of Pope St. John XXIII. His Holiness said that devotion in Goa and Sri

Lanka was not sufficient for such a canonization.

The record of the work and history of petitions by the Joseph Naik Vaz Institute throughout the world in the two Postio Historicas (official documents for the Cause) were submitted to Pope Francis as proof of international devotion.

Pope Francis accepted it and canonized St. Joseph Vaz, Apostle of Sri Lanka, in 2015 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. ▲

Filomena Saraswati Giese is president and founder of Joseph Naik Vaz Institute in Berkeley.



WE INVITE YOU TO COME TO OUR 46TH ANNUAL FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH NAIK VAZ OF INDIA AND SRI LANKA

**The celebration will be at the 11 a.m. Jan. 28
Mass at Cathedral of Christ the Light.**

Our theme of the program on the life and work of St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz in the Parish Hall after Mass will be for Inter-religious Peace and Reconciliation in memory of the protection from Dutch persecution given to him by the non-Christian Buddhist Kings of Kandy.

We will also be remembering our six African American candidates for the sainthood. While ministering to the persecuted Catholics, St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz also ministered to the African slaves and their descendants in Sri Lanka.

Call or text 510.325.1803 or email
josephnaik.vaz@gmail.com to make
a reservation for the program.

Joseph Naik Vaz Institute
www.josephnaikvaz.org

*Michael, Myra and Vana,
we care about you.*

*We lift up your souls tonight
to the loving mercy of Jesus.*

*And we pray that you and all
the departed may be saved.”*

On All Souls Day, Michael D. Davis, Vana Sicchio and Myra Theresa Williams received a Christian funeral at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland. Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, presided at the Mass, after which the previously unclaimed remains of three people were laid to rest in the Mausoleum.

Burying the dead is one of the Corporal Works of Mercy. The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are among the pillars of the Diocese of Oakland. ▲

PHOTOS BY DOMINIQUE GHEKIERE-MINTZ

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

BURY THE





THE DEAD





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**Eucharistic
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**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE ABOUT
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Our diocese is arranging a group of at least 100 (so far!) to be part of this historic event! If you have purchased your tickets already, or are planning to, you may attend the informational meeting on Jan. 21 at St. Raymond Parish, 11555 Shannon Avenue, Dublin.

To RSVP for the meeting and receive updates on the Revival,
email Father Erick Villa at frjetvilla@gmail.com

For information on dates, tickets and the schedule of events
visit www.eucharisticrevival.org



SISTER MOIRA MACPHERSON, OP

SISTER MOIRA MACPHERSON, OP, DIED IN FREMONT AT THE MOTHERHOUSE OF THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF MISSION SAN JOSE ON NOV. 4, 2023. SHE WAS 91 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 71ST YEAR OF HER RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.

Sister Moira, baptized Elizabeth Patricia, was the daughter of James Macpherson and Elizabeth Macpherson. Born on Jan. 15, 1932, in San Francisco, she was educated by the Dominican Sisters at St. James Girls School and Immaculate Conception Academy, San Francisco. On Feb. 2, 1951, she entered the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, and on Aug. 30, 1952, she made her first profession of vows.

During the course of 33 years, Sister Moira ministered in Catholic schools in California. She taught at San Gabriel Mission Elementary School, San Gabriel and St. Elizabeth Elementary School, Oakland. Sister Moira served as principal at Flintridge Sacred Heart Grammar School, La Canada; St. Michael's Elementary School and Santa Teresita School, Los Angeles; and Sacred Heart School, Patterson. Her teaching ministry also included assignments to two secondary schools, Sacred Heart High School, Los Angeles, and St. Elizabeth High School, Oakland.

For the next 25 years, from 1988-2013, Sister Moira was a pastoral minister at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Martinez, conducting the Rite of Christian Initiation Program (RCIA) program, leading a grief ministry, visiting patients in local hospitals, the elderly in their homes and veterans at the VA Northern California Health Care System. Moving to the Motherhouse in 2013, Sister Moira continued her ministry to the sick as a volunteer at Washington Township Hospital, Fremont until 2020.

Throughout her life, Sister Moira had a very keen interest in social justice issues, especially causes involving peace, justice, racial and religious tolerance.

Sister Moira is survived by her brother, Robert, nieces and nephews.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Moira was celebrated on Nov. 11 at the Dominican Sisters Motherhouse Chapel. Burial followed at the Congregation's cemetery, God's Acre, at the Motherhouse. ▲



SISTER MARY MELAINE TOKAR, OP

SISTER MARY MELAINE TOKAR, OP DIED IN FREMONT ON NOV. 12, 2023. SHE WAS 78 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 49TH YEAR OF HER RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.

Born on Aug. 23, 1945, in Fullerton, Mary Melaine was one of ten children born to William G. Tokar and Mary M. Lypps. Her siblings are brothers Matt, Vic, Joe, Mark and David, and sisters Pat, Lisa, Rosanne and Margaret.

She is an alumna of St. Boniface School, Anaheim, and Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana. In 1971, she entered the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose and made her first profession of vows in 1974.

In Northern California, Sister Mary Melaine taught at St. Leonard School (now Our Lady of Guadalupe School), Fremont.

In Southern California, she ministered as a teacher at St. Frances Cabrini School and Sacred Heart Elementary School, Los Angeles; St. Boniface School, Anaheim; San Gabriel Mission Elementary School, San Gabriel; and St. Callistus School, Garden Grove. She ministered as support staff at St. Catherine's Academy, Anaheim and San Gabriel Mission High School.

For 11 years, Sister Mary Melaine lovingly provided home care for her parents.

Sister Mary Melaine was blessed with gifts as an artist. A special way she shared this talent was making greeting cards with her signature drawings of little children. She also delighted young students by telling them stories using puppets.

For a number of years, Sister Mary Melaine carried the burden of illness. In 2016, she was assigned to St. Martin Community at the Motherhouse, where she resided until God called her home on Nov. 12.

The Funeral Mass for Sister Mary Melaine was celebrated on Nov. 17 at the Dominican Sisters Motherhouse Chapel in Fremont. Interment followed at God's Acre, the sisters' cemetery at the Motherhouse. ▲

OFFICIAL CALENDAR

January 9

Priest Personnel Board Meeting

January 15

Pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, Portugal

January 16-23

International Social Justice Conference for Bishops, Lisbon, Portugal.

January 24

Diocese of Oakland Catholic School Teachers Awards Ceremony

January 25

College of Consultors
Presbyteral Council Meeting

January 31

Benedict XVI Board Meeting,
Archdiocese of San Francisco

For a complete schedule, go to
www.oakdiocese.org/Bishop

SNEAK PEEK INSIDE *THE CATHOLIC VOICE* FEBRUARY 2024

The annual Our Lady of Guadalupe pilgrimage was held in December 2023. Look for the full story and additional photos in the February 2024 issue of *The Catholic Voice*.

PHOTOS BY LORENA ROJAS



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