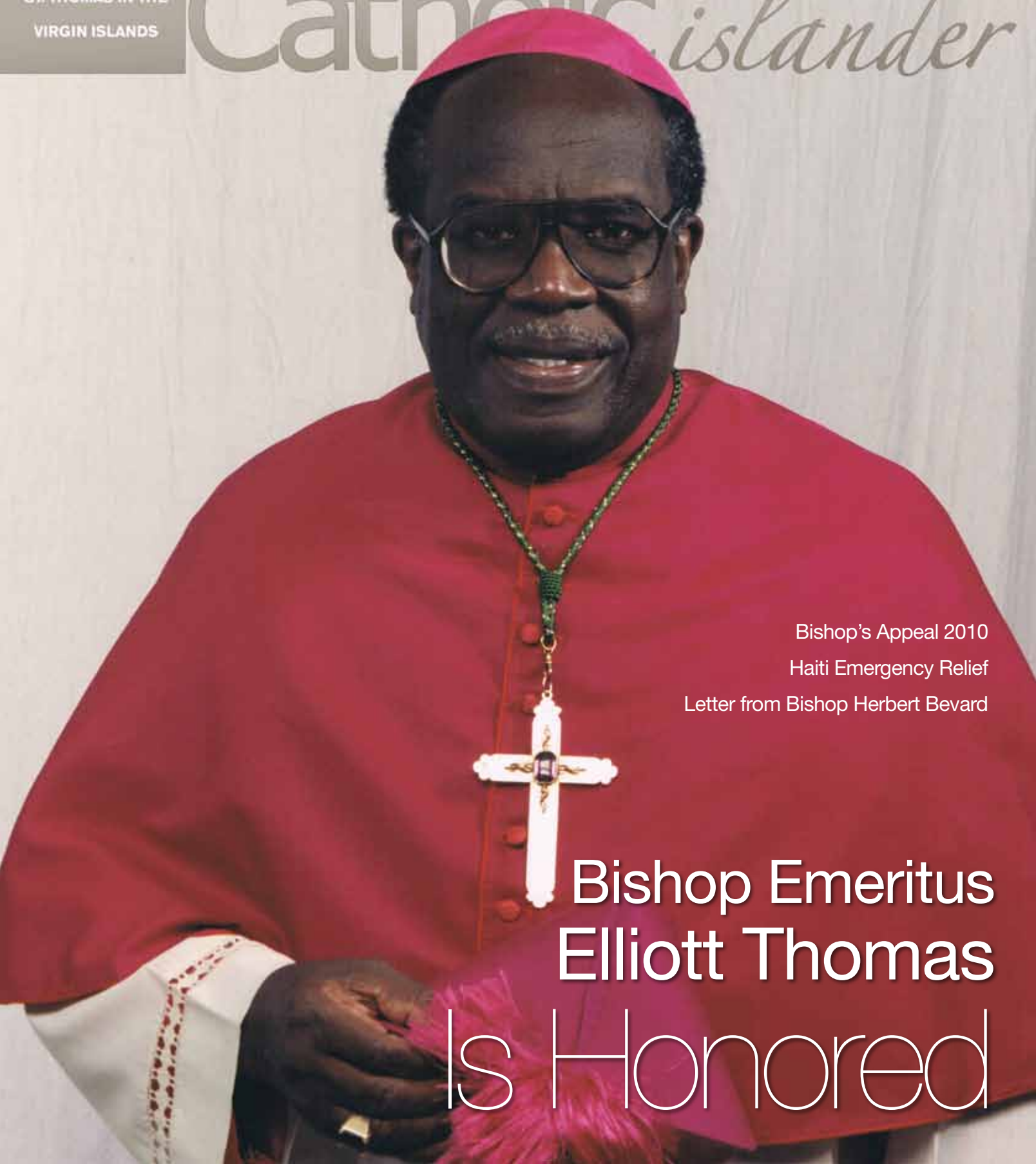


THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF
ST. THOMAS IN THE
VIRGIN ISLANDS

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February 2010

the Catholic *islander*



Bishop's Appeal 2010

Haiti Emergency Relief

Letter from Bishop Herbert Bevard

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas Is Honored

Bishop's Appeal 2010



>> **The Most Reverend Herbert A. Bevard** is Bishop of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands.

T

he launching of the Bishop's Appeal 2010 will generate financial support for Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands, the territory's four Catholic schools and evangelization outreach, including youth ministry and formation of seminarians. The Bishop's Appeal is an annual fundraising campaign designed to meet major needs within the diocese. All money raised stays in the territory. The 2010 appeal begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17, and ends on Pentecost Sunday, May 23. Brochures are available at all parishes and schools.

The goal for the Bishop's Appeal 2010 is \$400,000. The parish goals are as follows:

Holy Cross Church, St. Croix	\$50,000
Holy Family Church, St. Thomas	\$40,000
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, St. John	\$19,000
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas	\$35,000
St. Ann Church, St. Croix	\$40,000
St. Anne Chapel, St. Thomas	\$13,000
St. Joseph Church, St. Croix	\$16,000
St. Patrick Church, St. Croix	\$22,000
Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas	\$50,000
Special Donations	\$115,000

Appointments

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, has announced the following appointments.

Msgr. Jerome Feudjio is school chaplain for Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas, effective January 18. This appointment is in addition to his roles as rector of Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas and moderator of the curia.

Father Louis Kemayou is director of both Family Life Ministries and the Legion of Mary, effective February 1. These appointments are in addition to his role as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on St. John.

Wednesday, February 3, 9:45 a.m., Meeting with Grade 11, Ss. Peter and Paul School, St. Thomas.

Saturday, February 6, 6:30 p.m., Keys and Sword Award Benefit, Marriott Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort, St. Thomas.

Sunday, February 7, 9 a.m., Mass, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas.

February 8–11, Priests Retreat, Columban Hall, St. Thomas.

Thursday, February 11, 9:30 a.m., 150th Anniversary Mass for the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Saturday, February 13, 5:30 p.m., Confessions, 6:30 p.m., Mass, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas.

Sunday, February 14, 9:30 a.m., Mass of Installation of a Pastor, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, St. John.

Wednesday, February 17, 12:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., Ash Wednesday Masses, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Saturday, February 20, 6 p.m., Mass, St. Patrick Church, St. Croix.

Sunday, February 21, 7 a.m., Mass of Installation of a Pastor, St. Joseph Church, St. Croix.

Saturday, February 27, 5 p.m., Mass, St. Anne Chapel, St. Thomas.

Sunday, February 28, 10:30 a.m., Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

the *Catholic islander*

The Newsletter of the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands

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Sisters of Charity 150th Anniversary

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, will celebrate a Mass for the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth. The Mass will be at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas on Thursday, February 11, at 9:30 a.m. Many of the priests serving the Virgin Islands will concelebrate the Mass, and the students of Ss. Peter and Paul School will be in attendance. The religious community has served the school since 1933.

Sister Margaret Confoy, SC, had the elementary school students collect 150 pennies and the upper school students collect 150 nickels toward the purchase of images of the Blessed Virgin Mary for each classroom. Bishop Bevard will bless these statues at the anniversary Mass.

Operation Rice Bowl

Parishes in the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands will promote Operation Rice Bowl beginning Ash Wednesday, February 17. For 35 years, this Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services has called participants to pray with their families and faith communities, fast in solidarity with those who hunger, learn about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas and give sacrificial contributions to those in need.

Two Pastors Installed

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, will install two new pastors in February. He will install Father Louis Kemayou as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on St. John on Sunday, February 14, at the 9:30 a.m. Mass. He will install Father John Mark as pastor of St. Joseph Church on St. Croix on Sunday, February 21 at the 7 a.m. Mass.

Keys and Sword Award

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas will be honored for his years of service to the Virgin Islands at the Keys and Sword Award Benefit at the Grand Ballroom of the Marriott Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort on Saturday, February 6, beginning

with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. The white-tie fundraiser will benefit the Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral Restoration Project, which will launch its second phase of construction in the spring. The dinner-dance will feature music by Milo's Kings, raffles and a silent auction.



Three representatives of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands were interviewed live by host Addie Ottley on *Face to Face*, a local television talk show, on January 20. His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, Msgr. Jerome Feudjio, rector of Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, and Gail Schulerbrandt, a member of the Cathedral Restoration Committee, spoke about the restoration of the Cathedral and the February 6 benefit for the Cathedral Restoration Project. They also discussed diocesan initiatives in assisting the earthquake relief efforts in Haiti.



Martin Luther King Concert

The Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral Choir and guests performed a concert honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas on January 17.

Auction and Dinner

St. Mary School on St. Croix will hold its annual fundraising dinner and auction at the Divi Carina Bay Ballroom on Saturday, February 6. Cocktails will be served at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. The theme this year is "The Bells of St. Mary's."

All funds will be dedicated toward scholarships and the purchase of a generator.

St. Lucians Celebrate Independence

Father Ignatius Cetoute of St. Lucia will celebrate a bilingual English/French Creole Mass in honor of the 31st anniversary of independence in St. Lucia at St. Ann Church on St. Croix on Sunday, February 7, at 9:30 a.m. That Mass also will be live on television (CCN-TV, channel 7) and radio (WRRR 1620 AM).

Valentines Day Breakfast

The Prayer Group at St. Patrick Church on St. Croix will host its annual Valentines Day breakfast at St. Gerard Hall on Sunday, February 14, following the 7 a.m. Mass. Tickets are available at the parish office for \$10.

Mardi Gras

The Prayers, Hymns and Praise Steel Orchestra, based out of Holy Family Church on St. Thomas, is holding a Mardi Gras night at Columban Hall on Sunday, February 14, at 5 p.m. Participants will enjoy an all-you-can-eat pasta or jambalaya dinner, dancing, card games, a domino contest and jokes and riddles. The party favors consist of hats, horns, masks, beads and balloons. Tickets are available from the church office for \$25. Proceeds will go to the orchestra's scholarship fund, which helps graduating members who leave for college.

Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus St. Thomas Council 6187 held its first Brotherhood Retreat at Windward Passage Hotel on January 17 to organize and plan its 2010 goals and objectives. Pictured, left to right, are James Hunt, Anthony Francis, John Belle, Sen. Shawn Malone, John James, Jr., Gilbert Pinney, Sen. Patrick Sprauve, Claudy Brutus, Sr., Alrid Lockhart, Benedict Regis, John James, Sr., Winston Parker and James Hague.



Prayer Group Anniversary

The Prayer Group at St. Patrick Church on St. Croix celebrates its 28th anniversary with Mass on Friday, February 12, at 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served on the patio after the Mass.

World Marriage Day 2010

World Marriage Day will be celebrated at all parishes in the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands on the weekend of February 13–14. Special recognition will be given to couples who celebrate 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 50+ years of marriage in 2010. Couples who registered at their parishes will receive a commemorative certificate.



Epiphany Sunday

Father Charles Crespo, administrator of St. Anne Chapel on St. Thomas, introduced the three kings during the Epiphany Masses on January 2–3.

New Deacon Formation Program

Men discerning a call to the permanent diaconate and their wives began a discernment and formation program at St. Ann Church on St. Croix on January 28. These men were referred by their pastors.

Msgr. Michael Kosak, director of Deacon Formation, will be assisted by Father Simon Opira, assistant director, and Sister Patricia Alexander, WIF, spiritual director. Clergy, religious and members of the laity will comprise the administrative and teaching staff.



Msgr. Antonio Verzosa led a novena of nightly prayers, Masses and receptions in anticipation of the first-ever Santo Niño Mass at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas on January 24. These gatherings, three of which were held in homes and six at St. Anne Chapel, brought together as many as 50 Filipinos.

Letter from Bishop Herbert Bevard

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Following the January 12 earthquake devastation in Haiti, several towns and parts of the capital, Port-au-Prince, were destroyed, industrial installations collapsed, and many thousands of lives were lost, including that of the archbishop, the Most Rev. Joseph Serge Miot. The entire Haitian population finds itself once again in deep sorrow and is forced to endure another severe crisis with little basic human resources on which to depend. These calamities only worsened the poverty that already affected the majority of Haitians.

I am deeply saddened by this catastrophe, and am sincerely concerned over the disaster gripping this Caribbean island. The people of Haiti urgently need our immediate assistance. I am, therefore, requesting that all our parishes and church entities continue to join me in praying for the victims of this tragedy and undertake immediate action to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

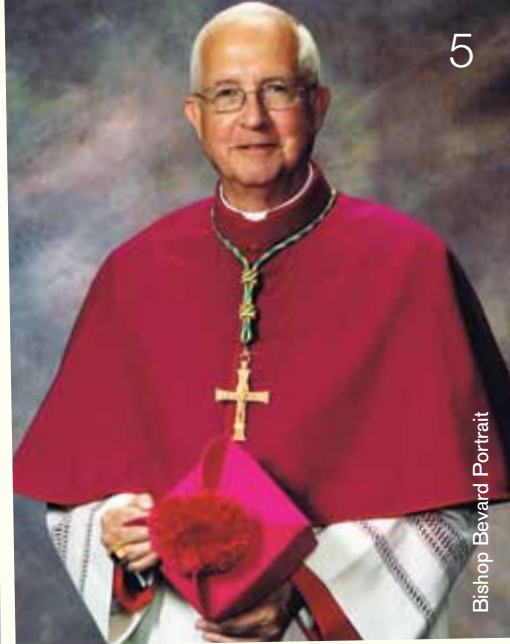
All our churches took a collection on the weekend of January 23–24 for Catholic Relief Services, which is doing remarkable work in the Port-au-Prince area. In addition, I celebrated a Mass at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on January 31 to gather all the faithful on St. Thomas to pray for the people of Haiti; similar island-wide Masses were held simultaneously at St. Ann Church on St. Croix and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on St. John. Even small parish groups took prompt action: For instance, the St. Thomas Filipino community took up a collection each night during their Santo Niño novena and the youth group at St. Anne Chapel on St. Thomas held a bake sale to raise funds for Catholic Relief Services' Haitian relief effort.

There is not enough we can do to help our brothers and sisters in Haiti. Please join with me as we pray that God will grant us strategies that will enable the Virgin Islands to continue to be vital in the recovery efforts there.

Devotedly yours in Jesus Christ,



Most Rev. Herbert A. Bevard
Bishop of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands



Bishop Bevard Portrait

E

mergency Relief

Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands (CCVI) is soliciting cash donations for Catholic

Relief Services' (CRS) Haitian relief effort. Thousands in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, received help from CRS amid destruction in the 7.0 magnitude quake on January 12.

CRS is working with partners from Caritas, the international Catholic aid network, to coordinate its aid response. The agency also is joining most aid groups in working with the United Nations as it becomes functional following the destruction of its Haiti headquarters and the death of many of its workers.

CRS turned a Port-au-Prince golf course into one of the first formal camps for the multitudes of displaced

people in the Haitian capital. With security provided by unarmed soldiers from the U.S. Army, CRS distributed buckets with food, water and hygiene supplies to a patient crowd.

At the St. Francois de Sales hospital — which has been working with CRS as part of the AIDSRelief consortium — CRS delivered enough medical and food supplies to allow the doctors there to perform their first operation since the earthquake. Though the surgery was conducted in a habitable building of the hospital, CRS staff say the facility is about 70 percent destroyed and will need long-term reconstruction.

CRS has formed six medical teams — each consisting of a medical doctor and a nurse — to provide primary care at several sites where people have gone for shelter. At one site, an AIDSRelief doctor began providing care on his own. When CRS staff

discovered this, they made plans to get him medical supplies.

CRS trucks coming from Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic brought in enough food for 2,500 people for several days, as well as hygiene kits and plastic sheeting for shelter. CRS has been distributing such materials at several informal camps and other places where the homeless gathered after the earthquake.

CRS has committed at least \$25 million for relief and recovery in Haiti, and, at press time, had received just over half of that amount in cash donations and commitments. Locally, checks payable to Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands may be brought to the CCVI offices at 68 Kronprindsens Gade on St. Thomas or 32 King Street (rear) on St. Croix, or mailed to CCVI at P.O. Box 10736, St. Thomas 00801. ●

School Board Meeting

The Board of Directors of St. Patrick School on St. Croix met at the school on December 12. Pictured, left to right, are Sister Claina Letang, ICM; Daniel Coughlin, president; Alphonsine Webster; Father Patrick Lynch, CSsR; Sheryl Calton, principal; Anna Doward; Ann Doute; Hortense Rowe, secretary; and Lauritz Blackwood, vice president and treasurer. The photograph was taken by John Clendenin, also a board member.



Future Teacher

Sangina Diaz-Garcia, Class of 2008 at St. Joseph High School on St. Croix, returned to learn about teaching at St. Mary School in January. She attends Seton Hill University, a Catholic school in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and is pursuing a career in education. To fulfill credits in her foundations of education course, she spent 10 hours in teacher observation, shadowing fifth-grade teacher Agatha Challenger and working with fourth-grade teacher Jan Rothwell. The course teaches the fundamentals of instruction, including instructional practices, classroom management and student learning styles.

Christmas Party

Deborah Skalkos, head of St. Joseph High School on St. Croix, helped to distribute the hamburgers during the student Christmas party on December 18, 2009. It was held outdoors with dancing on the Octagon area of the campus.



Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Awards

Hannah Charles, a senior at Ss. Peter and Paul School, was one of the six students honored by the Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas at a Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., memorial. The Shabbat service was held at the Hebrew Synagogue on January 15. She is pictured with Rabbi Shimon Moch, who presided over the ceremony.



Christmas Mass

St. Joseph High School on St. Croix celebrated a Pre-Christmas Mass at St. Joseph Church on December 22, 2009. Pictured, left to right, are the celebrants: Msgr. Michael Kosak, Bishop Herbert Bevard and Father John Mark, school chaplain.



Black History Month

February is Black History Month, and students at St. Patrick School on St. Croix have a schedule of activities.

- Week 1: Caribbean History Activities
- Week 2: National Black History Activities
- Week 3: Black History Motivational Speaker
- Week 4: Black History Play

In addition, the students will participate in an ancestry project to research family heritages and traditions.

Exchange Students

Third-grade students at St. Patrick School on St. Croix are participating in an exchange program with third-grade students from Illinois. Both groups of students shared how their communities are alike and how they differ. St. Patrick School students sent postcards about the Frederiksted community to the students in Illinois. The kindergarten students also are participating by sending drawings of the Frederiksted community.

Food Drive

Students at Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas are participating in a Valentines Day food drive. Principal Richard Pukenas told the *Catholic Islander*: "It seems like every Thanksgiving our food bank overflows with food, while the winter months bring scarcity for those in need. That is why we have decided to begin a Valentines Day food drive."

Recess Pilot Program

Students at St. Patrick School on St. Croix will participate in a pilot program entitled *Recess before Lunch*. Students who have recess before lunch tend to eat more and waste less food than those who have lunch before recess. After recess, students behave better during the lunch period and then show improved behavior during the school day.

Coole and Ropes

St. Mary School and St. Patrick School on St. Croix were among the schools that participated in a nine-week Coole and Ropes program sponsored by the Virgin Islands National Guard. "Coole" refers to character education and "Ropes" refers to team building education. Graduation for fifth- and seventh-grade participants was held at St. Gerard Hall on December 9.



Pride of the Parish

Peter John-Baptiste, Jr., is one of the young camera operators who tape Sunday Mass at St. Ann Church on St. Croix for broadcast on the local Catholic television station, CCN-TV, channel 7.



Protection of children

The Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands is committed to protecting children from all harm. If you have knowledge that any priest, deacon or church worker may have abused a minor, please immediately contact the Diocesan Child Protection coordinator, Callista Julien, at **(340) 774-3166**.

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Lent

Lenten Regulations

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which falls this year on February 17.

Abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics 14 years and older on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays of Lent.

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In addition, fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Those bound by this may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

The special paschal fast and abstinence are encouraged for Holy Saturday.

By the threefold discipline of fasting, almsgiving and prayer, the church keeps Lent from Ash Wednesday until the evening of Holy Thursday. All of the faithful and the catechumens should undertake serious practice of these three traditions. Failure to observe any penitential days at all or a substantial number of such days must be considered serious.

Ash Wednesday

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, Catholics and other Christians will wear the sign of the cross in ashes on their foreheads, bearing witness to their belief in the sorrow for sins and preparing for a season of repentance which ends with the bright celebration of Easter.

The ashes used in this ceremony are made by burning the remains of the palms blessed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year. Four ancient prayers are prayed in the blessing of the ashes. The ashes are sprinkled with holy water and scented with incense. The priest or deacon, dipping his thumb into the ashes, marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of each person, saying "Remember, you are dust and unto dust you shall return" or "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel."

On St. Thomas, ashes will be imposed at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral at 7 a.m., 8:30 a.m. (school Mass), 12:15 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. (Spanish); at Holy Family

Church at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church at 6:30 p.m.; and at St. Anne Chapel at 7:30 p.m.

On St. Croix, ashes will be imposed at the Herbert Grigg Home for the Aged at 10:30 a.m.; at Holy Cross Church at 6 a.m., 8:15 a.m., noon and 6 p.m.; at St. Ann Church at 6:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 3 p.m. (children's service) and 7 p.m.; at St. Joseph Church at 6:30 a.m. (English) and 7 p.m. (bilingual); and at St. Patrick Church at 6:30 a.m., 8 a.m., noon and 6:30 p.m.

On St. John, ashes will be imposed at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at the 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Masses.

Lenten Mission

Lenten Missions are an opportunity for Catholics to delve more deeply into the mystery of the paschal faith.

Evangelists Luis Gonzalez and Enrique Vega of Puerto Rico will lead a mission in Spanish at Holy Cross Church's McAlpin Hall on St. Croix on Friday, March 5, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 6, beginning at 9 a.m.

Father Carlyle Blake, CSsR, will launch a Lenten Mission at Holy Cross Church on St. Croix with the weekend Masses on March 6–7. The mission continues March 8–11 at 7 p.m.

Stations of the Cross

Praying the Stations of the Cross (also known as the Way of the Cross and the Via Crucis) helps the faithful enter spiritually into the Good Friday experience of Jesus walking through the streets of Jerusalem to his passion and death. The Stations of the Cross will be prayed at all parishes on the Fridays of Lent.

On St. Thomas, the Stations of the Cross will be prayed at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral in English at 5:30 p.m. and in Spanish at 6:30 p.m.; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church at 6 p.m.; and Holy Family Church and St. Anne Chapel at 7 p.m.

On St. Croix, the Stations will be prayed at St. Ann Church at 6 p.m.; St. Joseph Church at 6:30 p.m.; Holy Cross Church and St. Patrick Church at 7 p.m.; and in Spanish at Sacred Heart Chapel at 7 p.m.

On St. John, the Stations will be prayed at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at 7 p.m. 📍

¡Buenas Noticias!

La Súplica del Obispo 2010

La Súplica del Obispo es una campaña anual para las necesidades mayores de la Diócesis de Sto. Tomás en las Islas Vírgenes. La Súplica da apoyo económico a Caridades Católicas de las Islas Vírgenes, las cuatro escuelas católicas y los esfuerzos de evangelización. La Súplica del Obispo 2010 comienza el Miércoles de Ceniza, 17 de febrero, y termina el domingo de Pentecostés, el 23 de mayo. Las parroquias y escuelas tienen volantes para distribuir. La meta para 2010 es \$400,000.

Reglas de Cuaresma

Cuaresma comienza el Miércoles de Ceniza, que este año es el 17 de febrero, y termina el Jueves Santo, que este año es el 1 de abril. Todos los viernes de cuaresma se consideran días de abstinencia. Miércoles de Ceniza y Viernes Santo son los únicos dos días designados para ambos abstinencia y ayuno. Abstinencia significa que no podemos comer carne en esos días si tenemos 14 años en adelante. Ayuno significa que nos limitamos a una comida completa al día si estamos entre las edades de 18 y 59 años.

Miércoles de Ceniza

El Miércoles de Ceniza, 17 de febrero, habrá Misa en español en la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo en Sto. Tomás. La Iglesia San José en Sta. Cruz tendrá Misa bilingüe. Las dos Misas serán a las 7 p.m.

Vía Crucis

Una costumbre cada viernes de cuaresma es el revivir la caminata de Jesús al Calvario. La Vía Crucis se orará en español los viernes de cuaresma en tres iglesias. En Sto. Tomás, se orará en la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo a las 6.30 p.m. En Sta. Cruz se orará en la Iglesia San José a las 6.30 p.m. y en la Capilla Sagrado Corazón a las 7 p.m.

Operación Tazón de Arroz

Todas las parroquias en la Diócesis de Sto. Tomás en las Islas Vírgenes participarán en la Operación Tazón de Arroz. Este programa, auspiciado por Catholic Relief Services para la Cuaresma, nos invita a rezar con nuestra familia y nuestras comunidades de fe; ayunar en solidaridad con aquellos que sufren hambre; aprender más sobre nuestra comunidad en todo el mundo y los retos que enfrentan los pobres en el extranjero, y dar contribuciones que vengan de nuestros sacrificios para ayudar a los necesitados.

Oración y Reflexión

El grupo de oración del Movimiento de Cursillos de Cristiandad se reúne en la Capilla San Miguel de la Iglesia San José en Sta. Cruz el 22 de febrero y el último lunes de

cada mes a las 7 p.m.

Un grupo reza el rosario y comparte las lecturas del próximo domingo en la Iglesia Holy Cross en Sta. Cruz los martes a las 7 p.m.

Hay una Hora Santa bilingüe con exposición del santísimo y bendición en la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo en Sto. Tomás los martes a las 5.30 p.m.

Cursillo Ultreya

Miembros del Movimiento de Cursillos de Cristiandad se reúnen para la ultreya en su oficina de la Iglesia San José en Sta. Cruz los jueves después de la Misa de las 7 p.m.

Protección de Niños

La Diócesis de Sto. Tomás en las Islas Vírgenes está comprometida a proteger a los niños de todo daño. Si tienes conocimiento de algún sacerdote, diácono o empleado de la iglesia que haya abusado de algún menor, favor de comunicarte inmediatamente con la Coordinadora Diocesana de la Protección de los Niños, Callista Julien, al (340) 774-3166.

Legión de María

El Presidium María, Arca de la Alianza, se reúne en el Salón de Hospitalidad de la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo en Sto. Tomás los domingos a las 2 p.m.

Ministerio de los Enfermos

Hay un servicio de comunión bilingüe en la capilla del Centro Médico Schneider en Sto. Tomás los lunes a las 5 p.m.



Los Tres Reyes visitaron a la Misa en español en la Iglesia San José en Sta. Cruz el 3 de enero, la solemnidad de la Epifanía.



as visiting monsignors. They were available if the bishop needed any coverage for the weekend. Here he had need of one priest and in response to his need God sent him two monsignors. That was typical of God's response to Bishop Thomas' expectant faith and trust in him. We are privileged to have such a servant of God among us and to show him well-deserved honor, respect and love."

A late vocation, Bishop Thomas entered seminary at age 58, after a long career as a pharmacist, with a drug store located next door to the cathedral. In 2008, he donated the building to the diocese to be used as a semi-perpetual adoration chapel with the Blessed

Priest of the Month: Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas Is Honored

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas is the honoree at the Keys and Sword Award Benefit at the Marriott Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort on February 6. The proceeds from the event benefit the Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral Restoration Project, which will launch its second phase of construction in the spring.

Bishop Thomas was the third bishop of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, serving from 1993 to 1999. He was well-known to the community when he was ordained a priest in 1983 and, later, a bishop, having lived on St. Thomas off and on since his youth. When his friends, colleagues and his sister speak of Bishop Thomas, they use words such as kind, humble and generous. He is a man of faith and trust in God; a man who shares what he has been given.

Bishop Thomas and his sister, Bernice Heyliger, see each other often and talk every day; he is the fifth of eight children and she is the baby. Ms. Heyliger often described her older brother simply as "kind." She said that Elliott has been an "excellent brother" and she always has been able to depend on him. On her first day of school, when it was time for her to go to the one-room schoolhouse on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, she was scared because she had heard that the teacher was harsh. Her brother held her hand that day as they walked to school and she still remembers how much that meant to her and how it calmed her fears. Years later, when Bernice was in college, Bishop Thomas would send his little sister a portion of his paycheck every other week to help her through school.

Sister Louis Marie Bryan, SC, has been a friend of Bishop Thomas since before they were high school classmates. During the time he served as bishop of the diocese, he appointed her as chancellor. "Bishop Thomas is a man of steadfast faith and confident trust in divine providence," she told the *Catholic Islander*. "One Friday afternoon, when the bishop was trying to arrange weekend coverage for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on St. John, he planned to call St. Croix to ask for a priest. Before he could make the call, he was visited by two priests who introduced themselves

Sacramento. Msgr. Jerome Feudjio, rector of Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, explained that Bishop Thomas wished to create that chapel for the next generation. Although Feudjio spoke of Bishop Thomas' deep humility and said that he "does not like anything fancy," he noted that Bishop Thomas is enjoying the restoration of the cathedral because he loves the cathedral so much and knows that generations to come will be able to enjoy its beauty.

Father Charles Crespo, administrator of St. Anne Chapel, remembers that "Bishop Thomas brought me to the Virgin Islands from New York City 14 years ago to teach at Ss. Peter and Paul School and to help him coordinate the first-ever Bishop's Appeal in the diocese. He then sent me to seminary, and I am forever grateful to him for that. His pastoral sense continues to impress me even in his retirement. He has time and heart for everyone who approaches him. I love visiting with him."

Bishop Herbert Bevard met Bishop Thomas in 2008, shortly before he was named bishop. They met in Boston, where Bishop Thomas was recuperating from pneumonia. "Bishop Thomas is a gentleman of the first class, a deeply spiritual man and a profoundly pastoral shepherd," Bishop Bevard told the *Catholic Islander*. "I am very pleased that his health improved and he moved back to the Virgin Islands. He deserves the honors he will receive at the Keys and Sword Award Benefit on February 6." 🙏



Headlines from the U.S. Bishops



Health-Care Reform

In a nationwide call to Catholics to prevent health-care reform from being derailed by the abortion lobby, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has sent bulletin inserts and pulpit announcements to almost 19,000 parishes across the country.

“As long-time advocates of health-care reform, the U.S. Catholic bishops continue to make the moral case that genuine health care reform must protect the life, dignity, consciences and health of all, especially the poor and vulnerable,” read the insert. “Health-care reform should not advance a pro-abortion agenda in our country.”

As Congress negotiates a final health-care bill, the insert encouraged Catholics to contact their senators and representatives, urging them to keep longstanding restrictions against federal funding of abortion and full conscience protection in the legislation. If these criteria are not met, Catholics are asked to urge Congress to oppose the final bill.

The bulletin insert and pulpit announcement can be found in English and in Spanish at www.usccb.org/healthcare. Catholics can contact their legislators online by going to www.usccb.org/action.

Same-Sex Marriage

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, chairman of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, expressed support for a January 7 New Jersey Senate vote to preserve the definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

“On behalf of the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee, I am grateful for the courage of those New Jersey senators who stood for the truth of marriage as a bulwark of the common good,” he said.

The New Jersey Senate voted 20-14 to reject a same-sex

“marriage” bill, just as the New York Senate did when it rejected a similar measure December 2, 2009, by a 38-24 margin.

“Preserving marriage between one man and one woman is a matter of justice; indeed it is one of the premier social justice issues of our time. It does not deny but rather supports basic human rights — especially the rights of children,” Archbishop Kurtz said. “The recent New York Senate vote and the vote in New Jersey witness to this fact.”

The votes in New York and New Jersey followed closely the November 2009 vote in Maine, where the “people’s veto” overturned the legislature’s spring 2009 decision to redefine marriage to include same-sex couples.

Immigration Reform

On January 6 the USCCB announced steps to push for the enactment of immigration reform legislation in 2010. Bishop John Wester, bishop of Salt Lake City, Utah, and chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, and Bishop Howard Hubbard, bishop of Albany, New York, and chairman of the International Policy Committee of the USCCB, made the announcement.

“It is our view, and that of others, that the American public, including the Catholic and other faith communities, want a humane and comprehensive solution to the problems which beset our immigration system, and they want Congress to address this issue,” said Bishop Wester.

Steps announced by Bishop Wester included:

- The launch of a nationwide postcard campaign under the Justice for Immigrants campaign, with 1.5 million postcards already ordered.
- The launch of two websites — a new Justice for Immigrants website with tools for parishes (www.justiceforimmigrants.org), and the National Migration Week website, which provides other resources (www.usccb.org/mrs/nmw/index.shtml).
- A nationwide action alert asking for Congress to enact immigration reform as soon as possible. ☕

St. Thomas Calendar

Holy Hours/Eucharistic Adoration

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral has Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on February 5 and the first Friday of every month at 12:45 p.m. and on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church has Exposition and Benediction on February 25 and the last Thursday of every month from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., on Tuesdays from 7:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Holy Family Church and St. Anne Chapel have Exposition and Benediction on Fridays at 6 p.m., followed by Mass at 7 p.m.

Bingo Night

Ss. Peter and Paul School will have bingo in the cafeteria on two Fridays, February 5 and 12, at 7 p.m.

Rosary Walk

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral hosts a rosary walk on February 6 and the first Saturday of each month at 7 a.m., followed by Mass at 7:30 a.m.

Ministry to Catholic Women

Magnificat, an international ministry to Catholic women, meets at **Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral's Hospitality Lounge** on February 6 and the first Saturday of each month at 8 a.m.

Our Lady of Fatima Devotion

The Children of Mary lead a devotion

to Our Lady of Fatima at **Holy Family Church** on February 6 and the first Saturday of each month at 4 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Share Vincentian spirituality at **Holy Family Church** on February 9 and the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

Franciscan Spirituality

The Lady Clare of Assisi Fraternity shares Franciscan spirituality at **Holy Family Church's Columban Hall** on February 13 and the second Saturday of each month at 1 p.m.

Rummage Sale

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church will have a rummage sale after Masses on February 13-14.

St. Croix Calendar

Holy Hours/Eucharistic Adoration

Holy Cross Church has Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on February 5 and all first Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon.

St. Joseph Church has a bilingual Holy Hour with Exposition and Benediction on February 5 and all first Fridays at 7 p.m.

St. Patrick Church has a Holy Hour with Exposition and Benediction on Fridays after the 8 a.m. Mass.

St. Ann Church has a Holy Hour with Exposition and Benediction in the St. Ann Chapel on Fridays at 5:30 p.m.

Healing Mass

St. Patrick Church has a healing Mass on February 5 and the first Friday of each month at 7 p.m.

Santo Niño

St. Joseph Church hosts devotions to Santo Niño (the Holy Child Jesus) on February 6 and the first Saturday of each month at 4:30 p.m. The sacrament of reconciliation is offered during this time.

Pro-Life Prayer Vigil

The Pro-Life Committee of **Holy Cross Church** will hold a prayer vigil outside the abortion clinic at Island Center on Tuesday, February 9, at 5 p.m.

Charismatic Prayer Meetings

St. Patrick Church has charismatic prayer on February 19 and the third Friday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

St. Ann Church has charismatic prayer in Marian Hall on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Cursillo Prayer Group

The Cursillo Movement hosts a Spanish prayer meeting in the **St. Michael Chapel at St. Joseph Church** on February 22 and the last Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

Secular Order Discalced Carmelites

The Our Lady Star of the Sea Community shares Carmelite spirituality in the **St. Joseph Church Hospitality Lounge and Learning Center** on February 28 and the fourth Sunday of each month at 1 p.m.

Franciscan Spirituality

The Our Lady of the Angels fraternity of the Third Order of St. Francis

St. Joseph Workers

The St. Joseph Workers meet at **Holy Family Church's Columban Hall** on February 14 and the second Sunday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

Catholic Daughters of America

Court 2049 meets at **Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral's Hospitality Lounge** on February 20 and the third Saturday of each month at 3 p.m.

French Mass

Mass is celebrated in French at **St. Anne Chapel** on February 28 and the last Sunday of each month at 11 a.m.

Knights of Columbus

Council 6187 meets at **Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral's Hospitality Lounge** on the first and third Sunday of each month at 10 a.m.

Legion of Mary

Presidium Maria, Arca de la Alianza, holds meetings in Spanish on the first and third Sundays of each month

shares Franciscan spirituality at **Franciscan House** on February 28 and the fourth Sunday of each month at 2 p.m.

Neo-Catechumenal Way

The Neo-Catechumenal Way leads a celebration of the Word at **St. Joseph Church** on Mondays at 7 p.m.

Adult Education

The St. Patrick Learning Center offers classes in pre-GED, GED, computer literacy, intermediate computer and ESL on Monday through Thursday mornings.

World Apostolate of Fatima

The World Apostolate of Fatima meets in the chapel at **Holy Cross Church** on Tuesdays at 5 p.m.

Spanish Prayer and Reflection

Pray the rosary and share reflections on the readings of the coming Sunday Mass at **Holy Cross Church** on alternate Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Meetings are in Spanish.

at **Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral's Hospitality Lounge** at 2 p.m.

Presidium Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces, meets at the **St. Anne Chapel Hall** on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Presidium Mary, Mystical Rose, meets in the **Holy Family Church** classroom on Sundays at 3 p.m.

Ministry to the Sick

A Catholic Communion service is celebrated in the **All Faiths Chapel at the Schneider Regional Medical Center** on Mondays at 5 p.m.

Evenings of Charismatic Prayer

Charismatic prayer meetings are held at **Holy Family Church** on Mondays at 7 p.m.

Men's Prayer Group

The Sons of Joseph and Mary meet at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church** on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Shepherds of Christ Associates

The Shepherds of Christ Associates meet for prayer in the **St. Michael Chapel of St. Joseph Church** on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and on the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 5 p.m.

Knights of Columbus

Holy Cross Council 6482 meets at **Holy Cross Church's McAlpin Hall** on the first and third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

Cursillo Ultreya

Cursillo members meet for the "ultreya" in the Cursillo office at **St. Joseph Church** on Thursdays after the 7 p.m. Mass. Meetings are in Spanish.

Legion of Mary

Presidium, Our Lady of Grace, meets in the **Holy Cross Church rectory** on Saturdays at 4:30 p.m.

Pro-Life Rosary

A pro-life rosary is prayed at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church** on Wednesdays after the 6:30 p.m. Mass.

Intercessory Prayer Group

A team is prepared to pray for the needs of all who ask at **Holy Family Church** on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

World Apostolate of Fatima

The World Apostolate of Fatima meets at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church** on Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Saint Josephine Bakhita



Feast Day: February 8

>> Claim to fame: Josephine

Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869 and kidnapped when she was seven years old and sold into slavery. The girl was so traumatized by the experience that she was unable to remember her name and her captors gave her the name *Bakhita*, which means "fortunate one." After enduring much suffering as a slave for eight years, she was brought to Italy and left in the care of the Canossian Sisters. Under their care, Bakhita was baptized and given the new name of Josephine. In 1896 she joined the sisters permanently.

>> Why she is a saint: As doorkeeper for 45 years in the Schio community in northern Italy, she had much contact with the community and provided comfort to the poor and suffering. Her humility, simplicity and constant smile won the hearts of the citizens. Although Josephine Bakhita was not known for miracles or supernatural experiences, Pope John Paul II praised her for "leaving us a message of reconciliation and evangelic forgiveness in a world so much divided and hurt by hatred and violence."

>> Quote: "If I was to meet those slave raiders that abducted me and those who tortured me, I'd kneel down to them to kiss their hands, because, if it had not been for them, I would not have become a Christian and religious woman."

>> How she died: At the end of her life Josephine endured many long, painful years of sickness. In her last days her mind returned to her days of slavery and she would cry out: "Please, loosen the chains ... they are so heavy." She died on February 8, 1947.

St. John Calendar

Legion of Mary

Presidium Mary, Queen of Angels, meets in the **Guadalupe Hall of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church** on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

Silent Eucharistic Adoration

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church has a Holy Hour with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on Thursdays at 6 p.m.

Evenings of Charismatic Prayer

Charismatic prayer meetings are held at **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church** on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

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Our Blessed Mother's Message from Medjugorje

December 25, 2009

"Dear children! On this joyful day, I bring all of you before my Son, the King of Peace, that He may give you His peace and blessing. Little children, in love share that peace and blessing with others. Thank you for having responded to my call."

— Courtesy of John and Claire Foster

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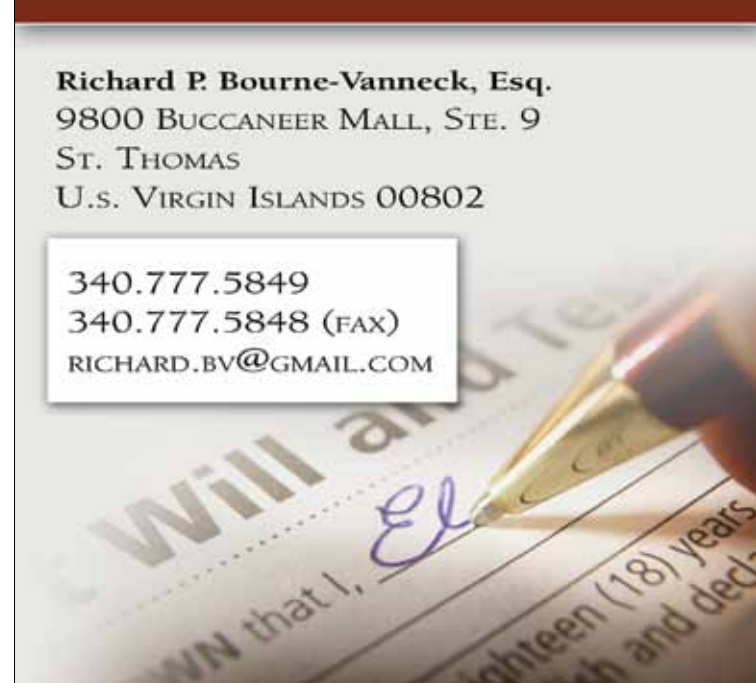
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