

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

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December 2009


the Catholic *islander*

Advent Missions
Penance Services
Aguinaldo Masses



Advent:

Preparing for
the Birth of
Our Lord



Students Against Drugs p.6

Cathedral Restoration Is Nearing



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

T

he architects working on the restoration of Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas are

processing technical information with local government offices in order to secure permits for work to begin. Construction companies will bid for the project, and scaffolding may be installed in the cathedral as early as February 2010. The roof will be replaced, but the demolition will take place in small segments in order to preserve the frescos on the ceiling of the cathedral.



The bell tower at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral will be restored in 2010 along with the church roof.

Tuesday, December 1, 10 a.m., Board of Directors meeting, Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas.

Saturday, December 5, 6 p.m., Mass, St. Patrick Church, St. Croix.

Sunday, December 6, 7 a.m. and 10 a.m., Masses, St. Joseph Church, St. Croix.

Tuesday, December 8, 8:15 a.m., Ss. Peter and Paul School Pre-Christmas Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Saturday, December 12, 5 p.m., Mass, St. Anne Chapel, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 13, 10:30 a.m., Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 13, 1 p.m., Confessions, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 13, 5 p.m., Benediction, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas.

Thursday, December 17, 10 a.m., Presbyteral Council Meeting and Christmas Luncheon, Bishop's Residence, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 20, 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., Masses, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, St. John.

Sunday, December 20, 4 p.m., Confessions, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Tuesday, December 22, 8:10 a.m., St. Joseph High School Pre-Christmas Mass, St. Joseph Church, St. Croix.

Thursday, December 24, Midnight, Christmas Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Friday, December 25, 10 a.m., Christmas Mass, Holy Family Church, St. Thomas.

Saturday, December 26, 6 p.m., Mass, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 27, 8:30 a.m., Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Thomas.

Sunday, December 27, 10 a.m., Patronal Mass, Holy Family Church, St. Thomas.

Thursday, December 31, Midnight, Old Year's Night Mass, St. Ann Church, St. Croix.

the **Catholic** *islander*

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

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December 2009 • Vol. 25 : Issue 7

The Catholic Islander is published monthly by the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. P.O. Box 301825, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, 00803-1825 <http://www.catholicislander.com> Telephone: (340) 774-3166, Fax: (340) 774-5816 E-mail: editor@catholicislander.com © FAITH Catholic™.

Please submit news, digital photography and advertising for the **January 2010** issue of *The Catholic Islander* by **December 5, 2009.**

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New Divine Mercy Shrine

Construction continues on the Chapel of St. Therese, which will be dedicated on Main Street on St. Thomas in 2010. Located next door to the Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral office, the chapel will include a Divine Mercy Shrine. Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas donated the building that housed his former pharmacy to the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands for use as a semi-perpetual adoration chapel with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Pictured above, His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, stands by the altar which arrived November 5.

Second Collection

Parishes in the Virgin Islands will have a second collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious on December 12–13. From this appeal, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' National Religious Retirement Office supplies grants to congregations for retirement planning, supervision, and immediate needs.

Patronal Feast

The Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is on December 28. Holy Family Church on St. Thomas will celebrate Patronal Masses on Saturday, December 26, at 6 p.m. and Sunday, December 27, at 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, will preside at the last Mass.



Carmelite Retreat

The Secular Order Discalced Carmelite community of St. Croix celebrated its annual retreat day with His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, at the Light of Christ Retreat Center on St. Croix on October 24.



Mass on St. John

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, celebrated Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on St. John on All Saints Day, November 1. Msgr. Antonio Verzosa, administrator of the parish, concelebrated the Mass.

Appointments

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, has appointed chaplains to the following apostolates:

- Msgr. Jerome Feudjio, chaplain of the Catholic Daughters of America and Magnificat.
- Very Rev. Neil Scantlebury, chaplain of the Children of Mary, the St. Joseph Workers and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
- Father John Mark, chaplain of the Legion of Mary and the World Apostolate of Fatima.

Chaplains attend to the pastoral and spiritual needs of the members of the apostolates. As spiritual directors, they are encouraged to foster unity, Catholic identity and compliance to the constitution or charter of the apostolates entrusted to their care.

Holy Days of Obligation

The solemnities of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Tuesday, December 8, the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas) on Friday, December 25, and Mary, Mother of God on Friday, January 1, are holy days of obligation. This precept can be met by attending a Vigil Mass on the evening before the feast day.

Advent: Preparing for the Birth of Our Lord

Advent Missions

Msgr. William John-Lewis of Dominica will lead an Advent mission at Holy Family Church at St. Thomas November 30–December 4 at 7 p.m. The theme will be “Becoming A Holy Family.”

Magnificat will sponsor an Advent retreat for women at Light of Christ Retreat Center on St. Croix December 4–6. Rose Jackman of the Living Waters Community in Barbados will be the guest speaker.

Father Kevin McDonald will lead an Advent mission at St. Patrick Church on St. Croix December 14–17 at 7 p.m.

Penance Services

Penance services during Advent provide Catholics with opportunities to receive the sacrament of reconciliation in preparation for the Christmas season.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church on St. Thomas will host an Advent Eucharistic Day of Reconciliation with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday, December 13, beginning after the 9 a.m. Mass. Priests will be available to hear confessions from 1 p.m. until Benediction at 5 p.m.

St. Patrick Church on St. Croix will have a penance service as part of its Advent mission on Tuesday, December 15, at 7 p.m.

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas will host an Advent Eucharistic Day of Reconciliation with

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday, December 20, at 3 p.m.

Aguinaldo Masses

Three parishes on St. Thomas and St. Croix will celebrate the traditional novena of sunrise aguinaldo Masses in Spanish in preparation for Christmas. The Masses are celebrated December 16–24.

On St. Thomas, the Masses will be celebrated at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral at 6 a.m., except Sunday at 12:30 p.m. and Tuesday at 7 p.m.

On St. Croix, the Masses at St. Joseph Church are at 5:45 a.m., except Sunday at 10 a.m., and at Holy Cross Church at 6:30 a.m., except Sunday at 7:15 a.m.

A light breakfast is served after each Mass in the parish social halls.

Marriage Encounter

Twenty couples rekindled their love for each other, their family and their church at the Worldwide Marriage Encounter (WWME) weekend at Light of Christ Retreat Center on St. Croix on November 6–8.

Rev. Dr. George Franklin, Walt and Michelle Johnson from Florida and Jose and Nilda Diaz from St. Croix were the presenters. Support came from members within the WWME community on St. Croix, which consists of encountered religious and married couples.

WWME is designed to deepen and enrich the joys a couple shares together, whether they have been married for only a short time or many years. Marriage Encounter equips couples with the tools they need to deepen their relationship.



Magnificat Meal

Dr. Carol Razza, adjunct professor at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary and founding coordinator of the Magnificat chapter in West Palm Beach, Florida, was the guest speaker at a Magnificat luncheon at Gertrude's Restaurant on St. Croix on October 25. Through participation at a charismatic conference in 1980, Dr. Razza said she was transformed from the lies she had accepted – lies of being stupid, ugly and uneducated – and so her shackles were broken and she was healed. Dr. Razza ended her testimony with a prayer inviting women to stand and make a public pronouncement that they wanted more of Jesus in their lives.



Bereavement Ministry

The Bereavement Ministry at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas has an annual breakfast on the Saturday morning closest to All Souls Day in the Hospitality Lounge. Parishioners who have lost a loved one in the past year are invited to attend. This year the group met on October 31.



Dominica Independence Day Masses

Catholics from the Commonwealth of Dominica celebrated 31 years of independence with two festive English/French Creole Masses in the Virgin Islands on November 8. Father Charles Martin celebrated Mass at St. Ann Church on St. Croix. Father Cornelius Phillip celebrated Mass at Holy Family Church on St. Thomas, at which His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, presided.



Holy Family Church,
St. Thomas



St. Ann Church, St. Croix

After School Program

Holy Family Church on St. Thomas is hosting an after school program in Columban Hall Mondays through Fridays from 2:30 to 6 p.m. The parish is providing a safe, nurturing environment so working parents do not have to worry about their child. The children have a snack, get help with their homework, watch a religious video, and do arts and crafts until the parents pick them up. Very Rev. Neil Scantlebury oversees the program with adult volunteers; high school students can volunteer as aides in order to get community service credits. Children from kindergarten through Grade 8 are eligible. The cost is \$5 per day.



Closing the Month of the Rosary

The Hispanic community on St. Thomas organized an all-parish closing ceremony for the Month of the Rosary on October 31. A procession began from Emancipation Garden and ended with Mass celebrated by His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Representing the various members of the congregation, the decades of the rosary were prayed in English, Spanish, French and Filipino Tagalog.

Old Year's Night

The St. Joseph Workers will host their annual Old Year's celebration in Columban Hall at Holy Family Church on St. Thomas on December 31, following the 11 p.m. Mass. Tickets are available at the parish office for \$30.

Exercising for Health

The Health Care Ministry at Holy Family Church on St. Thomas will host a low-impact aerobics class at Columban Hall on the third Saturday of each month, beginning December 19 at 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$5 per class. To register, call the parish office.

Rest in Peace

Prayers are solicited for the repose of the soul of Timothy Joseph Confoy, brother of Sister Margaret Confoy, SC, of Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas. Mr. Confoy died in his home in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, on October 24.



St. Joseph Work Day

The Cursillo Movement sponsored a work day at St. Joseph Church on St. Croix on November 7 to begin power washing, repainting, and repairing electrical work. The ministry is planning to complete this project in time for Advent.



25th Anniversary

Sister Audrey Abel, WIF, (left) and Sister Patricia Alexander, WIF, (right) celebrated the 25th anniversary of the West Indian Franciscan community. They renewed their vows at Sunday Mass at St. Ann Church on St. Croix on October 18.

Diocesan Development

Rev. Dr. George Franklin, director of development and stewardship, recently completed two development certification courses to aid in the enhancement of his duties. He completed an intensive four-day marketing and strategic planning course that taught him the latest trends in these fields.

Rev. Dr. Franklin will propose a plan, *Reaching Forward*, to bring a steady stream of income to the endowment funds of the Catholic schools in the Virgin Islands. *Reaching Forward* is similar in concept to "paying it forward," wherein individuals are asked to make a contribution to the future of Catholic

education through a minimal payroll deduction plan. By each Catholic school alumnus donating \$1 or more every pay period, "one-one will fill the basket."

Rev. Dr. Franklin also received certification as Passion Test Facilitator. Many Virgin Islanders are not happy doing what they are doing because they are not living out their purpose in life, he said. The Passion Test can help these people find their passion so they can discover their purpose. The Passion Test helps individuals discern God's will for their lives. Rev. Dr. Franklin will lead a series of workshops intended to transform the lives of its participants, making them happier and more fulfilled by pointing them to their divine purpose

so they can do God's will. According to Rev. Dr. Franklin, the Passion Test can provide clarity to high school or college students discerning their future; can assist married couples in living a more fulfilling marital relationship; and can assist individuals in midlife transition who are unsure what to do with the next phase of their lives. The Passion Test can help volunteer groups clarify their divine mission and help individuals in the group determine their specific call to ministry and, allowing them to discover and prioritize what is most important in their ministry in order to bring satisfaction and fulfillment to them and to those they serve. Workshops will be announced.

All Saints Fun Day

Students at St. Mary School on St. Croix enjoyed an All Saints Fun Day on October 30. Each class sponsored a game or an activity, ranging from bingo to musical chairs. In addition, classes competed in an All Saints door decoration contest. The entries for the contest were judged on the history of the saint and his/her impact on the world, the visual depictions and class creativity. K-4, grade 5 and 7-1 each won a class pizza party.

Pictured below, the children of K-4 dedicated their door to St. Martin de Porres (1579–1639), the patron saint of African Americans, social justice, race relations, barbers, hairdressers and more. The map shows his country, Peru. The dogs represent St. Martin's love for animals; he believed that every one of God's creatures deserved to be treated with compassion. The crutches represent St. Martin's lifelong dedication to healing the sick, regardless of race or social status. The broom is often used as a symbol for St. Martin de Porres, who often referred to himself as "Brother Broom." The little hand prints (one for each child in the class) represent all the children St. Martin cared for and provided a home to in the orphanages he opened. The letters of his name were colored by each of the students.



St. Joseph Teacher of the Month

Students and staff at St. Joseph High School on St. Croix are honoring teachers each month. Religion teacher Meg Brisson (left) was teacher of the month in November and mathematics teacher Leobe Pelle (right) was teacher of the month in October.



School Pageants

Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas will hold its annual Christmas Pageant at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on Sunday, December 6, at 3 p.m. This year's theme is *The Box*. The story tells of angels who come to deliver a very important box for the people of earth. The box will be "discovered" by the students from each class. The students will look inside to reveal a token. The students will explain the present, and then the class will follow in song, dance, skit or dramatic expression to tell about the token.

St. Mary School on St. Croix will have its Christmas tree lighting on Thursday, December 10, at 6 p.m. with a living nativity, songs and steel pan music. Students will reenact the Christmas story with the accompaniment of the Choir of Angels. The Annunciation Scene will start at Times Square and will process to the St. Mary School courtyard for the Christmas Tree lighting and the classes' Christmas presentations. The steel pan orchestra will perform the finale.

St. Patrick School on St. Croix will hold its Christmas Pageant at St. Patrick Church on Sunday, December 13, at 3 p.m. Classes will sing songs, recite poems and present their Christmas play.

Red Ribbon Week

Virgin Islands Catholic schools participated in Red Ribbon Week October 19–23.

Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug abuse prevention campaign in the United States. It calls on communities and individuals to make a commitment to promote drug abuse prevention and education, as well as to live drug-free lives.

Elementary students of Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas decorated their classroom doors with anti-drug messages and participated in an anti-drug march in the school



courtyard (pictured above).

Students of St. Mary School on St. Croix marched through Christiansted holding signs and chanting "One, two, three — all I want is to be drug-free!"

Students of St. Patrick School on St. Croix participated in a morning prayer service, a balloon launch with drug-free pledge cards, a parade and a poster contest.

School Notes

Ss. Peter and Paul School on St. Thomas had an off-campus earthquake drill in October, in which students and staff practiced getting to higher ground in case of a tsunami. The teachers used this drill as a tool for teaching students about earthquakes, tsunamis, and other natural disasters.

St. Patrick School on St. Croix had more than 70 students

on the Honor Roll for the first marking period. The eighth grade students who are on the Honor Roll are mentoring students in math and science in first, second, third, and fourth grade.

St. Patrick School on St. Croix instituted an initiative for middle school students entitled SNAP to promote health through hand washing. The nurses had students wash their hands until they completed singing the "Happy Birthday" song.



Youth Group Bake Sale

Les Enfants de Ste. Anne, the Youth Group at St. Anne Chapel on St. Thomas, sold pastries, drinks, and toys at the Fisherman's Fun Day at Joseph Aubain Field on November 1.



Youth in Action

Catholic Youth in Action, the youth group at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas, celebrated the departure of one of its colleagues, Juanita Corbett, into the military on October 22.

Catholic Youth in Action also cleaned the passageway alongside the cathedral rectory on November 7.



Young Rosary Makers

Members of the youth group at St. Ann Church on St. Croix made rosaries and had them blessed by their pastor, Msgr. Michael Kosak, at Sunday Mass on October 18.



Christmas Concert

The Office of Youth Ministry is hosting a Red Carpet Christmas Program at Holy Family Church on St. Thomas on Sunday, December 13, at 3 p.m. The program will feature performances by the various youth ministries in the diocese. Tickets are available at all parish offices for \$10.

Youth Quake

Youth of the parishes of St. Thomas are producing a television series entitled *Youth Quake*. The series primarily features youth interviewing other youth on matters of faith. The *Youth Quake* team recently interviewed the St. Vincent de Paul Society's Young Vincentians, and

several youth who recently traveled to China. They also interviewed Father Cornelius Phillip of Trinidad, who celebrated the Dominica Independence Mass at Holy Family Church on November 8. Once edited, the programs will air on CTN, channel 16, on St. Thomas and St. John.

"*Youth Quake* is about youth

rising up and making a difference in our communities," Father Anthony Abraham, director of the Office of Youth Ministry, told the *Catholic Islander*. "They meet to discuss faith and youth-related issues."

They also produced a *Youth Quake* newsletter which was distributed in St. Thomas parishes in November.

Accreditation

The teachers and staff of St. Patrick School on St. Croix are preparing for an accreditation visit in October 2010. The staff has designed a two-year strategic plan to accomplish its goals and realign the curriculum.

Teachers are on Learning Teams to research data and reflect on, share, develop, and modify instructional practices in order to more effectively address student needs, monitor student responses, discuss classroom applications, and make needed adjustments. The staff is using the "Designing Our Future" model to drive instruction and make data-driven decisions.

St. Mary School on St. Croix completed its Middle States accreditation visit October 19-21.

All Souls Day

Students of St. Joseph High School on St. Croix remembered their deceased relatives and friends at Mass at St. Joseph Church on All Souls Day, November 2. Students lit a votive candle before the homily and then placed their lighted candles on the sanctuary step after the homily. Father Louis Kemayou, pastor of the church and the chaplain of the school, celebrated the Mass.



Pre-Christmas School Masses

His Excellency, Bishop Herbert Bevard, will celebrate two Pre-Christmas Masses for Catholic school students. He will celebrate Mass for Ss. Peter and Paul School students at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas on Tuesday, December 8, at 8:15 a.m. He will celebrate Mass for St. Joseph High School at St. Joseph Church on St. Croix on Tuesday, December 22, at 8:10 a.m.

Catholic Identity

This year, Ss. Peter and Paul School has made two innovations that are intended to strengthen the faith of its students and enhance the Catholic identity of the school.

Whereas in the past, the entire school attended monthly Masses as one, this year the Upper School students (Grades 6–12) attend Mass every two weeks separately from the Lower School (Grades K–5), which also attends bimonthly. According to Dr. Gwen Moolenaar, Head of School, the students benefit because the celebrant can tailor his homily to the level of the students.

Secondly, spiritual retreats have been scheduled each semester for all levels of the Upper School. In previous years, only grades 9–12 participated in such retreats once per year. Father John Mark, the school’s chaplain, is conducting all the retreats with the assistance of the school’s religion teachers.

Honoring Students

St. Patrick School on St. Croix is celebrating a Student of the Week, recognizing those who demonstrate positive character, behavior, and self-regard. A Student Recognition Log is kept in the school office and students are recognized during the assembly on Mondays. Already 72 students have received recognition for meeting the school’s expectations of “Being Safe, Being Responsible, Being Respectful.”

Honor Roll – First Marking Period



Honor Roll students of St. Joseph High School on St. Croix.

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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Buenas Noticias!

Restauración de la Catedral

El Comité de Restauración de la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo ha conformado dos subcomités a fin de organizar la segunda fase de la restauración de la catedral y las rectorías en Sto. Tomás.

El Comité de Estructura Física revisará el trabajo completado hasta la fecha y establecerá los lineamientos a ser ejecutado en la segunda fase. En esta fase, la iglesia solidificará el edificio para conducir mejor el agua de las lluvias, un nuevo techo será instalado, se fortalecerán y se resanarán las columnas, y el flujo de agua subterránea se canalizará de mejor manera.

Por otro lado, el Comité de Pro-Fondos se comunicará con los antiguos donantes a fin de hacerles presente su valiosa colaboración, se explicará la forma en que fueron usados los fondos, se presentará el proyecto de la segunda fase y se solicitará donaciones adicionales para cubrir con las demandas prefijadas.

Días de Precepto

Varias parroquias celebrarán Misas adicionales para las solemnidades de la Inmaculada Concepción de María el martes 8 de diciembre, la Navidad del Señor el viernes 25 de diciembre y Santa María, Madre de Dios, el viernes 1 de enero. Todos son días santos de guardar. Este mandato se puede cumplir asistiendo a la Misa de vigilia la noche anterior.

Tres parroquias celebrarán Misas en español para los días de navidad y año nuevo. En Sto. Tomás, las Misas en la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo serán ambos días a las 12.30 p.m. En Sta. Cruz, las Misas serán en la Iglesia Holy Cross a las 7.15 a.m. y en la Iglesia San José a las 9 a.m.

Segunda Colecta

Las parroquias en las Islas Vírgenes tendrán una segunda colecta en beneficio del Fondo de Retiro para los Religiosos en diciembre 12-13. De esta súplica, la oficina nacional de retiro para religiosos de la Conferencia Americana de Obispos Católicos provee ayuda a las congregaciones para la planeación, supervisión del retiro y necesidades inmediatas.

Misas de Aguinaldo

Las tradicionales Misas de aguinaldo se celebrarán el 16 a 24 de diciembre en tres parroquias. En Sto. Tomás, las Misas serán en la Catedral San Pedro y San Pablo a las 6 a.m., menos el domingo a las 12.30 p.m. y el martes a las 7 p.m. En Sta. Cruz, se celebrarán en la Iglesia San José a las 5.45 a.m., menos el domingo a las 10 a.m., y en la Iglesia Holy Cross a las 6.30 a.m., menos el domingo a las 7.15 a.m.

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 28 de diciembre 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.

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 el primer y tercer domingo de cada mes 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.

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.



El Padre Janvier Sidjeu dio una bendición de cumpleaños al Diácono José Vázquez el 18 de octubre.

St. Thomas Calendar

Holy Hours/Eucharistic Adoration

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral has Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on December 4 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 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 Friday, December 4, at 7 p.m.

Rosary Walk

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral hosts a rosary walk on December 5 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 December 5 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 December 5 and the first Saturday of each month at 4 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Share Vincentian spirituality at **Holy Family Church** on December 8 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 December 12 and the second Saturday of each month at 1 p.m.

St. Joseph Workers

The St. Joseph Workers meet at **Holy Family Church's Columban Hall** on

St. Croix Calendar

Holy Hours/Eucharistic Adoration

Holy Cross Church has Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on December 4 and all first Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon.

St. Joseph Church has a bilingual Holy Hour with Exposition and Benediction on December 4 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 December 4 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 December 5 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 Barrenspot Mall on Tuesday, December 8, at 5 p.m.

Charismatic Prayer Meetings

St. Patrick Church has charismatic prayer on December 18 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.

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 December 27 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 shares Franciscan spirituality at **Franciscan House** on December 27 and the fourth Sunday of each month at 2 p.m.

December 13 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 December 19 and the third Saturday of each month at 3 p.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 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.

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.

Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus

Immaculate Conception:
December 8

Nativity of Our Lord:
December 25

Mary, Mother of God:
January 1



>> Claim to fame: The mother of Jesus and wife of St. Joseph.

>> What made her a saint: Mary's life and her role in the history of salvation. The archangel Gabriel appeared to her and asked her to become the mother of Jesus — her "yes" is a model of trust and faith. When her cousin Elizabeth acknowledged Mary as the mother of God, Mary burst forth in a song of thanksgiving commonly known as the *Magnificat*. Mary was at the foot of the cross when Jesus died and was present in the upper room with the apostles when the Holy Spirit descended on them.

>> Best quote: Jesus performed his first miracle at Cana in response to his mother's request. Her words, "Do as he commands," have meaning for all Christians as they walk their faith journey.

>> How she died: There is no scriptural reference about Mary's last years on earth. According to one tradition, she went to Ephesus; another tradition states that she remained in Jerusalem. The belief that Mary's body was assumed into heaven is one of the oldest in the church. Pope Pius XII declared this belief to be Catholic dogma in 1950. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception, that Mary was free of original sin at the moment of her conception, was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

Cursillo Prayer Group

The Cursillo Movement hosts a Spanish prayer meeting in the **St. Michael Chapel at St. Joseph Church** on December 28 and the last Monday of each month at 7 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.

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.

Christmas and Old Year's Calendar

Parish Schedules for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day,
Old Year's Night, New Year's Day/Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

St. Thomas

Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Carols
6:30 p.m. Family Mass
11 p.m. Carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

8:30 a.m. Mass
10:30 a.m. Mass
12:30 p.m. Mass (Spanish)

Old Year's Night

10 p.m. Holy Hour
11 p.m. Mass

New Year's Day

9 a.m. English Mass
11 a.m. Spanish Mass

Holy Family Church

Christmas Eve

11 p.m. Pageant/carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

7 a.m. Mass
10 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

10 p.m. Holy Hour
11 p.m. Mass

New Year's Day

10 a.m. Mass

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Children's Mass
11:30 p.m. Carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

9 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

11 p.m. Holy Hour
Midnight Vigil Mass

New Year's Day

9 a.m. Mass

St. Anne Chapel

Christmas Eve

11:30 p.m. Carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

8 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

7:30 p.m. Vigil Mass

New Year's Day

8 a.m. Mass

St. Croix

Holy Cross Church

Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Mass and pageant
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

7:15 a.m. Mass (Spanish)
9 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

11 p.m. Holy Hour
Midnight Mass

New Year's Day

7:15 a.m. Mass (Spanish)
9 a.m. Mass

St. Ann Church

Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Vigil Mass
11:15 p.m. Carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

6 p.m. Vigil Mass
11 p.m. Holy Hour
Midnight Mass

New Year's Day

10 a.m. Mass

St. Joseph Church

Christmas Eve

5 p.m. Children's Mass
10 p.m. Carols
11 p.m. Mass

Christmas Day

9 a.m. Mass (Spanish)

Old Year's Night

5 p.m. Children's Mass
10:30 p.m. Holy Hour
11:45 p.m. Mass

New Year's Day

9 a.m. Mass (Spanish)

St. Patrick Church

Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Vigil Mass
11 p.m. Carols
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

6 p.m. Vigil Mass
11 p.m. Holy Hour
Midnight Mass

New Year's Day

10 a.m. Mass

St. John

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church

Christmas Eve

9:30 p.m. Carols
10:30 p.m. Mass

Christmas Day

7:30 a.m. Mass
9:30 a.m. Mass

Old Year's Night

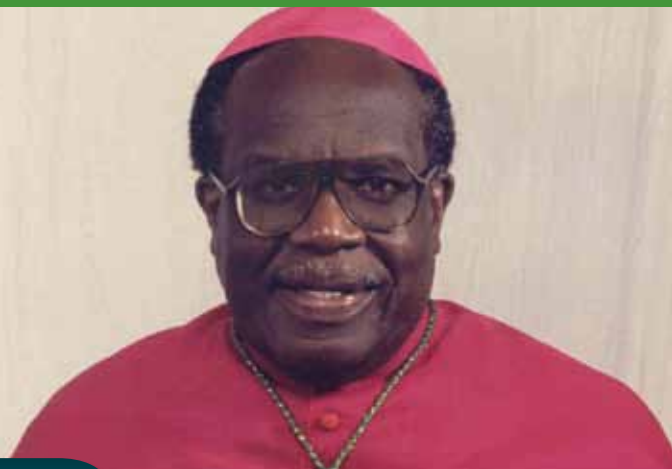
9:30 p.m. Holy Hour
10:30 p.m. Mass

New Year's Day

7:30 a.m. Mass
9:30 a.m. Mass

Priest of the Month

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas



Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas

Bishop Emeritus Elliott Thomas will be the first recipient of the Annual Keys and Sword Award at a benefit dinner at the Marriott Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort on Saturday, February 6. Bishop Thomas will receive this award for his many years of service to the Virgin Islands community.

Bishop Thomas was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on July 15, 1926, the fifth of eight children of the late Damon Griffin Thomas and the late Helen Malvina Christopher Thomas. The family roots are in Tortola,

British Virgin Islands. Throughout his 83 years he has relocated many times, but kept returning to his roots in the Caribbean.

After graduating from Charlotte Amalie High School on St. Thomas in 1945, Bishop Thomas earned a BS degree from the College of Pharmacy at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and then joined the U.S. Army. After his honorable discharge in 1953, he returned to the Virgin Islands for a short time. He held jobs as a pharmacist on St. Thomas, in Erie, Pennsylvania, and in Cleveland, Ohio, in the 1950s. In 1957 he converted to Catholicism and was received into the church at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie. In 1964 he returned to St. Thomas where he worked for the Department of Health and in 1967 founded Cathedral Pharmacy on Main Street. Earlier this year, he donated this building to the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands for use as a semi-perpetual adoration chapel.

Bishop Thomas began his studies for the priesthood in 1982 at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, Florida, and was ordained in 1986 by Bishop Sean O'Malley. He served as pastor of St. Ann Church on St. Croix and Holy Family Church on St. Thomas. He is also a Redemptorist Oblate.

When Bishop O'Malley was named bishop of Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1992, then-Father Thomas was elected as Diocesan Administrator. Fourteen months later he was chosen to serve as the third Bishop of the Virgin Islands by Pope John Paul II. He retired as bishop of the diocese in 1999. He resides in St. Thomas and is available frequently to assist the parishes in the celebration of the sacraments.

priest of the month

Save the Date



*Diocese of St. Thomas
In the Virgin Islands Presents*

*First Annual Keys and
Sword Award Benefit*

His Excellency, The Most Reverend Bishop Elliott G. Thomas, will receive the 2010 Keys and Sword Award, which recognizes extraordinary commitment and selfless dedication in service to others.

**Mark Your Calendars!
Saturday, February 6, 2010, 6:30 p.m.**

**Marriott Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort,
St. Thomas**

**Dinner – Awards – Dancing – Raffles
and Silent Auction**

**Proceeds support the Ss. Peter and Paul
Restoration Project**

Special Report: Health-care reform

What does the Catholic Church in the United States teach?



Health-care reform has been a hot topic. It played a major role in the last presidential election – it has been in the news for months. And it has been food for conversation across dinner tables, around water coolers and in Congress.

Everyone has a different idea about what health-care reform should include. Arguments can be vociferous. The Catholic Church has been a major participant in this debate – not only because of the

moral questions involved that affect us all, but also because the Catholic hospital system is one of the nation's largest.

So where does the church stand on health-care reform?

Position of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on health care reform

>> In our Catholic tradition, health care is a basic human right. Access to health care should not depend on where a person works, how much a family earns, or where a person lives. Instead, every person, created in the image and likeness of God, has a right to life and to those things necessary to sustain life, including affordable, quality health care. This teaching is rooted in the biblical call to heal the sick and to serve “the least of these,” our concern for human life and dignity, and the principle of the common good. Unfortunately, tens of millions of Americans do not have health insurance. According to the Catholic bishops of the United States, the current health care system is in need of fundamental reform.



To learn about Catholic teaching on health care in more detail, read the full statement by the United States Catholic Bishops, *A Framework for Comprehensive Health Care Reform*, at usccb.org/sdwp/national/comphealth.shtml.

Letter to Congress from the USCCB

The U.S. Bishops have voiced their opinion on this issue to members of Congress. Their most recent letter, on Oct. 8, stated:

... If final legislation does not meet our principles, we will have no choice but to oppose the bill. We remain committed to working with the Administration, Congressional leadership, and our allies to produce final health reform legislation that will reflect our principles.

We continue to urge you to:

1 Exclude mandated coverage for abortion, and incorporate longstanding policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights. No one should be required to pay for or participate in abortion. It is essential that the legislation clearly apply to this new program longstanding and widely supported federal restrictions on abortion funding and mandates, and protections for rights of conscience. No current bill meets this test.

2 Adopt measures that protect and improve people's health care. Reform should make quality health care affordable and accessible to everyone, particularly those who are vulnerable and those who live at or near the poverty level.

3 Include effective measures to safeguard the health of immigrants, their children and all of society. Ensure that legal immigrants and their family members have comprehensive, affordable, and timely access to health care coverage. Maintain an adequate safety net for those who remain uncovered.

We sincerely hope that the legislation will not fall short of our criteria. However, we remain apprehensive when amendments protecting freedom of conscience and ensuring no taxpayer money for abortion are defeated in committee votes. If acceptable language in these areas cannot be found, we will have to oppose the health care bill vigorously. Catholic moral tradition teaches that health care is a basic human right, essential to protecting human life and dignity. Much-needed reform of our health care system must be pursued in ways that serve the life and dignity of all, never in ways that undermine or violate these fundamental values. We will work tirelessly to remedy these central problems and help pass real reform that clearly protects the life, dignity and health of all.

What about the right to health care?

.....
 >> The church recognizes medical care as a fundamental human right. In Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, promulgated in 1963, the pope wrote:

• **Man has the right to live.** He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life,

particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill

health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood (8).

Abortion and health-care

>> The bishops and the church adamantly teach respect for human life and dignity, from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. Catholic teaching is very clear that abortion is not health care. Additionally, health-care providers should continue to have the freedom of conscience to refuse to provide abortion services to which they are morally opposed.

Surveys conducted by International Communications Research in September 2009 indicate that the general public concurs with the church on this matter:

Sixty percent favor – and only 30 percent oppose – “efforts to pass health care reform to provide affordable health insurance for all.” Focusing on that 60 percent, the survey found that:

- **60 percent** of those favoring reform oppose – and only **25 percent** support – “measures that would require people to pay for abortion coverage with their federal taxes.”
 - **By a 49-39 percent plurality**, those who favor reform oppose “measures that would require people to pay for abortion coverage with their health insurance premiums”
 - **Among those favoring reform**, those who favor maintaining “current federal laws that protect doctors and nurses from being forced to perform or refer for abortions against their will” outnumber those who oppose keeping such laws in place by a **margin of two to one (60-30)**.
- Of all U.S. adults,**
- **67 percent** opposed requiring people to pay for abortion coverage through their taxes
 - When asked if they would support their own insurance companies providing abortion services, **68 percent** of U.S. adults said ‘No’ and only **24 percent** said ‘Yes.’

Project Homeless Connect

Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands (CCVI) and other grass-roots organizations working with the United Way and the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services hosted their third Project Homeless Connect at the University of the Virgin Islands' Sports and Fitness Center on St. Thomas on October 16 and at the Agriculture Fair Grounds on St. Croix on October 23 in an effort to improve the lives of hundreds of homeless people in the local community.

The event provided a day of personal attention and care for the homeless. Hundreds of volunteers and service providers, which included government,

nonprofit and private agencies, served more than 142 homeless clients on St. Thomas and more than 128 on St. Croix. Services included dental screenings, vision care, blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol testing, HIV testing, flu shots, pediatric immunizations, legal assistance, employment services, Food Stamps/WIC food vouchers and housing information. CCVI headed the food committee, and lunch was prepared by the Educational Complex Culinary Arts students on St. Croix (pictured above).



Project Homeless Connect serves as an annual stepping stone to end homelessness in the territory. It connects the homeless with services in a stress-free environment; builds connections between advocates and the social service agencies; and raises awareness of the homeless.

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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Pride of the Parish

The Knights of Columbus, Assembly #1596, attended Sunday Mass at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas on October 25 and posed with Msgr. Jerome Feudjio, rector. Pictured left to right,

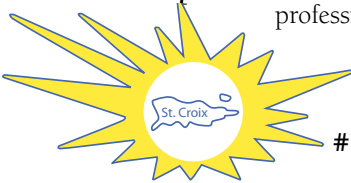


front row, are Claudy Brutus, Marcellin Phillip, Gilbert Pinney, Msgr. Feudjio, Anthony Francis and Michael Charles. James Hunt, Genio Etienne and John Belle stand in back.

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Investments of St. Croix

Our Blessed Mother's Message from Medjugorje

October 25, 2009

"Dear children! Also today I bring you my blessing, I bless you all and I call you to grow on this way, which God has begun through me for your salvation. Pray, fast and joyfully witness your faith, little children, and may your heart always be filled with prayer. Thank you for having responded to my call."

— Courtesy of John and Claire Foster

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