Diocese learns about new school program

LINDA REEVES
of the Florida Catholic staff

PALM SPRINGS | Educators and members of school communities here, guests and diocesan leaders participated in a daylong meeting Nov. 12 led by the chancellor of the University of Notre Dame Alliance for Catholic Education. It was focused on an innovative education approach designed to expand students' abilities to challenge and learn. It is called "Strategic Vision 2020: Charting a Course for Excellence." It is designed to provide direction and purpose for work in Catholic education and schools in the diocese through 2020.

Strategic Vision 2020

Since last year, professionals, experts and people from various schools and the community at large have been involved with helping design "Strategic Vision 2020: Charting a Course for Excellence." It is designed to provide direction and purpose for work in Catholic education and schools in the diocese through 2020.

Initiatives are all in keeping with the diocese’s commitment to continue to build on school initiatives, and provide the very best schools of excellence and ongoing opportunities for young people. Educators are dedicated to the mission of schools: helping young people develop God-given talents and gifts, preparing them both for higher education, vocations and leadership roles in the community, careers and the Church.

Strategic Vision 2020 is the Diocese of Palm Beach initiative. To review the vision, visit www.diocesepb.org, go to offices, scroll down and click onto schools.

Matt Kloser from the University of Notre Dame spoke to students in the science lab at St. Luke School in Palm Beach Gardens (LINDA REEVES | FC)

"I think that the STEM program is going to do amazing things for our kids," said Gelo. "They are already getting a very high level of education. This will raise the bar even higher, getting them more prepared to go out to the high schools, into college and out into the world. I think that it will give the students more opportunities and founda-tions for successful positions out in the world. But they will also have their Catholic faith to use for the greater good of the world."
DIOCESAN EVENTS

Workshops for extraordinary ministers of holy Communion: Dec. 7, Holy Family Parish, Port St. Lucie. Sponsored by diocesan Office of Liturgy. All workshops 9:15-11:45 a.m., doors open at 8:45 a.m. for registration. Training for beginners and experienced with discussions on various topics including sacramental theology, history of Eucharist and origin and development of the Mass. New ministers will get “hands-on” practice with unconsecrated altar boards and wine. Sessions offered simultaneously in English and Spanish. Call a parish office for information and registration.

Requiem Mass: Dec. 14, 10 a.m., Our Lady Queen of Peace Cemetery, outdoor chapel, 10941 Southern Blvd., Royal Palm Beach. Prayers offered for those who died in November, all buried at the cemetery, and the souls in purgatory. 561-793-0711.

Liturgy of the Hours: Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m., The Breakers Hotel, 1 S. County Road, Palm Beach. 25th anniversary of the devotional event to benefit Catholic education and 17 diocesan schools. Dinner and dancing. Speaker: Felicia Rodriguez, WPBF TV Channel 25 “News mornings” guest. Tickets: $350 per person. Contact 772-221-1865 or nolici91@gmail.com.

Matthew Kelly presentation: March 1, 2014, 1:30 p.m., St. Mary Parish, 280 S.W. Prima Vista Blvd., Port Saint Lucie. Theme: “Living every day with passion and purpose.” Tickets: $35. Limited seating. 772-878-1215.

Men’s Scripture study and discussion: Tuesdays 7-9 p.m., Holy Name of Jesus, Holy Family Room, 345 S. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Led by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach. Contact 561-630-2695 or jhoffman@diocesepb.org.

Rosary gathering: First Saturday, 9 a.m., near the Presidential Women’s Center in West Palm Beach, 100 Northpoint Parkway, West Palm Beach. Led by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach. Contact 561-345-2000, ext. 287.

Christmas bazaar: Nov. 20, 26-27 Dec. 1, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Emmanuel Parish, 15700 Military Trail, Delray Beach. Crafts, baked goods, Christmas items, nearly new items and books. 561-496-2480.

Bazaar and 40th anniversary celebration: Dec. 6-7, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., St. Martin de Porres Parish, 2555 N.E. Savanna Road, Jensen Beach. Vendors and crafters welcome. For booth reservation: 772-221-1865 or nolici91@gmail.com.

Lumen Christi Gala: Dec. 14, 2014, 6:30 p.m., The Breakers Hotel, 1 S. County Road, Palm Beach. Black-tie gala to benefit Catholic Women of Action conference: Oct. 6-7, 2014, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Woman’s World Medical Center, 155 S.E. Third Avenue, Delray Beach. Theme: “Living every day with passion and purpose.” Tickets: $35. Limited seating. 772-878-1215.

TV MASS

Weekly televised Mass: The televised Catholic Mass airs each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on Ion Television Network. Check listings. For more information on the televised Mass, please contact the Diocese of Palm Beach Office of Communications at 561-755-9289.

TV MASS

VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Prayer vigils: Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Planned Parenthood, 1322 N.W. Federal Highway, Stuart. Prayer warriors and sidewalk counselors needed. 772-221-1865.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Jorge Pettit Catholic Worker Hospitality House: Opportunities for volunteers and donors to help the homeless. The mission is in need of clothes, detergent, toiletries, Rookie, household items, furniture and bicycles. Financial donations are used to assist with electric bills and rental expenses. 772-579-9775 or Notre Dame Mission, 726-466-9617.

Hoff Cross thrift store and service center: Opportunities for volunteers to serve the thrift store and support mission work. Both are outreach ministries to the poor of Indiantown and are made possible through the help of volunteers and generous donors. 772-597-2798.

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Crafty seniors find dignity in art

LINDA REEVES

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WEST PALM BEACH | Carmelite Sister for the Aged and Infirm Eulaliae George is truly living in the spirit of her community’s foundress, Venerable Mary Angelina Teresa, a woman who pioneered new concepts in caring for the aging with focus on respect and dignity and giving seniors a sense of purpose and value.

Sister George, who serves Lourdes-Noreen McKeen Residence, an independent and assisted-living residence, has developed her own program for elderly that is not only helping make people healthier, but helps them discover God-given talents to create art pieces and crafts and feel good about work they made using their own two hands.

As part of Sister George’s program, on Oct. 15, the feast day of St. Teresa of Jesus, Teresa’s gift shop opened. It featured an array of items made by the residence’s seniors with love and a touch of Carmelite spirit. The shop is open to the public and gives seniors a sense of purpose and dignity in caring for the aging with respect and dignity and gives seniors a sense of purpose and value.

Lourdes-Noreen McKeen Residence is located at 315 S. Flagler Drive in West Palm Beach. Teresa’s gift shop is located on the first floor. Guests are encouraged to use the entrance at Flagler and Fern. The store is open weekdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and Sundays 11 a.m.-2 p.m. For information, call Sister George at 561-655-8544, ext. ext 2047.

I think it is a valuable program that stimulates the mind and body,” said Sister George, a licensed nurse, who came to West Palm Beach in the late 1970s, where she continued to serve Lourdes-Noreen McKeen as pastoral care mentor to seminarrians, volunteer program coordinator and supervisor of activities.

“It makes them feel good to see that they are able to do things,” she added. “It helps their self-esteem. It gives them a little bit of exercise and pride.”

When the Florida Catholic visited Nov. 7, crafters were sitting around a table with white Styrofoam balls, crystal beads, sequins in different colors, and glue. The artists were creating Christmas ornaments and involved in a little friendly conversation.

“I enjoy the crafting,” said Christine Zwennes, as she slowly and carefully added red sequins to the white ball she held in her hands. Sister George walked over to inspect Zwennes’ work, commenting that she was doing an excellent job. Women around the table chatted about art and craft projects and hobbies pursued when they were young. “I like the camaraderie,” said Zwennes about the social aspect of the sessions held at various times of the month.

Mildred Peifer was among the crafters. She is a former piano player and organist for St. Ann Parish in West Palm Beach. She painstakingly placed an array of colored sequins on her ornament and a tiny bit of glue here and there to hold them in place. Her hands were a little shaky and unsteady, but she managed to complete the project, hope it looks beautiful,” she said. When people at the table admired her work, Peifer smiled in delight appearing to have a bit of new self-confidence and pride.

The gift shop is named after St. Teresa of Avila also known as St. Teresa of Jesus, who founded the Discalced Carmelites. It features an array of jewelry, beaded glass holders, unusual napkin clips, caps, kitchen towels, toys and other items made by the residents. One item in the store that is not for sale is a quilt with embroidered flowers, designed and stitched by Sister George, who is quite a crafter herself, having learned to craft from her grandmother back home in Indiana.

“It looks very Floridian,” said Sister George about her quilt in bright colors that took two years to make. It will be raffled off Dec. 15 and tickets can be purchased at Teresa’s. Proceeds from the raffle will go to help purchase supplies for the arts and crafts program.

Sister George, who became a postulant of the Carmelites order nearly 55 years ago, told the Florida Catholic that as a little girl she helped take care of her grandmother back home in Indiana. “I like to help the aged,” Sister George said. “They are easy to get along with, and I like to help them at the end of life because it is like ushering them into heaven.”

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

To donate:
Diocese of Palm Beach
PO Box 109650
Palm Beach Gardens FL 33410-9650
Make your check payable to Archdiocese of Palm Beach/RFR.

Or give at your local parish December 7-8.

www.retiredreligious.org
Father John Morrissey, pastor of St. Sebastian Parish in Sebastian. (LINDA REEVES | FC)

Editor's note: Many Catholics here love the priests of the diocese. Priests have busy jobs and play major roles in the lives of people. In the upcoming issues of the Florida Catholic, the "Who’s who" section will highlight clergy of the Diocese of Palm Beach, giving a glimpse into the hearts of these men who have dedicated their lives to Christ and the people of God. In this issue, we feature Father John Morrissey.

Q: What are some of the things you do to bring Catholics back to the Church?
A: I try to get as many people as I can involved in some aspect of our parish life. It may be one of our ministries, joining organizations, or seeking to bring new life. The more a person is involved in some aspect of our community, the more the likelihood that their commitment to their religion will grow.

Q: How would you describe your time as pastor at St. Sebastian?
A: That's a hard question to answer. I enjoy baptizing infants, first Communion and confirmation, preparing people for marriage into the Church. I also enjoy seeing parishioners involved in parish life. Seeing people live their faith gives me the greatest joy, however.

Q: What can the Catholic Church do to attract more young families to participate in their parish on a regular basis?
A: I wish I had the answer to that question. Times have changed. We had stay-at-home moms 50 to 60 years ago, because the husband could earn enough to support his family. Now both have to work full time and they are tired at the end of the day. There seems to be more after-school activities that the kids are involved in as well, and this includes activities on Sunday morning. Technology is also a problem. Going to the Internet and texting has taken the place of people talking face-to-face. We need to find ways to get young families together in activities that both the parents and children enjoy together, but we also need to have interesting youth group activities for teen-to-teen social interaction with staff and parishioners.

Q: What is the most difficult aspect of being a pastor?
A: Administration and finance. I do not enjoy those items. I've never been lucky in having a good staff and capable volunteers for the finance council and parish council.

Q: What are your thoughts about how we can increase vocations in the diocese?
A: Family prayer. Vocations have to start in the family. Without a strong family commitment to their religion, we cannot expect our youths to be drawn to a religious life. We also need to have parishioners encourage their family and friends to consider a life devoted to God.

Q: What do you do to bring Catholics back to the Church?
A: I try to get as many people as I can involved in some aspect of our parish life. It may be one of our ministries, joining organizations, or seeking to bring new life. The more a person is involved in some aspect of our community, the more the likelihood that their commitment to their religion will grow.

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