

## 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time



Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight. The vengeful will suffer the LORD'S vengeance, for he remembers their sins in detail. Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. Should a man nourish anger against his fellows and expect healing from the LORD? Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows, yet seek pardon for his own sins? If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins? Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin! Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor; of the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults.

*Sirach 27:30-28:7*



None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

*Romans 14:7-9*



Peter approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart."

*Matthew 18:21-35*

(This page paid for by the Diocese of Lake Charles.)

## Diocese to celebrate Feast Day of Patron Saint

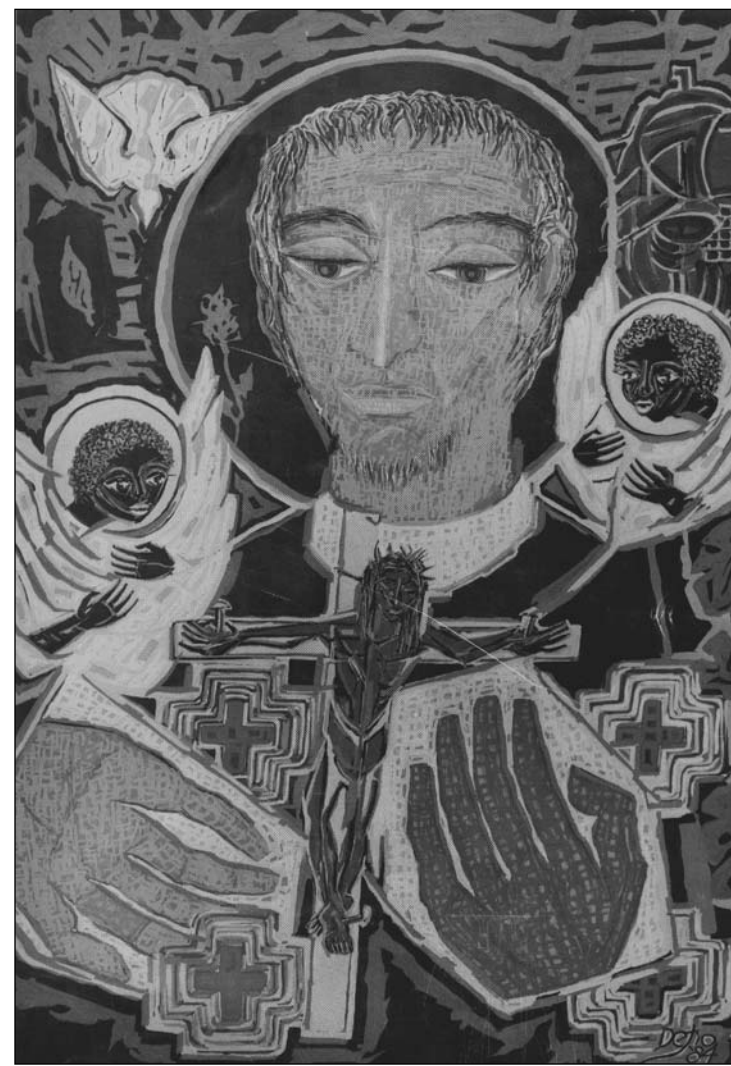
LAKE CHARLES — The Feast Day of the Patron Saint of the Diocese of Lake Charles, St. Peter Claver, will be celebrated today, Sept. 9, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The Rev. Msgr. Harry D. Greig, Administrator of the Diocese of Lake Charles, will preside at Evening Vespers Prayer.

Because of the recent devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, the Evening Prayer will include prayers for those who have been affected by the disaster. Everyone is invited to participate in this Diocesan Celebration.

St. Peter Claver, the son of a Catalonian farmer, was born at Verdu, in 1581; he died Sept. 8, 1654. He obtained his first degrees at the University of Barcelona. At the age of 20 he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Tarragona. While he was studying philosophy at Majorca in 1605, Alphonsus Rodriguez, the saintly door-keeper of the college, learned from God the future mission of his young associate, and thenceforth never ceased exhorting him to set out to evangelize the Spanish possessions in America. Peter obeyed, and in 1610 landed at Cartagena, where for forty-four years he was the Apostle of the Negro slaves. Early in the seventeenth century the masters of Central and South America afforded the spectacle of one of those social crimes which are entered upon so lightly. They needed laborers to cultivate the soil, which they had conquered, and to exploit the gold mines. The natives being physically incapable of enduring the labors of the mines, it was determined to replace them with Negroes brought from Africa. The

coasts of Guinea, the Congo, and Angola became the market for slave dealers, to whom native petty kings sold their subjects and their prisoners. By its position in the Caribbean Sea, Cartagena became the chief slave-mart of the New World. A thousand slaves landed there each month. They were bought for two, and sold for 200 écus. Though half the cargo might die, the trade remained profitable. Neither the repeated censures of the pope, nor those of Catholic moralists could prevail against this cupidity. The missionaries could not suppress slavery, but only alleviate it, and no one worked more heroically than Peter Claver.

Trained in the school of Père Alfonso de Sandoval, a wonderful missionary, Peter declared himself "the slave of the Negroes forever", and thenceforth his life was one that confounds egotism by its superhuman charity. Although timid and lacking in self-confidence, he became a daring and ingenious organizer. Every month when the arrival of the Negroes was signaled, Claver went out to meet them on the pilot's boat, carrying food and delicacies. The Negroes, cooped up in the hold, arrived crazed and brutalized by suffering and fear. Claver went to each, cared for him, showed him kindness, and made him understand that henceforth he was his defender and father. He thus won their good will. To instruct so many speaking different dialects, Claver assembled at Cartagena a group of interpreters of various nationalities, of whom he made catechists. While the slaves were penned up at Cartagena waiting to be pur-



St. Peter Claver

chased and dispersed, Claver instructed and baptized them in the Faith. On Sundays during Lent he assembled them, inquired concerning their needs, and defended them against their oppressors. This work caused Claver severe trials, and the slave merchants were not his only enemies. Nevertheless, Claver continued his heroic career, accepting all humiliations and adding rigorous penances to his works of charity. Lacking the support of men, the

strength of God was given him. He became the prophet and miracle worker of New Granada, the oracle of Cartagena, and all were convinced that often God would not have spared the city save for him. During his life he baptized and instructed in the Faith more than 300,000 Negroes. He was beatified July 16, 1850, by Pius IX, and canonized January 15, 1888, by Leo XIII. On July 7, 1896, he was proclaimed the special patron of all the Catholic missions among the Negroes.

### LIFE ISSUES FORUM

## Science and Ethics: Together Again?

By Richard M. Doerflinger  
New advances in stem cell research are rebutting politicians' claim that taxpayers must be forced to subsidize the killing of human embryos.

Some advances involve "reprogramming" adult cells to act more like embryonic stem cells. In one study, published in *Science* on August 26, researchers fused existing embryonic stem cells with adult skin cells, producing a new embryonic stem cell with the genetic makeup of the adult cell.

Ethical and practical problems remain. The technique still uses a stem cell originally obtained by destroying a human embryo. Some think this ethical problem may ultimately be solved by isolating the factors in stem cells that achieve this "reprogramming" and manufacturing them directly. Researchers also have to determine the best way to remove

the DNA of the old stem cell, so the new fused cell has only the genetic makeup of the adult cell.

Already, however, this advance is undercutting two arguments for government-sponsored destruction of human embryos.

First, it undercuts the argument that new embryos must be destroyed in the name of embryonic stem cell research. Regrettably, even current federal policy funds research using stem cells that were obtained by destroying embryos before August 2001. Many in Congress say that policy must now expand to promote the killing of new embryos, because the old cell lines are limited in number and becoming genetically abnormal over time. But if those old cell lines can be used to make brand new stem cells with the normal genetic makeup of adult cells, at least the argument for destroying new embryos

falls apart.

Second, it undercuts so-called "therapeutic cloning," where human embryos are cloned and then destroyed for their stem cells. Patients' own cells can be used to make new embryonic stem cells that are a perfect genetic match to them, without making an embryo who is then destroyed. The medical argument against a complete ban on human cloning becomes obsolete.

Let's also not forget the broader question: Why do we need embryonic stem cells at all? Despite a quarter-century's research in mouse embryonic stem cells, and seven years in the human variety, even the latest studies show disappointing results and a troubling tendency for these cells to form tumors. South Korean cloning expert Curie Ahn recently said that developing therapies may take "three to five decades" (AP, 5/20).

That makes new advances in non-embryonic stem cells even more important. For example, British and American researchers have discovered a stem cell in umbilical cord blood that seems as versatile as embryonic stem cells. According to the August issue of *Cell Proliferation*, they also learned how to multiply these cells in the lab for clinical use, using "microgravity" technology developed by NASA for experiments in space - and the U.S. team is working to make these cells produce islet cells for treatment of diabetes.

Any way you look at it, good news is popping up all over on the stem cell front - except for those who keep insisting we must kill to cure.

(Mr. Doerflinger is Deputy Director of the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.)

## Apostolic Seminary Visitation to begin this Fall

WASHINGTON-The Apostolic Visitation of U.S. seminaries and houses of formation by the Congregation for Catholic Education of the Holy See will begin in late September. Also involved in the Visitation is the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

The announcement was made by the Most Reverend Edwin F. O'Brien, Archbishop of Military Services, who is the Coordinator of the Visitation.

The Visitation will include schools of theology as well as college-level seminaries, houses of formation, and academic institutions that form future priests - both secular clergy and members of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life. There are 229 such institutions. However, those with very small student populations, as of the upcoming academic year, may not be visited.

Teams of three or four - more for larger institutions and fewer for small ones - made up of bishops and sem-

inary-related personnel, including members of men's religious institutes, will conduct the visits. One hundred and seventeen (117) visitors have been selected by the Congregation for Catholic Education, after consultation with the Committee on Priestly Formation of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM). The Congregation for Catholic Education will also designate the institutions to which each visitor is assigned.

Each team will submit its report to the Congregation for Catholic Education. Once there has been a distillation of the data received from these reports, the Congregation will be in a position to make its overall evaluation available to the bishops and religious superiors of the United States.

Resource persons, including deacons, religious and lay people, will participate in the Visitation process. They will be appointed by the Coordinator and partici-

pate in visits to the larger institutions.

The plan is to complete most of the Visitation by the end of the 2005-2006 academic year.

In describing the Visitation, Archbishop O'Brien said, "I am confident that this Apostolic Visitation will assist us in promoting the highest standards of formation necessary to bring forth qualified men for priestly ordination."

The Congregation has indicated the following objectives for the Visitation: 1) To examine the criteria for ad-

mission of candidates and the programs of human formation and spiritual formation aimed at ensuring that they can faithfully live chastely for the Kingdom; 2) To examine other aspects of priestly formation in the United States. Particular attention will be reserved for the intellectual formation of seminarians, to examine fidelity to the Magisterium, especially in the field of moral theology, in the light of Veritatis Splendor (the 1993 encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II, "The Splendor of the Truth").

## Charity Dinner set Nov. 3

LAKE CHARLES - The Seventh Annual Diocesan Charity Dinner, sponsored by the Secretariat for Pastoral Services of the Diocese of Lake Charles, will be Thursday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m. in Treasures of Marilyn, located at 2510 Fifth Avenue.

Tickets for the event are \$75 per person or a table for eight can be purchased for \$600.

Last year's event raised more than \$31,000 to assist with the works of the Secretariat, which includes the Catholic Service Center, located at 2333 East Broad Street, according to Deacon Ed Lavine, Secretary for Pastoral Services.

Tickets will be available at the end of September, Deacon Lavine noted.