

# Catechetical News

## The Word is the Wonder of the Season!



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Melissa Waldon

#### **Administrative Registrar**

Graciela Aviles

She began the long wait on the day the angel first appeared. A heavenly courier had come to her as she sat alone in prayer. His name was Gabriel. He said he came with words from heaven—from the very mouth of God! How often do we hear God as a voice in our head or in our heart? How often are we tempted to ignore this urgent call? Yet Mary understood this was message she couldn't ignore!

Later she told her parents, who in their worried response thought it would do her good to spend some time away from Nazareth for her own protection. They arranged to send her to her cousin Elizabeth, who, very late in her childbearing years was with child, herself.

Elizabeth greeted her as if she knew. Indeed, she was sharing the experience of anticipation. For an angel had come to her husband Zachariah, as well. They had begun for themselves this wait for their son to be born. The child, to be named John, would be a sign of hope for the world, a herald in his own right.

It was good for Mary to be with Elizabeth. They passed the time together, preparing themselves to bear their children, learning to wait and listen. They were also practicing the skills they would need and falling in love with the little ones whom they awaited but could not yet see. Many an expectant mother knows this feeling and can appreciate the love that was building inside these women as they waited.

God showered Mary with his love and protection, once more as she returned home to Joseph. Again, the messenger from God made himself known, this time to Joseph. For he too heard the voice of the angel in his troubled sleep saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." (*Matt 1:20*) The words of God brought him peace.

And now Mary waited in the stable, warmed by the breath of the animals, for her child to be born, God's Son and hers. And just as her people, the sons and daughters of Israel, had long awaited their Messiah, so this mother-to-be was about to live the reality of his coming. Once more the Angel appeared, leading others in the chorus, singing "gloria in excelsis deo!" The shepherds came looking for the promised child. It had been worth the wait for all of them Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth and Zachariah. The covenant fulfilled, as promised by John the Baptist, as fulfilled now and forever through the person of the Jesus.

Each year the Church takes time before the sacred feast of Christmas to remember, to immerse us in the holy longing for the Word made Flesh. How do we meet this challenge? This can be a time to direct our prayer, to wait and watch with Mary and the people of God. This can be a time to reflect on the miracle of God's gift to the world. Are we watching for the herald who will speak the Word of God to us? This Word is the wonder of this season of Welcome, a life given selflessly for the life of the world.

# Feliz Navidad

Lourdes



Jeanne

Claudio

Sylvia

Gracie

Melissa

María

# Merry Christmas

## La Palabra es la Maravilla de la Navidad

Ella comenzó la larga espera el día en que el Ángel apareció. Un mensajero celestial había venido a ella mientras estaba en oración. Su nombre era Gabriel. Él dijo que traía un mensaje desde el cielo – ¡de la boca misma de Dios! ¿Qué tan seguido oímos a Dios como una voz en nuestra mente o en nuestro corazón? ¿Qué tan seguido somos tentados de ignorar este urgente llamado? Pero aun así, María entendió que éste era un mensaje que no podía ignorar.

Más tarde, ella le contó a sus padres, quienes en su preocupación pensaron que sería una buena idea que pasara unos días fuera de Nazaret por su propia protección. Hicieron arreglos para enviarla donde su prima Isabel, quien a pesar de su avanzada edad, estaba también embarazada.

Isabel la saludó como si supiera. Realmente, ella estaba compartiendo la experiencia de la anticipación. Un ángel se había aparecido a su esposo Zacarías y ellos habían ya comenzado la espera de su propio hijo. El niño que se llamaría Juan, sería un signo de esperanza para el mundo, un heraldo.

Fue muy bueno para María el estar un tiempo con Isabel. Pasaban los días juntas, preparándose cada una para la llegada de sus hijos, aprendiendo a esperar y a escuchar. También estaban practicando los talentos que necesitaría y aprendiendo a amar a sus pequeños, a quienes aun no podían ver. Muchas madres embarazadas conocen este sentimiento y pueden entender este amor que se estaba desarrollando en estas mujeres en su espera.

Dios lleno a María con su amor y protección, una vez más, al regresar a casa y a José. Una vez más, el mensajero de Dios se hizo presente, esta vez apareciéndose a José. Ya que él también escuchó la voz del ángel en su sueño cuando le dijo: “José, hijo de David, no temas de recibir a María como tu esposa, porque ella ha concebido por obra del Espíritu Santo.” (Mt. 1, 20) Las palabras de Dios le dieron paz.

Y ahora María esperaba en el establo a que su hijo naciera; calentada solo por el aliento de los animales. Y como su pueblo, los hijos y las hijas de Israel, habían esperado al Mesías por tanto tiempo, así mismo ella estaba a punto de vivir la realidad de su venida. Una vez más apareció el Ángel, cantando con otros ángeles, “gloria in excelsis deo!” Los pastores llegaron buscando al niño prometido. Había valido la pena la espera de todos ellos, María, José, Isabel y Zacarías. La alianza se había cumplido, como lo había prometido Juan Bautista, cumplida ahora y por siempre en la persona de Jesús.

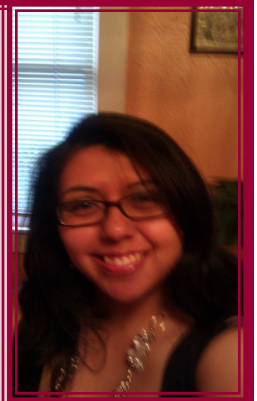
Cada año la Iglesia reserva un tiempo antes de la fiesta de la Navidad, para recordar, para sumergirnos en la sagrada espera de la Palabra hecha Carne. ¿Cómo respondemos a este desafío? Éste puede ser el momento de dirigir nuestra oración, para esperar con María y con el pueblo de Dios. Éste puede ser un tiempo de reflexionar en el milagro del don de Dios al mundo. ¿Estamos esperando al heraldo que nos hablará la Palabra de Dios? Esta Palabra es la maravilla de esta estación de Bienvenida, una vida entregada desinteresadamente por el mundo.



# Winter “What-nots”

## Welcome Graciela Aviles

The Department of Catechetical Services is delighted to welcome Graciela Aviles (Gracie) as part of our team. Gracie is our new Administrative Registrar. She tells us “I am the 6th of 7 children. I was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. My father is from Dallas, Texas and my mother is from Mexico City, Mexico. I attended and graduated from St. Mary of Carmel School and Bishop Dunne High School. I have a Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education, ESL (English as a Second Language) from Texas Woman’s University. I plan to attend Graduate school this summer and I am looking forward to my journey with the Diocese of Dallas.”



## RCIA

### *RCIA Team Spirituality*

**Saturday, January 14, 2012**

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish from **8:45 AM to 3:00 PM.**

RCIA catechists must register through the Parish PCL.

### **RCIA Rites-Parish Celebrations—English and Spanish**

**Feb 4, 2012**

8:45 AM-3:00 PM

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish

### **RCIA Conducting Retreats – English and Spanish**

**February 13 & 14, 2012**

7:00 PM-9:30 PM

St. Mark the Evangelist, Plano

**For More information or to register please contact Sylvia Garcia: [sgarcia@cathdal.org](mailto:sgarcia@cathdal.org)**

## Special Needs

### **Grace Committee Meeting**

TBA

### **Watch for Spring Trainings**

Watch for “Hands On” Training Planned for the Spring

**For More Information call Melissa Waldon at 214-379-2895**

**or e-mail: [mwaldon@cathdal.org](mailto:mwaldon@cathdal.org)**

# Calendar



Thurs.-Dec. 15	<b>Attention RCIA Directors for Catechumens &amp; Candidates:</b> Lists due on Thursday, December 15, 2011 Call Sylvia Garcia at 214-379-2857 or <a href="mailto:sgarcia@cathdal.org">sgarcia@cathdal.org</a> for more info.
Fri. - Mon. Dec. 23-26	Pastoral Center closed for the <b>Christmas Holiday</b> .
Sun. Dec. 25	<b>Christmas</b> , Holy Day which celebrates the Birth of Jesus
Fri. - Dec. 30,	<b>New Year's Eve</b> . Pastoral Center Closed
Jan 1, 2012	<b>New Years Day</b> , World Day of Peace.
Jan 2, 2012	<b>Holiday</b> , Pastoral Center Closed
Jan 11, 2012	<b>Catechetical Leadership Formation Program (CLFP) Class:</b> <i>Church History</i> Pastoral Center, 3725 Blackburn, Dallas, 75219, Time: 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. RSVP by January 9, 2012
Jan 14, 2012	<b>Spirituality of the RCIA Catechists/Team</b>
January 17	<b>Martin Luther King Holiday</b> , Pastoral Center Closed
TBA	<b>Grace Committee Meeting</b> St Jude Parish, Allen 6:30—8:00 p.m.
Jan 19, 2012	<b>PCL Professional Development:</b> Catechetical Models-Whole Parish Catechesis. St. Monica 9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. <b>RSVP by January 5, 2012</b>
Jan 24-27, 2012	<b>Southwest Liturgical Conference.</b> Five hours continuing credit if toward Catechist Certificate. <a href="http://www.swlc.org/association_pages/index-swlcassoc.html">http://www.swlc.org/association_pages/index-swlcassoc.html</a>
Feb 4, 2012	<b>RCIA Rites-Parish Celebrations</b> 8:45 AM-3:00 PM St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish
Feb 13 & 14, 2012	<b>RCIA Conducting Retreats – English and Spanish</b> 7:00 PM-9:30 PM St. Mark the Evangelist, Plano
Feb 15, 2012  4	<b>PCL Retreat. Sr. Maureen Sullivan, OP, Tom Kendzia, Hosted by RCL</b> St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Plano, TX , 8:30-9:00 a.m. Morning Hospitality, 9 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Presentation, Luncheon and Mass. RSVP by Feb 1 Invitation includes Pastors, PCLs, Adult Faith Formation Directors, RCIA Directors. <b>5 hours Retreat Credit given for attendees.</b>



Prayer & Study  
For  
Parish Catechetical Leaders

**Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week**

January 24-27, 2012

Sheraton Hotel

Dallas, TX

Opening Night Address:

Cardinal Donald Wuerl,

<http://www.swlc.org>



**Early Registration Extended Through Christmas**

**Catechetical Leadership Formation Courses (CLFP)**

**Church History**

**Wednesday, January 11, 2012**

Instructor: Sr. Carmen Therese Lazo, MCDP

First Floor Conference Room, Pastoral Center

**Please call 214-379 2847 to register ( & to order lunch if you wish) by Monday, Jan 9, 2012**

**Professional Development Day for PCLs**

You asked for it and now we have made it happen! So we trust that all of you will come and be a part of the this special day for PCLs.

**Jan 19, 2012**

***Catechetical Models  
Whole Parish Catechesis.***

**Instructor: Rosina Hendrickson**

**St. Monica Parish**

**9:00a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Please RSVP by January 5th for class, lunch, and short business meeting**

**Inviting All Parish Priests, Catechetical Leaders, Adult Faith Directors, & RCIA / RICA Directors To a Day of Retreat**

**Feb 15, 2012 —RSVP by Friday Feb 1, 2012 - [jjgilbert@rclbenzinger.com](mailto:jjgilbert@rclbenzinger.com)**

Sister Maureen Sullivan, OP & Musician Tom Kendzia

Presenting on the theme of *Evangelization*

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

Hospitality, 8:30 - 9:00 a.m. Presentation and Lunch & Mass

9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

# PCL Training for Operation Rice Bowl



CRS



Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012 -  
Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012.

## Operation Rice Bowl Information for Parish Leaders

Join Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities for a special Information Session on Operation Rice Bowl!

**When: Thursday, January 5th, 10:00am-12:30pm**  
(pizza and salad provided)

**Where: Catholic Charities of Dallas,**  
9461 LBJ Freeway Conf B, Dallas, 75243

**RSVP to Catarina Torres, 214-520-6590 ext. 124**  
[ctorres@central.catholiccharitiesdallas.org](mailto:ctorres@central.catholiccharitiesdallas.org)

CRS' Operation Rice Bowl offers simple yet powerful ways for parishes, schools and families to bring our Catholic faith to life during the holy season of Lent. By participating in the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving through CRS' Operation Rice Bowl, the faithful in our diocese are making a positive difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters who are most in need.

