

OPINION

Laredo Morning Times

A HEARST NEWSPAPER

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Catholic Charities puts faith into action

Happy birthday to Carolyn M. Schmies! As Ms. Schmies celebrates and enjoys time with her family and friends, Karla Varela, a Communications major from Texas A&M International University, will be filling in for her. We are excited that Karla has chosen to do her internship with the United Way of Laredo. This gives her the opportunity to learn about nonprofit agencies and different resources available in our community. Thank you, Karla!

This November, Catholic Charities is upholding the community by bringing health workers to San Luis Reyes Church. As part of their annual mission week, doctors, nurses, and health care professionals come together to provide free medical services to the public. The halls of San Luis Reyes Church will offer comfort and relief to those who have felt left behind. The faith and compassion of Catholic Charities will be demonstrated through the provision of vital health checkups, treatments, and health education.

Catholic Charities is a faith-based nonprofit organization that provides services to families and communities in need. This organization was founded by men and women who believed that the collective efforts of the church and people could help those in poverty. That is why, within this organization, they speak for the unheard and fight for change.

Nationwide, they have provided help for over 15 million people. Catholic Charities aims to bring justice in social structures, to end poverty, hunger, and unemployment. They bring hope to children who are malnourished, people with disabilities, the elderly who are isolated, migrants, refugees, and families that lack sufficient care. They care for at-risk and vulnerable communities to provide light and hope. Compassion is the root of this assistance. To support these communities, Catholic Charities provides emergency assistance, food distribution, rent and utility support, immigration services, and more.

One of the most notable programs that Catholic Charities provides is immigration services. This program assists those who have immigrated and are looking to become U.S. citizens. With this program, they aim to bring families together and offer immigration processing services at a lower cost. Aside from this, they offer workshops that educate them about their rights and the naturalization process. Catholic Charities provides emergency assistance to help individuals struggling to keep their homes. Their main goal is to prevent homelessness by providing help with utility and rental costs. All of these programs have notably helped several families stay together and keep their homes. Catholic

Charities' services go beyond financial or legal support. Catholic Charities ensures care for the physical well-being of the community.

Medical Mission is one of the impactful initiatives by Catholic Charities. From Nov. 6 to Nov. 10, they will be providing basic and specialized medical services. This initiative demonstrates the effort and care Catholic Charities invests in supporting those at risk by providing crucial services at no cost. In this event, you can receive physical examinations, prescriptions for basic medicine, dental checkups and consultations, blood pressure checks, vision tests, and referrals tailored to your needs. This initiative was launched in 2009 when Medical Missions of Divine Mercy partnered with the Diocese of Laredo. MDM is a group of doctors, optometrists, dentists, nurses, and volunteers from St. Laurence Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Their collaboration with Catholic Charities has made it possible to provide free, quality care to those who might not otherwise have access to it. This event has helped over 1,200 people annually.

Medical Mission embodies the spirit of community, demonstrating how we, as a collective, have the power to help a large number of people. These church halls serve as a haven for people who lack access to prop-

er health care provided by health professionals who have volunteered to give their services at no cost. This week's services offered by Catholic Charities capture their mission. They serve those in need regardless of circumstance and faith.

This event, hosted by Catholic Charities at San Luis Reyes Church, is located at 3502 Sanders Ave. On Nov. 6, services will be available from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. From Nov. 7 to 9, services will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Nov. 10, the final day, services will be offered from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. If planning to attend, you can preregister at catholiccharities-dioceseoflaredo.org. If you do not preregister, no worries! Walk-ins are welcome.

Mark your calendars
RUTHE B. COWL REHABILITATION CENTER; CHILDREN'S ORTHOPEDIC CLINIC

RBC is hosting its monthly Children's Orthopedic Clinic on Wednesday. Registration is required. RBC proudly provides physical, occupational, and speech therapy services for both children and adults, ensuring access to quality care for everyone. To schedule an appointment for the Children's Orthopedic Clinic or learn more about their services call 956-722-2431.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY LAREDO: CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

In honor of their 30th anniversary, Habitat is hosting a special celebration from 6-9 p.m. Thursday. Habitat is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization that helps families achieve the dream of being a homeowner. Tables and Sponsorship opportunities are available. Please contact outreach@habitatlaredo.org for more information or call 956-231-9724.

LAREDO REGIONAL FOOD BANK: 42ND ANNUAL RICE AND BEANS BOWL

Join the Laredo Regional Food Bank for World Food Day from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thursday at the Joe A. Guerra Laredo Public Library, 1120 E. Calton Road. For more information call 956-723-3725 or admin@laredoregionalfoodbank.org

IMAGINARIUM OF SOUTH TEXAS: HEB FREE FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Join us for the HEB Free Family Fun Night from 4-8 p.m. Friday at the Imaginarium on the main campus of Laredo College (West End Washington Street), Building P-149. For more information, please call 956-728-0404.

LAREDO MAIN STREET: FARMERS MARKET

Come join the fun! The next Farmers Market will be happening from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at The Outlet Shoppes at Laredo! Each month features a unique theme, seasonal activities and exciting work-

shops. Every visit is a new and memorable experience. Whether you're shopping for fresh ingredients, supporting local artisans, or enjoying live entertainment, the Farmers Market is the place to be. Vendor applications are now open! For more information email: lmsevents01@gmail.com

AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER (AHEC): 41ST VIRTUAL ANNUAL UPDATE IN MEDICINE CONFERENCE ON VARIOUS CONDITIONS AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY

AHEC will be having a virtual seminar from noon to 5 p.m. Oct. 24 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 25. Up to 11 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for health care providers. There are fees for the conference. For more information, contact AHEC at 956-712-0037 or email hmedellin@mrgbahec.org.

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF LAREDO; INSPIRING YOUTH BOWL-A-THON

Oct. 25 game times: noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Different levels of Sponsorships available. For more information contact Oralía Bernal at obernal@jast.org.

If you have an upcoming community event or information on a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization you would like to share, please email me at 956cuidandolonuestro@gmail.com.

Karla Varela For United Way of Laredo

YOUR OPINION

We must be forthright in assessment of U.S.

There are many questions one has about the country's founding, its ideology, its relevance and its authenticity, but all our questions can be morphed into the one being asked today — how do we make America Great?

This is the question Americans are asking fearing our democracy is failing and as the coming election nears.

But for us to genuinely attempt to answer this question, we must first look into how the ancient Greeks dealt with with the concept of being great in a democratic society.

To the ancient Greeks, the word “arête” meant that which makes a person be good at something. A woman's arête, for example, was measured by her beauty, by the purity of her manners, and by her wise economic management. The arête of a farmer was determined by his work being done at the right time and with the

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rhythm of nature, the arête of a warrior was his “valor” in battle, and that of a ruler was the wisdom required by Plato's “philosopher-king.”

But the Greeks would not take the arête of anything for granted, and they would always search for that particular element which made someone “good” at something. What, they would ask, is the arête of being a good father, a good husband, a good blacksmith or a good citizen?

At a time when “Make America Great Again” is the slogan of the day it is time for us to look at the “arête” of what makes a good America. What is it that makes America “good, or “great”? Is it its Constitution, its democracy, its electoral system,

its economy, its judicial system, or its people?

But like the ancient Greeks, we must be forthright and truthful in our assessment of America's arête. Otherwise, we will never find the true essence of our country's “virtuousness” and our private and public lives will always be in a state of continuous dissonance, as it is today.

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As Americans, for

example, we worship the motto of E Pluribus Unum — from the many, one — but are distrustful of each other and characterize each other as “givers” and “takers.” We cherish our democracy, but do not trust “government,” and allow for the manipulation of the electoral mechanism. We praise the American worker, but hesitate to establish a living wage and deny them the power to organize.

We relish “America the Beautiful” but criticize government when it attempts to curb pollution and side with “private enterprise” which under the guise of capitalism often destroys our “spacious skies,” and “mountain majesties,” and the fields of “amber waves of grain.”

We revere the concept of equality but are caught in a systemic web of intolerance and discrimination that we seem powerless to eradicate. We glorify the immigrant as being the building block of our society, but rail against the newcomers from south of the border.

So what and where is that arête which we believe makes America

great?

We must search for America's “arête” in the essence of its people, understanding that it is not the government that empowers people, but the cultural cohesiveness of the people that empowers the nation. The greatness that was Rome took centuries to achieve — and it was not built by the strength and power of its emperors, or by the privileged status of its patrician population, but through the character, diversity, talent and dedication of its common people, the plebe.

Christianity itself became a great religion not because of the eloquence of papal encyclicals or by the benevolence of bishops but by the actions of its common believers. In fact, Scripture describes the Kingdom of God as a woman who sweeps the house in search of a coin, and like a father who has a great feast upon the return of his prodigal son, both prophetic examples which demonstrate that it is the common people in society that are the guiding force in history.

In fact, the countries that fail to understand

this do so at their own peril. The monarchies of Europe, for example, fell not because the Kings became despotic and people rose up against them, but because common people who used to believe in “divine right” ceased to do so. It was they who decided that Divine Right was no match for the vitality and relevance of the “social contract” which they had accepted as the ultimate source of power, the sovereign.

The monopoly of dogma which the Catholic Church enjoyed for centuries crumbled not because Christianity lost its fervor, but because the Catholic doctrine of “papal infallibility” could not compete with the principle of “freedom of conscience” which the common people had begun to accept.

By the same token, mercantilism succumbed not because the nation states lost their power to protect their colonies and their trade, but because mercantilism could not contain the onslaught of “free enterprise” capitalism launched by small merchants.

How do we make America “great”? We do so by having each one of us find our own “arête. This is our task as Americans, for in America the people rule.

Fernando Pinon

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Laredo Morning Times does not publish anonymous letters. Letters must include the writer's first and last names as well as a phone number to verify identity. The phone number is not published; it is used solely to verify identity and to clarify content, if necessary.

When responding to another's letter, writers should focus on the topic and not on the original writer themselves. No name-calling or gratuitous abuse is allowed. Letters are edited for style, grammar, length and civility. Also, letters longer than 1,000 words will not be accepted.

Please send letters to editorial@lmtonline.com attached in a word document or in the email itself. If you cannot send an email, mail to Letters to the Editor, 5711 McPherson Rd Suite 203A, Laredo, TX 78041.