News
EarthBeat



Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria, Texas, blesses samples of seed and soil in Ganado, Texas, Jan. 15. (CNS/The Catholic Lighthouse/Janet Jones)

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GANADO, Texas — February 4, 2022
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On a windy, cold January morning, Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria blessed samples of seed and soil for the rural Texas diocese.

The blessing took place during a special Mass on the residential property of Bart and Karen Hajovsky, owners of BH Genetics, a homegrown seed corn and grain sorghum business that now distributes from coast to coast.

"Oh, it's a privilege to have him (Cahill) come and do this for the rural area, because everybody seems to forget about the rural area," Karen Hajovsky said. "It's very special."

During his homily, the bishop referred to the first reading from Jan. 15, from the First Book of Samuel, which recounts the anointing of Saul, who was simply on a mission to track down his father's lost donkeys.

"Y'all know what it's like to track down a lost animal," he said. "And then, what we hear in the story, is that God was working through all that. That he (Saul) was chosen and anointed to be the king of Israel. On one level, it reminds us that God works in mysterious ways."

What is shown, Cahill said, is that "God will sustain us each day and guide our lives. What a beautiful thought as we bless seed, because it is a hopeful sign. The seed is planted and the soil prepared. Ultimately, we know that God is in control and provides the bounty."

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Cahill, president of the national Catholic Rural Life board of directors, also said that, because nature teaches us about God in many ways, it is "fitting and appropriate" to celebrate the rural life Masses.

The Diocese of Victoria, which includes a local Catholic Rural Life chapter, also celebrates a Harvest Mass in the fall and the feast of St. Isidore, patron of farmers.

Fr. Stephen Vacek, director of the local chapter, Fr. Greg Korenek, pastor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Ganado, and Fr. Michael Rother, pastor of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in El Campo, Texas, concelebrated the Mass and blessing. Deacons Kevin Petrash and Anthony Hensley of the Ganado parish also served at the Mass.

Sherry Kainer, a member of Catholic Rural Life from the Victoria Diocese, helps coordinate the Masses and celebrations and always gives those who attend a rundown of the agricultural vocations that exist in the diocese.

Covering 9,600 square miles, the diocese in southern Texas is bounded on one side by coastline along the Gulf of Mexico. The specific geographic area is sometimes called the Golden Crescent or the Crescent Valley.

According to Kainer, within the diocese's borders are row crops, hay fields, pecans, olives, producers of wine and cheese, cattle ranchers, shrimpers, fish farms and more.

"How blessed we can be to take care and provide for the world in which we live. And from us, and from our farms, there are people being fed literally everywhere," Cahill said.