

Dear friends,

Next month we will hold our Annual November Weekend, see Agenda attached. For those of you that are planning to come please be aware that the Miami Beach Resort and Spa has guaranteed the prices for reservations made on or before October 15th (please take note). You can still make reservations after that date but prices could be higher, so if you are planning to come, make your reservations, now!

In a separate email in the next few days we will send more information about our November Events, specifically about the Florida Heritage Landmark Marker Unveiling/Pedro Pan Place Street Naming/Block Party. This will be a once in a lifetime event, don't miss it! If you were a Pedro Pan child 50 years ago, now is the time to go back and celebrate with your Pedro Pan brothers/sisters in the largest of the Florida facilities, Florida City Camp. This event is free of charge. We appreciate your cooperation in sending your RSVPs for this very special event so that we can all enjoy a day of fun and Pedro Pan celebrations!

This month we have a very special document to share with all of you. It is titled "Recollections of Shared Struggles at Camp St. John" by Thomas J. Aglio. Tom was a very young social worker at Camp St. John, located in Switzerland, Florida. Fifty years later, Tom has taken his time to write his beautiful and touching memories of the time he spent with "sus hijos" Pedro Pan at Camp St. John. It is a 30 page document written from the heart full of insights and memories that I am sure you will all enjoy! This is another part of our Pedro Pan story, through the perspective of a young social worker and his "adventures" with his newfound sons. Tom, thank you for the beautiful gift of your memories! They are priceless.....May God always bless you and your family! (Click on the pictures below to read entire document).

Also included are two stories about Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh. The first one written by our Pedro Pan brother, Fr. Juan Sosa, who, by the way, will be the Celebrant at the Thanksgiving Mass on November 18th for the Closure of our 50th Anniversary. The second one written by Carlos Muller, and translated by Director Elena Muller Garcia, his daughter. As usual these stories make us feel closer to our beloved Monsignor Walsh through the eyes of those who were closer to him.

Christina Diaz Gonzales will be presenting her new book "A thunderous whisper" at Books and Books on October 13th. Christina is a Pedro Pan second generation and we are sure that her book will be as successful as The Red Umbrella. She sent me the announcement for the Pedro Pan community and told me she would love to see many Pedro Pan at the presentation of her new book. We will be there!

Please take note of the ICCAS Certificate Program in Cuban Studies that starts October 29th. For all of you that have recently retired or are looking for something interesting to do with your time that is really worth it....here you have an excellent opportunity! I took the course last year and strongly recommend it to all of you that want to learn about our native Cuba, the past, the present and the future. The main professors for the course include, Jose Azel, Andy Gomez, Brian Latell, Pedro Roig and Jaime Suchlicki. They all share their knowledge and expertise about Cuba with ease and passion. (See information below).

Love,

Carmencita Romanach

***The official Pedro Pan Newsletter of Operation Pedro Pan
Group Inc.***

**OPERATION PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC. (OPPG)
A National Charitable Organization**

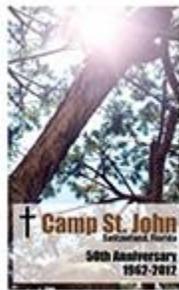
www.pedropan.org

<http://www.facebook.com/OPPGI>



October 2, 2012

Pedro Pan News



**Recollections of
Shared Struggles
at Camp St. John**

1962 - 2012

by
Thomas J. Aglio



Tom Aglio teaches medical practice across a course on the
social aspects of medical care. The course promotes the dignity
of every patient, cooperation, proper bedside manner, and
personal integrity in nursing.
St. Vincent Hospital, Worcester, Massachusetts (Fall)



Click on the Image (pdf file)

**Recollections of Shared Struggles at Camp St. John
by Thomas J. Aglio**

**Camp St. John, Switzerland, Fl
50th Anniversary 1962-2012**

**(you can also access this document by going to the
Resources Tab on
www.pedropan.org)**

Stories about Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh

10

BRYAN O WALSH - a priest, a friend, a mentor

By Juan J. Sosa

He stood tall before me and looked majestic. To a fifteen year old, the overwhelming presence of the House Director, who literally “called the shots”, became both overpowering and necessary. I had heard of the “punishments” he imparted on the “not-so-good” boys of St. Raphael’s Hall because they broke the curfew or simply did not adhere to rules. But I also heard that the use of “la paleta” was done with utmost care and responsibility (even I was called to his office once and got to experience one “hit” from la paleta). He cared for each of the boys as a father for his children. And, over the years, they responded to that care and concern, even if at the time, during their adolescence, they wore the robe of immaturity to hide the pain of separation from their families.

As time went by, I became aware of his concern for others in many ways. He attended my graduations from St. John Vianney and St. Vincent de Paul Seminaries, and when I was ordained a priest he was my “padrino” (the priest-friend-father who vests the newly ordained). We attended weddings, baptisms and funerals together of some of the people we knew in common, who had been part of that period of our lives. He attended many more, of course, as many as he could, of the many Pedro Pan children who, as adults, called him to share a significant or a sad moment in their lives.

Father/Monsignor Bryan O Walsh was involved in the personal concerns of “his” children and in the social concerns of Miami-Dade and many other areas of our country. His presence in Catholic Charities became a symbol of “care” for all who needed assistance, as witnessed by all who saw him involved in the plight of the Haitian community long before they became so visible in South Florida. He represented the Catholic Church well, despite the criticisms of those who resented his leadership, or who displayed more insecurities by dissenting with him when he persisted in whatever he believed needed to be done.

Father/Monsignor Walsh did not need his robes to feel secure. He did not hide behind his titles and accolades (many of which had been given to him by civic and ecumenical leaders throughout the years) to be an honest and

selfless leader of the needy among us. He displayed a clear sense of direction in his decision-making process and was never afraid of the consequences that such decisions carried. In most cases, he had already calculated the consequences before the decisions became public.

At St. Raphael's Hall, at age fifteen, I had spoken with three other Chaplains about my vocation. They all suggested that I should wait another year before choosing the vocation to the priesthood. Some of my friends were already going to the Seminary, and I had decided on this choice late that summer. In retrospect, I now believe that the original recommendation of the Chaplains was wise; maybe I was just entering the Seminary because my friends were entering as well. Was it a true vocation? Time would tell!

But when I went to see Father Walsh about my interest in the priesthood, his face beamed with joy and excitement. He must have seen right through all possible arguments against it. If I was sure, he was sure. Although I had already been accepted to conclude my senior year at Archbishop Curley High School, I entered St. John Vianney Seminary that fall (September 1962) as a junior in High School (I was too young to be a senior). At St. John Vianney, I lived through the Cuban-missile Crisis in the news and television, and began to miss my family much more. It was then that I began to understand that the journey toward reunion had been delayed indefinitely (it took five more years for my parents to arrive in Miami).

Father/Msgr. Walsh visited Cuba only once, in 1963, and just for a day, accompanying Bishop Coleman Carroll, the first bishop of Miami, to the funeral of Cardinal Manuel Arteaga. Later on, he would share the story of how, at the Cathedral of Havana, after the Funeral Mass, he perceived the anxiety and despair of those attending and thought of the children who were already in Miami or dispersed throughout the United States. Who were these people?; probably, the parents and/or relatives of the many Pedro Pan children. How did they know that he was there in Havana for this special occasion? How did the word spread that he was coming? No one knows to date how so many knew, but he brought many envelopes with him when he returned to Miami with Bishop Carroll. He always spoke of this experience with emotion and affection.

My first year at the Seminary, in 1962, I realized how much longer the journey toward priesthood would be: ten long years of study and formation. In more than one occasion I reflected on whether I would reach my goal or not. It seemed so far ahead and so many things could happen. Today, after thirty-nine years as a priest, I give thanks to God for the prayers of all who saw through my own limitations and weaknesses and saw me as a priest in the service of God and His people. Even after many years later, when we worked together with Archbishop McCarthy, I know that Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh was always one of them. For his joy and excitement, for his concern for others, and now for his intercession, I will always be grateful!

Stories about Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh

11

My Monsignor: A Truly Charming Person

Written by the late Carlos Muller and edited and translated by Elena Muller Garcia

My father, Carlos Muller, met Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh during his short visit in Havana to attend the funeral of Cardinal Manuel Arteaga on March 21, 1963. I recently found among a collection of my father's writings, a report he wrote after the memorable encounter that profoundly impacted his life. My brother Javier, who was then in his mid-twenties, had left Cuba almost exactly a year earlier, and was residing with relatives a few blocks away from St. Raphael Hall. What follows are segments of a much longer narrative that paint with words a close up portrait of the monsignor whose name, explains my father, he did not manage to remember, but that as we read the description we realize without any doubt that it is of Monsignor Walsh.

March 23, 1963

Last Thursday afternoon, I witnessed the arrival at the church of three Catholic dignitaries from Miami who came to attend the funeral of Cardinal Arteaga. They were Bishop Coleman F. Carroll and two of his assisting secretaries. One was Monsignor John Fitzpatrick and the other one whose name I could not retain in my mind is the object of interest in what I am going to narrate here. The arrival in Havana of these three Catholic hierarchs produced in our society the usual commotion. From the morning on and during their stay at the cathedral, the people of Havana were filled with enthusiasm by their presence and approached them with many questions, requests and, I assume, also with verbal messages, such as mine.

At one point, shortly before the departure of the funeral procession, and when the Monsignor was vesting in the sacristy of the church, I was one of the privileged ones who was able to approach him. I overheard a myriad questions about trips, visa waivers, etc., to which the priest replied affectionately but without giving hope to the petitioners. He spoke Spanish fairly well and he treated all with care, interest and love, but without delving too deeply into some of the inquiries. The last question I heard was in Spanish, since some of the people (men and women of every social class) would speak to him in English, and the lady in question asked: "Monsignor, what do you think of the Cubans who are over there? Reply: "WE LOVE THEM ALL VERY MUCH AND THEY SEEM TO US TO BE VERY GOOD."

When I was finally able to talk to him our conversation went like this:

"Monsignor, do you know Monsignor Alfredo Muller?"

"Yes, of course. Where is he? Is he here?"

"Yes, Monsignor, he is by the catafalque. I am his brother." Then I went on to ask him:

"Do you know my brother who lives in Miami?"

He paused and thought for a little while and then asked me, very enthusiastically and with a radiant smile on his face: "A tall young man, thin, who wears glasses who attends Mass and goes to communion every day in 'my' church?" I realized that he was talking about my son Javier and I replied: "Monsignor that is my son." Then something spectacular happened, there, in the midst of all those present and to everyone's surprise. He threw his arms on my shoulders and answered: "YOUR SON IS A SAINT, A LITTLE SAINT... He attends Mass every morning and he receives communion in the

little church.” You can imagine the emotion I felt, and how confounded I was. I limited myself to accepting his embrace by putting my arms under his (for he is very tall and his arms were far above my shoulders) speechless and finally, overcoming the initial emotion, I savored the moment looking at that living body surrounded by my arms... thinking that he was daily so close to Javier, and imagining that I was embracing a PART OF MY SON. After a few seconds we separated and then I asked him to tell Javier next time he saw him that he had seen me and that we were all doing very well. I felt overwhelmed, content, happy, emotionally moved, confused and perplexed!

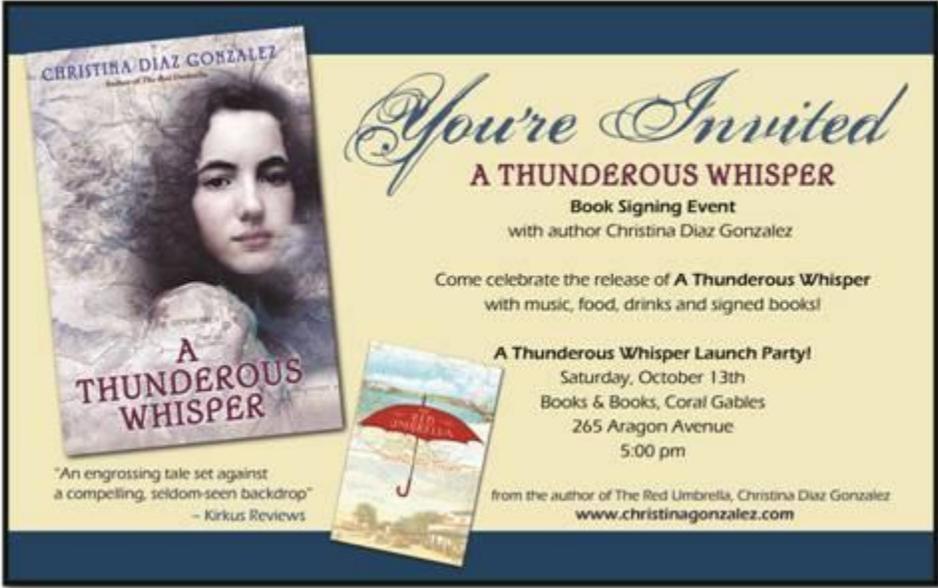
I note here that “my” Monsignor signed many missals, devotional books, holy cards, etc., that people brought for him to sign, and that he said his last name many times, which I did not retain in my memory. People thought that he was the bishop; but he would make it clear that he was only a “Monsignor.” He wore a purple cassock and a cap of the same color with a pretty tassel. “My” Monsignor is tall, blond, and has a wide face; he uses glasses with a metallic frame and a very light color; he is beardless, and has rose-colored complexion; nice features; a typical Saxon. He treats people very kindly and speaks in a gentle tone; his voice is clear and well pitched... In short, he truly is a charming person.

We have received the following invitation from Christina Diaz Gonzalez, Pedro Pan Second Generation and author of The Red Umbrella. Don't miss this opportunity to meet Christina and have her sign your book on October 13th at 5 p.m.

Books and Books,

265 Aragon Ave, Coral Gables, Fl

Her new book will make a wonderful Christmas gift for yourself, your children or grandchildren!



The invitation features a yellow background with a dark blue border. On the left is the book cover for 'A Thunderous Whisper' by Christina Diaz Gonzalez, showing a woman's face and a child. Below the cover is a quote from Kirkus Reviews: "An engrossing tale set against a compelling, seldom-seen backdrop". To the right of the cover is a small image of a red umbrella. The main text is in a mix of fonts, including a large cursive 'You're Invited' and bold sans-serif for the book title and event details. The event is scheduled for Saturday, October 13th at 5:00 pm at Books & Books, Coral Gables, 265 Aragon Avenue. The author's name and website are listed at the bottom.

CHRISTINA DIAZ GONZALEZ
Author of *The Red Umbrella*

You're Invited
A THUNDEROUS WHISPER
Book Signing Event
with author Christina Diaz Gonzalez

Come celebrate the release of **A Thunderous Whisper**
with music, food, drinks and signed books!

A Thunderous Whisper Launch Party!
Saturday, October 13th
Books & Books, Coral Gables
265 Aragon Avenue
5:00 pm

from the author of *The Red Umbrella*, Christina Diaz Gonzalez
www.christinagonzalez.com

"An engrossing tale set against
a compelling, seldom-seen backdrop"
— Kirkus Reviews



Certificate Program in Cuban Studies

The Program for Fall 2012 includes eight sessions, from 6:30 – 8:30 PM at Casa Bacardi:

The Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies (ICCAS) at the University of Miami is proud to open enrollment for the upcoming CUBAN STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM to be held from October 29 until November 20, 2012.

This high-level, intensive program is designed for professionals and others interested in Cuba and its future. Our program's expert instructors use a multi-disciplinary approach to reflect Cuba's past and address Cuba's present and future issues. The program creates an ideal atmosphere for participants to interact, exchange ideas, and think innovatively about the challenges and opportunities awaiting Cuba.

The fee for the certificate program is \$395, which includes the recommended books for the course.

The main professors for the course include, Jose Azel, Andy Gomez, Brian Latell, Pedro Roig, and Jaime Suchlicki.

The course will also include the participation of various guest lecturers.

Mon, Oct 29: Course Introduction, Dr. Azel and Setting the Stage – The Historical Background, Dr. Suchlicki

Wed, Oct 31: The Cuban Revolution, Dr. Suchlicki

Mon, Nov 5: Cuba's Leadership and the Cuban Armed Forces, Pedro Roig, Esq.

Wed, Nov 7: The Bay of Pigs and The Cuban Missile Crisis, Dr. Latell

Mon, Nov 12: Cuba's Civil Society and the Opposition, Dr. Gomez

Wed, Nov 14: Cuba's Economy and the Cuban Diaspora, Dr. Azel

Mon, Nov 19: Central and Eastern European Transitions and Scenarios Workshop, Dr. Azel

Tues, Nov 20: Transitional Challenges and Opportunities and Scenarios Workshop, Dr. Azel

Due to limited places, we encourage you to register as soon as possible. Please contact Ms. Jennifer Hernandez at 305-284-5386 or j.hernandez35@miami.edu for more information and to register.

Casa Bacardi, ICCAS is located at 1531 Brescia Ave. Coral Gables, FL

Future Events Calendar:

Saturday, October 20, 2012 at 10 AM - Breakfast

Place: Las Vegas Cuban Cuisine, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

Friday, November 16, 2012 at 10:30 AM - Florida Heritage Landmark Marker Dedication/

Pedro Pan Place Ceremony/Block Party

Place: Former Florida City Camp, 155 NW 14th St., Florida City, FI 33034

Friday, November 16, 2012 at 7:00 PM - Camp Nostalgia Celebration

Place: Miami Beach Resort and Spa., 4833 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, FI

Saturday, November 17, 2012 at 6:30 PM- Annual Thanksgiving Gala

Place: Miami Beach Resort and Spa., 4833 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, FI

Sunday, November 18, 2012 at 10:30 AM- Thanksgiving Mass

Place: St. Joseph Catholic Church, 8670 Byron Ave., Miami Beach, FI

Saturday, December 15, 2012 at 10 AM - Breakfast

Place: Las Vegas Cuban Cuisine, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

Thursday, December 20, 2012 at 8 PM- Memorial Mass

Place: St. Dominic Catholic Church, 5909 NW 7th St., Miami, FI

Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 10 AM- Toy Distribution

Place: Centro Hispano Catolico Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh, 125 NW 25 St., Miami, FI 33127

Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc

A National Charitable Organization of the former Children of Pedro Pan

161 Madeira Avenue, Suite 61 Coral Gables, FL. 33134 - (305) 554-7196

members@pedropan.org

www.pedropan.org

<http://www.facebook.com/OPPGI>

Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.

Weekend Activities Agenda

Friday, November 16

Florida Heritage Landmark Marker Dedication/ Pedro Pan Place Street Name Dedication Ceremony and Block Party

Ceremony at former Florida City Camp – 10:30 AM

Attire: OPPG Blue T-shirts

Free of charge but reservations are required. Number of persons attending _____

Free parking available on site

Optional Bus ride from Hotel to former Florida City camp at \$20 per person

Number of persons for the bus ride _____

Camp Nostalgia Celebration

Miami Beach Resort and Spa

Starlight Room - 7:00 PM

Music by: Angel Cañete's Son y Salsa DJ

Attire: Island Casual

\$35 per person, includes dinner, cash bar

Number of persons attending _____

Saturday, November 17

Annual Thanksgiving Gala

Miami Beach Resort and Spa

Cocktail Reception

Grand Promenade Ballroom - 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Dinner- Dance

Mediterranean Ballroom - 7:30 PM

Carlos Oliva and los Sobrinos del Juez

Angel Cañete's Son y Salsa DJ

Bacardi Bar-Cocktail attire

\$65 per person, *cocktail/dinner-dance/bar*

Number of persons attending _____

Sunday, November 18

Thanksgiving Mass

Mass at St. Joseph Catholic Church - 10:30 AM

8670 Byron Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida 33141

Celebrant: Father Juan Sosa

General Information:

**For Hotel Reservations contact the Hotel directly
at:**

Miami Beach Resort and Spa

4833 Collins Avenue

Miami Beach, Florida 33140

Phone: **305 532 3600**

Ask for the Reservations Desk

Code: **Pedro Pan.**

*There is a limited number of rooms reserved for us at the special rate of \$129 per night double
room*

for Reservations on or before October 15th, 2012.

Former Florida City Camp

155 N W 14th Street

Florida City, Florida 33034

For Festivities Reservations:

Please mail your check with this RSVP card by November 1, 2012 to:

Operation Pedro Pan Group Inc.

C/o Carmen Romañach

11352 N W 65th Street,

Doral, Florida 33178

Thanksgiving Donation for the needy children's program \$ _____

For more information e-mail us at: members@pedropan.org

OPERATION PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC.
161 Madeira Avenue, Suite 61, Coral Gables, Florida 33134
(305) 554-7196
www.pedropan.org
members@pedropan.org
www.facebook.com/OPPGI