

CHURCH TODAY

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July 18, 2016

ON THE INSIDE

Diocese cuts 7 employees in effort to balance budget

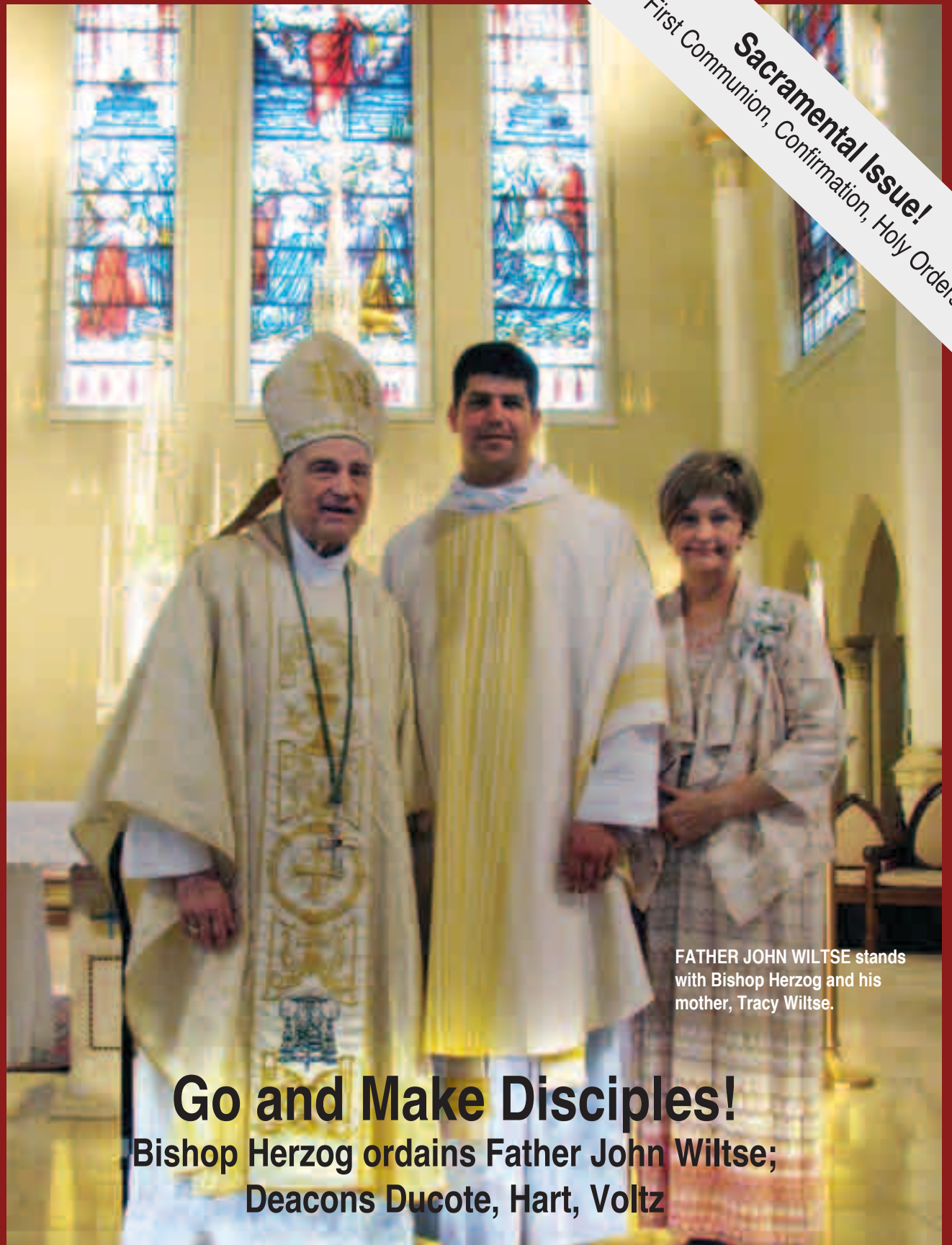
Seven diocesan employees were let go June 29 as part of the efforts of management to balance the budget. Find out more on page 3.

Bishop Herzog ordains Fr. John Wiltse; Deacons Ducote, Hart, Voltz

Father John Wiltse was ordained June 11 and seminarians Derek Ducote, Daniel Hart, and Dutch Voltz were ordained as transitional deacons July 9 by Bishop Ronald Herzog at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Check out the photos and read more about the newest additions of clergy to our diocese.

First Communion and Confirmation pictures

For the past four-five months, parishes around the diocese have been celebrating the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. Pictures of each of these celebrations are printed on pages 10-19. Check them out!



FATHER JOHN WILTSE stands with Bishop Herzog and his mother, Tracy Wiltse.

Go and Make Disciples!
**Bishop Herzog ordains Father John Wiltse;
Deacons Ducote, Hart, Voltz**

Women's health is the 'real loser' in US Supreme Court ruling

Abortion clinics not required to give same standard of care as medical facilities

(CNS) -- Just after 10 a.m. East Coast time June 27 in Washington, Kristan Hawkins, director of Students for Life, made an announcement to her small rally in front of the Supreme Court:

"Women across America just lost!"

Her comments followed the high court issuing its 5-3 decision in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. The court struck down restrictions on Texas abortion clinics that required them to comply with standards of ambulatory surgical centers and required their doctors to have admitting privileges at local hospitals.

The case challenged a 2013 state law, H.B. 2, placing the requirements on the state's abortion clinics. Opponents of the law claimed the requirements were aimed at closing abortion clinics. But the state and many pro-life advocates maintained that the law protected women's health.

Justice Stephen G. Breyer wrote the majority opinion, joined by Justices Anthony M. Kennedy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan. The same five had issued an earlier ruling allowing abortion clinics in Texas to remain operational until a final decision was handed down in the case.

The ruling was met with a sense of resignation by the few who were able to make speeches to barely 100 at Hawkins' pro-life rally before being drowned out by the adjacent rally. Numbering more than 2,000 in support of legal abortion, that group celebrated the decision as its loudspeakers blared Queen's "We Are the Champions."

"Reasonable people know that Texas law H.B. 2 was in the best interest of women's health," said Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life.

"Today, women and women's health are the real losers. Because of this decision today, beauty parlors, public pools and veterinary clinics will have higher health standards than abortion clinics."

Said Hawkins, "It is within the rights of the states, indeed, it is the duties of the states, to protect its citizens from predatory businesses, which is exactly what the abortion industry is."



TEXAS PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINIC. An exam room at the Planned Parenthood South Austin Health Center in Austin, Texas, is shown June 27. In a 5-3 vote that day, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down restrictions on Texas abortion clinics that required them to comply with standards of ambulatory surgical centers and required their doctors to have admitting privileges at local hospitals. (CNS photo/Illana Panich-Linsman, Reuters)

"What we've seen today is another win for special interests in Washington, D.C." said Genevieve Wood, a communications fellow at the Heritage Foundation. "Women did not win -- the abortion industry did."

Evangeline Bartz, a lawyer for Americans United for Life, said: "The Supreme Court has accepted the argument that the abortion industry should keep its prof-

its high and their standards low."

Hawkins sensed when she arrived that the numbers and noise level weren't going to work in her favor. "They're pretty aggressive today," she told Catholic News Service about groups in favor of legal abortion gathered in front of the court.

She also claimed "they paid a bunch of people to show up," explaining that before the rally at

the court, she had seen many of those demonstrators organizing at nearby Union Station and receiving packets of materials on the abortion issue.

During a teleconference with news media after the decision was handed down, Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life, said the court "has basically sanctioned patient abandonment today."

The decision "is true to the abortion industry and to their friends in government" and show "they care more about their own industry than the women they claim to be serving," the priest said. "They are not serving women because there is no such thing as an abortion that does not harm the women who have it. Abortion does not harm women some of the time -- it harms them all of the time."

Also on the call was Rep. Jodie Laubenberg, the Texas lawmaker who wrote and introduced H.B. 2 in the Texas Legislature and helped it get passed.

She called it "a bad day for women and a sad day for our nation."

"Women deserve the same standard of care at these abortion clinics as they would receive at a medical facility," she said. "Obviously the politics of abortion supersedes the health and safety of women and that's what we were fighting for in H.B. 2 -- for the health and safety of women. I'm disappointed, but we are not defeated because we are going to keep working to protect women."

Carol Everett, founder of the Heidi Group and a former abortion provider, spearheaded the inclusion of the law's requirement that abortion clinics comply with standards of ambulatory surgical centers.

FORMER SOCIAL SECURITY JUDGE **PETER J. LEMOINE** Social Security Disability Law

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MEMBER: Louisiana State Bar Association, American Bar Association, Baton Rouge Bar Association, Avoyelles Parish Bar Association, National Organization of Social Security Claimant Representatives, Legal Services for Purposes of Disability Committee (Louisiana State Bar Association).

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Diocese cuts 7 employee positions in effort to balance budget

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor



THE HALLS at the Diocese of Alexandria are quiet after employee layoffs were announced unexpectedly June 29. A total of seven lay employees were let go in an effort to balance the budget.

When diocesan employees came to work on Thursday, June 29, they knew there would be a staff meeting at some point during the day. They had been informed of the meeting three weeks earlier. They just didn't know what time or what the meeting was about.

Some assumed it might be some kind of announcement that Bishop Ronald Herzog would be announcing his early retirement.

A few feared some sort of announcement that departments might be asked to make deep cuts to their budgets.

Each employee eventually received an email from David Brook, the chief financial officer, giving each employee a particular time for his or her meeting. Two meetings were set up with one employee each, another with a group of five employees, and the last one at 3:15 p.m. with the remaining group of employees.

After the first meeting that morning, it was clear -- employ-

ees were being let go.

Immediate shock, then fear and panic, followed by tears and anger, spread throughout the building.

By the time the 3:15 meeting rolled around, both Bishop Herzog and David Brook, were visibly exhausted emotionally. They and Father Bruce Miller were the bearers of news that seven employees would have their jobs dissolved or restructured.

"It's not easy to do this," said Brook as he choked back tears. "The layoffs were NOT based on job performance. Every single one of our employees affected by layoffs today are hard working people doing valuable ministries in our diocese.

It all came down to money and balancing the budget.

According to a statement released by Bishop Herzog on the evening of June 30 and posted on

the diocesan website, the layoffs were the result of "trailing collections, charitable grants being reduced, and with ever increasing expenses."

The statement went on to say that next year's deficit was approaching \$500,000.

"I sincerely regret that I have had to make these very difficult, but necessary reductions," Bishop Herzog was quoted in the statement. "Unquestionably, these

employees and their families will encounter difficult times in these months ahead, and they remain in my constant prayer."

Employees affected by the layoffs were one in Hispanic Ministry, one in the Immigration Office, three in the Office of Religious Formation and Training, one in the IT Department, and one at the front desk.

Three clergy positions were also "either dissolved or restructured," according to the statement.

The departments that continue to operate at the diocese are the Tribunal, the Business Office, Maryhill Renewal Center, Buildings and Maintenance, Campus Ministry, Steubenville Office, Safe Environment, Schools and Nutrition Office, Development, Church Today and Vocations.

As of now, the Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass scheduled for July 31, has been cancelled. Check the Church Today and diocesan website for updated information on other diocesan events that may be affected.

Kansas seminarian believed drowned after saving life of kayaker on river

(CNS) -- Brian Bergkamp, a seminarian from the Diocese of Wichita who was studying at a Maryland seminary, is believed dead after saving the life of a woman who fell into the Arkansas River July 9.

By mid-day July 12, he remained missing. Friends and family members were holding vigils to pray for the recovery of his

body.

Bergkamp, 24, was among five people traveling in separate kayaks when all got caught in turbulent waters. According to The Wichita Eagle newspaper, Bergkamp jumped from his kayak to save the woman before getting pulled under himself. He was not wearing a life jacket. The other kayakers made it to shore.

"I knew Brian to be an exceptional seminarian, well on his way to demonstrating so many of the qualities needed to be a good and faithful priest," Wichita Bishop Carl A. Kemme wrote in an email to the diocesan newspaper. "I personally looked forward to the day when I might be able to ordain him."

Bishop Kemme said Berg-

kamp was quiet, dedicated, diligent in his work and studies, and presented himself always with a sense of decorum and maturity, well beyond his years. "I was looking forward to how God would use him as a priest in the Diocese of Wichita. Now, we must all mourn his much anticipated ministry and the many fruits we all knew would be abundant

by his priestly life and ministry."

Life on this side of heaven is full of mysteries, contradictions and ironies, Bishop Kemme said. "Brian's untimely death is full of these mysteries, which must wait until heaven to be solved."

Bergkamp had just finished his second year at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.



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Over the last few years many dioceses have encountered financial problems for a variety of reasons. Some had to file for bankruptcy.

Others have had to make major cut backs in diocesan ministries. The current economic downturn has been very difficult to manage for all of us.

We are not exempt from this. After reducing expenses and projects as much as possible, there remained a deficit in the diocesan budget. As a result of our limited options, I had to make the most difficult decision since coming to



ONE IN THE LORD

Most Rev. Ronald P. Herzog
Bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria

Alexandria -- the number of diocesan staff had to be reduced. Several positions were eliminated. It was difficult for everyone when we met to give this sad news. We

are assisting those whose positions were eliminated to find jobs. Please pray for them and for all of us as we attempt to move forward.

Msgr. Franz Graef dies at age 86

Msgr. Franz Graef, a priest of both the Alexandria and Shreveport dioceses, died at his home in Heidelberg, Germany on June 17, 2016. He was 86 years old.

Father Graef's Funeral Mass and Burial were held on June 24, at the Jesuitenkirche in Heidelberg. Shreveport Bishop Michael G. Duca celebrated a Memorial Mass June 29, at the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans.

Born December 6, 1930, to Aloys and Maria Graef, Fr. Graef entered the Collegium Canisianum as a seminarian for the Diocese of Alexandria and enrolled in the University of Innsbruck, Austria, earning the Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL). He was ordained in Innsbruck to the priesthood on April 6, 1957.

Following his immigration to the United States, Fr. Graef served the Alexandria parishes of Our Lady of Prompt Succor and St. Rita before becoming a professor at Maryhill Seminary in Pineville during the early 1960s. After earning his doctorate in Sacred Theology, Fr. Graef returned to teaching at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, LA.

Subsequent assignments included director of Religious Education and Adult Education for the Diocese of Alexandria-Shreveport, director of Continuing Clergy Education, professor in the Diocese of Shreveport's Greco Institute, and pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Monroe. He returned to Notre Dame Seminary as professor and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters degree at the end of his tenure. There are a host of priests, bishops and one archbishop who



Msgr. Franz Graef

will readily attest that Fr. Graef was the most influential professor of their seminary training.

Father Graef was named as pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Shreveport in 1999, where he served for seven years. He retired in 2006 to Jonesboro, La., where he assisted as sacramental minister at St. Lucy Church in Hodge, until his death.

Additional responsibilities he accepted at various times for the diocese were dean of the Monroe deanery, chair of the Presbyteral Council, judge in the diocesan

Tribunal, censor for the diocese and for the archdiocese of New Orleans, Church Vocations Board and the diocesan College of Consultants. Named an Honorary Prelate of the Holy Father with the title of *Reverend Monsignor* in 1989, most knew that he vastly preferred the title, "Father Graef" throughout his years of faithful service to the people of God.

Fr. Graef is survived by his sisters, Hildegard Hufendiek, Monika Jutt, Mechthilde Daub; and his brother, Klaus Graef. He leaves ten nieces and nephews and eighteen great-nieces and great-nephews to cherish his memory.

Fr. Graef suggested that those wishing to make memorial contributions in his honor please consider the following, Catholic Charities of North Louisiana, 331 E. 71st St., Shreveport, LA 71106, His Hands Ministry, 500 South Cooper Ave., Jonesboro, LA 71251, or the charity of the donor's choice.

We have now completed the 2016 Fortnight for Freedom. This continues to be a very important issue that we need to keep addressing. The danger is still present and real. Please continue your prayers and good work.

We have been blessed with candidates for ordination. I had the great joy of ordaining Father John Wiltse and recently ordaining three men to the diaconate, in preparation for priestly ordination next year: Deacon Derek Ducote, Deacon Gus Voltz and Deacon Daniel Hart. Please pray for them and all our seminarians.

In order to help offset the cost of seminary formation, we are again hosting this year the Taste of Faith. While the meal is free, donations for seminary formation are welcomed and encouraged. The location for the event is the Divine Providence Center be-

hind Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria. We hope to raise enough to qualify for a possible matching grant from Catholic Extension. Individual gifts of \$1,000 or more for this purpose count toward our portion (\$60,000). Come and enjoy!

The 2016 Annual Diocesan Appeal is progressing very well. If every household with at least one Catholic participates, we will be successful. Thank you to everyone who has already made a gift. We are very close to achieving our goal.

May the Lord continue to bless you in His mercy.

Again thank you for your continued prayers and encouragement.

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St. Anthony in Bunkie celebrates 90th anniversary of its tower bell

Twelve-year-old Andrew Dickens was chosen July 4 to electronically ring the massive bell in the tower at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Bunkie, celebrating not only Independence Day, but the 90th anniversary of the bell in the tower.

The celebration began at 8 a.m. with a special Independence Day Mass for the Nation. Following Mass, the bell began a three-minute full peal at 8:55 a.m.

Ninety years ago, on July 4, 1926, the Most Rev. Cornelius Van de Ven, bishop of Alexandria, arrived in Bunkie on a Texas and Pacific southbound train to preside at the christening service of the bell.

Several assisting ministers from Alexandria and additional clergymen from across Avoyelles also joined in the ceremonies.

It was a momentous event as the 2,300 lb. bell was christened and given the name "Anthony" in English, French, and Italian. These were the languages spoken by Bunkie residents in 1926.

The story of the bell began long before it was placed in the tower of the present church. In 1923, the building committee of the congregation placed a prior-



CELEBRATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY of the first ringing of the bell at St. Anthony Church in Bunkie on July 4.

ity on the purchasing of "a fine bell for the church." The local Knights of Columbus Council #2395 immediately began a campaign fund for the project. Funds, however, came very slowly until a benefactor of the church came forward to donate the bell as construction of the church neared completion.

Clarence Joseph Pope, the founder and owner of the Bunkie

Coca-Cola Bottling Company, contacted the St. Louis Bell Foundry of St. Louis, Mo. He contracted for the casting of "a bell of the finest quality." The bell was donated to the congregation in memory of Pope's mother, Leodocia Robertson Pope. A large bronze plaque remains located in the interior of the church dedicating the offering.

The newly-cast bell was

transported from St. Louis to Bunkie on a Texas and Pacific Railroad flatcar. At the time of the unveiling and blessing, the bell was highly polished. An inscription was cast into the circumference of the bell giving it to St. Anthony of Padua Church, with the name of the benefactor, and a memorial dedication to his mother.

The bell remains in perfect

condition and is presently electronically equipped to ring the *Angelus* three times a day, provide Mass calls, and toll the *De Profundis* each evening at 9.

"The bell has a life of its own," said Father Scott Chemino, pastor at St. Anthony.

Each day it rings at 6 a.m. to call the community to prayer based on the Biblical event of the Angel Gabriel announcing to Mary the conception and birth of Jesus. This prayer is called the *Angelus*, from the Latin word meaning *angel* and is based on the Gospel of Luke 1: 26-38. It rings the same reminder for prayer at noon and 6 p.m. each day.

Finally, at 9 p.m., the bell tolls very slowly an ancient prayer reminder called the *De Profundis*. It is based on the Bible at Psalm 130: 'Out of the depths, I cry unto thee, O Lord.' These nine solemn strikes call for prayer for all who have died that day and stand in judgment before God in eternity.

"After this final prayer at day's end, the bell goes to sleep like everyone else, until it awakens the next day at 6 a.m.," said Father Chemino.

"As with the story of so many famous church bells in other cities, our 'Antoine' has been a part of Bunkie for 90 years," said Fr. Chemino. "It has rung joyously at Midnight Mass on many Christmas nights. It tolls the death of our popes, our presidents, and our national heroes. It was rung in thanksgiving for an entire hour at the end of World War II. And it still rings for our funerals, weddings, and holy days. You could say this bell is a part of Bunkie," said Father Chemino.

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(right) **LAYING ON OF HANDS.** Bishop Herzog lays hands on Wiltse during the Prayer of Ordination. Each of the priests in attendance followed with the "Laying on of Hands."
(Photo courtesy Elizabeth Shaw)



(top far right) **CONSECRATION.** Father John Wiltse concelebrates the Mass with Bishop Herzog and the priests of the diocese. Also pictured kneeling at the altar is Deacon Michael Young and Deacon Richard Mitchell.



(lower far right) **ANOINTING OF THE HANDS.** Bishop Herzog anoints the hands of Wiltse during the "Anointing of the Hands" part of the ordination.

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Mr. and Mrs. Robert Schupbach	\$150.00
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Tri-Community Nursing Center	\$200.00
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Mr. and Mrs. Robert Miller	\$200.00
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Diocese celebrates the ordination of Father John Wiltse

Before a packed house of family, friends, deacons, and clergy, John Wiltse was ordained a Catholic priest on June 11 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral.

The Most Reverend Ronald P. Herzog conferred the sacrament of Holy Orders as the main celebrant of the 10 a.m. Mass, which was also concelebrated by the priests of the Diocese of Alexandria.

Also in attendance was Abbot Justin Brown, OSB, and Rev. W. Becket Soule, O.P. both from the Pontifical College Josephinum, where Father Wiltse attended seminary.

Following the Ordination Mass, a reception was held in Xavier Hall, where Father Wiltse celebrated with friends and family.

The son of Tracy and the late Larry Lee Wiltse of Tioga, he was baptized at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in August 1981. He received the sacraments of First Holy Communion, First Penance and Confirmation at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville,



FATHER JOHN WILTSE. Bishop Ronald Herzog stands with newly-ordained Father John Wiltse after the Mass of Ordination held June 11 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. (Photo courtesy Elizabeth Shaw)

which his family has called home for 31 years.

He graduated from Tioga

High School in 1999. He was heavily involved in the leadership and creation of the SALT Team at

Sacred Heart.

He attended St. Joseph Seminary in Covington for two years, finishing his undergraduate degree at Louisiana College in history in 2004. While in undergraduate college, he worked with Radio Maria as the promotions and volunteer coordinator.

He attended the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio from 2005-2010 and

2014-2016, receiving a bachelors in philosophy and masters in divinity.

On Sunday, June 12, Father Wiltse celebrated his First Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Pineville. Father Wiltse's first assignment is parochial vicar at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria and as chaplain at Holy Savior Menard Central High School.



HANDING OVER OF THE BREAD AND WINE. Bishop Ronald Herzog hands the chalice to Wiltse during the "Handing Over of the Bread and Wine" part of the ordination. (Photo courtesy Elizabeth Shaw)

Give praise and thanks to God
for the blessing of the calls of

Father John Wiltse
Deacon "Dutch" Voltz

May God continue to bless you, your journey
and the church through your service.

From your loving parish family of
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church
Pineville, Louisiana



Monsignor Christopher J. Schreck, Rector,
and the faculty, staff and seminarians of the
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FATHER JOHN WILTSE

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DEACON ORDINATION. Priests on the altar concelebrating the Deacon Ordination Mass watch as one of the seminarians stands before Bishop Herzog. (Photo by Melva Villard)

SEMINARIANS SERVE AT ORDINATION MASS. The seminarians from the Diocese of Alexandria lead the procession out of the Cathedral after the Ordination Mass. The diocesan seminarians were the altar servers for the Mass. (Photo by Melva Villard)



Our Lady of Prompt Succor

Alexandria

Rev. Daniel O'Connor,
Parishioners, School and Staff
join in celebrating with

Rev. John Wiltse

Deacon Derek Ducote

Deacon Daniel Hart

Deacon Gus "Dutch" Voltz, III

on the occasion of their ordinations



Congratulations

on your ordination
as deacon

**Deacon
Daniel Hart**



With prayers
and love from Mom, Dad, and Stephen.

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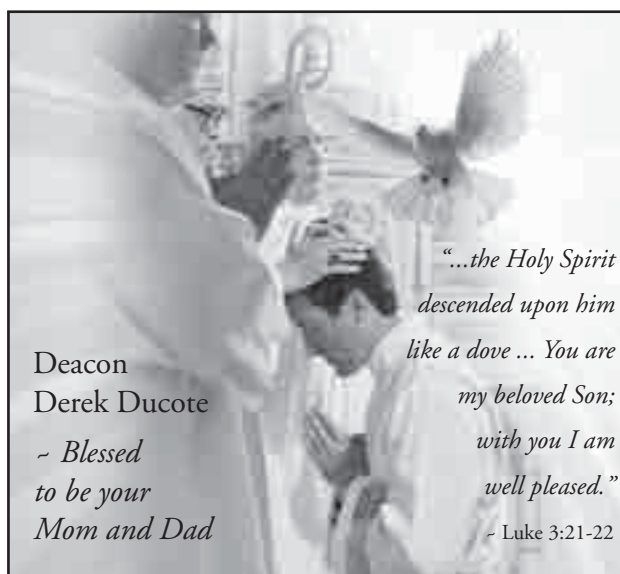


*God has called you to
share in the ministry
of Jesus. May you be
sustained by His grace.
Congratulations. . .*

**Deacon
Derek Ducote**

*I am very proud of you as a person and
especially proud to be your brother. ~ Damien*

☞ Luke 2:39-52 ☞



Deacon
Derek Ducote

*~ Blessed
to be your
Mom and Dad*

*"...the Holy Spirit
descended upon him
like a dove ... You are
my beloved Son;
with you I am
well pleased."
~ Luke 3:21-22*

Celebrating your ordination as Deacon

**Deacon
Derek Ducote**



~ The Ducote Family, PaPa, Aunts and Uncles.

Ducote, Hart, and Voltz, ordained as transitional deacons



NEWLY ORDAINED DEACONS. The Most Rev. Ronald Herzog, bishop of Alexandria, ordained three seminarians as transitional deacons July 9 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Pictured are Deacons Daniel Hart, Gus "Dutch" Voltz, and Derek Ducote. (Photo by Jackie Murphy)

Taking the next step of formation toward the priesthood, three seminarians were ordained as transitional deacons July 9 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral by Bishop Ronald P. Herzog.

Daniel Hart, Gus "Dutch" Voltz III, and Derek Ducote were ordained deacons at a 10 a.m. Mass concelebrated by the priests of the diocese.

During the Election of Candidates, the candidates were called forward by Deacon William Travis. The candidates were then presented by Father Louis Sklar and Father Joseph Palermo, from Notre Dame Seminary.

The seminarians of the diocese participated as servers at the Mass.

After the words, "Relying on the help of the Lord God and Our Savior Jesus Christ, we choose these men, our brothers, for the Order of the Diaconate," by Bishop Herzog, the congregation responded with "Thanks be to God," and a congratulatory applause.

Derek Ducote is the son of Kelly and Chris Ducote, of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral parish.

He graduated from St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, La. with a B.A. in Philosophy and is currently studying at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

Daniel Jude Hart is the son of Johnnie and Timothy Hart of St Martin Church in Lecompte.

He also attended St Joseph Seminary College, where he completed three years of studies in philosophy. From 2013-2016, Hart attended the Pontifical North American College in Rome and has completed three years of studies in Theology at the University of Santa Croce.

Gus "Dutch" Aloysius Voltz III, is the son of Kathleen Voltz and the late Gus A. Voltz Jr., of Our Lady of Prompt Succor parish. He received a law degree from Loyola University in New Orleans and practiced law in Alexandria for more than 30 years. In 2011, Voltz entered Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

Rev. James Ferguson, Rector, and the parishioners & staff of

St. Francis Xavier Cathedral

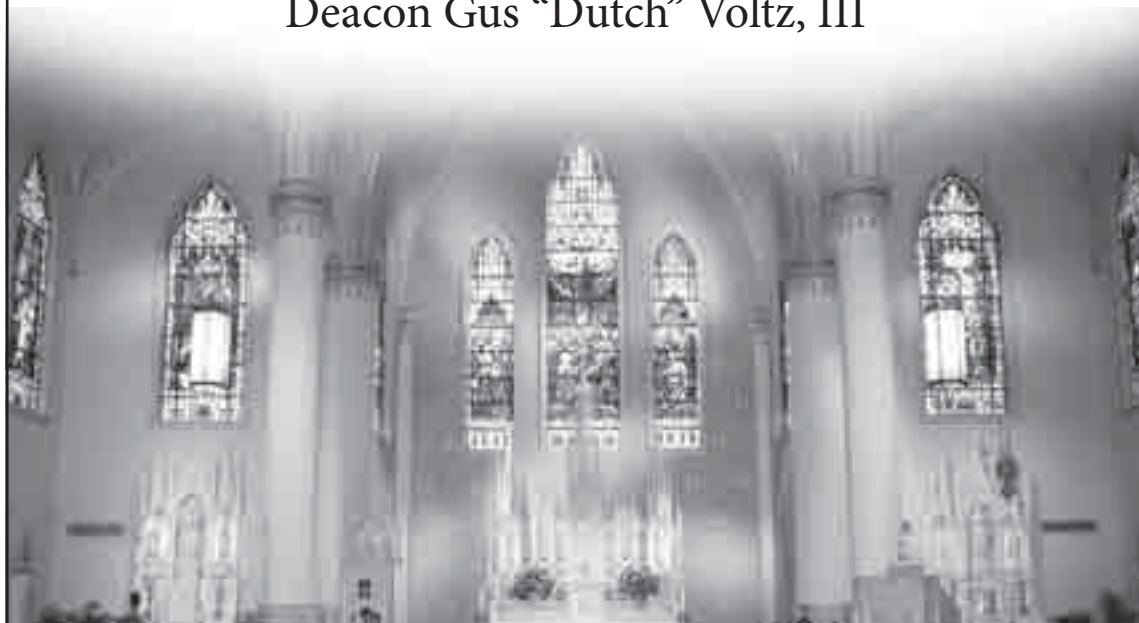
extend a warm welcome to our newly ordained:

Rev. John Wiltse

Deacon Derek Ducote

Deacon Daniel Hart

Deacon Gus "Dutch" Voltz, III



*St. Martin
Catholic Church
Lecompte*

Give thanks to Almighty God
for the recent ordinations of

*Rev. John Wiltse
Deacon Derek Ducote
Deacon Daniel Hart
Deacon Gus "Dutch" Voltz, III*

Laudetur Jesus Christus!





ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE (Mansura) FIRST COMMUNION. Four students from St. Paul in Mansura received First Communion May 1.



ST. MARTIN OF TOURS (Belledeau) FIRST COMMUNION. Two students from St. Martin of Tours in Belledeau received First Communion on April 17.



NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (Campti) FIRST COMMUNION. received her First Communion May 8 at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



ST. RITA (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Twenty-one students from St. Rita Church in Alexandria received their First Communion May 7.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL (Leesville) FIRST COMMUNION. Eleven students from St. Michael the Archangel Church in Leesville made their First Communion recently.



ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH (Isle Breville) FIRST COMMUNION. Three students from St. Augustine Catholic Church in Isle Breville made their First Communion May 1.



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8 a.m. Sunday Mass

7 a.m. Sunday Mass

ST. JULIANA (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Six students from St. Juliana Church received their First Communion recently.



HOLY GHOST (Marksville) and ST. RICHARD CHAPEL (Hickory Hill) CONFIRMATION. Seven students from Holy Ghost Church and St. Richard Chapel received their First Communion May 8 at Holy Ghost Church in Marksville.



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ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH (Deville) FIRST COMMUNION. Nine students from St. John the Baptist Church in Deville made their First Communion recently.

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IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, (Tioga) FIRST COMMUNION. Nine students from Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Tioga made their First Communion on May 1.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (Dupont) FIRST COMMUNION. Twelve students from Immaculate Conception Church in Dupont received First Communion May 8.



OUR LADY OF SORROWS (Moreauville) FIRST COMMUNION.

received Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil and the Pentecost Vigil respectively at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Moreauville.



MATER DOLOROSA (Plaucheville) FIRST COMMUNION.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Seventy-three students from Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria received First Communion in April.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (Natchitoches) FIRST COMMUNION. Ten students from St. Anthony Church in Natchitoches recently made their First Communion.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (Bunkie) FIRST COMMUNION. Twenty-one students from St. Anthony of Padua in Bunkie received First Communion April 10.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR (Mansura) FIRST COMMUNION. Eight students from Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Mansura made First Communion April 30.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES (Winnfield) FIRST COMMUNION.

ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH (Hessmer) FIRST COMMUNION. Fourteen students from St. Alphonsus Church in Hessmer received First Communion April 3.





ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Two students from St. Francis Xavier Cathedral made their First Communion May 1 and participated in May Crowning.



ST. JAMES MEMORIAL CATHOLIC CHURCH (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Three students from St. James Memorial Catholic Church in Alexandria made their First Communion May 1 at the 10 a.m. Mass.



SACRED HEART OF JESUS (Pineville) FIRST COMMUNION. Seventeen students received First Communion April 16 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Pineville.

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH (Marksville) FIRST COMMUNION. Twenty-two students from St. Joseph Church in Marksville received First Communion April 17.



MARY MOTHER OF JESUS (Woodworth) FIRST COMMUNION. Eight students from Mary Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth made First Communion May 1.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES (Fifth Ward) FIRST COMMUNION. Six students from Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Fifth Ward received First Communion April 10.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL (Moreauville) FIRST COMMUNION. Forty-six students from Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville made their First Communion May 7.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Twenty students from St. Frances Cabrini School received First Communion April 10.



ST. GENEVIEVE (Brouillette) FIRST COMMUNION. Four students from St. Genevieve Church in Brouillette received First Communion April 3.



MB OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (Natchitoches) FIRST COMMUNION. Twenty-four students from the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception received First Communion in May.



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL (Alexandria) ADULT CONFIRMATION. Thirty-six students from 12 area churches were confirmed May 15 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral by Father Scott Chemino, vicar general for the Diocese of Alexandria.

HOLY GHOST CHURCH (Marksville)/ St. Richard Chapel (Hickory Hill) CONFIRMATION. Five students from Holy Ghost Church and St. Richard Chapel were confirmed April 23 at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Mansura.

Pray Rosary outdoor every Thursday

Join St. Joseph Church in Marksville every Thursday, at 8:15 p.m. to pray the Rosary located outside on the grounds of the parish hall. In case of inclement weather, the Rosary is prayed in the church.

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Fri.-Sat. 4 p.m.-10 p.m.

Sunday:
11 a.m.-9 p.m.





OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR (Alexandria) CONFIRMATION. Sixty-seven students from Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church were confirmed recently.



HOLY CROSS (Natchitoches) CONFIRMATION. Three students were confirmed at Holy Cross Church in Natchitoches April 23.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (Natchitoches) CONFIRMATION. Seven students from St. Anthony of Padua Church in Natchitoches recently received the Sacrament of Confirmation.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES (Fifth Ward) CONFIRMATION. Eight students from St. Martin of Tours in Belledeau were confirmed with others June 5 at Our Lady of Lourdes in Fifth Ward.



ST. JOSEPH (St. Joseph) CONFIRMATION. One student from St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, La., was confirmed April 16 at St. Edward Church in Tallulah, along with several other candidates from surrounding areas.



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY (Tioga) CONFIRMATION. Thirteen students from Immaculate Heart of Mary were confirmed April 10 at St. Rita Church.

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS (Woodworth) CONFIRMATION. Three students from Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth received the Sacrament of Confirmation April 10 at St. Rita Church.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES (Winnfield) CONFIRMATION.

from Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Winnfield, was confirmed April 22 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Natchitoches by Bishop Ronald Herzog.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH (Marksville) CONFIRMATION. Eight students from St. Joseph Church in Marksville received the sacrament of Confirmation April 23 during a consolidated celebration held at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Mansura.



ST. RITA (Alexandria) CONFIRMATION. Twenty-three students from St. Rita Church in Alexandria were confirmed by Bishop Ronald Herzog on April 10.



ST. GENEVIEVE (Brouillette) CONFIRMATION. Ten students from St. Genevieve Church in Brouillette were confirmed June 5 at our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Fifth Ward.



ST. AUGUSTINE (Isle Brevelle) and ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (Cloutierville) CONFIRMATION. St. Augustine Church in Isle Brevelle and St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Cloutierville celebrated Confirmation May 21 at St. Augustine.



ST. EDWARD CHURCH (Tallulah) CONFIRMATION. Seven students were confirmed April 16 at St. Edward Church in Tallulah.



ST. PETER/ST. MICHAEL (Bordelonville) CONFIRMATION. Five students from St. Peter/St. Michael Church in Bordelonville April 23 at St. Paul Church in Mansura.



ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL (Leesville) CONFIRMATION. Fourteen students from St. Michael the Archangel Church in Leesville were confirmed.



ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE (Mansura) FIRST COMMUNION. Eight students from St. Paul Church in Mansura were confirmed April 23.

2016 STEUBENVILLE SOUTH: "I THIRST" YOUTH CONFERENCE. Almost 3,000 students attended the 2016 Steubenville South Youth Conference held June 24-26 at the Riverfront Center in Alexandria. Under the direction of Father Jose Robles-Sanchez, Steubenville South celebrated its 22nd anniversary. This year, during the Saturday night Eucharistic Adoration and Mass, the "Vocations Call" attracted nearly 100 guys and 100 girls. Vocations call is when the celebrant asks anyone who has felt called to join the priesthood or a religious vocation, to come forward. "What an awesome sight to see so many young people feeling the vocations call from God," said Father Jose. A special thanks to the Josh Blakesley Band, and hosts/speakers Father John Parks, Jackie Francois Angel, Michael "Gomer" Gormley, Pete Burds, and Steve Angrisano.



BACK SCHOOL RALLY

Saturday, Aug. 20
6:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Holy Savior Menard High School

Holy Savior Menard's MAC Team (Menard Apostles for Christ) will present its annual Back to School Rally on Saturday, Aug. 20 from 6:15 -8:30 p.m. at the Menard Gym. Special guest speaker will be Lance Strother. Come join us as we 'kick-start' the year with God! Music, keynote, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. For more information, contact Jessica Sanders at 318-305-1351.



Back to School Start Dates

- Aug. 11 St. Anthony of Padua Bunkie
- Aug. 11 St. Mary Assumption Cottonport
- Aug. 11 Sacred Heart School Moreauville
- Aug. 11 St. Joseph School Plaquemine
- Aug. 12 St. Mary's School Natchitoches
- Aug. 12 St. Frances Cabrini Alexandria
- Aug. 15 Holy Savior Menard High School, Alexandria
- Aug. 17 Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria

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Epic flash floods threaten opening day of Noah's Ark theme park

Ark Encounters offers authentic experience of 40 days and nights on the Ark

When Ark Encounter, the largest new Noah's Ark Theme Park, opened July 7, 2016 in Williamstown, Ky., it was, ironically, met with epic flash floods and heavy rains.

Kentucky announced a state of emergency as severe flooding overwhelmed the area.

Still thousands of visitors inundated the park on opening day.

Created by Christian fundamentalist organization Answers in Genesis (AiG), Ark Encounter is a Bible-themed "amusement park" designed to tell the story of Noah's Ark.

The \$100 million project, the brainchild of Ken Ham, president of AiG, is partially funded by the secular state of Kentucky through sales tax incentives, despite the fact that it is a for-profit enterprise.

A full-size replica of the Ark, the centerpiece of the park, is the world's largest timber frame structure. Prepare to be blown away as you explore the life-sized reconstruction of Noah's Ark, built according to the dimensions given in the Bible.

It took thousands of workers two years to build the 510-foot-long, 85-foot-wide and 51-foot-high structure.

To give you idea of how big the Ark is, NASA could lay three



ARK ENCOUNTER, which opened July 7 in Williamstown, Ky., is the newest Bible-themed "amusement park."

space shuttles -- nose to tail -- on the ark's roof! The bottom portion is almost one and a half football field long and higher than a modern four-story house!

Visitors will learn about the history of Christianity through camel rides, high-speed zip lines, animatronic animals. Inside the Ark, you'll tour three decks of world-class exhibit bays that allow you to experience what Noah's life may have been like.

You'll learn how Noah might have cared for all the animals and how the Ark was big enough to fit them all on board.

Located 45 interstate miles from the Ark Encounter is the Creationism Museum, another project of AiG. This state-of-the-art 75,000 square-foot museum brings the pages of the Bible to life, recasting its characters and animals in dynamic form and placing them in familiar settings.



Other nearby attractions include the Newport Aquarium, the Kentucky Horse Park, the National Museum of the US Air Force, and the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens.

General ticket prices are \$40 for adults (age 13-59), \$31 for seniors (age 60+), \$28 for children (5-12), and free for children under the age of 5.

Special pricing is also available for 2-day passes, Ark + Museum combos, and annual passes.

For more information, go to www.arkencounter.com.





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VIRTUS

• **Thursday, July 21** -- 6 p.m. St. Paul Church (St. Paul Community Center), Mansura

• **Thursday, Aug. 4** -- 1 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

• **Thursday, Aug. 4** -- 6 p.m., St. Mary's School, Natchitoches

• **Saturday, Aug. 6** -- 9:30 a.m., Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward

• **Tuesday, Aug. 23** -- 6 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

To register, go to www.virtus.org.
For more information, call Pam Delrie, Safe Environment Coordinator at 318-445-6424 x 213.



ST. AUGUSTINE HONORS GRADUATES. Graduates were recognized at St. Augustine Church May 29. A small reception followed in the church hall. Pictured are (front row)

Also pictured is Thomas E. Roque, Sr., parishioner and superintendent of Catholic schools from the Diocese of Alexandria; and Father Charlie Ray, pastor of St. Augustine Church.

Job opening: DRE at Prompt Succor

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria is seeking a Director of Religious Education. This is a part-time (20 hours/week) position to oversee the parish RCIA process, the CCD program (Pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade), and to work with a team in the catechesis for and celebration of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion. DRE will also coordinate an annual Vacation Bible School. Applicant must be a practicing Roman Catholic in full Communion with the Church; possess a Bachelor's degree, preferably in theology, catechetics or a related field; and have a minimum of two years' experience teaching children and adults. Applicant must be able to work Tuesday and Wednesday evenings as well as some office hours, in a variety of settings and with a variety of people of all ages. The position is available Aug. 1. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience. Qualified applicants should send a cover letter and resume to frdan@olpschurch.org.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

July 23: Have Mercy on Me' Day of Renewal

"Have Mercy on Me" Day of Renewal, sponsored by Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Louisiana (CCRC) and CENLA Magnificat, will be held Saturday, July 23 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at St. Anthony's Church Hall in Natchitoches. Denise Beyer will be the speaker. Registration is \$20 made payable to "CENLA Magnificat" and mailed to either: Diane Ardoin, 1415 Creed St, Pineville, La. 71360 or Mary Wilson, 4569 Parhams Road, Jonesville, La. 71343. Open to men and women. Register online at cenlamagnificat@gmail.com

June 22-July 27: Eagles Basketball Clinic

Keep your kids active this summer with Holy Savior Menard's basketball team. Each Wednesday from June 22- July 27 from 6 -8:30 p.m., kids ages 5 to 12 are invited to participate in a special basketball clinic that will include skills sessions, player evaluations, 5 on 5 games and basketball contests. The cost to participate is \$20 per child per session. For more information, contact Menard Boys' head basketball coach, Brian Terwilliger at 860-485-5347 or bterwilliger@holysaviormenard.com.

July 25-29 Summer Dance Camp

Young dancers, entering K- 6th grade, are invited to attend a Summer Dance Camp July 25-29 at Holy Savior Menard, sponsored by the Golden Eaglettes and Emerald Eaglettes dancelines. The camp will be held from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. daily, with a final dance performance for parents on July 29 at 1 p.m. Extended daycare is available until 4 p.m. for only \$25 per day. Cost is \$85. For more information or to register, email Sandy Oestricher at nursesao@aol.com

July 28: Taste of Faith

Mark your calendars now for the annual Taste of Faith dinner will be held Thursday, July 28 from 5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the OLPS Divine Providence Center. This seminar-benefit dinner is prepared by Bishop Ronald Herzog and assisted by the seminarians. All you can eat dishes are free, but donations are welcome.



ST. JOSEPH (Colfax) GOING AWAY PARTY. St. Joseph's Altar Society and its parishioners in Colfax threw a going away banquet for Fr. Blake Deshautelle June 26 in the Family Center. A native of Marksville, Father Blake has been appointed parish administrator at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Natchitoches. St. Joseph parish also welcomes Father Silverino Kwebuza as their new pastor. Father Silverino will also be responsible for St. Patrick in Montgomery, St. Margaret's in Boyce, La. and its 2 missions. Pictured is Karron Guillory, Fr. Blake, Karen Vets and Rita Roberts. Back ro: Judy Jackson, Anne Brevelle, Lou Brown, Nelda Ebert and Giselle Richards.

July 31: Wedding Anniversary

The Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass previously scheduled for July 31 has been cancelled.

July 31: KC Dinner for St. Mary's

The Knights of Columbus Councils 1134 and 3200 will have a BBQ Chicken Dinner on Sunday, July 31 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the KC Hall located at 6656 Coliseum Blvd. The cost is \$7 per plate. All proceeds will benefit St. Mary's Training School.

Aug. 1-5: Eagles Basketball Camp

Sharpen your basketball skills before school is back in session! Holy Savior Menard's basketball team is hosting its annual basketball camp Aug. 1-5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Learn from coach Brian Terwilliger, staff and varsity basketball players as you improve your game! Campers will work on dribbling, passing, shooting and rebounding -- all the essentials of the game! The cost is \$100 per child. The camp is open to boys and girls ages 6-13. For more information, contact Menard Boys' head basketball coach, Brian Terwilliger at 860-485-5347 or bterwilliger@holysaviormenard.com.



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July - August

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		Eagle Basketball Skills Nights 6:00-8:30 p.m. Holy Savior Menard HS	VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Paul the Apostle Church, Mansura Illuminated Rosary 8:15 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville		"Have Mercy on Me" Day of Renewal 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Natchitoches	
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- Mater Dolorosa, Plaquemine			Worldwide Marriage Encounter -- Baton Rouge, LA			
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria (session 2)			VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- Holy Ghost, Marksville			
PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION	PRAY FOR FR. J. HASIEBER	PRAY FOR BISHOP R. HERZOG	PRAY FOR MSGR. R. HOPPE	PRAY FOR FR. R. HUMPHRIES	PRAY FOR FR. B. IBE	PRAY FOR FR. H. IMAMSHAH
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Grandparents Mass & Ice Cream Social 12:15 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Alexandria	Eagle Basketball Skills Nights 6:00-8:30 p.m. Holy Savior Menard HS	Taste of Faith 5:00-7:30 p.m. Divine Providence Center, OLPS, Alexandria Illuminated Rosary 8:15 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville			KC BBQ Dinner 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. KC Hall, 6656 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria
Eaglettes Summer Dance Camp -- Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria						
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- Isle Brevelle						
PRAY FOR FR. K. ISHMAEL	PRAY FOR FR. G. KROSFIELD	PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI	PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUPURAM	PRAY FOR FR. S. KWEBUZA	PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD	PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME
AUGUST 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			VIRTUS Training 1:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Mary's School, Natchitoches		VIRTUS Training 9:30 a.m. Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward	
Eagles Basketball Camp -- Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria						
PRAY FOR BISHOP R. HERZOG	PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS	PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE	PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER	FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. A. MESSINA	FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK	PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHELIS
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			School starts: • St. Anthony, Bunkie • St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport • Sacred Heart, Moreauville • St. Joseph, Plaquemine St. Philomena Mass 6 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria	School starts: • St. Mary's, Natchitoches • St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria		
PRAY FOR FR. B. MILLER	PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN	PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK	PRAY FOR FR. J. NELLIKUNNEL	PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL	PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIKWE	PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
School starts: • Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria		School starts: • Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria	Illuminated Rosary 8:15 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville		Back-to-School Rally 6:15-8:30 p.m. Holy Savior Menard High School, Alexandria	
PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR	PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA	PRAY FOR FR. R. OWUMANAM	PRAY FOR FR. A. PALLAKATTUCHIRA	PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL	PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE

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OUR FARM.**

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THE HYLTON FAMILY

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