

CHURCH TODAY

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January 16, 2017

ON THE INSIDE

2017 will mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25) will focus its theme on the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Read more about it on page 5.

The 2nd annual Cenla Life March will roll through downtown Feb. 4

Gather your friends and family and make plans now to participate in the second annual Louisiana Life March in Central Louisiana on Saturday, Feb. 4. Details on page 6.

Jan. 20 marks the 30th anniversary of Bishop Greco's death

It was one of the largest funerals in Alexandria's history. Bishop Charles P. Greco, the sixth bishop of Alexandria died 30 years ago on Jan. 20, 1987. Read about his legacy on pages 10-11.



Sanctity of Human Life

SUNDAY

January 22, 2017

*"Before I formed you
in the womb, I knew you,
before you were born
I set you apart."*
- Jeremiah 1:5a

On Jan. 22, 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated the third Sunday of January as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. Churches and pastors utilize this day to raise awareness about what the Bible teaches about the sacred gift of human life, how life is under attack, and what the church can do to protect the sanctity of life. For more related stories on the Sanctity of Human Life, see pages 6-8.

Aleppo friar says learn about Syria, keep an open mind

By Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Syrians don't want to leave their homeland, they want a safe place to live in peace, said a Franciscan friar from Aleppo, Syria, who spoke on Jan. 5 with the Archdiocese of Washington's Holy Land Committee.

Franciscan Brother George Jamal, who is originally from Aleppo, said even though the situation in his homeland is complicated, it is important to learn about it and if people feel inclined to do something, they can learn about the different aid groups in the region to see how to best help.

By some estimates, 5 million Syrians have left the country since the country's conflict began in 2011. That includes some members of Brother Jamal's family.

"My family, too, wants to be back after the war is finished," he said, during the informal meeting, aimed at learning more about region. "It is home."

Recently, the Syrian government retook control of Aleppo after months of heavy fighting



SYRIAN CHILDREN transport their salvaged belongings from their damaged house in Doudyan, a village in northern Aleppo Jan. 2. (CNS photo/Khalil Ashawi, Reuters)

with rebel groups. It had been the largest city in the country before the conflict. Last year, Staffan de Mistura, United Nations Special Envoy for Syria, said the conflict has left 400,000 deaths in

its wake and millions of people displaced as they have left to find safety in other countries.

Brother Jamal said some of his friends had died in the conflict and one of his family homes was

destroyed. When he visited a few years ago, after being away while studying, he said he felt "like a stranger" in his homeland. Aleppo has more checkpoints, more destruction, but even in conflict,

people find a way to hold on to whatever stability there might be.

Christians are still carrying on with celebrations and customs, he said, and sometimes he still is able to see part of normal life through his friends' posts on social media. But he said he has a feeling that what he knew of his city of Aleppo only exists now in his memory.

"I lost my past," he said. "I have my past in my memory."

As he studies elsewhere and awaits ordination, Brother Jamal still dreams of one day returning home and helping the youth of Syria and those who have faced the decision to leave.

When members of the committee asked what would be the best path for the country and best way to help, he encouraged them to keep open minds about the situation, which is hard to compare to other conflicts, to pray, to send material help but also to consider the right situation for the people of Syria that can "help people to stay, not to get out." Even those who leave want to return home, he said, but they're looking for peace and safety.

Syrians, who never thought they'd need help, turn to Caritas

By Doreen Abi Raad
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Balancing boxes and bags filled with warm clothes for his family, Malak Elias Mnayeri waited for a taxi in the near-freezing temperatures outside Caritas Lebanon's center in Zahle, close to the Syrian border.

"Today I feel like a real father," he said, discussing the necessities he would take to his two children.

The Syriac Orthodox family fled from Homs, Syria, four years ago.

"We used to live in dignity," Mnayeri said. "I never thought we'd be living like this, always in need."

Through his work as an auto mechanic, Mnayeri's family lived comfortably in Homs before the conflict started.

In their early days in Lebanon, the family received help from the U.N. Refugee Agency, the UNHCR. But the agency has not provided the family with any assistance in about two years, and

only Caritas is helping them, he said.

"We are just living day-to-day," said Mnayeri, who has not been able to find steady work. "I have no idea what the future will bring."

"I'm so thankful to God that Caritas remembers us," he added.

Mnayeri was one of the recipients of Caritas Lebanon's distribution of winter clothes for 16 families in Zahle in early January. In all, 150 refugee families who live there are being assisted by the coordinated distribution. Each family was registered individually and the winter items -- including pants, sweaters, jackets, socks, hats, scarves and gloves -- were selected based on age and gender.

Most of the items were donated to Caritas by Lebanese individuals and nongovernmental organizations in the country and, before distribution, filled up eight garage-sized storage rooms, said Ramzi Abou Zeid, regional coordinator for Caritas Lebanon. He said the project took three months



WINTER GIFTS. Mireille Saliba, right, Caritas Lebanon social worker, presents Syrian refugee Fadi Kyorkis with a stuffed animal for his two sons Jan. 4 as part of the Catholic charity's distribution of winter clothes for 16 families in Zahle. In all, 150 refugee families who live there are being assisted by the coordinated distribution. (CNS photo/Jean Khoury for Caritas Lebanon)

to prepare.

In the Bekaa region of Lebanon where Zahle is located, the winter chill lasts through April. As intermittent rain fell during the Jan. 4 distribution, the sur-

rounding hills and mountains in the Bekaa resembled towering snowdrifts.

Especially for refugees, central heating is a luxury. Typically, families gather around a kero-

sene-burning stove to keep warm in the damp, concrete-walled apartments where they live. Most often they do not have money to buy the needed fuel.

Ramzi estimates that just in the Bekaa region of Lebanon, there are approximately 750,000 Syrian refugees, about 80 percent of whom are Muslim. More than 1 million Syrian refugees are registered with the UNHCR in Lebanon, a country about the size of Rhode Island. But Ramzi said the total number of Syrian refugees, including unregistered in Lebanon, is "easily" twice that amount.

Fadi Kyorkis, a Greek Orthodox also from Homs, told CNS that if the situation were better in Syria, he would go home with his family.

"We fled only to save our children," he said. "When the terrorists came, it seemed they wanted to push the Christians out (of Syria). Before, we were living happily. We never expected we'd have to leave like we did."

NY Cardinal Timothy Dolan to participate in Trump inauguration

By Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- New York's Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan will take part in the upcoming presidential inauguration of Republican Donald Trump.

"I am honored to have been asked to offer a reading from Scripture at the upcoming presidential inauguration, and look forward to asking almighty God to inspire and guide our new president and to continue to bless our great nation," Cardinal Dolan said in an email to Catholic News Service.

Trump, a lifelong New Yorker, will be sworn in as the 45th president of the United States Jan. 20.

According to the inaugural committee, other faith leaders who are scheduled to be present include the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference; Paula White of New Destiny Christian Center; Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center; the Rev. Franklin Graham of Samaritan's



DONALD TRUMP, then the Republicans' nominee for U.S. president, smiles as he sits between New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan and wife Melania during the 71st annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner in New York City Oct. 20. Cardinal Dolan is among religious leaders will read from Scripture at Trump's presidential inauguration Jan. 20. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; and Bishop Wayne T. Jackson of Great Faith Ministries International.

The Washington Post reported in a Dec. 21 story that Trump is scheduled to attend "a private family church service at St.

John's Episcopal Church near the White House," where many previous presidents have worshipped just before being sworn-in.

A day after the inauguration, Trump is expected to attend the 58th Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service, an interfaith service at Washington's National Cathedral.

"The cathedral is a sacred space for the nation to come together at moments of national importance, including the inauguration of our presidents," officials for the cathedral said in a statement. "The Inaugural Prayer Service is a moment for our next president to pause and contemplate the incredible responsibility he has been entrusted with and to listen as the faith community offers prayers for the office of the president."

In October, Cardinal Dolan hosted Trump and Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, at the 71st annual dinner of the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation. The charitable gala, which drew 1,500 people, is named for a former governor of New York who was raised in poverty and who ran for president in 1928. Smith was the first Catholic nominated by a major political party to run for the nation's highest office.

Nun organizes national pre-inauguration event to foster peace

(CNS) -- Sister Rita Petruziello said she could feel the "contention and nastiness" in the air during the presidential election campaign of the last year. Instead of getting better as the process went along, it kept getting worse.

"It didn't matter who won," she told Catholic News Service Jan. 3. "There would be a lot of unrest, division and hatred."

But she couldn't just sit with-

out doing anything about it and decided to find a way to counter all those bad feelings she was seeing and hearing.

Sister Petruziello, a member of the Sisters of the Congregation St. Joseph in Cleveland, has since put together Circle the City with Love, an event that seeks to gather people across cities in the United States on Jan. 15 at 3 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, have

them join hands in their respective cities and, in silence, meditate together as a means to foster peace.

The intention behind the event is to reduce the acrimony around the country during and after the presidential election. The title and format had been used before during an event in Cleveland tied to the opening of the Republican National Convention

there in July 2016. And it must have worked, she said, because Cleveland did not experience the violence many had feared during the convention.

"We had been expecting riots and nothing happened," she said.

So now she wants to apply the concept nationally and has asked people around the country to organize local events that will result in harmony, not more ran-

cor, prior to the inauguration of Donald J. Trump as the country's 45th president on Jan. 20.

More than 40 groups in 17 cities, as well as a group in Australia -- whose participants will gather at 4 a.m. local time -- have agreed to participate. More continued signing up in early January at www.circlecitywithlove.com, Sister Petruziello said.

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Welcome 2017: the New and Empty Calendar

By Phyllis Zagano
Senior Research Associate
Hofstra University

After the carols and the presents, after the dinner and the storytelling, warm Christmas happiness spreads across minds and hearts. By its glow, we root around our desks for next year's calendar, the one proudly proclaiming 2017.

We may be glad to put away the old one, the one that marked our ups and downs throughout 2016. It holds the ordinary memories: appointments with dentists and doctors; birthdays; perhaps a trip to see an old friend or a new country.

It remembers for us that day in traffic court, and the first (or last) day on the job. It holds the dates when things happened outside our circles, to poor people, innocent people, unsuspecting people who lost their lives or limbs to one or another stupid act of violence. We did not mark them, but we know those days are there. We work to forgive, but not to forget.

The new calendar is clear, open to movies with friends and



dinner with the in-laws. Its pages spread before us clean and bright, ready as the dawn to welcome good days, great days, ordinary days.

How will we note the days ahead?

There is of course the trusty black pen. It notes our plans most permanently this coming year. We could use pencil, but why be tentative about those things closest to our hearts?

Pencil is for appointments that we—or they—may change. Pencil is for what we might do, if we have the time. Pencil is for dreaming.

Black pen is permanent. Pen marks the birthday. Pen notes when we'll have lunch with Mother, or a friend.

Right now, that calendar is mostly empty, except perhaps for those few weeks in summer. Its months open wide to adventure and to joy.

What will 2017 bring? The world around us limps toward the new year damaged in so many ways. Atrocities burst all around us into the world's consciousness.

How can we mark the calendar to maintain a sense of peace?

If we think about the seven deadly sins, and their associated

colors, perhaps there are some markers we need to metaphorically throw away. We cannot avoid the seven completely. They may be subtle shadows, or they may be icebergs in our hearts. No matter. We can lose them in the year ahead.

Start with the red marker. It is the color most associated with anger, the bear that sits behind us ready to pounce on a memory and rip it to shreds until we are crying mad.

The green one can go to. That one is for envy, barking at our heels because someone has what we do not.

It's next-door neighbor, the yellow one of greed, can go out the door as well, croaking as it leaves. If we open our hands and hearts, we understand we do not need it.

The orange one is next; it notes the pig-like gluttony that comes from falling prey to greed. Again, just let go.

Then, put away the blue ones—the dark blue of lust and the light blue of sloth. Each promises significant comfort, but a comfort that is fleeting and a comfort we do not need.

Purple is for pride, the peacocking belief that we are better, somehow, than the next one. Ask Goethe about pride, and he'll give you a copy of *Faust*; ask Milton and he'll point to *Paradise Lost*.

So, are we stuck with only permanent black and temporary pencil?

Not really. Healthy colors on the calendar need not blot out its promise. Colors on the calendar can signal special things and special people. But if we find ourselves red with anger or green with envy, we might remember there is something else to life. If we are yellow with greed or gluttonously orange, we might try to loosen our grips on whatever grips us. The blue shades of lust and sloth together mark the depressed blue that slows our smiles. For sure, pride's purple steps ahead (and often on) the next person we meet.

The world reels at the attacks of evil, at the ways those seven categories fill up the nightly news. But we can and should greet the new year with gratitude, ready to mark permanently and with joy each wonderful day.

Blessings in your 2017.

Before you turn off the TV . . .

By Tony Rossi
Director of Communications
The Christophers

The Catholic website *Aletheia* ran an article recently titled "Turn It Off, Tune Out, Save Your Soul."

The gist of the writer's argument was that while there are some good things on television, "We have to police what goes into our minds and, if we have children, what goes into theirs, and that policing ought to be a lot more stringent than it usually is."

I'm sure the writer is well-intentioned, and I sympathize with parents who struggle to find shows they can watch with their kids. That being said, I still think that perpetuating an anti-TV culture among Christians can be harmful in the long run.

For instance, a lot of Christians have already given up on television because they say it doesn't reflect their values. But when a large group of people

stops watching TV, programming executives with the power to choose what shows make it on the air can ignore that group. The Christian complaint that there's nothing good on TV becomes self-fulfilling because the Christian audience has removed itself from the equation.

TV should be seen as a mission field where Christians can bring light to the darkness. You may not like the content of a lot of shows today, but they are generally well-produced and know how to tell stories. If young people learn those techniques, then use them to tell mainstream stories that reflect their values, an impact could be made.

Consider that TV was traditionally watched in a living room. As hokey as it sounds, TV characters who viewers watch every week become like family and friends. The stories they tell can connect with viewers and serve as a teacher or an inspiration.

For example, I watched a

PBS documentary a while back about Mary Tyler Moore in which Oprah Winfrey said she was inspired to get into television because of Moore's news-producer character on her self-titled sitcom.

That's cultural power!

Finally, there's the argument that a lot of people on TV set a bad example. Here's another perspective: my favorite sitcom of the last 20 years is "Everybody Loves Raymond." Boy, was there a lot of arguing on that show! -- but they never let it get in the way of their being a family.

Once you waded through all the comedic bluster, these were characters who genuinely loved each other and stuck together despite their differences. That's a pretty good example in my book.

So before you decide to completely ditch television, see if there are ways you can use it to some advantage. It's a powerful tool that will shape hearts and minds with your input—or without it.

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2017 will mark the 500th anniversary of Protestant Reformation

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25) will focus its theme on the Reformation

The theme of this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is "*Reconciliation-The Love of Christ Compels Us.*" (2 Cor 5:14-20).

According to Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (GEII), "it was in the context of the Reformation anniversary that the Council of Churches in Germany took up the work of creating the resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has a history of more than 100 years, in which Christians around the world have taken part in an octave of prayer for visible Christian unity.

By annually observing the WPCU, Christians move toward the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper "that they all may be one." (cf. John 17:21)

In keeping with the long-standing practice of alternating the hosting of a local ecumenical event between the Diocese of Alexandria and the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, the Episcopal diocese will sponsor an ecumenical prayer service this year on Wednesday, Jan. 25 at noon at St. James Episcopal Church in Alexandria. The public is invited to attend. The Diocese of Alexandria will host an observance of the week in 2018.

All parishes of the diocese are encouraged to pray for the blessings of ecumenical dialogue at this time.

Parishes wishing to sponsor a local event or prayer service may find materials online at the



ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE. Bishop David P. Talley is a member of the official dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church and the United Methodist Church under the auspices of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Bishop David's parents were Southern Baptists and his paternal grandfather was a devout Methodist.

Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute.

In preparation for the WPCU, ecumenical partners in a particular region were asked to prepare a basic text on a biblical theme. Then an international group organized through the World Council of Churches (WCC) and The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity edited this text, which was jointly published

by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and WCC, through their Commission on Faith and Order.

The WCC accompanied the entire production process of the text.

The final material was sent to member churches and Roman Catholic dioceses, and they were invited to translate the text and contextualize it for their own use.

What is the Protestant Reformation?

The Protestant Reformation, (aka The Reformation) was a period of time in 16th century Europe (1517-1555) when an Augustinian monk and university lecturer Martin Luther, challenged papal authority and other Catholic beliefs and practices.

On Oct. 31, 1517, he composed a list of "95 Theses" or challenges against the Catholic Church and defiantly nailed a copy of it to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in Wittenberg, Germany.

Luther wrote "The Ninety-Five Theses" because he was dissatisfied with several practices of the Roman Catholic Church, including the sale of indulgences,

the abuse of priestly power and the power of the Pope. He also argued that faith alone, is the path to salvation. By making these arguments public, he sparked a religious revolution that came to be known as the Protestant Reformation.

Followers of Martin Luther became known as Lutherans; John Calvin, Calvinism; King Henry VIII, the Church of England; and John Knox, Presbyterianism.

During the next 500 years, a long succession of reformers who disagreed with the teachings of the Catholic Church, also broke away and formed many of the religions we have today.



OCT. 31, 1517 - Rev. Martin Luther posts 95 theses on the door of a German church, marking the start of the Protestant Reformation.



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February 4, 2017: Join us for 2nd annual Cenla March for Life

Gather your friends and family and make plans now to participate in the second annual Louisiana Life March in Central Louisiana on Saturday, Feb. 4.

That's right -- no need to travel to the North event in Shreveport/Bossier or the South event in Baton Rouge. It's all happening right here in Central Louisiana and is expected to attract a huge crowd.

The march will be held from 10 a.m. -12:30 p.m. beginning on the campus of Louisiana College in Pineville and ending in downtown Alexandria.

Start now by organizing your church, youth ministry, Catholic organization, or just a group of family members or friends to participate. Participants need not register, but are asked to gather at Louisiana College no later than 9:45 a.m.

According to a press release from Ben Clapper, executive director of Louisiana Right to Life, the 2017 theme of the march is "Protect them both!"

"Our vision for every event is to unite the pro-life people of Louisiana from across denominational lines and mobilize them to make a difference in their communities," said Clapper.

The events are family-friendly and open to all.

With horrendous videos highlighting Planned Parenthood's sale of baby body parts, we must remind the world that human lives are valuable and priceless. In Luke 12:6-7, Jesus reminds us the value of each human life: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many



CENTRAL LOUISIANA LIFE MARCH. Thousands of people participated in the first annual Central Louisiana Life March held last year on Jan. 30. The March started on the campus of Louisiana College, continued across the Jackson Street Bridge, and ended at the downtown Alexandria Ampitheatre. More are expected to attend this year. For more information about the march, go to prolifelouisiana.org.

sparrows.

Plan to march with others in 2017 and take a stand for the priceless value of every human life.

In addition to the second Life March in Central Louisiana, two other Louisiana Life March-

es will be held Jan. 21 in Baton Rouge at the Old State Capitol from 10 a.m. to noon and Jan. 28 in Shreveport at the Bossier Louisiana Boardwalk from 10 a.m. to noon.

Sponsors of the event include Louisiana Right to Life, Catholic

Diocese of Alexandria, Knights of Columbus, Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, Louisiana College, Louisiana Baptist Convention, United Pentecostal Church of Louisiana, Louisiana Family Forum, and Concerned Women for America.

If you would like to request promotional materials for your church or organization, please contact the Louisiana Right to Life office at 1.866.463.5433 or info@prolifelouisiana.org. We have posters and flyers available free!

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Pray the 9 Days for Life Novena January 21-29

On Jan. 22 our nation will mark the 44th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal throughout the United States.

Since that tragic decision, more than 60 million children's lives have been lost to abortion, and many suffer that loss -- often in silence.

Join thousands of Catholics across the country in prayer for a 9-Day Novena for Life from Saturday, Jan. 21 - Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017.

There are many ways to participate in the Pro-Life effort:

1. Pray the 9 Days for Life Novena -- Jan. 21 - Jan. 29. (The entire novena is printed here.) Go to the USCCB website -- www.usccb.org -- to download and print the full 9-day novena. You can also sign up to receive the novena sent to your phone each day either as a text or as an email. Visit the USCCB website for full details.

2. Organize a Day of Prayer on Jan. 22. Talk to your pastor about hosting a Day of Prayer in your parish. Go to the USCCB website for prayer resources under Life Issues and Pro-Life Activities.

3. Participate in any of the Life Marches in Louisiana or the National Life March in Washington, D.C. Louisiana Life Marches are: Jan. 21: Louisiana Life March South, Baton Rouge
Jan. 28: Louisiana Life March North, Shreveport-Bossier
Feb. 4: Louisiana Life March Central, Pineville-Alexandria

4. Pray the Rosary -- Even if you are unable to attend any of the Life events in your area, pray the Rosary at home for the intentions of all pro-life issues.



Day 1: Saturday, Jan. 21

Intercession: For the conversion of all hearts and the end to abortion.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Pope Saint John Paul II described the "culture of life" as "the fruit of the culture of truth and of love" in his encyclical *The Gospel of Life* (no. 77). Do we build up the culture of life by living in truth and in love? Are we the kind of people whom a woman could and would come to if she found out she were pregnant and needed loving support and encouragement? How can we help those who suffer from the pain of abortion to experience God's tender mercy? The brief articles in today's "One Step Further" give suggestions for extending God's merciful love to others.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):
Go to an abortion clinic and pray, or set aside an hour today to pray for those who are struggling with a decision of life or death for their unborn child.

Spend some time reflecting upon no. 77 of *The Gospel of Life*.

Use the Respect Life social media toolkit to build up a culture of life on social media.



Day 2: Sunday, Jan. 22

Intercession: May each person suffering from the loss of a child through abortion find hope & healing in Christ.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today, on this 44th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, we consider the past four decades in which our society has legally permitted abortion. Since that tragic decision, many children's lives have been lost, and many suffer that loss--often in silence. Yet God's greatest desire is to forgive. No matter how far we have each strayed from his side, he says to us, "Don't be afraid. Draw close to my heart."

"In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called confession, we meet the Lord, who wants to grant forgiveness and the grace to live a renewed life in him. ... We bishops and priests are eager to help you if you experience difficulty, hesitation, or uncertainty about approaching the Lord in this sacrament. If you have not received this healing sacrament in a long time, we are ready to welcome you."

Let us run into the arms of Jesus, who is love and mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):
Today, go visit an adoration chapel and spend some time with Jesus.

Go to confession--today, if possible--or during this week. Before you go, look up St. Faustina and learn a little about the message of Divine Mercy that she shared during her life.

Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for those who are suffering the loss of a child through abortion, asking that they find healing and peace.



Day 3: Monday, Jan. 23

Intercession: May all people embrace the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift, and is worth living.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Our culture is obsessed with perfection—a superficial perfection. Photos are airbrushed, and social media sites depict seemingly perfect lives. God calls us to seek perfection, too. He does not call us, however, to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in love. In "A Perfect Gift," one parent shares about the experience of raising a child with Down syndrome, contrasting it with what onlookers might perceive: "It's like looking at a stained-glass window from the outside: The colors look dark, and you can't quite make out the figures. From the inside, however, with the sun shining through it, the effect can be brilliant. From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie.* What may seem dreary to others, maybe even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color."

May each of us experience the power of God's transforming love, that our eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of the people the Lord places in our lives.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):
Say a prayer for your parish priest. Without our priests, we could not have the Mass or the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
Pray for your deceased relatives and those who have no one to pray for them.

Spend quality time with a family member or friend; offer to help them with something with which they need assistance.



Day 4: Tuesday, Jan. 24

Intercession: May those near the end of their lives receive medical care that respects their dignity and protects their lives.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: When Maggie's active father suffered an accident that eventually led to his passing, her conversations with him turned to life's more serious topics, and his final days became a time that was cherished by the whole family. During this time, Maggie's dad taught her that "dignity can't be diminished by pain or loss of personal control," that "Jesus was walking along with him," and that "our suffering is not meaningless when we unite it with Christ's own suffering."

As a 50-year-old wife and mother of three, Maggie needed this message in a dramatically new way when she was diagnosed with a terminal illness. Instead of giving up hope, she embraced the legacy her father had left her, cherishing the life she still had left: "[M]y life is, always has been, and always will be, worth living." Read more about her experience in "Maggie's Story: Living like Dad."

Acts of Reparation (choose one):
Take time to write a handwritten note to someone who is lonely or needing encouragement.

Meet Maggie in the brief, 3-minute video that inspired the article, "Maggie's Story: Living like Dad."

Read and reflect upon "Caring for Loved Ones at Life's End." Ten suggestions anchored in unconditional respect for human life help readers know how to provide authentically compassionate care.



**Day 5: Wednesday, Jan. 25**

Intercession: For an end to domestic violence.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: "A correct reading of Scripture leads people to an understanding of the equal dignity of men and women and to relationships based on mutuality and love. Beginning with Genesis, Scripture teaches that women and men are created in God's image." ("When I Call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women" USCCB 2002).

Acts of Reparation (choose one): Do you love your cup of tea or coffee in the morning? Fast from caffeine today, or try your coffee black.

Learn how to pray the Angelus prayer and consider saying it every day— on awakening, at noon, or at 6 p.m. (or all three times).

Give up your favorite form (or all forms) of social media for the day. Spend some of the extra time meditating upon a Scripture verse or passage.

Day 6: Thursday, Jan. 26

Intercession: May those affected by pornography experience the Lord's mercy and healing.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: We are created with a desire to love and be loved. We long to be known, understood, and accepted for who we are. In contrast, pornography distracts us from our call to love by objectifying people and bringing hurt and pain. As noted in *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, "it is an illusory substitute for real relationships and intimacy, which in the end bring true joy."

However, "no wound is out of the reach of Christ's redeeming grace. Christ is our hope! The Church proclaims the truth about love, sexuality, and the dignity of each person, and she seeks to provide the Lord's mercy and healing for those harmed by pornography. ... For further resources and help, visit www.usccb.org/cleanheart."

Acts of Reparation (choose one): Don't push the snooze button. Get right out of bed and offer your day in prayer to God.

Fast from snacking today. Eat three meals only. Contemplate a beautiful piece of sacred art today, and reflect upon how true beauty draws us closer to God.

Day 7: Friday, Jan. 27

Intercession: May those who long for a child of their own be filled with trust in God's loving plan.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: It can be very difficult and painful when the Lord doesn't answer our prayers the way we hope. We may have many doubts and questions, wondering why we face the challenges that we do. Yet even though our suffering is often shrouded in a sense of mystery, we believe that the Lord loves us with great tenderness and compassion that is beyond our imagination. Knowing this, we can trust that "all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28).

Acts of Reparation (choose one): Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and share Christ's love with those who need encouragement the most today.

Today, pray the Rosary, or even just a decade, for someone who has hurt or disappointed you, and ask for the grace to forgive that person. (Pro-Life Rosary Prayer Intentions: www.goo.gl/cUf6kj)

We can sometimes forget how blessed we are to have many of our daily comforts. Give up sleeping with your pillow tonight.

Day 8: Saturday, Jan. 28

Intercession: For an end to the use of the death penalty in our country.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: As Catholics, we believe and put our hope in a merciful and loving God. We are conscious of our own brokenness and need for redemption. Our Lord calls us to imitate him more perfectly by witnessing to the inherent dignity of every person, including those whose actions have been despicable. Our faith and hope is in the mercy of God who says to us, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Mt 5:7) and "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Mt 9:13). As Christians we are called to oppose the culture of death by witnessing to something greater and more perfect: a gospel of life, hope and mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one): Do something nice for someone else without being asked or telling anyone. Pray for him or her while you do so.

Read about a Church teaching you don't understand in the Catechism (www.goo.gl/cu4OBs).

Read about the life of a modern saint. You might be surprised by how much you have in common with him or her.

Day 9: Sunday, Jan. 29

Intercession: For God's peace to fill the hearts of all who travel upon the path of adoption.

Pray: Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us to "hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm" (Heb 6:18-19). We pray that all who are involved in the adoption process would be filled with the hope of Christ and "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (Phil 4:7). We also remember that we too can cling fast to this anchor of hope, for we have received "a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom 8:15). May our loving Father envelop each of us in his love today and open our eyes in faith that we may see and rejoice in his love.

Acts of Reparation (choose one): Make an act of faith, hope, or love (www.goo.gl/QilqQW).

Today, ignore your sweet tooth. Make healthy eating choices.

Make a "quiet hour" today, turning off all electronic devices (cell phone, iPod, computer, television, radio, video game system), and retreat to your room. Spend some time in prayer or prayerful reading, such as the "Novena to St. Joseph: For Those on the Path of Adoption" (www.goo.gl/dv7Dn2).

*Names changed for privacy.

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Venerable Henriette Delille and the Sisters of the Holy Family

Sisters of the Holy Family begin year-long celebration of 175th anniversary

By Beth Donze
Clarion Herald

Their ministries include educating the young at St. John Berchmans Early Childhood Program and St. Mary's Academy; befriending the elderly residents of Delille Inn and St. John Berchmans Manor; shepherding Lafon Nursing Facility – the oldest continuously operating Catholic residence of its kind in the U.S.; and giving spiritual counsel to inmates at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women at St. Gabriel.

But perhaps not as well-known is the tender care the New Orleans-founded Sisters of the Holy Family extend to the hungry and homeless who show up at their Chef Menteur motherhouse seven days a week.

This daily nourishment is performed in direct emulation of Sisters of the Holy Family foundress Venerable Henriette Delille, who tended to the elderly, sick and disenfranchised of the city during the era of slavery.

"Whoever comes to the door, we feed them and that's all day long – breakfast, lunch and supper," said Sister of the Holy Family Greta Jupiter, reflecting on the legacy of Mother Delille before Mass of Thanksgiving Nov. 19 marking the sisters' 175th anniversary. The principal celebrant and homilist was Archbishop Gregory Aymond.

The congregation currently numbers 84 professed sisters, three junior professed sisters, one novice and one postulant.

In 2005, a group of Holy Family sisters were forced from their homes in New Orleans after Katrina and resettled in Alexandria, where they have been teaching and working in other ministries since then.

History of Holy Family

"The congregation traces its official origins to 1842 – nearly a quarter century before the Emancipation Proclamation – when Mother Henriette purchased a home where women of color could live in community to further their ministry of assisting the sick and dying and catechizing the uninstructed, often by becoming a godmother. New Orleans Bishop Antoine Blanc "heard her cry and took her very seriously," Archbishop Aymond said.

The community's first rule was written even earlier – in 1836 – when they formed a pious group of women, not yet living under the same roof, known as the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Their motto was "one heart, one soul," based on Acts 4:34 and the rule of St. Augustine.

Praying for sainthood

Before the Mass, Sister of the Holy Family Leona Bruner, first general councilor, presented an



THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY opened the year of their 175th anniversary on Nov. 19 in their motherhouse chapel in New Orleans. In 2005, a group of Holy Family sisters were forced from their homes after Katrina and resettled in Alexandria, where they have been teaching and working in other ministries.

update on the cause for Mother Henriette's beatification and canonization. Venerable Henriette was accepted as a candidate for sainthood by the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome 28 years ago, becoming the first U.S.-born, African-American whose cause for canonization was officially opened by the Catholic Church. Pope Benedict XVI declared her venerable on March 27, 2010.

For the last six years the sisters and their extended family of

supporters have been praying for an authenticated miracle to take the cause to the next stage, with hopes that an alleged miracle involving the healing of a seriously ill college student in Little Rock, Arkansas, will be accepted.

"The young student was healed, graduated from college and is doing very well," Sister Leona said. "As soon as the inquiry is completed, the doctors in Rome will study the medical records. This could be the authenticated miracle we need for

beatification. We hope, pray and wait for the day when we can say 'Blessed Henriette' and then 'St. Henriette.'"

The anniversary year will close with Mass at St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans on Nov. 19, 2017. For a complete list of anniversary year activities, visit www.sistersofthehollyfamily.com.

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Jan. 20 marks the 30th anniversary of Bishop Greco's death

In front of the main chapel on the campus of Maryhill Renewal Center is the final resting place of Bishop Charles Pascal Greco -- laid to rest there 30 years ago on Jan. 23, 1987.

Alexandria has seen few funerals as large and as moving as the one on that day -- bishops and archbishops, white-robed clergy, the Bishop's family, ministers of the Protestant and Jewish faith; the Knights of Columbus, St. Peter Claver, and St. Gregory, and more than 700 mourners whose lives had been touched by the man who had been a shepherd for 41 years. An estimated 1,200 people attended the three wake services prior to the funeral.

Bishop Greco led a faith-filled life and accomplished things many of us only dream about.

He was the son of Italian immigrants, (the third of 13 children) born in Rodney, Miss. on Oct. 29, 1894. His family moved to Waterproof, La., and then relocated to New Orleans where he enjoyed a Catholic education under the direction of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. It was in their chapel, where he served at the altar, that he met (Mother) St. Frances Cabrini who predicted that "This boy will go far into the priesthood."

He entered St. Joseph's Seminary College in Covington in 1907 and was ordained a priest

in New Orleans on July 25, 1918. He served as vice-chancellor and then chancellor of the archdiocese of New Orleans, pastor of several parishes, vicar general and for a short while, as editor of the diocesan newspaper.

At the age of 51, he was appointed the sixth bishop of Alexandria and was installed on March 19, 1946.

As bishop, Greco launched a diocesan expansion program that resulted in the erection of more than 415 new buildings in 22 years including 124 churches and chapels, 48 schools, 64 rectories,

45 convents, 29 parish halls, 7 hospitals and nursing homes and 98 other building. A total of 33 new parishes were opened in the 27 years of his administration.

He started his first school for the retarded at an abandoned mill in Clarks, La. and invited a group of religious from Italy - Our Lady of Sorrows sisters - to staff it. This grew into St. Mary's Residential Training School and later another school, Holy Angels, in Shreveport.

He was a personal friend of President John F. Kennedy, St. Pope John XXIII, and Blessed

Pope Paul VI. He often traveled with Pope Paul on trips as an interpreter.

The Holy Father once offered Bishop Greco a promotion to a larger diocese, but at the time he was involved with building St. Mary's. "So he spent the rest of his life with us," it's been said.

When Greco first saw a large tract of land in Pineville covered with tall pine trees, he envisioned a seminary and a lake with a place for children to play by the lake and then he built it.

For the next 15 years, thousands of children and counselors

attended Camp Maryhill where he greeted the children at the KC youth camp each summer.

In addition to his work as chief shepherd of the diocese, Bishop Greco also served as the state and Supreme Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, becoming the spiritual leader of more than 1.2 million Knights throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Bishop Greco died on Jan. 20, 1987 in Alexandria.

A Rosary and Memorial Mass for Bishop Greco will be held Friday, Jan. 20 at the main chapel at Maryhill.



YOUNG BISHOP GRECO shortly after his ordination in 1918.



HUNTING AND FISHING were favorite pastimes of Bishop Greco.



VATICAN II. Bishop Greco was a major participant in Vatican II in 1962.



BOY SCOUTS, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, AND KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER. Bishop Greco was always active in the activities and events of Boys Scouts, Knights of Columbus, and the Knights of Peter Claver.



CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. Bishop Greco erected more than 415 new buildings in 22 years in the diocese.



THE KIDS AT ST. MARY'S RESIDENTIAL TRAINING CENTER were the joy and love of Bishop Greco's life.



CAMP MARYHILL attracted hundreds of kids to Maryhill every summer to enjoy swimming, fishing, horseback ricking, and canoeing. One of the main attractions was a replica of the boat (Star of the Sea) that Greco traveled on from Italy to the United States.



Ven. Pope Pius XII



St. Pope John XXIII



Blessed Pope Paul VI



Ven. Cardinal Fulton Sheen



BISHOP GRECO celebrated his last birthday on Oct. 29, 1986. He died on Jan. 20, 1987 at the age of 93.

MOTHER LOUISA FALSETTI, superior general of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrow, flew from Italy for the services and Virgil Dechant, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, also attended. Archbishop Philip Hannan of New Orleans was the main celebrant at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Also in attendance was Bishop John C. Favalora, Archbishop Pio Laghi, the papal nuncio; Bishop William Friend, and Bishop Lawrence Graves.

FOR UNTO IS, A CHILD IS BORN!

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA COURT NOTRE DAME #1452, Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, held its Annual Christmas Party and Angel Tree Fundraiser on Dec. 12 in the Divine Providence Center. There were 50 guests including members, spouses and our chaplain, Father Dan O'Connor. With the money raised, we were able to help make a happier Christmas for our Angel Tree Family plus lots more.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM was held Dec. 20. Each class performed for parents throughout the day. Pictured are the Pre-K shepherds.



ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL (Bunkie) CHRISTMAS PROGRAM. Students in grades PreK - 8th grade at St. Anthony School in Bunkie participated in the annual Christmas Program held Dec. 16 and directed by Lagniappe Theater Company.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL (Moreauville) CHRISTMAS PRODUCTION was held Dec. 21 at the Earl Barbry Sr. Convention Center in Marksville. The production, titled *This is Christmas*, featured each class demonstrating what Christmas means to them. The Nativity was performed by the 8th grade class.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH (Marksville) NATIVITY PLAY ANGELS.



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL (Plaucheville) CHRISTMAS PROGRAM. Mrs. Clause opened the night with a special reading of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. The religious brothers and sisters performed various Christmas carols as Santa knelt before Jesus in the manger. Mrs. Cassie Gaspard's 5th grade class sang "I Want A Hippopotamus for Christmas". Teachers Rhiannon Moreau,



Akeysheia Juneau and Luis Ramirez performed Alvin & The Chipmunk's "Christmas Don't Be Late". PreK3, PreK4 & Kindergarten students teamed together to perform "We Are Santa's Elves". And Mrs. Kimberly Compton's 4th graders performed "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer". The event ended with the entire student body singing "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."



ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH (Colfax) CCD students performed the Christmas play for the parish Dec. 17.



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION SCHOOL (Cottonport) CHOIRS visited area nursing homes to sing Christmas carols to the residents. The 6-8 grade choir performed at the Riviere De Soleil Community Care Center and the 4th and 5th grade choir performed at the Hessmer Nursing Center. Pictured are the students from the 4th-5th grade choir with Brother Anthony Dugas, and Principal Nathan Laborde.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH (Marksville) NATIVITY PLAY was held Dec. 24 with 40 children participating



SACRED HEART SCHOOL'S COLUMBIAN SQUIRES AND CHILDREN OF MARY ORGANIZATIONS took their annual community service field trip Dec. 13 to entertain residents with Christmas cheer at the nursing facilities of Oak Mont Estates Assisted Living, Riviere De Soleil, and Colonial Nursing Home in Marksville. While at Oak Mont, Mr. Gerard Dupuy, a former La. History teacher, and a friend of the sponsors, entertained the residents with French music.

Caroline Lacombe sang a solo of "Silent Night" at each nursing facility and all students sang Christmas Carols and brought fruit and Christmas cards. While in Marksville, the students also visited St. Joseph Church, where religion teacher Amanda Lacombe, and Columbian Squire sponsor Dan Soldani instructed the group on the historical and architectural significance of the church.



DUKE TIP PROGRAM QUALIFIERS FROM CABRINI.

from St. Frances Cabrini School in Alexandria, qualified for the Duke TIP Program by scoring in the 95th percentile or above on the ACT Aspire in the Spring of 2016.

ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL (Bunkie) ACADEMIC BANQUET is held every year in May to recognize outstanding academic achievements of the students.

8th GRADE RETREAT AT MARY-HILL. The Menard MAC (Menard Apostles for Christ) Team hosts a retreat every year for all 8th graders in all diocesan Catholic Schools. This year's retreat, held Jan. 11, was attended by more than 200 8th graders from all of the 8 Catholic Schools.



Diocese celebrates Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29 - Feb. 4

Janet Burgess named new director of Child Nutrition program

Janet Burgess has been named supervisor for the Child Nutrition program for the eight Catholic schools in the Diocese of Alexandria, according to Thomas Roque, superintendent of Catholic schools.

Originally from Erwinville, La., Burgess comes to the diocese with more than 36 years of education experience. In addition to serving as principal for 13 years in Rapides Parish, she has also served as assistant principal, and teacher. While at Hadnot-Hayes Elementary, she piloted the Fresh Fruits & Vegetables and the After School Snack programs.

She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education with a concentration in Communication Disorders from Southern University in Baton Rouge and a master's degree in administration and supervision from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches.

"We are very fortunate to have acquired Mrs. Burgess with the credentials and expertise she brings with her to the diocese," said Roque. "I know she will be an asset to



Janet Burgess
Child Nutrition supervisor

our Child Nutrition program."

As director of the Child Nutrition program, Burgess will be responsible for the administration of the programs that provide healthy food to children in the schools including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and the Special Milk Program. She will also be responsible for making sure our schools follow the guidelines of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and for lunch room staffing in each of the schools.



Catholic Schools Week Diocese of Alexandria

Schedule of Events

St. Joseph School -- Plaquemine

Pre-Registration is currently open to all students (returning and new students). The fee is \$100 per returning student and \$150 for new students. It is due by April 25th for returning students to take advantage of the \$50 discount. Anyone registering after April 25th will be charged a \$150 registration fee regardless if they are new or returning students. Fees can be paid by cash, check or money order. Checks must be made payable to SJS or St. Joseph School. Final registration will be held in July.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor School -- Alexandria

OLPS will have Open House at 11:30 January 29th following 10:30 mass. This is the Sunday to kick off Catholic Schools' Week. We will meet in the Divine Providence Center in the Church Parking Lot, then will have rooms open to tour in the school. Our waiting list is currently open.

Holy Savior Menard Central High School -- Alexandria

Holy Savior Menard Central High School and Junior High will host an Open House on Thursday, Feb. 2 from 6 -7:30 p.m. Parents and students are invited to come by to meet the faculty and staff, tour the campus, and learn more about what Menard has to offer.

Sacred Heart School -- Moreauville

Sacred Heart School in Moreauville will host an Open House on Wednesday, Feb. 1 during the school hours. Check in at the office and visit the classrooms and meet our teachers.

St. Frances Cabrini School -- Alexandria

St. Frances Cabrini School in Alexandria will host an Open House on Tuesday, Jan. 31 from 5:30 - 7 p.m. Any parents interested in sending their children to Cabrini in the Fall can come and visit the classrooms and learn more about the many academic programs offered. Registration packets for new students will be available.



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- Learn about extracurricular activities


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For more information contact Renee Hicks, 318-445-8233, ext. 217

Feast of St. Blaise

Friday, Feb. 3

Blessing of the Throat



Young adult with 'dark past' starts Catholic In Recovery

Seeking the Good News through the eyes of a recovering alcoholic, drug addict

By Denis Grasska
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- By any measure, Scott Weeman seems contented.

All of the pieces of his life seem to have fallen into place.

The 31-year-old is a newlywed, married in September to his wife, Jacqueline. He enjoys the love of his family and a supportive community of friends. He has found fulfillment in a rewarding ministry. And he recently finished his first book, which will be published in late 2017.

What a difference five years makes.

Flashback to 2011

Flashback to Oct. 9, 2011, when Weeman had hit bottom and, in a long-distance call to his parents and a few remaining close friends, admitted that he needed help.

He had gone through "nine years of darkness," enslaved by an alcohol and drug addiction that damaged some of his closest relationships, cost him a full-tuition college scholarship and resulted in two driving under the influence charges and several underage drinking citations. Even after making the decision to sober up, he doubted whether he would ever be able to make up all the years he had wasted.

"What's funny is that ... I thought that my life was over at the young age of 26 ... and that really the rest of my life would be playing catch-up," he said.

But, as it turned out, that wasn't the case at all.

"God has awoken me to believe ... that I can use my dark past as a great asset to help others," said Weeman, founder of the nonprofit organization Catholic in Recovery.

Started in spring 2015 as nothing more than a blog, it received its nonprofit status in April. The organization's roots



Scott Weeman, founder of the nonprofit organization Catholic in Recovery, is pictured in an undated photo. (CNS photo/courtesy Elissa Voss Photography)

can be traced back to a discovery that Weeman made shortly after embracing sobriety, when he began attending meetings for recovering alcoholics and simultaneously getting more actively involved in the church.

He said he found that the spiritual principles that were the foundation of both the church

and addiction recovery programs "were really the same tenets."

Catholic in Recovery offers addiction recovery resources within the context of Catholic spirituality and "the life-giving sacraments of the church," he explained.

The organization has collaborated with parishes and schools, enabling them to improve their outreach to those struggling with any form of addiction, whether alcohol, drugs, pornography, sex, gambling or food.

CatholicInRecovery.com

The website CatholicInRecovery.com is home to a blog as well as a host of resources for those seeking help and encouragement on their path to recovery. Weeman also speaks at parishes throughout the Diocese of San Diego. In October, he addressed a school assembly at Cathedral Catholic High School in Carmel Valley, as well as speaking at the Diocese of Fresno's annual congress.

In January, Catholic in Recovery was to begin hosting twice-monthly meetings at San Diego's St. Joseph Cathedral for anyone whose life has been impacted by addiction.

Growing up in a small town in Wisconsin, Weeman was 17



CatholicInRecovery.com

when he had his first drink. He soon began taking drugs, beginning with marijuana.

After moving to New York City for college, he transitioned from social drinking and recreational drug use to addiction. He was using alcohol or drugs -- "usually both" -- on a daily basis, and he found himself needing more and harder drugs, including cocaine, to reach the same high. He even began selling marijuana.

In 2010, Weeman moved to San Diego. He was still drinking excessively and using drugs at the time, but sobriety was just around the corner.

"By the grace of God, about a year later, I had reached my bottom, lost practically everything that I had, minus some close friendships that I had back home (and) the unconditional love of my family, and called for help,"

he said.

After that long-distance phone call, Weeman entered a substance abuse recovery program and also got involved with the young adult community at St. Brigid Parish in the Pacific Beach neighborhood of San Diego.

Through his addiction, Weeman said, he was "humbled" to the point that he was willing "to give a personal relationship with God a chance." He ultimately came to accept "how much (God) loves me and how much he was willing to pursue me, even when I was hiding from him as much as I could."

Though it has taken time, Weeman has rebuilt his life. He has repaired many of the relationships that were damaged by his addiction. After several semesters at a local community college, where he worked to improve his grades, he was accepted into Point Loma Nazarene University and is set to graduate in May.

Weeman remembers being told five years ago that "the key component" in his own recovery would be to take "the great gift" of freedom and hope that he had received and to share it with others. He still believes that, and that's what he hopes to accomplish through Catholic in Recovery.

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Adjunct Professor (1994-1997), Northwestern State University

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).

PUBLISHED ARTICLES: "The Worn-Out Worker Rule Revisited," "Significant Work-Related Limitations of Function Under §12.05C," "Questionable Retirement and the Small Business Owner," "Crisis of Confidence: The Inadequacies of Vocational Evidence Presented at Social Security Disability Hearings."

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Souls ignited at SEEK 2017

Nearly 13,000 seek and find fellowship, formation and fun at conference

Almost 13,000 attendees, most of them college students, charged up their faith Jan. 3-7 at SEEK2017 held in San Antonio, Texas.

The biennial event, hosted by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), featured the theme "What Moves You." Throughout the conference, attendees learned to see the truth of how God seeks them with sacrificial love and invites them to encounter Him with their whole hearts.

A group of 45 from the Catholic Student Center in Natchitoches and from Monroe attended the event.

Chicago natives Kelley, Lauren and Maggie Hartman experienced SEEK2017 in different ways. It was the first national FOCUS conference for each of these three sisters. Maggie, a senior at Harvard University studying pre-med and religion who will be a FOCUS missionary after graduation, said, "You can see Christ reflected in each person and how He desires to meet each of us individually."

Her twin sisters Kelley and Lauren are freshman at University of South Alabama. Kelley added, "this has shown me there are 13,000 people with me with the same beliefs and goals as I have." Lauren reflected, "It's been life-



HOLY CROSS CSO (Natchitoches) STUDENTS and a group from Monroe, travelled to San Antonio for the Jan. 3-7 biennial SEEK conference. More than 13,000 college students from across the nation attended the conference designed to bring evangelization efforts to college campuses.

changing to be a part of something larger and more powerful than I ever thought. I'm excited to go back to college to share my faith with others."

Nearly 53,000 people have attended FOCUS events since the inaugural National Conference held in 1999, where 25 students came together to pray, deepen their Catholic faith and learn how to share Christ with others.

SEEK2017 attendees came from more than 500 college campuses, and a few dozen international attendees hailed from several other countries. The largest campus contingent was from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with nearly 400 registrants.

"Our hope for SEEK2017 is that God will light a fire in the hearts of young leaders," said Curtis Martin, CEO and founder

of FOCUS. "Then as we return to our campuses all over the country, we can encourage one another to live as world-changers."

Freshman Dai'Jon Brown came to SEEK2017 with the FOCUS group from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Brown is currently in Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) classes. He said his experience at SEEK2017 was

like no other: "It opened my eyes up to grow as an individual and showed me how to be a better man by being positive in all situations and lifting up my brothers and sisters."

More than 300 priests celebrated daily Mass. Adoration and confession throughout the event provided many opportunities for reflection and prayer. The Holy Spirit opened many hearts on Thursday night, with adoration in the main hall. That evening alone, more than 4,000 people went to confession. Over the course of the event, more than 6,000 confessed their sins to priests during the sacrament of reconciliation.

"I hope this week at SEEK2017 young adults experienced the Lord seeking each of them in a unique way," said Archbishop Charles Chaput, O.F.M. "When people experience that God is seeking them, they'll be more likely to seek Him as well."

More than 35 speakers talked about relationships, discipleship and challenging topics on today's college campus, including Archbishop Chaput, Dr. Scott Hahn, Jeff Cavins, Fr. Michael Gaitley, and Dr. Edward Sri.

Many of the talks will be available in a few weeks for digital download at www.shopfocus.org.

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Pope: Vocations require prayers, open door, big hearts, busy hands

(CNS) -- While God is the one calling people to a vocation, clergy and religious have to cooperate by being inspirational role models, keeping their doors open and giving restless young people constructive things to do, Pope Francis said.

Praying for vocations and holding meetings to discuss effective strategies are key, he said, but if those things are done "without making sure that the doors are open, it's useless."

The pope made his remarks near the end of a Jan. 3-5 conference on pastoral ministry for vocations, sponsored by the Italian bishops' conference national office for vocations.

Setting aside his prepared text, the pope told his audience it was too early in the day to make them fall back asleep again by reading aloud something they could read later. Instead he wanted to talk to them about the conference theme of the divine command -- "Get up!"

The pope recalled how Peter heard this call while he was sleeping, chained in prison awaiting trial. An angel told him, "Get up quickly" and "Put on your cloak and follow me." The angel freed him and led him safely to an alley, but then left him there alone, a bit confused at first, but then excited and eager to find his friends.

Unfortunately, the pope said, when Peter got to the home where



DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONS, Father Louis Sklar walks with the seminarians who worked with the Bishop's Golf Tournament in October. Father Louis is available to answer any questions you may have about vocations.

his friends were praying fervently for him, the door was shut and the servant didn't think to open it right away when she heard him calling.

How often does this happen today, the pope wondered, with so many people praying for vocations and for the Lord to tell people to rise up and be free, but then when those people go out to seek what they are looking for, they find a closed door.

This happens when a priest has very limited or inconvenient hours for receiving the public or for hearing confessions or when the parish has a very unfriendly

secretary who "scares the people away. The door is open, but the secretaries show their teeth" like a snarl.

"To have vocations, being welcoming is necessary. It's in a home that you welcome" people, he said.

The pope said he knows how tiring, frustrating or difficult it can be to do outreach with today's young people.

He said when he was young, he and his friends were happy to go to parish-organized meetings where they just sat around and talked about a particular topic, then went out after to watch a

game at the stadium or do some charity work. "We were easygoing" and didn't need so much activity like young people today crave.

To foster vocations, he said, "you need to make young people walk," do something, go on a journey and accompany them -- "an apostleship of walking" and working because it will be while they are helping and interacting that they will feel part of the church and then start going to confession and Communion -- not the other way around, he said.

Priests also have to "be nailed to the chair" when they lis-

Diocese of Alexandria Office of Vocations

Father Louis Sklar
Director of Vocations
318-445-6424, ext. 260

ten to young people who come to see them for guidance or answers. They have to be patient and make the person feel they have all the time in the world to sit and just listen, offering very brief comments like "a seed that will do its work from the inside."

Young people may have dreamy, crazy ideas or really tough questions or cause trouble with their "shenanigans," but that's because they are young, "thanks be to God," and eventually they will get their act together with time, the pope said.

The pope urged the priests and religious men and women how important it was they set a good example for young people.

It's true people are called to a religious vocation by God, he said, but it is also true a majority of those vocations were also prompted by the effective, inspiring witness of the people in their lives.

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Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach.....	\$125.00
Monsignor Steve J. Testa Burse	
Total.....	\$905.00



CHRISTMAS MASS AT ST. JAMES CHURCH. Bishop David P. Talley celebrated the 10 a.m. Mass at St. James Church in Alexandria on Christmas Day.

The bishop gave a rousing homily and a charge of action for the congregation!



KC COUNCIL 4010 AWARDED STAR COUNCIL AWARD. For the first time, Knights of Columbus Council #4010 of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Mansura has earned the Star Council Award, one of the top awards given by the Knights of Columbus headquarters in New Haven, Conn. The award, announced by KC Chief Executive Officer Carl A. Anderson, recognizes overall excellence in the areas of membership recruitment and retention, promotion of the fraternal insurance program and sponsorship of community and church programs. The award was presented to the council Nov. 16 by KC District Deputy Marvin Guillot. “Receiving the Star Council award is quite an honor for us and we are extremely proud of this award”, said John H. Mitchell, Jr., grand knight. Special recognition is given to Tom Mayeux, membership chairman and KC insurance agent, for his dedicated service to the council. Officers are Rev. Irion J. St. Romain, chaplain; John H. Mitchell, Jr., grand knight; Thad Rabalais, deputy grand knight; Gaon Escude, financial secretary; Richard Ducote, treasurer; and Larry Breaux, recorder.

Dr. Alveda King's new book: *America, Return to God!*

By TruthPR

Dr. Martin Luther King's Niece, Alveda King's latest book was written soon after the election of the next president of the United States.

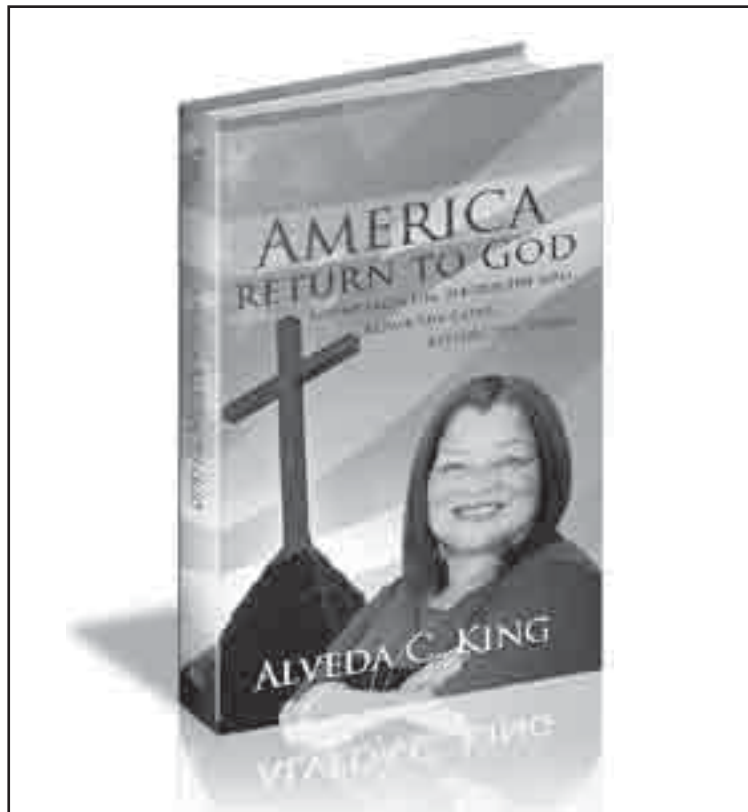
Now hear this clarion call, "American, RETURN TO GOD!"

All of this talk about a "wall" for America has actually caused the hearts of America's prayer warriors to hope again, realizing that a wall must have a strong foundation, a sturdy rock and a chief cornerstone. Finally, 21st-century America seems to have taken notice that something more is required if there is truly to be hope for America.

Yes, there is hope, and there still may be time to return to God and rebuild God's wall of protection around our nation. If we sincerely desire to rebuild our nation, there is much to be learned from the lessons in the books of Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Outline of Book

One reason that America borders on the brink of economic disaster and constant violent upheaval is that we have turned



America Return to God -- by Alveda C. King

\$15.99 SKU: BK-AKI002

Available at: <http://www.elijahshopper.com/america-return-to-god-by-alveda-c-king/>

blind eyes and deaf ears to the plight of our brothers and sisters. Like Cain who killed his brother Abel, we have despised good and have turned away from caring about what happens to our brothers and sisters.

We must humble ourselves as Nehemiah did: "When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven." (Nehemiah 1:4 NIV).

Amazingly, in 2015, there emerged a least likely presidential candidate who wanted to "make America great again." He started speaking of "building a wall" around America's borders. The people became fearful, the naysayers became furious. Yet the talk of America's wall continued.

It's the season for the "hidden prophets" to speak out:

In the Bible account, Ahab called for Obadiah, his household supervisor. This man, who feared the LORD very much, had taken 100 prophets and had hidden them by fifties in a cave, providing them with food and water when Jezebel was trying to destroy the LORD's prophets.

Let the kings and priests of God arise. Let the prophets and

BOOK REVIEW

intercessors unite with the high praises of God in our mouths.

In the final analysis, hope springs eternal. Even as the year 2016 was a season for God repairing breaches and unleashing many spiritual gifts to advance His Heavenly Kingdom, I pray that 2017 and beyond will be remembered as the beginning of a new and fresh wave of repentance, healing and forgiveness among families, communities and nations. As hope springs eternal, faith will increase and agape love will grow stronger. As this happens, the repairing, rebuilding, restoring process is all part of God's eternal plan to draw America ever closer to His heart.

May this book be a landmark in the history of 21st century America, chronicling the REPAIRING THE GATES, REBUILDING THE WALL, RESTORING THE DREAM, and RETURNING TO GOD.

Mardi Gras Dates

Jan. 6 - Feb. 28	Mardi Gras Season
Feb. 28	Mardi Gras
March 1	Ash Wednesday Lent begins

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A *Monster Calls* is definitely not a movie for kids

By Kurt Jensen
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- The first thing to know about "A Monster Calls" (Focus) is that, although it's based on a children's novel, it's definitely not for kids.

Even many adults will find its mawkish treatment of death and its supply of blithe "answers" to life's struggles difficult to handle. While the film is probably acceptable for mature and literate adolescents, "mature" is the vital term here.

Like all books, Patrick Ness' award-winning 2011 work can be absorbed slowly, put aside and reflected on. The movie, by contrast, sustains unrelenting horror in the manner of a cult film.

The intent of J.A. Bayona, who directed from Ness' own script, appears to have been to make a faithful adaptation, with mordant observations on the need to accept the inevitability of life's passages. What the filmmakers ended up with, though, is an uncompromisingly dark melodrama, somewhere beyond gothic.

Its protagonist, Conor (Lewis MacDougall), a young adolescent who lives in a British country village, is one very sad and angry boy. There is no respite from his grief.

He's bullied at school and tortured by the knowledge that



A MONSTER CALLS. Lewis MacDougall confronts The Monster, voiced by Liam Neeson, in the movie "A Monster Calls." The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. (CNS photo/Focus Features)

his divorced mother, Lizzie (Felicity Jones), is slowly dying of cancer. His father (Toby Kebbell) has moved to America and begun a new family. His grandmother (Sigourney Weaver) is emotionally distant, and there are no compassionate adults to guide him through all this.

Like his mom, Conor is a skilled artist with an active imagination. He suffers from a vivid recurring nightmare involving a crumbling church and his mother's plunge into the depths as the cemetery surrounding it becomes a sinkhole.

Coming to his "rescue" is a benevolent giant (voice of Liam

Neeson) formed from the bark and roots of the graveyard's ancient yew tree -- and with a voice as deep as a coal mine. His centuries of observing human behavior and ability to dispense slightly off-kilter fables are supposed to bring gruff instruction, if not exactly comfort.

Initially, this puts the story on a par with benign and occasionally funny tales such as "Pete's Dragon," "The Iron Giant" and "The BFG." But only for a moment.

The giant promises Conor that, on successive nights, he'll tell three stories, after which Conor has to tell him a fourth.

The first two, elaborately animated as watercolors, involve a handsome prince who's not the murderous villain he seems to be and a grouchy medieval apothecary who is far more moral than others might think -- especially when compared to the pious clergyman who wants to drive him out of business,

Conor, whose fears don't extend to his new friend, notices these discrepancies right away, leading the giant to reflect, "Many things that are true feel like a cheat."

The giant never gets to finish his third tale -- which begins "There was once an invisible man

MOVIE REVIEW

who had grown tired of being unseen" -- because by now, Conor is in the midst of a destructive emotional breakdown, well past the point at which any form of fantasy might still help him cope.

But he's never punished for his resulting misbehavior. His grandmother and school principal understand the sources of his rage, and when he asks about retribution, both respond, "What could possibly be the point?"

Conor finally obtains wisdom, if not exactly peace, by confronting his nightmare in the midst of a turn-on-all-the-faucets tableau. "In the end, it's not important what you think," the monster advises him. "It's important what you do."

The film contains some physical violence, several discussions of death and intense emotional scenes. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

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Cane River Creole Heritage Day

Join the St. Augustine Historical Society at Isle Brevelle Jan. 21 for an evening of great Creole cuisine and Zydeco music! Costumed tours begin at 4 p.m., Mass at 5 p.m., Cochon de Lait dinner from 6 – 9 p.m., and a Creole Heritage Party featuring the music of Rusty Metoyer and the Zydeco Crush. Admission is \$10.

Avoyelles Right to Life Speaker

Avoyelles Right to Life will host Kathy Allen of Lafayette as a speaker on Saturday, Jan. 21 at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Church in Marksville. Kathy will share the story of her abortion, but then how she came to know the saving grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. Free and open to the public. For more information, call 253-7810.

Finance Class for Young Couples

A class in basic finances for engaged couples, young spouses and single persons is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 22 at 11:45 a.m. at the Sts. Francis and Anne Church Youth Building in Kolin. The presenter will be Donovan Davis, CFP, a local financial planner and a member of that parish. This is a great opportunity to learn about handling finances whether one is just starting out in life or needs a little assistance along the way. The course will cover topics such as budgeting, timely paying of bills, credit score, tithing, and managing one's cost of living. For more information or to register for the class, please contact Kara Bertrand at (318) 290-9228 or email kara@pecangrovetrainingcenter.net.

44th Anniversary of Roe v Wade

Because January 22 falls on a Sunday in 2017, the designated observance of the date of the legalization of abortion in the US is moved to Monday, January 23.

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

January 23 has been designated the "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children" In all the dioceses of the United States, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) is observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion."

Blessing of Throats

Friday, Feb. 3 is the Feast of St. Blaise. Check with

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your local church parish to see when throats will be blessed.

Life March - Central Louisiana

Alexandria will host its second annual pro-life Louisiana Life March on Saturday, Feb. 4. The event will begin at Louisiana College at 10 a.m. Participants will walk from Pineville, across the Jackson Street bridge, and end at the amphitheatre in downtown Alexandria, hear pro-life speakers, and will end at 12:30 p.m. Make plans now with your church, youth ministry, organization, or with friends and family to participate in this historic event. Sponsors: Louisiana Right to Life, Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, Knights of Columbus, Louisiana College, Louisiana Baptist Convention, United Pentecostal Church of Louisiana, Louisiana Family Forum, and Concerned Women for America. For more information, go to www.prolifelouisiana.org.

Father - Daughter Dance

Sts. Francis & Anne (Kolin) Youth Ministry is holding a Father/Daughter dance on Saturday, Feb. 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. (for fathers/daughters of all ages). Cost is \$25 per family and includes dinner and a souvenir picture. Attire is church appropriate dress (knee length dresses for the ladies and dress shirt/pants for the dads, jacket or suit

optional). For more information or to reserve your table, please contact Debbie Humphreys @ 318)715-4010 or Rena Clayton at 318) 787-7665.

Women of Grace

St. Rita Catholic Church in Alexandria is offering Women of Grace, a formation program for Catholic women in understanding and affirming them in their dignity and vocation as daughters of God and in their gift of authentic femininity. Classes will be held from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. every other Monday at the St. Rita Holy Family Center beginning Feb. 6 and ending June 5. Cost is \$40, which includes a book and workbook. For more information, contact Christine Gormsen at cgormsen@strita.org or Desi Martin at dsm9624@live.com.

Men's Scripture Study

St. Rita Catholic Church in Alexandria is offering a Men's Catholic Scripture Study (session I) titled *Luke: The Gospel of Mercy* from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. every other Monday, beginning Feb. 13 and ending June 26. A second session will be offered in the Fall of 2017. Registration was held Jan. 7-8, after all Masses. The cost is \$40 and includes a study guide that covers all lessons. For more information, contact Jerry Deville at jdev3943@gmail.com or Christine Gormsen at cgormsen@strita.org.

Natural Family Planning Classes

You are invited to attend a Natural Family Planning class series teaching the 99% effective Sympto-Thermal Method on the Saturdays of March 4, April 1, and May 6 from 10 a.m. - noon. Attendance of all 3 classes completes the course. There is a one-time fee of \$130 which includes Student Guide book, fertility tracking charts, digital thermometer, 1 year membership CycleProGo app, and Family Foundations magazine. You can register at www.ccli.org. For more information, contact Michael and Leah Peltó at (318) 640-8678 or michaellandleah@suddenlink.net.

OLL (Vidalia) Cookbook for Sale

The Ladies' Altar Society and Men's Club at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Vidalia, have published a cookbook titled, *Manna on the Mississippi*. The cookbook is comprised of over 320 recipes contributed by cooks throughout the Miss-Lou area and the U.S. Also included are recipes from some of our local Indian priests. The cost of the cookbook is \$15 plus \$5 per book if you want us to mail it to you. Contact Corinne Randazzo at 601-597-2917 or Pat Stein at 601-807-6383 to order. Net profits from the sale of this cookbook will be used toward upgrading our A/C and heating system in the church hall.

VIRTUS

- Monday, Jan. 30 -- 6 p.m., St. Mary Assumption, Cottonport
- Thursday, Feb. 16 -- 6 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

To register, go to www.virtus.org



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January - February

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<div>16</div> <div>Diocesan Offices closed</div> <div>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. G. KROSFIELD</div>	<div>17</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI</div>	<div>18</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUPURAM</div>	<div>19</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. KWEBUZA</div>	<div>20</div> <div>30th Anniversary of Bishop Greco's death</div> <div>Rosary & Memorial Mass for Bishop Greco 6:00 p.m.</div> <div>Main Chapel Maryhill</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD</div>	<div>21</div> <div>Avoyelles Right to Life speaker 10:00 a.m.</div> <div>St. Joseph, Marksville</div> <div>Cane River Heritage Day 4:00 p.m.- Midnight</div> <div>St. Augustine, Isle Breville</div> <div>9-day NOVENA FOR LIFE</div> <div>RETROVAILLE WEEKEND -- Lafayette</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME</div>	<div>22</div> <div>Finance Class for Young Couples and Singles 11:45 a.m.</div> <div>Sts. Francis and Anne Church, Kolin</div> <div>44th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS</div>
<div>23</div> <div>Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of the Unborn</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE</div>	<div>24</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER</div>	<div>25</div> <div>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Prayer Service 12 noon</div> <div>St. James Episcopal Church</div> <div>Pro-Life Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C.</div> <div>9-day NOVENA FOR LIFE</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. MESSINA</div>	<div>26</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</div>	<div>27</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS</div>	<div>28</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. MILLER</div>	<div>29</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</div>
<div>30</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m.</div> <div>St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</div>	<div>31</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. NELLIKUNNEL</div>	<div>FEBRUARY 1</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Feast of St. Blaise "Blessing of the Throats"</div> <div>FIRST FRIDAY</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Life March Central Louisiana 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.</div> <div>Louisiana College</div> <div>Father-Daughter Dance 6:00-9:00 p.m.</div> <div>Sts. Francis and Anne, Kolin</div> <div>FIRST SATURDAY</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</div>	<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA</div>
<div>6</div> <div>Women of Grace 10-week Series 6:00-8:00 p.m.</div> <div>St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. OWUAMANAM</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPPARAMBIL</div>	<div>9</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH</div>	<div>10</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE</div>	<div>11</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN</div>	<div>12</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL</div>
<div>13</div> <div>Men's Catholic Scripture Study Series 6:00-7:30 p.m.</div> <div>St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. G. POOKKATTU</div>	<div>14</div> <div>VALENTINE'S DAY</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS</div>	<div>15</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY</div>	<div>16</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m.</div> <div>St. Joseph Catholic Center Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS</div>	<div>17</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES SANCHEZ</div>	<div>18</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ</div>	<div>19</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROY</div>



**HAPPY
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MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU;
MAY HE MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON YOU
AND BE GRACIOUS;
MAY HE LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE UPON YOU
AND GIVE YOU PEACE.

NUMBERS 6:24-26