

CHURCH TODAY

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September 11, 2017

ON THE INSIDE

Diocese of Alexandria responds to the needs of the hurricane evacuees

Individuals and churches from all over the Diocese of Alexandria responded generously to the needs of the 2,500 evacuees of Hurricane Harvey who found refuge at the LSU-A Mega Shelter in Alexandria. For complete coverage of Hurricane Harvey, go to pages 6-7 and 12-13.

Thinking about becoming a deacon?

The Office of the Permanent Diaconate plans to start a new Permanent Deacon Formation class beginning in the Fall of 2018. Interested persons should inquire about it now. See page 5 for details.

Claire Lemoine named executive director of Cenla Pregnancy Center

Before a crowd of almost 100 pro-life supporters, Claire Lemoine was introduced as the executive director of the new Cenla Pregnancy Center, a free pregnancy help facility expected to open Dec. 4, 2017 in Alexandria. See page 9 for details.

Generous response to hurricane relief efforts



MUCH NEEDED SUPPLIES. Maxwell Moreau, Cole Churchman, Deacon Bill Travis, and Father Adam Travis, help unload a truck of supplies collected from St. Martin Church and Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioners. A number of parishes collected supplies for Hurricane Harvey evacuees and brought them all to the St. Joseph Catholic Center, where they will be sorted and distributed to agencies who need them.

Oklahoma priest Father Stanley Rother to be beatified Sept. 23

(CNS) -- Catholics in Oklahoma have been preparing for a long time for this moment. Many, like Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, had faith it would come, but there's still a sense of awe, to think that a farm boy, one of their own, is about to take a step toward official sainthood.

On Sept. 23, Oklahomans will get a front row seat to the beatification of Father Stanley Rother, an ordinary man from an ordinary town, who died extraordinarily as a martyr in Guatemala while serving in a mission. He knew well the dangers of the Guatemalan highlands, where government forces tortured and killed anyone suspected of dissent during the most politically tumultuous moments in the country's history.

However, Father Rother refused to abandon the community he so loved from 1968 until his 1981 assassination. Like many

of the poor and persecuted he served, he died long before he had to at age 46, shot in the head in the parish rectory.

"People are justly proud of this native son, but one wouldn't expect something like this, such a recognition to be accorded to somebody from Okarche, Oklahoma," said Archbishop Coakley.

Okarche (pronounced oh-car-chee) is a small farming town with a lot of windmills, said Archbishop Coakley, and one that's increasingly receiving visitors and pilgrims wanting to learn more about the tranquil setting that was home to Father Rother. He left it behind because he wanted to serve the church in a place where priests were needed and, in the late 1960s, priests were needed in the remote highlands of Guatemala, where the Oklahoma City Archdiocese had a mission in the town of Santiago Atitlan.

"We weren't talking about the peripheries 30, 35 years ago



SISTER MARITA ROTHER, a member of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, holds a picture of her brother, Father Stanley Rother, a priest of the Oklahoma City Archdiocese, who will be beatified Sept. 23 in Oklahoma City. (CNS photo/Christopher Riggs, Catholic Advance)

when Father Rother was killed but certainly he had that missionary spirit," said Archbishop Coakley. "He had a heart for the people there. He recognized their dignity, he recognized that they were precious in the Lord's sight."

Some say Father Rother arrived "knowing 10 words in Spanish," but the agricultural skills he imported from Okarche and his kindness endeared him to the locals. Archbishop Coakley has visited Santiago Atitlan on a couple of occasions, once during a pilgrimage and also for an event honoring Father Rother.

"The devotion of the locals to Padre Aplas, as they call him, is amazing," he said. "He's venerated and honored as the beloved shepherd who laid down his life for them. We were there for the very special day of the anniversary of this death so there was a large festive Mass, a colorful event, processions.

U.S. bishops establish new ad hoc committee against racism

WASHINGTON—The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has announced the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism. Initiated by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the USCCB. The committee will focus on addressing the sin of racism in our society, and even in our Church, and the urgent need to come together as a society to find solutions.

"Recent events have exposed the extent to which the sin of racism continues to inflict our nation. The establishment of this new ad hoc committee will be wholly dedicated to engaging the Church and our society to work together in unity to challenge the sin of racism, to listen to persons



Bishop George V. Murry, SJ
Committee chairman

who are suffering under this sin, and to come together in the love of Christ to know one another as

brothers and sisters," says Cardinal DiNardo.

Bishop George V. Murry, SJ of Youngstown, Ohio has been appointed by Cardinal DiNardo as chairman of the committee. The membership of the committee will be finalized in the coming days and its mandate will be confirmed at the first meeting, expected very shortly.

"I look forward to working with my brother bishops as well as communities across the United States to listen to the needs of individuals who have suffered under the sin of racism and together find solutions to this epidemic of hate that has plagued our nation for far too long," says Bishop Murry. "Through Jesus' example of love and mercy, we are called

to be a better people than what we have witnessed over the past weeks and months as a nation. Through listening, prayer and meaningful collaboration, I'm hopeful we can find lasting solutions and common ground where racism will no longer find a place in our hearts or in our society."

The new ad hoc committee has been formed upon the unanimous recommendation of the U.S. Bishops Conference Executive Committee and in consultation with members of the USCCB's Committee on Priorities and Plans. The establishment of the committee will also welcome and support the implementation of the pastoral letter on racism anticipated for release in 2018. The formation of the ad hoc commit-

tee also follows the conclusion of the work of the Peace in Our Communities Task Force. The Task Force was formed in July 2016 by then USCCB President, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, in response to racially-related shootings in Baton Rouge, Minneapolis and Dallas.

Almost 40 years ago, the Bishops of the United States wrote a Pastoral Letter on Racism. Among the many things, they discussed was the fact that "Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father."

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Catholic school removes religious statues from campus

Administration makes effort to be 'more inclusive' of other faiths

By Mary Rezac
CNA/EWTN News

Parents are concerned after a California Catholic school has removed several religious statues from its campus in an effort to be more inclusive of other faiths.

San Domenico School in San Anselmo, California removed several religious statues from display on campus, donating some and relocating others to storage.

Many parents and members of the school community expressed worry that this could signify an erasure of the school's Catholic identity.

Shannon Fitzpatrick, whose 8 year-old son attends the school, voiced her objections to the removal of the statues to the school's board of directors, according to the Marin Independent Journal.

"Articulating an inclusive foundation appears to mean letting go of San Domenico's 167-year tradition as a Dominican Catholic school and being both afraid and ashamed to celebrate one's heritage and beliefs," she said.

Cheryl Newell, who had four children graduate from the school, echoed concerns that attempts to be inclusive were actually erasing the school's identity.

"They're trying to be something for everyone and they're



REMOVING MARY TO BE 'MORE INCLUSIVE.' San Domenico School in San Anselmo, Calif., removed 180 religious station from display on campus in an effort to be more inclusive of other faiths.

making no one happy," she told the Marin Independent Journal.

San Domenico was the first Catholic school in the state of California, founded by the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael in 1850. It now operates as an Independent Catholic school, meaning that most day-to-day decisions and operations are decided by the school's board and administration, not by a parish or a religious order. The Dominican sisters maintain sponsorship of

the school, as well as the approval of certain decisions like board members or the budget.

The school is within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, but runs largely independently of the archdiocese, archdiocesan spokesman Michael Brown told CNA. The canonical responsibility for the school falls to the Sisters.

Brown added that the archdiocese would have further clarifying conversations with school

officials about the removal of the statues.

"We are going to be in contact with the school, just to clarify what the situation is, but it isn't in any sort of crisis mode," he said. "There's just been a lot of publicity and public concern, so we'll be having private conversations with the school hierarchy."

School officials have maintained that the removal of the statues was in compliance with a plan that was approved unani-

mously by the school board, and that it was part of an attempt to be more welcoming to the growing number of non-Catholic students at the school.

"Over San Domenico's 167-year history as California's oldest independent and Catholic school, we have adjusted the number of statues on campus many times, and our recent effort is part of that continuum; the recent political climate and conversation have served to distort our intentions," Kimberly Pinkson, director of Marketing and Communications for the school, told CNA.

Pinkson added that previous numbers and photos shared by the media were misleading.

"For the record, there were 16 statues on campus prior to the school year and today there are 10 statues on campus," she said.

She added that another photo of a statue that had been published had actually been in storage since 1965.

"In addition...at the start of this school year we moved our statue of St. Dominic to a more prominent place at the center of our school and put up a plaque honoring St. Dominic as our School's patron saint. The plaque was placed the first week of school, prior to this news cycle. There has been and there is no plan to move any other statues," she added.

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Forming missionary disciples

In July, a group of clergy, a Sister and several lay leaders from our diocese joined me at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Convocation of Catholic Leaders: *The Joy of the Gospel in America*.

Inspired by Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of The Gospel), this Convocation was a gathering of Catholic leaders for a strategic conversation focusing on forming missionary disciples to animate the Church and to engage the many cultures of the United States more effectively and with Gospel joy.

This gathering of Catholic leadership would be expected to include cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, deacons and religious women and men. And so it did.

But the Convocation also included an extraordinary group of lay leadership from around the country for an edifying experience of the whole Church fully alive!



I am the VINE;
YOU are the BRANCHES
(John 15:5)

Most Rev. David P. Talley
Bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria

This experience underscored and solidified a plan that was already in process, the creation of a new Diocesan office, the Office of Life and Justice. While we have had similar offices in the past, this new office will take on a different mission and tone.

Fr. Craig Scott, pastor of St. Rita Church and the newly appointed dean of the Central Deanery has volunteered to spearhead the creation and coordination of the Office of Life and Justice.

This office will be run strictly by volunteers (who are missionary disciples!). The goal is not to "reinvent the wheel." Rather,

the intention of this new office is to ensure a coordinated diocesan effort in these areas of pastoral concern, and to offer appropriate support to our pastors, lay leaders, parishes and schools.

The Office of Life and Justice will focus on three areas: Sanctity of Life; Ministry to the Poor and Marginalized; and Environmental, Cultural and Civic Concerns. Fr. Scott's first order of business has been in gathering a group of committed volunteers. He has reported that each of these three areas has a committed priest advisor, and a committed lay chair, as well as an overall chair for this

office. He is currently reaching out to pastors across the diocese for recommendations, so that we can have representation from all four of our regions or deaneries (Natchitoches, the Eastern deanery, the Central deanery and the Avoyelles). Once the entire committee is established, I will hope to introduce the members in The Church Today.

I know that many ministries and activities in these areas of concern are already at work in our diocese, and have been for many years. And I thank God for the clergy and religious and lay leaders that have staffed these minis-

tries of Christ the Lord.

The next order of business for the Office of Life and Justice will be to lift up these existing ministries and to seek input from these ministries into ways that the new Office of Life and Justice can be of support.

Pastors will soon receive a survey to better identify what ministries are active in their parish or mission. The Office of Life and Justice is in its infancy, but I know you will support Fr. Craig Scott and his committee as they hope to share the joy of the Gospel and in sharing this Good News, to transform the cultures of central Louisiana.

By our Baptism and through the grace of Confirmation and with the strength of Holy Eucharist...each of us is called to be a missionary disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ, and an Ambassador of the Kingdom of our Father!

AMDG

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam
(For The Greater Glory of God)

Giving in disaster: give like the widow

By Jennifer Carr Allmon
Catholic News Service

"And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living.'" (Mark 12:43-44)

When it comes to charitable giving during a disaster, we are called to give like the widow. We give deeply and with a goal and purpose in mind. Many have said disaster recovery is a marathon, not a sprint, and our giving must be also. It can be tempting to respond to every emotional plea for help, or to the first request we see, but strategic giving is important.

There are three stages to disaster recovery:

- **Immediate crisis response** is handled by city and county first responders and the American Red Cross. It includes immediate rescues and evacuation efforts. It also includes many faith communities that open their doors as immediate shelter. Often there are

requests for donations of shoes, blankets, clothing, diapers, food and water. Donations during for this phase are best coordinated through American Red Cross, United Way, Texas Baptist Men, Knights of Columbus and local churches or schools functioning as shelters.

- **Intermediate transitional recovery** helps people to leave crisis and temporary shelter, return home to assess damage and find a place to stay while long-term plans begin. Catholic Charities agencies are fully engaged in this intermediate transitional phase, and donations to a local Catholic Charities are critical for this transition. Cleanup efforts are continuing during this phase.

Helpful giving in this phase includes gift cards to grocery stores such as Kroger; home-improvement stores such as Home Depot and Lowe's; and outlets such as Walmart, Target, and Bed Bath & Beyond. Visa and MasterCard gift cards can be used at all retailers. Cleaning supplies are needed more than bottled water in this phase of recovery.

- **The long-term recovery** phase includes rebuilding, resto-

ration, return to work, school, and a sense of the new normal. Recovery from catastrophes such as Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Harvey takes years. During that time those impacted may remain evacuated in other cities while rebuilding their homes.

In these cases, it is helpful to donate to organizations closest to the evacuees. Remember, even if someone's home damage is minimal, their ability to return to work may be impacted by the damage to their place of employment, thus still creating financial stress for their families.

Donating to Catholic Charities USA enables Catholic Charities agencies around the country to gather teams of loaned disaster case management staff to deploy to the impacted agencies.

This type of assistance is critically important in communities where the staff of Catholic Charities are also personally impacted by the storm.

CCUSA's text to donate link makes donating simple: just text CCUSADISASTER to 71777. Also online at <https://catholic-charitiesusa.org>, and by phone at 800-919-9338.

We recall Christ's words: "For you always have the poor with you." (Mark 14:7)

Giving to disaster relief should not replace current chari-

table and parish giving. We all know that the hearts of Texans are deep, and today we ask you to dig deep for those most affected by Hurricane Harvey.

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Father Craig Scott Burse	
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DEACON CANDIDATES ON RETREAT. Father Dan O'Connor and the ten deacon candidates who are expected to be ordained in the Spring of 2018 went on a retreat at the Benedictine Abbey of St. Meinrad in Indiana recently. Pictured are (front row) Stephen Gramigna, Darrell Dubroc, William Aldridge, Larry Feldkamp and Father Dan O'Connor. Back row: Mark Adkins, Bill Endris, Tommy Robichaux, Paul Sunderhaus, Luke White, and Steven Newbury.

Thinking about becoming a deacon?

Now is the time to contact diocese to learn more

The Office of the Permanent Diaconate would like to announce the start of a new Permanent Deacon Formation class beginning in the Fall of 2018.

Deacon Richard Mitchell, assistant director for the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, is now taking contact information and fielding questions from men who may be interested in discerning this ministry.

If interested, contact Deacon Mitchell at (318) 445-6424, ext. 206 or email: dcnrmitchell@diocesealex.org.

The qualifications for the permanent diaconate include: must be at least 35 years old at the time of ordination, must have wife's consent (90% are married)

and can be married, but can't marry or re-marry after ordination.

The four dimensions of formation -- Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral -- are learned throughout the five-year formation process that consists of Aspirancy, Candidacy, and Post-Ordination.

In the Aspirancy and Candidacy stages, the men and their wives are required to attend classes. Once a month, an instructor from St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana comes to Alexandria to teach the aspirants philosophy and the theory of ministry. A psychological exam will also be done at this time.

The next four years include

the formal study of theology for the Candidates. Church history, the Sacraments, Preaching, Moral Theology, and Scripture are some of the courses the men and their wives will study in classes held from September to June.

After the Candidate passes the theology curriculum and the psychological exam, the Bishop makes a final determination of his readiness for ordination.

Just as priests and bishops are ordained, a deacon is the third order in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

After ordination, the deacon becomes incardinated into the Diocese of Alexandria. The Bishop assigns the deacon to a parish or charitable ministry.

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Texas parishioners shocked by devastation of Hurricane Harvey

By James Ramos
Catholic News Service

HOUSTON (CNS) -- With floodwater as high as 20 feet from swelling bayous and waterways, thousands of homes in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston flooded as Tropical Storm Harvey continued to batter southeast Texas Aug. 28.

Bishops from dioceses along the mid-Texas Gulf Coast, including Victoria and Galveston-Houston, granted dispensations from regular Mass Sunday obligations Aug. 27.

The storm, which made landfall a day earlier as a Category 4 hurricane, was downgraded to a tropical storm and claimed at least four lives. The record-breaking rainfall, as much as 28 inches over 24 hours in four counties in the archdiocese, was "unprecedented" and "catastrophic," according to the National Hurricane Center. The region typically sees about 49 inches of rain in a year.

In southeast Houston, Father David Bergeron, a member of the Companions of the Cross order, spent Saturday night in his truck on a highway because of rising floodwater. The next morning, he kayaked the flooded streets to try to find wine to celebrate Sunday Mass for nearby stranded neighbors.

Sitting atop his red kayak, Father Bergeron told a local TV reporter on a live broadcast that he was trying to return home to celebrate Mass. He had visited Galveston for a kayak trip the previous day.

"I tried to go back home for Mass and ... I didn't make it," Father Bergeron said.



A man carries his belongings through flood waters in Houston, Texas, Aug. 28. (CNS photo/Nick Oxford, Reuters)

The priest used his kayak to visit a nearby convenience store for supplies as well as wine to celebrate Mass for nearby stranded neighbors.

"I even tried to buy wine right now to say Mass with some of the people who are stranded here, but that didn't happen because it's not noon yet," Father Bergeron said. Texas liquor laws prevent alcohol sales on Sundays before noon. "It's not that I usually buy alcohol that early in the morning, but I had wanted to say Mass with the few people who are stranded."

He said he was praying for everyone in need, reflecting on America's first evangelizers who came by boat.

"I guess this is how the Americas were evangelized as well, with a canoe, and this is a kayak," Father Bergeron said. "I hope that can bring a smile to a few people."

"The Lord is alive and the Lord is always with us as well, so I really pray for the protection of all the people. ... There are a few psalms that implore for the grace of God and the washing and the rain, but now we have enough rain."

Thirty miles north of Houston, 29-year-old Eric Robinson spent the morning of Aug. 27 walking three miles in floodwater to morning Mass at Sts. Simon and Jude Catholic Church in The Woodlands even though a dispen-

sation had been given.

"I made it in time for the 9:30 a.m. Mass," he said. "It's normally a crowded Mass, but there were about 100 people."

In his homily, Father Pat Garrett, pastor, encouraged people to pray for flood victims and first responders. After Mass, Robinson trekked back to his apartment, wading through waist-deep water.

The situation was not the first time the parish has seen floodwater come close to church grounds. In April 2016, the church's center served as a Red Cross shelter. Activated again as Harvey pounded the state, at least 22 people took shelter at the church by the evening of Aug. 27, parish staff said.

Sacred Heart Church in

Rosenberg, 35 miles southwest of Houston, also served as a Red Cross shelter.

Elsewhere, Danielle Noonan walked through her Sienna Plantation neighborhood southwest of Houston Aug. 27, observing the damage caused by a tornado that ripped through area the previous evening. "I feel like I'm still in shock," she said.

No sooner than her husband Chris told her to get into the closet where her two sons already were hiding, the tornado touched down a quarter-mile away, damaging at least 50 houses, shredding roofs and windows, snapping hallowed oak trees "like toothpicks" and flipping fences.

The next day, the community tried to recover quickly, but strong rains hampered efforts. Not until a trip to the grocery store for more supplies did Noonan see how shaken by the tornado her two children were.

One of them "was really scared," she said. "It was hard for him to see his friends' homes just destroyed. He didn't want to leave the safety of his home."

Noonan saw it as a good teaching moment about how to live a life of true prayer and love in the community. In an effort to rally the local churches in prayer, Noonan joined her parish, St. Angela Merici in nearby Missouri City, in hosting the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and praise and worship session on Facebook.

Noonan and her family evacuated to central Texas Aug. 28 under orders of local officials because of rising waters in the Brazos River.

Continued on pg. 7



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Ford gives Catholic Charities USA a new Mobile Response Center

(CNS) -- Ford Motor Co. has given Catholic Charities USA a new Mobile Response Center, which will bring relief and recovery to people across the country experiencing disasters.

The van was presented Aug. 22 to the national agency, which is a network of Catholic Charities agencies and programs in U.S. dioceses and has its headquarters in Alexandria.

The vehicle is wheelchair accessible, has air conditioning, lighting, wheelchair access and even a phone-charging station, which will be particularly helpful for people in a disaster who need to reconnect with their families.

When not responding to a disaster, the Mobile Response Center will be used by the Archdiocese of Washington, as well as the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, to serve those in need in the region.

The new Mobile Response Center will allow the agencies to get services to a lot of people who normally wouldn't have access to them, and also follows how Pope Francis has asked the Catholic Church to go out into the periphery, go out into the streets and make a difference.

Hurricane Harvey devastation

Continued from pg. 6

Meanwhile, a social media post about storm damage caused Ashley Ben-David's jaw to drop.

Scrolling through Twitter, the Houston St. Francis de Sales Catholic School fourth grade teacher saw images of hurricane-ravaged Rockport. The seaside city 30 miles northwest of Corpus Christi was among the first to see major damage from the storm. A photo showed a storied home in the Ben-David family decimated by Harvey; the two-story structure painted in friendly yel-

low and white was cut in half by winds that topped 130 miles per hour.

At first she denied what she saw in disbelief. "The stairs aren't in the right spot," she thought. However, after sending the picture to her two siblings, they confirmed the worst: It was the family home, only Harvey had moved the stairs and trees.

"We've had that house in our family for so long," said Ben-David in the safety of her Sugar Land, Texas, residence. The home belonged to her grandparents in the 1960s, and for the

next half-century, played host to "countless summers, vacations, Christmases and Easters," for the family.

"It's ... heartbreaking because there's so many memories," she said. "It was our go-to place to be by the sea."

The Texas Catholic Conference said the bishops of the state's 15 dioceses are coordinating relief efforts. The conference requested "people join in prayer for the coastal and inland areas being affected, and consider donating money to local dioceses and Catholic Charities."

Where to give to assist with Hurricane Harvey recovery

- **Catholic Charities USA:** online at <https://catholiccharitiesusa.org>; telephone at 800-919-9338; mail to P.O. Box 17066, Baltimore, Maryland, 21297-1066 and write "Hurricane Harvey" in the memo line of the check.

- **Texas Catholics Conference** is coordinating emergency services. A listing by diocese of where to give has been posted online at <https://txcatholic.org/harvey/>.

- **Special collections** in the local dioceses were held Sept. 2-3 or Sept. 9-10 during weekend Masses. Funds will benefit Catholic Charities USA's disaster relief efforts as well as pastoral and rebuilding support through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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Claire Lemoine named executive director of Cenla Pregnancy Center

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

Before a crowd of almost 100 pro-life supporters, Claire Lemoine was introduced as the executive director of the new Cenla Pregnancy Center, a free pregnancy help facility expected to open Dec. 4, 2017.

CPC board president Brian Gunter, senior pastor at First Baptist of Pollock, made the announcement Aug. 25 at a press conference held at the center's location at 1254 MacArthur Drive.

"In 2016, there were 439 abortions in Central Louisiana alone," said Gunter. "A pregnancy center is needed in this community to help lower the number of abortions and to help mothers facing a pregnancy crisis."

"The Cenla Pregnancy Center was started because a small group of pro-life supporters said 'yes' to supporting life," said Lemoine. "I am so proud to be part of this pro-life community effort."

Lemoine, from Marksville, has worked more than 20 years in maternal child nursing. She has 10 years of experience serving low-income, first-time pregnant women in a home setting.



CENLA PREGNANCY CENTER TEAM LEADERS. Some of the key organizers of the Cenla Pregnancy Center are (from left) Dr. David Spence, medical director of the facility; Sandra Sues, board member; Father Taylor Reynolds; Claire Lemoine, executive director; Brian Gunter, president of the Board of Trustees; Peter J. Lemoine, an attorney and member of the advisory board; and George Hardy, Kenny Moore, and Bob Tompkins, advisory board members. Back row is Eric Lord and Father John Wiltse.

More than 200 churches of multiple Christian denominations have worked together to establish the pregnancy resource center, a non-profit, pro-life organization that will provide compassionate support to women and men faced

with difficult pregnancy decisions.

The center will offer free pregnancy tests, free limited ultrasounds for pregnant women, and information about pregnancy options. For more information about services and how to donate

go to www.cenlapc.com

"We want to make this center a place of hope," said Lemoine. "A place where mothers in crisis can feel welcomed and not judged."

According to the Louisiana Department of Health Statistics,

8,973 abortions were performed in the state's three abortion centers located in Shreveport, Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

"We can, we must, and we will decrease those numbers," said Lemoine.

Natchitoches Women's Resource Center to host gala fundraiser Sept. 21

Mike Long, one of the most sought after, enthusiastic pro-life speakers for banquets and fundraisers, will be the guest speaker for the Women's Resource Center's annual Celebration of Life to be held Thursday, Sept. 21 at the Natchitoches Events Center.

Tickets are \$25 per person (includes dinner) and may be purchased at the Womens' Resource Center located at 107 North Street in Natchitoches. Tickets must be purchased in advance; no sales at the door.

The event begins with a Meet

and Greet at 5:30 p.m., which includes hors d'oeuvres and photos. The program begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by an after-program buffet, catered by Layone's Restaurant.

Sponsorships are still available by calling 318-357-8888.

One of the pioneers of the abstinence education movement, Mike has woven his 30 years of speaking on sexual purity into one of the most unique messages of prevention and restoration on the issue of abortion. His presentation, which includes humor and

stories that touch every heart, captivates his audiences.

His message is simple: The #1 goal of Pregnancy Resource Center ministries is to help young women who have made a wrong choice in their lives, not make another one called abortion. PRCs are very successful in achieving that goal, but when they do, the question



Mike Long

should arise, "Do we want to see that young woman back a year from now?" The answer is no and that is why Mike's message is so appealing.

Mike and his family are originally from Raleigh/Durham, NC and currently reside in Atlanta, GA. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mike served as a legislative assistant for the late US Senator Jesse Helms. He then became a teacher in the Durham Public Schools.

His teaching career led to

the development of his nationally acclaimed videotape series "Everyone Is NOT Doing It," one of the most persuasive abstinence education programs currently used in over 5000 school systems throughout the world.

In addition, he has authored two books, has a masters degree in Christian School Administration from Southeastern Theological Seminary, and is recognized as one of the Outstanding Young Men of America.

For more information, call 318-357-8888.

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BISHOP D.F. DESMOND KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER (KPC) COURT # 91, LADIES AUXILIARY represented by Grand Lady, Millie Price, presented Fr. Gabriel Uzondy with a monetary donation for St. James Memorial Catholic Church at the 10 a.m. Mass Aug. 13. Pictured are (front row) Tamara Augustine, Theresa Metoyer, Father Gabriel Uzondy, pastor; Carolyn Smith and Millie Price. Back row: Joan Surgent, Sheila McDaniel, Madeline LaCour, Sadie Dupas, Eva Horn, Felecia Aaron and Audrey Sanders.



JUNIOR DAUGHTERS BISHOP DANIEL DESMOND KPC #91. Pictured are: [redacted] their counselors Sheila McDaniel, counselor; and Felecia Aaron, assistant counselor.



WOODMEN OF THE WORLD CHAPTER 612, represented by Glynn Kimball, chapter secretary, presents a \$200 check to Sister Sandra Norsworthy, principal of Sacred Heart School in Moreauville. The funds will be used to help cover the cost of school supplies for students. Sr. Norsworthy said she is very grateful to the Woodman of the World for their donation.



2ND AND 3RD DEGREE KNIGHTS. Nine members of the Natchitoches Knights of Columbus traveled to St. Alphonsus Catholic Church Aug. 19 to participate in an advancement ceremony hosted by Council 3088. The First Degree Knights were advanced to become 2nd and 3rd Degree Knights. Those from Natchitoches who attended the ceremony are (from left) Stephen Llorens, Christopher La Cour, Anthony La Cour, Tommy Melder and Greg St. Andre. On back row are Barry Antee, F.J Delphin, Anthony Rachal and Chad Deranger. They were accompanied by Mike Menou, Billy St. Andre and Michael Yankowski (not pictured.)

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Two new offices created at diocese to be staffed by volunteers

Bishop David Talley has created and will direct two new offices at the Diocese of Alexandria. Both will be staffed by volunteers.

Office of Divine Worship

Bishop Talley will direct a new Office of Divine Worship and will be assisted by a small team of volunteers (laity and clergy), dedicated to the reverent and joyful celebration of the Mass (music and liturgy).

The Committee of Divine Worship will consist of Father Rick Gremillion, Father James Ferguson, Father Paul LaPalme, Deacon Richard Mitchell, Dea-

con Luke LaFleur, Dr. Burt Allen and Dr. Mary Deville.

"Basically, this committee will work together to coordinate the music and liturgy for all of the diocesan Masses held at the Cathedral throughout the year," said Bishop David, "like ordinations, the Red Mass, and the Chrism Mass.

One of the first goals of the ODW committee will be to create a Diocesan Liturgical Calendar to be available to all on the diocesan website.

Office of Life and Justice

Father Craig Scott will direct

a new Office of Life and Justice which will be made up of volunteers (clergy and laity).

The Office of Life and Justice will focus on three areas: Sanctity of Life; Ministry to the Poor and Marginalized; and Environmental, Cultural and Civic Concerns.

Members of the Committee of Life and Justice, will include Dr. Gabriel Rodriguez, chairman; Florence Sanders, co-chair; Father John Wiltse, Tara Whitehead, Father John O'Brien, Jessica Viator, Father Remi Owuamanam, SMMM, and David Melancon. Other volunteers may join.

The purpose of this commit-

tee will be to showcase all that our parishes and communities are doing in our four deaneries (Natchitoches, Eastern, Central and Avoyelles).

"So many of our parishes and missions already offer services for the poor, participate in pro-life events, and are active in issues involving the environment and citizenship," said Father Craig Scott. "But there is no coordination of these services on the diocesan level.

"In essence, we will be a resource center to let people in need know about those services that are already being offered," he added.

Although the Office of Life and Justice for the Diocese is not fully up and running, there are several exciting things happening in the community and beyond.

The Cenla Crisis Pregnancy Center, an effort by Catholic lay leadership, in conjunction with other Christian denominations, to provide a safe venue for women and families with unexpected pregnancies, is expected to open its doors Dec. 4.

For more information contact Claire Lemoine, executive director at 318-314-3066.

The Bread or Stones Campaign seeks to improve the lives of children in Louisiana by networking with churches of all denominations in an effort to end poverty and hunger for the chil-

dren of Louisiana. This Campaign is sponsored by the Louisiana Interchurch Conference.

For more information visit www.lainterchurch.org or contact Samuel Rottman, coordinator, at 225-346-1646 ext 242 or at samuelrottman@gmail.com

Central Louisiana Homeless Coalition. The CLHC is getting very close to opening a Homeless Resource Center in Alexandria; but more funds are needed.

A fundraiser, *Grillin' and Chillin'* will be held Sept. 17 at Spirits Restaurant (1200 Texas Avenue, Alexandria) from 3 – 6 p.m.

If your parish is able, please consider a sponsorship, and/or share the information about sponsorship as well as how to obtain individual tickets (\$50/per person).

Respect Life Sunday. Materials have been ordered for all parishes for Respect Life Sunday, which is October 1 (also the beginning of Respect Life Month.) The theme for 2017-2018 is *Be Not Afraid*. For more information visit www.usccb.org

There are many other ministries in our diocese including Manna House, the Servant House in Marksville, various parish thrift stores, food pantries, and pro-life committees. Look for more from the Committee of Life and Justice.



USCCB CONVOCAION OF CATHOLIC LEADERS. A group of people from the Diocese of Alexandria attended the USCCB Convocation of Catholic Leaders held in July. Pictured are (seated) Fr. Donald Rooney, Fr. Emilio Garreaud (Radio Maria), Jessica Viator (Manna House); and Sister Kateri Mitchell (Tekakwitha Conference). Standing: Fr. Adam Travis, Cole Churchman, Fr. Jose Robles-Sanchez, Deacon Richard Mitchell, Bishop David Talley, Fr. Craig Scott.

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Coming together to help Hurricane Harvey Refugees



LOUISIANA KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS (KC) COUNCIL 1199 members purchased more than \$500 worth of diapers, baby and children's clothing, shoes, t-shirts, socks, and other items, to help the men, women, and children staying in the LSU Ag Center Mega Shelter in Alexandria. Hurricane Harvey devastation forced these people to be evacuated from Texas and Southwest Louisiana. The Rapides Office of Homeland Security-Emergency Preparedness assisted the Mega Shelter in identifying items of need and the United Way of Central La was set up to accept donated items at the Kress Theatre Building in Alexandria. The local KC Council from Cottonport made the effort to provide charitable assistance to those in need. Pictured are (from left) Gary Gauthier, Bob White, Dave Britt (United Way coordinator), and Don Jeansonne.



ST. RITA COOKING CREW. Donnie Bolton led the St. Rita volunteers and the parish's Knights of Columbus Council 1134 to cook for more than 1,200 refugees at the LSUA Mega Shelter.



MASS FOR THE HURRICANE HARVEY REFUGEES. Father Steve Brandow and Deacon Kip Pelto celebrated Mass Sept. 3 at the LSU-A Mega Shelter. A group of musicians from Sacred Heart Church in Pineville (at right) provided music for the Mass. Rev. Dr. Rodney Wood of Baton Rouge, who established The Mission Foundation and works with a non-denominational ministry to legislators at the Louisiana State Capitol and with a ministry to Christian men (is pictured with the group).



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Father Craig Scott, pastor of St. Rita Church, leads the volunteers in prayer.



Donnie Bolton discusses the logistics of transporting the food from St. Rita to the LSU-A Mega Shelter with Fr. Craig Scott and Belinda Guillory.

St. Rita Church leads effort to feed 1,200 evacuees at LSU-A Mega Shelter

St. Rita Church in Alexandria, organized by the “St. Rita Cooking Crew,” prepared, delivered and served a meal to feed some 1,200 evacuees from Hurricane Harvey at the LSU-A Mega Shelter on Sunday, Sept. 3.

Led by Donnie Bolton, parishioners were joined by members of the parish’s Knights of Columbus Council 1134, and the parish’s Altar and Rosary Society, to purchase items and prepare for a pulled pork dinner, as well as

collect baked goods.

Many others joined St. Rita in this effort, including Knights of Columbus from other local Councils, parishioners of Sts. Francis and Anne Church in Kolin, the Kolin Volunteer Fire De-

partment, Rapides Women’s and Children’s Hospital, CHRISTUS St. Francis Cabrini Hospital, Rapides Regional Medical Center Emergency Room, Louisiana National Guard (Camp Beauregard), parishioners of First Unit-

ed Methodist Church in Pineville, and local businesses The Pill Box and Diamond B Construction, as well as many other friends. Many came forward with monetary donations, and donations of baked goods and other needed supplies.



(far left) Alicia Gravel, Billie Jeansonne, and Cheryl Verzwylt help pack homemade cookies and desserts to go with the meals.



(left) Father Daniel Hart and other volunteers from St. Rita serve food to the 1,200 evacuees at the LSU-A Mega Shelter.

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BISHOP SAM G. JACOBS poses with Principal Ronald Lemoine, and co-chairmen of Project: Home Field Advantage, Wilson Cedars and Martin Lyons after the groundbreaking ceremony in 1996.



MENARD VOLUNTEERS and some Red Simpson workers use shovels to stabilize the new light poles with gravel.



GREG PETRUS, PAUL SQUYRES, and DONNIE WELCH mix up hundreds of pounds of grass seed and fertilizer for the newly re-shaped football field. Volunteers reshaped the field, installed an underground sprinkler system, and planted a special blend of grass seed for the new field. Despite a drought that summer, the new field was ready for opening night with thick green grass.



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Menard football field built by volunteers celebrates 20th anniversary

Total cost to Menard -- zero dollars. Total cost to Menard's future -- priceless

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

It's hard to believe that for a school celebrating its 125th anniversary this year, its football field has only been around for 20 years.

This football season, Holy Savior Menard will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the football field -- a grass-roots project that grew into one of the largest volunteer efforts the school has ever seen!

It all started in 1996 when several things were happening. The enrollment at Menard had dropped to less than 381 (in grades 7-12). The future of Menard was on shaky ground. Even the football team had dropped down to Class 2A because of the low enrollment.

A small group of parents had cleaned up the overgrown baseball field the year before so that the baseball team could play games at home again after many years of not using it.

Menard had a football field with a small scoreboard, small set of wooden bleachers, and a field of broken bricks left from a house that had been there years ago and lots of overgrown weeds. It was used for football practice, but the Eagles had never hosted their own game on their own turf.

For 30 years, the weeds in the field continued to grow, while the school paid \$500 every Friday night during football season to play home games at the Pineville High School stadium.

The time was right for change.

So when a small group of parents were at a junior high game in Montgomery, they noticed the simplicity of the field they were playing on.



SEPT. 11, 1997 -- DEDICATION OF NEW MENARD FOOTBALL FIELD. Wilson Cedars addresses a crowd of 2,500 fans during the dedication ceremony for the first home football game ever played at Holy Savior Menard Central High School. A core group of about 20 men worked every weekend and every evening in the summer for a solid year to build a 'functional and affordable' football field.

"Why can't we clean up our practice field and at least use it for junior high games?"

Wilson Cedars, Martin Lyons, Jeff Seiler and a few other parents made minor repairs and cleaned things up, so that the junior high team began playing home games on it.

After the junior high games began attracting large crowds, making profits with gate fees and concessions and raising the spirits of the students attending the games, more thought was given to the idea of renovating the field for high school use.

The 1996-97 Athletic Association, with Barbara Trotter as its president, and co-chairmen Wilson Cedars and Martin Lyons began what soon became known as "Project: Home-Field Advantage."

Since the main obstacle was the lighting for the field, Cedars applied for a grant, which was secured almost immediately to pay for new lights. When word got out in the community that the field would have new lights, some parents offered to reshape the field "while we were at it."

"From there everything started snowballing," said Cedars. "People were offering to donate equipment, supplies, and labor. We knew we had to get organized and have a plan."

Plans were drawn for a "functional, expandable" football stadium and the work began.

"The school had absolutely no money for building a football field, so the goal was to make the field functional and affordable so that Menard could host their own

home games," said Cedars.

The plans called for new lighting, a pressbox, scoreboard, concession stand, reshaping the field, installing a sprinkler system and improving drainage on the field.

There was a core group of about 20 men who volunteered their time, expertise, equipment and "connections" to do the job.

- Farmers used their own equipment to disc and plane the field.
- CLECO donated the poles for the new lights, but had no way of transporting the heavy poles. An out of town trucking company volunteered to haul the poles.
- A local feed and seed expert, donated, planted and fertilized the grass.
- A local plumber volunteered to install the underground sprinkler

system

- 400 cubic yards of dirt was donated and hauled in by volunteers.
- Volunteers and a building contractor designed and built the pressbox.
- Local electricians volunteered too do all the wiring.
- Moms, dads, students, grandmas and grandpas and neighbors painted the (then) wooden bleachers.
- Local businesses donated money to purchase the scoreboard.

For a solid year, the core group of men were out there every weekend and every night after work during the summer. Hundreds of other volunteers showed up during of the course of the project including wives who cooked food for the workers.

Three quarters of the way through the project, more than 40 businesses had donated equipment, materials or services.

"It seemed as though the entire community heard that we were doing this and so many businesses *called us* to offer equipment, supplies and services to us for free," Cedars said. "It was unbelievable the support we received from the community. There was so much enthusiasm and support for Menard then, it was just unbelievable."

On Sept. 11, 1997, Holy Savior Menard played its first home football game EVER on their own field. More than 2,500 people attended.

Over the next three years, the home field had record attendance. People from the community, who were not even affiliated with Menard, came to the games to see what a group of volunteers had accomplished with a lot of hard work, but mostly with just a lot of heart. No one was there for any glory, just a heart for Menard.

Within three years, the enrollment had increased to just under 500 students.

On Thursday, Sept. 21, 2017, the core volunteer members will gather at Menard for a Thursday game and will be recognized at halftime for their efforts in building the Menard football field. The public is invited.

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• Sept. 16-17: St. Peter/St. Michael Church, Bordelonville.

Join us for the annual St. Peter/St. Michael Church fair at the Bordelonville Volunteer Fire Department Training Facility. Activities begin Saturday after the 4 p.m. Mass. Join us for food, games, and live music. On Sunday, don't miss the Cochon de Lait dinner from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 pm for only \$10 donation per plate.

• Sept. 29- Oct. 1: St. Francis de Sales Church, Echo.

The Knights of Columbus Council 9294 invites you to a weekend of fun at the St. Francis de Sales Church Fair in Echo. Friday, 5 pm – midnight (\$5 admission): Enjoy a jambalaya dinner, games, and a street dance at 8 pm. Saturday, 5 pm – midnight: Gumbo dinner, games, and a street dance. Sunday, 10 am until: no games, but chicken/pork dinner at 11 am, and raffle.


• Sept. 30: Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor School will hold its annual Fall Festival "Gone Fishing for God's Love" on Saturday, Sept. 30 from 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. The day will consist of games, food, a silent auction, and many other fun things. The festival will conclude with the celebration of Holy Mass on the playground of the school. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs if you would like.

• Oct. 14-15: Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine.

The annual Fall Fair at Mater Dolorosa Church in Plaquemine will begin Saturday, Oct. 14 at 4:30 p.m. with the celebration of Mass. After Mass, enjoy lots of fun and games for the kids and great food for everyone. Saturday night will also include a fish fry sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council 2142, and entertainment by Lee's Last Stand.

This year, there will be a trail ride honoring the late Mr. Davis Brown. Mr. Brown has been a parent at SJS for over 20 years. He passed away this past spring due to a heart attack. Mr Brown's dedication to the SJS fair caused us to want to do something in his honor. He was a true country man. He loved horses and working with the land and God's creatures.



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Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017

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Catholic school students witness 99-year solar eclipse



Our Lady of Prompt Succor students watch the eclipse with special glasses.



OLPS students created models of the sun & moon to learn about the eclipse.



Mayor Jacques Roy (center) poses with a group of Menard students who watched the eclipse with special glasses.



Father Taylor Reynolds travelled to Nashville with his classmate, Father Michael Frye to watch the eclipse. Fr. Taylor is holding 21st Dominic, patron saint of astronomy.



Sacred Heart students in Moreauville watched the eclipse in the classrooms through live-streaming on the internet.

LSU-A student represents Catholic Student Organization at United Nations-sponsored leadership conference in Thailand this summer

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

When Molly Parks completed her freshman year at Louisiana State University at Alexandria this past May, she was hoping to spend her summer doing some sort of mission work, so she went to the chapel at the Catholic Student Organization (CSO) to pray about it.

A few months later, Molly was planting rice in Thailand and loving it.

Molly was one of five students invited by LSU-A to attend the University Scholars Leadership Symposium July 25-Aug. 9 in Thailand. Lynn Ray, coordinator of Campus Ministry at LSU-A recommended her to represent the CSO. She joined four other students from LSU-A, as well as Dr. Eamon Halpin, director of advising and Nina Cox, coordinator of International Students.

Approximately 907 students from 78 countries were invited to attend the United Nations-sponsored symposium aimed at teaching future world leaders about Sustaining Development Goals.

"The main purpose of the symposium was to encourage, motivate, and instruct students on how to get involved in our communities -- wherever we are in



INTERNATIONAL 'DRESS UP FROM YOUR COUNTRY' DAY. Molly Parks, (fourth from left) was chosen by LSU-A to represent the Catholic Student Organization at a leadership symposium in Thailand this summer.

the world -- and how to be service leaders in our communities," said Molly.

Before the symposium began on Aug. 1, the group arrived in Bangkok July 26 to learn about the people and experience the culture. There, the group visited places like Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University, the Tha Kha Floating Market, the Grand Palace, and the ancient

city of Samutprakarn. Riding an elephant at the Damnoen Sukuak Elephant Camp was one of the highlights of the trip for Molly.

When the symposium actually began on Aug. 1, the group spent their days listening to motivational speakers, participating in group discussions, and learning about how to get involved and become leaders in service community projects.

One day was spent as a service learning day, where each of the students had to choose between kayaking, riding bikes, visiting orphans, bringing food to people in the slums or planting rice.

"I chose planting rice," said Molly, "mainly because no one else was signing up for it! I have never planted rice before, so I was glad to have the opportunity

to do it."

Molly was chosen as the leader of her rice-planting group of 160 students. Her group was instructed on how to plant the rice and then she had to coordinate the efforts of the project. By the end of the day, the group had successfully planted one acre of rice for the small village of Nong Sarai.

Molly said one of the best things about the experience was meeting the other students. Everyone who attended the symposium was required to speak English, so language was not a problem.

"I enjoyed meeting people from all over the world," she said. My roommate was Nola Parker from LSU-A but I met other friends from Pakistan, Singapore, and several from Australia. I am friends with many of them now on Facebook."

Molly and the five students from LSU-A are back in fall classes again now. They will meet periodically throughout the year to put into action what they learned in Thailand about getting involved and becoming leaders in community service.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience I will never forget," she said. "I am looking forward to putting into action what I learned."



Molly Parks planting rice in the village of Nong Sarai.



Five LSU-A students: Anthony Phelps, Molly Parks, Nola Parker, Matthew Benham, and Cody Hamilton.



Molly Parks hanging out with the kids on the streets of Bangkok.



THE ST. MARY’S SCHOOL (Natchitoches) football players, danceline, and cheerleaders begin every Friday game day with Mass at 6:30 a.m. at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

St. Mary’s School 2017-2018 Football Schedule			
September 1	Lakeview	Home	7 pm
September 8	Winnfield	Away	7 pm
September 15	North Caddo	Home	7 pm
September 22	Block	Away	7 pm
September 29	LaSalle (Homecoming)	Home	7 pm
October 5	Montgomery	Home	7 pm
October 13	Loyola College Prep	Away	7 pm
October 19	University Academy	Home	7 pm
October 27	Northwood	Away	7 pm
November 3	Logansport	Away	7 pm

Holy Savior Menard 2017-2018 Football Schedule			
September 1	Bolton	Home	7 pm
September 8	Buckeye	Away	7 pm
September 15	Avoyelles	Away	7 pm
September 22	University Academy	Home	7 pm
September 29	Bastrop	Home	7 pm
October 6	Lakeview (Homecoming)	Home	7 pm
October 13	Many	Away	7 pm
October 20	Winnfield	Home	7 pm
October 27	Bunkie	Away	7 pm
November 3	Red River	Away	7 pm



THE HOLY SAVIOR MENARD HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS attended summer camp in Lake Charles hosted by Southwestern Cheerleaders Association. SCA taught the girls many new cheer skills, but most importantly, they also led the girls in nightly prayer, as well as teaching them their organizations motto, “God first, friends and family second and cheerleading third.” In addition to their numerous awards as a squad, they also earned many individual awards.



DANCE CAMP. The cheerleaders will also teach choreography and dance techniques to children ages 4 and up Sept. 16 from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Menard Gym. The clinic fee of \$60 includes a full day of instruction, a t-shirt, and an afternoon workshop with Miss Louisiana, Laryssa Bonacquisti. Participants will perform for parents at 3:30 p.m. to showcase what they learned during the clinic and will also perform at the HSM Eagles football game with the Golden Eaglettes on Thursday, Sept. 21.

Local choir director records with London Symphony

Critic says new CD has 'most gorgeous sounds ever to caress your ears'

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

International Classical Guitarist John De Chiaro will perform in concert on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 3 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church on Jackson Street in Alexandria. Admission is free.

The concert will include a selection of original classical guitar compositions and a brief talk by Kermit Poling, the composer of the *Concierto De Chiaro*. A special part of the concert will be listening to a portion of the recording of De Chiaro playing with the London Symphony.

De Chiaro travelled to London in January to record his newest CD on Centuar Records with the London Symphony. He recorded the concerto at the Angel/EMI Studio in London, formerly Capital Records, where the Beatles recorded most of their early songs. The London Symphony recorded in a large room while he recorded his guitar part in a sound proof booth behind the orchestra.

"Recording with the London Symphony was definitely a highlight of my professional career," he said. "The people in the symphony were the most welcoming, most professional musicians I have ever worked with."

The CD, titled *Along These Footsteps to Paradise*, was written by Louisiana-based composer, conductor, and violinist Kermit Poling. Poling is in his 31st year as associate conductor of the Shreveport Symphony, the orchestra in which he was also concertmaster for more than 27 years. He also serves as director of the Shreveport Metropolitan Ballet and music director for the Marshall Symphony Orchestra in Texas since 2015.

Poling's Guitar Concerto No. 1 is titled *Concierto De Chiaro* because it was written specifically for De Chiaro, his long-time friend.

"After hearing Kermit conduct one of his original string compositions almost two years ago in concert, I asked him if he would write a concerto for me," said De Chiaro. "He received a commission to compose the concerto from the Shreveport Sum-



JOHN DE CHIARO, retired professor of classical guitar and choir director for the St. Martin Catholic Church Choir in Lecompte, records his part of Kermit Poling's *Concierto De Chiaro* with the London Sympony at the Angel/EMI Studio in London in January. Louisiana-based composer, conductor, and violinist Poling, wrote the *concierto* for his long time friend De Chiaro two years ago, and then got a contract to record the *conceirto* with the London Symphony.

mer Music festival, wrote it in a couple of months, and presented it to me. Although he wrote the music, he gave me the liberty to make editions and changes to the guitar part throughout the concerto, as long as it fit his musical and technical intentions. The first performance I did was in June 2016 at the Shreveport Summer Music Festival with the Shreveport Symphony."

In January 2017, De Chiaro and Poling got the contract with the London Symphony. Music critic Jerry Dubin of Fanfare Magazine wrote of Poling, "I am aware that when one of the world's great orchestral organizations, the London Symphony Orchestra in this case, takes up works by a contemporary com-

poser, a certain imprimatur of worthiness and importance is conferred upon that composer and his or her music."

"After learning in January that we had a contract to play with the London Symphony, I began practicing eight hours a day, seven days a week," said De Chiaro. "When you are about to perform with a world-class symphony, you have to be perfect with every note and with the timing. I was little nervous about making a mistake in front of the Symphony members!"

The opening movement in *Concierto De Chiaro* possesses a melodic sweep that would "not be out of place in a Hollywood score of the Golden Era," according to another music critic

Dave Saemann, also from Fanfare Magazine. Saemann continues, "There is a Spanish tinge to De Chiaro's solo; it is jaunty and sanguine at first, then meditative – the strength of De Chiaro's performance."

The remainder of *Along These Footsteps to Paradise* is an arrangement of his second string quartet. Each movement is named and inspired by an aspect of the life of a saint of the Catholic Church. There is a violin solo for St. Maria Kowalska, leading to a gracious waltz.

Dubin wrote, "The Fantasy on the Hymn to St. Michael opens with a joyous gig. St. Andre Bessette features a touching depiction of humility. And Joan of Arc's Visions of Virgins is a harrowing

CD

REVIEW

moment."

Along These Footsteps to Paradise was originally scored for a string quartet, but later adapted for a string orchestra, which is the form it was presented in a televised performance in May of 2017 on EWTN, a Catholic affiliated cable network.

De Chiaro is now a retired professor of classical guitar from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. De Chiaro is currently living in Pineville, where he serves as choir director for the St. Martin Catholic Church Choir in Lecompte and as professor of Classical Guitar at Louisiana College. He served as director of the Carlow Choir, which performed throughout Ireland; and has performed solo Classical Guitar concerts throughout the U.S. (including Carnegie Hall), Canada, South America and Europe.

He is currently performing concerts around the South, during which he plays a recording of Poling's *Concierto De Chiaro* with the London Symphony, as a special feature.

"I think you will find in these works (*Along These Footsteps to Paradise*) by Kermit Poling some of the most gorgeous sounds ever to caress your ears and touch your heart," writes Dubin. De Chiaro has clearly made himself one with Poling's music, responding to its rich, colorful, and exotic tapestry of sounds with deep understanding and feeling."

The CD will be available for sale at the Sept. 10 concert.

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All Saints celebrates Christian faith and family life

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Sincere but less than slick, the low-key, fact-based drama "All Saints" (Sony) celebrates Christian faith and family life. Believers, accordingly, will likely be inclined to overlook its artistic shortcomings.

Director Steve Gomer and screenwriter Steve Armour recount the story of the titular Episcopal parish in Smyrna, Tennessee. With its dwindling congregation down to a mere dozen, the church appears to have no future. So its new pastor, Michael Spurlock (John Corbett), arrives with orders from his superior, Bishop Thompson (Gregory Alan Williams), to shut it down and sell off its property.

A former salesman taking up his first assignment in ministry, Michael is not disposed to question his instructions, at least at first. But the revitalizing influence of an influx of devoutly Anglican refugees from Southeast Asia -- Nelson Lee plays their leader, Ye Win -- begins to change his outlook.

The newcomers are Karen people, the victims of long-standing and bloody persecution by



ALL SAINTS. Low-key, fact-based story of a dwindling Episcopal parish in Smyrna, Tennessee, and the pastor (John Corbett) assigned by the local bishop (Gregory Alan Williams) to shut it down and sell off its property. Partly due to the revitalizing influence of an influx of devoutly Anglican refugees from Southeast Asia (led by Nelson Lee), the clergyman sees unexpected hope for his congregation and launches a scheme to preserve the community, and help the newcomers, by transforming the fields around the church into a profitable farm. (CNS photo/AFFIRM Films)

the government of their homeland, Myanmar. Partly in order to aid them, but also with an eye to rescuing All Saints, Michael launches a scheme to transform the fields around the church into a profitable farm.

His plan draws the support of his dedicated wife, Aimee (Cara Buono), but the steady opposition of Forrest (Barry Corbin), an ornery veteran parishioner. Other challenges come in the form of a lack of equipment and a potential

drought.

Through the changing fortunes that follow, Michael demonstrates determination, perseverance and solidarity with the immigrants who now make up the bulk of his flock. Gomer

MOVIE REVIEW

clearly aims to inspire his audience, and "All Saints" -- despite its necessary discussion of the ill-treatment to which the Karen have been subjected -- is generally wholesome and suitable for most age groups.

Considered on a purely aesthetic level, however, the picture suffers from a sluggish pace and often awkward tone. Good intentions help to make up for, but cannot entirely mask, these defects. Still, patient patrons will find positive values awaiting them under the sometimes-imperfect surface.

The film contains mature themes, including references to atrocities and rape, and a marital bedroom scene. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children despite the elements listed below.

The film contains bedroom scenes, including a nongraphic premarital sexual encounter, some irreverent images, a mild oath and a few crass terms. The CNS rating 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.

VIRTUS

- **Thursday, Sept. 14** -- 6 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Marksville (church hall)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 20** -- 6:15 p.m., St. Michael Church, Leesville (church hall)
- **Thursday, Sept. 21** -- 6 p.m., MB of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches
- **Tuesday, Sept. 26** -- 6 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

To register,
go to www.virtus.org



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The loss of a parent through death, or a changed parental relationship through divorce or separation is a traumatic experience for children, or for those in their teens or twenties. Beginning Experience is registering now for a weekend presented by a team of youth and adults who have experienced this loss themselves and are willing to share their experience to help others on Sept. 15 - 17 at Maryhill Renewal Center. Cost is \$185 which includes two nights' lodging and meals. To register or for more information call: Rose at (504) 920-0770 or figladybrocato@gmail.com

Magnificat Brunch

Cindy Scardina will be the guest speaker for the Magnificat Brunch to be held Sept. 16 beginning at 9:30 a.m. at Merci Beaucoup Restaurant in Natchitoches. Adopted as an infant, Cindy just recently found her birth family. Come hear how, under God's direction, life choices have affected Cindy. Reservations are \$18 per person. Send your check or money order to Donna Reason, 4162 Bordelon St., Hessemer, LA., 71341. No tickets are sold at the door. For more information, contact Mary Wilson at 318-359-7735 or Diane Ardoin at 318-419-1547.

St. Joseph Adult Faith Series

St. Joseph Church in Marksville will begin an 8-week adult faith series title *Bible Study: Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible*, by Jeff Cavins and Sarah Christmeyer. Join us every Tuesday morning from 10-11 a.m. or evening from 7-8 p.m. in the Church office building. Sign up at the church office (318) 253-7561. Workbook is \$20.

Sept. 19: Introduction
 Sept. 26: Early World
 Oct. 3: Patriarchs
 Oct. 10: Egypt and Exodus; Desert Wanderings
 Oct. 17: Conquest & Judges, Royal Kingdom
 Oct. 24: Divided Kingdom, Exile, Return
 Oct. 31: (open)
 Nov. 7: Maccabean Revolt, Messianic Fulfillment (part I)
 Nov. 14: Messianic Fulfillment (part 2)

Catechism classes for adults

Join Father John O'Brien at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Natchitoches every second Tuesday of the month from 5:30-6:30 pm for Disciples of Jesus Christ the King Catholic Adult Catechism classes. Whether you are considering becoming Catholic or just want to know more about your Catholic faith, come discover the astounding treasures of Jesus in the beauty of our Catholic Faith. Join us Oct. 10 and bring a friend!

Christian Dream Therapy Retreat

Jim and Dr. Christy Gootee and the Two Hearts Team will be offering a retreat on Christian Dream Therapy at Maryhill Renewal Center Sept. 23 - 24, from 9 a.m. Sat. to 5 p.m. Sunday. The Retreat will look at dreams in Scripture as well as study God's symbolic language found in our dreams. You will learn a variety of approaches to help you understand your own dreams and both heal and grow spiritually through this special gift from God. Bring a Bible

DIOCESAN BRIEFS



SENIOR SOCIAL AT ST. JOSEPH (Colfax). The Ladies Altar Society of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Colfax, hosted a "Senior Social" this summer in the church hall. Anyone ages 65+ were invited to enjoy a light supper and play a game of Bingo. The gathering was part of a new outreach program headed up by Karen Vets with guidance from Fr. Silverino Kwebuza, pastor. Pictured are Rita Roberts; facing camera -Fr. Silverino, Elaine Barron and husband Maurice, Margie Hart, Tiny Vercher; Not facing camera, from left are Bobbye McNeely, Gail Price with her mother, Gladys Morris, and Ray Fuller.

and Dream Notebook. The \$120 cost includes Reference Book and Retreat Manual. If you wish to stay overnight, there is an additional charge of \$40 for a room. Call 318-290-1642 for more information or e-mail christygootee@outlook.com to preregister.

Novena to St. Dymphna Sept. 4 - May 7

St. Dymphna is the patron saint of those whose lives are impacted by nervous or mental disorders, Alzheimer's disease, or sexual abuse. Father Paul LaPalme will pray a 9-month novena to St. Dymphna at 6:30 p.m. at Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth on the 1st Monday of every month, starting Sept. 4 and ending on May 7, 2018.

Bishop's Golf Tournament -- Oct. 9

The 22nd annual Bishop's Invitational Golf Tournament, benefiting the Seminarian Education Fund will be held Oct. 9 at Oakwing Golf Course in Alexandria. The 4-person scramble, which includes green fees, cart, muligans, range balls and refreshments, is \$135 per person or \$540 per team to enter. Sponsorships, ranging from \$100 and up, are available by calling Sandi Tarver at 318-445-6424, ext. 209.

Spiritual Fatherhood - Oct. 7

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria, will host the next meeting in the series on Spiritual Fatherhood on Saturday, October 7, from 8am-noon. This is a ministry for men to "learn how to be the men that Christ calls them to be, and not what society tries to tell them," in the role of

husbands and fathers as spiritual leaders of their families. The day includes Mass, breakfast, adoration and inspirational talks. There is no charge.

Ladies Day Retreat - Oct. 14

The Catholic Daughters and Women of Grace of St. Rita Church will host a one-day ladies retreat titled "*The Seven Sorrows of Mary*" on Saturday, Oct. 14 at the Holy Family Center beginning with registration at 8:30 a.m. and ending with a 4 p.m. Mass at St. Rita Church. Father Charlie Ray and Sister Judith Gomila, MSC will be the guest speakers. Please join us for a day of spiritual reflection. RSVP by Oct. 10 by calling 318-445-7120.

Marriage Encounter Weekend

On a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend you will have the time you need to focus on your relationship and learn a unique communication technique which will help you to bridge any gaps you may have and bring back that spark that made your marriage so special. The next weekend is Oct. 20-22 at the Bishop Robert Tracy Center in Baton Rouge. To register, go to LAMS-wwme.org or call Jack & Angel LaBate at 470-297-8560 or jackandangel@bellsouth.net.

Alexandria Pro-Life Chain

The Alexandria Pro-Life Chain will be held Sunday, Oct. 29 from 2-3:30 p.m. at the bottom of the Jackson Street bridge. Life Chain is a peaceful, prayerful public witness of pro-life Americans praying in public witness for our nation and to end abortion. Volunteer musicians will be there to keep up focused with music.



ST. JAMES MEMORIAL CATHOLIC CHURCH (Alexandria) FIRST COMMUNION. Five students from St. James Memorial Catholic Church received First Communion May 7.

September - October

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<div>11</div> <div>Fatima Statue Visit Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. BROCATO</div>	<div>12</div> <div>Adult Catechism 5:30-6:30 pm St. Anthony of Padua Church, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. CHEMINO</div>	<div>13</div> <div>Fatima Statue Visit St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport</div> <div>Our Lady of Fatima Mass 5:30 pm Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. COOK</div>	<div>14</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 pm St. Joseph Church Marksville</div> <div>Fatima Statue Visit OLPS, Alexandria</div> <div>Outdoor Rosary 7:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. CORKERY</div>	<div>15</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. CUNNINGHAM</div>	<div>16</div> <div>Magnificat Brunch 9:30 am Merci Beaucoup Restaurant, Natchitoches</div> <div>Church Fair -- St. Peter/St. Michael, Bordelonville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. W. DECOSTE</div>	<div>17</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. DEJESUS</div>
<div>18</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. DESHAUTELLE</div>	<div>19</div> <div>Adult Faith Series 10:00-11:00 am or 7:00-8:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. DESIMONE</div>	<div>20</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:15 pm St. Michael the Archangel Church, Leesville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. DUCOTE</div>	<div>21</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 pm MB Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Outdoor Rosary 7:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>Celebration of Life Gala 5:30 pm Natchitoches Events Ctr.</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. FAULK</div>	<div>22</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. FERGUSON</div>	<div>23</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. FEY</div>	<div>24</div> <div>Supper with the Seminarians Avoyelles Deanery 5:00 pm Christ the King Church, Simmesport</div> <div>Christian Dream Therapy, Maryhill</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. W. GEARHEARD</div>
<div>25</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. GOOTEE</div>	<div>26</div> <div>Adult Faith Series 10:00-11:00 am or 7:00-8:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 pm St. Joseph Catholic Ctr, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION</div>	<div>27</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. HART</div>	<div>28</div> <div>Outdoor Rosary 7:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. HASIEBER</div>	<div>29</div> <div>PRAY FOR BISHOP EMERITUS R. HERZOG</div>	<div>30</div> <div>Fall Festival 10:00 am-3:30 pm Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</div> <div>Church Fair -- St. Francis de Sales, Echo</div> <div>PRAY FOR MSGR. R. HOPPE</div>	<div>OCTOBER 1</div> <div>PRAY FOR BISHOP D. TALLEY</div>
<div>2</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. HUMPHRIES</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Adult Faith Series 10:00-11:00 am or 7:00-8:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. IBE</div>	<div>4</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. H. IMAMSHAH</div>	<div>5</div> <div>Outdoor Rosary 7:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. G. KROSFIELD</div>	<div>6</div> <div>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI</div>	<div>7</div> <div>Spiritual Fatherhood 8:00 am-12 noon Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</div> <div>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUMPURAM</div>	<div>8</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. KWEBUZA</div>
<div>9</div> <div>Bishop's Annual Golf Tournament 12:00 noon Oakwing Golf Course</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD</div>	<div>10</div> <div>Adult Faith Series 10:00-11:00 am or 7:00-8:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>Adult Catechism 5:30-6:30 pm St. Anthony of Padua Church, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME</div>	<div>11</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS</div>	<div>12</div> <div>Outdoor Rosary 7:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE</div>	<div>13</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER</div>	<div>14</div> <div>Ladies Day Retreat 8:30 am-5:00 pm St. Rita Holy Family Center, Alexandria</div> <div>Church Fair -- Mater Dolorosa, Plaucheville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. MESSINA</div>	<div>15</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</div>

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Hospital

Thomas' Story

"At 49 years old, I didn't feel right and I was scared. But my experience at Cabrini while I was there was simply awesome. I'm grateful to Dr. Jones and the entire Cabrini family. Now, I'm celebrating 16 years of life since then."

Thomas

"Thomas had significant coronary disease that was not amenable to balloons and stents—bypass surgery was the best option. Our goal was to get Thomas home as soon as possible—to get back home to his family again. That was very important to us."

Dr. Jones

