

CHURCH TODAY

Volume L, No. 11

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

November 25, 2019



Operation Christmas

Students at St. Anthony School in Bunkie collected over 50 boxes for the Operation Christmas Child shoebox ministry!

Each year, St. Anthony School participates in Operation Christmas Child. The entire school is asked to pack these boxes, pray over them together with their families, and spread God's love and joy to those in need. The class that collects the most boxes is rewarded a treat, but overall, the kids have all come to know that the greatest reward is the gift of giving itself.

INSIDE

Ten pictures that shaped our year - page 6

Throughout 2019, we have published hundreds of images from life events around the diocese. See page 6 for ten that truly helped to shape our year, and our future.

Pope appoints AR priest to be bishop of Shreveport

Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Francis Malone, a pastor and the chancellor for ecclesial affairs in the Diocese of Little Rock, Ark., to be the bishop of Shreveport. See page 8 for more information. Congratulations Diocese of Shreveport!

Holiday fairs and festivities!

The next few weeks will be full of fairs and festivities as well as days to rest and reflect. See page 15 for a listing of local events as well as opportunities to refresh your faith this Advent season.

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Looking back



December 2017:

Left: ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL'S ORIGINAL TABERNACLE REFINISHED and returned to prominent position on center high altar. At the request of Bishop David Talley, the original main tabernacle of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral has been restored and returned to its prominent position on the center high altar. Father Jim Ferguson, rector of the Cathedral, blessed the refinished tabernacle during the 4:00 p.m. Mass Dec. 2. The Cathedral was originally designed with three tabernacles - one at the center high altar and one at each of the side altars. During a renovation project in the 1990's, the front tabernacle was covered with a decorative board and the Holy Eucharist was reserved in the tabernacle on the side altar. The brilliance of the new brass finish of the tabernacle (work completed by F.C. Zeigler Company, out of Tulsa, Okla.) is now one of the first things that catches your eye when entering the Cathedral.

"The restored tabernacle - in both brilliance and its prominent position on the high altar - fills an emptiness that has existed in the Cathedral for many years," said Father Ferguson. "It is a beautiful part of our Cathedral."

Today:

The Diocese celebrates the feast of its patron, Saint Francis Xavier, on Dec. 3. See below for more on his life and legacy.

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Saint Francis Xavier, Patron of our Diocese

By Emily Ann McCullough
Guest Contributor

Francis Xavier was born into a wealthy, noble family in 1506. While studying at the University of Paris, he roomed with Peter Faber. A new student, St Ignatius of Loyola, moved in with them. Ignatius was 38 at the time. Francis and Peter were both 23. Ignatius, "the old man," walked with a limp from an injury he had received as a soldier (which had led to his conversion). Francis made fun of him, making sarcastic remarks about his attempt to convert students. Class clowns are usually in it for the attention. When Peter Faber left to visit his family, Francis' audience was gone. Ignatius personally challenged him to become the man God had created him to be. He was successful.

In 1534, seven students met to make vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to the pope, and the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) was begun. Among the seven were Ignatius of Loyola, Peter Faber, and Francis Xavier, who all became canonized Saints.

In 1540, Pope Paul III sent the Jesuits on their first mission. The pope appointed Francis as the Apostolic Nuncio to the East. When they arrived in Goa (now India), they found baptized Christians who did not know the faith. There were churches and a bishop, but no priests. So Francis would walk the streets ringing a bell to call the children and servants to catechism



classes. During his time there, he visited the tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle, the first Christian missionary to India.

In 1545, Francis traveled to southeast Asia, where he met a man from Japan. The man, Anjiro, became a Christian and now Francis felt that he could begin to evangelize Japan (a great desire of his) with Anjiro as his interpreter. And here I would like to share a fascinating quotation from Saint Francis Xavier Apostle Of The Indies And Japan, Lives of Saints, by John J. Crawley & Co., Inc:

"Having learned that evangelical poverty did not have the appeal in Japan that it had in Europe and in India, he decided to change his approach. Hearing after a time that a Portuguese ship had arrived at a port in the

in India for the emperor."

He evangelized there for over two years and was able to establish successor Jesuits. After he left Japan, a ship he was on landed on an island just eight and a half miles from the mainland of China. He died there from a fever on December 3, 1552, while waiting for a boat to take him to the mainland. He was known as the "Apostle of the Indies," a well deserved title, considering the thousands upon thousands he converted. Many miracles are attributed to his intercession, including the raising of the dead to life.

Emily Ann and her husband Leland, a former Protestant minister, became Catholic in 1998. She has worked in Religious Education ever since, and at present teaches Religion full-time at St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria.

*Let us go
rejoicing
to the house
of the Lord.*

Psalm 122: 1
Responsorial Psalm
for December 1

Advent matters

By *Deacon Greg Kandra*
Catholic News Service

Christmas is still weeks away, and already we're exhausted.

We've heard too much Mariah, endured too much tinsel, watched too many Hallmark specials, been bombarded with too many ads for champagne and candy and cars. The calendar is out of whack. Black Friday actually began on a Monday, and Christmas music began on Halloween and for weeks now the mail has been delivering fat catalogs from long-forgotten pen pals like Harry & David and L.L. Bean.

Is it January yet?

In the middle of all this, we can easily forget a vital part of the Christian calendar: Advent.

I once preached a homily in which I bemoaned the tendency to merge Advent and Christmas into one vaguely wintery holiday blur we might as well call "Chradvent." It's all the same, isn't it? Might as well start early, right? Well, no.

These weeks before Christmas are intended to make that singular holiday - and singular holy day - matter. Advent sets the stage, calling us to "prepare the way," building in our hearts a sense of yearning, anticipation and joyful hope. Dorothy Day once compared Advent to a woman expecting a child. "She lives in such a garment of silence," Day wrote, "as though she were listening to hear the stir of life within her."

Silence? It's hard to appreciate that when every day is full of "Fa-la-la." We're left to wonder: How can we recapture the mystery and quiet of this beautiful season? How



can we transform the incessant bell-ringing hucksterism into something more like a prayer?

How can we make Advent matter? I'd suggest three approaches to these days that can help us experience Advent the way it was meant to be.

First, look. I live in New York City, and every corner during December gives you an eyeful. The lights, the decorations, the ads, the throngs -- it's thrilling. And exhausting. But we can appreciate it more, I think, if we strive to see beyond the early Christmas onslaught, to what lies beneath. Just like 2,000 years ago, we are still a world in waiting. Waiting for salvation. Waiting for sustenance. Waiting for hope. And significantly, we are a world

desperately waiting for light.

So much of what crowds these pre-Christmas days fulfills our ancient need to give this dark time of year light. We untangle chords and replace burned out bulbs and then we string wires around the house and over shrubbery for one explicit purpose: to beat back darkness and defy the night. God's first words in all of Scripture become our anthem in December: Let there be light! During these weeks, when we see these extravagant displays -- tasteful or not -- we are seeing something that affirms creation and says, no matter what, there will be light.

We see in all this signs of hope. Advent is about that hope, that expectation of the Sun of

Justice. All of what we see around us, in ways large and small, reflects that. It is a prayer of anxious yearning.

Second, listen. Do you hear what I hear? The soundtrack of Christmas makes itself heard, and heard, and heard, during Advent -- and sometimes, even earlier. On top of that, there is the noise from, well, life. Cable TV, the internet, modern media of all kinds cry out for attention. The news will not be ignored. Impeachment! Invasion! Floods! Snow! Sales! It all runs together after a while.

Where is that sacred silence that Day wrote about? We need to seek it, wherever and however we can. It takes effort, but the effort is worth it. Turn down the volume. Click off the computer. Turn off the TV. Lower the lights and dim the glare. Work to make this season a time of gentleness, a time of quiet and thoughtfulness and peace. Remember the carol: "The world in silent stillness waits to hear the angels sing." Carve out moments in your day to have some of that "silent stillness," and prayerfully reflect on something besides what you need to order on Amazon for delivery by Christmas. The world during the time of Christ had its own noise, its own distractions, its own conflicts and troubles. But into that came the Prince of Peace. How can we prepare ourselves to welcome him today in our own time?

Finally, just let it go. That anthem from "Frozen" can offer helpful advice during this stressful time of year. Too busy? Too distracted? Some things can wait. Let it go.

When I was growing up, every year we got a live Christmas

tree, complete with roots, to plant when the holiday was done. That meant we often didn't get a tree or bring it inside until a day or two before Christmas. It made the last hours before the holiday more wondrous. And it taught me the invaluable lesson of patience -- something at the heart, I think, of Advent. The decorating can wait. The wrapping can wait. This is a season about waiting, after all.

And the season that follows, and starts Dec. 25, has more to it than the secular world may realize.

A couple of years ago, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan wondered on his radio show, "You know, how come nobody writes devotions or prayers for the Christmas season? It's a real season, you know! It doesn't end for weeks." He had a point. It always saddens me to see Christmas trees tossed to the curb before New Year's. The Christmas season actually extends until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, in mid-January. Developing a better sense of the separate seasons of Advent and Christmas can help us have a better sense, as well, of why these times of year matter.

So save the Christmas greetings and wishes for later. Look to this time with gratitude and awe -- the anticipation of what is coming and the joy of what will be. Enjoy this season's special character. Savor it. Embrace its quiet wonder. Or, as a song might put it: Have yourself a merry little Advent.

Deacon Kandra serves in the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. He is the author of "The Busy Person's Guide to Prayer" (Word Among Us Press).

A message from the Diocese of Alexandria's Safe Environment Program

If you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected and that the abuse is by a parent or caretaker, please call: Louisiana Child Abuse / Neglect Hotline at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437).

If suspected abuse is related to a diocesan/church/school program, or if abuse occurred by anyone acting in Church services, a report also should be made to the diocesan victim assistance coordinator, Dr. Lee Kneipp at 318-542-9805.

For updated information, news articles, and documents regarding ongoing activity and planning for securing and maintaining a Safe Environment for all, visit www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/healing (visit www.diocesealex.org and look for "A Safe Environment For All" under the "Our Faith" tab). Here, you can find Bishop Talley's message for November 2018, as well as updates from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Also found on this page is the letter from Pope Francis to all Bishops in the United States regarding a meeting in February 2019 at the Vatican entitled "The Protection of Minors in the Church."

Do you know someone who wants to receive the Church Today FREE of charge?

Visit the sign-up form at www.diocesealex.org, or email cari.terracina@diocesealex.org with their name and mailing address.

Happy new year!

See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the wilderness I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers.

-Isaiah 43:19

Sunday, December 1, marks the beginning of the Advent season, signaling the beginning of a new liturgical year for the Church. So while the rest of the world waits for January 1, we as Catholics get to go ahead and begin afresh with renewed goals and clearer focus for what we want for ourselves and our families. In fact, the liturgical new year is a perfect time to examine our life with Christ.

Dear friend, how is your prayer life? Do you want to get to Confession or weekday Mass more often? Are you seeking to pray the Rosary or attend Adoration more consistently? Is there a small devotion you'd like your family to begin?

The Church's liturgical new year, coinciding with the Advent season, allows us the quiet still space for reflection and



Letter from the Editor

Mrs. Cari Terracina

Publications Manager for the Diocese of Alexandria

preparation. Would you like to make new resolutions with the Lord this liturgical new year with me? Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Choose a patron Saint for your year. You most likely already have a patron based on your given name and/or your Confirmation saint. Choosing a patron Saint for the new year is a great way to learn more about a holy one of God, and to receive their prayers in a special way. Unsure of who to pick? Visit www.saintsnamegenerator.com for help in choosing your patron.

Establish a realistic prayer rhythm. Many of us get excited by the thought of a new year.

There are so many possibilities and so much we want to do! These same sentiments often apply when we seek to establish a new devotion with the Lord. Often, we tend to take on too many spiritual practices at once, struggle to keep up, and then decide to quit them all together. Instead, let's focus on establishing - or adjusting - prayer rhythms that can be realistically sustained. "The life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and in communion with him" (CCC 2565). Prayer does not need to be fancy or elaborate, but should be consistent. Consider adopting one spiritual practice for the new year or Advent season,

and build from there. Let the Lord speak to you in the little that you can accomplish well.

Examine your community. How is your community life? How is the quality of your friendships? Our mothers were right: the company we keep does, in fact, matter a great deal. Are you in need of good, holy friends? Do you have good friends, but feel the need for a greater vulnerability and closer walk with God together? Take your community life to the Lord in prayer, and ask Him what He thinks. Ask Him to tell you one tangible, realistic thing you can do to cultivate holy community in your current state of life.

Focus on a single virtue for yourself and your family. Ask Jesus if there's a specific virtue that He would like to cultivate in your family this season. Focus on praying for that virtue, learning about it, and practicing it. Write it on your family's kitchen calendar, talk it about on the way to school in the morning, or text your adult children about it. Pray daily that the practice of this virtue is stirred up in your hearts, and that your family sees the fruit of their efforts this year. See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for a list of virtues.

While the rest of the world is hustling and bustling and wrapping and baking, we get the chance to pause and throw our Advent-colored confetti in the air, celebrating the beginning of a new year full of possibility. Let's not waste this opportunity for deep reflection and lasting spiritual resolution.

To our best year yet,
Cari

Follow Cari on
Instagram at [@cariterracina](https://www.instagram.com/@cariterracina)

Eucharist

I can recall during my childhood trying to make deals with my mother, especially around time of my birthday and Christmas. Deals such as: "If you buy me that new toy, I promise I will be good and never ask for anything again!" The older I got, the bigger the deals would be. I moved from toys, to bicycles, to the ultimate gift for a young person...a CAR. Of course I never kept my end of the deal. The newness of the gift would quickly wear off and I would be right back at being the not-so-good son wanting the next big thing. But no matter how many times I broke my promise of being good and never asking for anything again, my mother always remained kind, loving, and very generous. While I was an ungrateful son, she remained a faithful mother.

As I moved into adulthood, this pattern shifted to trying to make deals with God. You may have been guilty of doing this too: "Lord if I could just get that job, I'll be set; I'll pay more tithes; and will never ask for anything again." But then it



Embracing the Liturgy

By Deacon Richard W. Mitchell

moves to "If she says 'yes' to my marriage proposal, our lives will be perfect and I will not ask for anything again." Then "Lord, if the baby is born healthy, I promise I will never ask for anything again."

But here is the thing, we do not need to make "deals" with God. God is the Good Father that knows the wants and desires of His children long before we can even formulate the prayer. Now I am not saying to stop praying, quite the opposite. For as Saint Paul wrote in his first letter to the Thessalonians, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (5:16-18)

So we are called to be

prayerful people depending on the goodness and faithfulness of God, not negotiators who will never live up to our end of the "deal." God does not want our "deals" He wants our faithfulness and "Thanksgiving!"

If you read the scripture passage above again, note that Saint Paul tells us we are to give "thanks in all circumstances." This is the part that many (myself included) easily leave out of our prayers. We are quick with our intentions and needs, but may be a bit slower in recognizing and being grateful for answered prayers.

So what does any of this have to do with the liturgy? Well, attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist (body

and blood of Jesus) IS where we give "thanks." The Greek word "eucharisteo" means "to give thanks." The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that the Eucharist is "an act of thanksgiving to God." (No. 1329)

Remember that Jesus suffered and died for our sake, He does not want our "deals." Instead, as disciples of Jesus, we are called to participate in Mass, receive the Eucharist, and then live a life that continues to show our "thankfulness" for ALL that the Lord has given us. If we recall this each time we go to Mass, it will help draw us closer to the Lord and we will "Love the Liturgy."



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Diocese of Alexandria
on Spotify

Send your questions
and/or share your comments
with Deacon Mitchell via email
to: WhyDoWe@diocesealex.org

Special thanks to our parish families

A special thank you to the 27 parishes/missions who have exceeded their 2019 Annual Diocesan Appeal goal:

Church of the Little Flower - Evergreen
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church - Tioga
Mary Mother of Jesus Church - Woodworth
Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
 -- Natchitoches
Our Lady of Lourdes - Winnfield
Our Lady of Prompt Succor - Alexandria
St. Anne Chapel - Old River
St. Anne Church - Spanish Lake
St. Anthony of Padua - Bunkie
St. Augustine Church - Isle Brevelle
St. Charles Mission - Goudeau
St. Edward Church - Fishville
St. Frances Cabrini Church - Alexandria
St. Francis of Assisi Church - Waterproof
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral - Alexandria
St. John the Baptist - Moncla
St. Joseph Church - Cheneyville
St. Joseph Church - Marksville
St. Joseph Church - St. Joseph
St. Jude Mission - Seiper
St. Louis Church - Glenmora
St. Martin of Tours - Belledeau
St. Mary Church - Winnsboro
St. Patrick Church - Ferriday
St. Peter Mission - Elmer
St. William Chapel - Olla
Sts. Francis and Anne Church -- Kolin

If you have not already made your contribution to the 2019 Annual Diocesan Appeal, please consider making an offering to help us reach our goal.

Donations can be made on the Diocese of Alexandria web page,
 by mail to 2019 Annual Diocesan Appeal
 P. O. Box 8714
 Alexandria, LA 71306

Or by calling our Development Office at 318-445-6424 ext. 209 and having a card mailed to you. Please prayerfully consider contributing to this worthy cause as so many of the faithful of our Diocese have already done.

DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA 2019 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL *Thank You for Your Commitment!*



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Dear Friends,

God's peace to you and all you hold in your heart!

As we near the end of another year, one of the greatest joys in my service as interim Shepherd of the Church of Alexandria is to express my heartfelt gratitude for your generosity and support to the 2019 Annual Diocesan Appeal. Your support in this uncertain financial climate significantly helps the Church in Central Louisiana to continue offering its broad range of spiritual and practical assistance to God's people.

The ADA funds vital ministries that are essential to our faith: Campus Ministry -- for students on our colleges campuses; Tribunal Office -- for those seeking annulments and other services; Vocations -- for the continuing formation of priests, the formation and education of seminarians and the formation and training of those preparing for the permanent diaconate. These areas of ministry and formation serve each one of us and the diocese at large.

I am sincerely grateful to you for all that you have done to make Christ present in so many ways throughout our diocese. For those who have not donated to the 2019 Annual Diocesan Appeal it's not too late, donations can be made until December 31.

Please be assured you and your intentions will be in my prayers.

Wishing you God's blessings, I am

Gratefully in Christ,

Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
 Apostolic Administrator

Thank You!

Ten pictures that shaped our year

Throughout 2019, we have published hundreds of images of life around the diocese. This month, we would like to point out several pictures that have helped to shape our year so far. These pictures, in no particular order, help to tell the story of who we are as a diocese, and the direction we will move in the future - whatever 2020 may bring!

Please continue to keep the diocese in prayer, especially our priests, as we look forward to welcoming a new bishop in the future!



CARRYING OF THE CASKET. Clergy of the diocese carry the casket of Bishop Emeritus Ronald Herzog at his funeral on April 22, 2019 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Seminarians, priests, and deacons of the diocese attended the funeral, along with visiting prelates, family members, members of the Diocese of Alexandria community, and friends. Herzog was bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria beginning in 2004 through his retirement in 2017.



FATHER AUGUST THOMPSON PASSES AWAY. The diocese received word of the death of Fr. August Thompson, a retired priest of the Diocese of Alexandria, on August 11. Fr. Thompson served as pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Mansura, as rector of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, and as pastor of St. James Memorial Church in Alexandria.

In over fifty years of priestly service, Fr. Thompson served the Church and the community in a variety of ways, including serving on the Board for the National Black Catholic Clergy caucus, as a spiritual director for the Legion of Mary, a member of the Presbyteral Council, and finally, in his retirement, on the board for St. Mary's Residential Training School.



BISHOP DAVID TALLEY NAMED BISHOP-ELECT OF MEMPHIS. Bishop David Talley addresses the Diocese of Memphis Chancery staff and local media during a press conference on March 5 at the Catholic Center for the Diocese of Memphis, TN. Also in the picture is Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY. (Photo courtesy Gragg Higgenbotham)



FATHER TAYLOR REYNOLDS SWEARING IN. Fr. Taylor Reynolds, JCL was sworn in as an Ecclesiastical Judge in the Tribunal of the Diocese of Alexandria on Sept. 12. Per the decree of Archbishop Gregory Aymond, the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Alexandria, Fr. Taylor was appointed as a judge for the Diocese. In this capacity, Fr. Taylor will preside over trials dealing with nullity of marriage cases, as well as serving in various other capacities dealing with Church governance and administration. Church Law requires that the canon lawyer who is appointed as a judge must be sworn in by means of an Oath of Fidelity as well as an Oath of Office.



Prayer for Priests

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests.
 Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments.
 Help our priests to be strong in their vocation. Set their souls on fire with love for your people.
 Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.
 Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom. Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.
 Allow them to experience joy in their ministry. Help them to become instruments of your divine grace.
 We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest. Amen.

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for December

The Future of the Very Young -
 That every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering.



MONSIGNOR BRUCE MILLER. On June 20, Archbishop Gregory Aymond presented the papal diploma bestowing the title of 'Monsignor' on Reverend Bruce Miller, JCL, after recommendations were made to the Holy See by Bishop David Talley.



ARCHBISHOP GREGORY M. AYMOND VISITS THE ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CENTER OFFICES. Archbishop Aymond made his first visit on Monday, April 15, as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Alexandria. During his visit he met with diocesan staff, including superintendent of Catholic Schools, Thomas Roque, Sr.



MARCH FOR LIFE. The Central Louisiana March for Life was held Saturday, Feb. 2. Many from across our diocese were among the record crowd of 7,000 marchers!



CENLA PREGNANCY CENTER TO SERVE AVOYELLES. Ribbon cutting ceremony was held on April 9 for the new Avoyelles Pregnancy Center now open and located in Marksville.

STEUBENVILLE SOUTH (Left) The conference celebrated 25 years of ministering to teens and adults in the Central Louisiana community.



RETIREMENT. (Above) After 29 years of service, Mrs. Eva Horn retires from Manna House, Jan. 24, 2019.

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What is iGiveCatholic?

The Diocese of Alexandria, for the first time, will join many other dioceses around the country to host #iGiveCatholic on #GivingTuesday, Dec. 3 of this year. Participating parishes, schools, and Catholic non-profit organizations will have the opportunity to raise funds online for their own local needs.

#iGiveCatholic is a 24-hour online crowdfunding effort, celebrated annually on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. The day isn't just a fundraiser; it is an opportunity for the Catholic community to affirm their faith as disciples of Christ, and to showcase all of the good work the church and its parishes, schools, and institutions do for the community at large.

In 2017, the campaign raised more than \$3.6 million for more than 600 participating parishes, schools, and nonprofits representing 17 dioceses across the country. At the close of the 24-hour giving period, the number of online contributions totaled more than 13,000 gifts from 29 states and six countries.

This project allows Catholics to collectively

help parishes, schools, and organizations achieve their goals and reach new donors. Projects have ranged from repairing church windows and building outdoor classrooms to long-term projects that needed a boost.

The Diocese of Alexandria joins 38 other dioceses across the United States in this online giving day for the Catholic community. The goal of the #iGiveCatholic Giving Day is to inspire our Catholic community to come together with giving in support of organizations that shape our souls: our parishes, schools, ministries, not-for-profit organizations. Without doubt, we are blessed with a beautiful diocese, and we continue to find ways to improve it and bring everyone into full participation in the Church community. We ask for your support in making #iGiveCatholic 2019 a hugely successful campaign for our diocese.

*To participate, visit
<https://alexandria.igive-catholic.org>
on Tuesday, Dec. 3.*

Thank you for your support!

DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA OFFICE OF LIFE AND JUSTICE

The Diocese of Alexandria Office of Life and Justice now lists a Social Service Directory on the Diocese website!

The Office of Life and Justice lists this directory as a public service.

It does not recommend, support, or guarantee any of the mentioned services. Each consumer should be vigilant and ask questions of each provider, including costs (if any), confidentiality of medical or personal information, and to whom they can address complaints if necessary.

Please visit www.diocesalex.org/office-of-life-justice for a directory of utilities assistance, mental health, legal, and other services.

P.O. Box 5624
Alexandria, LA 71307

3306 Giamanco Street

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Fax: (318) 473-4045
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Donald J. Baker, ACF/RF/CF
CONSULTING FORESTER
Licensed Urban Tree Consultant

Pope appoints AR priest to be bishop of Shreveport, La.

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Francis Malone, a pastor and the chancellor for ecclesial affairs in the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas, to be the third bishop of Shreveport, Louisiana.

Bishop-designate Malone, 69, has held the post of chancellor since 2008. He also is pastor of Christ the King Parish in Little Rock. In Shreveport, he succeeds Bishop Michael G. Duca, now head of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he was installed Aug. 24, 2018.

The appointment was announced in Washington Nov. 19 by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Bishop-designate Malone's episcopal ordination and installation Mass will be celebrated Jan. 28 in the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans in Shreveport.

Among his diocesan appointments, he was managing editor of the Arkansas Catholic, Little Rock's diocesan newspaper, and diocesan director of communications in 1995. He also was a theological consultant to the Catholic paper in 1997. He was vicar general from 2002 to 2006.

Born Sept. 1, 1950, in Philadelphia, Francis Malone was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Little Rock May 21, 1977. He holds a bachelor of arts in history (1973) and master's degrees in divinity (1977) and education (1977) from the University of Dallas, a Catholic university in Irving, Texas. In 1989, he earned a licentiate in canon law from The Catholic University of America in Washington.

After his ordination, then-Father Malone had many parish assignments as associate pastor



POPE APPOINTS NEW BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF SHREVEPORT. Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Francis Malone, a pastor and the chancellor for ecclesial affairs in the Diocese of Little Rock, Ark., to be the bishop of Shreveport, La. Bishop-designate Malone, 69, is pictured in an undated photo. (CNS photo/courtesy Arkansas Catholic)

and as pastor in parishes around the Diocese of Little Rock. He was named rector of the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock in 1989, serving there until 1996. That year he was named pastor of Immaculate Conception Church and St. Anne Church in North Little Rock.

In 2001, he was assigned to his current pastorate at Christ the King Parish in Little Rock. The parish is considered a vibrant Catholic community, in part for fostering a number of vocations since he has been pastor.

He served on the faculty of Mount St. Mary Academy, an all-girls high school in Little Rock from 1980 to 1983. Also in 1983, he was on the clergy personnel

board and a chaplain at St. Mary-Rogers Memorial Hospital in Rogers, Arkansas. He was moderator of Cursillo in 1989 and chancellor and vice officialis from 1990 to 2002.

He also currently serves on the priests' council, the college of consultors, the clergy personnel board and the clergy welfare board.

Bishop-designate Malone was named a monsignor in 1998, a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre in 2002 and protonotary apostolic in 2010.

The Diocese of Shreveport has a Catholic population of 41,335 out of a total population of 812,200.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED:

If you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, and that the abuse is by a parent or caretaker, please first call the Louisiana Child Abuse / Neglect Hotline at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) and/or your local law enforcement agency.

If suspected abuse is related to a diocesan/church/school program, or if abuse occurred by anyone acting in Church services, a report should then also be made to the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Dr. Lee Kneipp, Clinical Psychologist at 318-542-9805.

Appeal helps religious communities care for aging members

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held Dec. 7-8 in the Diocese of Alexandria.

The parish-based appeal is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), and proceeds help hundreds of U.S. religious communities to care for aging members. Some 30,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests benefit.

Last year, the Diocese of Alexandria donated \$22,530.03 to the collection. The 2018 appeal raised \$27.7 million, and 360 religious congregations across the nation received financial assistance. Distributions are sent to each eligible congregation's central house. Communities combine this funding with their own income and savings and apply it toward various retirement expenses, such as medications and nursing care.

"We are humbled and profoundly grateful for the countless Catholics who honor the service and witness of senior religious through their prayers and generosity," said Presentation Sister Stephanie Still, the NRRO's executive director.

Catholic bishops of the United States initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious in 1988 to help address the profound lack of retirement savings among U.S. religious communities. Since the collection's launch, U.S. Catholics have donated \$872 million to the annual appeal.

Despite this generosity, many congregations still struggle to provide for aging members. Most older religious served for low wages that did not include retirement benefits. Today,



numerous communities face a critical shortage in retirement savings. Moreover, retired religious now outnumber wage-earning members, resulting in declining income and a rising cost of care.

Proceeds from the annual collection allow the NRRO to offer assessment tools, educational programming, services and resources that enable communities to evaluate and prepare for long-term retirement needs. The NRRO also coordinates an extensive network of volunteer consultants, including experts in eldercare and financial planning, to help congregations lower costs while enhancing care.

"Donations to the Retirement Fund for Religious enable our office to provide financial assistance for an array of direct needs," said Sister Still. "They also underwrite education and

resources that help religious communities stretch retirement dollars and plan for the future."

Why We Ask

- In 1988, Catholic bishops of the United States launched the Retirement Fund for Religious to address the significant lack of retirement funding for Catholic sisters, brothers, and priests in religious orders.

- For most of their lives, elder religious worked for little to no pay. There were no 401(k) plans or pensions.

- Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of all members. Income, earnings, and expenses are managed separately from the parish and diocesan structures of the Catholic Church.

- The funding shortage is compounded by rising healthcare costs and decreased income. And, as more religious reach retirement age and leave

compensated ministry, income will further decline while care needs increase.

- By 2029, religious past age 70 are projected to outnumber religious under age 70 by nearly three to one.

- There are 30,151 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2018, the average annual cost for their care was roughly \$47,000 per person; skilled care averaged \$69,000 per person.

- Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded \$1 billion.

- In 2018, 72 percent of the religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) had a median age of 70 or higher.

- The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is \$6,596.77, while the average US beneficiary receives \$17,535.72.

How Donations Help

- Each year, hundreds of US religious communities receive financial assistance made possible by the Retirement Fund for Religious. Communities can use this funding for immediate retirement expenses or invest for future needs. Since the first

collection, US Catholics have donated \$872 million.

- Since 1989, almost \$737 million has been distributed to support the day-to-day care of elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. An additional \$98 million has been allocated toward self-help projects initiated by religious communities, including collaborative healthcare facilities.

- In addition to direct financial assistance, proceeds from the annual appeal underwrite educational programming, services, and resources that enable religious communities to evaluate and prepare for long-term retirement needs.

- Support from the Retirement Fund for Religious helps religious communities care for senior members while continuing important ministries to the People of God.

Data on women and men religious obtained from the NRRO database of participating religious institutes as of December 31, 2018. Visit usccb.org/nrro to access a full statistical report.

Visit retiredreligious.org to learn more.

Seminarian Burses October 2019 Donations

Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian L. Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$50.00
Deacon Gary Schupbach Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$100.00
Monsignor Steve Testa Burse	
Mrs. Barbara Rigby	\$100.00
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Dan F. Vanderlick	\$100.00
Cecilia Vanderlick Mathews Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller	\$200.00
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
Mrs. Nelwyn Broussard	\$500.00
Deacon Rodrick "Benny" Broussard Burse	
Dr. Joseph W. Landreneau	\$657.50
Edna Rabalais Seminary Burse	
Ms. Elizabeth S. Arthur	\$1,000.00
Sadie Stroud Burse	
Dr. Joseph W. Landreneau	\$1,342.50
Monsignor Henry Beckers Burse	
Total	\$4,075.00

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Parish Spotlight: Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine

Established 1879

In the late 1840's, three brothers, Etienne, Francois and Visitant Planche, staked out land for themselves at the conjunction of Bayou Jack and Bayou Choupique. Other settlers slowly followed to plant corn and cotton. In 1872, Fr. Paul Simon, the pastor of the Moreauville church, began construction of a small mission chapel on Bayou Choupique, about three miles from Moreauville, dedicated to the mystery of the Assumption. In 1873, Bishop Martin consecrated a bell for the chapel with the name 'Marie.' In 1874, the church was moved to Couvillionville where it was blessed by Fr. Chauvin, in Bishop Martin's name, on May 11, 1875. In 1876, Fr. Dicharry, the administrator of the diocese, signed a decree changing the name of the chapel to 'Notre Dame des Sept Doleurs' - Our Lady of Seven Sorrows or in Latin, Mater Dolorosa.

In 1878-1879, the church was moved to Plaquemine and Fr. Julien Gallop was appointed pastor. Construction on a new church began in 1894 but the work was destroyed in a storm before it could be completed. New plans were made and a large church was finished in 1898. In 1899, Fr. J. B. Limagne established a branch of



MATER DOLOROSA CHURCH, PLOUQUEVILLE. Mater Dolorosa celebrates its 140th anniversary as a church parish in Plaquemine. St. Joseph School celebrates its 120th anniversary.

St. Joseph's School of Marksville in Plaquemine and invited the Sisters of Divine Providence to staff this new St. Joseph's School as a parochial school under Mater Dolorosa Parish. The sisters arrived in August and began classes in September with 90 students. In 1924, a new church was constructed under the direction of Fr. Francis Van Haver. This church, with its

carved Gothic high altar, survived the 1927 flood which inundated the Avoyelles.

Fr. Van Haver was instrumental in establishing a Knights of Columbus Council in Plaquemine. Council #2142 was formally organized on June 4, 1920 with J.A. Dufour as the first Grand Knight. A new brick church was erected to replace the old wood-frame structure in 1964

under Msgr. Marcel Anderson. The high altar and statues from the old church add beauty to the new building and serve as a

tangible sign of the continuity of traditional Catholic Faith. Msgr. Anderson oversaw the construction of a new rectory before his retirement in 1986.

In 1999, St. Joseph's School marked its 100th anniversary with a year of celebration led by Fr. Stephen Scott Chemino and is one of the oldest continuously operating parish schools in the Diocese. Marianites of Holy Cross together with the Brothers of the Holy Eucharist have until recently served as a religious presence adding to the academic excellence achieved at St. Joseph's School. A perpetual adoration chapel was added to the rear of the church in 2000 by Fr. Craig Scott that now supports continuous adoration 4 days every week. Currently, St. Joseph School serves grades pre-K3 - 12th. This year St. Joseph's School joyfully celebrates its 120th anniversary with continued vitality and renewed vigor!

Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever. Psalm 72: 7
Responsorial Psalm for December 8

For updated contact information and Mass times for our diocesan churches and missions, please visit www.diocesealex.org/

Lord, come and save us.

Psalm 146
Responsorial Psalm for December 15

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SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED CARMELITES: On Oct. 12, Dr. Holly Wilson made her "first promise" to the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. Pictured are Deacon William Travis, Dr. Holly Wilson, Father Taylor Reynolds, and members of the community, at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville.

Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, a religious association of the Roman Catholic Church composed primarily of lay persons and accepted diocesan clergy, meets every second Saturday of the month at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville. "Discalced Carmelite Seculars come from all walks of life, from every level of education and from every type of work," said Deacon Bill Travis, one of its members.

"We are Catholic laypersons over the age of 18 (married or unmarried) or ordained diocesan priests or deacons." They practice contemplative prayer while living lives of charity in their common occupations, and profess a promise to the Order to live according to the Rule of St. Albert and the OCDS Constitutions and to live a life of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and to live the beatitudes according to their lay state of life.

Anyone interested in more information, is invited to join the Secular Order on any second Saturday of the month at Maryhill Renewal Center, or to call Mary Jo McCoy, president, at (318) 481-9638 or (318) 346-6860.

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

Psalm 24: 7 | Responsorial Psalm for December 22

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O Join us in prayer for #iGiveCatholic Day of Giving

O Lord, giver of life, we know that all we receive is from Your hand.
 We live in a world of mass consumption, yet there is scarcity.

You offer us a way to grace by calling us to be stewards of Your abundance.

On this #GivingTuesday, grant us wisdom to know that little is much because You are the source;

Through You, the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

May #iGiveCatholic bring nourishment to the hungry, hope to the lost, and promote gratitude and generosity among all.

We pray that this day of giving be a time of loaves and fishes,

A world where even one small gift can be bread for the multitudes,

A way where each of us has a piece of your merciful heart to share with others.

In this giving, may our hearts be filled by You alone, who are Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

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Celebration of life



EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE. Six from the Diocese of Alexandria attended the Annual Meeting of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in South Carolina, October 19-21. The group celebrated Mass at St. Rita Church on Oct. 27, with Father Craig Scott. Tony Lee "Bo" Vets was invested into the Order at Blessed Sacrament Church in Charleston on Sunday, Oct. 20. Pictured (left to right): Dennie Williams, KHS; Patti Williams, DHS; Bo Vets, KHS; Roz Allemond, DGCHS, and Pierre Allemond, KGCHS.

BLUE MASS. The Blue Mass was celebrated Nov. 7 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. The Blue Mass honors living and deceased members of law enforcement, firefighters, and other first responders. See more pictures from the day on the Diocesan Facebook page.



ALL SAINTS DAY. St. Francis de Sales youth dressed up as their favorite saint for the Mass on Sunday Nov 3.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. On Sunday, Oct. 20, St. James parishioners celebrated Fall Family Day along with Mrs. Bertha LeGras' 103rd birthday. Mrs. LeGras was also honored by Bishop D.F. Desmond Court #91 Ladies Auxilliary for 77 years of service. She is a charter member of the organization, and is pictured above with her nieces, Joann M. Baty and Cheryl Metoyer. Happy birthday, Mrs. LeGras!



RELIC COLLECTION. Mr. Marcus Descant recently displayed his collection of relics and artifacts at St. Juliana Church, Alexandria.



MORNING GRACE. St Mary's Assumption Church in Cottonport hosted 20 women for "Morning Grace" on Saturday, Oct. 19. Morning Grace is a two and a half hour mini-retreat that includes movement, prayer, scripture study, and fellowship, hosted by Mandy Chapman and Kim Roberts. For more information, visit www.fromheretograce.com

VETERANS DAY. St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie, welcomed veterans from our community for a special recognition Mass in honor of Veterans' Day. The students then hosted the veterans for coffee, doughnuts, handmade thank-you cards, and a special presentation by the primary students.



100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY. Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Marksville, celebrated its 100 Year Anniversary with a Jubilee Mass on Sunday, Oct. 27. Pictured left to right: Dcn. Richard Mitchell; Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira; Fr. Abraham Varghese (Pastor); Fr. Jacob Thomas; Fr. Rusty Rabalais and Dcn. Ted Moulard

Please keep our priests and future bishop in prayer as we near the beginning of Advent and a new liturgical year!
See below or visit www.diocesealex.org to see more pictures of life around the Diocese.



GIRLS ON THE RUN. The Girls on the Run from St Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie conducted their community service project this week. The girls baked homemade "thank you treats" and delivered them to the local fire station, police station, and Bayou Vista Nursing Home as a way to show their appreciation to the public servants of their community.

ALEXANDRIA MEMORIAL GARDENS. Father Paul LaPalme celebrated Mass at Alexandria Memorial Gardens, assisted by Deacon Paul Sunderhaus.



LOUISIANA VETERANS CEMETERY. Father Kenneth Michiels celebrated Mass at the Central Louisiana Veterans Cemetery on Nov. 4. Parishioners from St. Michael's Church were in attendance, along with the St. Michael's Choir. Following Mass, Fr. Michiels blessed the graves of veterans and family members interred at the cemetery, assisted by Chaplain (MAJ) Michael Lindsey, Fort Polk, and Deacon Stephen Gramigna.



ROSARY WALK. Students from Holy Savior Menard High School processed from the school to St. Rita Church for their annual Rosary Walk and Mass at St. Rita's church on Wednesday, Nov. 20.



ESSAY WINNERS. Pictured above are VFW Patriotic Essay Winners 1st place [redacted] (first place), [redacted] (second place) and [redacted] (third place).

Penance Services

The following is a list of Penance services scheduled across the diocese. Some churches have several different times listed for each day. This schedule is posted on the diocesan website at www.diocesealex.org, and will be updated periodically through the month of December. If your church is not listed, contact your church parish office for dates and times.

Central Deanery

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6:00 p.m. -- Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
 Wednesday, Dec. 4, 6:10 p.m. -- Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville
 Friday, Dec. 6, 6:00 p.m. -- Sts. Francis and Anne Church, Kolin
 Wednesday, Dec. 18, 5:30 p.m. -- St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria
 Wednesday, Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. -- Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria

Avoyelles Deanery

Saturday, Dec. 7, 3:00 p.m. -- Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen
 Sunday, Dec. 8, 7:30 a.m. -- St. Charles Chapel, Goudeau
 Sunday, Dec. 8, 9:00 a.m. -- Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen
 Monday, Dec. 16, 5:30 p.m. -- St. Joseph Church, Marksville

Natchitoches Deanery

Wednesday, Dec. 18, 5:00 p.m. -- Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Winnfield

Eastern Deanery

To be announced

Before celebrating the Sacrament of Penance, one should prepare oneself with an examination of conscience, reflecting prayerfully on one's thoughts, words, and deeds in order to identify any sins. There are various types of examinations of conscience but regardless of which one you use to prepare yourself for the Sacrament, it should be rooted in Scripture. Visit the USCCB's website section for Examinations of Conscience to help you prepare for the Sacrament.

Dec. 8: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Dec. 8 is always a Holy Day of Obligation because the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the patronal feast of the United States. In other words, we claim Mary as our patron saint under this special title of the Immaculate Conception. That means that she was conceived in the marital union of her parents - who were believed to have been St. Joachim and St. Anne.

"The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin." - Pius X, ex cathedra, In effabilis Deus 1854.

This year, because Dec. 8 is a Sunday, the Solemnity is moved to Monday, Dec. 9. Therefore, the obligation to attend Mass on this day is abrogated - it will not be an obligatory day for us to attend Mass.

Catholics are still encouraged to celebrate the Solemnity accordingly with prayers, novenas, Mass, or other appropriate spiritual exercises.

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Over 300,000 Christmas lights and 100 lighted set pieces illuminate downtown Natchitoches and Cane River Lake every evening at dusk through January 6, 2019. All Christmas events take place in Downtown Natchitoches along the banks of Cane River Lake and the Historic District. Visit www.natchitocheschristmas.com for a complete schedule of dates, times, and events.

Dec. 3 Christmas at the Nest

Holy Savior Menard High School invites all students in grades PreK-6 to attend the Sixth Annual Christmas at the Nest, on Tuesday, Dec. 3 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. The evening will start in the school gymnasium with storytime with award-winning storyteller, Sylvia Davis. After storytime, the fun will continue in the school mall area with Christmas crafts and games, light refreshments, and pictures with Santa. This

event is FREE and open to the public. Attendees are asked to bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to the Food Bank of Central Louisiana as part of the Christmas Cheer Food Drive.

Dec. 5, 12, and 19: Advent Reflection Series, St. Frances Cabrini Church in Alexandria

Join St. Frances Cabrini Church for an Advent Reflection series by Father Chad Partain. This series will take place on Thursday, Dec. 5, 12, and 19, beginning at 6:00 p.m. each evening in Ducote Hall, located behind the Church Office. For more information, call Michelle at 318-445-4588.

Dec. 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, and 26-28: Holiday Light Safari, Alexandria Zoo

Alexandria Zoo is lighting up the season with Holiday Light Safari, featuring hundreds of thousands of lights, train rides, Santa, and activities for the kids. Create wonderful memories with

a casual stroll through the Zoo's colorful environment sparkling with thousands of lights and whimsical lighted animal figures. Admission is \$8 (children ages 3 and under get in free), opening 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Dec. 7: Fall Fair and Gumbo Cook-Off, Pineville

Come join us at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville for a Fall Fair with gumbo cook-off and kids' Christmas Craft Day. Bring out the whole family for food, crafts, and Christmas shopping! Contact Dawn Parker for more information at angelicdawnparker@gmail.com or 318-446-6557. Registration forms can also be found on the Sacred Heart church website, Facebook page, and fair event page.

Dec. 8: Photos with Santa, Woodworth

Bring the kids to Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth from 9:00-10:00 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 8 for breakfast and pictures

with Santa! For more information call 318-487-9894.

Dec. 8: Gumbo Cook-off, Kolin

Sts. Francis and Anne will hold the 3rd Annual Gumbo Cook-off on Dec. 8 after 10:30 a.m. Mass. Prize will be awarded to the team with the best gumbo. Teams can sign up in the back of the church or contact the office at 318-767-2078. \$6 buys gumbo, rice, crackers, and sweet potatoes. There will be a cake sale in conjunction with the meal.

Dec. 10: Old-Fashioned Christmas, Kent House Plantation

Old Fasioned Christmas at Kent House is a FREE family event. There will be plenty of Christmas crafts for children to take home with them and they can decorate the Kent House Christmas Tree with old fashioned popcorn and cranberry garland and paper chains. There will be a visit from Papa Noel and free hot cocoa and cookies for all to enjoy. Call 318-487-5998 for more information.

Dec. 12-15: Alex Winter Fete, Downtown Alexandria

Alexandria will be able to step into a magical experience in Downtown Alexandria. Alex Winter Fete is back with several returning favorite attractions along with new activities for everyone to enjoy. This winter celebration is FREE with numerous must-see

events. Visit www.cityofalexandria.com for more information.

Dec. 14: Christmas Spectacular, Coughlin-Saunders Performing Arts Center

The Cenla Christmas Spectacular is back for its twelfth year, ready to bring you the same great yuletide entertainment that you've come to expect. Featuring performing arts organizations from all over Cenla, performances by the Lagniappe Theatre Company, and your two favorite Cajun radio hosts Dirty Coultile and Jean "the Clod" Claude. Don't miss your chance to have your Christmas spirit lifted and your funny bone tickled! Visit coughlin-saunderspac.org for information or to purchase tickets.

Dec. 16-17: Advent mission, Our Lady of Lourdes, Winnfield

Seminarian Thomas Kennedy will present the Advent mission on Monday and Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 18: Advent parish penance service, Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria

Confessions will begin at 6:30p.m. Call 318-445-9748 for more information.

Dec. 18 Advent parish penance service, Our Lady of Lourdes, Winnfield

Confessions will be held 5:00-7:00 p.m. Call the church office for more information.





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Christmas Concerts

Dec. 8: The Rapides Parish Symphony Orchestra performs its annual Holiday Concert including music from The Nutcracker and other Christmas favorites. Visit www.rapidessymphony.org for more information or to purchase tickets.

Dec. 10: Lessons and Carols featuring the NSU Chamber Choir at Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches at 7:30 p.m. with free admission.

Dec. 10: Join the Red River Chorale for their annual "Celebrating Christmas" concert at 7:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. This concert features choral selections accompanied by string ensemble and organ as well as unaccompanied pieces, all to prepare us for the Christmas season. Visit redriverchorale.com for more information or to purchase tickets.

Bishops hear follow-up Encuentro report, OK writing new pastoral plan

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- The U.S. bishops, aware of the growing numbers of Catholics in the country who are of Hispanic origin, voted to write a new pastoral plan for Latino Catholics that would be produced sometime between 2021 and 2024.

The action took place Nov. 12, the second day of the bishops' Nov. 11-13 fall general meeting in Baltimore.

The bishops also heard a follow-up to the V Encuentro, or Fifth National Encuentro, held last year in Grapevine, Texas. The Encuentro is a four-year process, and 2019 is year four. Leading up to national gathering were parish, diocesan and regional encuentros.

Bishops in their comments detected an urgency in responding to the pastoral needs of Hispanic Catholics, who could constitute a majority of all U.S. Catholics by midcentury.

"It's really important that there's a sense of 'we've got to get this done,' or it might come up here or four of five years from now," said retired Auxiliary Bishop William J. Justice of San Francisco. He added that "it's only natural" that the fervor generated at the V Encuentro "has gone down a little bit," but if such a slide continues, "we're in trouble."

"There was such great enthusiasm generated in that process from my own people," said Archbishop Alexander K. Sample of Portland, Oregon. "Since the Encuentro occurred,



V-ENCUENTRO. MA delegate from Region 8 - Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota - prays Sept. 20 during the Fifth National Encuentro in Grapevine, TX.

people are in my ear, asking, 'What's next? What's going on? Where is all this going?'"

A few bishops spoke of the need to have Hispanic children enrolled in Catholic schools.

Noting that only 12% of Hispanic children in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are enrolled in Catholic schools, Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop David G. O'Connell said Catholic schools "are the best way we have to evangelize and educate our children -- and the best way

of all ... to foster vocations."

Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston asked that the forthcoming plan emphasize Catholic schools. "There's been no institutions in the United States that have pulled people out of poverty more than Catholic schools," he said. "I hope we will push very much" for that.

"When I was in school, it was free. Today that's not possible, but we have to work very hard," he added.

Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted

of Phoenix said, "We really need to train leaders, not so much within the parishes, but within society." Bishop Mark E. Brennan of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia, said to consider also the need for Latino permanent deacons.

It has even reached the highest levels of the church. Bishop Nelson J. Perez of Cleveland, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, was part of a delegation that delivered V Encuentro materials to Pope Francis. "The Holy Father received the documents with interest and offered words of encouragement," Bishop Perez said, adding the pope told them, "Continue to go further."

Auxiliary Bishop Arturo Cepeda of Detroit, chairman of the committee's Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs, said Encuentro follow-up will feature "three bold new initiatives": the development of emerging family ministries and resources for Hispanic families; a collection of best practices used in parishes and dioceses; and a V Encuentro social media campaign.

"In addition, our work continues on the Encuentro Youth and Young Adult Leadership Initiative," which Bishop Cepeda called "a direct pastoral response to the V Encuentro process." He added that its goal is "to form Hispanic/Latino young adults, and adults working this Hispanic/Latino youth and young adults

through a solid certification program and to create a pathway towards degree programs."

Speaking on the pastoral plan OK'd by the bishops, Bishop Cepeda said: "We believe a new comprehensive plan will provide the church in the United States with the vision to guide and strengthen Hispanic ministry over the next 10 to 15 years."

He added the church is seeing "generational change from a larger immigrant population, which is still the reality in many dioceses, to a rapidly growing majority U.S. born Latino population. A new vision is needed."

He said the document will respond not only to the U.S. bishops' 2021-24 priorities and plans -- approved at the fall meeting just the day before -- but also to the recommendations of the V Encuentro process' ministry areas.

Bishop Cepeda said five elements would constitute the central focus of a comprehensive plan: championing the leadership development and formation of Hispanic and Latino youth and young adults; promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life; promoting ministry models and resources for Hispanic families; "for the church to be an example and promoter of social justice and human dignity"; and identifying best practices in ministry with Hispanics in parishes, dioceses and other Catholic institutions.

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Psalm 128: 1 | Responsorial Psalm for December 29

?? Catholic Trivia ??

The liturgical season of Advent begins
Sunday, Dec. 1 of this year.

What does the word "advent" mean?

Answer on page 19.

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The **C**ross Word

December 1, 8
and 15, 2019



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Sunday readings: Is 2:1-5; Rom 13:11-14; Mt 24:27-34
and Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12 and Is 35:1-6a,
10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| ACROSS | 25 Nettle |
| 1 One of Noah's sons | 26 Noah built |
| 4 Style | 29 Set off |
| 8 Clean | 30 "With an iron ___" |
| 11 Bullfight cheer | 31 Roman eight |
| 12 Rock of ___ | 32 Known as (abbr.) |
| 13 It's time ___ (2 wds) | 33 Bear's neighbor |
| 14 Cooking tool | 34 Church law |
| 15 Smack | 35 Wash with a mop |
| 16 Belongs to us | 37 Wheeled vehicle |
| 17 Burst out | 38 City: Boca ___ |
| 19 Locusts and ___ | 40 See before |
| 20 Cardinals' color | 44 Graven image |
| 21 Girdle | 45 Skinny |
| 22 Duck down | 46 Have |

- 47 Will browse with
young lion
- 48 Gait
- 49 Reverend (abbr.)
- 50 "Blessed ___ you"
- 51 Cain's brother
- 52 Attempt

- DOWN**
- 1 Scripture gives
 - 2 Winged
 - 3 Restaurant list
 - 4 Owner of house
 - 5 Eyed
 - 6 They are raised
 - 7 Sixth sense
 - 8 "___ of the Lord's
House"
 - 9 Giant
 - 10 Bouquet
 - 13 Pliers
 - 18 Secondary
 - 19 ___ sign
 - 21 Pillow place
 - 22 Airport abbr.
 - 23 Make angry
 - 24 Heartbeat's relaxation
 - 25 Religious make one
 - 27 ___ de Janeiro
 - 28 Relation
 - 30 Steal
 - 31 Wind pointer
 - 33 Soup container
 - 34 ___ and Sharon
 - 36 Guest of the lamb
 - 37 Cries out in desert
 - 38 Costa ___
 - 39 6th month (Jewish)
 - 40 Excess flesh
 - 41 Classify
 - 42 Water pitcher
 - 43 Jealousy
 - 45 Hotel

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Fa la la films: 10 merry movies

By Grace Bellon
Guest Contributor

Fuzzy blankets, hot chocolate, falling snow, and merry movies. To me, this is an ideal way to spend a December evening while snuggling with my cuddle bugs that disguise themselves as dogs and my obliging husband. Since life has led us to a temporary home in Georgia for the next few years, I think I can pretty much rule out snowfall when it comes to this year's Christmas experience. But our apartment thermostat is set to a brisk 66 degrees, so blankets, warm drinks, and snuggles are still on the menu.

If you're looking for Christmas movies to watch this December, I've compiled a list of the most wholesome holiday movies (with little to no questionable content) to get you in a warm, cheerful, and loving mood with your whole family.

1. *Holiday Inn*

I'm a sucker for old movies (there's a few on this list), and in my opinion, this film from 1942 outshines most. The plot revolves around two friends (played by Bing Crosby & Fred Astaire), an inn that is only open on major holidays, and a pretty girl (played by Marjorie Reynolds). A successful performer who is ready for a quiet life, Crosby buys a farm in Vermont and plans to settle down. He's heart-broken by his fiancée who leaves him for Astaire, his supposed best friend. In a twist of fate, Astaire shows up at the farm after she leaves him, too.

Once again, these two friends find themselves vying for the affections of the same woman (Reynolds). Charming, old-fashioned, wintery drama unfolds, but at the end, their issues are all resolved and everyone remains friends. Irving Berlin wrote twelve original songs for the movie, including the song "White Christmas," which would later be used as the title for another Bing Crosby Christmas movie about a decade later. It's light, it's warm, it's funny, and the whole family can watch it together.

2. *Little Women*

Maybe it's because I have four sisters of my own, but this merry movie reminds me so much of my own childhood. Based on



the autobiography of Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women* follows the life of Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March as they grow up during the post-civil war era. Because the March girls are both sisters and best friends, watching them interact with each other always deepens my own feelings of sentiment toward my family. The March sisters are fiercely loyal, generous with what little they have, and true to themselves.

Perhaps my favorite aspect is that these sisters are not perfect. The movie displays very authentic vice (vanity, pride, jealousy), but also growth and forgiveness. It's filled with snowy scenes, ice skating, sledding, Christmas carols, and lots of love – all the ingredients in a perfect Christmas delight.

3. *Meet Me in St. Louis*

In 1904, the World's Fair came to St. Louis. In the year prior, the whole city of St. Louis is abuzz, including the Smith family. Full of pride and excitement that the whole world will be coming to them in their very own hometown, the four Smith girls (played by Judy Garland, Margaret O'Brien, Joan Carroll, and Lucille Bremer) learn lots of lessons about life that year, including falling in love.

Unexpectedly, their father gets transferred and they discover they must leave behind their beloved city. Tears and heartbreak erupt, sparking Garland to sing "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" to calm her five-year-old sister Tootie on Christmas Eve. What would our modern-day Christmases be

like without this staple holiday melody? If you need a good cry and an uplifting of emotions, this merry movie should be able to accomplish that in about 90 minutes.

4. *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*

At first, you may not think of this book-turned-movie as a Christmas film. Sure, Father Christmas makes an appearance, and the world is caught in an eternal winter thanks to the White Witch. But this story isn't really about Christmas...or is it? When Christianity began, there was no annual celebration of Jesus' birth. It wasn't until a few hundred years after Jesus' Ascension that this practice began. Some wise former-pagans made a connection between their old traditions and Christian truths. Every year, pagans would hold a feast after the Winter Solstice to celebrate the "turning of the tide." From that point in the winter season, the amount of light and warmth during the day increases. Pagans used to attribute this to the coming of their gods. It was converts who then attributed this celebration to Jesus' birth, which brought "Light" into the world.

In this story, Jesus is represented by the lion Aslan. It is upon Aslan's return to Narnia that the evil White Witch's power lessens and winter begins to end. It really is a Christmas story! Just as Christ came in the darkest days of humanity and saved us from sin's brisk coldness and Satan's firm grasp, Aslan returns, bringing spring, freeing the creatures from the

5. *Miracle on 34th Street*

Six-year-old Susan does not believe in Santa Claus. This dis-belief was instilled in her by her mother, Dorey, who does not think it's healthy for her young daughter to believe in fantasy. When tasked with hiring the Santa who will pose with kids at Macy's during the holiday season, Dorey enlists a man by the name of Kris Kringle. Kris claims to be Santa himself, but Dorey and Susan remain skeptics, even though they are intrigued by the "magic" he seems to work for all the people around him.

When a Macy's competitor sets a trap to make Kris look mentally unstable and threatening, Kris finds himself institutionalized. A young lawyer, along with Susan and Dorey, comes to his defense. These acts of love result in a little Christmas miracle and a new, happy family.

6. *Babes in Toyland*

If *The Wizard of Oz* and *Once Upon a Time* had a baby born in December in the 1980s, it would be this movie. By means of a magical Christmas Eve blizzard, eleven-year-old Lisa finds herself transported to the world of Toyland, a place where toys and fictional characters are real people. Lisa learns to embrace the importance of imagination and make-believe (which she had previously thought of as pointless) as she works alongside her new friends and the "toymaster" to save their home from the evil Barnaby Barnacle.

7. *It's a Wonderful Life*

This movie was considered such a flop by the studio when it was released in 1946 that they actually let its copyright lapse. By the 70s, there was a festive Frank Capra film available for networks to screen for free. Thus the story of George Bailey was played over and over and over again on multiple channels. It's because of this that people fell in love with the film and it became the holiday classic it is today. Thank goodness because, let's be honest, Christmas is not always an easy time of the year. Finances can be tight, family can make things stressful, and other shoppers might inspire us to lose our faith in humanity. This movie

is a good reminder of the effects a generous and sacrificial life has on others. No matter how bad things may seem at the moment, life really is wonderful!

8. *New in Town*

Even if you live somewhere it never snows, the amount of fluffy white precipitation in this film really transports one's mind into the winter season. The scenes are filled with ice fishing, Minnesota manners, and tapioca pudding, which at first doesn't seem too enticing. This is exactly how Lucy, played by Renee Zellweger, feels when her corporate job in Miami sends her to check on their plant up north. Knowing she's there to restructure the factory, many of the employees go out of their way to make her task more difficult.

Never one to back down from a fight, Lucy retaliates and becomes wildly unpopular. It's not until a near-death experience when Lucy is rescued by the handsome, head-of-the-union widower (played by Henry Connick Jr.) that everyone's icy attitudes towards one another begin to soften.

9. *The Muppets Christmas Carol*

I have a confession to make: I'm a bit of a scaredy-cat, and all the other Christmas Carol movies actually kind of frighten me (go ahead and laugh). I love the original story – it's a true classic! However, my sensitive self prefers the story told to me by the friendly muppets, whose silly antics soften some of the spooky parts and make it more bearable for myself and very young children.

10. *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*

I've always wanted to go to Radio City Music Hall, and since my husband's family lives right outside New York City, there's a good chance that at some point I will be able to cross it off my bucket list. Until then, I'm grateful to Netflix for adding their Christmas spectacular to their queue of holiday movies so that those of us who can't make it to the Big Apple in person can still watch the snazzy Rockettes sparkling amidst the glow of Christmas lights and music.

What's your favorite Christmas movie?



CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA. The Natchitoches Court #1372 Regina Pacis of the Catholic Daughters of America celebrated the 75th Anniversary of its founding on Oct. 20 at its CDA Hall on Trudeau Street. Regent Kathy Bundrick received guests following the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. Rev. Luke LaFleur (Associate Pastor) opened the reception with a blessing. Pastor Blake Deshautelle (Chaplain for the Court), and Deacon John Whitehead greeted guests. Bundrick read the Proclamation from Mayor Lee Posey, City of Natchitoches declaring the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the local court in 1944.

The Louisiana State Regent, Dawn Fortenberry, brought congratulations from the State, along with Sheila Moore, the State Treasurer of the Louisiana State Catholic Daughters of America. Many visitors from Alexandria, including Bishop Desmond Court #1459 and Notre Dame Court #1452 also brought greetings and gifts from their courts. Officers of the local court are: Regent Kathy Bundrick, Vice Regent Marie Soileau, Secretary Carolyn Benefield, Treasurer Mary White, and Financial Secretary Gayle Howell. Members in attendance for the celebration were: Beatrice Owsley, Melba Ackel, Nita Maggio, Susan Chesal, Adele Scott, Brenda Powell, Pat Melder, Gwen Ponthieux, Karen Scott, Kathy Bostick, Paula Hall, Dottie Mims, Elaine Bacon, Linda Vienne, Sandy Sharplin, Sue Keller, Rita Fontenot, Jean Gill, Kathleen Hicks, Laura Solomon, and Diane Vienne.

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Quiz Answer:

The word "advent" means arrival or coming. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "When the Church celebrates the *liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming" (CCC 524).

ANSWER:



The Holy Eucharist

God, our Father, in heaven above,
 Sent His son down with the
 greatest gift of love.

It is the Holy Eucharist, a gift for all,
 The greatest source of grace after the fall.

His body is real food,
 His blood is real drink,
 The changes takes place before
 the eye can blink.

His body and blood,
 the best source of good health.
 Better than all things on earth
 and all its wealth.

So, when in His presence,
 all knees must bend,
 Because He will be with us
 until the very end.

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BETA INDUCTION. St. Anthony of Padua School held their BETA induction and pinning ceremony for grades 4 - 6.



ROSARY MAKING. Ashton Caubarreaux and Vic Saucier, both residents of Marksville, came to St. Anthony to teach the 8th grade class how to make a rosary.

The string was blessed by Father Scott Chemino before they began.



FLU SHOT CLINIC. St. Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie hosted a Flu Shot Clinic sponsored by the Wellness Committee on Thursday, Oct. 17. Ninety-three flu shots were administered to students, faculty, and families of the school.

See more photos from Catholic Schools please visit www.diocesealex.org.



AWAKENING RETREAT. (BELOW) Diocese of Alexandria College Campus Ministry recently held its annual Awakening Retreat at Maryhill Renewal Center, .

Several Faculty/Staff positions are available in our diocesan Catholic Schools for the 2019-2020 school year.

Visit the <https://www.diocesealex.org/latest-news/teacher-jobs-available-at-catholic-schools/> for more information or to apply.

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Deadline to receive applications: Dec. 31, 2019

The schools of the Diocese of Alexandria admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Hands-on experiences guide St. Mary's science students

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." – Ben Franklin

By Jeannie Petrus

Ask any student and he/she will tell you that the easiest way to learn is by doing or becoming involved. That's why the recent acquisition of new equipment in the biology and chemistry labs at St. Mary's School is so important to the success of the students.

"Teaching quantum theory is essential, but students experience the subject by hands-on and inquiry-based learning," said Dr. Mark Ward, a math and science teacher at St. Mary's School. "Unlike a video that may show the experiment, St. Mary's students can put their hands on the equipment, learn techniques of accurate and precise measurement, and pose questions about how well the theory was supported by their data."

He added, "The whole experience of watching students learn in the laboratory is fun to watch, and certainly a satisfying experience for them. Application is key, and that is made possible by having an organized laboratory."

Some of the new equipment that has been recently added to the chemistry lab includes volumetric glassware, vacuum filtration systems, wireless spectrometers and fluorometers, electronic analytical balances, and gas discharge tubes.

Dr. Ward said the new



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL EXPANDS BIOLOGY LAB. [REDACTED], a 10th grade student at St. Mary's School, utilizes one of the 10 new microscopes that were recently added to the St. Mary's Biology Lab. The 10 new microscopes and new biology research materials are part of an ongoing project to keep the science lab equipment updated. Mrs. Carol Garcia-Rachal, who teaches Biology I & II, Honors Biology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, and Chemistry I & II, said the new microscopes will provide the students with the latest hands-on technology while engaging in biology lab research and experiments.

equipment gives the students more responsibility and buy-in with their experiments.

"Take, for instance, the spectrometer measurements on colored solutions of aqueous ions," said Dr. Ward. "While we have always used the older, standard methods to measure solution amounts of ions, the new equipment allows importing data directly to computer where ion concentrations are statistically analyzed, stored or printed. Students can compare the standard method with the

state-of-the-art method and feel the improvement in time and efficiency."

Dr. Ward has an M.S. and Ph.D. in Chemistry, taught at the Louisiana School for Math, Art and Sciences in Natchitoches, and has 25 years of experience in oil and gas chemical research and development. He teaches Advanced Math and Algebra II, Chemistry and Honors Physics. He also teaches Chemistry Dual Enrollment through Northwestern State University, which means the students he teaches in his

Chemistry DE lecture and lab classes earn college credit as well.

"It is especially beneficial to students in the Dual Enrollment program to be exposed to the newest technology since the lab course is earning the student college credit," he said.

Some other pieces of equipment that Dr. Ward recently added to the lab are portable sensors and probes.

"The students use these instruments for environmental engineering field work," said Dr. Ward. "I believe it is important to get the students outside into the environment as an extension of the chemistry lab. The sensors and probes are handy and can be compared to lab measurements when samples from the field are taken and brought to our labs. Field work is a great hands-on learning experience."

In the biology lab, ten new state-of-art microscopes were recently added. The 10 new microscopes and new biology research materials are part of an on-going project to keep the science lab equipment updated. Carol Garcia-Rachal, who teaches Biology I & II, Honors Human Anatomy and Physiology, Honors Chemistry and Chemistry I & II, said the new microscopes will provide the students with the latest hands-on technology while engaging in biology lab research and experiments.

Garcia-Rachal has an undergraduate degree in biology and a master's degree

in education and 47 years of teaching experience.

Even in the elementary grades, student involvement in science concepts are encouraged. Just recently, Chrissie York's first grade class engaged in a STEM project involving an apple. The students utilized science and math concepts to measure the weight, density, and circumference of the apple and engineering concepts to create a sturdy "apple transporter" on their heads. The students tested their engineering design outside where they ran from point A to point B to see if their design would stay intact. Two students were successful in this engineering challenge.

"Even at this young age, the students are more likely to understand basic math and science concepts if it involves an activity," said Mrs. York. "The project concluded with a discussion about what made the difference in the two successes of the challenge."

Mrs. Andrea Harrell, principal at St. Mary's School, said she believes in hands-on learning in all the grades and all curricula and believes the new equipment will enhance learning in the labs. "In the end, it's the students who benefit from this," she said.

For more information about St. Mary's and its science curriculum, contact Christy Griffin, admissions counselor, at 318-352-8394.

Catholic Campus Ministry is provided at LSU of Alexandria, Louisiana College, and Northwestern State University. Contact any University for more information.

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Now Accepting Applications for

**Administrative Assistant
to Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Diocese of Alexandria**

The Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools Office is seeking an experienced Administrative Assistant. Must be proficient in general office skills, excellent written and oral communication skills, computer usage, organizational skills, and multi-tasking. Works closely with the superintendent and 8 Catholic schools as communication liaison. Experience in education field preferred.

For an application packet please visit
<https://bit.ly/2oYaOEV>

Deadline for applications: December 31, 2019

Maryhill Legacy Bricks are now available!

Maryhill Renewal Center began in the 1940's as a vision of Bishop Charles Greco. Today, thousands of people attend retreats and functions held at Maryhill throughout the year and it continues to serve as the spiritual heart of the Diocese of Alexandria. Help continue Bishop Greco's vision by purchasing a beautiful, personalized and engraved commemorative Maryhill Legacy Brick. **These commemorative paver bricks will be installed and displayed at the entrance of the main chapel as a permanent legacy at Maryhill Renewal Center.** To order, contact Deacon Luke White or order online at www.diocesealex.org/maryhill-legacy-bricks/

Be Radiant Women's Retreat - November 30

Join the gals of Everyday Missionaries as we partner with St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Bunkie to glorify the Lord! Come and learn about the source and summit of our faith - the Eucharist! We will hear about miracles of Jesus through the Eucharist and how as women we can draw strength and hope from the Lord. This retreat comes just before the beginning of Advent, the time when we await for the coming of Jesus, God made flesh. Let us take this time to ask ourselves if we truly adore and appreciate the miracle of the Eucharist. We will come together to explore the truths of this sacrament and open our hearts to Him in a new and exciting way! Visit www.everydaymissionaries.com/retreats for updates and registration information. All women are invited. Cost is \$15. Lunch will be provided.

Small Business Saturday - November 30

Here's to a day to celebrate the makers, managers, employees, visionaries, entrepreneurs, and dreamers of small businesses - and the amazing people who support them! Remember to shop local and support small businesses in the Central Louisiana community.

Christmas at the Nest - December 3

Holy Savior Menard High School invites all students in grades PreK3-6th to attend the Sixth Annual Christmas at the Nest, on Tuesday, Dec. 3 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. The evening will start in the school gymnasium with storytime with award-winning storyteller, Sylvia Davis. After storytime, the fun will continue in the school mall area with Christmas crafts and games, light refreshments, and pictures with Santa. This event is FREE and open to the public. Attendees are asked to bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to the Food Bank of Central Louisiana as part of the Christmas Cheer Food Drive.

Advent Reflection Series, Cabrini - Dec. 5, 12, and 19

Come join us at St. Frances Cabrini Church for an Advent Reflection series by Fr. Chad Partain. This series will take place on Thursday, Dec. 5, 12, and 19, beginning

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

at 6:00 p.m. each evening in Ducote Hall, located behind the Church Office. For more information, call Michelle at 318-445-4588.

Fall Fair and Gumbo Cook-off, Pineville - Dec. 7

Join Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville for a Fall Fair with gumbo cook-off and kids' Christmas Craft Day. Bring out the whole family for food, crafts, and Christmas shopping! Anyone interested in entering a gumbo team should contact Wade or Luanne Trahan at 318-308-0406. Anyone interested in having a vendor booth should contact Crystal Mallett at 318-481-6993. Craft making from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Children of all ages are welcome, and an adult must stay with them. Volunteers are needed to host a craft table. Everyone is invited to attend! Contact Dawn Parker for more information at angelicdawnparker@gmail.com or 318-446-6557. Registration forms can also be found on the Sacred Heart church website, Facebook page, and fair event page.

Breakfast and Photos with St. Nicholas, Woodworth - Dec. 8

Bring the kids to Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth from 900 - 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 8 for breakfast and pictures with St. Nicholas! For more information call the church office at 318-487-9894.

Gumbo Cookoff, Kolin - Dec. 8

Sts. Francis & Anne Church in Kolin will hold the 3rd Annual Gumbo Cookoff on Dec. 8 after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Prize will be awarded to the team with the best gumbo. Teams can sign up in the back of church or contact the office at 318-767-2078. \$6.00 will get gumbo, rice, crackers, and sweet potatoes. There will be a Cake Sale in conjunction with the meal. Come join the fun!

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - Dec. 9

Please be aware that the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, normally celebrated on Dec. 8, this year has been moved to Monday, Dec. 9. While it remains a solemnity and the Patronal Feast day of the United States of America, the obligation for the faithful to attend Mass has been abrogated, i.e., it is not a holy day of obligation this year.

Heart of St. Kateri Circle meeting - Dec. 12

Our monthly meeting for the Heart of St. Kateri Circle will be on Thursday, Dec. 12 at 5:30 p.m. at 2225 N. Bolton Ave. in Alexandria. Our Christmas party for both Heart of St. Kateri Circle in Alexandria and the Campiti Kateri Circle will be Saturday, Dec. 14 at 2:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph Hall in Campiti, LA. We are joining with our Sister Circle for good cheer, and exchange of gifts by all who wish to participate in a Christmas celebration.

Holy Spirit Women's Retreat - Jan. 24-26, 2020

Johnette Benkovic Williams, Fr. Mark Goring, Deacon Larry and Andi Oney, and Patti Mansfield will be featured at the annual Holy Spirit Women's Retreat Jan. 24-26, 2020, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Lafayette, LA. The prophetic theme is "2020: Without a Vision the People Perish." Register online at www.ccrno.org or call 504-828-1368.

REGISTRATION for Steubenville South 2020 is NOW OPEN!

Go to www.steubenvillesouth.com to register! Online registration for the 2020 Steubenville South Conference in Alexandria is now open! This year's theme is RESTORED. Youth ministers are invited to go online to www.steubenvillesouth.com to register their groups. The conference will be held June 26 - 28, 2020.

Positions Available:

Administrative Assistant to Superintendent of Catholic Schools Diocese of Alexandria
See the ad on page 21.

Principal Opening: 2020-2021 School Year
Holy Savior Menard Central High School
See the ad on page 20

Principal Opening: 2020-2021 School Year
Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria

Our Lady of Prompt Succor School seeks an enthusiastic, dedicated and qualified principal to minister in leadership for a school community of more than 420 students in Grades Pre-school through six. The successful candidate must be committed to balancing the strong traditions of the 70 year history as a parish school with embracing new and creative opportunities to lead the faculty, students, and parent community to deeper spiritual, academic, and social excellence. The ability to collaborate with the pastor, parish staff, assistant principal, faculty, and parent body is essential.

Interested applicants may go online for an application packet: www.diocesealex.org/our-diocese/catholic-schools/job-applications/. Deadline to receive applications is Dec. 6, 2019.

Church Today News Deadlines

Next issue: Dec. 30
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Dec. 12

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December 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>25</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPPARAMBIL</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>FEAST OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>THANKSGIVING DAY</p> <p>FEAST OF ST. CATHERINE LABOURE</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Everyday Missionaries Women's Retreat St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</p> <p>Small Business Saturday</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL</p>	<p>DECEMBER 1</p> <p>FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT</p> <p>PRAY FOR ARCHBISHOP AYMOND</p>
<p>2</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS</p>	<p>3</p> <p>#iGiveCatholic on #GivingTuesday</p> <p>Christmas at the Nest Menard High School</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY</p>	<p>4</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS</p>	<p>5</p> <p>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center</p> <p>Advent Reflection St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria</p> <p>Holiday Light Safari, Downtown Alexandria Zoo</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES-SANCHEZ</p>	<p>6</p> <p>FIRST FRIDAY</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ</p>	<p>7</p> <p>FALL FAIR and Gumbo Cook-off Sacred Heart, Pineville</p> <p>FIRST SATURDAY</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Breakfast and Photos with Santa Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth</p> <p>Rapides Parish Symphony Orchestra Alexandria</p> <p>SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</p>
<p>9</p> <p>SOLEMNITY of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Old-fashioned Christmas Kent House</p> <p>Lessons and Carols Minor Basilica, Natchitoches</p> <p>Red River Chorale concert St. Francis Xavier Cathedral</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY</p>	<p>11</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Advent Reflection St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria</p> <p>Heart of St. Kateri Mtg. Alexandria</p> <p>Holiday Light Safari, Downtown Alexandria Zoo</p> <p>Alex Winter Fete, Downtown Alexandria</p> <p>FEAST of OUR LADY of GUADALUPE</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR</p>	<p>13</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN</p>	<p>14</p> <p>PRAY FOR MSGR. S. TESTA</p>	<p>15</p> <p>THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS</p>
<p>16</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. TIMMERMANS</p>	<p>17</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. TRAVIS</p>	<p>18</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Advent Reflection St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria</p> <p>Holiday Light Safari, Downtown Alexandria Zoo</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD</p>	<p>20</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. G. VOLTZ</p>	<p>21</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. WILTSE</p>	<p>22</p> <p>FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. XAVIER</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. ZACHARIAH</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>CHRISTMAS EVE</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. AELAVANTHARA</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>CHRISTMAS</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. W. AJAERO</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>Holiday Light Safari, Downtown Alexandria Zoo</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Diocesan Offices Closed</p> <p>PRAY FOR ARCHBISHOP G. AYMOND</p>	<p>28</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. S. BRANDOW</p>	<p>29</p> <p>FEAST of the HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. BRAQUET</p>

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