

# CHURCH TODAY

Volume LI, No. 1

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

January 27, 2020



## Be courageous!

Eighth grade students from Holy Savior Menard; Sacred Heart, Moreauville; St. Anthony, Bunkie; St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria; St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport; and St. Mary's, Natchitoches came together for a day of retreat at Maryhill Retreat Center on Jan. 8.

Speakers included Paul George, Father Louis Sklar, and Kelly Lombardi who encouraged students to designate a specific place to pray, and to incorporate prayer into their daily routines.

### INSIDE

#### **Holy Savior Menard names new principal for the 2020-2021 school year**

The Diocese of Alexandria and Holy Savior Menard announced the appointment of Christopher D. Gatlin as Principal of the school, effective July 1, 2020. See page 5 for more information. Congratulations, Mr. Gatlin!

#### **Pro-life month activities draw to a close**

As pro-life activities draw to a close, see pages 6 and 7 for ways to support expecting mothers, plus a few not-so-typical Catholic baby names to share with your friends.

#### **Prepare for Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26**

The Lenten season is just around the corner. See page 15 or the diocesan website for a schedule of Lenten missions around the diocese.

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# Looking back



### January 2005:

**Left:** Students in the library of Our Lady of Prompt Succor School; (standing) Weslee Gralapp, 6th grade; Rylee Ferguson, 3rd grade; and Ishmael Ray, Kindergarten.

### Today:

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Alexandria celebrate the annual eighth grade retreat at Maryhill Renewal Center, the appointment of a new principal at Holy Savior Menard high School, and the annual Student of the Year competition. See this issue and the diocesan website at [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org) for more pictures and updates.

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P. O. Box 7417  
 Alexandria, LA 71303  
[churchtoday@diocesealex.org](mailto:churchtoday@diocesealex.org)  
 318-445-6424

Publisher: Diocese of Alexandria  
 Publication Manager / Editor:  
 Cari Terracina, ext. 255,  
[cterracina@diocesealex.org](mailto:cterracina@diocesealex.org)  
 Multimedia Manager / Advertising:  
 Joan Ferguson, ext. 264;  
[joanferguson@diocesealex.org](mailto:joanferguson@diocesealex.org)  
 Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209;  
[starver@diocesealex.org](mailto:starver@diocesealex.org)

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 e-mail [starver@diocesealex.org](mailto:starver@diocesealex.org)

# Catholic All Year: Groundhog Day



February 2 marks three distinct but related historical events in the life of the Holy Family, plus a yearly sacramental observance: the Presentation of the Lord (when Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem for the first time), the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, Meeting of the Lord (when St. Simeon encountered the Holy Family in the temple), and Candlemas.

The American tradition of Groundhog Day is actually based on a Catholic Candlemas tradition, dating back to the Middle Ages, "If Candlemas Day is clear and bright, winter will have another bite. If Candlemas Day brings cloud and rain, winter is gone and will not

come again." Candlemas, or the blessing of the candles, is celebrated on February 2 of each year. The feast goes by this title because of the words of St. Simeon: "For my eyes have seen your salvation \ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, \ a light for revelation to the Gentiles, \ and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2: 30-32). Jesus is the Light of the World, so on this day, the Church blesses candles for use throughout the year. Traditionally, families would bring their own candles to be blessed on this day as well, for use in their own homes. Candles used in church for the liturgy must contain at least 51 percent beeswax, and

families are encouraged, but not obligated, to use the same in their homes when using candles as sacramentals. In France, Candlemas is also known as "crepe day," meant to commemorate the purification of the Virgin Mary, and the presentation of the baby Jesus. A perfect way to celebrate this day is to make savory crepes for family dinner with whole wheat flour and filling them with ham and cheese, followed by sweet crepes, made with white flour and topped with fruit, chocolate, and whipped cream. In our current liturgical calendar, our focus is on the Presentation, but in previous eras, the Church highlighted the Purification. From the

observance of the Purification of Mary came the tradition of "churching" women: the blessing of a woman forty days after childbirth, regardless of the outcome. The tradition was an acknowledgement of the difficulty of childbirth and new motherhood, and an official Church mandate for women to rest for six weeks after giving birth. The blessing of the mother now typically takes place as part of the baptism ceremony.

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**The feast of Candlemas  
 will be celebrated  
 Sunday, February 2.**

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# Integral development for all is a moral duty

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis told global business and government leaders that everyone has the moral responsibility to seek the integral development of all people, but especially those who are in need, suffering injustice or whose lives are threatened.

"The moral obligation to care for one another flows from this fact," which must never be forgotten, that "we are all members of the one human family," he said in a message read to those attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Likewise, this means putting the human person, "rather than the mere pursuit of power or profit, at the very center of public policy," he wrote.

The pope's message was read to the assembly Jan. 21 by Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; he attended the forum as the Vatican's representative.

The annual meeting in Davos Jan. 21-24 brought together people representing business, government, academia and media to discuss the theme, "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World."

With the World Economic Forum celebrating its 50th anniversary, Pope Francis said it has offered opportunities "to explore innovative and effective ways of building a better world. It has also provided an arena where political will and mutual cooperation can be guided and strengthened in overcoming the isolationism, individualism and ideological colonization that



**WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM.** Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, president of the Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad, attends a session at the 50th World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, Jan. 21, 2020. (CNS photo / Denis Balibouse, Reuters)

sadly characterizes too much contemporary debate."

As the world begins a new decade, he said, the duty to put people first and protect their dignity "is incumbent upon business sectors and governments alike," and must be part of the search for "equitable solutions to the challenges we face."

"It is necessary to move beyond short-term technological or economic approaches and to give full consideration to the ethical dimension in seeking resolutions to present problems or proposing initiatives for the future," the pope said in his message.

When practices and structures are "driven largely, or even solely, by self-interest," he wrote, they often only see people as "a means to an end," which, in turn "gives rise to real injustice."

"A truly integral human development can only flourish when all members of the human family are included in, and contribute to, pursuing the common good," he said.

"In seeking genuine progress," he said, "let us not forget that to trample upon the dignity of another person is in fact to weaken one's own worth."

Pope Francis acknowledged

the achievements made over the past 50 years and said he hoped those taking part in this year's and future forums "will keep in mind the high moral responsibility each of us has to seek the integral development of all our brothers and sisters, including those of

future generations."

"May your deliberations lead to a growth in solidarity, especially with those most in need, who experience social and economic injustice and whose very existence is even threatened," he said.

## Pro-life committee chairman's Roe v. Wade anniversary statement asks faithful to serve moms in need

WASHINGTON – January 22 is the National Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children, when the Catholic Church remembers the 47th anniversary of Roe v. Wade—the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in all 50 states. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued the following statement:

"January 22 marks the sorrowful anniversary of the tragic Supreme Court decisions of Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, which legalized abortion through all nine months of pregnancy. The Church will never abandon her efforts to reverse these terrible decisions that have led to the deaths of millions of innocent children and the traumatization of countless women and families.

"As the Church and growing numbers of pro-life Americans continue to advocate for women and children in courthouses and legislatures, the Church's pastoral response is focused on the needs of women facing pregnancies in challenging circumstan-

es. While this has long been the case, the pastoral response will soon intensify.

"The Committee on Pro-Life Activities at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is asking bishops to invite parishes in their dioceses to join a nationwide effort from March 25, 2020 through March 25, 2021 entitled, 'Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service.'

"Recognizing that women in need can be most effectively reached at the local level, the 'Year of Service' invites parishes to assess, communicate, and expand resources to expectant mothers within their own communities. The U.S. Bishops will be providing resources, outreach tools, and models to assist parishes in this important effort.

"We pray that 'Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service' will help us reach every pregnant mother in need, that she may know she can turn to her local Catholic community for help and authentic friendship."

More information about Walking with Moms in Need can be found at [www.walking-withmoms.com](http://www.walking-withmoms.com).

### 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](http://www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/healing) (visit [www.diocesealex.org](http://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?**

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## End of Christmas season?

**Q.** At my previous parish, we said that the end of the Christmas season was the feast of the Epiphany (the three Wise Men). My current parish, though, says that the Christmas season concludes a week later on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Which one is right? And if it's the latter, what does the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the Jordan River have to do with Christmas? (New Middletown, Indiana)

**A.** Many people do put away their Nativity creches and other Christmas decorations following the Epiphany, leading to a common assumption that the Christmas season closes with that feast. But liturgically, your current parish is correct.

The Christmas 2019 website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops says this: "The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes



### Question Corner

Father Kenneth Doyle  
Catholic News Service

on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts, and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him ... including the fact that he was born to die for us."

The baptism of Jesus marks a sharp line of demarcation: Previous to that, he was viewed simply as a carpenter from Nazareth. But with his baptism, his public life begins as he proclaims with his words and actions the arrival of the reign of God; with the baptism in the

Jordan, the Holy Spirit begins to lead Jesus in a new way.

The second part of your question, though, is a bit more difficult: What does Christ's baptism have to do with Christmas? Here, it's helpful to consider something Pope Benedict XVI said in a homily on the feast of the baptism in 2013.

He explained that both the nativity of Jesus and his baptism show the savior's solidarity with us, the humble immersion in our human condition that allowed Christ to understand

our weakness and frailty. Even though Jesus had no need for baptism as a sign of repentance, he allowed it to happen. In the words of Pope Benedict, "He was moved to compassion, he chose to 'suffer with' men and women, to become a penitent with us."

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Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.

*Who is  
this king  
of glory?  
It is  
the Lord!*

Psalm 24: 8  
Responsorial Psalm  
for February 2

## Stained glass windows

By most accounts, I would classify myself as a "visual learner." Even to the point that when I am forced to put something together that has instructions, I look at the pictures and try to figure out how the pieces fit rather than reading the directions. The old saying, "When all else fails, read the directions" fits me perfectly.

If you have been following these articles, you may recall a few months when I used illustrations to help you "see" what I am trying to "say." With such a reliance of pictures as a learning and expression tool, you would think I would have some ability to draw or paint. Nothing could be farther from the truth! My drawing skills are so bad that I am always last to be chosen for the team when playing Pictionary.

I suppose that is why I admire those who have the gift for artistry. Having an ability to look at a blank canvas, have an image in your mind, and using a medium to bring that image to life, must bring great joy to the artist. A good work of art allows us to see the story the author is wanting to tell us.



### Embracing the Liturgy

By Deacon Richard W. Mitchell  
Vice Chancellor / Director of the Diaconate

Telling the story through art is the idea and one reason stained glass windows are common in our churches. Even those stained glass windows that have nothing other than a colored design, allows the sun to shine through and bring beautiful color into the church. It is as if God is reminding us of His words in the beginning of Genesis: "Let there be Light." But those that do have a design or a scene are meant to tell a story from scripture, depict a meaningful symbol in the liturgy, or possibly show the picture of a saint that is meaningful for that church parish.

To appreciate their importance, it is helpful to recall that long before people could read or write, their main

source for learning scripture was hearing the readings at Mass and learning from the priest during his homily. Passing these stories to their children would certainly be aided by illustrations found in the windows of the church.

Though reading and writing are the customary methods of communication today and with the internet you can have the bible read to you by clicking a few buttons, stained glass windows still continue to be compelling ways to share the gospel. These images can include many symbols and intricate details that may require an explanation from someone knowledgeable about the stained glass. This is the case if you walk through St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. They

are some of the most beautiful stained glass windows I have seen. Thankfully, there are brochures that explain each of the windows. Nonetheless, for us visual learners, they provide pictures to help us "see" what the Lord is teaching us.

So, the next time you attend Mass and see the light shining through a beautiful stained glass window, take a moment to study the scene to recall the story the artist is depicting and pray with that scene in mind. If you do, it will draw you closer to the Lord and help you to "Love the Liturgy."

*Send your questions  
and/or share your comments  
with Deacon Mitchell via email  
to: [WhyDoWe@diocesealex.org](mailto:WhyDoWe@diocesealex.org).*



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Diocese of Alexandria  
on Spotify

## Holy Savior Menard High School announces new principal for the 2020-2021 school year

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Alexandria is pleased to announce that Christopher D. Gatlin has been appointed Principal of Holy Savior Menard High School in Alexandria, LA to be effective July 1, 2020.



Current principal, Dwayne Lemoine, announced his retirement in October to be effective June 2020.

Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Thomas Roque, Sr., welcomes the stability and continuity that Mr. Gatlin will offer as he steps into the role of principal after serving as the Dean of Students, Head Football Coach, and Assistant Principal at Menard since 2017.

Gatlin says, "As a Catholic school educator, I am excited to have the opportunity to establish an educational experience for all students that embraces that values and beliefs of the Catholic Church. And as a Catholic school leader, I understand that I must demonstrate a love for a diverse student body... During my teaching career, I have discovered that every child can learn when in an environment that is safe, welcoming,

and conducive of acquiring knowledge."

Previously, Gatlin was a Special Education Teacher and football coach at Ruston High School; Athletic Director and Head Football Coach at Alexandria Senior High; Athletic Director and Head Football Coach at Buckeye High School; and Special Education Teacher/football coach at Abilene Cooper High School, Abilene, TX.

A search will be forthcoming for a new head football coach for Menard.

A press conference was held at Holy Savior Menard High School's Library on Friday, January 17 to announce the news. For additional information, please contact the Catholic Schools Office.

## Hospital joins forces with community partners to bring Catholic health care ethics conference to Alexandria

CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital has a rich tradition, almost 70 years, in central Louisiana, and Christopher Karam, CEO of CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Health System, is honored to lead the Catholic healthcare ministry. According to Karam, "the Sisters' wonderful Catholic healthcare ministry has been there for all, regardless of their ability to pay, as patients and their families grasp with often difficult healthcare decisions. As the issues that confront us in healthcare become more complex and often challenge our position as a Catholic healthcare organization, staying current in Church teachings will help us all better live out what God calls us to be." In an effort to support health care professionals in their service to patients and families, Karam initiated the collaboration between the Diocese of Alexandria, Catholic Physicians Guild of Central Louisiana, and St. John Paul II Foundation to bring the first Converging Roads health care ethics conference to CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital on Saturday, February 29, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. "This upcoming conference is a blessing to our hospital and the Diocese as it gives us an opportunity for physicians, clergy, our associates, and the local communities to grow in the understanding of Catholic bioethics," Karam shared.

Converging Roads is an initiative of the St. John Paul II Foundation, a national Catholic apostolate proclaiming the Good News about life and family through education and



formation. At this conference, health care professionals and chaplains can receive continuing education credits; however, all are invited to attend regardless of profession. On the topic of Health Care and Human Dignity, Converging Roads provides continuing education deeply rooted in the Hippocratic and Catholic ethical tradition and will feature presentations from Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, PhD on "Proportionate Vs. Disproportionate Means and Pain Management"; Natalie Rodden, MD on "End of Life Decision Making and Advance Directives"; Jeffrey Berger, MD, FASAM on "A Catholic Response to the Opioid Crisis"; and more. Father Joy Antony, Chaplain of CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital, invites all to "get the most out of several national and local experts at one event."

When asked, "why should someone attend Converging Roads?" Fr. Joy responded, "By healing the sick, our Lord, Jesus Christ, revealed the kingdom of God to them. Thus, healing has

a noble purpose beyond physical cure. The vast majority of our Catholic population and doctors take their faith seriously and expressed their desires to know more about authentic, Catholic teaching on their health care ministry. Converging Roads focuses on how the healing ministry of Jesus Christ can be faithfully carried out on a daily basis.

Registration for Converging Roads is now open, and prices range from \$69-\$149 based on CME/CNE inclusion. The conference will include seven presentations, a light breakfast, lunch, opportunities to attend Mass and confession, and a wine and cheese networking social. Students (medical, nursing, graduate, and undergraduate) are offered a special rate of \$15, and priests in the Diocese of Alexandria are offered free admission. If you are a priest who would like to attend, please email [erin@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:erin@forlifeandfamily.org) to register. For registration or more information, visit [www.convergingroads.com](http://www.convergingroads.com).

### HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for February

Listen to the Migrants' Cries

We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.

### *Prayer for the Appointment of a New Bishop*

**Please begin praying publicly and privately in anticipation of the appointment of a new Bishop for our Diocese.**

Praise to you, Lord our God, our eternal shepherd and guide. In your faithfulness, grant to the Diocese of Alexandria a new bishop whose watchful care will serve to continue the good work of his predecessors.

In Your love, give us a shepherd who will lead us in being Christ's heart of mercy, voice of hope, and hands of justice. Help him to fill our minds and hearts with the truth of the Gospel, the power of the sacraments, and the desire to build up your holy Church. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

*The just man is a light in darkness to the upright.*

Psalm 112: 4  
Responsorial Psalm for February 9

# 10 ways to support her when she's unexpectedly expecting

I had been brought up to believe that life is always a gift, but it certainly didn't feel like one when I gazed in shock at a positive pregnancy test. As a mom who had my first baby in college, I know that an unexpected pregnancy can sometimes bring fear, shame, and doubt.

However, I also know that an unexpected pregnancy can bring joy, excitement, awe, gratitude, and deeper love than I knew was possible—not to mention the little bundle who inspires these sentiments! About nine months after looking at that pregnancy test, I received the very best gift I have ever been given: my daughter, Maria\*.

An unexpected pregnancy might be confusing along the way, but life—though at times difficult—is ultimately beautiful. Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. As someone who has been there, I encourage you to support your friend in her new journey of being a mother.

Not sure how to help or what to say? Here are ten tips:

## 1. Be available.

An unexpected pregnancy can send a woman into crisis mode. If your friend just found out she is pregnant, she may not be thinking clearly, and she may feel she has no control over anything at the moment.

Be aware of how she is responding to you. Listen to her and let her know you love her and are there for her any time she needs you. Don't pass judgment on her either interiorly or through words or body language.

## 2. Respond positively.

When a woman experiencing challenging circumstances confides she is pregnant, the reaction of the first person she tells tends to set the tone for her decision-making. Avoid responding with shock or alarm, and be calm and understanding. Let her know you're there for her and that it's going to be okay. Pay



close attention to her emotional state, and act accordingly.

Depending on where she is emotionally, it may or may not be helpful to congratulate her at that time. However, it is always important to affirm that every person's life—including her child's and her own—is precious and beautiful no matter the circumstances.

## 3. Be honest.

The journey through an unexpected pregnancy is not easy, and it's okay if you don't know the perfect words to say. Just be honest. Let her know you are there for her, and ask her how she is feeling and how you can support her.

It's a good way to open the door to communicate, and she may be grateful for the opportunity to talk freely with someone. She might become emotional at times, but be patient—let's not forget hormones; the struggle is real.

## 4. Offer specific help.

Don't be afraid to ask her if she needs help with anything or to make specific offers to help. For example, you might offer to help with cleaning, finding a good doctor, or running to the store to pick up the one food that won't make her feel sick. But remember to read her cues, and make sure you're not being overbearing.

## 5. Set up a support system.

In addition to the standard baby registry, you can help her get other kinds of support by lining up much-needed, practical help. Think outside the box. Food = love, so take advantage of websites that allow friends and family to sign up to make meals, send food deliveries, or simply donate money. Some websites can even help organize other assistance like rides to the doctor, babysitting other children she may have, or help around the house. You can also look into what programs and assistance may be sponsored by your local diocesan pastoral care or Respect Life offices.

## 6. Tell her she is beautiful.

She may be feeling physically, spiritually, and emotionally drained with this pregnancy. Take the time to reassure her of her beauty, both inside and out, especially when morning sickness might make her feel otherwise.

## 7. Help her recharge and relax.

First-time mothers may have difficulty crossing that threshold into their new life as a mother. Your friend may be fearful that her life is "over," so help her see it's okay—good, actually—to still focus on herself sometimes.

Even though she is a mother, she will still continue to be a woman, so affirm that it's healthy and important to take care of herself—not only physically, but emotionally, as well. Help her to do things she really enjoys. Take her out for a nice meal, a movie, or a day of pampering.

## 8. Reassure her it's okay (and good) to be happy.

It can be hard to be happy about a pregnancy that many people see as unfortunate timing at best and totally irresponsible at worst. Even if your friend wants to be happy about her bundle of joy, she may not feel she "deserves" to show that happiness. Get excited about her pregnancy in front of her, and she may just feel comfortable enough to share her own excitement with you.

Also, continue to show your interest and excitement throughout her pregnancy. Ask questions about her developing child. What is she learning at her doctor appointments? What names is she considering? Ask her what she thinks her baby looks like. Does she think they will have her eyes?

## 9. Encourage her.

Society tends to focus on ways that an unexpected pregnancy can be challenging. Help your friend to think of the benefits. Remind her of the fluttering kicks, somersaults, and maybe even dance moves her son or daughter will be rocking once they grow a little more. With moms' groups and opportunities for play dates, there's a whole new social world to explore. And there are plenty of benefits to being a young mom—like having

more energy to chase her kids around.

## 10. Point out some real-life role models.

Many amazing young mothers and birthmothers have experienced unexpected pregnancies and still followed their dreams. Other women have discovered that, even when unable to follow their lives as planned, something beautiful and good came out of the twists in the road, bringing opportunities, growth, and joy they hadn't imagined.

Point your friend to some of the many websites, blogs, and social media accounts dedicated to supporting young mothers. And let's not forget Mary, whose "yes" to bearing Jesus affected the course of history. The Blessed Mother is a great person to pour her heart out to, and she's a powerhouse of intercessory prayer.

An unexpected pregnancy can be a difficult and frightening time, and it's important that your friend knows you are thinking of her and supporting her. Although the tips mentioned can be helpful, don't forget the most important thing is to pray. Even if it's just a quick two-second prayer, prayer is the most effective way we can help. Pray for her, for her child, and for guidance in how you can give her the best possible support. Also, pay attention to how your friend feels most loved. One person might appreciate encouraging words, while another might feel more supported if you wash the dishes. Simple things—letting her know that you care and are always ready to listen, that you are available to help her, that you are praying for her—can give hope and courage when she might otherwise feel alone. Your support might be the only support she receives. Even if we never know how, the smallest things we do can change someone's life. You can make a difference in her life. Will you?

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*Originally printed at [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org). The author is now a married mother of four who works as an advocate for young mothers facing unexpected pregnancies. She had her first baby in college, and is a proud Catholic who supports life in every circumstance and at every stage.*

## 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.

# Not so typical Catholic baby names

By Cari Terracina  
Publications Manager



Spring is coming soon, bringing with it warmer weather, blooming buds, and baby showers. Last spring saw an abundance of baby shower celebrations, including my own. My husband and I obviously thought about possible Catholic baby names for our little one, wanting something somewhat unique that would also shed some light on the importance of our Faith.

## Unique Catholic baby names

All of this brainstorming resulted in a long list of names. In the hopes that all of our brainstorming Catholic baby names won't go to waste, here are just a few to help you in your search for the perfect name for your soon-to-arrive little one!

## Catholic baby names for boy

- Ambrose: St. Ambrose was a brilliant preacher who convinced St. Augustine that God exists;
- Amos: meaning "borne of God;"
- Asher: one of Jacob's 12 sons;
- Beckett: after the martyr, St. Thomas Beckett;
- Benedict: meaning "blessed;"
- Blaise: St. Blaise (pronounced "Blaze"), was both a bishop and a doctor;
- Bosco: rather than the typical and popular "John," choose Bosco and assign your son the awesome patronage of St. John Bosco;
- Damien: after the science-minded, St. Damien;
- Fabian: remembered on Jan. 20. St. Fabian was bishop and martyr, and unanimously elected to the papacy;
- Fulton: one of my personal favorites, after Fulton Sheen;
- Gabriel: meaning "God's

strength;"

- Guy: the patron saint of comedians and dancers;
- Ignatus: choose between Ignatius of Antioch or Ignatius of Loyola;
- Judah: another favorite of mine, son of Jacob, his patron could be Judah Maccabee, or St. Jude;
- Kolbe: in honor of St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan friar who volunteered to die in place of a stranger at Auschwitz;
- Liam: a form of "William," after Bl. William Joseph Chaminade, beatified in 2000 by Pope John Paul II;
- Louis: after St. Louis Martin, father of the Little Flower;
- Luca: a form of Luke, meaning "light;"
- Rex: The latin meaning of this name is "king;"

- Shepherd: not only would he have a classic Southern name, but he'd also have an incredible namesake: the Good Shepherd;
- Simeon: another son of Jacob, but also the prophet who foretells of Mary's Sorrowful Heart;
- Titus: after the companion of St. Paul;
- Xavier: after the missionary St. Francis Xavier.

## Catholic baby names for girls

- Adele: Saint Adele, whose feast day is celebrated December 24;
- Agnes: the name means "lamb" in Latin;
- Caeli: pronounced "cha-lee," this name is part of the latin Marian antiphon, "Regina Caeli," or in English, "queen of Heaven;"
- Charlotte: Pope St. John Paul II's birth name was Karol, which translates to "Charles" in

English, the masculine form of "Charlotte;"

- Chiara / Ciara: in honor of Bl. Chiara Luce Badano;
- Colbie: after another Polish saint, St. Maximilian Kolbe;
- Dinah: the only daughter of Jacob;
- Dorothy: after Dorothy Day;
- Edie: after St. Edith Stein
- Faustina: Marai Faustyna Kowalska, popularly spelled "Faustina," whose apparitions of Jesus inspired the Divine Mercy devotion;
- Felicity: after the new mom and early Christian martyr;
- Gemma: when St. Gemma herself was baptized, her mother reportedly feared that the child would never get into heaven without a saint's name. The priest reassured her, saying, "Let us hope that she may become a gem of Paradise.;"
- Gianna: patron of mothers, physicians, and unborn children;
- Jordan: after the river in which Christ was baptized;
- Josephine: the feminine form of Joseph;

- Leah: she may not have been loved by her husband, Jacob, but Scripture says that God favored her;
- Maris: after Our Lady, Star of the Sea;
- Phoebe: the name of St. Paul's friend who delivered his letter to the Romans;
- Sarai: Sarah's name before God changed it to "Sarah;"
- Selah: a term commonly used in the book of Psalms, given its context, is likely to mean "to praise" or "pause and reflect;"
- Siena: "Catherine" is a fairly common name, but "Siena" is more unique and specific to this Doctor of the Church;
- Stella: Another Marian name, after Our Lady, Star of the Sea;
- Verity: Derived from "veritas," which is Latin for "truth;"
- Zelig: Canonized very recently, St. Zelig was the mother of St. Therese.

Do you have any other ideas for unique Catholic baby names? If so, share them with us on Facebook!

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A Seminary Burse is an invested sum of money, the interest of which is used in perpetuity to help fund the education of men to the priesthood. Contributions to any of the burses or to establish a new burse should be sent to the Chancery Office, Post Office Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306-0417. -- Very Reverend Stephen Scott Chemino, Chairman

Completed burses at \$15,000.00 each:

- Bishop Charles P. Greco
• Monsignor Henry F. Beckers
• Monsignor Milburn Broussard
• Monsignor Thomas F. Early (3 completed)
• Monsignor B. A. Scallan
• Father H. Gerald Bordelon
• Father Daniel Corkery
• Father Michael P. Kammer
• Father Bruce Miller (2 completed)
• Father William B. Provosty (2 completed)
• Angelo R. and Ena F. D'Angelo
• John Dominick Driscoll
• Miss Mary F. Early
• Irvin and Elma Moreau, Harrison P. Moreau, Michael N. Moreau, Deborah S. Moreau Bouche, Emily A. Moreau, Tom and Mary Candiottio, and Ruby Moreau
• David Stafford "Brother" O'Shee
• John Gregory Simms
• Joseph T. Simms, Jr.

The following is a list of established burses and amounts each:

Table listing established burses and amounts, including St. Damien de Veuster (175.00), Bishop William Friend (100.00), Bishop Lawrence P. Graves (5,805.00), Bishop Charles P. Greco (1,450.00), Bishop Ronald P. Herzog (450.00), Bishop Sam G. Jacobs (1,100.00), Bishop David P. Talley (525.00), Monsignor Marcel J. Anderson (100.00), Monsignor Leon R. Aycock (1,535.00), Monsignor Norman C. Buvens (100.00), Monsignor Paul E. Conway (825.00), Monsignor Allen M. Chenevert (1,000.00), Monsignor Isidore Deceulaer (160.00), Monsignor S. J. Dekeuwer (650.00), Monsignor Gerald J. Ducote (560.00), Monsignor Robert C. Friend (50.00), Monsignor Ronald C. Hoppe (950.00), Monsignor James E. Howard (50.00), Monsignor Charles M. Jekeler (325.00), Monsignor Joseph F. Kidd (1,500.00), Monsignor William Kwaitaal (850.00), Monsignor Warren T. Larroque (800.00), Monsignor Terrence J. Lennon (125.00), Monsignor George W. Martinez (500.00), Monsignor Patrick Murphy (2,304.00), Monsignor William C. O'Hanlon (5,000.00), Monsignor Aloysius O. Olinger (865.00), Monsignor Mozart Pelletier (100.00), Monsignor John V. Plauche (400.00), Monsignor F. Joseph Rateau (570.00), Monsignor Russell J. Richie (616.14), Monsignor B. A. Scallan (10,085.90), Monsignor Matthew J. Scanlon (310.00), Monsignor Joseph M. Susi (9,906.00), Monsignor Steve J. Testa (9,655.00), Monsignor Henry A. Thompson (360.00), Monsignor John M. Timmermans (8,320.00), Monsignor Martin J. Tyrrell (4,250.00), Monsignor Henry Van der Putten (1,291.89), Monsignor John C. Vandegaer (1,350.00), Monsignor Nicholas F. Vandegaer (1,350.00), Monsignor John J. Wakeman (100.00), Monsignor Julius G. Walle (2,170.00), Father Walter Ajaero (25.00), Father William G. Allison (160.00), Father Peter J. Besselaar (50.00), Father Michael Bodnar (50.00), Father Lawrence Bonin (70.00), Father H. Gerald Bordelon (13,885.00), Father Vernon Bordelon (445.00), Father Gilles Boyer (85.00), Father Basil Burns (100.00), Father Scott Chemino (350.00), Father Alfred Chlebowczyk (125.00), Father Jules L. Claes, CICM (4,761.00), Father Wilbur G. Cloutier (3,690.50), Father Daniel Cook (2,500.00), Father Daniel Corkery (2,700.00), Father Anthony N. Cumella (1,250.00)

Seminary Burses

Table listing seminary burses and amounts, including Father John H. Cunningham (1,475.00), Father Dennis A. Curren (650.00), Father Leonard Curtis, OP (1,050.00), Father Ferreolus D'Cruz (875.00), Father Edward Deasy (625.00), Father Blake Deshautelle (50.00), Father Derek Ducote (692.00), Father Rudolph J. Engelen (550.00), Father Richard Fale (5,700.00), Father James Ferguson (700.00), Father Harvey J. Fortier (1,475.00), Father Joseph Alfred Fortin (200.00), Father James Foster (280.00), Father Louis Gagnard (50.00), Father John M. Gayer (870.00), Father William Gearheard (50.00), Father Serafin Glasnovic (150.00), Father Rickey Gremillion (11,490.00), Father Daniel Hart (2,125.00), Father William M. Hopp (10.00), Father Mark W. Horacek (50.00), Father Bartholomew Ibe (200.00), Father Tom Jezak (400.45), Father Michael P. Kammer (921.00), Father W. John Kiley (625.00), Father Francis X. Kronemeyer (100.00), Father George Krosfield (50.00), Father Peter Kuligowski (1,408.00), Father Paul Kunnumpuram (475.00), Father Henri Jacquemain (50.00), Father Russell J. Lemoine (425.00), Father Frederick J. Lyons (1,600.00), Father Bernard F. Maguire (105.00), Father Robert M. Maure (10.00), Father Jamie Medina-Cruz (200.00), Father Jack Michalchuk (150.00), Father Bruce Miller (300.00), Father Adrian Molenschot (4,350.00), Father Joseph Montalbano (400.00), Father Govie J. Moraus, Jr. (200.00), Father Christudas Nayak (225.00), Father Peter T. Norek (400.00), Father Dan O'Connor (1,843.00), Father Thomas O'Connors (10.00), Father Chad Partain (125.00), Father Martin L. Plauche (50.00), Father Samuel J. Polizzi (1,000.00), Father George Pookkattu (50.00), Father William B. Provosty (105.00), Father Rusty Rabalais (50.00), Father Charles Ray (350.00), Father Frederick Taylor Reynolds (1,085.00), Father Yves J. Robitaille (1,900.00), Father José Robles-Sanchez (450.00), Father James Roy (100.00), Father Kenneth J. Roy (3,505.00), Father Sheldon Roy (225.00), Father Lloyd M. Samson (50.00), Father Craig Scott (2,000.00), Father Louis Sklar, III (250.00), Father Paul B. Smith (250.00), Father Irion St. Romain (25.00), Father Ker Texada (200.00), Father August Thompson (1,390.00), Father Adam Travis (100.00), Father Antonio E. Villaverde (1,300.00), Father Nino G. Viviano (200.00), Father Gus Voltz (25.00), Father Silvan A. Waterkotte, OFM (160.00), Father Kenneth Williams (880.00), Father Joseph Xavier (100.00), Father Bernard L. Zagst (1,275.00), Reverend H. Biggers (158.50), Deacon Emile "E. J." Barre, III (100.00), Deacon Rodrick "Benny" Broussard (6,200.00), Deacon L. G. DeLoach (575.00), Deacon Darrell Dubroc (200.00), Deacon Raymond J. Dunn (300.00), Deacon Ray D. Gibson (100.00), Deacon Charles A. Jones (1,150.00), Deacon Gregory P. LeBlanc (100.00), Deacon Todd Marye (100.00), Deacon Patrick C. McCusker (100.00)

Table listing seminary burses and amounts, including Deacon Richard W. Mitchell (100.00), Deacon Ted A. Moulard (300.00), Deacon Clifton "Kip" Pelto (100.00), Deacon William E. Schaidnagle (100.00), Deacon Gary A. Schupbach (700.00), Deacon William "Bill" Travis (200.00), Deacon John L. Whitehead (100.00), Deacon Michael L Young (200.00), Sister Margaret McCaffrey (300.00), Sister Marie Therese McGee, OP (100.00), Sister Virginia Lee Vanderlick, CDP (100.00), Ismael and Libby Agosto (250.00), Shirley Alexander (1,125.00), Charles P. and Florence C. Anastasio (880.00), Germaine Armand (550.00), Virgie D. Aymond (225.00), Bobby D. Basco (4,690.00), Delores Basco (150.00), Harold and Lillie Beridon (6,500.00), John M. Bauer (150.00), Dr. Lamar and Jean Boese (50.00), Will Bollich (100.00), J. V. Bonnette (50.00), Carolyn Brouillette (50.00), Nathan Cannella (225.00), Frank V. Cariere (175.00), Dylan Michael Cashio (400.00), T. W. Clark (50.00), Charles D'Amico (50.00), Leo P. Dobard (3,400.00), Gerald Flynn (100.00), Mr. and Mrs. Philip Flynn (50.00), Anne Berry Gallagher (2,025.00), Anthony and Mary Glorioso (100.00), Toby Guedry (1,000.00), Gail T. Gutierrez (100.00), William J. Hamlin (500.00), Madeline Jeansonne (100.00), Leonard E. Johnson (1,650.00), Richard Kelly (100.00), Maria S. Keran (1,000.00), Floyd J. LaCour, Sr. (9,100.00), Gerry and Connie Leglue (100.00), Huey and Neen Lemoine (150.00), Judge Alfred and Mary Jo Mansour (2,050.00), Cecilia Vanderlick Mathews (100.00), Huey and Ethel Mathews (1,000.00), Louis "Dump" Henry Mathews, Sr. (100.00), Daryl "Pat" Mauterer (6,000.00), Ethel Miller (100.00), Odis James Miller (190.00), Yvonne Moore (50.00), Gerald Moreau (215.00), Helen Morgan (12,000.00), Marge Murrin (315.00), Alcide A. Nassif (522.29), Kitty Treadway Nassif (100.00), Maurice Noel (295.00), N. J. and Hannah Nolan (10,000.00), Harvey Miller "Buddy" Normand (100.00), W. D. O'Neal (8,159.00), Danny O'Quinn (100.00), Albert and Elsie Poche (900.00), Kathleen Poole (375.00), Edna Rabalais (2,032.50), Dr. Sidney Rud (50.00), Luis R. Robles-Cortez (125.00), Dr. Brenda V. Seiler (100.00), Josephine G. Serio (275.00), John Gregory Simms (4,275.00), Sadie Stroud (13,000.00), Robert Upton (100.00), Henry Vanderlick (200.00), Patsy Dekeyzer Vincik (200.00), Gus Voltz, Jr. (4,020.00), Larry Lee Wiltse (1,925.00), Tracy Pl Wiltse (1,825.00), Mary Virginia Young (100.00), Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence (100.00), Deceased Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Regina Pacis #1372, Natchitoches (775.00), In Honor of Providence Central High School Class of 1959 (1,450.00), Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish, Alexandria (3,260.00), St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Tallulah (100.00), St. Mary's Assumption Parish, Cottonport (700.00), General Fund (2,000.00), TOTAL (576,757.17)





**DONATION TO SEMINARIANS.** St. Anthony's Catholic Daughters of the America Court #968 of Bunkie presents a Christmas donation of \$500.00 to Father Scott Chemino for the diocese's seminarians. Pictured from left to right on the back row are Stephanie Dixon, Gwen Roy, and Angie Vernon, and on the front row are Maria Whittington, Dorothy Lacombe, Sigrid Guillot, Regent and Fr. Chemino.



## What is a Seminarian burse?

A seminary burse is a “named” portion of the seminary endowment trust fund. Burses are commonly “named” either by the person or persons who established them, or in memory of a priest or deceased loved one.

**How do seminarian burses contribute to the diocese’s ongoing seminary formation?** Money donated to the seminary fund remains as untouched principal, while interest from the fund is used to pay for the diocese’s annual cost of seminary formation. Currently, the interest from the fund pays about 20 percent of this expense, while the remainder is supplemented by funds raised during the Annual Diocesan Appeal, assessments from the parishes, and grants.

**When is a seminarian burse complete?** Typically, a burse is completed when its balance reaches \$15,000.00. This amount represented the total cost of educating a single seminarian back when the practice was first established, although today that cost has risen exponentially. Once a burse has reached \$15,000.00, a new burse may be opened if those who established the original wish to continue their donations.

**Who can establish and contribute to a seminarian burse?** Anyone is capable of establishing a burse and naming it as desired, and anyone can contribute simply by specifying the designated burse name when the contribution is made. Contributions may be mailed to the St. Joseph Catholic Center “Seminary Burse” at P.O. Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306.

**How is a seminarian burse established?** Anyone who is interested in establishing a new seminarian burse may contact the Business Office at 318-445-2401 ext. 215.

Each month the Church Today publishes a list of donors and receipts, and together we will watch the burses grow. It is our hope that each will attain the value of at least \$15,000.00.

### *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.

## Seminarian Burses December 2019 Donations

<b>Mr. and Mrs. N. Ray Dickens, Sr.</b> .....	<b>\$25.00</b>
Father Derek Ducote Burse	
<b>Knights of Columbus Council #9217</b> .....	<b>\$25.00</b>
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<b>Father Rickey Gremillion</b> .....	<b>\$75.00</b>
Deacon L.G. DeLoach Burse	
<b>Mrs. Helen R. Mathews</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Father August Thompson Burse	
<b>Mrs. Barbara Rigby</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
<b>Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller</b> .....	<b>\$200.00</b>
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
<b>Mrs. Marjorie V. Johnson</b> <b>in memory of Father Robert Garrione</b> .....	<b>\$200.00</b>
Leonard E. Johnson Burse	
<b>Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church Staff</b> .....	<b>\$317.00</b>
Father Derek Ducote Burse	
<b>Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church Staff</b> .....	<b>\$318.00</b>
Father Dan O'Connor Burse	
<b>Mrs. Nelwyn Broussard</b> .....	<b>\$500.00</b>
Deacon Rodrick “Benny” Broussard Burse	
<b>Deacon and Mrs. L. G. DeLoach</b> .....	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
Father Rickey Gremillion Burse	
<b>Mr. and Mrs. Daniel C. Brockner</b> .....	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
Daryl “Pat” Mauterer Burse	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$3,885.00</b>

## Parish Spotlight: Our Lady of Lourdes, Vidalia Established 1887

When the English took over all lands east of the Mississippi after 1763, Don Jose Vidal abandoned his concession near Natchez and received a land grant across the river in Spanish Louisiana. He built a new plantation called 'Concord'. His brother, Fr. Matteo Vidal, offered mass for Catholics living in the area in Don Jose's private chapel. This small chapel was abandoned after the Spanish relinquished control of Louisiana back to France.

It was not until 1887 that the rector of St. Mary's Cathedral in Natchez secured permission from Bishop Durier to minister regularly to the Catholics in Vidalia. Fr. Theophile Meerschaert laid the ground work for the new parish which he dedicated in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes. The first resident pastor, Fr. J.H. Cartissier, arrived in 1887. He and his assistant, Fr. Francis Grosse, worked in the area without a church or rectory. In 1890, Fr. Peter Cooney arrived as pastor. Fr. Cooney



built the first church and rectory before his death in 1895. For the next 7 years the parish was administered by priests from the Natchez cathedral.

In 1902, Bishop Durier sent a newly ordained priest, Fr. Nicholas Vandergaer, to

Vidalia for his first assignment. He organized the Ladies Altar Society that same year. In 1907, he was replaced by Fr. Charles F. Degan, a native of New York, who served the parish until his death in 1923. Fr. Francis Xavier Kronemeyer, a German native, served as pastor from 1923 till his death in 1949. He gathered the Catholics from the surrounding areas and opened five missions in nearby communities. He was pastor during the upheaval that followed when the whole town was removed from its original site to make way for a new levee in 1939-1940.

During Msgr. Terrance

Lennon's pastorate (1951-1957), a new brick church was built and dedicated on December 8, 1954. Fr. Matthew Scallan added a new rectory and hall to the parish complex. A Third Order Carmelite cell or group was organized by Fr. Scallan in 1958 and canonically established in the parish 10 years later. Msgr. Scallan organized the first parish council in 1968.

This past Christmas, around 75 parishioners joined

in celebration of the parish's annual Christmas party. Everyone enjoyed food, fun, and fellowship.

View current updates and pictures from Our Lady of Lourdes church on their facebook page OurLadyofLourdesVidalia.

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### ?? Catholic Trivia ??

**It is customary for parents to choose a Christian name for their child's first or middle name.**

Why is the name of a saint given to a child at the time of their Baptism?

*Answer on page 20.*

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**CHRISTMAS PLAY.** The children of St. Francis de Sales, Echo participated in a play at the Christmas Eve Mass.



**OUTREACH PROGRAM.** Parishioners of St. Joseph's, Colfax; St. Margaret's, Boyce; St. Patrick's, Montgomery; St. Cyril's, Flatwoods, and St. Margaret Mary Gorum had a Christmas campaign outreach program to collect blankets to be given out to the homeless and those in need. An outstanding 324 blankets were collected and given to the Central Louisiana Homeless Coalition to be distributed.



**MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS CHURCH, WOODWORTH.** Parishioners of Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth had breakfast with St. Nick on Sunday, Dec. 8. Parishioners also participated in their annual Advent Giving Tree, benefiting Molly Wise Senior Housing in Woodworth, the Cenla Pregnancy Center, and our diocesan seminarians. Youth from the parish also put together luminaries to light the way to the church entrance at Christmas.





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**LSU-ALEXANDRIA CSO MARCH FOR LIFE.** Students from the LSU-Alexandria Catholic Student Organization held their first pro-life March on campus, titled "Voice of the Innocent." Around 40 individuals participated in the march, beginning with prayer in the Quad and then peacefully walking while praying the Rosary on the way to the Catholic Student Organization building.

Once at the center, the students finished praying the rosary, and Father Daniel Hart celebrated in the building's St. John Paul II Chapel.

The Catholic Daughters from Cottonport provided free lunch for around 100 people, and Claire Lemoine, director of the Cenla Pregnancy Center, served as the guest speaker.

# Living courageously



**PROLIFE MARCH IN WASHINGTON, D.C.** Youth and chaperones, including Father Luke LaFleur visit the Shrine of St. John Paul II as part of their trip to the prolife march in Washington, D.C. in January.



**PRO-LOVE STUDENTS.** Claire Lemoine, director of the Cenla Pregnancy Center, spoke to the students of St. Anthony School in Bunkie about how they can become an active part of the pro-life movement by being pro-love. January marks the 47th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the landmark decision that made abortion legal. St. Anthony School students learned about ways that they can support families in crisis and stand for a baby's right to life. Cenla Pregnancy Center is a non-profit organization located in Alexandria that serves Central Louisiana and its surrounding communities, offering a variety of professional services to provide unique support to women who are faced with the news of unplanned pregnancy.

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**EIGHTH GRADE RETREAT.** Eighth grade students from Holy Savior Menard; Sacred Heart, Moreauville; St. Anthony, Bunkie; St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria; St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport; and St. Mary's, Natchitoches came together for a day of retreat at Maryhill Retreat Center on Jan. 8. Students listened to talks, participated in small group discussions, played games, and took advantage of personal prayer time to learn how to courageously live their vocations as brothers, sisters, students, and athletes.






**SOULCORE.** (TOP) Kim Roberts led families from St. Anthony School in a soulcore rosary with the prayer intentions to protect the precious gift of human life.

**ST. MARY'S RTS DONATION.** (BOTTOM) Father Silverino Kwebuza and St. Joseph Church parishioners Shirley Watson and Dorothy Jones visited the staff of St. Mary's Residential Training School this holiday season and presented staff with a gift of \$1,150 to support the organization's mission of caring for young people with developmental disabilities. Accepting the gift on St. Mary's behalf was Bo Vets (Programs Director), Bonita Walker (Health Services Director), Jessica Hamilton (ABA and Day Program Manager), and Alisa Marlte (Residential Services Manager).

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## St. Josephine Bakhita and other black saints

By Grace Bellon  
Blessed Is She Ministry



Right before His Ascension, Jesus tells His Apostles, to "... make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:18). After an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles went and did just that.

Based on the popularity of well-known Saints, we may have fallen into the line of thinking that Christianity spread firstly across Europe. In reality, Christianity's presence in Europe came after its prevalence in Africa. This truth is even illustrated in Scripture, when Philip encounters an Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. Philip explains the fulfillment of the man's reading choice. The eunuch rejoices enthusiastically about the Gospel, asking to be baptized right then and there. Philip obliges, the eunuch returns home, and Christianity spreads to Africa.

### Early African Martyrs and Saints

Christianity dispersed across the Northern parts of the continent rapidly. Hundreds of Africans were some of the earliest Christian martyrs, including Sts. Perpetua and Felicity. Other notable African Saints include St. Augustine of Hippo and his mother, St. Monica. These may be some of the most well-known Saints from the region, but there are many more men and women of African descent who lived holy lives, contributed impactful work and service to the Catholic Church, and who intercede for us now in Heaven.

The United States celebrates Black History Month during the month of February. Let's take a look at Catholic history and draw inspiration from these seven black Saints who built up the Body of Christ.

### St. Josephine Bakhita

This gem of a woman (whose feast we celebrate today!) has been gaining lots of popularity among Catholic circles in recent years. Perhaps this is because of the fight against human trafficking and the fact that she herself was a victim of this horror. Kidnapped as a girl, she was sold and resold multiple times. She experienced beatings and mutilations before being sold to a family that instead used her to watch their daughter. Josephine accompanied the girl to school in Venice where she was introduced to Christ by the Sisters who ran the school.

When her owners decided to return home to Africa, Josephine refused to go. When a judge declared her to be free since slavery was illegal

in Italy, Josephine joined the religious order that had brought her to Christ. She lived a life of "unnoticed holiness," completing simple tasks for the rest of her life.

### St. Maurice of Aganaum

Maurice was born less than 250 years after Jesus, near Egypt. As a young man, he entered the Roman army and moved his way up the ranks, eventually becoming a general. He took command of a legion in modern-day France right before being given orders to stamp out a rebellion against the empire. When Maurice and his 6,000 African soldiers discovered the rebels were fellow Christians, they refused to fight. Their disobedience earned (most of) them martyrdom. Their relics are housed in the Basilica in Aganaum, Switzerland.

### Venerable Mother Henriette Delille

Born in 1812 in New Orleans, Henriette lived a part of her life as a mistress in a placage, whereby wealthy white men

entered relationships with free women of color, circumventing the laws against interracial marriage. Two children were born from this relationship, but after their deaths at a young age, Henriette experienced a conversion and rejected placage altogether. Shortly after her thirtieth birthday, she and two friends formed a religious order for women of color: the Sisters of the Holy Family. Only the second religious community in the United States specifically for women of color, their mission was to care for the poor and elderly and to teach the uneducated of Creole society. Her cause for canonization is currently open. If canonized, she will become the first New Orleanian, and the first United States-born black person, to be recognized as a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

### St. Severus

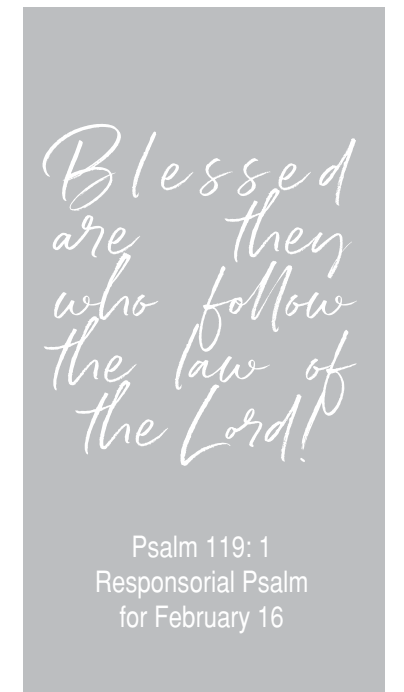
There is not much known about this fifth century Saint. Because Severus was of royal blood, his conversion to Christianity was not taken lightly. At the hands of his torturers, he was thrown airborne before being jerked back down towards the pavement. His wrists were bound with ropes and the executioners drug him throughout the city streets until his bones were exposed. Somehow, this did not kill him immediately. It is believed that he died as a result of his tortures, and thus he is remembered among the early Church martyrs.

### Venerable Pierre Toussaint

Pierre was born into slavery in Haiti. When an uprising

threatened the safety of his owners, they fled to New York, taking Pierre, his younger sister, his aunt, and two other house slaves with them. In New York, Pierre became an apprentice under one of the city's leading hairdressers, eventually earning large sums of money doing the hair of many renowned women in the city. After his owner died, Pierre financially supported the widow and the rest of the slaves with his earnings. He treated those who enslaved him as if he was a dedicated member of their family. Moved by his goodness and generosity, the widow granted Pierre his freedom shortly before her death. He became a philanthropist for the black community, opening

See SAINTS, page 16



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## Catholic Schools Week

National Catholic Schools Week is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. Catholic schools in our diocese will host Open House events throughout the week. Please contact the individual schools for more information.

**Tuesday, Jan. 28: St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie;** Showcasing the Montessori Method, everyone is invited to attend, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, Jan. 29: Sacred Heart School, Moreauville;** during school hours; Parent and Volunteer Appreciation Day

**Thursday, Jan. 30: Holy Savior Menard, Alexandria;** 6:00 p.m.

Many of our diocesan schools participate in the Louisiana Scholarship Program, designed to provide students with additional opportunities to attend the school of their choice. Applicants are eligible to receive state-funded scholarships to enroll in participating nonpublic schools or high performing public schools. The deadline to apply is January 31.

Please visit <http://www.lascholarshipprogram.org/faq/statewide/> for more information or to apply.

### Upcoming VIRTUS sessions

• **February 3, 6:00 p.m.**  
Immaculate Conception Church Hall  
NATCHITOCHE

• **February 20, 6:00 p.m.**  
St. Joseph Catholic Center  
ALEXANDRIA

• **March 19, 6:00 p.m.**  
St. Joseph Church  
MARKSVILLE

To register, go to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). For more information, call 318-445-6424, ext. 213.



### Upcoming Retreats

• **January 30**  
**Spanish ACTS for Women**  
Contact Javier Molinary or email [actschapteralexandria@gmail.com](mailto:actschapteralexandria@gmail.com)

• **February 6 - 9**  
**Sacred Heart ACTS for Men**  
Contact Cheryl Paul at 318-308-5026 or [www.jesusinpineville.com](http://www.jesusinpineville.com)

• **February 27 - March 1**  
**Cenla ACTS for Men**  
Contact Mark Vilar at 318-664-1366 or [www.cenlaacts.org](http://www.cenlaacts.org)

## Lenten Missions

### Lent in the Footsteps of Jesus, Bordelonville

The Lenten journey with Jesus for forty days reminds us that our life is a never-ending combat in which the weapons of reflective reading of the Bible, supported by prayer and sacrifices will lead us to a personal experience of the mystery of Easter Triduum. St. Peter and St. Michael Churches in Bordelonville will sponsor a 5-week series to follow this Lenten journey. Join us every Sunday from 6:00-7:00 p.m. for a spiritual talk presented by Fr. Shoury in St. Peter church hall, followed by a fruitful discussion for personal salvation.

- March 1: Deliverance from the Slavery of Sin
- March 8: Eyes fixed on Christ
- March 15: Quenching our Spiritual Thirst
- March 22: Enter into the Merciful Heart of the Father
- March 29: Jesus the suffering Servant & victor of God

### Lenten Mission, St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria

St. Frances Cabrini church in Alexandria will hold their annual Lenten Scripture study on each Thursday evening of Lent, beginning Thursday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m.

### Lenten Mission, Bordelonville

Fr. Ryan Humphries, pastor of St. Edward the Confessor Church in Tallulah will present a Lenten Mission on March 18 at 6:00 p.m. at St. Peter Church in Bordelonville. All are invited to attend this reflection.

## Pilgrimages

### Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

May 3-12, 2020: Join Fr. Bino Jacob of Sts. Francis and Anne Church in Kolin and travel from Alexandria, LA to the Holy Land, and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. This all-inclusive journey includes air travel, breakfast, and dinner daily. A post tour to Rome from May 12-15 is also available as an add-on. For more information, visit [www.pilgrimages.com/frbino](http://www.pilgrimages.com/frbino).

### Medjugorje Pilgrimage

May 19-27, 2020: Space is limited! Reserve your place now for a pilgrimage to Medjugorje and Dubrovnik with Father Derek Ducote and Fred Schoonover. The 9-day trip includes daily Mass, breakfast and dinner daily, English speaking guide, lodging in Medjugorje and Dubrovnik, airfare from New Orleans, airport transfers. Be in Medjugorje for the Feast of Ascension and Our Lady's Message to the World on May 25! Cost is \$2,969 per person. For more information or to register visit [www.catholicjourneys.com/md2020](http://www.catholicjourneys.com/md2020) or contact Fred Schoonover at 318-359-2205.

### Pilgrimage to France

October 21-30, 2020: Father Martin Laird will lead a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France from, including visits to the holy sites in Lourdes, Lisieux, and Paris with a special trip to the glorious Chartres Cathedral. More information can be found on the Magnificat Travel Website at <https://holyltravels.org/tours/>

### Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

January 15-23, 2021: The Scriptures will come alive as you visit our Lord's homeland. The spiritual director for this trip is Father John Wiltse, pastor St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport. For more information, call 337-291-1933 or visit [www.holytravels.org/tour/stmaryscottonport/](http://www.holytravels.org/tour/stmaryscottonport/).

Visit [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org) or our Diocesan Facebook page soon for a listing of Lenten missions and activities.

## Special Collection

There will be a special collection taken the weekend of Feb. 1-2 for our diocesan newspaper, the Church Today. Every month, this 24-page newspaper is mailed FREE to every Catholic household in the diocese. All donations to this special collection go directly to the Church Today to help defray the cost of printing and mailing.

This year, we celebrate 50 years of the Church Today. Look for more information in an upcoming issue of the paper, or call 318-445-6424, ext. 209 to be added to our mailing list.

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# SAINTS

(continued from pg. 14)

home to many and purchasing the freedom of others (including the woman who became his wife). At his death, he was one of the most well-known and respected Catholics in New York City.

## St. Martin de Porres

Martin was born in Peru, the illegitimate son of a Spanish soldier and a freed slave. His father was so unhappy that Martin had inherited his mother's dark complexion that he refused to acknowledge him for years. After the birth of a baby girl, Martin's father abandoned the family altogether, leaving them in dire poverty. Despite having almost nothing himself, Martin gave generously to those who had less than he. When he was

mocked for his illegitimacy and race, he responded by doing nice things for the very people who made fun of him.

As a man, Martin wanted to join the Dominican Order. Peruvian law did not allow people of color to enter religious life, but the Dominicans allowed him to work as a servant, sweeping the floors and answering the door. He did so joyfully, and after years of good works and miraculous cures at his hands, the Dominicans worked around the law, allowing him to become a lay brother. Martin eventually founded orphanages for homeless children and cared for lonely African slaves who had been forced to come to Lima. When he died, everyone in Lima mourned him, even bishops and members of the royal court. He is the patron Saint of persons of mixed race and of those who suffer from discrimination.

## St. Moses the Black

Moses was a slave to an Ethiopian government official during the 4th century. When he was accused of thievery and murder, he was disowned (protection of his master being withdrawn) and started a gang. After one particular act of terrorizing, Moses fled to the desert to escape authorities.

He found shelter in a colony of monks. Their dedication, peace, and contentment was like nothing Moses had ever seen before. Affected deeply, Moses gave up everything to become a Christian. He then joined the monastic community permanently and lived a life of prayer and fasting.

## Model Catholics

One of the most beautiful aspects of our Catholic Faith is its universality. Every member of the Body of Christ plays a vital role, and the steadfastness and perseverance of these men and women prove that each of us has an important role to play within the Church.

Somehow, despite betrayal and mistreatment, these black Saints showed deep and personal faith in Christ. St. Josephine Bakhita even once remarked that if she ever met the people who kidnapped her as a child, she would sincerely thank them. If it hadn't been for that injustice, she never would have come to know her Redeemer, Christ. Every Catholic can learn from her example.

Let us all pray for the intercession of these Saints today. We ask that their humility, fidelity, and bravery may take root in our own hearts.

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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](http://www.diocesalex.org/office-of-life-justice) for a directory of utilities assistance, mental health, legal, and other services.

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• Saint Martin de Porres •

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Social Security Disability Hearings," "An Unsolved Mess:  
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for Identifying Occupations and Job Numbers."

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# The Cross Word

February 2  
and 9, 2020



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**Sunday readings:** Mal 3:1-4; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 and 1Cor 2: 1-5; Mt 5:13-16

#### ACROSS

- 1 Velocity (abbr.)
- 4 Center
- 7 Foreign Agricultural Service
- 10 **First woman**
- 11 **Biblical fisherman**
- 13 Type of brakes
- 14 Bitmap image
- 15 Analyze properties
- 16 Anger
- 17 **Church tables**
- 19 Bluish green
- 21 "Gone With the Wind" actress
- 23 Neckband
- 26 Lecture
- 29 Danger
- 30 Monkey
- 31 Plural pronoun
- 33 East northeast
- 34 Springs
- 36 **\_\_\_ Virgin Mary**
- 38 **Abraham lived in one**
- 39 Avails
- 40 *Pater*
- 42 **Mother \_\_\_**
- 46 **"I am \_\_\_ resurrection"**
- 48 Tree
- 50 Legume

- 51 **"\_\_\_ Father"**
- 52 Dwelling
- 53 Buck's mate
- 54 Okay
- 55 Distress call
- 56 Advertisements

#### DOWN

- 1 Bright star
- 2 **Sin is doing \_\_\_**
- 3 Port
- 4 **Savior**
- 5 It is (abbr.)
- 6 **Devil has this power**
- 7 Losers
- 8 Radiologists board
- 9 South southeast
- 11 Mother & Father
- 12 Seed bread
- 18 Muslim name for "champion"
- 20 **"Blessed \_\_\_ you among women"**
- 22 Loon-like seabird
- 24 Ticket
- 25 Bolted
- 26 **"\_\_\_ of the earth"**
- 27 Dueling sword
- 28 Aimlessly wanders
- 29 Groom
- 32 **Lazarus had one**
- 35 School group
- 37 Concord e.g.
- 39 Angels' head wear
- 41 Morse code "T"
- 43 U.S. Department of Agriculture
- 44 **Cross**
- 45 Potato sprouts
- 46 Child's plaything
- 47 Shade
- 49 Dynamic \_\_\_

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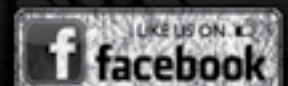
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## The importance of meal time prayer

By Nikki Frerker  
Guest Contributor

“Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Amen.”

That was the mealtime prayer I grew up with in my God-filled Lutheran home. Other mealtime prayers were offered on occasion, such as my preschool favorite about the Lord’s goodness in the sun, the rain, and the apple tree. Do you remember that catchy tune and the round of “Amen’s” at its conclusion?

When I met my future husband, he introduced me to the prayer he grew up with in his Catholic home.

Bless us, O Lord, and these, thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Now, although our family periodically has “open mic” prayer before meals where we speak spontaneously from the heart, we most often pray the traditional Catholic mealtime prayer of my husband’s youth.

### Why Mealtime Prayer?

Prayer before meals could possibly be the most widely practiced prayer. Its deep meaning is often overlooked because of its familiarity and repetition. Not to mention the distraction of the food that we could eat if we could just get through the prayer. I’ve prayed tens of thousands of mealtime prayers. I know I’ve missed their deep truths more times than I’d like to count. Considering that such prayer offers an opportunity to give praise and thanks to God, the Provider of everything, and to make space for Him and all others at the table, I believe it’s worth reflecting on its beauty.

### Mealtime Prayer in Scripture



Whoever observes the day, observes it for the Lord. Also whoever eats, eats for the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while whoever abstains, abstains for the Lord and gives thanks to God. —Romans 14:6

In Scripture, Jesus teaches us many forms of prayer. He showed us how to bless and give thanks for our food.

[Jesus] ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. —Matthew 14:19

### What Mealtime Prayer

produces, sold it, our gifts that enable us to earn resources to pay for it, those who prepared it, those who served it, the time to eat it, the body to enjoy and be fueled by it, the presence of all others at the table or the peaceful solitude of eating alone, and the gifts of every person involved in all those things who collaborated with God to bring about the food on the table in front of us. And in our gratitude, we hold close to us those who hunger.

### The Last Supper + Communion

If we’re willing to go further, it is an opportunity to recall the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples before he died for us. While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, “Take and eat; this is my body” (Matthew 26:26).

Our meals are not a participation the Eucharist. But when we break bread together and share a blessing, we can spiritually commune with God for a quiet moment before we commune together at the table. It’s a most beautiful place: around the table with Jesus, the Holy Spirit, our Father and the others with us. Beyond our place of food and drink, we withdraw to the depths of our hearts to sit with our living God, the Provider of it all. It is a taste of the eternal celebration to come.

### Mealtime Prayer as Evangelization

Mealtime prayer need not be confined to our homes. Our family has not always been committed to praying together before meals at restaurants. However, the same God provides the food, no matter where we’re sitting when we eat it. He’s teaching us courage

to pray in new places. Prayer in public should not be about the piety of the one praying. It is all about the One providing. If it is seen by others, perhaps the Lord might grow fruit from it.

In some workspaces and other secular settings, a prayer might not be spoken before a meal. But a prayer in your heart is always heard by God. In circumstances when I am uncertain about whether to offer a spoken prayer, I pray for the courage to invite others to pray with me and the wisdom to know when it might not be God’s time to do so. I have prayed for forgiveness for the opportunities I have missed to share God’s love through prayer.

### Prayer and Endless Grace

All prayer is a precious gift. A grace. An eternally open and accessible lifeline to our Lord. Trying to grasp it can be like trying to shovel smoke. And like the smoke that rises in wild patterns from the incense we burn at Mass, our mealtime prayers rise to God and He gathers into His arms every single thought, word, and detail.

May the mealtime prayer that your family shares take you to a place of gratitude and unity with Our Lord and each other. Perhaps you or someone you know hasn’t made a commitment to pray at mealtimes. Today is a good time to start.

*Nikki Frerker is a wife and mother of four. You may find her running before the sun rises, driving her children around at all hours, or singing praise music just loud enough to embarrass anyone willing to listen.*

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# Opening doors to love

**By Maureen Pratt**  
*Catholic News Service*

As Valentine's Day approaches, so too does more awareness of love and how we express it to the diverse people in our lives. From an awesome agape-centered "I love you" lived out in actions toward a stranger to the "I love you" deep with years of togetherness shared by spouses, bringing God's kindness to the world is one of the most wonderful actions we engage in and central to our Christian faith.

But sometimes kindness can be mistaken for condescension or a clumsy power play or prejudice. Or, our own "baggage" can make for heavy lifting when it comes to giving or receiving kindness from someone else.

A remembered scene from high school illustrates what I mean:

The school's band director, male, and a female student were walking ahead of me toward a closed door. As we approached it, the band director grabbed the handle and swung the door open, then stepped aside to let the student and me pass through.

I saw this as a courteous gesture, but the other student saw it as something quite different. She stopped, turned to him and said, "Oh, you're just doing this because you're a man, aren't you? Well, I can open my own door."

She turned away and went through the open doorway, leaving the band director looking quite surprised (and still holding the door handle). As I walked through, I looked at him and said, "Thank you," but I suspect my gratitude didn't quite make up for my fellow student's reaction. I still wonder if the band director ever dared to hold the door for someone else.

Since that episode, I've seen others where the presence of a closed (or closing) door poses potentials for love and kindness and/or the opposite.

An elevator bank, with multiple possibilities of going up and down floors, can be tempting to those of us who are in a hurry.

We've maybe (probably) been in the situation where the doors to a car are closing just as someone else rushes toward it, hoping to catch the same car rather than wait for another. In those fleeting moments, do we think, "Oh, well, he/she will catch another soon enough," or, "Where's the 'door open' button ... ah! There it is."

Someone carrying a heavy load might obviously signal to us that our help in holding doors or otherwise navigating with the bundle might be welcome.

But the physical presence of

weight doesn't have to be visible for us to be kind, patient and lend a hand; so many of the burdens that weigh people down cannot be seen, but are profoundly felt.

A door doesn't have to be physical to be an impediment that we can help remove so someone else's life can be a little easier, a little more hope-filled.

Job seekers or those working through various maze-like situations in health care, education or troubled relationships can benefit from the access we might be able to provide through our giving of time, counsel or other assistance, thus opening doors to opportunities, growth and strength.

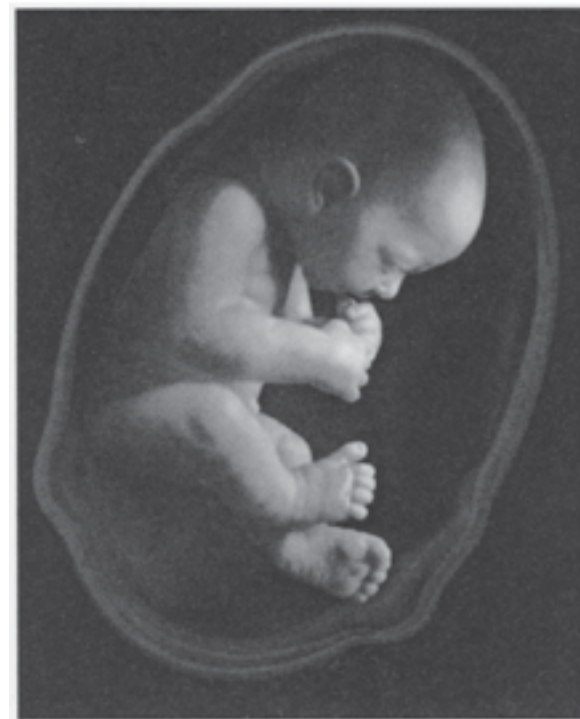
Pain from past hurts, trauma that festers can surely affect the ease with which the door to our heart opens, especially if our kind actions seem to be met with resistance or hostility. In those

times we may wonder, "Is it worth it to try again?" Or, "Should I just save myself the extra trouble?"

A quick glimpse back to the miracle of Christmas we have just enjoyed, or forward to Lent and Easter upcoming can steady us: Love matters beyond roses, lace hearts and store advertisements. Love brings Christ's light to all!



Pratt's website is [www.maureenpratt.com](http://www.maureenpratt.com).



## The Little One

I hear a voice, a voice from above.  
I wonder who, and if there will be love.  
As I sleep here in my mother's womb,  
I wonder if it will be my tomb.

My heart aches, and sometimes I cry;  
Just from not knowing if I live or die!  
I plead with my mom to have mercy on me,  
And I pray to God that she may see.

For I have a soul - I am full of life,  
And I don't wish to die via a blade of a  
knife.

I wish to be born and give glory to God.  
And woe the man struck by the rod.  
For when all is said and all is done,  
He must pay - pay for the death  
Of the little one!

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*The Lord  
is kind  
and merciful.*

Psalm 103: 8  
Responsorial Psalm  
for February 23



**STUDENT OF THE YEAR.** Thomas Roque, Sr., superintendent of Catholic Schools, with the winners of the Region 4 Student of the Year competition after the final competition held Jan. 22 at the St. Joseph Catholic Center in Alexandria.

The winners are:

- 5th grade: Graham [redacted], St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie
- 8th grade: Noah [redacted], St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie
- 12th grade: Anderson [redacted], Holy Savior Menard Central High School

These young men will move on to the State Competition to be held in Baton Rouge in March.

**?? Catholic Trivia Answer ??**

In order that the person baptized may imitate that saint's virtues and have him or her for a protector.

**Answer:**



**SACRED HEART STUDENT OF THE YEAR.** On Dec. 12, 2019, Sacred Heart School held its annual Student of the Year Competition. The winners were:

- 5th grade: [redacted], daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacques Pitre of Marksville;
- 8th grade: [redacted] son of Joe Head and Lisa Breaux of Mansura.



**ST. MARY'S, NATCHITOCHEs DONATION.** Knights of Columbus Grand Knight John Scott of Natchitoches Council #1357 presented St. Mary's School Bursar Melissa Frye with the final installment on the \$18,000 annual pledge to the school. The Knights have supported St. Mary's School for over 100 years. The weekly bingo conducted by this organization of Catholic men allows for donations to numerous charities in addition to St. Mary's School, including the Women's Resource Center in Natchitoches, ARC, and Coats for Kids. Those on hand for the celebration included students along with Father Luke LaFleur.

**The annual Catechetical Quiz Bowl will be held March 14**

The annual Catechetical Quiz Bowl will be held Saturday, March 14 at Maryhill Renewal Center from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. This event is open to students in grades 6, 7, and 8.

Compete against other teams to win cash and trophies!  
 First prize is \$500 and a trophy; second prize is \$200 and a trophy.

Cost is \$10 per 4-person team. Pizza lunch will be provided. To register or for a copy of the questions and answers, please email [emccullough@cabrinischool.com](mailto:emccullough@cabrinischool.com) or call Ashley at 318-445-4588.

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## LSU-Alexandria Catholic Campus Ministry Spring Semester Dates

Jan. 27; Jambalay fundraiser for those who are raising money to go San Antonio for Spring Break. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., \$8/plate;

Feb. 19: CSO Garage Sale and Bake Sale, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.;

March 23-27: Spring Break trip to San Antonio;

April 10: Lenten Good Friday Retreat at the CSO, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.;

April 24: Cajun dancing at the CSO, 5:00-7:00 p.m.;

May 4: Midnight Breakfast at the CSO, 9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

Weekly events include:

Tuesdays: Bible Study, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: Mass, 11:00 a.m.

Free Lunch, 12:00 p.m.

Thursdays: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 3:00 p.m.

Contact Lynn Ray for more information at [lray@diocesealex.org](mailto:lray@diocesealex.org) or 318-613-0634.



**LSU-ALEXANDRIA CSO.** (ABOVE) The students at the LSU-Alexandria Catholic Student Center celebrated their Welcome Mass with Father Derek Ducote in January for the beginning of the new semester.

**OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR PRE-K, ALEXANDRIA.** (LEFT) After the first of the new year, the Pre-K students of Our Lady of Prompt Succor School in Alexandria start going to big Church School Mass. In order to help them they are paired up with the 6th grade students to have a buddy to help teach them in Church. This is a much anticipated activity for both ages. It is always beautiful watching the older students teach the younger children something so special.

See more photos from Catholic Schools please visit [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org).

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[anthony@proximotravel.com](mailto:anthony@proximotravel.com)

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

LSU of Alexandria:  
Catholic Student Organization  
Phone: 318-473-6494  
[lray@diocesealex.org](mailto:lray@diocesealex.org)

Northwestern State University  
Catholic Student Organization  
Phone: 409-749-9971  
[dylan.browning@nsucatholic.org](mailto:dylan.browning@nsucatholic.org)

Louisiana College Catholic Student Organization  
Phone: 318-613-0634  
[lray@diocesealex.org](mailto:lray@diocesealex.org)

## Annual Louisiana Life March Cenla

### - February 1

The annual Louisiana Life March Cenla will be held on Saturday, Feb. 1, from 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The event will begin on the grounds of Louisiana College in Pineville. The 1.6 mile march will go down Main Street toward the Jackson Street Bridge, cross the bridge and conclude at the amphitheater on the Alexandria side of the Red River, where speakers and musicians will lead the audience in prayer for life. Visit [www.prolifelouisiana.org](http://www.prolifelouisiana.org) for more information. Mass for the participants will be offered at St. Frances Cabrini Church at 8:00 a.m.

### Adult Faith Formation Series - February 3

Doors of Mercy: Exploring God's Covenant with You will guide you through God's covenant with his people, from Adam and Eve to Jesus Christ, showing how God cares for his people and offers them mercy even after they stray from Him again and again. This 8-week series will be held every Monday from 6:00-7:45 p.m., beginning Feb. 3 at the St. Rita Holy Family Center, Alexandria. Cost is \$23 for the Study Guide which covers all sessions. The guide may be shared between spouses, friends, etc. For more information or to register, contact Jerry Deville at 318-447-7006 or [jdev3943@gmail.com](mailto:jdev3943@gmail.com), or Gwen Deville at 318-446-3044 or [gdev0088@gmail.com](mailto:gdev0088@gmail.com).

### Valentine's Day Dinner and Show - February 7

Join us for "Love in the Golden Age of Television" at St. Rita Church Holy Family Center on Friday, Feb. 7, featuring the St. Rita Choir, musicians, and guests. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Cost is \$25 per person (adults 21+ only, no children please). Included wine, dinner, dessert, and a fabulous show! Limited number of tickets! Purchase tickets at the St. Rita Church office at 3822 Bayou Rapides Road, Alexandria. We will not be taking phone calls to hold tickets. We apologize for any inconvenience.

### Magnificat in Avoyelles - February 8

Join us in Hessmer at Rateau Center on Feb. 8 for Magnificat in Avoyelles. Doors at the Rateau Center will open at 9:00 a.m. Fr. Edwin Rodriguez, pastor of St. Alphonsus Church and Spiritual Advisor for CENLA Magnificat, will give his testimony. For reservations or more information, visit <https://magnificat-ministry.net/chapters/chapter-states-l-m/la-alexandria/> or email [cenlamagnificat@gmail.com](mailto:cenlamagnificat@gmail.com).

### St. Kateri Circle Meeting - February 13

Our next meeting is Thursday, Feb. 13 at 5:30 p.m. at the Home Office of the Tekakwitha Conference Center, 2225 Bolton Ave., Alexandria, LA. We'll have our monthly raffle along with comments on our Family Movie Night at the CB Gym and prayer time with study on St. Kateri. Everyone is invited to attend.

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS

### Domestic Church Retreat - February 13-16

Please join us for the next Domestic Church Retreat to be held at **Maryhill Renewal Center**, Feb. 13-16. What a wonderful gift to give yourselves and your marriage! The cost is \$375 per couple, which includes a \$50 deposit. To register, please visit [nolacatholicfla.regfox.com/domestic-church-evangelization-retreat-maryhill-retreat-center-february-1](http://nolacatholicfla.regfox.com/domestic-church-evangelization-retreat-maryhill-retreat-center-february-1). Another retreat will be held Feb. 6-9 at Dry Creek Baptist Camp in Dry Creek, LA.

For more information, please contact Jenay Franco at [jenayolivia@gmail.com](mailto:jenayolivia@gmail.com) or 337-258-4155.

Finances should never be an obstacle for any couple wanting to attend, so please contact the Franco's to discuss options.

### T.O.O.L.s for a Great Marriage - February 15

Give your beloved a Valentine's gift that will be last a lifetime. Married, engaged, and couples thinking about marriage are invited to attend "T.O.O.L.'s for a Great Marriage - Couples Day" to be held at the Plaquemine Community Center from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15. Help strengthen your relationship through the Cardinal Virtues of prudence, justice, courage, and temperance. The event will be followed by adoration and Holy Mass at 4:30 p.m. at Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine. Cost is \$20 and includes lunch. For more information or to register, please visit [www.materdolorosaplaucheville.com/couples/](http://www.materdolorosaplaucheville.com/couples/).

### Natural Family Planning class series - February 22, March 14, and April 25

You are invited to attend a Natural Family Planning class series teaching the Sympto-Thermal Method, through the Couple to Couple League International, the largest provider of NFP instruction in the nation. Natural Family Planning is effective, safe, and morally acceptable to delay or achieve pregnancy. Attendance of all 3 classes completes the course. Classes are on Saturdays, Feb. 22, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon; March 14, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon; and April 25, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. There is a one-time fee of \$135, which includes the Student Guide book, fertility charts, digital thermometer, 6 months CycleProGo mobile app, award-winning Family Foundations magazines

subscription, and ongoing consultation. For more information and to register for classes, visit [www.ccli.org](http://www.ccli.org) or contact Michael and Leah Pelto at 318-730-2839 or [michaellandleah@suddenlink.net](mailto:michaellandleah@suddenlink.net).

Transition NFP classes (after childbirth/premenopause) are taught on an as-needed basis. Please contact Michael and Leah to schedule a class.

### Converging Roads Health Care Ethics Conference - February 29

In collaboration with the Diocese of Alexandria, CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Health System, and the Catholic Physicians Guild of Central Louisiana, the St. John Paul II Foundation presents the first *Converging Roads* health care ethics conference in Alexandria, LA. On the topic of **Health Care and Human Dignity**, the conference will feature Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, PhD of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, Rev. Brian Gunter of the Cenla Pregnancy Center, and more. The conference will be held at CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital from 9:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Registration ranges from \$69 - \$149 based on CME/CNE inclusion, and priests in the Diocese of Alexandria are offered a special discount. To register or for more information, please visit [convergingroads.com](http://convergingroads.com) or email [erin@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:erin@forlifeandfamily.org).

### Pre-Cana Day for Engaged Couples - February 29

Pre-Cana Day for Engaged Couples is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 29 at St. Frances Cabrini Church's Ducote Hall. Cost is \$25 per person; \$50 per couple. To register, please call Ashley at 318-445-4588.

### Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference - March 7-8

REGISTRATION IS OPEN for the annual Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference to be held March 7-8 at the Alexandria Riverfront Center. This year's host will be Chris Padgett. Cost is \$130, including the hotel stay or \$90 without. To register, visit [www.diocesealex.org/beyond-the-limits/](http://www.diocesealex.org/beyond-the-limits/). For more information, contact Gennie Ashy at [gashy@diocesealex.org](mailto:gashy@diocesealex.org).

### Day of Lenten Reflection - March 14

Join us for a Day of Lenten Reflection on March 14 at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Natchitoches. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. for a continental breakfast. Day of Reflection is open to men and women, and begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends in time for the Vigil Mass at St. Anthony's Church. Lunch is included in the \$35 registration fee. Speakers will be Joan Gahagan and Mary Wilson. For more information, email [dianeardoin@yahoo.com](mailto:dianeardoin@yahoo.com). The Day of Lenten Reflection is sponsored by CENLA Magnificat and Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Louisiana (CCRC).

### Church Today News Deadlines

Next issue: February 24  
Deadline for news:  
Thursday, February 13

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# February 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Open House</b> 5:30 p.m., St. Anthony School, Bunkie	<b>29</b> <b>Parent and Volunteer Appreciation Day</b> During school hours, Sacred Heart School, Moreauville	<b>30</b> <b>Open House</b> 6:00 p.m., Holy Savior Menard	<b>31</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 1</b> <b>Louisiana Life March Cenla</b> 10:00 a.m., Louisiana College, Pineville	<b>2</b>
Spanish ACTS Retreat for Women -- Maryhill Retreat Center, Pineville						
PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN	PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK	PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL	PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE	PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN	FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR ARCHBISHOP AYMOND	FEAST of the PRESENTATION of the LORD PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR
<b>3</b> <b>Adult Faith Formation Series</b> 6:00 p.m., St. Rita Holy Family Center  <b>VIRTUS Training</b> 6:00 p.m., Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Valentine's Dinner and Show</b> 6:00 p.m., St. Rita Holy Family Center	<b>8</b> <b>Magnificat</b> 9:00 a.m., Rateau Center, Hessmer	<b>9</b>
Sacred Heart ACTS Retreat for Men -- Maryhill Retreat Center, Pineville						
PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA	PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRAN	PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL	PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE	PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN	PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <b>St. Kateri Circle Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m., Tekakwitha Conference Center	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>T.O.O.L.s Couples Day</b> 9:00 a.m., Plaucheville Community Center	<b>16</b>
Domestic Church Retreat -- Maryhill Retreat Center, Pineville						
PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY	PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS	PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES	ST. VALENTINE'S DAY PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ	PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN	PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>Garage and Bake Sales</b> 9:00 a.m., Catholic Student Center, LSU-Alexandria	<b>20</b> <b>VIRTUS Training</b> 6:00 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <b>Natural Family Planning Class</b> 10:00 a.m., Location TBA	<b>23</b>
PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER	PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY	PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA POSADA	PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR	PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN	PRAY FOR MSGR. S. TESTA	PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>MARDI GRAS</b>	<b>26</b> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Converging Health Care Ethics Conference</b> 9:00 a.m., CHRISTUS Cabrini  <b>Pre-Cana Day</b> St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria	<b>MARCH 1</b> <b>1ST SUNDAY OF LENT</b>  <b>Lenten Mission</b> 6:00 p.m., Bordelonville
Cenla ACTS for Men -- Maryhill Retreat Center, Pineville						
PRAY FOR MSGR. J. TIMMERMANS	PRAY FOR FR. A. TRAVIS	PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE	PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD	PRAY FOR FR. G. VOLTZ	PRAY FOR FR. J. WILTSE	PRAY FOR ARCHBISHOP AYMOND

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