
CHURCH TODAY

Volume LI, No. 12

www.diocesealex.org

Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

December 28, 2020



Pride in our Catholic school students!

St. Frances Cabrini School's 8th grade Physical Science class launched a weather balloon on Friday, Dec. 4. Science teacher, Father Taylor Reynolds, spent the last few weeks teaching about astronomy and the planets. The students then worked to prepare the payload, predicted where the balloon would land, and how fast it would travel.

See page 20 for more pictures and information from this exciting class project!

INSIDE

Year of Saint Joseph proclaimed

Marking the 150th anniversary of St. Joseph being declared patron of the universal church, Pope Francis recently proclaimed a yearlong celebration dedicated to the foster father of Jesus. See pages 3, etc. for the full text of the apostolic letter.

Cause opens for Louisiana priests who sacrificed their lives in the 1873 pandemic

The sacrifice of five Catholic priests who gave their lives ministering to the people of Shreveport during the 1873 yellow fever pandemic will now be widely known in the Catholic Church and beyond. See page 8 for this important first step.

Looking for the Holy Family today

As we savor the celebration of the Christmas season, the Holy Spirit seems to be nudging each of us to recognize the Holy Family not in their perfection, but in their flesh, giving us opportunities for life-altering, unscripted, living nativity moments. See page 14 for how we can look for, and serve the Holy Family in our own lives.

INDEX

Letter from the Editor	2
USCCB Statement	2
National / World News	3
Diocesan News.....	5
Feature Story.....	6
Feature Story	8
Burses / Vocations	9
Parish Spotlight	10
Picture Spread.....	12
Feature Story	14
Parish Events	15
Feature Story	16
Schools / Youth	20
Diocesan Briefs	22
Calendar.....	23

CHURCH
TODAY

Volume LI, No. 12
December 28, 2020

P. O. Box 7417
Alexandria, LA 71303
churchtoday@diocesealex.org
318-445-6424

Publisher:
Most. Rev. Robert Marshall
Publication Manager / Editor:
Cari Terracina, ext. 255,
cterracina@diocesealex.org
Multimedia Manager / Advertising:
Joan Ferguson, ext. 264;
joanferguson@diocesealex.org
Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209;
starver@diocesealex.org

The CHURCH TODAY (USPS 393-240) is published by the Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, once a month, free of charge to members of the parishes in the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana. Out of diocese subscriptions are \$20 a year.

The office is located at
4400 Coliseum Blvd.,
Alexandria, LA 71303.
Periodicals postage paid at
Alexandria, LA.

Postmaster:

Send address changes to
The CHURCH TODAY, P. O. Box
7417, Alexandria, LA 71306

Website: www.diocesealex.org
To receive a free subscription,
call 318-445-6424, ext 255 or
e-mail starver@diocesealex.org

Ringling in the new year with St. Joseph

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid...” - Matthew 1:20

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Francis ushered in the year of Saint Joseph.

Our world and our Church need Saint Joseph’s paternal intercession, and I’m so thankful for this upcoming year. I can’t wait to witness all the grace that the Lord will pour out through His foster father’s example and intercession.

If you want to dive into a friendship with Saint Joseph during this upcoming year:

• **Tuck under his cloak.**

The *Holy Cloak of St. Joseph 30 day Novena* is a thorough and breathtaking time of contemplation on Saint Joseph’s virtue. In it, we place ourselves under the holy cloak of Joseph, entrusting him with our most pressing needs (and Saint Joseph is a mover and shaker, so be specific about what you need!).



Letter from the Editor

Mrs. Cari Terracina
Publications Manager for the Diocese of Alexandria

• **Consecrate yourself to him.**

There are two primary consecrations to Saint Joseph (*Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father* and *Consecration to Jesus through St. Joseph*; both can be found on Amazon). Both are deep and spiritually edifying. This year, consider consecrating yourself to Jesus through Joseph!

• **Pray with sacred art.**

No words of Saint Joseph are recorded in Sacred Scripture. While that alone is enough food for meditation, it’s also spiritually beneficial to pray with sacred art depicting him. Throughout the

centuries, artists have rendered countless portrayals of Saint Joseph. Do a quick Google search for pictures of Saint Joseph or the Holy Family. Save a few to pray with. What do you notice about Joseph’s posture? What is he wearing? What is he holding? Where do you see symbolism? Allow sacred art to move you closer to Jesus through meditation on Joseph.

• **Surrender your vision.**

Maybe your vision for the new year is a bit blurred right now - just like Joseph’s vision for his life was blurred when he heard God’s calling to take Mary and

the baby into his care. Following Joseph’s example, let’s lay down our vision in exchange for our Father’s. Ask yourself what you might need to surrender or see differently as we walk into the new year.

Friends, in all matters, go to Joseph. What a joyful year this will be under his special care!

Protector of the Holy Family,
pray for us!

To the waiting,
Cari

Follow Cari on Instagram
@cariterracina

Statement on COVID-19 Pfizer and Moderna Vaccines

Our national and international news continues to be filled with reports surrounding the approval, availability, and arrival of COVID-19 vaccines. In many respects, this is indeed good news which brings with it a great sense of hope and optimism as the world continues to face a health crisis.

With these recent and ongoing developments, the worthy questions of the ethical nature of such vaccines along with whether or not it is morally permissible to receive them, has already been and continues to be raised. This is both a complex and highly delicate issue as it generally focuses on whether or not the vaccines were developed in such a manner that utilized cell lines from aborted babies.

A thoughtful, detailed evaluation and analysis of this question has been completed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life and Doctrine stating that the two vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna only are



found to be “morally justified.” Their extensive conclusion is offered below:

“The world is currently facing a health crisis. The number of deaths from COVID-19 is now almost one and a half million worldwide. In the United States, the toll is approaching 300,000. Given the urgency of this crisis, the lack of available alternative vaccines, and the fact that the connection between an abortion that occurred decades ago and receiving a vaccine produced today is remote, inoculation with the new COVID-19 vaccines in these circumstances can be morally justified.”

For our part, we bishops and all Catholics and men and women of goodwill must continue to do what we can

to ensure the development, production, and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine without any connection to abortion and to help change what has become the standard practice in much medical research, a practice in which certain morally compromised cell lines are routinely used as a matter of course, with no consideration of the moral question concerning the origins of those cell lines.”

As individuals consider whether or not to receive these vaccines, we remind the faithful to exercise prudence while consulting with their personal health care professional.

The full statement may be found on the USCCB website at <https://www.usccb.org/moral-considerations-covid-vaccines>.

Louisiana Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Board of Directors

Most Rev. Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans

Most Rev. Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Most Rev. Michael G. Duca
Bishop of Baton Rouge

Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre
Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux

Most Rev. J. Douglas Deshotel
Bishop of Lafayette

Most Rev. Francis I. Malone
Bishop of Shreveport

Most Rev. Robert W. Marshall
Bishop of Alexandria

Most Rev. Fernand J. Cheri
Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans

Year of St. Joseph proclaimed

Marking the 150th anniversary of St. Joseph being declared patron of the universal church, Pope Francis proclaimed a yearlong celebration dedicated to the foster father of Jesus. In a Dec. 8 apostolic letter, "Patris Corde" (With a Father's Heart), the pope said Christians can discover in St. Joseph, who often goes unnoticed, "an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble." As Mary's husband and guardian of the Son of God, St. Joseph turned "his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart, and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home."

Despite being troubled at first by Mary's pregnancy, St. Joseph was obedient to God's will, "regardless of the hardship involved," the pope added. St. Joseph's unconditional acceptance of Mary and his decision to protect her "good name, her dignity, and her life" also serves as an example for men today, the pope added. "Today, in our world where psychological, verbal, and physical violence toward women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man," he wrote. As a carpenter who earned "an honest living to provide for his family," Christ's earthly guardian is also an example for both workers and those seeking employment and the right to a life of dignity for themselves and their families, the pope said. The year dedicated to St. Joseph will end Dec. 8, 2021. The apostolic letter follows, copyright 2020 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

With a father's heart: That is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as "the son of Joseph."

Matthew and Luke, the two evangelists who speak most of



ST. JOSEPH AND THE CHRIST CHILD. St. Joseph and the Christ Child are depicted in a stained-glass window at Immaculate Conception Church in Westhampton Beach, N.Y. In a Dec. 8 apostolic letter, Pope Francis proclaimed a yearlong celebration dedication to St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus. (CNS photo / Gregory A. Shemitz)

Joseph, tell us very little yet enough for us to appreciate what sort of father he was and the mission entrusted to him by God's providence.

We know that Joseph was a lowly carpenter (cf. Mt 13:55), betrothed to Mary (cf. Mt 1:18;

Lk 1:27). He was a "just man" (Mt 1:19), ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the law (cf. Lk 2:22, 27, 39) and through four dreams (cf. Mt 1:20; 2:13, 19, 22).

After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he

beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since "there was no place for them" elsewhere (cf. Lk 2:7). He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds (cf. Lk 2:8-20) and the Magi (cf. Mt 2:1-12), who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagan peoples.

Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). As we know, for ancient peoples, to give a name to a person or to a thing, as Adam did in the account in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:19-20), was to establish a relationship.

In the Temple, 40 days after Jesus' birth, Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened with amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his mother (cf. Lk 2:22-35).

To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph dwelt as a foreigner in Egypt (cf. Mt 2:13-18). After returning to his own country, he led a hidden life in the tiny and obscure village of Nazareth in Galilee, far from Bethlehem, his ancestral town, and from Jerusalem and the Temple. Of Nazareth it was said, "No prophet is to rise" (cf. Jn 7:52) and indeed, "can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (cf. Jn 1:46).

When, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary lost track of the 12-year-old Jesus, they anxiously sought him out and they found him in the Temple in discussion with the doctors of the law (cf. Lk 2:41-50).

After Mary, the mother of God, no saint is mentioned

more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate more fully his central role in the history of salvation. Blessed Pius IX declared him "patron of the Catholic Church," Venerable Pius XII proposed him as "patron of workers" and St. John Paul II as "guardian of the Redeemer." St. Joseph is universally invoked as the "patron of a happy death."

Now, 150 years after his proclamation as patron of the Catholic Church by Blessed Pius IX (Dec. 8, 1870), I would like to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure so close to our own human experience. For, as Jesus says, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12:34).

My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced amid the crisis how "our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines or on the latest television show yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone. ...

See ST. JOSEPH, page 6

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

Psalm 72: 11 | Responsorial Psalm for January 3



Diocese of Alexandria Website
www.diocesealex.org



Diocese of Alexandria
Facebook
[facebook.com/DioceseofAlexandria](https://www.facebook.com/DioceseofAlexandria)



Diocese of Alexandria
Instagram
[@dioceseofalexandria](https://www.instagram.com/dioceseofalexandria)



Diocese of Alexandria
on Spotify

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

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

Radio Maria welcomes new priest director

Radio Maria would like to welcome their new national priest director, Father Daniel "Dan" Reehil, from the Diocese of Nashville, Tenn.

Fr. Dan replaces Fr. John Fletcher, who served as interim priest director from June to August 2020.

"I am very excited about the opportunity to serve Radio Maria as the national priest director," said Fr. Dan. "I look forward to the challenge ahead of me."

As national priest director, Fr. Reehil will oversee the spiritual needs of the listeners through programming, will spearhead all fundraising and development activities and communication efforts, and will assist with all other aspects of the radio station.

Effective Dec. 1, he will begin presenting a weekly program, "Battle Ready," Tuesday - Friday, at 9:00 a.m. CST/10:00 a.m. EST. Join him each day to hear him speak about the tools we need to fight the rising evil in the country today.

Fr. Dan was born in Mineola, NY in 1965, to parents Dan and Gladys. He is the oldest of four children. His father was an NYC Fire Chief and his mother was a court reporter after the children were in school.

After graduating from the University of Dayton, he worked in global trade and finance in Manhattan for American Express and Citicorp for 10 years, and then 3 years as the sales director of a corporate communications



FATHER DANIEL REEHIL. Radio Maria welcomes Father Daniel Reehil as their new national priest director. Congratulations Fr. Reehil!

PR firm.

In 1998, Fr. Reehil made a pilgrimage to Medjugorje. This was a life-altering trip upon which he experienced a miraculous conversation after being away from the church for 20 years. This is where the seeds of his vocation to the priesthood were planted when the priest who heard his 20-year confession told him that he believed he had a vocation to the priesthood.

Father began reflecting on the

emptiness of his life and praying for God to lead him. After September 11, 2001, he left New York City, and moved to Boston with a priest who invited him to come and see the life of diocesan priesthood. The priest, Fr. Tom DiLorenzo, was the greatest priestly role model Fr. Reehil has ever experienced and it was in Boston that his formation to priesthood began.

He studied philosophy and theology at Holy Apostles Seminary but left before completing his studies to become a contemplative hermit in Omaha, NE. For five years he was formed in the radical life of the Evangelical Counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. He then went back to seminary to finish his studies.

Near the end of his studies, he was invited to Nashville by the bishop to come and see Middle TN. Both Dan and the bishop agreed Nashville would be his new home.

He was ordained on July 26, 2014, and assigned to St. Edward Parish as the Parochial Vicar and later pastor. He is currently the pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Columbia, TN.

B.K. ROOFING, LLC

Call the Pros!
Residential Roofing Experts

www.bkroofingllc.com

Brian Maddox, Owner
13 years experience

Licensed & insured • References available

"It doesn't cost any more to get it done right!"

Free estimates!

Most estimates in 2 days

Experienced in dealing with Insurance Companies
Let us handle the details!

318-201-9065

17 Glade St. • Pineville, LA 71460

Emergency
service
available



New Radio Maria Program: *Battle Ready*

Fr. Dan Reehil, Radio Maria's new National Priest Director, will host a new program, titled *Battle Ready*. *Battle Ready* will examine the scriptures and Church Tradition to form devout and holy soldiers for the Church Militant.

The program will seek to guide ordinary people into the extraordinary future that God is currently unfolding before our very eyes. *Battle Ready* airs at 9:00 a.m. CST / 10:00 a.m. EST, Tuesday through Friday mornings.



Emile P. Oestrieher, III, CPA

Anne M. Oestrieher, CPA, CFP®

Oestrieher Financial Management Services

Let us help your family pursue your financial goals.

4641 Windermere Place, Alexandria, LA 71303

(318) 448-3556

www.o-fms.com

Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC



**HOLY FATHER'S
PRAYER INTENTIONS**
for January 2021

Human fraternity -

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

4400 COLISEUM BLVD.
P. O. BOX 7417
ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA 71306-0417
318.445.2401 PHONE
318.767.1230 FAX
WWW.DIOCESEALEX.ORG

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we end this difficult year, I give thanks to almighty God for the honor of being called to serve the Church of Alexandria as its thirteenth shepherd. Coming to a new home in the midst of a pandemic has been challenging, but I have also been blessed by the welcome that I have received and the faith that I have witnessed. That is true of so many things in 2020 – even in the midst of suffering and fear; God has revealed His presence to us in the dedication and compassion of our health care workers, in the kindness of our neighbors, and in the fidelity of God's people.

I am especially grateful for the generosity of the people of Central Louisiana to the 2020 Annual Diocesan Appeal. Though we have not yet reached our financial goal, the continued contributions of so many is heartening amidst the economic challenges we face. Thank you for your support of the ministries of our diocese – our Catholic schools and our Campus Ministry for our colleges and universities; the formation of our future priests and deacons; our Tribunal and our Office of Worship; and our Finance Office which has played such a critical role in supporting our parishes through the challenges of this pandemic economy.

The contributions to the ADA have revealed the face of Christ to so many in Central Louisiana. If you have not had an opportunity to donate to the 2020 Annual Diocesan Appeal, or if you are planning your year-end charitable contributions, please remember that the ADA continues until December 31.

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

Live Jesus in our hearts!

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert W. Marshall, Jr.
Bishop of Alexandria

TOGETHER AS ONE

2020 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL

Thank you!

Special thanks to our parish families

A special thanks to the 24 parishes/missions who have exceeded their 2020 Annual Diocesan Appeal goal:

Church of the Little Flower - Evergreen
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church - Tioga
Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception - Natchitoches
Our Lady of Lourdes Church - Winnfield
Our Lady of the Rosary Mission - Black Lake
St. Anthony of Padua Church - Bunkie
St. Augustine Church - Isle Brevelle
St. Charles Mission - Goudeau

St. Edward Mission - Fishville
St. Frances Cabrini Church - Alexandria
St. Francis of Assisi Mission - Waterproof
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral - Alexandria
St. John the Baptist Mission - Moncla
St. Joseph Church - Cheneyville
St. Joseph Church - St. Joseph
St. Jude Mission - Seiper

St. Louis Church - Glenmora
St. Martin of Tours - Belledeau
St. Mary Church - Winnsboro
St. Patrick Mission - Montgomery
St. Peter Mission - Elmer
St. William Chapel - Olla
Sts. Francis and Anne Church - Kolin
St. Margaret Church - Boyce

If you have not already made your contribution to the 2020 Annual Diocesan Appeal, please consider making an offering to help us reach our goal.

Donations can be made on the Diocese of Alexandria web page: www.dioceasealex.org or by mail to:

2020 Annual Diocesan Appeal, P.O. Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306

Or by calling our Development Office at 318-445-6424 ext. 209 and having a card mailed to you.

Please prayerfully consider contributing to this worthy cause as so many of the faithful of our Diocese have already done.

ST. JOSEPH

(continued from pg. 3)

“How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children in small everyday ways how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all.”

Each of us can discover in Joseph — the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence — an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all.

1. A Beloved Father

The greatness of St. Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way he placed himself, in the words of St. John Chrysostom, “at the service of the entire plan of salvation.”

St. Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood “by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the Incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah, who was growing to maturity in his home.”

Thanks to his role in salvation history, St. Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious institutes, confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and the many traditional expressions of piety in his honor.

Innumerable holy men and women were passionately devoted to him. Among them was Teresa of Avila, who chose him as her advocate and intercessor, had frequent recourse to him



and received whatever graces she asked of him. Encouraged by her own experience, Teresa persuaded others to cultivate devotion to Joseph.

Every prayer book contains prayers to St. Joseph. Special prayers are offered to him each Wednesday and especially during the month of March, which is traditionally dedicated to him.

Popular trust in St. Joseph is seen in the expression “go to Joseph,” which evokes the famine in Egypt, when the Egyptians begged Pharaoh for bread. He in turn replied, “Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do” (Gn 41:55). Pharaoh was referring to Joseph, the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers (cf. Gn 37:11-28) and who — according to the biblical account — subsequently became viceroy of Egypt (cf. Gn 41:41-44).

As a descendant of David (cf. Mt 1:16-20), from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan (cf. 2 Sm 7), and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, St. Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

2. A Tender and Loving Father

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily “in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor” (Lk 2:52). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: “He taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant

to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him” (cf. Hos 11:3-4).

In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: “As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him” (Ps 103:13).

In the synagogue, during the praying of the psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again

and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love, who is good to all, whose “compassion is over all that he has made” (Ps 145:9).

“Each of us can discover in Joseph — the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence — an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

The history of salvation is worked out “in hope against hope” (Rom 4:18), through our weaknesses. All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. Thus St. Paul could say:

“To keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness’” (2 Cor 12:7-9).

Since this is part of the entire economy of salvation, we must learn to look upon our weaknesses with tender mercy.

The Evil One makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas

the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser (cf. Rv 12:10).

That is why it is so important to encounter God’s mercy, especially in the sacrament of reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness. Paradoxically, the Evil One can also speak the truth to us, yet he does so only to condemn us.

We know that God’s truth does not condemn but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us. That truth always presents itself to us like the merciful father in Jesus’ parable (cf. Lk 15:11-32). It comes out to meet us, restores our dignity, sets us back on our feet and rejoices for us, for, as the father says, “This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found” (v. 24).

Even through Joseph’s fears, God’s will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.

3. An Obedient Father

As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known.

Joseph was deeply troubled by Mary’s mysterious pregnancy. He did not want to “expose her to public disgrace,” so he decided to “dismiss her quietly” (Mt 1:19).

In the first dream, an angel helps him resolve his grave dilemma: “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:20-21).

Joseph’s response was immediate: “When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him” (Mt 1:24). Obedience made it possible for him to surmount his difficulties and spare Mary.

In the second dream, the angel tells Joseph: “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him” (Mt 2:13). Joseph did not hesitate to obey, regardless of the hardship involved: “He got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod” (Mt 2:14-15). In Egypt, Joseph awaited with patient trust the angel’s notice that he could safely return home.

In a third dream, the angel told him that those who sought to kill the child were dead and ordered him to rise, take the child and his mother, and return to the land of Israel (cf. Mt 2:19-20). Once again, Joseph promptly obeyed. “He got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel” (Mt 2:21).

During the return journey, “when Joseph heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. After being warned in a dream” — now for the fourth time — “he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth” (Mt 2:22-23).

The evangelist Luke, for his part, tells us that Joseph undertook the long and difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be registered in his family’s town of origin in the census of the Emperor Caesar Augustus. There

Jesus was born (cf. Lk 2: 7), and his birth, like that of every other child, was recorded in the registry of the empire.

St. Luke is especially concerned to tell us that Jesus' parents observed all the prescriptions of the law: the rites of the circumcision of Jesus, the purification of Mary after childbirth, the offering of the firstborn to God (cf. 2:21-24).

In every situation, Joseph declared his own fiat, like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In his role as the head of a family, Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient to his parents (cf. Lk 2:51), in accordance with God's command (cf. Ex 20:12).

During the hidden years in Nazareth, Jesus learned at the school of Joseph to do the will of the Father. That will was to be his daily food (cf. Jn 4:34). Even at the most difficult moment of his life, in Gethsemane, Jesus chose to do the Father's will rather than his own, becoming "obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8). The author of the Letter to the Hebrews thus concludes that Jesus "learned obedience through what he suffered" (5:8).

All this makes it clear that "St. Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood" and that in this way, "he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation."

4. An Accepting Father

Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally. He trusted in the angel's words. "The nobility of Joseph's heart is such that what he learned from the law he made dependent on charity. Today in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence toward women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man. Even though he does not understand the bigger picture, he makes a decision to protect Mary's good name, her dignity and her life. In his hesitation about how best to act, God helped him by enlightening his judgment."

Often in life, things happen whose meaning we do not understand. Our first reaction is frequently one of disappointment and rebellion. Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious

as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history. Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow.

The spiritual path that Joseph traces for us is not one that explains but accepts. Only as a result of this acceptance, this reconciliation, can we begin to glimpse a broader history, a deeper meaning. We can almost hear an echo of the impassioned reply of Job to his wife, who had urged him to rebel against the evil he endured: "Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" (Jb 2:10).

Joseph is certainly not passively resigned but courageously and firmly proactive. In our own lives, acceptance and welcome can be an expression of the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude. Only the Lord can give us the strength needed to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments.

Jesus' appearance in our midst is a gift from the Father that makes it possible for each of us to be reconciled to the flesh of our own history, even when we fail to understand it completely.

Just as God told Joseph, "Son of David, do not be afraid!" (Mt 1:20), so he seems to tell us, "Do not be afraid!" We need to set aside all anger and disappointment, and to embrace the way things are, even when they do not turn out as we wish. Not with mere resignation but with hope and courage.

In this way, we become open to a deeper meaning. Our lives can be miraculously reborn if we find the courage to live them in accordance with the Gospel. It does not matter if everything seems to have gone wrong or some things can no longer be fixed. God can make flowers spring up from stony ground. Even if our heart condemns us, "God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything" (1 Jn 3:20).

Here, once again, we encounter that Christian realism which rejects nothing that exists. Reality, in its mysterious and irreducible complexity, is the bearer of existential meaning, with all its lights and shadows. Thus, the apostle Paul can say, "We know that all things work

together for good, for those who love God" (Rom 8:28). To which St. Augustine adds, "even that which is called evil (etiam illud quod malum dicitur)."19 In this greater perspective, faith gives meaning to every event, however happy or sad.

Nor should we ever think that believing means finding facile and comforting solutions. The faith Christ taught us is what we see in St. Joseph. He did not look for shortcuts but confronted reality with open eyes and accepted personal responsibility for it.

"Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses."

up and walk away or somehow engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had.

As we read the infancy narratives, we may often wonder why God did not act in a more direct and clear way. Yet God acts through events and people. Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the beginnings of the history of redemption. He was the true "miracle" by which God saves the child and his mother. God acted by trusting in Joseph's creative courage.

Arriving in Bethlehem and finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph took a stable and, as best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the

divine providence.

If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative and to find solutions ourselves.

That kind of creative courage was shown by the friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (cf. Lk 5:17-26). Difficulties did not stand in the way of those friends' boldness and persistence. They were convinced that Jesus could heal the man, and "finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you'" (vv. 19-20). Jesus recognized the creative faith with which they sought to bring their sick friend to him.

The Gospel does not tell us how long Mary, Joseph and the child remained in Egypt. Yet they certainly needed to eat, to find a home and employment. It does not take much imagination to fill in those details. The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many of our migrant brothers and sisters who today too risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger. In this regard, I consider St. Joseph the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.

At the end of every account in which Joseph plays a role, the Gospel tells us that he gets up, takes the child and his mother, and does what God commanded him (cf. Mt 1:24; 2:14, 21). Indeed, Jesus and Mary, his mother, are the most precious treasure of our faith.

In the divine plan of salvation, the Son is inseparable from his mother, from Mary, who "advanced in her pilgrimage of faith and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son until she stood at the cross."

We should always consider whether we ourselves are protecting Jesus and Mary, for they are also mysteriously entrusted to our own responsibility, care and safekeeping. The Son of the Almighty came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected,

*God always finds a way to save us,
provided we show the same
creative courage as
the carpenter of Nazareth,
who was able to turn a problem
into a possibility
by trusting always in
divine providence.*

Joseph's attitude encourages us to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show special concern for the weak, for God chooses what is weak (cf. 1 Cor 1:27). He is the "Father of orphans and protector of widows" (Ps 68:6), who commands us to love the stranger in our midst.²⁰ I like to think that it was from St. Joseph that Jesus drew inspiration for the parable of the prodigal son and the merciful father (cf. Lk 15:11-32).

5. A Creatively Courageous Father

If the first stage of all true interior healing is to accept our personal history and embrace even the things in life that we did not choose, we must now add another important element: creative courage. This emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. In the face of difficulty, we can either give

world (cf. Lk 2:6-7). Faced with imminent danger from Herod, who wanted to kill the child, Joseph was warned once again in a dream to protect the child and rose in the middle of the night to prepare the flight into Egypt (cf. Mt 2:13-14).

A superficial reading of these stories can often give the impression that the world is at the mercy of the strong and mighty, but the "good news" of the Gospel consists in showing that, for all the arrogance and violence of worldly powers, God always finds a way to carry out his saving plan.

So too, our lives may at times seem to be at the mercy of the powerful, but the Gospel shows us what counts. God always finds a way to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in

Cause opens for Louisiana priests who sacrificed their lives in 1873 epidemic

Shreveport, La. (CNS) -- The sacrifice of five Catholic priests who gave their lives ministering to people in Shreveport during the 1873 yellow fever epidemic is memorialized in stained glass at Holy Trinity Church in downtown Shreveport.

Their stories have been regularly recounted across nearly 150 years of news reports and histories of Shreveport. The city's Pierre Avenue is named in honor of one of them, Father Jean Pierre, the first pastor of Holy Trinity.

And now their story will be widely known in the Catholic Church in the U.S. and beyond with the formal opening of their sainthood cause.

"It is my joy, on this feast of the Immaculate Conception and from this historic church, to announce that we may refer to them as "Servants of God," Shreveport Bishop Francis I. Malone said at a Dec. 8 news conference at Holy Trinity Church.

"I am still within my first year here as the bishop of the 16 northernmost (civil) parishes of Louisiana, but I learned quickly of the extraordinary zeal of these earliest of missionary priests to our area, which culminated in the free offer of their lives in the yellow fever epidemic of 1873," said the prelate, who was ordained and installed as Shreveport's bishop Jan. 28.

"The stories of their lives, up to their deaths in the epidemic, are truly extraordinary," he said. The diocese has a website that tells their stories: <https://shreveportmartyrs.org>.

In the late summer of 1873, Shreveport was besieged by the third-worst epidemic of yellow fever recorded in U.S. history,



SHREVEPORT BISHOP FRANCIS I. MALONE. Bishop Francis I. Malone of Shreveport, La., signs a decree of recognition Dec. 8, 2020 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in downtown Shreveport, officially opening a sainthood cause for five priests who died ministering to people during the yellow fever epidemic of 1873. (CNS photo /Kierstin Richter, courtesy Diocese of Shreveport)

losing one-fourth of its population. One Catholic priest who refused to leave the sick and dying, and four others who knowingly entered the quarantined areas were among the city's dead.

"Each priest made the free and voluntary offer of life and heroic acceptance of a premature and horrific yellow fever death, in the act of charity," the diocese said in a news release.

Father Pierre was the first Catholic pastor in Shreveport. He came from Saint-Brieuc, a town in the Brittany region of France, as a missionary priest to what was then the Diocese of Natchitoches, Louisiana, established in 1853.

He first went to the tiny community of Bayou Pierre,

Louisiana, which today is called Carmel. In 1856, he was assigned to Shreveport and was tasked with founding a new church -- Holy Trinity. He also ministered in the civil parishes of Caddo, Bossier, DeSoto, Webster, and Claiborne, Louisiana.

The other four priests are:

-- Father Isidore A. Quemarais, first assistant priest of Shreveport, who also served in Rapides and Avoyelles civil parishes.

-- Father Jean-Marie Biler, chaplain of the Convent and Novitiate of St. Vincent's in Shreveport.

-- Father Louis Gergaud, first pastor of St. Matthew's Church in Monroe, Louisiana,

who also ministered in Ouachita, Morehouse, Union, Webster, Clairborne, Caldwell, and Franklin civil parishes.

-- Father Francois LeVezouet, founding pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Many, Louisiana, who ministered throughout Sabine and Natchitoches civil parishes.

The Vatican's Congregation for Saints' Causes has reviewed their stories and granted the Diocese of Shreveport permission to begin the process of gathering evidence of the sanctity of the priests' lives and the devotion to them.

It is the first step on the road to sainthood. The next step is a declaration by the Vatican they

lived lives of extraordinary and heroic virtue and they will be granted the title "Venerable."

The next two steps are beatification and canonization: In general, each step needs verification of a miraculous cure or event attributed to the intercession of the sainthood candidate.

"The culmination of this process may very well, in fact, most likely will take place in a number of decades," said Bishop Malone, who before being appointed to Shreveport by Pope Francis Nov. 19, 2019, was a pastor and chancellor for ecclesial affairs in the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas.

"Today is the needed first step toward that goal," he added.

According to the diocese, there has never before been any sainthood cause from northern Louisiana, "making this an especially historic development for the region."

The fact that the five priests' cause "is proceeding during a time of pandemic is a noteworthy historic parallel," it said.

The groundwork needed to be able to officially open the priests' sainthood cause has led to extensive research into their lives for a book-length manuscript, podcast, and graphic novel project currently underway by Father Peter Mangum, rector of the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans in Shreveport, local historian W. Ryan Smith and Cheryl White, a history professor at Louisiana State University Shreveport.

The trio's project sets the biographies of the priests in the broader narrative of the 1873 Shreveport epidemic. Their soon-to-be-published book is titled "The Surest Path to Heaven: 1873 Shreveport Martyrs."

DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA OFFICE OF LIFE AND JUSTICE

The Diocese of Alexandria Office of Life and Justice now provides a list of social services available while the Corona Virus measures are in effect.

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/latest-news/social-services-information/ for a directory of local services.

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.

*Greater love has no one than this,
that one lay down his life for his friends. John 15: 13*



FATHER ISIDORE QUEMARAIS. Father Isidore Quemarais died of yellow fever in Shreveport, after spending his lastdays working to the point of exhaustion, as he helped the sick and dying of the city. Father Jean Marie Biler from the Daughters of the Cross Convent provided him with comfort at his bedside and the Last Rites of the Church, Fr. Quemarais had just passed his twenty-sixth birthday when he became the first of five priests to fall in Shreveport as martyrs to their charity.



FATHER JEAN MARIE BILER. Father Jean Marie Biler, chaplain at the Daughters of the Cross Convent, became the third priest to die of yellow fever while caring for the city's ill and dying, yet another martyr to his charity. Just before his death, his plea for help had been answered - Father Louis Gergaud arrived from Monroe and Father Francois Le Vezouet arrived from Natchitoches to take their place in the epidemic.



FATHER JEAN PIERRE. Father Jean Pierre, beloved first pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Shreveport, died of yellow fever while caring for the city's poorest victims of the epidemic. He became the second of five priests to offer his life as a martyr to his charity.



FATHER LOUIS GERGAUD. Father Louis Gergaud, pastor of St. Matthew's Church in Monroe, became the fourth priest to die of yellow fever while caring for the city's ill and dying, yet another martyr to his charity.

As he boarded the stagecoach in Monroe to come into the fever-stricken city of Shreveport, Fr. Gergaud was heard to say, "Write to the bishop and tell him I go to my death. It is my duty, and I must go."



FATHER FRANCOIS LE VEZOUET. Father Francois Le Vezouet of Natchitoches became the fifth and final priest to die of yellow fever while caring for the city's ill and dying, yet another martyr to his charity.

As he prepared to leave Natchitoches on horseback for the ride to Shreveport, someone called out to him, "You are going to your death." Fr. Le Vezouet responded, "I believe it. But, I am taking the shortest and surest path to heaven."

Seminararian Burses

October 2020 Donations

Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Rickey Gremillion Burse	
Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$50.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Marion A. French	\$50.00
Father Peter T. Norek Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$50.00
Deacon Gary Schupbach Burse	
Dr. and Mrs. Phillip Carney	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$50.00
Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Hanley Gremillion Millwork & Supply	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$50.00
Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$100.00
Monsignor Steve Testa Burse	
Mrs. Barbara Rigby	\$100.00
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
Mrs. Sally Vanderlick	\$100.00
Henry Vanderlick Burse	
Mrs. Connie Leglue	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$100.00
Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Ryder	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$100.00
Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Dr. William Sansing	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$100.00
Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Total	\$875.00

See November Burses on page 16.

2 Chronicles 7 : 14

"If my people who are called
by my name humble themselves,
and pray and seek my face,
and turn from their wicked ways,
then I will hear from Heaven,
and will forgive their sin
and heal their land."

lizdescant@gmail.com
Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant

Parish Spotlight: St. Edward the Confessor, Tallulah Established 1936

Much of the lumber used to build the first church in Tallulah in 1911 came from the old chapel at Milliken's Bend. Before the Civil War, a brick chapel, dedicated in honor of St. Mary, was built largely through the generosity of Honore Perigny Morency. As a child, Mr. Morency, together with his brother and sister, had escaped the Santo Domingo uprising.

They were taken to Baltimore with other refugees and were given shelter and an education by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The original chapel at Milliken's Bend was destroyed during the war but a new frame chapel was erected after Reconstruction around 1884. In time, the Catholic population settled primarily in Lake Providence, Louisiana, where a new church was erected in 1869.

The small chapel in Tallulah served as a mission of Lake Providence from 1911 to 1936.



ST. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR CHURCH, TALLULAH.

During the 1927 flood, over six feet of water filled the structure but it survived intact. On October 19, 1936, Fr. John C. Vandegaer

took up residence in the mission and on October 25, Bishop Daniel Desmond formally erected the former mission as an independent parish dedicated in honor of St. Agnes.

In January, 1947, Fr. Robert Maure secured new land for a larger church on Highway 80. The new church built facing Brushy Bayou was dedicated in honor of St. Edward and blessed by Bishop Charles Greco on October 3, 1948. In its tower is an old ship's bell taken from the steamer, Iron Mountain, which was wrecked on the Mississippi in 1882. In 1962, a new rectory was built after the old one was destroyed by fire. Tragically, Fr. Thomas Connors died in that fire. In 1980, under the leadership of Fr. Louis Voorhies, a new parish hall was built. Today, St. Edward's is considered to be one of Tallulah's most beautiful landmarks. Although the Catholic population has been traditionally small, the parish is a growing and vibrant community.

Continue to support your church parish

Though you are not obligated to attend Mass during this time, please consider continuing to support your church parish with your tithing and donations.

Church parishes rely on these funds to continue to operate and provide programs and services to the faithful in our communities.

The address to each church parish can be found on the diocese website at www.diocesealex.org. Your pastor will appreciate your continued support.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.

The Lord takes delight in his people.

Psalm 149: 4
Responsorial Psalm for January 9

See the Catholic Trivia answer on page 18.

Baker Agri-Forest Properties
A Limited Liability Company

Melanie Blanchard, Broker
Donald Baker, Agent
Robert Tassin, Agent

Licensed in Louisiana, USA
Phone: 318-473-8751
3306 Giamanco St. Alexandria, LA

Website: bakeragproperties.com

We specialize in forest, recreation, and agriculture properties.

SABINE STATE BANK & Trust Company

Member FDIC

Call your local branch for information.
(318) 256-7000

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Petrus FEED & SEED

2914 N. Bolton Ave. • Alexandria, LA
442-2325

YOU GET IT ALL AT

SAYES OFFICE SUPPLY

WWW.SAYESOFFICE.COM

Alexandria: 318.448.4225 • Ville Platte: 337.363.6322 • Toll Free: 800.766.4819

OFFICE SUPPLIES • OFFICE FURNITURE • OFFICE MACHINES
PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS • BREAKROOM & FOOD SERVICE SUPPLIES
JANITORIAL SUPPLIES • JANITORIAL EQUIPMENT • PRINTING

Martha Neil Anthony

Feline Canine Coach

- Behavior Modification
- Obedience and Therapy
- Pet Training
- 30-day Money Back Guarantee
- In home, Individual, and Group Sessions Available
- Phone Consultations and Phone Assessments

985.226.6458 • www.felinecaninecoach.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 (visit www.diocesealex.org and look for “A Safe Environment For All” under the “Our Faith” tab). Here, you can find Bishop Talley’s message for November 2018, as well as updates from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Also found on this page is the letter from Pope Francis to all Bishops in the United States regarding a meeting in February 2019 at the Vatican entitled “The Protection of Minors in the Church.”

We can
have recourse
to many saints
as our intercessors,
but go especially
to Joseph...

// St. Teresa
of Avila

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

LOVE IS . . .

“ . . . patient;
love is kind.

Love is not jealous,
it does not put on airs,
it is not snobbish.

Love is never rude,
it is not self-seeking,

nor is it prone to anger;

it does not brood over injuries.

Love does not rejoice in what is wrong
but rejoices with the truth.

There is no limit to love’s

forebearance,

to its trust,

its hope,

its power to endure.

Love never fails.”

(1 Cor. 13 : 4-8)

lizdescant@gmail.com
Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant

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.



Prayer for Vocations

God our Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son’s Kingdom as priests, deacons, religious, and consecrated persons. Send your Holy Spirit to help us respond generously and courageously to your call. May our community of faith support vocations of sacrificial love in our youth. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A prayer card with this prayer can be downloaded and printed from foryourvocation.org



Refueling & Refreshing Communities

www.ynotstop.com

? Catholic Trivia?

When was veneration of the Holy Family first established?

Service in Christ



STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE CHURCH. (ABOVE) Bishop Marshall visited Sts. Francis and Anne Church in Kolin on Dec. 8. The bishop celebrated Mass on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with the congregation, including members of Boy Scout Troop 626, Kolin, La.



CHRIST THE KING PROCESSION. (LEFT) Parishioners and visitors of the Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen, with their pastor, Father Ramji Shoury, honored the Feast of Christ the King with a solemn Eucharistic procession following the Mass on Sunday, Nov. 22.



CHRISTUS ST. FRANCES CABRINI HOSPITAL. On Monday, Dec. 14, Bishop Robert Marshall visited CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital. He was given a tour and had the opportunity to pray with staff members. He also celebrated Mass in the hospital's chapel with Father Joy Antony, the director of pastoral services at Cabrini Hospital.

Youth of the Diocese continue to learn, support each other, and celebrate their communities!
See below or visit www.diocesealex.org to see more pictures of life in the Diocese.



ST. TIMOTHY FOOD PANTRY. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria, as part of Thanksgiving weekend, held their monthly distribution of free foods. Persons in need who ask, receive a bag of no-cook foods (peanut butter, canned tuna and chicken, etc.) or cook-foods (beans, rice, pasta, soups), plus a bag of bread and crackers. Approximately 110-150 or more food bags are normally handed out. Pictured above are some of the food bags that were prepared and distributed.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL FOOD PROCESSION. Our Lady of Prompt Succor School Food Drive was held on Friday, Dec. 4, with all classes participating. Food was collected to go to the Church Christmas Cheer program that will provide food and gifts to close to 75 families. At the end, some of the 6th grade boys helped to sort, gather, and move all of the food. Once again, our parents were so generous with their donations to those in need during this difficult time.



PETER CLAVER DONATION.

Msgr. Henry A. Thompson, Assembly 27 of the 4th Degree Knights of Peter Claver in Alexandria, donated turkey, ham, and all the trimmings to the Hope House of Central Louisiana, on Wednesday, Nov. 25.

The annual donation is part of the Assembly's community service initiative. Sir Knight Tommy Milo is the Faithful Navigator. Project Coordinator is Sir Knight Melvin Edwards.

Pictured here, left to right are: Melvin Edwards, Melody Mutch, Children's Service Coordinator; Tommy Milo; and Tim Ford.

Unlikely blessings: Looking for the Holy Family today

By Katie Cassady
Blessed Is She Ministry

The first Christmas I remember receiving Christmas cards addressed to me personally was the year I moved to Denver. Delighted by this very adult practice of sending and receiving Christmas cards, I tore them open with delight when I got home from work each evening, savoring the familiar faces in the pictures and scripts in the margins. The only one I can remember anymore was a hand-drawn depiction of a young, brown family, holding their infant son under the shelter of a graffiti-covered bus stop. It was blank on the back, no further explanation provided. The friend who sent the card was living in the St. Louis Catholic Worker house. She shared that this was the image one of her youth group students drew when asked to create a picture of a modern-day Holy Family.

An Unlikely Savior

As Catholics, we lean hard into the story of the Incarnation — God made flesh, physically delivered into the muck of everyday life, in the midst of poverty and vulnerability. Perfection amidst imperfections. We reverence every aspect of this story: the Annunciation, the Visitation, Joseph's dream, the stable, the manger, the swaddling clothes, the unlikely family who received the Savior into their lives with complete humility and trust.

On the Feast of the Holy Family, our relationship with this family is certainly worth



some further thought.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Us

At this point, our churches are bedazzled with crèches, poinsettias, glittering gold and white garments, cloths, and vestments. Our noses detect the lingering smell of incense. Choirs are singing out the joyful news, all because our God chose us. He chose to come to us in a way that we might understand. Born in a body that we would recognize. Born into a family we could relate to.

In our own ways, we recreate the beautiful scene of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus with live nativities, posadas, our mantle crèches, the carefully-

chosen designs on our Christmas cards, and in our illuminated yard decor. This practice of remembering is the sacred, holy work of our souls. Our participation in these traditions put us back in touch with the story that reminds us who (and Whose) we are.

And yet there is a temptation to perfect the scene, because we are talking about Jesus and family after all, and because we are uncomfortable with the idea that Jesus' family might have had an un-photogenic moment. In our own ways, we dress up the one who arrived bare. We can focus only on the story's beauty and neglect the coinciding rawness of the Christ-child's arrival. In the same way that imagery can

distract us from the core of the Holy Family, I have found that it can also call me back to it.

Would We Recognize the Holy Family Today?

Personally I have found that Salesian Brother Mickey O'Neil McGrath is an artist worth keeping an eye on during this season, especially when my own depictions of Christmas become too glamorous. A talented iconographer, Brother Mickey creates a new icon of the Holy Family each year, many based on events occurring within the year. Some of his most notable works are Syrian Mary, Joseph and Jesus or Resting in Flight. The images are both playful and stirring in their vibrancy

and depth. They give a tangible identity to the vague characters we have imagined in our mind's eye.

The question his work poses is an important one: Who is it that personifies a family on the move? Ostracized? One for whom we might just not be able to make an exception? How are we imagining Jesus' unexpected arrival this year?

Truthfully, I don't know exactly who this is for me. Are they the ones closest to me in my own family, or those I've kept at a distance and struggle to see in a "holy light"? I have a hunch that follow-through on my part with any of these individuals would be both a welcomed gesture and an offering that the Incarnate God might find pleasing.

As we savor the celebration of the Christmas season, the Spirit seems to be nudging each of us to recognize the Holy Family not in their perfection, but in their flesh. Are there people in my life toward whom I've struggled to make an exception? Extend hospitality? Who have arrived inconveniently? Unexpectedly?

These are our opportunities for life-altering, unscripted, living nativity moments.

Who are the unlikely blessings in your life?

Katie Cassady is a wife and mom to two little girls in Denver, CO. Steeped in theological reflection, beekeeping, and motherhood, she is appreciative of any and all wisdom she can glean from living intentional lives of faith. Find out more about her at www.unexpectedhoney.com.

/ Prayer to the Holy Family /

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,
in you we contemplate the splendour of true love, to you we turn with trust.
Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion
and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may families never again experience violence, rejection and division;
may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer. Amen.

Hixson-Ducote Funeral Home
Avoyelles Monuments

Ray and Marie Ducote, Owners

Bunkie
(318) 346-6346

Plaucheville
(318) 922-3200

Mass is being offered online and on radio

Mass will be offered online on Facebook, YouTube, or on the radio at the following churches. Please visit the links listed below.

Our diocesan church parishes have been working hard to provide spiritual resources to the people of our diocese. Please continue to visit your church parish's Facebook page (you do not need a Facebook account, just click "not now" and view the content) or the diocesan website for updates, and pray for our diocesan priests and parish staff as they continue their ministry. Please inquire directly to your church parish concerning their requirements and guidelines for attending Mass in-person.

Thank you, parish secretaries and staff members for your hard work and dedication to continue to bring the message of Christ to all homes in our diocese!

Sunday

- 7:00 a.m. Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville KZLG-FM 95.5
- 8:00 a.m. Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville - KLIL-FM 92.1
St. Rita Church, Alexandria on Facebook or YouTube
Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth on Facebook or YouTube
- 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. (time varies) Radio Maria | www.radiomaria.us
(click the play button) or tune in on your radio
in Alexandria on station 580 AM
or in Natchitoches on station 89.7 AM
- 9:00 a.m. St. Francis de Sales, Echo on Facebook
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on Facebook
St. Edward the Confessor, Tallulah on Facebook
- 10:00 a.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville on Facebook or YouTube
Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen on Facebook
St. Patrick Church, Ferriday on Facebook
- 10:30 a.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria
on Facebook or YouTube
St. Augustine Church, Isle Brevelle on Facebook
Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth on Facebook or YouTube
- 11:00 a.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria on Facebook or YouTube
- 11:30 a.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville on Facebook or YouTube

Monday - Friday

- 7:00 a.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
on Facebook or YouTube (Monday - Thursday only)
- 8:00 a.m. Radio Maria | www.radiomaria.us (click the play button)
or tune in on your radio in Alexandria on station 580 AM
or in Natchitoches on station 89.7 AM
- 8:30 a.m. Immaculate Heart of Mary, Tioga on Facebook or YouTube
- 9:00 a.m. Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine on Facebook
St. Edward the Confessor, Tallulah on Facebook (Wednesdays),
(9:30 a.m. talk - aka "The CU Catecast"; Wednesdays)
- 5:30 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria
on Facebook or YouTube
St. Edward the Confessor, Tallulah on Facebook (Fridays)

Saturday

- 8:00 a.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria
on Facebook or YouTube
- 9:00 a.m. (Latin) St. Edward the Confessor, Tallulah on Facebook
- 4:00 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria on Facebook or YouTube
Radio Maria | www.radiomaria.us (click the play button)
or tune in on your radio in Alexandria on station 580 AM
or in Natchitoches on station 89.7 AM
- 5:00 p.m. St. Michael the Archangel, Leesville on Facebook

View recorded Mass on YouTube:

St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria
and St. Anthony of Padua Church, Natchitoches

Please continue to visit
www.diocesealex.org
for updated
livestream Mass times,
as well as
additional updates
from the
Diocese of Alexandria.

Other online Mass and
service times are listed on
the USCCB website.

Here am I,
Lord;
I come
to do
your will

Psalm 40: 8-9 |
Responsorial Psalm
for January 17

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Tuesday, January 12, 6:00 p.m.

St. Joseph Catholic Center,
4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria

Tuesday, January 26, 6:00 p.m.

Sacred Heart School, Moreauville

Face masks MUST be worn during the entire session. The session typically lasts 2.5 to 3 hours. Seating will be one (1) person per table (spouses may sit together). A maximum of ONLY 15 adults will be allowed to attend each session. Minors are not allowed to attend because of the adult content of the videos and discussions.

To register, go to www.virtus.org.
For more information, call 318-445-6424, ext. 213.



Upcoming Retreats

All ACTS Retreats have been
cancelled until further notice.

Please contact individual retreat
organizers for more information
about rescheduling.

Information will be updated
periodically on the Diocese of
Alexandria website as well.

A list of ACTS Retreat dates can
be found at www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/.

Pandemic seen as chance for church 'to innovate' ways to engage young adults

By Kurt Jensen
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- There was a recurring theme during a Dec. 7-11 young adult ministry conference: Zoom encounters were adequate in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they quickly became a poor substitute for in-person ministry and worship.

Everyone's eager for human interactions, and the vaccine can't arrive soon enough.

This sentiment was, not surprisingly, expressed on Zoom.

Brian Rhude, the project coordinator for the Catholic Apostolate Center in Washington, used to schedule a weekly Divine Mercy Chaplet with friends that way "before everyone got tired of Zoom." He doesn't think that would work now.

"Simply listen to form relationships with young adults," he advised. "They're individuals that come with stories and experiences. They're beloved sons and daughters of God."

Cynthia De Leon, a volunteer youth minister from San Antonio, said the pandemic isolation gave her "the appreciation of being in a group" and to "just enjoy the little moments, to never take those for granted again."

They were among the participants in the National Leadership Forum on Ministry with Young Adults, hosted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth and organized by our National Advisory Team on Young Adult Ministry.

According to Paul Jarzembowski, the secretariat's assistant director of youth and for the U.S. bishops, the forum was originally planned as two-day leadership gathering in New Orleans in early December.

But the advisory team, he said, "redeveloped the program into an all-online formation experience for ministry leaders in the church who are seeking ways to better engage and accompany young adults' ages



18 to 39.

Participant Kara Dixon, a TV journalist from Portsmouth, Virginia, said she's had "stronger relationships this year due to COVID. One of the things I've learned this year is just being present, and just being along for the journey."

"Psychologists will tell you that you form your identity as a child of God in relationships," said Tracey Lamont, an assistant professor of religious education at Loyola University in New Orleans.

Dr. Leon said that hit home for her when she found herself afraid when she simply bumped into a cashier at her supermarket. "You yearn for that, that physical touch, so I think that was just the biggest hit."

Sarah Jarzembowski, the coordinator for campus and young adult ministries for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, said conversations to remind young adults that they have a calling has to start early on and regularly.

"Young people have to take the church out of catacombs after the pandemic," said Schonstatt Father Alexandre Awi Mello, secretary of the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, one of the week's keynote speakers.

"From this crisis, we can get better or worse. Right now, what we need, (Pope Francis) says, is the opportunity to change or innovate," he said.

Unemployment has limited the availability of young people for ministry, Father Mello

observed. "We wonder what to do to minister to them... to give them an encounter with Christ and their church."

They ask, he said, "for a dedicated accompaniment" by older adults, and "if we had to choose one stop to reinforce -- I would suggest we put all our strength into accompaniment."

He pointed to surveys that "say very clearly that young people live this exclusion. They all feel completely alone most of the time. About 40% have no one to talk to and feel left out."

"The church should not hesitate to give them space to be protagonists. To give them space so they can act."

Referencing mission synodality, Pope Francis' theme for the next World Synod of Bishops in 2022, Father Mello predicted "a better world -- something that's going to surge after the pandemic. ... As we know, the spirit of the Lord surprises us every time."

Doug Tooke, vice president of ministry advancement for ODB Films, based in St. Charles, Illinois, mentioned "a lot of distrust" by young people, in part because of church scandals, and in part because of flawed messaging.

He recommended, "Focus on that language of humility and language of reconciliation. Our language and our tone for all of our ministry endeavors can't be gradiose. It has to be simple."

Seminarian Burses

November 2020 Donations

Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Scott Chemino Burse	
Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. William James, Jr.	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$25.00
Father Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Marion A. French	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$50.00
Father Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Mrs. Barbara Rigby	\$100.00
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
Mrs. Deborah Tumminello	\$100.00
Daryl "Pat" Mauterer Burse	
Ms. Martha McBurney, Mr. and Mrs. Rap McBurney	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$100.00
Father Gus Voltz, Jr. Burse	
Mrs. Elizabeth Metoyer	\$200.00
Father Charles Ray Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Chris L. Hayne	
In memory of Mrs. Kathleen Voltz	\$200.00
Father Gus Voltz Burse	
Mr. Dwight E. Beridon	\$250.00
Monsignor John timmermans Burse	
Mr. Dwight E. Beridon	\$250.00
Harold and Lillie Beridon Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller	\$400.00
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
Mrs. Leta Juneau	\$2,000.00
Rita Juneau Rabalais Burse	
Total	\$3,725.00



Flu Shots & Vaccinations

Many gifts including large selection of religious items:

- My Saint My Hero religious jewelry
- Holy Medals
- *Jesus Calling* & other inspirational books
- Rosaries
- ACTS bracelets
- First Communion, Confirmation & Baptism gifts

Follow us on Facebook @ Cottonportcornerdrug.giftboutique

(318) 876-3665

Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm

206 Choupique Lane • Cottonport, LA 71327

Kim & Stewart Wixson, Owners

LEGLUE NISSAN INC.

**NEW & USED CARS •
SALES • SERVICE • PARTS**



**6400 COLISEUM BLVD.
WWW.LEGLUENISSAN.COM
318-767-3300**

LUMBER MILLWORK **Jeansonne's Millworks & Cabinet Shop**
 * Architectural Millwork
 * Custom Cabinets & Moulding
Phone 445-5665 * FAX 445-5276
GUY JEANSONNE 1843 Sterckx Road
 Owner Alexandria, LA 71301

Heart of Saint Kateri Circle

Do you have a devotion to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha?

Do you have a desire to learn and become more involved with this vital ministry to and with our indigenous brothers and sisters?

Are you looking for new opportunities to pray, serve and grow alongside believers right in your own community?

You are invited to **COME & SEE** what we're all about!
 • Tribal affiliation, though welcome, is not a requirement •

The "Heart of Saint Kateri" Circle meets:
 2nd Thursday of each month 5:30 p.m.
 Tekakwitha Conference National Center
 2225 North Bolton Avenue • Alexandria, LA 71303

For more information, call (318) 227-0545 or (318) 471-2044

The Cross Word

January 3
and 10, 2021



© 2021 www.tri-c-a-publications.com

Readings: Ish 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12 and Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Mk 1:7-11

ACROSS

- 1 Fraction
- 4 Spar
- 8 Vane direction
- 11 ___ vs. Wade
- 12 Holy ___
- 13 Potato
- 14 Possessive pronoun
- 15 Pharisees sought to ___ Jesus
- 16 ___ Herod
- 17 Evangelist
- 19 Had too much to drink
- 20 Cardinal wears
- 21 Marrow
- 22 Religious ___

- 25 Epiphany month
- 26 Expression of surprise
- 29 Gloomy
- 30 Affirmative
- 31 Fresh
- 32 Environment
- 33 Bathtub rug
- 34 Ball and mall do, for example
- 35 "Smoldering ___"
- 37 Poet Edgar Allen
- 38 Overdue
- 40 "The ___ in Christ"
- 44 Shades a cardinal wears
- 45 Close-fitting cap

- 46 Christmas month
- 47 The Baptist wore one of leather
- 48 Healing plant
- 49 Papal name
- 50 Works undercover
- 51 He shines on Jerusalem
- 52 Gray sea eagle

DOWN

- 1 Rim of cup
- 2 Small particle
- 3 Exam
- 4 Mary
- 5 Voiced
- 6 Cabbage salad
- 7 Cooking measurement
- 8 January 6
- 9 Stars
- 10 Fidgety
- 13 Act
- 18 Journey
- 19 Can metal
- 21 Pop - multiple
- 22 Poem of praise
- 23 Knock on sharply
- 24 Doodle (2 wds.)
- 25 Air commuter's transport
- 27 Border
- 28 Respect for God
- 30 Wild ox
- 31 Excuse me!
- 33 Microgram
- 34 Covered
- 36 Institution (abbr.)
- 37 Abbot's assistant
- 38 Globes
- 39 Cry
- 40 Pony game
- 41 Loaf
- 42 Oracle
- 43 Economics (abbr.)
- 45 Calorie

Mardel Products Co.

Custom Millwork
 Residential/Commercial Woodworking
www.mardelproducts.com
 (318) 253-7730

Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Psalm 25: 4 | Responsorial Psalm for January 24

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

Offices in Alexandria, Baton Rouge,
 Lafayette, Lake Charles, Cottonport

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

PUBLISHED ARTICLES: "The Worn-Out Worker Rule Revisited,"
 "Significant Work-Related Limitations of Function Under §12.05C,"
 "Questionable Retirement and the Small Business Owner," "Crisis of
 Confidence: The Inadequacies of Vocational Evidence Presented at
 Social Security Disability Hearings," "An Unsolved Mess:
 Analyzing the Social Security Administration's Methodology
 for Identifying Occupations and Job Numbers."

318-717-1995

ST. JOSEPH

(continued from pg. 7)

cared for and raised by Joseph. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who found in him someone who would not only save her life but would always provide for her and her child.

"How can we speak of human dignity without working to ensure that everyone is able to earn a decent living?"

In this sense, St. Joseph could not be other than the guardian of the church, for the church is the continuation of the body of Christ in history, even as Mary's motherhood is reflected in the motherhood of the church.²³ In his continued protection of the church, Joseph continues to protect the child and his mother, and we too, by our love for the church, continue to love the child and his mother.

That child would go on to say: "As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40). Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is "the child" whom Joseph continues to protect. For this reason, St. Joseph is invoked as protector of the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying.

Consequently, the church cannot fail to show a special love for the least of our brothers and sisters, for Jesus showed a particular concern for them and personally identified with them.

From St. Joseph, we must learn that same care and responsibility. We must learn to love the child and his mother, to love the sacraments and charity, to love the church and the poor. Each of these realities is always the child and his mother.

6. A Working Father

An aspect of St. Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social encyclical, Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, is his relation to work. St. Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labor.

In our own day, when employment has once more become a burning social issue and unemployment at times reaches record levels even in nations that for decades have enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, there is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which St. Joseph is an exemplary patron.

estrangement and even breakup. How can we speak of human dignity without working to ensure that everyone is able to earn a decent living?

Working persons, whatever their job may be, are cooperating with God himself and in some way become creators of the world around us. The crisis of our time, which is economic, social, cultural and spiritual, can serve as a summons for all of us to rediscover the value, the importance and necessity of work for bringing about a new "normal" from which no one is excluded.

St. Joseph's work reminds us that God himself, in becoming man, did not disdain work. The loss of employment that affects so many of our brothers and sisters and has increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic should serve as a summons to review our priorities. Let us implore St. Joseph the Worker to help us find ways to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!

Lord your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you traveled" (Dt 1:31). In a similar way, Joseph acted as a father for his whole life.

Fathers are not born but made. A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child. Whenever a man accepts responsibility for the life of another, in some way he becomes a father to that person.

Children today often seem orphans, lacking fathers. The church too needs fathers. St. Paul's words to the Corinthians remain timely: "Though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers" (1 Cor 4:15). Every priest or bishop should be able to add, with the apostle: "I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel" (ibid.). Paul likewise calls the Galatians "my little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!" (4:19).

Being a father entails introducing children to life and reality. Not holding them back, being overprotective or possessive but rather making them capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities. Perhaps for this reason, Joseph is traditionally called a "most chaste" father. That title is not simply a sign of affection but the summation of an attitude that is the opposite of possessiveness.

Chastity is freedom from possessiveness in every sphere of one's life. Only when love is chaste is it truly love. A

possessive love ultimately becomes dangerous: It imprisons, constricts and makes for misery.

God himself loved humanity with a chaste love; he left us free even to go astray and set ourselves against him. The logic of love is always the logic of freedom, and Joseph knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the center of things. He did not think of himself but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus.

Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.

"Fathers are not born but made. A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child."

Our world today needs fathers. It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs. It rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction.

Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, which is the fruit of mature sacrifice. The priesthood and consecrated life likewise require this kind of maturity. Whatever our vocation, whether to marriage, celibacy or virginity, our gift of self will not come to fulfillment if it stops at sacrifice; were that the case, instead of becoming a sign of

*The saints help all the faithful
"to strive for the holiness
and the perfection
of their particular state of life."*

Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of society and fraternal communion. It becomes an opportunity for the fulfillment not only of oneself but also of that primary cell of society that is the family.


A family without work is particularly vulnerable to difficulties, tensions,

7. A Father in the Shadows

The Polish writer Jan Dobraczynski, in his book *The Shadow of the Father*, tells the story of St. Joseph's life in the form of a novel. He uses the evocative image of a shadow to define Joseph. In his relationship to Jesus, Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: He watched over him and protected him, never leaving him to go his own way. We can think of Moses' words to Israel: "In the wilderness ... you saw how the

Budget Blinds
a style for every point of view™

Custom Window Coverings
Shutters • Draperies • Blinds



Huge selection of the best brands!

(318) 443-9730
FREE In-Home Consultation & Estimates

Professional Installation • Low Price Promise
Each Franchise Independently Owned and Operated
www.budgetblinds.com

Signature Series • Lafayette Interior Fashions
Exterior Window Screens

?? Catholic Trivia Answer ??

de Laval, the first bishop of New France.
formally begun in the 17th century by Saint François
Answer: Veneration of the Holy Family was

BU'S PIZZA HOUSE

CALL IN YOUR ORDER - WE WILL HAVE IT READY IN 20 MINUTES
COMPARE QUALITY - TASTE - QUANTITY & PRICE

WE DELIVER EVERYTHING FROM CHEESE TO "FULL HOUSE"
WITHIN LIMITED AREA CHECK ACCEPTABLE SUN-THUR 11 AM-10:30 PM
FRI & SAT 11 AM-11 PM

#1 ALEXANDRIA 902 VERSAILLES BLVD. 448-4104	#2 BALL 6301 MONROE HWY. 640-2983	#3 PINEVILLE CORNER HWY. 28 EAST & STILLEY RD. 445-9249
--	---	--

VALUABLE COUPON
Two Medium Pizzas \$17.99 Coupon Expires 1/25/21
Single Topping - Additional Toppings Extra
Not valid with any other coupon

All prices subject to change

the beauty and joy of love, the gift of self would risk being an expression of unhappiness, sadness and frustration.

When fathers refuse to live the lives of their children for them, new and unexpected vistas open up. Every child is the bearer of a unique mystery that can only be brought to light with the help of a father who respects that

child's freedom. A father who realizes that he is most a father and educator at the point when he becomes "useless," when he sees that his child has become independent and can walk the paths of life unaccompanied.

When he becomes like Joseph, who always knew that his child was not his own but had merely been entrusted to his

care. In the end, this is what Jesus would have us understand when he says, "Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven" (Mt 23:9).

In every exercise of our fatherhood, we should always keep in mind that it has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a "sign" pointing to a greater fatherhood. In a way, we are all like Joseph: a shadow of the heavenly Father, who "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt 5:45). And a shadow that follows his Son.

"Get up, take the child and his mother" (Mt 2:13), God told St. Joseph.

The aim of this apostolic letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal.

Indeed, the proper mission of the saints is not only to obtain miracles and graces but to intercede for us before God, like Abraham and Moses and like Jesus, the "one mediator" (1 Tm 2:5), who is our "advocate" with the Father (1 Jn 2:1) and who "always lives to make intercession for [us]" (Heb 7:25; cf. Rom 8:34).

The saints help all the faithful "to strive for the holiness and the perfection of their particular state of life." Their lives are concrete proof that it is possible to put the

Gospel into practice.

Jesus told us, "Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Mt 11:29). The lives of the saints too are examples to be imitated. St. Paul explicitly says this: "Be imitators of me!" (1 Cor 4:16). By his eloquent silence, St. Joseph says the same.

Before the example of so many holy men and women, St. Augustine asked himself, "What they could do, can you not also do?" And so he drew closer to his definitive conversion, when he could exclaim: "Late have I loved you, Beauty ever ancient, ever new!" We need only ask St. Joseph for the grace of graces: our conversion.

Let us now make our prayer to him (below).

Franciscus



visit us at
DESPINOTIRE.COM




Brigitte Kelso
Owner/Agent
2918 S. MacArthur Dr.
Alexandria, La. 71301

Phone: 318.448.2226
Fax: 318.448.2280
bkelso@kelsoinsurance.com

Auto, Home, Recreational Vehicles, Collector Cars, Commercial

**Lacombe
Floor Finishing**

310 N. Briarwood, Bunkie, LA 71322
Specializing in installation

- Floor Finishing
- Ceramic Tile Floors
- Hardwood Floors
- Reseal Tile Floors

Ph: (318) 481-0950
Morgan Newton, Owner

PEST AID CO.

We Sell Do-It-Yourself Pest Control Supplies



Termites • Ants
Ticks • Roaches
Mice • Fleas
Mosquitoes

COMPLETE TERMITE & PEST CONTROL
6 Month Service Agreements
Home Owned & Operated • Raymond J. Constantino, Sr.

473-0228
1-800-256-0450

2828 Jackson St. • Alexandria, LA



Hail, guardian of the Redeemer,

Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

Given in Rome, at St. John Lateran, on Dec. 8, solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year 2020, the eighth of my pontificate.

**NEBLETT, BEARD
& ARSENAULT**

561-2500 • NBALawFirm.com

Richard J. Arsenault 2220 Bonaventure Court, Alexandria



WEATHER BALLOON. St. Frances Cabrini School's 8th grade Physical Science class launched a weather balloon on Friday, Dec. 4. Science teacher, Father Taylor Reynolds, spent the last couple of weeks teaching about astronomy and the planets. The students worked to prepare the payload, predicted where the balloon would land, and how fast it would travel. On Friday, the weather balloon was released with the entire student body present to countdown.

The payload contained a GPS tracker and three GoPro cameras to capture footage of the launch and what it would see from above. The weather balloon surpassed the jet stream, and was in the air for over an hour. It landed in the Homochitto Forest in southwestern Mississippi. On Saturday, students traveled there to recover the payload. It was exactly where the GPS had said it would be!



NEBLETT, BEARD & ARSENAULT

Need Social Security Disability Benefits?

561-2500

NBALawFirm.com

Richard J. Arsenaault 2220 Bonaventure Court, Alexandria

A note from the Catholic Schools Office

Information and guidelines for schools regarding safety with COVID are always evolving, changing, and generally present a challenging situation for all businesses and individuals. We know that parents have many questions, and are working with our Catholic schools to best answer those questions.

Our Catholic schools have a long history of providing a top-quality Catholic education. We look forward to continuing that education in the school year to come. If you have any questions, we invite you to contact your school administration or the Office of Catholic Schools.

Thank you for your patience and prayers as decisions are made daily to best care for the youth of our diocese.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR. On Nov. 18, Sacred Heart School held its annual Student of the Year competition. Winners were Leah [REDACTED], 5th grade, daughter of Jeremy and Amy [REDACTED] of Plaquemine; and Ryan [REDACTED], 8th, son of Jeremy and Amy [REDACTED] of Plaquemine. Both students will compete at the Diocesan level.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

PATRIOT PEN. Ryan [REDACTED], 8th grade student from Sacred Heart School in Moreauville, was presented with the Patriot Pen Essay Award by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) - Post 3139, on Dec. 8 by Mr. Marty Rabalais. Ryan will compete at the District Level and will have an opportunity to move on to the state and then national level which will be held in Washington, D.C.

Ryan is the son of Jeremy and Amy [REDACTED] of Plaquemine, and has been a student of Sacred Heart School since Pre-K4. He was also recently named the 8th grade Student of the Year for Sacred Heart School, where he will compete at the Diocesan Level. Congratulations from Sacred Heart School!

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD. Sacred Heart School sixth grade student, Molly [REDACTED], nominated her teacher, Mrs. Michelle Andries, for the Golden Apple Recipient on KALB Channel 5. Mrs. Andries is the wife of Rayford Andries. Congratulations from Sacred Heart School!

Choosing Kramer Funeral Home means choosing 145 years of compassion, respect, and dignity.

Since no two people are alike, no two funerals should be alike.

We are here for you and your family yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

KRAMER

Funeral Home and Cremation Service

Est. 1875

www.KramerFunerals.com 318-445-6311

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
Campus Minister: Lynn Ray
Phone: 318-473-6494 | lray@diocesealex.org

Northwestern State University Catholic Student Organization
Chaplain: Fr. Marc Noel
Phone: 318-352-2615 | frmnoel@diocesealex.org

Louisiana College: Catholic Student Organization
Campus Minister: Lynn Ray
Phone: 318-613-0634 | lray@diocesealex.org

**Mark your calendars for Catholic Schools Week
January 31
- February 6, 2021!**

*If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.*

Psalm 95: 8 | Responsorial Psalm for January 31

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Holy Land Pilgrimage - January 15-23, 2021

Join us for a journey of a lifetime on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The Scriptures will come alive as you visit Our Lord's homeland. It is an encounter that has changed the lives of many pilgrims, and it is an act of faith and prayer. Your spiritual director for this trip is Fr. John Wiltse, pastor of St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport. For more information, call 337-291-1933 or visit www.holytravels.org/tour/stmaryscottonport/.

Catholic Schools Week - January 31-February 6

Since 1974, National Catholic Schools Week is the annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. It starts the last Sunday in January and runs all week, which in 2021 is January 31 - February 6. The theme for National Catholic Schools Week 2021 is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service." Schools typically observe the annual celebration week with Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners, and community members. Through these events, schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to our church, our communities, and our nation.

All American Scholar Award deadline - March 1, 2021

The All American Scholar Award is granted to 35 graduating high school seniors. Each scholarship is worth \$1,000 and is designed to help offset tuition costs for young Catholic Life members. Applicants must be seeking to attend an accredited college or university the fall semester immediately following their high school graduation.

A complete list of criteria and application forms may be downloaded at www.cliu.com. For more information, please contact Megan Real in the Communications Department at 800-262-2548 or 210-828-9921, ext. 141 or email branch@cliu.com.

Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference - March 6-7

The annual Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference is scheduled for March 6-7 at the Randolph Riverfront Center. For more information as we make updates, please visit www.steubenvillesouth.com, or email Cari Terracina at info@steubenvillesouth.com.

NEW DATE - Pilgrimage to France - June 2-11

The pilgrimage with Fr. Martin Laird to Lourdes, France has been rescheduled for June 2-11, 2021. In Lourdes, experience the Grotto and Way of the Cross, and visit the Basilica of St. Therese in Lisieux. In Paris, see Sacre Coeur and the Miraculous Medial Chapel, as well as cruise down the Seine River. Request more information by calling 337-291-1933 or visit www.holytravels.org/materdolorosa.

Steubenville South High School Youth Conference - June 25-27

The Steubenville South High School Youth Conference is scheduled for June 25-27, 2021. For more information as we make updates, please visit www.steubenvillesouth.com or email Cari Terracina at info@steubenvillesouth.com.

Prayer Line - Ongoing

Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth has a dedicated prayer line. One of our Prayer Companions will pray with you when you call or, privately, if you prefer, following your call. Anonymity and confidentiality are ensured and respected. Our desire is to pray with you for the gifts of hope, and asking for the continued mercy and love of Jesus Christ. The prayer line phone number is 318-625-9195.

Maryhill Legacy Bricks now available!

A great gifting opportunity! These beautiful, personalized, and engraved commemorative Maryhill Legacy Bricks make the perfect year round gift! These commemorative paver bricks will be installed and displayed at the entrance of the main chapel as a permanent legacy at Maryhill Renewal Center. To order your Maryhill Legacy Brick, contact Deacon Luke White or order online at www.diocesealex.org/maryhill-legacy-bricks/

Upcoming ACTS Retreats

All ACTS Retreats have been cancelled until further notice. Please contact individual retreat organizers for more information about rescheduling.

Information will be updated periodically on the Diocese of Alexandria website as well. A list of ACTS retreat dates can be found at www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/.

New Radio Maria Program

Fr. Dan Reehil, Radio Maria's new National Priest Director, will host a new program, titled *Battle Ready*.

Through his program, Fr. Dan will strive to fortify, strengthen, and embolden the people of God, making them battle ready to advance the Gospel and the Kingdom of God.

Battle Ready will examine the scriptures and Church Tradition to form devout and holy soldiers for the Church Militant. The program will seek to guide ordinary people into the extraordinary future that God is currently unfolding before our very eyes.

"We are living in the most exciting of times as the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart is imminent, and the time is fast approaching for our Mother and Queen, The Blessed Virgin Mary, to crush the head of the serpent," he said. "The clarion call of Our Lady of sounding to 'rouse the warriors to arms' (Joel 3:9) and take up the battle for souls. Won't you please join in this battle?"

Battle Ready airs at 9:00 a.m. CST / 10:00 a.m. EST, Tuesday through Friday mornings.

Visit www.praymorenovenas.com to join in praying the Coronavirus novena.

Join in the Coronavirus novena at www.praymorenovenas.com, praying for all who are affected, all who are sick suffering, for all those who work in the medical profession, and for those who have died as well as for their grieving family members.

Church Today News Deadlines

Next issue:
January 25
Deadline for news:
Thursday, January 14

Telephone 318-445-1446
Fax 318-445-1449

Certified Gemologists
Registered Jewelers

Under the clocktower
Schnack's
FINE JEWELRY
Established 1865
1438 Dorchester Drive
Alexandria, Louisiana 71301-3408
www.schnacks.com



Listen to the Holy Sacrifice
of the Mass on

KLIL 92.1 **KZLG 95.9**

8 a.m. Sunday Mass

7 a.m. Sunday Mass

January 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>DECEMBER 28</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE</p>	<p>29</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD</p>	<p>30</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. GUS VOLTZ</p>	<p>31</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. WILTSE</p>	<p>JANUARY 1</p> <p>FIRST FRIDAY SOLEMNITY of MARY the HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (Holy day of obligation) NEW YEARS DAY PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>	<p>2</p> <p>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. XAVIER</p>	<p>3</p> <p>EPIPHANY of the LORD PRAY FOR FR. K. ZACHARIAH</p>
<p>4</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. AELAVANTHARA</p>	<p>5</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. W. AJAERO</p>	<p>6</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY</p>	<p>7</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. S. BRANDOW</p>	<p>8</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. BRAQUET</p>	<p>9</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. BROCATO</p>	<p>10</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. S. CHEMINO</p>
<p>11</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. CORKERY</p>	<p>12</p> <p>VIRTUS St. Joseph Catholic Center, ALEXANDRIA 6:00 p.m. PRAY FOR FR. J. CUNNINGHAM</p>	<p>13</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. W. DECOSTE</p>	<p>14</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. DEJESUS</p>	<p>15</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. DESHAUTELLE</p>	<p>16</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. DESIMONE</p>	<p>17</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. DHARMARAJ</p>
Holy Land Pilgrimage						
<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
Holy Land Pilgrimage, January 15-23						
<p>MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY PRAY FOR FR. D. DUCOTE</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. P. FAULK</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. J. FERGUSON</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. W. GEARHEARD</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. J. GOOTEE</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION</p>	<p>PRAY FOR FR. D. HART</p>
<p>25</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. HASIEBER</p>	<p>26</p> <p>VIRTUS Sacred Heart, MOREAUVILLE 6:00 p.m. PRAY FOR MSGR. R. HOPPE</p>	<p>27</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. R. HUMPHRIES</p>	<p>28</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. H. IMAMSHAH</p>	<p>29</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI</p>	<p>30</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUMPURAM</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Catholic Schools Week, January 31 - February 6 PRAY FOR FR. L. LAFLEUR</p>



WOMEN'S ROBOTIC SURGERY

"My best advice to women is put your health first."

CLAIRE HICK

Robotic GYN Patient

PATRICK TASSIN, MD

Robotic Surgeon

"I knew I needed a hysterectomy. Through research and discussion with my doctor, robotic surgery was the perfect choice. It was less invasive and offered quicker recovery. Dr. Tassin, my surgeon, agreed it was right for me. After the surgery, I spent one night in the hospital and was back working within five days. My best advice to women is put your health first and chose Cabrini!"

CENLA'S ONLY HOSPITAL OFFERING GYN ROBOTIC SURGERY
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 866-581-3627

A cross on the outside
Means a difference on the inside.

 **CHRISTUS.**
ST. FRANCES CABRINI
Hospital

ChristusStFrancesCabrini.org