

# CHURCH TODAY

Volume LIII, No. 1

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

January 24, 2022



## Discover and Celebrate Catholic Schools: Celebrating our students!

St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie, Jr. Beta Club placed 2nd in Performing Arts, 3rd place in Living Literature, 3rd place in Apparel Design, and 3rd place in Speech for Beta District Day. They will now head to state competition!

### INSIDE

#### Getting the most out of your Bible reading time

Getting the most out of reading the Bible isn't about having the best study techniques so much as it is about allowing God's Word to change how we think and live. See page 6 for tips on how to get the most out of your bible reading time, no matter what season you're in.

#### Launch of Fertility Science Institute

Couple to Couple League has launched the Fertility Science Institute, a one-of-a-kind online platform that provides scientifically based resources to the millions of Fertility Awareness-Based Method users seeking ongoing support. See page 19 for more information on this new and exciting platform!

#### Catholic Schools Week 2022

Discover and celebrate our Catholic Schools! Sponsored by the National Catholic Educators Association, Catholic Schools Week is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. See page 21 for a list of activities and open houses around our diocese.

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## Resolutions for today

By Katie Prejean  
Catholic News Service

I think New Year's resolutions are silly.

Under the guise of "get healthy" and "better yourself" we establish arbitrary (and often unrealistic) goals to eat less, move around more, spend less time on our phone, etc.

One year, I resolved to use a paper planner to keep track of my to-do lists and meetings. I gave up the practice within two weeks because it just wasn't a useful habit for me. But even though I knew I needed to quit on my resolution, I was frustrated by my giving it up.

Left with just one other resolution for the year: Go to bed by 9 p.m. That one lasted just a couple weeks beyond the first.

In a furious fit, I resolved to never make resolutions again, at least not new year ones. Because, it was obvious I waiting to make necessary changes in my life -- and build good, healthy, holy habits -- until the first of a new year.

Rather than doing what I knew needed to be done when I realized it needed to be done, I'd procrastinate the new habit: "Oh, after the new year I'll do that" and just set the habit or task on a never-ending to-do list labeled "Someday," knowing good and well "someday" was never really coming.

We do this with far more than just healthy eating or closet organization or bedtime routines. We set resolutions for our spiritual life on a "someday" list all too often.

"Someday I'll start going to daily Mass."

"Someday I'll pray Liturgy of the Hours."



"Someday I'll invite Father over to dinner."

"Someday I'll volunteer to lector on Sunday."

"Someday I'll make that silent retreat."

"Someday I'll pray the rosary every night before bed."

They sit there on that "someday" list -- these hopes and habits with no real direction, and therefore no real resolve. Even though we know they are noble, worthy, good practices, they simply become these platitudes with no path to living them out.

These "someday" resolutions, promised at the start of a new year because it's what everyone else is doing, are not realistic behaviors we can put into practice and thus develop holy

habits. They're these generalized promises made to no one, least of all ourselves.

So perhaps our mindset to these generalized resolutions for the new year that we'll forget in a matter of weeks can be made more specific, more purposeful, more immediate and, most of all, more tangible.

Perhaps we name in a very intentional way what it is we hope to achieve, and then make the resolution a practice we can reasonably begin to do in our lives.

"I hope to grow closer to the Lord" means I resolve to attend a weekday Mass at least one day a week.

"I hope to learn more about sacred Scripture" means I resolve

to pray evening prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours at least two nights a week.

"I hope to become more comfortable in my parish community" means I resolve to invite Father over to dinner at some point before Lent begins.

"I hope to serve my church" means I resolve to finally call the parish secretary and ask about volunteering to become a lector.

The Lord doesn't ask us to "do" things for him at the beginning of a new year simply because every diet blog and health care website and each gym in town is screaming at you to "make big changes" and "resolve to do better."

The Lord invites us to hope and dream about how close we are to Him and resolve to make the changes we need to make to grow closer to Him whenever we need to, and not just wait for the beginning of the new year or "someday."

Every time we go to confession we make a resolution when we pray our act of contrition. We "firmly resolve with the help of thy grace" to change how we live, to avoid sin as best we can, to grow closer to Jesus.

Perhaps this is the year we firmly resolve to hope in new ways, and live and act in new ways, so we can see the fulfillment of those hopes, to ultimately be resolute in our resolve to someday grow closer to the Lord.

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Katie Prejean McGrady is an award-winning author and host of The Katie McGrady Show on Sirius XM's The Catholic Channel. She lives in Louisiana with her husband and daughters.

*Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus*

*prayer of invocation  
to the Holy Spirit*

We stand before You, Holy Spirit as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path  
nor partiality influence our action.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,  
in the Communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.

# Annual 100-hour nonstop public Bible reading planned in Louisiana diocese

ST. MARTINVILLE, La. (CNS) -- An annual 100-hour, nonstop public Bible reading takes place in St. Martinville in the Diocese of Lafayette Jan. 19-23.

The holy Bible will be read publicly from cover to cover without pause in the square of the diocese's oldest church parish, St. Martin de Tours. The parish was erected in 1765 and the present church dates to 1836.

The reading will begin at 12:30 p.m. (local time) Jan. 19 and end at 4:30 p.m. Jan. 23, which is Word of God Sunday.

During the four days of continuous reading, 300 lectors from the various 121 parish churches in the Diocese of Lafayette as well as faith leaders from other denominations from across the Acadiana region will be employed.

The Bible Marathon will help to accentuate "the rich cultural heritage of the region by including its various nationalities and languages," said a news release on the event.

In addition to English, selections from the Bible will be read in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hebrew, Latin and Greek. Over 3,000 people usually attend at various times throughout the 100 hours.

Fête-Dieu du Teche in conjunction with St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church is hosting the Bible Marathon. Fête-Dieu du Teche is an organization that sponsors an annual eucharistic boat procession of the same name each August to celebrate faith, family and tradition in the Lafayette Diocese.

The Bible Marathon will be livestreamed on the Fête-Dieu du Teche Facebook page.

## HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for February 2022

Religious Sisters and Consecrated Women -

We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women; thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.



**LOUISIANA 'FRIAR TRUCK'.** An annual 100-hour, nonstop public Bible reading takes place in St. Martinville in the Diocese of Lafayette Jan. 19-23. The holy bible will be read publicly from cover to cover without pause in the square of the diocese's oldest church parish, St. Martin de Tours.

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The Bible Marathon was livestreamed on the Fête-Dieu du Teche Facebook page. The special event is intended to help "prime the pump" and reignite a love for the word of God and its practice in our lives, said Father Michael Champagne, a priest of the Community of Jesus Crucified, who is the organizer of the event.

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"People everywhere love to exercise. It's important to stay in physical shape, which is why many participate in programs such as CrossFit and compete in Iron Man races, triathlons and marathons. And we wanted to provide a way for people to spiritually exercise," the priest said. "We, as Christians, and all men and women of goodwill, need to 'shake the dust off' our Bibles and begin to ponder God's plan for our lives."

"In these chaotic times we often get confused about how we are to act in our personal lives, in our families, at work and in our dealings with others," he added. "God's preeminent way of speaking to us is through the sacred Scriptures.

"Every page of the Bible

recounts God's burning and fatherly love for us, and the Bible Marathon is a reminder of that love."

Lafayette Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel participates in the Bible Marathon every year.

He said it "serves as a reminder of the importance of the Bible, the word of God and the sacred Scriptures."

"In the very noisy world we live in today, the significance of the word of God can be easily lost," Bishop Deshotel said. "The Bible is a record of God's interaction with the human race" and "culminates in the person of Jesus Christ."

Fête-Dieu du Teche has added a new element to this year's Bible Marathon -- the "Friar Truck." The retrofitted antique fire truck has been transformed into a mobile church with a built-in pulpit.

The Friar Truck, blessed by Bishop Deshotel Jan. 7, will be used for proclaiming the word of God during this year's Bible Marathon, Father Champagne

region.

Among this year's readers will be Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry, who noted that the rule of law won't fail if it is anchored in the law of God.

The Bible Marathon -- also called the "Jubilee of the Word Marathon" -- "is a great way to recover that wisdom and reflect on it together," he said.

According to Father Champagne, the public Bible reading in the church square in St. Martinville has spawned many Bible studies and inspired other Bible Marathons at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana, in New Orleans and most recently in Colorado.

During the marathon in St. Martinville, priests will be available each day for the sacrament of reconciliation "by means of the Spiritual Care Unit," or SCU, a mobile confessional, according to the news release.

"Catholics who are properly disposed can obtain a plenary indulgence by reading or listening for 30 minutes from the holy Bible in the square during the event," the release said. All lectors were asked to invite at least 10 people to come along with them "and listen to the Word while it is being proclaimed in the square."

"We need proclaimers of the Word, but also hearers of the Word, and most importantly doers of the Word," said Father Champagne.

said.

The truck also is stocked with free Bibles, holy water and will be used for itinerant street preaching on the Scriptures at various public locations in the

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## The basics of prayer

By Val Woerner  
Val Marie Paper

After talking about prayer for the past 6 years, it can be really easy to not address the very basics of prayer. As you sift through our resources, it might even feel like your jumping into the middle of a conversation and you feel a little lost. Who cares about organizing prayers in a prayer journal when you're not really sure of the purpose of prayer in the first place, right?

Today, we wanted to answer some foundational questions about prayer. Some of these answers are taken straight from the first module of our prayer course, *Developing a Fluency of Prayer*. If you are really ready to invest in becoming confident and consistent in prayer, this is our best comprehensive tool to help you minimize the physical and mental barriers when it comes to prayer. We cover everything

from the basic foundations, to learning to discern the voice of God, praying with others, using Scripture in your prayers, tackling obstacles that are sure to come and more. Let's dive in!

### What is prayer?

The best answer I've learned comes from my daughter's chapel at school. The teacher placed one hand vertically in front of her and said "prayer is talking to God" then she took her other hand and did the same saying "and listening to God" making prayer hands. I love this so much because often we say it's talking to God but it's actually our conversation with God and listening is a vital part.

### Who are you praying to?

We start here because it can be easy to focus on the format and forget WHO we pray to, which may relieve some pressure we fail to get the format right.

The best way to learn about who you are praying to is to study the Bible with two specific

thoughts in mind.

1. Learn the character of God by asking "what does this passage say about God?" You may want to keep a running list as a reminder when you come to pray!

2. Listening to the prayers of others and asking what does this teach me about the way to approach God? You'll notice prayers that include praise, request, confession, lamenting, gratitude. He is worthy of and wants to receive each of these parts!

Here are just a few quick thoughts on why God is worthy of our prayers:

1. He is the God who hears and responds. There would be no point to pray if God didn't hear our prayers but He does and better than that, He responds. (Jeremiah 29:12-13)

2. He is the God who cares. You are not a bother to God. Part of knowing God means we know what we can take to him.

The short answer? Everything. (Matthew 6:26, Matthew 7:7-11)

3. He is the God who is capable. He created the universe. He is capable of working in your life too. (Colossians 1:17)

4. He is the God who is outside of time. What feels like unanswered prayers or like God is ignoring you may just be a reminder time isn't linear to God like it is to us. (Psalm 90:4)

### Who should pray?

Every believer is called to pray. (Hebrews 10:19-22)

(If you aren't a believer yet, that simply means first admitting that you are a sinner in need of saving and you believe that Jesus' death on the cross paid the price for our sins. You confess your sins and commit to following Christ.)

### When? Where?

Anytime, anywhere. This is the beautiful thing about being daughters of the King. Though it might feel like we would have

limited access to such a powerful being, Scripture repeatedly tells us to come to Him always and pray without ceasing. (1 Thes. 5:17, Ephesians 6:18 and Luke 18:1).

### How do we pray?

I want you to first know God is far more gracious than we give him credit for. He's not looking for you to fail or standing there with a checklist making sure you cross every "i" perfectly and dot every "i". Our enemy, the devil, wants to paint that picture of God because he knows it's paralyzing. The quickest way to break through is to just start talking to God, out loud if that's easiest, or writing a letter to him. Let him know you aren't sure how to pray and ask Him to help you. He's even given us the Holy Spirit to help us when we don't know what to say. (Romans 8:26) Does that sound like an unapproachable God waiting for you to fail?

## Are silent prayers heard by God? / Confession or reconciliation

**Q.** I am an 88-year-old Korean War veteran with a question that is not earth-shattering but one that bothers me almost every day. I talk and pray to God, to Jesus and to the Blessed Virgin Mary out loud -- every morning and at night before I go to bed. (I live alone.)

But there are also times when I pray silently -- just in my head -- especially if I wake up during the night. So what I need to know is whether those prayers -- the silent ones -- are heard. (Georgia)

**A.** Please relax and be at peace. The Lord (and Mary, too) hears all our prayers, including the silent ones. In fact, the Bible speaks directly to that. The Letter to the Hebrews says: "The word of God is living and effective... penetrating even between soul and spirit... able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart" (4:12).

Even when we are burdened and find prayer difficult, the Lord is there to help us. Paul's



### Question Corner

By Father Kenneth Doyle  
Catholic News Service

letter to the Romans says that the Spirit "comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings" (8:26).

So, God can hear our thoughts just as easily as he can hear our words. (This may serve as a helpful reminder; even our thoughts should be kind and prayerful, too.)

**Q.** While I know that only confession will reconcile me with God, I am confused about the terminology used in my parish. (We are a rural parish and have very few opportunities for confession, but there is always

the chance to make a private appointment for confession.

Any scheduled confessions are now announced as reconciliation, and I am not clear as to what to expect when I go. Sometimes there is a reconciliation service followed by confessions; other times there are only confessions.

Does the church no longer recognize a difference between the reconciliation service (which was to prepare us for confession) and the sacrament of confession (which is private). In other words, is there still a sacrament of confession or is it now called the sacrament of reconciliation? (Courtland, Virginia)

**A.** Generally, the sacrament of penance can be called confession or reconciliation, and the three terms are used interchangeably. In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Nos. 1423-24) lists several names by which the same sacrament can be designated.

These include: the sacrament of conversion, the sacrament of penance, the sacrament of confession, the sacrament of forgiveness, and the sacrament of reconciliation.

The catechism notes that "the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament" (No. 1424).

Sometimes parishes offer reconciliation services that include prayers and scriptural readings on forgiveness, as well as a homily on the same topic. It would be good for a local church to mention in advance what the format will be for the sacrament -- in particular so that parishioners can know how much

time to allow.

*Questions may be sent to  
Father Kenneth Doyle at  
askfatherdoyle@gmail.com  
and 30 Columbia Circle Dr.,  
Albany, New York 12203*

**Come Holy Ghost,  
Creator blest,  
and in our hearts  
take up They rest;  
Come with they grace  
and heav'nly aid  
to fill the hearts  
which thou hast made,  
to fill our hearts  
which thou hast made.**

*11 Come, Holy Ghost*



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for our diocese.

# Synodality and ecumenism require walking together, says cardinals

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service



**CHRISTIAN UNITY.** Pope Francis speaks as Maltese Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, looks on during a meeting with representatives of bishops' conferences from around the world at the Vatican in this Oct. 9, 2021, photo. Cardinal Grech and Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, released a joint prayer that calls for the Catholic church to "walk together with all Christians" during the synod process. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- All Christians are invited to pray for unity and continue to journey together, said Cardinals Mario Grech, general secretary of the Synod of the Bishops, and Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Toward that end, the two offices came together to offer a prayer, which could be added to the other intentions during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Jan. 18-25.

Inspired by the theme of this year's Week of Prayer, "We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him," the prayer "offers a propitious occasion to pray with all Christians that the synod will proceed in an ecumenical spirit," the two cardinals said in a joint news release Jan. 17.

"Conscious of our need for the accompaniment and the many gifts of our brothers and sisters in Christ, we call on them to journey with us during these two years and we sincerely pray that Christ will lead us closer to him and so to one another," they said.

The prayer is:  
"Heavenly Father, as the Magi journeyed toward Bethlehem led by the star, so by your heavenly light, guide the Catholic Church to walk together with all Christians during this time of synod. As the Magi were united in their worship of Christ,

lead us closer to your Son, and so to one another, so that we become a sign of the unity that you desire for your church, and the whole creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Cardinals Koch and Grech have been highlighting ways the local churches can implement an ecumenical dimension of the synodal process given that "synodality and ecumenism are processes of walking together,"

they wrote in a joint letter dated Oct. 28, 2021, sent to bishops responsible for ecumenism within their episcopal conferences.

The Catholic Church inaugurated a synodal process, titled "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission" in October 2021. It will lead to a general assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023.

Because a synodal church

is a church which listens, "this listening should concern the totality of those who are honored by the name of Christian, since all the baptized participate to some degree in the *sensus fidei*," Cardinals Grech and Koch wrote.

Ecumenism is an "exchange of gifts" and "one of the gifts Catholics can receive from the other Christians is precisely their experience and understanding of synodality," they added.

Among the suggestions in the letter, the cardinals ask that dioceses reach out to the leaders of the main Christian communities in their area, inform them about the synodal process, invite them to appoint delegates to participate in the pre-synodal diocesan meetings and possibly to address the diocesan synodal assembly, organize listening sessions, and encourage them to send written reflections on the questionnaire included in the preparatory document.

## The Synodal Church Survey

As Pope Francis invites all Catholics to have their voices heard leading up to 2023's Synod of Bishops, the Diocese of Alexandria encourages everyone to share their thoughts. An eight-question survey is available on the Diocesan website at <https://www.diocesealex.org>.

The questions center under the theme "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participating, and Mission." The Diocesan Synod Committee will compile the responses into a report that will be submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB will then submit a report for the Synod of Bishops, which will adopt a final document. All dioceses across the globe are participating in the Synod.

That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings and transforms me,  
**Jesus, I trust in You.**

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You,  
**Jesus, I trust in You.**

That You are with me in my suffering, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That You will not leave me an orphan, that You are present in Your Church, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That Your plan is better than anything else, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others,  
**Jesus, I trust in You.**

That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

That my life is a gift, **Jesus, I trust in You.**

*That You will teach me to trust You.*

11 *Litany of Trust*

Written by Sr. Faustina Maria Pia, SV  
Sisters of Life

## How to get the most out of your bible reading time

By **Shelby Turner**  
Guest Contributor

“Boys, it’s time to clear the table off for dinner!” I chimed. Three boys, lounging on the couch, engrossed in a TV show, didn’t budge. “Boys, did you hear me? Hello?” I said a little louder. They didn’t blink. They didn’t respond. They did nothing. So, I walked directly in their line of sight, my body between them and the TV, and repeated my request. They looked at me dazed, completely unaware I had been trying to get their attention for several minutes now. Then, they slowly slumped off the couch and toward their chore.

This is not an unusual scene in our home. Not only for my kids but also for myself. Only recently, the beck and call I’ve been too distracted to notice is not one asking me to attend to my chores, but one from the Lord asking me to attend to my soul. See, I’ve been faithfully reading my Bible day in and day out for years. It’s become a familiar routine, I almost do it without thinking anymore. It’s just simply part of my day. But, though the routine was familiar, I was finding that what I was reading was going in one ear and out the other. Some days, if you would have asked me 15 minutes after I completed my Bible reading what I had read about, I doubt I would have been able to tell you. I started to want more out of my Bible reading time. I wanted it to move me, build me up, and convict me of sin. I wanted my time spend in God’s Word to change me.

I began to search for what it might look like to get the most out of my Bible reading time and I found the answer in James 1:21–25. These verses may be familiar to you; they mention the importance of being not only a hearer but also a doer of the Word



of God. And they are so rich and profound. I can’t help but share them with you, in case you, too, are craving encounters with God’s Word that are more than ho-hum.

**Here are steps James 1:21–25 gives us to get the most out of our Bible Reading Time:**

• **Rid and Receive.**  
“Therefore, *ridding yourselves of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, humbly receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*” — James 1:21

James 1:21 tells us that the first step is two-fold. We must rid

ourselves of the moral filth and evil that is all around and us and receive the Word with humility. We all live amidst constantly messaging telling us what to believe, how to live, and in what way to view the world.

If we want to let God’s Word transform us, we need to start by peeling back the layers of what we believe and identifying which of our beliefs are contrary to God. We must humbly accept what the Word of God says, even when it is profoundly uncomfortable or in opposition to what we desire. We should open the Bible with a heart that says, “Lord, show me where what I believe is contrary to truth.” The evil we need to

rid ourselves of is anything that is unrighteous, that is anything that is not of God—whether it be big or small. And in its place, we should receive God’s truth, which is able to save our souls.

• **Be a doer.**

“*But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone looking at his own face in a mirror. For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of person he was.*” — James 1:22–24

James 1:22 says that once we’ve received the Word, we must act on it. We must become a doer. Being a doer of what we read and receive in God’s Word should be who we are. This verse also warns us that if we hear, but are not actively engaged in doing what God’s Word tells us to do, we are deceiving ourselves. We have convinced ourselves that hearing is enough when in reality, hearing is just the beginning.

The next two verses, James 1:23–24, show us the difference between hearers and doers. If we focus on the action words found in these verses, we see that hearers see, go away, forget, and are deceived. But, doers look intently, persevere, don’t forget, and are blessed.

• **Focus and Perseverance.**

“*But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works—this person will be blessed in what he does.*” — James 1:25

The difference between the hearer and the doer is their focus and perseverance. The hearer listens to God’s word briefly, then walks away and allows their focus to shift and sway in every

direction. The doer hears God’s Word and chooses to focus on it. They ask, “how does God’s Word impact my time, money, decisions, relationships, and pain?”

Doers do the hard work of persevering in focusing on how the Bible transforms the way they live their entire lives. Put simply, doers allow God’s Word, through the work of the Holy Spirit, to change what they think, feel, and do. While hearers view the Bible as a corner of their life that does not affect anything else.

Getting the most out of reading the Bible isn’t about having the best study techniques so much as it’s about allowing God’s Word to change how you think, act, and live. For me, this has meant engaging in my Bible reading time with my heart and not just my head. It has meant asking myself, “What should I do in response to what I’ve read today?” And it’s meant being ready to acknowledge it and repent when I’m living contrary to Scripture. I wonder, how might it impact your Bible reading time if you focused on being not only a hearer, but a doer of God’s Word?

---

Shelby Turner lives outside Kansas City, Missouri with her husband, Kent, and their four children. She is passionate about writing words that help women know God and understand the bible. When she’s not pouring her heart into studying and teaching God’s Word, you’ll probably find her posting Instagram stories of her kids or watching way too many episodes of *The Office* with her husband. You can connect with her on Instagram at @shelbyraeturner.



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# “The Bible in a Year” podcast goes global as world’s #1 podcast in Religion and Spirituality

## “Ascension’s chart-topping podcasts in English and Spanish are #1 in the U.S. in “all categories” and #1 in “Christianity” in 47 countries worldwide

Hit podcast The Bible in a Year (with Fr. Mike Schmitz)<sup>™</sup> featuring Jeff Cavins is back in the #1 position on the U.S. Apple Charts, one year after achieving the same feat in January 2021.

This year, aided by an all-new version in Spanish, the impact of the show is going global.

As of January 3, Ascension’s duo of Bible-focused podcasts (The Bible in a Year in English, La Biblia en un Año in Spanish) had snagged the #1 spot in “Christianity” in 47 different countries including Great Britain, Italy, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. (Full list of countries available in the Ascension Newsroom.)

“Chartable,” a leading authority in podcasting charts, has named The Bible in a Year (English version) as the #1 podcast in Religion & Spirituality in the world this week as ranked by total “global reach.”

“So many people listened last year, and they’ve inspired a whole new crowd to participate,” adds Jonathan Strate, president and CEO of Ascension, the Catholic multimedia network behind the show.

**Deja vu for 2022: The #1 Podcast in the U.S. for the second year in a row**

This is the second year in a row that The Bible in a Year podcast became the #1 show in the United States. Hosted by popular Catholic priest, “BIY” debuted as the #1 podcast in all categories from Jan 2 – 18, 2021, and maintained nearly a half-million daily downloads through the end of the year.

Podcast producer Ascension’s website, podcast, and social media pages are awash in over 37,000 testimonials from 2021 listeners who found the podcast to be a life changing addition to their prayer lives, such as this review from mamaw2i on Apple Podcasts:

“I cried at the end of the last episode. My heart was so touched. Hearing Fr. Mike say, ‘Thank you, Father,’ after the



**BIBLE IN A YEAR PODCAST.** The Bible in a Year podcast was featured on a billboard in Times Square, Dec. 2021.

last readings for the year felt so profound. I’m starting over again. ... Thank you, God, for Fr. Mike.”

“Many of us are distracted and distressed by the battles we face in the Church, in the culture and in our country. By the grace of God The Bible in a Year podcast has helped hundreds of thousands to rediscover a biblical worldview – one of hope in God’s love and Divine will,” said Fr. Mike, chaplain for the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Duluth.

### Serving the Spanish-Speaking Church

This year, Ascension added the all-new Spanish-language La Biblia en un Año podcast hosted

by Fr. Sergio Serrano, OP and Fr. Dempsey Acosta to their offerings. Between the two shows, the #1 podcast in Christianity in 47 countries is now a Catholic podcast guiding listeners through the Bible Timeline.

#1 in Christianity in 47 Countries (Both Podcasts Combined)

On January 3, 2022 at 2:00pm ET, The Bible in a Year in English was #1 in Christianity on the charts for the following 31 countries:

Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cayman Islands, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Egypt, Finland, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta,

New Zealand, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United States of America

On January 3, 2022 at 2:00pm ET, La Biblia en un Año in Spanish was #1 in Christianity on the charts for the following 16 countries:

Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela

### About Ascension

Ascension is a multimedia network and the leader in Catholic faith formation and digital content. Over the past 20 years, Ascension has helped nurture the faith of over 10 million people in over 8,000 parishes through more than 50 unique faith formation programs and the Ascension Presents media platforms. The Ascension Presents YouTube channel boasts 600,000 subscribers, 88 Million total views, and is the largest Catholic YouTube channel in English.

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**Sunday:**  
11 a.m. - 9 p.m.



**FORMER HOLY SAVIOR MENARD TEACHER MAKES FINAL VOWS.** On Dec. 21, 2021, John Fryer (now Brother Ambrose, O.S.B.) made his final vows as a Benedictine monk at Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas. Br. Ambrose was a former high school religion teacher at Holy Savior Menard. Br. Ambrose is pictured on the left, and on the right is the Abbot, Rt. Rev. Leonard Wangler, O.S.B.

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I surrender myself  
to You.  
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*// the surrender novena*

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

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

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

For updated information, news articles, and documents regarding ongoing activity and planning for securing and maintaining a Safe Environment for all, visit [www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/healing](http://www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/healing) (visit [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org) and look for “A Safe Environment For All” under the “Our Faith” tab). Here, you can find more information, 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.”

*In the sight of the angels,  
I will sing your praises, Lord.*

Psalm 138: 1 | Responsorial Psalm for February 6




### Serra Club invitation

Serra Club is an international lay apostolate of men and women whose goal is to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and show appreciation to priests, deacons, religious, and

especially seminarians. Serra Club members each “adopt” a seminarian to pray for daily, and acknowledge on special occasions throughout the year. An annual end of summer

BBQ and Christmas party are hosted by Serra Club for the seminarians and their families. For more information about joining, contact Billie Flynn at billieflynn5@gmail.com.




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### Seminarian Burses

#### December 2021 Donations

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Louis Lowrey Burse	
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Lois Jeansonne Normand Burse	
<b>Deacon and Mrs. L.G. Deloach</b> .....	\$500.00
Father Rickey Gremillion Burse	
<b>Mr. and Mrs. Timothy J. Hart</b> .....	\$1,000.00
Father Daniel Hart Burse	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$3,350.00</b>

### 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.

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

### 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.

## Parish Spotlight: St. John the Baptist Church, Deville Established 1949

Catholic services in the Deville community date back to 1834 when Fr. Robert Doogan, the first pastor of St. Francis Xavier in Alexandria, offered the first mass in the area in the home of Mr. Chevalier. Holloway Prairie was added as a regular mission station and mass was offered on a regular rotating basis.

In 1854, Fr. D'Angles, one of Bishop Martin's Breton missionaries, built a small chapel on land that is now known as the 'Old Catholic Cemetery' in the Deville area.

The French Creole congregation was scattered by the chaos of war and Reconstruction. It was not until November of 1879 that formal plans were made to replace the small chapel with a larger church in the village of Buckeye. Michael Deville led the effort donating a yoke of oxen which were traded for half the lumber needed for the new building. John Janlin and James Noone donated timberland and Joseph Brulette served as contractor. The new church was completed in time for Easter in 1880.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, DEVILLE.

In the years that followed, the Church of St. John the Baptist was a mission of the Alexandria cathedral. "Uncle Jimmy" Noone kept the faith alive by teaching catechism.

In 1949, St. John the Baptist Church received its first resident pastor, a Benedictine priest, Fr. Placid Sasek, OSB. The parish began to grow.

In 1956, the old church was enlarged and a mission, Sts. Francis and Anne, was

established at Kolin.

In September, 1967, Fr. Armando Fuoco broke ground for a new church to replace the 87 year old wood-frame structure. The new church, built at a cost of \$40,000, was dedicated on May 5, 1968. At the center of the new sanctuary is the old altar made by men of the parish out of dressed tupelo 'sweet gum' logs in 1939.

In 2010, the mission of Sts. Francis and Anne in Kolin became a parish and in 2018, St. John the

Baptist Chapel in Moncla was transferred as a mission from St. Martin of Tours, Belledeau.

St. John the Baptist has an Altar Society, a Men's Club, Youth groups for ages Pre-K through grade 12. The Knights of Columbus, Council 13296 is also affiliated with Sts. Francis and

Anne Church in Kolin.

The Men's Club assists with maintenance, repairs and fundraisers to help with the cost of any appliances, furniture or upgrades needed on our grounds or buildings. They basically do everything that is needed and is a wonderful ministry.



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**ST. PATRICK MISSION CHURCH, MONTGOMERY.** Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jan. 16, with the community of St. Patrick Church in Montgomery. Pictured with Bishop Marshall are the parishioners and Fr. John Brocato.



**ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH AT CANE RIVER** had a Parish Fall Mission with guest presenter Fr. Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap. He is Director of the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers. Parishioners from St. Augustine, Cane River and St. Anne's Chapel gathered for three nights during Advent to reflect with Fr. Tuscan on the topic, "Repent and Believe."

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are they  
who hope  
in the Lord.*

Psalm 40: 5a |  
Responsorial Psalm  
for February 13

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Confidence: The Inadequacies of Vocational Evidence Presented at  
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You're invited to join us at the table.  
To see available Mass times near you, visit [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org).

2022 is His year!



**DONATION TO NURSING HOME.** Residents at Avoyelles Manor, Dupont, were presented blankets and throws for Christmas by Knights of Columbus Council #2142. This Council serves both Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine, and Immaculate Conception, Dupont.

78 blankets and throws were presented to the Staff to be distributed at their Resident's Christmas Party. Attending the delivery were Steve Couvillion, Financial Secretary; Tommy Veade, Trustee; Craig Gremillion, Donation Project Manager; Johnny Knott, Deputy Grand Knight; and Avoyelles Manor Staff.



**LIVING NATIVITY.** Parishioners of St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA, closed out the Christmas season on Sunday, Jan. 9 with a living nativity at the end of the 10:00 a.m. Mass, followed by a celebration with king cake.



**HOLY GHOST CHURCH.** The CCD teachers and staff of Holy Ghost Church / St. Richard's Chapel held their Christmas gathering on Dec. 16 at Holy Ghost Church. Pictured above: Sheila Augustine, Father Abraham Varghese (Pastor), Rose Noel, Bertha Lavalais, Patricia Lavallais, Patricia Jacobs, Deacon Ted Moulard, Brian Barton, Dariyon Greenhouse, and Betty Augustine.



**SACRED HEART CHURCH, MOREAUVILLE.** Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville held their Nativity Program.



**LIVING NATIVITY.** The youth of Our Lady of Lourdes in Fifth Ward presented a Nativity play for Christmas Mass.



**ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL BASKETBALL.** St. Anthony School A Boys and A Girls both won 1st place in the Catholic League Basketball Tournament.



**ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.** St. Joseph High School Senior, Brooke [redacted] has made LHSAA's 2021-2022 All Academic Girls Basketball Team. She is the only one eligible in Avoyelles Parish, and one of only three eligible in six surrounding parishes. In order to be eligible, Brooke maintained a 4.0 throughout her four years of high school. Congratulations to Brooke [redacted] on her achievement.



**ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.** St. Joseph School student, Bryce [redacted], was awarded by the Dept. of Veterans Affairs for being an outstanding spokesperson for freedom. In order to receive this award, Bryce submitted a speech into the competition, in which he spoke about the future of America.



**ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR.** St. Anthony School Brees [redacted] was named the 5th grade Student of the Year for St. Anthony School in Bunkie, and Jayla [redacted] was named the 8th grade Student of the Year.

**STUDENT OF THE YEAR.** The Student of the Year competition was held at the St. Joseph Catholic Center on Jan. 13.



## Couple: Young Catholic adults need community, parish outreach

By Laura Dodson  
Catholic News Service

As Catholic young adults, Patrick and Phoebe Neve are intentional about living their faith and about evangelizing others.

"I realized that I have gifts to be shared," explained Patrick, 24. "But realistically I can only touch 30 people at a time. So, I must invest the time to teach those 30 to reach out to others. Find people who want to evangelize, teach them how to do it better and empower them -- give them the tools -- necessary to do it."

Phoebe, 23, discovered another method. "I found others are interested in my way of life, but I am most effective when I first become a friend," she said. "I love them because Jesus loves them and then I can explain about Scripture and community."

Patrick is the coordinator of youth ministry for Archangel Gabriel Parish outside Pittsburgh, frequently writes articles for the bulletin and is co-founder of a Catholic Comedy for Young Adults podcast, [www.thecrunchcast.com](http://www.thecrunchcast.com), which averages 15,000 downloads per month.

The couple were married July 31, 2020 -- the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, Patrick was quick to point out -- and are expecting their first child April 24, Divine Mercy Sunday.

Father Anthony Sciarappa, who is parochial vicar at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Pittsburgh and hired Patrick for his first youth ministry position, presided at their wedding.

"I hired Patrick not just because of his deep love for evangelization, which he's very good at, but also for his deep care and concern for the kids," Father Sciarappa said. "He and Phoebe actively live their faith. They wanted to get married and live a sacramental life despite all the restrictions imposed by COVID."

"It was more important to them not to postpone their wedding so their family and friends could be there."

The priest added, "That's the kind of genuine faith, that more than anything else is what brings people to Christ."

Patrick and Phoebe met at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. A member of the Fishers of Men Household,



he graduated with a degree in theology and communications and is pursuing a master's degree.

Over time and in discernment with three priests, he discovered his vocation was not to the priesthood, but to be the best husband and father he could be.

Phoebe graduated with a degree in social work after discerning she could best express God's mercy by helping people and began her career as a part-time intern in a Catholic Charities transitional housing for men. "It was so incredibly beautiful to help them in every aspect of their lives. I have a passion for this."

There is a common thread in the couple's wisdom and confidence -- both share a lifelong awareness and love of God's presence in their lives.

"I wasn't baptized until I was 2," Patrick said. "My mother dreamt that an angel told her to get me baptized immediately. My father agreed and they have been faithful Catholics since."

He attended Catholic preschool "where I was taught to say good morning to God because Jesus is always with me in my heart."

"In second grade, I knew I wanted to give my life to the church. I started public school in sixth grade and evangelized my classmates to come to our middle school Catholic youth group," Patrick told Catholic

News Service. "I continued through high school and have been inviting ever since."

Patrick's first experience of Christ was at eucharistic adoration during his first high school retreat: "I'm going to have to change my life," he recalled feeling.

A year later at a Steubenville Conference with 4,000 teens, once again the experience of Christ during adoration made him realize "I have to change my friendships -- everything." The day after he returned home, an older teen from youth group invited him to an event with his friends.

"That was it!" Patrick said. "First a mountaintop experience then a community experience welcoming me. My faith life has become one experience after another."

Phoebe is a "cradle Catholic, raised in the faith," but she said, "God gave me a supernatural faith, deeply trusting and I loved God because that's what my mom told me to do. I kept a cross under my pillow and I remember in public school I decorated my name tags with crosses all over. I was in love with God."

Phoebe's first profound experience of Christ was at a high school confirmation retreat.

"In confession, I discussed something that had been on my heart for years and I felt God's

mercy so intensely it was a real awakening," she said. "Everyone needs to experience that 'I am loved despite whatever I'm going through."

"It was huge in my spiritual life and I decided I wanted to devote my life with intention to become closer to God. It was the beginning of my devotion to Divine Mercy."

Phoebe explained that she didn't have a community of Catholic friends nor a youth group. She didn't have a sense of God in her daily life and struggled without a community to support her. Still, she wanted to major in theology and attended Franciscan University.

"My mind was completely blown by all the Catholic people participating in Mass, confession, adoration and Holy Hours," she said.

In her second semester, she joined the Daughters of Divine Mercy Household. "Every Monday night we read and discussed St. Faustina's Diary of Divine Mercy. We prayed and reflected to bring each other closer to living out God's mercy to others."

Patrick and Phoebe are intentional about sharing their strong faith, especially with their peers.

Everyone they meet is someone with whom they can share friendship and fellowship;

from this personal relationship emerges community.

"You have to invite them out for coffee, drinks, a meal on a one-to-one basis," Patrick said. "You have to do things that only young adults are interested in, for example a sledding day, events just for them."

Phoebe added, "Community is really important for young adults especially for those having a difficult time. Parishes need to have resources for them: Bible studies, socials, fellowship is very important and you have to include activities that are comfortable for people not Catholic."

"They find acceptance, then friendship and then they become interested in our Catholic way of life."

Now that they are expectant parents, against the backdrop of the current debate on abortion, the Neves also are concerned about women who are facing crisis pregnancies and might feel abortion is their only option.

"I will never forget the expression of love on Phoebe's face when she saw our baby for the first time on the ultrasound," Patrick said. "We have to realize that there are real women who are hurting and we have to make sure they see another option for them. We want to have an institutional solution to a human problem."

"But if we make abortion illegal, it's not going to change the issues of the women. ... We must change attitudes to make abortion unthinkable," he added.

"Scientifically, we know that the fetus is a baby," Phoebe said. "There is no argument. I think pro-choice and pro-life are talking about two different things. Pro-choice focuses on the issues of the mother and pro-life is concerned with the baby. We need to try to enter into a conversation that is level-headed, filled with compassion and love that will help them both."

"Being pregnant, seeing our baby for the first time at 12 weeks has made me more passionate: That is a human being!" she said.

Another ultrasound Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, showed Patrick and Phoebe their baby is healthy and growing normally. They planned to celebrate Christmas with family and reveal the baby's gender.

## Positions available across the diocese

### MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR

St. Joseph Church in Marksville seeks an enthusiastic, dedicated, and qualified full-time maintenance supervisor to oversee the upkeep of the parish campus in Marksville, La. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum of 3 years' experience in Maintenance
- Demonstrated leadership skills;
- Availability on or before February 1, 2022.

Inquiries may be sent to St. Joseph Church, 141 S. Washington Street, Marksville, LA 71351-3022. For the application form, please contact: Rev. Dan O'Connor, Pastor, at 318-253-7561, Ext. 5.

St. Joseph Church does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or national and ethnic origin.

### DATA ENTRY CLERK - PART TIME/TEMPORARY

The National Tekakwitha Conference Office is looking for a part time/temporary Data Entry Clerk. 15 Hours per week. \$12 per hour.

Must be prolific in Microsoft Office Suite, including Microsoft Access. Experience negotiable. Must be an active Catholic in good standing. Please include 2-3 references. Contact 318-483-3908.

Send resumes to info@tekconf.org.

### BOOKKEEPER

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church and School in Alexandria is looking for a bookkeeper. This is a full-time position handling financial transactions for Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church and School. Candidate must have a background in payroll/bookkeeping/tax reporting, and have excellent computer skills, including Word and Excel. A degree in Accounting is preferred. Must be a practicing Catholic with excellent organizational skills.

Send resumes to Julie Bayone at 401 21st Street, Alexandria, La., 71301, or to julie.bayone@olpschurch.org. Questions? Call 318-445-3693.

## Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Thursday, January 27, 6:00 p.m., St. Paul the Apostle Church, Mansura

Monday, January 31, 6:00 p.m., Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Church Hall, Natchitoches

Tuesday, March 1, 6:00 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

NOTE: Minors are not allowed to attend because of the adult content of the videos and discussions. To register, go to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). For more information, call 318-445-6424, ext. 213.

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## Upcoming Retreats

• April 7-10, 2022  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville  
Women's ACTS

• April 21-24, 2022  
St. Mary's Assumption,  
Cottonport  
Men's ACTS

A list of ACTS Retreat dates can be found at [www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/](http://www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/).

## YOUR COMMUNITY STORES



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## Live-streamed Mass Schedule

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. Please inquire directly to your church parish concerning their requirements and guidelines for attending Mass in-person.

### 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

10:00 a.m. **Radio Maria** | [www.radiomaria.us](http://www.radiomaria.us)  
(click the play button) or tune in on your radio in  
Alexandria: station 580 AM  
or in Natchitoches: station 89.7 AM

9:00 a.m. **Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church**, Alexandria  
on Facebook or YouTube  
**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

10:30 a.m. **St. Augustine Church**, Isle Breville on Facebook  
**Mary, Mother of Jesus Church**, Woodworth  
on Facebook or YouTube

11:30 a.m. **Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Pineville  
on Facebook or YouTube

### Monday - Friday

8:00 a.m. **Radio Maria** | [www.radiomaria.us](http://www.radiomaria.us)  
(click the play button) or tune in on your radio in  
Alexandria: station 580 AM  
or in Natchitoches: station 89.7 AM

9:00 a.m. **St. Edward the Confessor**, Tallulah  
on Facebook (Wednesdays),  
(9:30 a.m. talk - aka "The CU Catecast"; Wed.)

5:30 p.m. **St. Edward the Confessor**, Tallulah  
on Facebook (Fridays)

### Saturday

4:00 p.m. **St. Rita Church**, Alexandria on Facebook or YouTube  
**St. Anthony of Padua Church**,  
Natchitoches on Youtube [www.youtube.com/channel/UCxWI4jt3uy8d64HwDpmMB6Q](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxWI4jt3uy8d64HwDpmMB6Q)

**Radio Maria** | [www.radiomaria.us](http://www.radiomaria.us)  
(click the play button) or tune in on your radio in  
Alexandria: station 580 AM  
or in Natchitoches: station 89.7 AM

5:00 p.m. **St. Michael the Archangel**, Leesville on Facebook

Find additional resources at  
[www.diocesealex.org/come-to-the-table](http://www.diocesealex.org/come-to-the-table), including:

- How to find a church parish near you
- How to find Mass times at churches near you
- Divorce and annulments in the Catholic Church



**OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE MASS.** On Dec. 11, 2021, Father Taylor Reynolds, pastor of St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA, celebrated Mass in Spanish for the Hispanic community. The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is observed on Dec. 12 every year.



**ST. RITA SPANISH COMMUNITY.** St. Rita Spanish Community celebrated Las Posada on Tuesday, Dec. 21 in the Holy Family Center. The children had a program and there was delicious food enjoyed by all.

*The Lord is kind and merciful.*  
 Psalm 103: 8a | Responsorial Psalm for February 20

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# Knights of Columbus documentary 'Enduring Faith' now available to all

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS) -- After a successful run on ABC affiliates throughout the U.S., "Enduring Faith," a Knights of Columbus documentary on the legacy of the Catholic faith among Indigenous communities in North America, is now available to all.

"As Catholics we're called to build bridges, listen and love -- firstly based on our relationship with Jesus," said a news release announcing the film's wide availability. "In all of these areas, Indigenous Catholics have an important lesson and message to share with the world."

"Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholicism," it said, "offers a missing piece to the greater story of Catholicism in North America and a beautiful example of how Christ reveals himself through the uniqueness of every culture."

The film is available to view at [www.kofc.org/endingfaith](http://www.kofc.org/endingfaith). The site also has a "Facts & Discussion Guide" to facilitate discussion or reflection by families, parish groups and community groups on topics touched upon in the documentary. DVDs of the film can be purchased at [Knightsgear.com](http://Knightsgear.com).

"This film will inspire in viewers a deeper appreciation



**ENDURING FAITH DOCUMENTARY.** Enduring Faith - A documentary film on the faith, perseverance, and inspiring example of Indigenous Peoples across North America - available for all to watch at [kofc.org/endingfaith](http://kofc.org/endingfaith).

Indigenous communities across North America have a rich and vibrant testimony to share - both past and present - including the witness of their faith. Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholics dives deep into the rich contribution of Native Americans in the tapestry of the Catholic faith. Produced by the Knights of Columbus as part of its Faith Formation and Native Solidarity initiative, the 60 minute documentary offers a missing piece to the greater story of Catholicism on the continent and a beautiful example of how Christ reveals himself through the uniqueness of every culture.

A must watch with the family, classroom, or faith group. Available to all at [kofc.org/endingfaith](http://kofc.org/endingfaith).

for the spiritual and cultural gifts of Native American Catholics, a greater awareness of the wrongs inflicted upon them by the unjust policies of the British and American governments, and a sense of hope at how Native American Catholics continue to live out their faith in fully

enculturated ways today," the news release said.

Narrated by actor Larry Omaha, the movie reaches back to the Age of Exploration to examine the impact the Catholic faith has had on Native people from Mexico northward to Canada. It also celebrates the contributions their dedication has made to the church.

Filmmakers David Naglieri and Tim Moriarty examine the varied attitudes displayed by colonists from Spain, France and Britain. Catholic newcomers from the first two countries tended to have a greater interest in evangelizing Indigenous

North Americans, a fact which also led them to treat those they sought to convert with greater dignity than did the British.

The film highlights the work of the Franciscan, Dominican and Jesuit orders in bringing the Gospel to the Western Hemisphere.

It also showcases the trailblazing role played by such individual missionaries as the indefatigable Flemish-born Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean De Smet (1801-1873).

Former Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and others discuss the legacy of Our Lady of Guadalupe and her contemporary significance as a patroness of the new evangelization.

Her appearances in 1531 and her miraculous image left on St. Juan Diego's tilma, or cloak, had a significant impact on the Indigenous people, drawing them to the Catholic faith.

"The program, which is unlikely to be of interest to youngsters anyway, includes artistic representations of ethnographic nudity. For teens and adults, nonetheless, it constitutes not only acceptable viewing but a historically,

culturally and -- most importantly -- spiritually rich experience. It can also serve as a valuable catechetical tool," Catholic News Service's John Mulderig wrote in a review.

He reviewed the film in May when it was released to air on ABC stations through a partnership with the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission.

"'Enduring Faith' does not shy away from some of the more disappointing episodes in the history it recounts," he said. "These include the way in which at least some Catholic Americans of European descent adhered to the misguided policy of the U.S. government that sought to 'civilize' Native Americans by rooting out their languages and traditions."

"Yet," Mulderig added, "the overall tone remains optimistic. Summing up his hopes for the future of the relationship between Native American Catholics and the church at large, Anderson, who also served as the film's executive producer, looks forward to 'a true reconciliation, a true incorporation and a true unity.'"

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*Lord, it is good  
to give thanks to you.*

Psalm 92: 2  
Responsorial Psalm for February 27  
Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

# From contraception to natural family planning

by *Samantha Aguinardo-Wetterholm*  
*Blessed is She*

There I was, sitting on the bathroom floor staring at two little pink lines. My heart was pounding, I could feel my blood pulsing in my ears, and I could not breathe. I walked over to the foot of my bed where my husband was waiting. I sat down next to him and broke down in sobs—gut-wrenching, cannot-catch-my-breath sobs. He held me and rocked us back and forth. His face was nuzzled in my hair and he was whispering that everything was going to be okay and that we are blessed and that we will manage everything together as always.

But I could not see it that way. Truthfully, I was terrified.

Terrified at a future I found overwhelming, terrified at being unprepared, terrified of the unknowns and the what-ifs, and mostly, terrified that none of this was planned.

## *Finally Saying Yes*

I am a planner. I am an organizer. I live comfortably in the known zone. You'll find me with my calendar and planner, filling out every moment of my schedule. I've lived by spread sheets and timelines and to-do lists and checkboxes. And it worked for me—or so I thought.

If you have lived like I have, planning every moment, day, week, and year, you will find that anything that does not go according to plan completely throws you off balance. And here I was, completely spinning.

When my second child was born, I felt a pull by the Holy Spirit to change my mindset on contraception. Like all other aspects of my life, I was trying to control something so innately feminine and precious about me—my own fertility.

## *My Journey to NFP*

It started when I was around seventeen years old. I had been experiencing excruciating menstrual cramps in high school, sometimes to the point of fainting. And when seeking help from my doctor, I was placed on hormonal birth control. Like so many other women, instead of trying to figure out the root of my pain, I was



given a bandaid.

I took hormonal birth control every day, set to my alarm, for years. When preparing for marriage to my college sweetheart, I finally learned about Natural Family Planning (NFP).

I am a cradle Catholic but I had never understood what NFP meant for my fertility and for my future marriage. I thought it was another thing to checkoff during my marriage preparation. I learned about my temperatures and mucus, but ultimately, I did not think I would need the information. I did not understand on any real level what contraceptives would mean for my marriage or my saying yes to God's plan over my own.

## *My Plan. Not His.*

And while I never actively decided to reject the plans of

God for myself, I definitely did not allow them to guide me in my daily decisions. I lived in ignorance. Was I faith-filled? Yes. Did I love God? Absolutely. But did I live a prideful and selfish life? Completely.

I decided exactly when I wanted to have my first child. I stopped the contraceptive and got pregnant the next cycle. My plan. Not His.

After I gave birth, I started the contraceptives right back up again. My plan. Not His.

## *The Witness of Other Catholics*

Several women in particular inspired me greatly. These women had multiple children and they still kept their hearts open for more. I was in awe of their bravery, their selflessness, and their own yes to God's plan.

It made me question my own hesitation and pride. I wondered why I could not trust that the Father had a greater plan for what our family would look like. They shared their struggles and fears so openly with me and yet they kept saying yes.

I was jealous of that trust. I had never been able to trust the Father so fully.

Several months after the birth of our second child, I kept feeling that stirring in my heart. The Holy Spirit would whisper to me in the quiet of the night while nursing my baby. He kept saying, "Trust, love, be open, say yes. I will guide you, I will protect you, you are safe."

As someone who planned every minute of my life, I could not imagine what it would look like to fully trust. Relinquishing my control and death grip on my life would take more than a nudge. It would take a giant push off of the cliff.

## *Being Open to Life*

Several months of discernment, prayer, and arguments conversations with God, my husband and I decided that we would start the process to learn to trust and be open to life. A Blessed is She friend started teaching us an NFP method. I learned about charting, mucus, stamps, and more about my own body than I thought possible.

When my menstrual cycle resumed, I continued to track my symptoms daily. A yellow stamp here, a white baby stamp there. If this was my way of saying yes, at least I had a chart that made me feel productive and in control. I finally felt like I was getting the hang of it.

By saying yes to my own fertility and allowing my mindset to shift from one of contraception to one of openness, I saw other aspects of my life change, too. I

learned to lean more heavily to the guidance of God. In January of 2018, I felt the Lord calling me towards a career change. I took on a huge responsibility of leadership at work and I felt like I had finally learned to listen to God's plan.

But then, just as I started this new position at work, I saw those two little pink lines that terrified me. I was flabbergasted! God, how could You so clearly lead me towards this change at work and now add a baby into this chaos!?

I was frightened because this was my first pregnancy that was not planned to the day. I had to trust again. And it was scary. But I turned to those sisters who inspired me and to a loving Father with a plan for me. I finally said yes.

## *Freedom from Fear*

What I learned so entirely from this change in mindset is that God does not promise to remove the chaos or lay out every plan with neon signs and arrows. He promises that I am never alone, that to say yes to His plan is to say yes to the unknown, too.

He turned this type-A, control-freak, planner extraordinaire into a trusting daughter. And while you'll still find me planning every moment of our family schedule, you'll also see me now including God in the mix and mess of it all.

---

*Dr. Samantha Aguinardo-Wetterholm is a wife and mom to four little ones and practices dentistry at a public health community center for low income families in the Bay Area, California. She (unashamedly) thinks ice cream is its own food group and does not leave the house without wearing sparkly earrings. Find out more about her at [substanceandsoul.com](http://substanceandsoul.com).*

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# Couple to Couple League marks 50th anniversary with launch of Fertility Science Institute

## New platform aims to educate a wider audience reaching women and families

Cincinnati, OH -- Couple to Couple League has launched the Fertility Science Institute (FSI), a one-of-a-kind online platform that provides scientifically-based resources to the millions of Fertility Awareness-Based Method (FABM) users seeking ongoing support and education through a lifetime of fertility. Debuting in conjunction with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Couple to Couple League (CCL), this innovative institute offers resources that stretch far beyond the usual Natural Family Planning (NFP) courses for engaged couples to include courses and resources for mothers and daughters, young adults, couples new to FABMs, postpartum moms, perimenopausal women, and women struggling with irregular fertility.

Traditionally focused on teaching NFP to faith-based couples, CCL seeks to reach beyond the faithful with the new Fertility Science Institute and invites a wider audience into FABM education. Ongoing research has shown that Millennial and GenZ women are hesitant to embrace hormonal contraception and desire more natural methods to understand and navigate their fertility, meaning they have more openness to FABMs than

previous generations. CCL plans to utilize FSI to reach these women, regardless of their faith background, and invite them into God's plan for their bodies and fertility.

"after 50 years of Big Pharma promoting a very damaging narrative, the Fertility Science Institute allows us to both use our 50 years of scientifically-based fertility awareness training and resources to bring to life a new narrative which supports the innate dignity of women and men," shares CCL Executive Director, Katie Zulanis. "CCL has a history of updating their training methods and FSI, as an online institute, is our latest update to take advantage of online resources as we step up to meet the tremendous need for trusted help."

The current culture has taught women to believe that fertility is a disease, something that ultimately gets in the way of their happiness and ability to live as they desire. CCL seeks to confront that lie directly and give families the tools they need to educate themselves and teach young people about the gift of fertility and God's plan for marriage and family life. By offering these resources online, the Fertility Science Institute makes it possible for many more women and couples to access

the information and support they need regardless of the presence of CCL couples in their area. They can learn at their own pace and have accurate, helpful FABM information at their fingertips, including easy access to knowledgeable coaches and supportive medical partners.

"The FSI has formalized the support CCL has provided to its members throughout each stage of life to allow them to

confidently live out their vocation of marriage. We hope our work, along with our partners, will allow us to assert our authority and become the trusted source to learn about fertility, ultimately helping others understand how we are beautifully and wonderfully made in the image and likeness of God," expresses Zulanis.

For more information on the Fertility Science Institute, visit [fertilityscienceinstitute.org](http://fertilityscienceinstitute.org).

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*The Couple to Couple League is an international non-profit organization established in 1971, that is dedicated to inspiring, educating, and supporting couples in family planning that is natural, effective, healthy, and consistent with God's plan for life, love, and marriage.*

### Spring Natural Family Planning Class Series

You are invited to attend a Natural Family Planning class series teaching the Sympto-Thermal Method through the Couple to Couple League International, the largest provider of NFP instruction in the nation. Natural Family Planning is effective, safe, and morally acceptable to delay or achieve pregnancy. Attendance of all 3 classes completes the course.

Classes are on the Saturdays of Feb. 19, March 19, and April 30 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. There is a one-time fee of \$135 and includes the Student Guide book, fertility charts, fertility thermometer, 6 months CycleProGo mobile app, award-winning Family Foundations magazine subscription, and ongoing consultation.

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

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

The **C**ross Word

February 6 and 13, 2022

answers on pg 15

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**Readings:** Is 6:1-2a, 3-8/ 1 Cor 15:1-11 / Lk 5:1-11 & Jer 17:5-8/ 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20/ Lk 6:17, 20-26

<p><b>ACROSS</b></p> <p>1 Airport abbr.</p> <p>4 Understand facts</p> <p>8 Gnaw</p> <p>12 Stringed instrument's partner</p> <p>13 "Nothing"</p> <p>14 Not there</p> <p>15 "Love __ all things."</p> <p>17 Train track</p> <p>18 Fourth letter</p> <p>19 Angel did to Mary</p> <p>21 "A __ of brass"</p> <p>24 "Gird your __"</p> <p>26 Variation on "Louis"</p>	<p>28 Joining</p> <p>32 All Souls month</p> <p>33 Drop (2 wds.)</p> <p>35 Female deer</p> <p>36 Overfull</p> <p>38 Synthetic fiber</p> <p>40 Append (2 wds.)</p> <p>42 The Apostles __ with Jesus</p> <p>43 Surroundings</p> <p>46 Incorporated (abbr.)</p> <p>48 First man</p> <p>49 Dealing with ethnic groups</p> <p>54 Dawdle</p> <p>55 Where 48A lived</p>
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<p>56 Coffee alternative</p> <p>57 Sliding toy</p> <p>58 Aching</p> <p>59 Swab</p>	<p><b>DOWN</b></p> <p>1 Tide goes out</p> <p>2 "Lest you dash this against a stone"</p> <p>3 Punching tool for leather</p> <p>4 Genuflect on</p> <p>5 Type of orange</p> <p>6 Lyric poem</p> <p>7 Fishermen were, with nets</p> <p>8 " __ died for our sins"</p> <p>9 "Cure"</p> <p>10 Canal</p> <p>11 Join metal</p> <p>16 Without purpose</p> <p>20 Negatively charged particle</p> <p>21 Lack</p> <p>22 Lotion ingredient</p> <p>23 " __ is patient"</p> <p>25 Outlay of money</p> <p>27 Slither</p> <p>29 Lazy</p> <p>30 Middy</p> <p>31 Chap</p> <p>34 "Love __" (lasts)</p> <p>37 Permanently injured</p> <p>39 Young Women's Christian Association</p> <p>41 Kinder</p> <p>43 Charts</p> <p>44 Graven image</p> <p>45 Sea of Galilee is one</p> <p>47 Days in a novena</p> <p>50 Hubbub</p> <p>51 Long-term memory</p> <p>52 Lion name</p> <p>53 Shriek bark</p>
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## 4 Things St. Faustina taught me about mercy

by Maddy Bass  
Life Teen



Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska was a humble instrument to the Lord, desiring religious life at only seven years old.

Now, I know what you're probably thinking. At seven years old, I was swapping Nilla Wafers for Oreos on the playground, let alone thinking about my vocation. But, for Faustina, her role in her family encouraged her to grow up fast. By sixteen, she was supporting and caring for her nine other siblings as the family's housekeeper.

As much as she obeyed her parents' wishes to stay at home, Faustina often sought out Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with a deep desire to join the convent at a young age. In 1924, she received her first vision of Jesus, who instructed her to leave home for the convent in Warsaw, Poland. She later found her place in the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, where she took her first religious vows as a nun in 1928. She was only 22 years old.

Saint Faustina famously recorded her visions of Jesus in a diary. You might be familiar with the image of Jesus as the King of Divine Mercy, wearing a white garment with red and pale rays coming from his heart. This presentation of Christ came directly from one of Faustina's visions. Out of these visions also came Divine Mercy Sunday (when Jesus explained he wanted the Divine Mercy image to be "solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter"), as well as the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, an intercessory prayer used on rosary beads for a special remembrance of Christ's passion.

*Learning by the Way of Mercy*

Because of saints like Faustina, we come to understand the merciful heart of Jesus more fully and seek it out in our own lives. I'm here to share with you how her little story continues to change my ordinary heart in hopes that it might inspire you, too:

*God is not stingy with His mercy.*

God's mercy is freely given, not earned. God's choice to humbly send down His son, who died on the cross for us, is the ultimate outpouring of His merciful heart, freely offering Himself, again and again, every time we partake in the Eucharist at Mass.

Next time you attend Mass, count how many times you recite prayers that ask for God's mercy. Even though He offers it to us anyway, we acknowledge that His mercy is necessary and vital to our spiritual life.

*Suffering can actually make us holier.*

In one of Saint Faustina's diary entries, she writes, "Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering, the purer the love" (#57, page 29).

In other words, our ability to endure suffering of any weight or kind is making us more like Jesus. Let's be real; nobody wants suffering to occur. But, Faustina is inviting us to see these moments of trial as opportunities for us to lean into God's love and mercy.

Jesus desires to be near to us. We are called to open our hearts to that closeness and trust that He is working in our hearts no matter the circumstance. Faustina also shares, "When I see that the burden is beyond my strength, I do not consider or analyze it or probe into it, but I run like a child to the Heart of Jesus and say only one word to Him: 'You can do all things'" (#1033, page 392).

*Mercy is at the heart of community.*

The first time I ever prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet was among my team of Life Teen summer missionaries a few years ago. One of the missionaries had an intention to pray for a relative who fell ill. Without hesitation, our staff joined together in the chapel with our rosaries to pray.

The Chaplet is commonly used in these times to pray for those that are sick and dying. It is also prayed after having received Holy Communion at Mass. In numerous revelations, Jesus made it clear that the Chaplet is not just for the person praying it, but for the whole world. Faustina finishes the prayer in one diary entry with "for the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us" (475). The following entry is edited to say, "have mercy on us and on the whole world" (476).

I consider this change and why it was so important for Jesus to iterate. While this communal prayer is intended for those approaching the hour of death, I think Christ intended it for anyone in need of God's mercy (all of us!). There is so much power and volume in praying these words together, asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance on not just us but the entire world.

*Our own forgiveness is necessary for mercy.*

Easier said than done, right? I think, for me, this token of wisdom from Faustina really hits the hardest. Just as God offers us endless mercy, we are given a similar responsibility to pay this mercy forward. This could look like patience with that sibling who's getting on our nerves, forgiveness toward a friend who we feel wronged us, or even mercy toward ourselves and the ways we have fallen short in loving and trusting Jesus.

If I'm being honest, I don't think I've always been the greatest friend to others. Oftentimes, I wallow in self-pity and blame myself for anything and everything I may have said or done wrong. Other times, I put all the blame on the other person. Yet, it is in moments like these I am challenged to not only accept God's mercy but to share it: "He who knows how to forgive prepares for himself many graces

from God. As often as I look upon the cross, so often will I forgive with all my heart" (390, page 175).

*Walking in the Way of Mercy*

Saint Faustina's life is validation that Jesus can make the ordinary extraordinary. Even though we may not experience these same profound images of Jesus in our daily lives, we can look to Faustina as an instrument of total humility and trust in the

Lord.

If you find Saint Faustina's life to be difficult to understand or even too unbelievable, ask yourself why. Invite Saint Faustina to pray with you and ask God to open your mind to the possibilities of His mercy and love. As Saint Faustina reminds us, all we need to do is run to the Lord like a child and say only one word to Him: "You can do all things."

### How to recite the Divine Mercy Chaplet:

- Using the Marian Rosary, begin with the Sign of the Cross on the Crucifix, then on the group of three beads, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Apostles' Creed.
- On the bead of the five decades, say the following:
  1. On the Our Father beads, *Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins, and those of the whole world.*
  2. On the ten Hail Mary beads, *For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.*
- Repeat for all five decades.
- Conclude with: Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. (3x)

**Catholic Campus Ministry  
is provided at LSU of Alexandria,  
Louisiana College,  
and Northwestern State University.**

**LSU of Alexandria:**  
Catholic Student Organization, 318-447-2956

**Northwestern State University**  
Catholic Student Organization  
FOCUS Ministries: <https://nscatholic.org/focus>

**Louisiana College:**  
Catholic Student Organization, 318-447-2956

### ASIST Workshop set for March 9-10 at St. Michael the Archangel Church, Leesville

St. Michael the Archangel Church in Leesville will host an ASIST Suicide Prevention Workshop. ASIST stands for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training and is a proven method in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. The workshop is designed for anyone, caregivers to professionals to lay persons. It is the most widely used suicide prevention training program in the world. Registration is required, visit [www.savecenla.com](http://www.savecenla.com) or for more information, call (337) 519-1888. There is no charge for the workshop but you can earn CEUs for Social Work or Psychology for \$60.

## Activities and Open Houses for Catholic Schools Week 2022

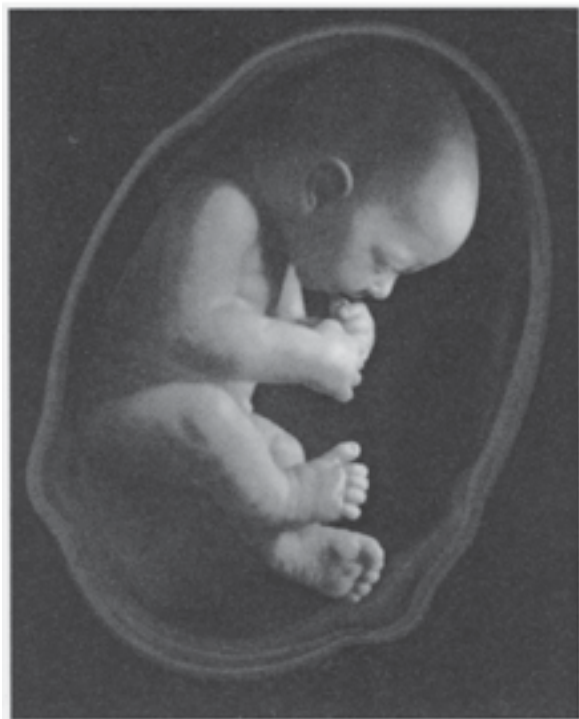
• **Sunday, Jan. 30:** St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria, will have an Open House from 1:00-3:00 p.m. For more information, contact the school office at (318) 448-3333.

• **Tuesday, Feb. 1:** Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, 420 21st St., Alexandria, will have an Open House. Choose 8:00 a.m. or 12:15 p.m. to tour the school and learn what we have to offer! For more information contact Patricia Upton at [upton\\_p@promptsuccor.org](mailto:upton_p@promptsuccor.org) or call (318) 487-1862.

• **Thursday, Feb. 3:** Holy Savior Menard, Open House beginning at 6:00 p.m. Meet, tour and explore the possibilities! For more information, contact Jennifer Tichenor at [jtichenor@holysaviormenard.com](mailto:jtichenor@holysaviormenard.com)

• **Friday, Feb. 4:** Sacred Heart School, Moreauville, “Celebrating Our Faith and Vocations” and Mass. Fr. Brian Seiler and Sr. Sandra Norsworthy are inviting religious to speak on vocations. All are welcome.

• **Wednesday, Feb. 9:** St. Mary’s Catholic School in Natchitoches will host an Open House on Wednesday, Feb. 9 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Prospective new families of students in preschool through twelfth grade will be able to tour the school campus and receive enrollment information. Faculty members as well as club and athletic representatives will be available for questions. RSVP is preferred but not required. Interested families may contact Debbie Norman at 352-8394 or [dnorman@smstigers.org](mailto:dnorman@smstigers.org) for more information.



### *The Little One*

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

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

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

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

*Marcus Descant, Leesville*

[lizdescant@gmail.com](mailto:lizdescant@gmail.com)  
Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant

## Steubenville South 2022 won’t be the same without your teens! // Register now!



Gather your junior high and high school students to join us this spring and summer for life-changing events.

At the Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference, March 5-6, and the Steubenville South High School Youth Conference, June 24-26, your teens will experience the peace of Jesus Christ through inspiring talks, praise and worship, and the sacraments; connect with hundreds of other Catholic teens; return home with memories that will last a lifetime, knowing that they are never alone.

Our goal is to set the stage for a life-changing encounter with Christ through an authentic environment of community. We would love to walk alongside you and your church parish to make sure that every teen knows that they are not only wanted, but are an irreplaceable part of our communities.

We would so love for you and your teens to join us! Registration is now open. Visit [www.steubenvillesouth.com](http://www.steubenvillesouth.com) to register, or contact the Steubenville South Office at [info@steubenvillesouth.com](mailto:info@steubenvillesouth.com) or 318-448-6120 for more information.

**Beyond the Limits  
Jr. High Conference  
Students in grades 6 - 8**

**March 5-6, 2022**

**Join Host Ragan Savedra  
Speaker Kris Frank  
Worship Leaders Grae McCullough  
and Kelly Lombardi**

**Steubenville South  
High School Youth Conference  
Students in grades 8 - 12**

**June 24-26, 2022**

**Join Host Ennie Hickman  
Speakers Fr. Joe Freedy,  
Lisa Cotter, Nicholas Frank,  
and Sr. Josephine Garrett  
Worship Leader Josh Blakesley**

***“I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.” // John 16:33***

**Adult Faith Series - Jan. 12 - Mar. 23**

"Beyond the Basics of our Catholic Creed." In the New Year, Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria will offer an Adult Faith Series on the Apostles' Creed on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Madonna Room. This is a presentation in Apologetics (defense of our faith), and will be a refresher course in the fundamentals of our Faith that will also move beyond the basics to explore the fullness of truth. Register for this free series of classes by calling the church office at 318-445-3693.

**Catholic Schools Week - Jan. 31 - Feb. 5**

Sunday, Jan. 30: St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria will have an Open House, 1:00-3:00 p.m. For more information, contact the school office at 318-448-3333.

Tuesday, Feb. 1: Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, 420 21st Street, Alexandria, will have an Open House. Choose 8:00 a.m. or 12:15 p.m. to tour the school and learn what we have to offer! For more information contact Patricia Upton at [upton\\_p@promptsuccor.org](mailto:upton_p@promptsuccor.org) or call 318-487-1862.

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Friday, Feb. 4: Sacred Heart School, Moreauville, "Celebrating Our Faith and Vocations" and Mass. Fr. Brian Seiler and Sr. Sandra Norsworthy are inviting religious to speak on vocations. All are welcome.

**Priestly Vocations Retreat - Feb. 5**

There will be a day of reflection on Feb. 5 at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for any man who is discerning priesthood or wants to know more about seminary. Any high school, college, or adult male is invited to attend, to do so please contact Fr. Luke LaFleur at [frllafleur@diocesealex.org](mailto:frllafleur@diocesealex.org).

**Disalced Carmelite Meeting - Feb. 12**

The Order of Disalced Carmelites holds its monthly meeting at 9:00 a.m. every second Saturday, at Maryhill Renewal Center. Anyone is invited to attend morning prayer followed by Mass and then the meeting. If you are interested in Carmelite studies, please contact Mary Jo McCoy (318) 346-6860 or (318) 481-9638

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS

**Fullness of Truth Catholic Conference - Feb. 18 - 19**

Why go to Mass? With virtual live-streaming available, especially in times of pandemic, is in-person attendance still necessary? Should it now be "optional" for modern Catholics? On February 18-19 at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria, Fullness of Truth presents its timely conference entitled, "Rediscover the Holy Mass: Real Presence, Real Power!" Come explore both fresh insights and the non-negotiable truths related to our central act of worship, with the "spot-on" missionary preaching of Fr. Ken Geraci, CPM, the straight-forward rationale of EWTN call-in radio show host Dr. David Anders, and the Augustine Institute's dynamic scripture scholar & author Dr. Michael Barber. This conference will provide clarity on such an essential matter... Your salvation! Don't miss it! To register & for more information, visit: [FullnessOfTruth.org](http://FullnessOfTruth.org) or call: 877.21.TRUTH.

**Magnificat Breakfast - Feb. 19**

Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women, will have a breakfast on Feb. 19 at Rateau Center in Hessmer, LA. For more information or for tickets, please visit <https://magnificat-ministry.net/chapters/chapter-states-l-m/la-alexandria/>. The speaker for this event will be Claire Lemoine, director of the Cenla and Avoyelles Pregnancy Centers. For more information, contact Mary Wilson at [marykwilson51@gmail.com](mailto:marykwilson51@gmail.com).

**Beyond the Limits - March 5 - 6**

To really love Christ, we must love "Beyond the Limits." Please join us March 5-6, 2022 for the Beyond the Limits Junior High Conference. All students in grades 6 - 8 are encouraged to attend. Speakers include Kris Frank and Ragan Savedra. Email [info@steubenvillesouth.com](mailto:info@steubenvillesouth.com) for more information, or visit [www.steubenvillesouth.com](http://www.steubenvillesouth.com) to register. We can't wait to see you there!

**Steubenville South - June 24 - 26**

Calling all high schoolers! Throughout the Bible, the Lord tells us over and over again, "Be not afraid," and he continues to speak these words to us today. Join hundreds of Catholic teens at Steubenville South in Alexandria, LA on June 24 - 26, 2022 to experience the peace of Jesus Christ, who is always faithful.

All rising freshmen in high school through rising freshmen in college are invited to attend this retreat. Learn more at [www.steubenvillesouth.com](http://www.steubenvillesouth.com), email [info@steubenvillesouth.com](mailto:info@steubenvillesouth.com), or contact your church parish for more information. We can't wait to see you there!

**The Synodal Church Survey**

As Pope Francis invites all Catholics to have their voices heard leading up to 2023's Synod of Bishops, the Diocese of Alexandria encourages everyone to share their thoughts. An eight-question survey is available on the Diocesan website at <https://www.diocesealex.org>.

The questions center under the theme "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participating, and Mission." The Diocesan Synod Committee will compile the responses into a report that will be submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB will then submit a report for the Synod of Bishops, which will adopt a final document. All dioceses across the globe are participating in the Synod.

**We need teachers!**

Elementary • Middle • High School

If interested, please contact the Office of Catholic Schools at 318-445-6424, Ext. 227 or fill out and submit an application on the diocesan website: <https://www.diocesealex.org/our-diocese-catholic-schools/job-applications/>

**Divine Mercy Hour - every Friday**

Sacred Heart Church of Moreauville has a weekly Divine Merch Hour at 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. There will be adoration with benediction, recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and confessions available. Everyone is invited.

### Church Today News Deadlines

**February 21**  
Deadline for news:  
**Thursday, Feb. 10**

**March 28**  
Deadline for news:  
**Thursday, Mar. 17**



Emile P. Oestrieche, III, CPA

Anne M. Oestrieche, CPA, CFP®

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# January - February 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
JANUARY <b>24</b>  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. S. GRAMIGNA</small>	<b>25</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION</small>	<b>26</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. D. HART</small>	<b>27</b> VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Paul the Apostle Church Hall, Mansura  <small>PRAY FOR FR. J. HASEIBER</small>	<b>28</b>  <small>PRAY FOR MSGR. R. HOPPE</small>	<b>29</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. R. HUMPHRIES</small>	<b>30</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. H. IMAMSHAH</small>
<b>31</b> VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, (church hall) Natchitoches  <small>PRAY FOR FR. R. JOHNSON</small>	FEBRUARY <b>1</b>  <small>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</small>	<b>2</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. T. KENNEDY</small>	<b>3</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI</small>	<b>4</b>  <small>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUPURAM</small>	<b>5</b> Priestly Vocations Retreat 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Maryhill Renewal Center  <small>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. L. LAFLEUR</small>	<b>6</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD</small>
<b>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK</b>						
<b>7</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME</small>	<b>8</b>  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. G. LEBLANC</small>	<b>9</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. V. MANUEL</small>	<b>10</b>  <small>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</small>	<b>11</b>  <small>PRAY FR. R. MATHEWS</small>	<b>12</b> Disalced Carmelite Meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER</small>	<b>13</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE</small>
<b>14</b>  <small>VALENTINES DAY PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER</small>	<b>15</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</small>	<b>16</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS</small>	<b>17</b>  <small>PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER</small>	<b>18</b>  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL</small>	<b>19</b> Magnificat Breakfast Rateau Center, Hessmer  <small>Fullness of Truth Conference - OLPS PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</small>	<b>20</b>  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. T. MOULARD</small>
<b>21</b>  <small>PRESIDENTS DAY PRAY FOR FR. A. MULLOTH</small>	<b>22</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</small>	<b>23</b>  <small>PRAY FOR DCN. S. NEWBURY</small>	<b>24</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</small>	<b>25</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE</small>	<b>26</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</small>	<b>27</b>  <small>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</small>

# CHRISTUS HEALS

Antionette was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017 and after her initial treatment it returned in 2019. The Cancer team was a big part of her healing, from chemo to radiation to surgeries. Antionette also leaned on her faith, right along with the team at Cabrini. They treated her as part of their family.

She proudly talks about Cabrini,

"They get to know their patients, they take a bad situation and make it good. I knew I had to walk this journey for whatever reason, and I knew they were right by my side."

Every day when she wakes up she's excited because God gave her another chance. "I can live in remission and that's what I intend to do. Anytime cancer comes to my doorstep we're gonna beat it with my forever team at Cabrini."

**I AM A THREE-TIME CANCER SURVIVOR. THE DOCTORS, NURSES, AND ASSOCIATES AT CABRINI ARE MY ANGELS."**

"CHRISTUS Cabrini's Cancer Center provided healing. They are my forever team."

**ANTOINETTE BLAKE**



CHRISTUS  
ST. FRANCES CABRINI  
Hospital