

# CHURCH TODAY

Volume LIII, No. 3

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

March 28, 2022



## INSIDE

### **2022 Annual Diocesan Appeal: God's gift: our response**

We look forward to a faith-filled future! This issue includes a special envelope for your convenience. See page 5 for how you can be a part of our collective response to God's gifts in our diocese.

### **Making Holy Week new**

In just a few weeks, we enter into the holiest week of the Church's year. How do you celebrate Holy Week? Are you incorporating any new forms of prayer or celebration this year? Find fresh ideas for your Holy Week on page 7.

### **Building cultural memory**

Catastrophic things happen when God's people forget their story. See page 16, as well as the pictures and stories scattered throughout this month's issue of the Church Today, for more on how the people of our diocese are bearing witness to our faith.

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**FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH, MARCH 19.** Our St. Joseph altar at St. Joseph Church in Saint Joseph, LA. Father Taylor Reynolds blessing the altar.



**ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.** We celebrated our school's patron saint on the Feast of St. Joseph with our annual St. Joseph's Altar. We also were blessed to be able to host the Our Lady of Fatima pilgrimage statue blessed by the pope during this time, which was included in our celebration! Each student brought items to contribute to the altar including fresh fruits, vegetables and baked goods. Mrs. Akeysheia Juneau, PreK4 teacher and Mrs. Rhiannon Moreau, assistant principal, organized the event. After lunch, each student was allowed to partake of the altar for their afternoon snack. This is an event that the students look forward to each year because of all the delicious treats!



**SACRED HEART SCHOOL ST. JOSEPH ALTAR.** Holy Mass was celebrated in the Sacred Heart School gymnasium for Sacred Heart School's grandparents on March 18. The St. Joseph Altar was blessed and the entire school and guests shared in fellowship by partaking of the sweets, fruits, and vegetables from the altar. In addition, everyone was offered a blessed St. Joseph medal, St. Joseph Novena, an unleavened bread ball, and fava beans in a small paper bag.

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**HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for April 2022**

Health Care Workers

We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

## Ukraine is 'epicenter of spiritual challenge,' nuncio says

By Junno Arocho Esteves  
Catholic News Service



**ARCHBISHOP KULBOKAS NUNCIO UKRAINE.** Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, apostolic nuncio to Ukraine, elevates the Eucharist in the kitchen at the apostolic nunciature in Kyiv, Ukraine, in this recent photo. During the war, Archbishop Kulbokas has been celebrating Mass in the kitchen because it's a well-protected area. (CNS photo/courtesy Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Russian invasion of Ukraine is not just a tragic conflict between two nations, but the center of a spiritual battle wrought by the forces of evil that have pitted brother against brother, said the apostolic nuncio to Ukraine.

"Like Pope Francis has underscored, any war -- (including) this concrete war -- is an invention of Satan, it's an evil invention," Lithuania-born Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas told Catholic News Service by phone March 21.

"If God allowed such things to happen," he said, it is not a call to point fingers of blame, but instead to understand "what God wants to tell us through such experiences."

"I would say that I am feeling like I am in the epicenter of a spiritual challenge," Archbishop Kulbokas said.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine Feb. 24, Archbishop Kulbokas has remained at the nunciature in Kyiv, having the "privilege to be an element of union between the suffering of the Ukrainian people" and the solidarity of the global Catholic Church.

In his Angelus address March 20, Pope Francis expressed his gratitude to church personnel, who remained in the country "for the concrete support you are offering courageously to so many desperate people."

"I also think of the apostolic nuncio -- who was just made a nuncio -- Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, who since the beginning of the war has stayed in Kyiv together with his collaborators and who with his presence brings me close every day to the martyred Ukrainian people," the pope had said.

Despite the tragic situation, especially in areas of the country devastated by Russian bombs, the nuncio said necessities like heating, electricity, internet and phone lines are still functioning at the nunciature in Kyiv.

Yet, being able to work under the constant threat of bombardment, has proven challenging at times, especially when "there is an air-raid alert and we must hide ourselves in the basement."

The archbishop also said he celebrates daily Mass in the kitchen, which is in an area of the nunciature that is well-protected from potential bombings.

"Psychologically, of course, it's a dramatic situation, but it also has a spiritual dimension," Archbishop Kulbokas said. "It's even a grace of God to live in this situation because this kind of situation I think pushes us to -- I don't want to say to pray or to believe more -- but to identify ourselves more with God, with people and pushes us to read more attentively what the Lord is saying to us. So spiritually speaking, it is a profound experience."

Nevertheless, the Lithuanian archbishop said he remains hopeful, especially for the scheduled March 25 consecration of Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which he believes is, first and foremost, a call for personal conversion.

"When we raise our eyes

toward the Virgin Mary, toward the Immaculate Heart, it's not just an action of our devotion," he said. "It is not a magic action that we consecrate ourselves, we consecrate all the world, and we consecrate especially Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart and everything will be resolved. No! It starts from our humble conversion."

Much like in the Book of Revelations, which describes in eschatological terms "this battle between Satan and the Virgin Mary who is protected by God himself," another purpose of the consecration is that through "God's help, the Virgin Mary and the Immaculate Heart of Mary is able to protect the world from the devil's actions," he said.

"When we unite our humble, contrite hearts with the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, then we have this protection against the devil's forces," Archbishop Kulbokas said. "I would say she will win the war because we need to win peace. It's something much more than an intercession."

While the outcome of the war remains uncertain, Archbishop Kulbokas told CNS

that he is hopeful that Ukraine will be a "spiritual winner after such suffering" and through the unity and solidarity among the various religious confessions in the country.

"The solidarity I am perceiving here in the country gives me a great hope for the future of Ukraine," he said. "But the cost is very high: the death of children, of pregnant mothers and the military, of course."

Nevertheless, Archbishop Kulbokas said that while Russia's invasion "should be stopped as soon as possible because it is an evil war," the consecration serves as a reminder that "all of us need

to humbly convert ourselves" and not judge others.

"Russia should not have started such a war, that is very clear," he said. "But we should avoid any kind of hate, otherwise we are no longer Christian, I would even say no longer a religious person, because all of us are brothers and sisters if we believe -- and I believe -- that our God is a father for everybody."

"In this sense, we have no right to judge," he said. "We judge only the actions, we reject the evil actions, but we should not develop hate in our hearts."

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for our diocese.

# Purgatory and the good thief / Weddings during Lent

**Q.** As I understand purgatory, it is a place where a cleansing is done, even if we have received the sacrament of anointing of the sick and/or made a good confession and had our sins absolved before death.

My question is this: On the day Jesus was crucified, he told the good thief, "Today, you will be with me in paradise,"; so are we to assume that no cleansing in purgatory was required for him? And, if that's the case, why not? (Philadelphia)

**A.** Your understanding of purgatory is correct. It has been a clear and consistent belief of the church, as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven" (No. 1030).

What we don't know, of course, is just what this transitional state consists of. How long it lasts, whether it might even be instantaneous and what it feels like are questions beyond our reckoning so long as we are still on this side of eternity.

What needs to be factored in,



## Question Corner

By Father Kenneth Doyle  
Catholic News Service

too -- and some might be unaware of this -- is a prayer called the "Apostolic Pardon." This prayer of blessing is customarily administered by a priest when someone is close to death and follows the anointing of the sick, and, if possible, the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist as viaticum, bread for the journey.

In this prayer, the priest says, "Through the holy mysteries of our redemption, may almighty God release you from all punishments in this life and in the life to come. May he open to you the gates of paradise and welcome you to everlasting joy."

And even if a priest is unavailable, the church provides in the Handbook of Indulgences that a dying person who is rightly disposed and has prayed regularly during life may be granted this same plenary indulgence (No. 28).

So to me, it's quite reasonable

that Jesus could have absolved the repentant thief of both sin and of punishment. If a priest can do it, why not Christ?

**Q.** We just learned that a close family member will be getting married next year during Lent. We, of course, are excited about the couple's pending nuptials, but we thought that the church frowned upon weddings during Lent.

Since they are getting married in another Midwestern state, it seems that the local church there must permit the practice. Does each diocese make its own decision on this issue? (Indianapolis)

**A.** I have heard that there are parishes or even dioceses that discourage the celebration of marriages during Lent, but there is actually no universal rule of the church that would ban them.

I would even argue that it would be a violation of canon law to rule out Lenten weddings altogether based on Canon 843, Paragraph 1, which states that Catholics cannot be denied the sacraments if they ask for them, and are properly disposed, and Canon 18, which indicates that the rights of the faithful cannot be limited unless the law clearly permits it.

In 1988, the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments did rule that weddings may not take place on Good Friday or Holy Saturday, but those are the only days so indicated.

Liturgical guidelines of the church do indicate, though, that if weddings are held during Lent both music and church decorations should be less lavish, in keeping with the penitential nature of the season.

Questions may be sent to  
Father Kenneth Doyle at  
[askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com)  
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## MY LIFE

As I sit here and look at my life  
I can now see things that caused me strife.

I prayed to God to lift me up  
And that one day I could drink from HIS  
cup.

He sent me the Holy Spirit, the dove  
And also the graces to see HIS love.

HE kept HIS word and showed me the way  
I will pray to be with HIM one day.

Because of HIS mercy I know I will win  
Hoping to be with HIM in heaven in the  
end.

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## 2022 Annual Diocesan Appeal: God's gift, our response

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

During this season of Lent, we are invited to examine our lives, to identify those places where we have encountered our loving God and those places where we have missed him, or where our sin and selfishness have led us away from him. Most of us can make a list of the hardships and difficulties we face each day, and especially in these trying times. Our Lenten prayer and reflection should open our eyes to the many and varied ways that God offers us his mercy and love -- blessings we often take for granted. Each day we wake up, each breath we take, the family and friends who bring us the joy, the satisfaction we take from our careers and, of course, the love we find when we encounter God in the Sacraments, in the Scriptures, and especially in the gift of the Eucharist. Yes, we are blessed in many ways; indeed, our very life is God's gift.

Recognizing our blessings should prompt us to give thanks and to seek to share those blessings with others. Our lives are God's gift -- and the way we live them is our response. God's Gift, Our Response is the theme of this year's Annual Diocesan Appeal. In the Diocese of Alexandria, we carry out the work of the Lord in so very many ways. Our mission spans thirteen civil parishes. It includes 71 church parishes and missions, eight schools, our retreat center at Maryhill, priests, deacons, religious sisters, seminarians, catechists, lectors, ministers to the sick, teachers, musicians and choir members, campus ministers, countless volunteers, and, hopefully you. All of us work and pray and sacrifice together to bring the message of the gospel to our little part of the world. And to carry out this mission, we need the combined efforts, the combined talents, the combined financial

support of all of us.

Together, as a diocese, we assist and support our parishes and missions in their celebration of liturgy, in religious education, faith formation and sacramental preparation, and often in administrative matters, particularly for many of our smaller locations. Together, we help young men and women discern their vocation, and we educate those who are preparing to serve us as the priests and deacons of the future. Together, we provide support for those priests of our diocese who have retired after many years of faithful service. Together we support the faculty, staff, and students of our Catholic schools, forming disciples with an excellent education and a faith-filled environment. Together, we provide Maryhill as a place of prayer, rest, and encounter with the Lord. And together, we plan for the future.

In the near future, we will be

reforming Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana -- a combined effort of the Catholic community in our diocese that can help more than each parish could help separately. Soon, you will hear about a new initiative coming to many of our parishes, Walking with Moms in Need. This ministry reminds us that we do not just vote pro-life, we live pro-life in our support of moms and their children before, during and after the child's birth. And in June we will begin the first phase of a three-year national Eucharistic Renewal -- a chance to recognize and appreciate that each week, each day we are invited to a privileged encounter with the Lord by receiving his Body and Blood as our nourishment and our strength.

Yes, sisters and brothers, there is much that his happening in our diocese, and we need your help. Recently, you may have received a letter from me

asking for your financial support of our Annual Diocesan Appeal. Or, given everything that is going on in our country and in our postal service, you might not have received it. I'm still waiting to receive my letter, for example. So for all of us, pledge envelopes will be included in this issue of the Church Today. Please prayerfully consider your response to God's gifts to you. Return your pledge or gifts to your parish or to the diocese. Visit our website -- [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org) -- for information on how you can donate to the Annual Diocesan Appeal or how you can find other ways to respond to God's gifts.

We look forward to a faith-filled future. Thank you for being a part of it.

*Sincerely in Christ,  
Most Reverend  
Robert W. Marshall, Jr.  
Bishop of Alexandria*



**2022 RCIA.** On Sunday, March 6, it was a joy to celebrate the combined Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. In this celebration, we invite catechumens from throughout the diocese to be enrolled as members of the Elect. We also invite candidates from throughout the diocese to join us in the continuing conversion which characterizes the Season of Lent. Please pray for these Elect and Candidates as they journey toward the Easter Sacraments.



**GOVERNOR AT ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH.** Come to the Table! St. Augustine Catholic Church welcomed Governor John Bel Edwards and Senator Louie Bernard to Mass on Sunday, Feb. 27. Following Mass was a tour of this historic church which dates back to the 1803 plantation chapel of Augustin Metoyer, founder and patriarch. Pictured L to R: Clyde Roque, Father Charlie Ray, Thomas Roque, Sr., Sister Liz Holmes, Dr. Mark Guidry, Ethel Marie Guidry, Governor Edwards, and Senator Bernard.



# Cross ministry: Wooden yard crosses have become his life's work

By Donna Culotta

Little did Jim Sprinkle know when he visited his brother, Jon, in Lufkin, Texas, that he would come back home with an inspiration.

Jon was involved in a project where the group made wooden yard signs painted with the simple message, "Jesus is Lord."

"The ministry has been going on for years," Jim said, "and they have sent out at least 10,000 crosses."

Jim saw one of the crosses, what it said, and -- even more importantly -- what it meant, and he became hooked on the project.

"For a while, the group in Texas stopped making the crosses, and I thought I could make them," he said.

His commitment was definitely serious because he had to first invest in a table saw.

"I bought a fence board and some screws," he began, "and found that I could make two crosses from each board with the measurements approximately 46x27."

The yard crosses are meant to be pounded into the ground with a hammer in a prominent place so the message can be seen. About 10 inches or so of the 47 inches is meant to be in the ground.

"They can withstand the weather," Jim pointed out.

Unlike the Texas crosses,

where the wood was stapled, Jim chose screws to make the cross more stable and secure.

For the wording on the cross, Jim at first painted it on, "but it was messy and I couldn't get it right."

Enter vinyl lettering that saved the project. Through the Gibko sign company in Bunkie, Jim now gets his lettering for the crosses donated from Greg Kojis.

It might sound simple to take some pre-cut letters off a sheet of paper and just stick them on a wooden cross.

Seriously, not so. It's more involved than one would think.

"I had to learn how to do it," Jim said.

First he sands the sections on the upright and the crossbar so the surface is smooth.

With a special "spatula-like tool," Jim goes over the letters once he has them on the wood. He presses and smooths, then presses and smooths some more.

"The adhesive on the back is very sticky and you want the letters flat," he explained.

Then by using a heat gun, he "softens the glue so it will adhere."

Jim chose white lettering because it was "angelic-like and that's the color the group in Texas used."

To make one cross, Jim estimates it takes about 30 minutes.

As he speaks at different groups' meetings, the word has been getting out.

Speaking at the Cottonport Lions Club, Jim garnered a new supporter in Chris Lemoine of Lemoine Lumber in Moreauville, who donates all the wood and screws.

Father Ramji Shoury, who is Sprinkle's pastor at Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen and also of St. Peter in Morrow enthusiastically supports the project and has given the crosses away at the church.

Yes, there is no charge for a cross and they can be picked up at Griffin's in Bunkie, Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen, and Lemoine Lumber in Moreauville.

Perhaps the most important part of the cross is what's attached to the back.

On a simple white sheet of paper stapled to the back is the Bible Scripture from Matthew 10:32. It begins "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my Father..."

This verse has special significance to Jim and when he talks about his work on the crosses he often states, "When you put the cross in the yard, you acknowledge Him whether you believe it or not."

*Originally published in The Marksville Weekly News*



**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL BETA CLUB.** St. Anthony School Beta Club was awarded 5th place at State Beta Convention in Living Literature. They will head to National Convention this summer.

## St. Frances Cabrini School is hiring for the 2022-2023 school year.

The following positions are available:

- Curriculum/Development Director
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Please send resumes to Sr. Nina Vincent at [nvincent@cabrinischool.com](mailto:nvincent@cabrinischool.com) or call the school for more information (318)448-3333.

## 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."

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to You.  
take care  
of everything!

*11 the surrender novena*



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## Making Holy Week new

By **Lindsay Schlegel**  
*Blessed is She*

In just a few weeks, we enter into the holiest week of the Church's year. If you experienced God's love and mercy in a new and powerful way this Lent, Holy Week may be something you're looking forward to. But maybe you struggled to stick to your resolutions or didn't make really sound ones in the first place. Then, seeing "Palm Sunday," "Holy Thursday," and so on in your calendar may feel daunting. Or perhaps life threw you some curveballs lately, and you don't really know what to think about your relationship with Christ.

### *Celebrating Holy Week*

No matter where you've been, Holy Week can be a fruitful and hopeful time for your spirit. Consider the Apostles during that first Holy Week: Jesus told them what was going to happen, but they couldn't fathom His predictions coming to fruition. It seemed too farfetched, too unbelievable, too impossible. And yet we know that all things are possible in Christ—even rising from the dead!

The Church lives and breathes, in large part, on tradition. You may have practices that you turn to in this season each year that continue to be fruitful and life-giving. But even if you do, I echo my own pastor's challenge from the Sunday before Lent began: make this Holy Week different from any you've experienced before.

Open your heart a little wider. Create a little more space for God to move in your life. Let His grace call the shots and, inspired by our Blessed Mother's fiat, say "yes" to wherever He may lead you this week.

### *Ideas for Holy Week*

To get you started, here are some ideas to live each day of this Holy Week with intention. Remember, even in darkness, even in despair, Christ makes all things new.

#### *Palm Sunday*

Before you plan your meals for this week, take stock of your pantry. What food do you already have? Canned soup? Tuna? Rice, quinoa, couscous? Look in your freezer as well. Frozen



vegetables? Meat? Microwave dinners? Too often, we take what we have right in front of us for granted. This week, be nourished by the sustenance God has already provided for you. Use the money you had budgeted for groceries to provide meals for someone (an individual or an organization) who is in greater need.

#### *Holy Monday*

Go to Confession. Many parishes have additional hours during which the Sacrament is offered this week (and if you're not comfortable with a priest you know, normally there are some new faces present!). To prepare, work through an Examination of Conscience. Often resources are available near the confessional, but you can also find versions online (like this one from *Blessed is She*) or simply work your way through the Ten Commandments. How have you abided by or broken each one since your last Confession? Once you do receive the Sacrament, begin incorporating a nightly Examination of Conscience into your prayers to better prepare for next time.

#### *Holy Tuesday*

Replace your typical evening activities with a viewing of *The Passion of the Christ*. Invite your BIS sisters to bring over a journal and join you. After the film, take a few moments to write about the scenes that moved you. If you've seen the movie before, what struck you differently this time? What might God be telling you through this reflection? Share your thoughts and pray together for increased hope and trust this week.

#### *Holy Wednesday*

Wed your prayer time to creativity and color your reflections. A number of adult coloring books are available that incorporate religious images and phrases, some specifically for Lent. Brew a pot of tea and invite the women you've met in your local BIS sisterhood to bring their

pencils, pastels, and paints over. Try *Coloring Lent: An Adult Coloring Book for the Journey to Resurrection*, *The Mysteries of the Rosary: An Adult Coloring Book*, or *The Stations of the Cross: Catholic Coloring Book Devotional*.

#### *Holy Thursday*

Participate in your diocese's Chrism Mass, which takes place either on Holy Thursday morning or an evening earlier in the week. The priests of the diocese gather with the bishop for this Mass, where three oils that will be used in sacraments throughout the year—the oil of catechumens, the oil of the infirm, and holy chrism—are blessed. In the evening, plan to attend Holy Thursday Mass as well. Here, witness the washing of feet and the consecration of the Eucharist.

#### *Good Friday*

In addition to the traditional Good Friday service, pray the Stations of the Cross either with a group or on your own. St. John Paul II prayed the Stations every Friday! Experience these fourteen moments on Christ's road to Cavalry in a new way with *Soul Core*, a method that integrates body and soul in a "a gentle path to grow in virtue and interior peace." Today is also the day to start the Divine Mercy Novena, so that it finishes on Divine Mercy Sunday (the Sunday following Easter Sunday). Sign up with *Pray More Novenas* to get the prayers delivered to your inbox each morning.

#### *Holy Saturday*

Attend your parish's Easter Vigil. This Mass is a special opportunity to pray with and for those candidates entering the Church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The Mass begins with a darkened church, a tangible sign that Christ is "the light of the

human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5). The time of waiting has passed. Now we rejoice!

#### *Easter Sunday*

He is Risen, alleluia! Easter is such a big deal that the Church celebrates it for eight days! Make the octave of Easter special by continuing to incorporate prayer into each day. Put 3 p.m. next Sunday on your calendar, too, as it's prime time to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet. Look for a local parish that may incorporate adoration into a sung chaplet—you'll never look at 3 p.m. the same way again. The revelations St. Faustina Kowalska received from Jesus in the early twentieth century assure us that God wants us to pray for His mercy, to be merciful to others, and to totally trust in His son. As Lent comes to a close, hopefully you have experienced these truths in a new and resonating way.

Now, we are called the same way the first disciples were at Pentecost: go out and spread the good news!

How do you celebrate Holy Week? Are you incorporating any new forms of prayer or celebration this year?

---

*Lindsay Schlegel seeks to encourage, inspire, and lift up the contemporary woman to be all she was created to be. She's the author of Don't Forget to Say Thank You: And Other Parenting Lessons That Brought Me Closer to God, as well as shorter nonfiction and fiction pieces, both online and in print. With joy, she speaks about recognizing God's voice and living the truth therein. Lindsay lives in New Jersey with her high-school-sweetheart-turned-husband and their kids. You can find out more about her at [lindsayeschlegel.com](http://lindsayeschlegel.com).*

*The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

Psalm 126: 3 | Responsorial Psalm for April 3 | Fifth Sunday of Lent



**SERRA CLUB FEBRUARY MEETING.** Serra Club of Alexandria hosted Father Martin Laird as the guest speaker at the monthly luncheon meeting held at Brocato’s Restaurant. Father ‘Raj’ Dharmarah was also in attendance. Serra Club members attend First Friday Mass at St. Rita’s followed by a brief breakfast meeting. The monthly luncheon meeting hosts a guest speaker from the Diocese. At the February meeting, Fr. Laird retold his journey from Menard High School, through college to becoming a practicing Ophthalmologist, then entering a religious order and being a missionary Brother for seven years in California and Mexico, then returning to Louisiana to be ordained a Priest for the Diocese of Alexandria. The Serra Club is a group of Catholic men and women from throughout the Diocese who pray for priestly and religious vocations and show appreciation for those who serve the church. If you would like to know more about Serra Club of Alexandria contact: R.J. Dunn, President at rdunn@eecla.com, or Fr. Luke LaFleur, Vocation Director at frllafleur@diocesealex.org, or Billie Flynn, Membership at billieflynn5@gmail.com.



**ST. MARY’S SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEES, DONATION TO WOMEN’S RESOURCE CENTER.** A central aspect of Catholic education is learning the importance of service to others. On Thursday of Catholic Schools Week, students at St. Mary’s Catholic School, Natchitoches, brought infant items that were donated to the Women’s Resource Center. Jennifer Luna, Executive Director of the Women’s Resource Center, visited the school during morning prayer and accepted the donation on behalf of the Center. Pictured are senior students [REDACTED]



**ANNUAL DIOCESAN QUIZ BOWL** The Annual Diocesan Quiz Bowl returned on March 19 after being cancelled last year due to COVID. Teams of junior high students from across the diocese competed for the trophies. Father Chad Partain facilitated the competition. The winning team was from Our Lady of Lourdes in Winnfield, claiming victory over the team from Holy Savior Menard.



**ST. MARY’S SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEES, VIRTUE OF THE MONTH.** The religion department teaches and discusses a different virtue each month. Students that display characteristics of that particular are selected monthly by their teachers. The Virtue of the Month for January was courage. The Virtue of the Month for February was honesty. Those students chosen for February are pictured, along with principal Jason Lachica.





**EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS AND LADIES OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER.** Saturday, March 12, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass for the Equestrian Order of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulcher at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Natchitoches. Father Scott Chemino concelebrated. Father Derek Ducote was the altar server and the photographer who took this photo.



**CARMELITE NUNS.** On Tuesday, March 8, Bishop Robert Marshall had lunch with Carmelite nuns from throughout communities in North America who gathered at Maryhill Renewal Center. They reflected upon and discussed recent Vatican documents on consecrated life. Mother Mary John, OCD, and the Discalced Carmelites of Mary, Mother of Grace in Lafayette were the hosts for the meeting. Father Daniel Chowning, OCD, from Wisconsin assisted the nuns in their reflection. Though all are affiliated with Carmels in North America, there were sisters from throughout the world taking part. Please pray for these wonderful nuns as they have promised to pray for us.

## Seminararian Burses

### February 2022 Donations

<b>Knights of Columbus Council #9217</b> .....	<b>\$25.00</b>
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
<b>Ms. Elizabeth Holmes</b> .....	<b>\$50.00</b>
Father Daniel Hart Burse	
<b>Mr. and Mrs. Marion French</b> .....	<b>\$50.00</b>
Father Gus Voltz Burse	
<b>Ms. Patricia Vandersypen-Basco</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Jerome and Audrey Vandersypen Burse	
<b>Mrs. Barbara Rigby</b> .....	<b>\$200.00</b>
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
<b>Ms. Desi Martin</b> .....	<b>\$15,000.00</b>
Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Shores Burse	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$15,425.00</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.

*My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

Psalm 22: 2 | Responsorial Psalm for April 10 | Palm Sunday

## Parish Spotlight: St Patrick Church, Ferriday established 1950

William and Helen Smith Ferriday established Helene Plantation of 4,000 acres in east Louisiana west of Vidalia in 1827. In 1924, Mass was offered by priests from Vidalia and Natchez in private homes in the growing community.

In 1925, a small chapel dedicated in honor of St. Thomas was built as a mission of Vidalia. That chapel was destroyed by a storm and a new chapel was erected in 1935 and dedicated in honor of St. Patrick by Fr. Robert Ryer.

In 1951, Bishop Charles P. Greco established St. Patrick's as an independent parish and Fr. Simone Vitale was appointed as the first pastor.

In 1953, a rectory was completed and Fr. John Gayer was appointed as the second pastor of the church. In 1958, the present church was constructed under



ST. PATRICK CHURCH, FERRIDAY

Fr. Gayer and blessed by Bishop Greco on the Feast of St. Patrick, March 17.

### Mission: St. Gerard – Jonesville

Today, the parish serves the mission of St. Gerard in Jonesville. Originally established as a mission of Jena, St. Gerard's first church was an old Army building secured by Bishop Greco. On November 1, 1964, ground was broken for the erection of a new church. The new structure, measuring 60 by 30 feet and seating 100 people, was built by James Al Eiland of Bunkie for less than \$20,000. It was blessed by Bishop Greco on May 31, 1965.



ST. GERARD CHAPEL, JONESVILLE

*This is the day the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad.*

Psalm 118: 24 | Responsorial Psalm for April 17 | Easter Sunday

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If you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, and that the abuse is by a parent or caretaker, please first call the Louisiana Child Abuse / Neglect Hotline at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) and/or your local law enforcement agency. If suspected abuse is related to a diocesan/church/school program, or if abuse occurred by anyone acting in Church services, a report should then also be made to the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Dr. Lee Kneipp, Clinical Psychologist at 318-542-9805.



**ST. MARGARET MARY CHAPEL, GORUM.** February 20, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time at St. Margaret Mary Chapel in Gorum. St. Margaret Mary and St. Cyril, Flatwoods, are missions of St. Margaret Church in Boyce. The parishioners told Bishop that this was a small congregation today as three of their regular number went to Mass at the parish church this weekend.



**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH, POWHATAN.** February 19, Bishop Robert Marshall visited St. Francis of Assisi Church in Powhatan to celebrate the 4:00 p.m. Mass.

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National Organization of Social Security Claimant Representatives,  
Legal Services for Purposes of Disability Committee (Louisiana State  
Bar Association).

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



**SATURDAY MASS.** Father Walter Ajaero celebrated the Saturday morning opening Mass.



**SATURDAY EVENING ADORATION.** Father Luke LaFleur led a time of Adoration and Benediction for the junior high students.



**SUNDAY MORNING SESSION.** Ragan Savedra, Grace Johnson, Kris Frank, and Grae McCullough led a group discussion on how to pray.



**ST. ANN PARISH.** Adult chaperones and group members from St. Ann Parish in Shreveport pose for a group photo during this year's Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference. Welcome Diocese of Shreveport!

*Ready to fly*

Two hundred adults and junior high youth gathered for the "Fly" Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference, held March 5-6, 2022 at the Randolph Riverfront Center. A big thank you to our parents for your support



**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH, BUNKIE.** Father Scott Chemino blessed the St. Anthony Jr. High students before they left for the Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference.

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**FUN AND GAMES.** Group members play games to teach community and teamwork during the Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference. Thank you Chick-Fil-A for yummy boxed lunches!



**ST. ANN PARISH.** Group members from St. Ann Parish in Shreveport pose for a photo before the start of this year's Jr. High conference at the Randolph Riverfront Center.

**PRAYER GROUP.** Thank you to the Men's Prayer Group who helped to prepare, cook, and serve Saturday dinner to the adults and participants!

**SPOONS FRO-YO.** The Spoons Frozen Yogurt food truck delivered big smiles to all of the adults and participants who stood in line for an afternoon treat. Thanks Spoons A Go Go!

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Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of much more value than they?

*11 matthew 6: 26*

**PRAYING FOR YOU.** We took a minute to pray for YOU - parents, family members, friends, volunteers, and community members who make communal gatherings like this possible, and who introduce our students to Jesus and His Church.



**CONFIRMATION, ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, LEESVILLE.** Confirmation Season 2022 began Saturday, March 5, at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Leesville. The first Sunday of Lent was celebrated and the Holy Spirit was called down upon 12 young and enthusiastic parishioners. Pictured with the confirmandi and Bishop Robert Marshall are Father Kenneth Michiels, Deacon Stephen Gramigna, Deacon Richard Mitchell. A great beginning to Lent and to our 2022 confirmations.



**CONFIRMATION, IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, TIOGA.** CONFIRMATION, IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, TIOGA. On Sunday, March 13, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Second Sunday of Lent and the Sacrament of Confirmation with the community of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tioga. Congratulations to the two newly confirmed young men.



**CONFIRMATION, OUR LADY OF LOURDES, FIFTH WARD.** On Thursday, March 17, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward. Nine parishioners were confirmed. Thank you to Father Kurian Zachariah, Deacon Darrell Dubroc, Deacon Ted Moulard, Deacon Richard Mitchell and the parishioners for their welcome and support of the Confirmandi.



**CONFIRMATION, ST. FRANCES CABRINI, ALEXANDRIA.** On Saturday, March 19, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Third Sunday of Lent and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Alexandria. Congratulations to the six young people confirmed. Thank you to Father Chad Partain and the parishioners for their welcome and their support of the Confirmandi.

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## Supterintendent Thomas Roque, Sr. named Natchitoches Treasure by City of Natchitoches

Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools superintendent, Thomas ("Tommy") Roque, Sr., was recently awarded the 2021 Natchitoches Treasure by the City of Natchitoches. This prestigious award is given to community members who "embody the heartbeat of Natchitoches by giving back, volunteering and making a difference."

In his nomination, Tommy Roque was noted to be instrumental to improving how communities treat its weakest members. Noted was Mr. Roque's lifetime of volunteer services, bringing faith, spiritual care, education, healthcare, and many other services to communities, with a special heart for the poor, forgotten, and least fortunate. He has done this in many roles including being the parish council president of St. Augustine Catholic Church on Isle Brevelle, LA, where he has served many ministries over his lifetime; the president of the board of a non-profit organization, Outpatient Medical Center, which brings needed healthcare services to underserved in Natchitoches, Leesville, & Tallulah; and chair of the library board, assuring the availability of educational, literacy, and technology resources to Natchitoches area residents without other means for access.

Being part of a nationally recognized faith-based Creole community on Isle Brevelle, Mr.

Roque is a founding member of the St. Augustine Historical Society formed 4 decades ago in 1979. He has volunteered countless hours to protect, promote, and preserve its heritage of faith for future generations. As a lifetime educator, his impact on human potential is immeasurable. He has touched many lives, in many capacities and in many roles. Personally, he attended Catholic elementary school at St. Joseph's High School and Holy Rosary Catholic School in Lafayette, college at NSU and Southern University, master's degree studies at NSU, and some doctorate studies in higher education at Grambling. Some of his many roles in education include the following: Natchitoches Parish School Board for 10 years; teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent of Rapides Parish School Board, and an adjunct professor of education at NSU. Currently, he is the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Alexandria, and he serves on the State of Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), appointed by the Governor and bringing Natchitoches area representation to the state.

Wherever he goes he demonstrates his Catholic faith in meaning deeds. For his lifetime, he has provided services which strengthen the community. He is



Thomas Roque, Sr.

part of a long family legacy of community and public services. His father, Earl Roque, was a former police juror, and his mother, Marie Llorens Roque was the director of the retired seniors volunteer program (RSVP), bringing services to the people of elderly and all people of the area. Additionally, he, like his predecessors, has a special calling to serve the poor, the lonely, the elderly, the disadvantaged, and the underserved.

Finally, Mr. Roque has been an excellent role-model as he freely coaches, mentors, and helps develop new leadership so that this valuable community service may continue through future generations.

Congratulations to Mr. Roque himself for a well-deserved light of recognition as a Natchitoches Treasure!

Hope has two beautiful daughters;  
their names are Anger and Courage.

Anger at the way things are,  
and Courage to see that they  
do not remain as they are.

*11 Saint Augustine*

### Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Tuesday, March 29, 6:00 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center

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.



### 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/).

## Lent + Holy Week Activities

### Divine Mercy Hour - every Friday

Sacred Heart Church of Moreauville has a weekly Divine Mercy 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.

### Stations of the Cross, Alexandria

#### - every Friday during Lent

St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria will have Stations of the Cross and Benediction will be offered every Friday in Lent at 5:30 p.m.

### Stations of the Cross, Pineville

#### - every Friday and weekdays during Lent

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville will have Stations of the Cross every Friday 6:00 p.m. Weekday Masses at 6:45 a.m. - alternate rosary and stations of the cross, Mass at 7:00 a.m. Everyone is invited.

### Lenten Fish Frys

#### St. Frances Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria

#### TAKE OUT or DELIVERY ONLY

KC Council #3200 will have their Lenten Fish Fry in Xavier Hall from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. every Friday through April 8. Menu includes fish, french fries, hush puppies, and coleslaw. No dine in available. For delivery call 318-447-3663 with a minimum of 4 orders. Cost is \$9 per plate, and \$1 for soda or water. (No Fish Fry on Good Friday.)

#### St. Rita Church, Alexandria

#### DINE IN or DRIVE THRU

St. Rita's annual Lenten Friday Fish Frys every Friday during Lent from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., \$10 a plate, US Catfish, french fries, hush puppies, coleslaw, eat in or drive thru. (No Fish Fry on Good Friday.)

#### Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth

#### EAT IN or TAKE OUT

Every Friday during Lent from 5:00-7:00 p.m. \$9 a plate.

Please continue to visit your church's Facebook page (you do not need a Facebook account, just click "not now" and view the content), or the diocesan website for updated live-streamed Mass times, and Holy Week activities.

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

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

## Building cultural memory

By *Jenny Richeson*  
*Blessed is She*

In my years teaching in public schools, I started to notice a subtle but steady presence of cultural orphan mentality. I talked with 5th graders who did not know anything about George Washington or history in general. I taught 3rd graders who had no understanding of fairy tales and, when asked what lesson a story taught, did not know the meaning of the word “lesson.” As a point of clarification, I taught students with some form of a learning challenge but that does not mean all had significant disabilities. Many were in regular classrooms who needed a little extra support. This was often provided in a pull-out model of instruction for a limited period of time weekly. In other words, most of the time they were in their grade-level class.

I’m not suggesting rigorous content was absent but something was definitely going on here. I am also aware that many things have to be reinforced at home in order for children to realize and remember how important they are. Without that, schools have limited ability to pass on knowledge that matters.

### *Why we remember*

But still, I saw it happening. As technology pervaded daily life more and more, it seemed to be impacting the development of minds and souls. Almost like forgetting anything that came before.

Cultural memory includes the stories, events, and people that are remembered in a society. This can be heroes and villains, art, music, literature, and holidays.



It can be seen in celebrations, memorials, and what is mourned.

Scripture is full of this theme of remembering. Catastrophic things happen when God’s people forget their story, Who they came from, and where they are going. Think of the Israelites leaving Egypt and heading toward the Promised Land. So many of them forgot their purpose and the strength of their God. It led to hard heartedness and death.

### *The solution is simple*

What are we to do about this? I suggest leaning into sacred order and actionable steps that connect

with what is eternal. Steward language, write the play, sing the song, light the candle, read the prayer. Bear witness to faith not just with head bowed in silence but also in communal gatherings of remembrance. Feast days can be opportunities for building tradition and memory as well as acts of courage. We can develop immunity to words in our culture that have become weapons of ideology. We know sin is the real problem of humanity, which exists within the religious and without.

And for the younger

generations who grew up with technology in our relatively new world of iPhones and social media, I invite you to build cultural memory in communal acts together.

- To practice hospitality and transparent conversations.

- To believe there is more than individualism and materialism that is being sold as the way to true happiness.

- To lay your phone down and go have real experiences.

- To reach out for spiritual mothers and fathers if that is what you need. My life would be lacking in richness without relationships that span ages and experiences. Old and young are necessary to build the kind of

cultural memory that lasts and gets passed on.

Hear the Trinitarian call in your heart and remember, remember, remember.

How are you building cultural memory today?

---

*Jenny Richeson is a Catholic writer who is a lover of language and its mysteries. She makes her home in Kentucky with her husband, Matt. Together, they find God in gardening and all manner of outdoor activities whenever they can. You can find more about her at [instagram.com/thespeechpoet](https://www.instagram.com/thespeechpoet).*

## Heart of Saint Kateri Circle

**Do you have a devotion to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha?**

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## Centennial Celebration Set for Christian Mothers

1922-2022 is a Centennial Year for the Confraternity of Christian Mothers' organization of St. Augustine Catholic Church, Natchez, Louisiana (an area also known as the Cane River). Members also include mothers from St. Anne's Chapel of Old River, as well as mothers from across the U.S who have had roots from this area. With guidance of spiritual director Reverend Charles B. Ray and that of patroness, Our Lady of Sorrows, the ladies join regularly to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion, work together, and as wives and mothers pray for one another, their families, and especially for their children. Through Holy Mother Church, they work to instill faith, hope, and love in their children and indeed their families.

The Christian Mothers meet throughout the year, with an Annual Mothers' Day Meeting bringing members from afar. The centennial celebration will be held on May 8. The morning will begin with a breakfast social hosted by the Holy Name Society and fathers of the parish. Christian Mother President Gail Jones will call the meeting to order commencing with prayer; later adjourn to Mass at 10:30 a.m.

Most Reverend Robert Marshall, Bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria, will be the principal celebrant at the Holy



**NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN MOTHERS, ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH, ISLE BREVELLE.** Pictured left to right: Angela Sarpy, Deirdre Rachal, Mary Jo Claiborne, Fr. Charlie Ray, Sherry Metoyer Bradley, Mary Donna Antee, Jennifer Antee Below, and Barbara Ann LaCour.

Mass.

The origins of the Christian Mothers go back to northern France and a woman named Louise Josson de Bilhem, wife of a court official. Paying attention to mothers who were solicitous about the welfare of their children, she brought to fruition the envisioned desire of these Christian women to assist one another by words, deeds, and mutual prayer. It was in May 1850 that the Christian mothers of Lille, France assembled for the first time. They looked for encouragement from pastors whom our Divine Savior had appointed to minister through teaching and nurture through His

sacraments and blessings. Today there are six Archconfraternities around the world.

In the United States, Ministry to the Christian Mothers' organization is a work of the Capuchin Franciscans of the St. Augustine Province, Pittsburgh, PA. where the Archconfraternity of Christian Mother headquarters is located. On October 13, 1922, under the spiritual direction of Fr. Joseph Baumgartner, St. Augustine Catholic Church, Isle Brevelle was granted permission to establish the Confraternity of Christian Mothers. This led to affiliation on November 5, 1922, with the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers.

Throughout the years generations of our mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers have strived for a common cause of keeping a spiritual connection that is so important to the life, growth, and love in our community. Although not one member of the original group is still with us, their impact on subsequent generations is still evident as we celebrate this 100th year.

Read more at: [www.archconfraternityofchristianmothers.com](http://www.archconfraternityofchristianmothers.com)

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*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
his love is everlasting.*

Psalm 118: 1 | Responsorial Psalm for April 24 | Second Sunday of Easter

## Why your teens need a Steubenville conference

By Andrew Brown  
Life Teen, Inc.

During my senior year of high school my mom told me about “Steubenville University.” I must admit, I immediately thought she said “Stupidville University.” Good. We said it. Now that that’s out of the way... I did not apply nor attend the university but I did look into it.

A few years later, as a youth minister, a parent approached and asked to send some of our teens to the Steubenville Youth Conference in our state. I told her I couldn’t make the dates, but she could promote the event and serve as its Group Leader for the conference. She brought three teens with her in a minivan that summer.

For the next few years, the numbers of our teens attending this summer weekend “jolt” of faith grew to the point of needing a bus, and, of course, matching t-shirts to attend the conference. NOTE: Matching t-shirts are not needed to attend but are very helpful for finding stray teens.

It wasn’t easy for my Core Team and I to discern which summer events we should offer to our teens, but the Steubenville Conference was always one of them. It can be cumbersome having to pick and choose which events to attend, as it may require you asking the parents, parish, or pastor for more budget. It can be annoying giving up family weekends during the school year, must less being asked to offer one up during the summer. It’s hard enough getting teens to submit permission slips during the school year when they’re in town, let alone amidst summer vacations.

As a former youth minister, I get all of that. But let me tell you something: *it’s all worth it.*

**What makes it worthwhile**  
Teens encounter Jesus

FEAR—  
Jn 16:33  
LES S

*personally*, in Word and Sacrament. At the Steubenville conferences, there are two Masses, Reconciliation, Adoration and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, praise and worship, workshops, and ministry booths. God’s grace works through all of them to inspire our teens.

*They’re free to encounter Him*, without the pressure of schoolwork or sport commitments. This is often so overlooked, but teens can be totally present to the message without thinking about that assignment due on Monday.

*It creates a summer buzz within the youth ministry* and keeps teens interested in the follow-up events. Bible studies, daily Masses, youth nights, socials, etc. that your parish offers continue what has been built upon over the weekend conference.

*It shows teens that God isn’t meant to be contained within an academic calendar*, but rather is meant to be experienced throughout our entire lives. How do you show newly confirmed that their faith is continued after Confirmation programming? Continually offer them discipleship opportunities.

*It challenges teens to think or rethink about summer leisure activities* that may be morally ambiguous or just wrong. Teens + boredom = creativity. Sometimes

they need to be reminded there are healthy and holy creative ways of socializing under the summer sun.

*It can spur deep and lasting discipleship* through LEAD trainings. All of my LEAD “alumni” teens are still involved in ministry in some capacity. Such a beautiful fruit!

*It provides incredible relational ministry memories.* When reminiscing with former teens some of our best laughs and moments are the travel adventures we shared, the crazy game of spoons played in the hotel room, or the heart-wrenching conversations that were shared as we are present to the teens.

*It reinforces the Church’s teachings* through dynamic speakers. Even if you’re the greatest youth minister and offer incredible catechesis, teens learn and encounter through various temperaments and styles. The speakers they’ll encounter on a Steubenville weekend are some of the best vessels of truth for today’s teens.

**Myths Debunked**  
*“Franciscan Youth conferences are for just Franciscan graduates and their youth group teens.”*

Totally not true. Though Franciscan puts forth incredible ministers in the youth ministry

go!”

Our first year attending the Steubenville Conference had three teens (a boy and two girls), a mom, and the youth minister. We started small and, within a few years, we had the bus, matching t-shirts, scholarships from parishioners, etc. Be not afraid, Jesus only brought three with Him to Mt. Tabor.

### Don’t Wait

There is still time for you to register your teens for this summer’s conference!

---

*Andrew Brown is married to his Pre-school classmate, Mary Beth. The two wed in 2010 but not before Andrew was able to nab her to serve on his Core Team. Andrew is a cradle-Catholic who has served the Church in a professional setting since he was 21 years old - barely older than the teens to which he was ministering! Andrew has been a Youth Minister, a DRE, and now serves as the Pastoral Associate for his parish of St. Lucy in the Diocese of San Jose. He enjoys traveling the country to aid in building disciples in youth ministry but especially loves serving the local church. He is one of the cofounders for a teen Theology of the Body retreat, titled Echoes of Worth.*

**Petrus**  
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Don’t wait! There’s still time to register for this summer’s Steubenville South Youth Conference, June 24-26, 2022!

For more information, visit [www.steubenvillesouth.com](http://www.steubenvillesouth.com).

**Registration is now open!**

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American Gem Society

# Pope says elderly must be prophets, warning of world's 'self-destruction'



said, "the wisdom of the elderly is needed to prevent the path of self-destruction by denouncing corruption and a relativistic lifestyle."

Pope Francis was continuing his series of talks dedicated to the meaning and value of old age and reflected on the theme, "Seniority, a resource for a carefree youth."

Elderly people, the pope said, can easily "grasp the deception" that often ensnares young people into obsessing over ephemeral pleasures that lead to a "life without thought, without sacrifice, without interiority, without beauty, without truth, without justice, without love; this is all corruption."

Reflecting on the biblical account of the great flood and

God's decision to wipe out humanity after seeing "how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth," the pope noted that, in his wisdom, God entrusted saving life on the earth to Noah, "the oldest of us all."

Using symbolic language, he said, the Bible presents God's actions as a "paradoxical twist of mercy," since eliminating humanity would spare future victims from "corruption, violence, and injustice."

Recalling Jesus' warning that the coming of the son of Man would catch people unaware, just as they were before the flood, the pope explained that when people focus solely on enjoying life, they tend to not perceive corruption or

ignore it.

With their life experience, older people are more adept at spotting corruption and at being "prophets against corruption as Noah was in his time." However, he also warned of those elderly people who "have not matured and become old with the same corrupt habits of the young."

"We, women and men of a certain age -- not to say old, because some are offended -- must not forget that we have the wisdom to say to others, 'Look, this path of corruption leads nowhere.' Pope Francis said.

"We must be like good wine that in the end, when aged, can give a good message and not a bad one," he said.

By Junno Arocho Esteves  
Catholic News Service

progress to eradicate illness and prolong life is often mingled with the focus on the "final catastrophe that will extinguish us, such as would happen with an eventual atomic war," he said March 16 at his weekly general audience.

"The 'day after' this -- if we are still here, days and human beings -- we will have to start from scratch. Destroy everything to start again from scratch," the pope said.

"Now more than ever," he

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- In a world still reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic and starting to feel the threat of nuclear war between Russia and Western nations, Pope Francis said that symbol of Noah and the great flood that wiped out humanity "is gaining ground in our subconscious."

The allure of technological

## The Cross Word

answers on pg 11

April 3 and  
10, 2022



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Readings: Is 43: 16-21; Phil 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11 & Lk 19:28-40; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Lk 22:14-23:56

### ACROSS

- 1 Colorless
- 5 Shade tree
- 8 That girl
- 11 Broken
- 13 Snake
- 14 Plaything
- 15 The Magi brought
- 16 Container
- 17 Monks' brewed
- 18 Satan likes one
- 20 Harassed
- 22 Shout of praise
- 26 Being under a vow in Ireland
- 27 (2 wds) Chalice

- 28 "At the name of \_\_\_"
- 30 Short-term memory
- 31 \_\_\_ Rica
- 32 National police
- 35 Town chief
- 36 "A rod of \_\_\_"
- 37 Ship's head
- 39 The Lord's time of suffering
- 41 "Path in the \_\_\_ waters"
- 43 Pod vegetable
- 44 Past
- 45 Hand tool
- 47 Shred (2 wds.)
- 51 \_\_\_ Francisco

- 52 Winter hazard
- 53 Righteousness comes through \_\_\_
- 54 Strive
- 55 Fall behind
- 56 "Take \_\_\_, watch and pray"

### DOWN

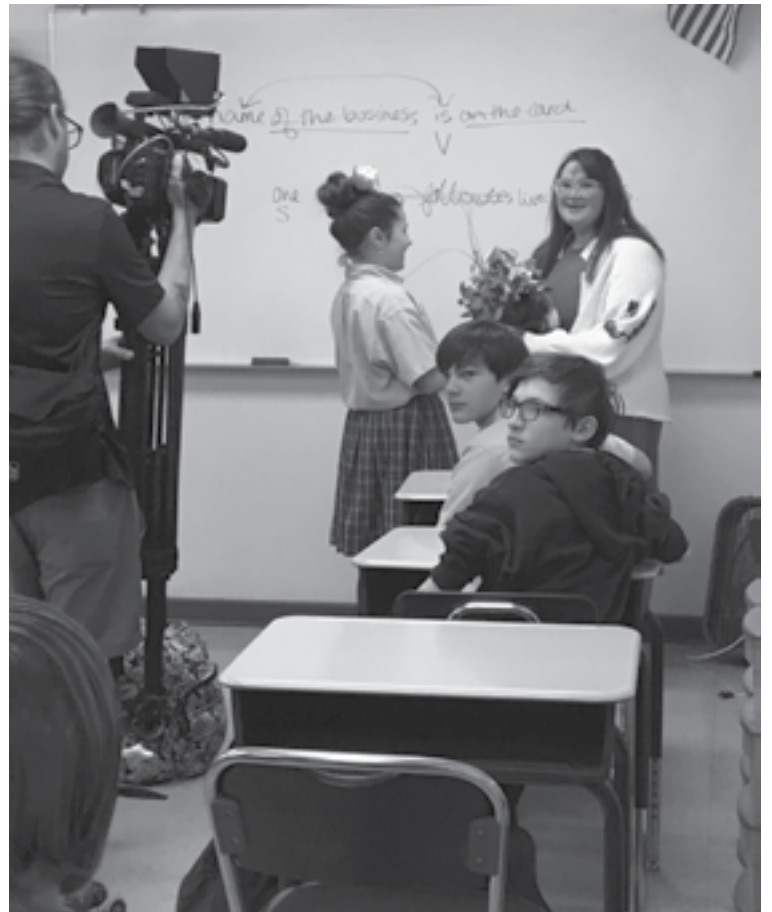
- 1 Ten meters
- 2 Stinging fish
- 3 Easter month
- 4 Gunny sack material
- 5 \_\_\_ and flow
- 6 Cut of pork
- 7 Nicaragua capital
- 8 Part of a rocket
- 9 Risen Lord had in hands, and feet
- 10 Regarded speculatively
- 12 Not fat
- 19 Take pleasure in
- 21 Petrol
- 22 In possession of
- 23 Rosary month
- 24 Total
- 25 Fable writer
- 29 Seatbelt
- 31 Brown, fuzzy marsh plant
- 32 Food Friday (abbr.)
- 33 Ghost's greeting
- 34 No room here
- 35 Car speed
- 36 Eighth-century prophet
- 37 Roll of tobacco
- 38 "\_\_\_ in the garden"
- 40 Vassal
- 41 Spar
- 42 Gym club
- 46 Limb
- 48 Pastry
- 49 North American Indian
- 50 Doctoral degree

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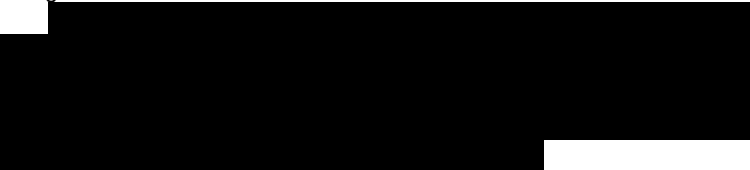
**SACRED HEART SCHOOL.** Sacred Heart School students competed at the 4-H Parish and District levels showing livestock. Pictured: Mackinley [redacted] showed beef; Margeaux [redacted] showed beef; Jacques [redacted] showed Pygmy goats; Wesson [redacted] showed market hog; Carson [redacted] showed 2 rabbits. All of the students won several awards at Parish and have advanced to District. Kristen Dauzat served as sponsor.




**SACRED HEART SCHOOL GOLDEN APPLE.** Mrs. Katherine Freeman, Sacred Heart Schools 8th grade homeroom teacher, Jr. Beta Club sponsor, and ELA teacher, was nominated for the Golden Apple Award by Leah [redacted]. Mother General Carla Bertani, OLS from Italy, was present when Mrs. Freeman was presented with flowers from KALB Channel 5.





**SACRED HEART SCHOOL SPELLING BEE.** One of the many highlights for Catholic Schools Week at Sacred Heart School was the annual Spelling Bee. It was very exciting with 8th grader Olivia [redacted] winning overall. Congratulations to all of our winners!





**ADVANCE**  
Program for Young Scholars  
Northwestern State University  
July 10-30, 2022





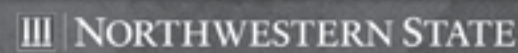
Northwestern State's ADVANCE Program for Young Scholars (ADVANCE) is a three-week summer residential program in Natchitoches, Louisiana, that offers challenging classes for honors, gifted, and/or talented students currently in grades 7 through 11. Visit the website, [www.advance.nsula.edu](http://www.advance.nsula.edu) or call 318-357-4500 for more information!

**Program dates: July 10-30, 2022**

**Financial Aid application deadline: April 5, 2022**

**Application and payment deadline: May 3, 2022**





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and Northwestern State University.**

**LSU of Alexandria:**  
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**Northwestern State University**  
Catholic Student Organization  
FOCUS Ministries: <https://nsucatholic.org/focus>

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



**OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL MARDI GRAS.** Our Lady of Prompt Succor School Pre-Kindergarten-4 students entertained the OLPS school on Wednesday, February 24, 2022. They paraded down the front of 21st Street, to the squeals of delight of the entire school. The students were assisted by the 6th graders, and their floats were pulled by their parents. The skies may have been a little gloomy but the atmosphere was joyous!



**SACRED HEART SCHOOL PATRIOTIC ESSAY.** In the Fall of 2021, the 4th Degree KC Assembly #2333 held a Patriotic Essay Contest. Students in grades seven and eight attending public, private, parochial, or home schools were eligible to participate. Students from Sacred Heart School, Red River Charter School, and Avoyelles High School were invited to participate. Each participant was asked to write an essay between 500 and 750 words. This year's theme was: "Do you feel it is important to stand for the pledge of allegiance and the national anthem? Why or why not?"

Twenty-four essay entries were submitted. Second place winner this year went to Sacred Heart School student Aaron [REDACTED]. Aaron received a check for \$100 from the assembly. The first place award was presented to Sacred Heart School student Victoria [REDACTED]. Victoria received a check for \$200 from the assembly. Victoria's essay has advanced to the Alexandria Diocesan level for competition. The Alexandria Diocesan winner will be selected by March 1. The winner from the diocesan level will advance to the state level and will be selected by March 20. Congratulations to both students!



**OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL STATIONS OF THE CROSS.** Our Lady of Prompt Succor 3rd - 6th grade students attended Stations of the Cross on a weekly basis during Lent. The education of the meaning of Stations of the Cross is taught throughout the school. Mrs. Caludine Reich a kindergarten teacher is walking through the stations after a recent Mass to help her kindergarten students better understand what Jesus went through.

**OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL ASH WEDNESDAY.** Our Lady of Prompt Succor School Kindergarten through 6th grade celebrated Mass together and received ashes, on Ash Wednesday. After Mass Father Rusty Rabalais and seminarian Derrick Rials went to the school to give ashes to the pre-school and pre-kindergarten classes.



## Spring Fling! - April 2

Sacred Heart School in Moreauville will hold their annual Spring Fling on Saturday, April 2 starting with a Motorcycle Poker Run at 12:15 p.m. Cost is \$30 per bike/\$20 per extra hand, winners announced at the school at the end of the ride. For more info about the Poker Run contact Alissa Tassin or Lacey Lemoine at (318) 359-9572. The Cornhole Tournament with cash prizes begins at 2:00 p.m., registration starts at 1:30 p.m. Cost for the tournament is \$50/adult teams and \$30/kid teams. For more info about the cornhole tournament, contact Kacey Meche at (318) 359-9338. From 1:00-9:00 p.m. there will be Bingo and games for the kids along with food and drink booths as well as jambalaya available at 4:00 p.m. A Split the Pot drawing will be held at 8:00 p.m. and Big Raffle drawing at 8:30 p.m. All proceeds benefit Sacred Heart School. For more information about the Spring Fling, contact the school office at (318) 985-2772. Come join us for fun filled day!

## NSU Advance for high school students

- **April 5:** Financial aid deadline
- **May 3:** Application deadline
- **July 10-30:** Program date

Northwestern State University's ADVANCE Program for Young Scholars (ADVANCE) is a 3-week summer residential program in Natchitoches that offers challenging classes for honors, gifted, and/or talented students currently in grades 7-11. Visit the website, [www.advance.nsula.edu](http://www.advance.nsula.edu) or call 318-357-4500.

## Married Couples Morning of Meditation - April 8

Join us on April 8 at St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA for a morning of meditation dedicated to married couples. Topics discussed will include communication, love and prayer within marriage. The morning begins with Mass at 8:30 a.m.

## Come and See Weekend - April 8-10

St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College, Covington is scheduled to have its Spring Come and See weekend from April 8-10. This is a great opportunity for any male 16 years old or older to come and see the seminary campus and what seminary life is like. For more information, please contact the Director of Vocations, Fr. Luke LaFleur at [frlalfleur@diocesealex.org](mailto:frlalfleur@diocesealex.org).

# DIOCESAN BRIEFS

## Discalced Carmelite Meeting - April 9

The Order of Discalced 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 spiritual studies, please contact Mary Jo McCoy (318) 346-6860 or (318) 481-9638.

## Heart of Kateri Circle meeting - April 14

The next Heart of St. Kateri Circle meeting will be on Thursday, April 14 at 5:30 p.m. at the Tekakwitha Conference Center, 2225 North Bolton Avenue, Alexandria, LA. All are welcome, Catholic or not, we hope to see you there! For more information contact Scotty Durio at (318) 483-3908 or [finance@tekconf.org](mailto:finance@tekconf.org).

## Chords of Blue Concert - April 21

You are invited to Strike a Chord with the Chords of Blue Benefit Concert in honor of autism awareness month and St. Mary's Residential Training School! The concert features United by Music North America with UBMNA guest artists Grammy-nominated blues musician, Kenny Neal and Sarah Grace from Season 15 of NBC's hit show The Voice. Doors open April 21 at the historic Hotel Bentley in Alexandria at 6:00 p.m. The concert starts at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at [www.chordsofblue.com](http://www.chordsofblue.com) or by texting ConcertTIX to 91999. For more information, contact St. Mary's development office at (318) 445-6443 ext. 2144.

## Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship - April 30

"Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship" is back! St. Joseph Church in Marksville will host the festival on Saturday, April 30 from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. outside the church hall. There will be over 25 teams competing and cooking 10,000 pounds of crawfish served "all you can eat." Three local bands will be playing throughout the day, vendors will be selling local items, food and drinks

and there will be free activities for the kids. Wristbands will be sold at the gate for \$25.00 per adult and \$10.00 for children five to 12 years (children under five years are admitted free). Bring a chair and join us for the best boiled crawfish in the state! For information, call St. Joseph Church at (318) 253-7561.

## Women's Genesis of Eve Conference: Come to the Well - May 13-15

Join us for a weekend of spiritual encounter, intellectual empowerment and apostolic evangelization. This conference, rooted in our Catholic faith, will provide a weekend away from the demands of life and offer spiritual encounter through prayer and testimonies, intellectual empowerment via educational tracks and evangelization via meeting and talking with the women of the diocese. The goal of this weekend is to create an environment where women of all ages can deepen their personal relationship with Christ. To register visit: <https://bit.ly/genesisofeve>

## 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 is encouraging everyone to share their thoughts. An eight-question survey is available on the Diocesan website: <https://www.diocesealex.org/synodal-church-survey/>

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.

## Church Today News Deadlines

**April 25**  
Deadline for news:  
**Thursday, April 14**

**May 30**  
Deadline for news:  
**Thursday, May 19**



Emile P. Oestrieche, III, CPA

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# April 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>MARCH <b>28</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. G. VOLTZ</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. L. WHITE</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. J. WHITEHEAD</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. WILTSE</p>	<p>APRIL <b>1</b></p> <p>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Spring Fling! 1:00-9:00 p.m. Sacred Heart School, Moreauville</p> <p>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. XAVIER</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Fifth Sunday of Lent</p> <p>Lenten Mission 4:00-5:00 p.m. Sts. Francis &amp; Anne Church, Kolin</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. M. YOUNG</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. ZACHARIAH</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. AELAVANTHARA</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. W. AJAERO</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. W. ALDRIDGE</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Married Couples Morning of Meditation 8:30 a.m. St. Joseph Church, St. Joseph, LA</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>Discalced Carmelite Meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. E.J. BARRE</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>PALM SUNDAY PRAY FOR FR. S. BRANDOW</p>
<b>Come and See Weekend -- Covington</b>						
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. BRAQUET</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Chrism Mass 11:00 a.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. BROCATO</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. S. CHEMINO</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Heart of Kateri Circle meeting 5:30 pm Tekakwitha Conference Center, Alexandria</p> <p>HOLY THURSDAY PRAY FOR FR. D. CORKERY</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>GOOD FRIDAY PRAY FR. J. CUNNINGHAM</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR REV. W. DECOSTE</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>EASTER PRAY FOR FR. D. DEJESUS</p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. L.G. DELOACH</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. DESHAUTELLE</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. DESIMONE</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Chords of Blue Concert 7:00 p.m. Hotel Bentley, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. DHARMARAJ</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. D. DUBROC</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. DUCOTE</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>DIVINE MERCY PRAY FOR DCN. W. ENDRIS</p>
<p><b>25</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. FAULK</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. L. FELDKAMP</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. FERGUSON</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. W. GEARHEARD</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. GOOTEE</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Champship 11:00 am-6:00 pm St. Joseph Church, Marksville</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. S. GRAMIGNA</p>	<p><b>MAY 1</b></p> <p>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>

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