
CHURCH TODAY

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

July 25, 2022



Fearless!

The Steubenville South High School Youth Conference was held June 24 - 26, at the Randolph Riverfront Center in downtown Alexandria. Over 1,400 youth, chaperones, volunteers, priests, and guests from Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Arkansas were registered to attend the weekend. See pages 12-13 for more pictures from the weekend.

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Diocesan Synthesis Report

The Diocesan Synthesis Report was submitted to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 30, 2022, to be included in the final report in preparation for the Synod of Synodality in 2023. See pages 2 and 4 for more information.

Newly formed Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation

Bishop Robert Marshall has announced Deacon Jason Lavergne as Director of the newly formed Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation. See page 5 for more information as well as practical strategies of evangelization.

Standing with moms in need

The Cenla Pregnancy Center has set Tuesday, September 13 for its 4th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet, with Kirk Cameron as the special guest speaker. See page 7 for more information on the banquet, as well as the opening of a new pregnancy center, and the announcement of a new Executive Director!

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Diocesan Synthesis Report



The following Diocesan Synthesis Report was submitted to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 30, 2022, to be included in the final report in preparation for the Synod of Synodality in 2023. Through listening sessions held throughout the diocese, parishioners and others connected to the Church were asked to share their thoughts on the life and ministry of the Church. The goal of the sessions was to truly hear concerns the faithful believe are facing the Church and what challenges they are experiencing in their family, community, and parish.

**For a Synodal Church:
Communion, Participation, and
Mission**

Introduction

Pope Francis has requested that a three-year Synodal process take place in all dioceses throughout the world. The process includes three phases of consultation and discernment—diocesan, continental, and universal, and will conclude at the assembly of the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican in October of 2023.

This emphasis on “synodality” is a revival of one of the oldest traditions in the history of the Church. The early Church Fathers and Popes of the primitive church, the middle ages as well as into the modern period all continually emphasize the importance of local and regional synods. The Council of Nicaea (325) decreed that bishops should hold synods twice a year in their dioceses. The Council of Trent (1563) decreed that every bishop was responsible for convoking an annual synod in his diocese. During the ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s re-institution of the Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis expressed his desire for a Synodal path for “laity, pastors, [and] the Bishop of Rome.” As a fruit of this, a “decentralized” Synod process is being celebrated throughout the universal church, in continuity with this most ancient apostolic tradition.

The Synod process was officially opened with a Mass celebrated on October 9, 2021 in Rome by Pope Francis. Locally, Bishop Robert Marshall

celebrated the opening Mass for the Diocesan phase of the Synod on October 17, 2021 in the Cathedral of St. Francis Xavier.

Bishop Marshall appointed Rev. Peter Faulk, JCD to serve as the Diocesan Coordinator of the Synodal Process. A Diocesan Steering Committee for the Synodal Process was formed and met to initiate the preparatory phase. Deanery “listening sessions” were held in each deanery over the course of a six month period as well as a virtual consultation which was available on the Diocesan website. This report is the fruit of the consultation with multiple groups from the Natchitoches, Eastern, Avoyelles, and Central Deaneries as well as the online survey.

Three salient points of emphasis emerged from the Synodal process in the Diocese of Alexandria: belonging, identity, and momentum. Very honest remarks came forward which emphasized that people want to feel connected to the Diocese.

Communion - Belonging

By means of a prayerful reading of the individual and collective responses from the listening sessions, common themes were noted. As seen in some of the quotations below, people desire a concrete sense of belonging as a rich component of their Catholic faith:

“We want to feel connected to our parish. We want unity among the parishes. Without communication, we cannot succeed. Communication is of the essence. Your race doesn’t matter. Whether you are white, black, Asian or Latino, we all want to be

treated like family in the church. We want to be connected to the Diocese. We must be willing to accept the past, to communicate and to move forward.”

“Minorities are forgotten about – even in majority Catholic populations. We need more cultural diversity. Everyone needs to be more deeply involved. All different groups need to be involved in what’s happening. The church needs to go where minorities are [located]. What are our needs?”

“We want unity rather than to be compartmentalized as parishes. The ‘Come to the Table’ program was a success. We want more programs like this.”

“We often think of the Church as just a building. A building will eventually get old, crumble and decay. The church is actually the people. We need to invest in people.”

“We need more people to come to Mass. We don’t need to be the frozen chosen. It’s not the new Holy Trinity of me, myself and I. There needs to be more of an attitude of ‘I’m glad to see you’ rather than ‘you didn’t make the sign of the cross just right.’”

“We need to make the church grow. A lot of people are A.C.E.’s – meaning, they just come to church on Ash Wednesday, Christmas and Easter.”

“We need to evangelize. The Church is a family and a community. We have to take it upon ourselves and be responsible for our time. We have to have a coherent message of welcoming. The messages coming from society are very persuasive. We need new people and new families.”

Comments also came forth concerning Catholics who have left the Church due to issues linked to divorce, remarriage and the annulment process. One observer commented in this regard that “divorce has driven a wedge between the church and many people. Former Catholics populate many other denominations. Perception becomes reality. We need to find ways to welcome people who have left to return to their home. We need to find a way to say ‘we want you back in our churches.’”

“Come To the Table” was a program initiated by the Diocese of Alexandria after the close of the Covid-19 pandemic. This initiative encouraged Catholics to return to the celebration of the liturgy, in accord with safety guidelines in place at the time. It featured video testimonials on the diocesan website and yard signs.

Participation – Identity

Catholics of the Diocese expressed a deep pride in their religious heritage and wish to be active protagonists in the life and mystery of the Church. This sentiment was expressed in all of the listening sessions throughout the diocese. This love for the Church was articulated in a desire for the Church to continue to develop and grow as an institution that promotes the love of Christ to all people in both word and deed. This was expressed in the following quotations from participants in the Synodal process:

“The congregation seems to be mixed on Sundays – black, white, creole and Latino. I think the universal Church under Pope Francis is doing well to reach out to the poor and marginalized. I hope that some of this will trickle down to the dioceses and parishes. I hope also that the universal church will begin to appreciate the expertise of laymen and laywomen.”

“The Diocese encourages and supports different prayer groups and retreats within church parishes located throughout. Some of those events are listed here but this does not include all spirit filled activities of the

House bill to codify Roe is ‘unjust, extreme,’ say USCCB committee chairmen

By Lori Dolan
Catholic News Service



U.S. CAPITOL. People are seen near the U.S. Capitol in Washington June 24, 2022. Earlier the same day, the Supreme Court overruled the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion decision that legalized abortion nationwide in 1973. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees said a measure passed by the House July 15 is "the most unjust and extreme abortion on demand bill our nation has ever seen."

They implored lawmakers "who see abortion as a legitimate 'solution' to the needs of women to abandon this path of death and despair," urging them to join the U.S. bishops in prioritizing "the well-being of women, children and families" by providing material resources and "personal accompaniment" so "no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child."

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the USCCB's Committee for Religious Liberty, made the comments in a joint statement July 18.

In a mostly party-line vote of 219 to 210, House members approved an updated version of the Women's Health Protection Act of 2022, which would codify a right to abortion in federal law. An earlier version was passed in March by the House, but it failed to pass in the Senate.

The bill, H.R. 8296, would impose abortion on demand nationwide at any stage of pregnancy and would eliminate pro-life laws at every level of government -- including parental notification for minor girls, informed consent, and health and safety protections specific to abortion facilities.

"Answering the needs of women by promoting taxpayer-funded elective abortion, as this bill would do, is a grave evil and a failure to love and serve women," said Archbishop Lori and Cardinal Dolan.

"Offering free or low-cost abortions, instead of increasing the resources women need to care for themselves and their children, is not 'choice' but coercion and callous abandonment," they said.

"Simply repeating the mantra that abortion is health care doesn't make it so," they added. "Deliberately ending the lives of defenseless and voiceless human beings is the antithesis of health care."

They said H.R. 8296 would likely force health care providers and professionals to perform, assist in and/or refer for abortion against their deeply-held beliefs, as well as force employers and insurers to cover or pay for abortion.

The House also passed the Ensuring Access to Abortion Act, H.R. 8297, which would ban states from punishing those who travel out of state "for reproductive health care." This vote also was largely along party

lines; the measure was approved 223-205.

Archbishop Lori and Cardinal Dolan invited everyone, in Congress and in the country at large, to join the U.S. bishops "in pursuing a vision we presented in 'Standing with Moms in Need,'" which, they said, "upholds the truth that every human life is sacred and inviolable -- a society in which the legal protection of human life is accompanied by profound care for mothers and their children."

The USCCB issued the statement "Standing with Moms in Need" earlier this year as the nation awaited the outcome of the Supreme Court's ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, a challenge to a Mississippi law banning abortion after 15 weeks. Oral arguments were heard in the case Dec. 1.

The bishops reiterated their statement when a draft of the court's majority opinion in

Dobbs was leaked in early May indicating Roe v. Wade would be overturned.

On June 24, the court upheld the Mississippi law 6-3, but the high court also voted 5-4 to overturn its 1973 Roe decision and 1992's Casey v. Planned Parenthood ruling, which affirmed Roe.

In the "Standing with Moms in Need" statement, the bishops pledged "to redouble our efforts to accompany women and couples who are facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies, and during the early years of parenthood, offering them loving and compassionate care through initiatives such as 'Walking with Moms in Need' and countless others."

These efforts include ensuring all parishes are places of welcome for pregnant women in need and their families.

In 2020, the U.S. bishops launched the initiative "Walking

with Moms in Need," which aims to engage every Catholic parish "in providing a safety net to ensure that pregnant and parenting moms have the resources, love and support they need to nurture the lives of their children."

In the "Standing with Moms in Need" statement, the bishops also said they would redouble "our advocacy for laws that ensure the right to life for unborn children and that no mother or family lacks the basic resources needed to care for their children, regardless of race, age, immigration status or any other factor."

"We are deeply conscious that, after nearly half a century of legalized abortion, more than 65 million children have died from abortion and an untold number of women, men, and families suffer in the aftermath," they also said.

"Recognizing this pain and loss, we also recommit our committees and urge our dioceses, parishes, and Catholic agencies and institutions: To proclaim God's mercy after abortion and compassionately accompany women and men who are suffering after an abortion," they said.

They also pledged to expand the church's abortion healing ministries.

The "Standing with Moms in Need" was signed by Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, USCCB president, and the chairmen of eight USCCB committees: pro-life, migration, domestic policy, international policy, Catholic education, communications, evangelization and catechesis, and marriage and family life.

Editor's Note: The full "Standing with Moms in Need" statement can be found online on page 6 or on the USCCB website.



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for our diocese.

SYNOD

(continued from pg. 2)

Diocese. A.C.T.S. Retreats are held by various church parishes and are held at our retreat center, Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville, LA. The A.C.T.S. retreats are held with the goal of encouraging evangelization and being 'Fishers of Men.' The retreats are spirit filled and those in attendance report feeling the Spirit in the various events throughout the retreat weekend. Also, the Diocese supports other events, i.e. the formation of the Carmelite Third Order, the Central Louisiana Magnificat group, the numerous Knights of Columbus chapters, Knights of Peter Claver chapters, vocational development and support of our seminarians through the Serra Club, support for the Catholic schools located within the Diocese, supporting our priests during these troubling times of Covid shut down, scandal and other negative maladies that they encounter. Also, the Diocese has added four certified spiritual directors as a resource for those seeking spiritual direction and guidance."

"Our Diocese is diversified geographically, culturally and ethnically. There are people of all educational and socioeconomic means present in all of our parishes. Families and individuals are welcomed into the church by various events such as RCIA, Religious Education of children, inclusion in various events and activities of the church parishes they attend. Spanish Masses are held in the Diocese and the Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Conference office is located in our Diocese. This group hosts Masses in different parishes promoting the renewal of our faith and reaffirming our baptismal call as followers of Jesus to proclaim the good news. Some attendees wear costumes and perform dances reflecting the culture of the many tribes of indigenous people in our Diocese."

Emphasis was also placed by many participants upon a desire to grow in understanding, appreciation and reverence for the Eucharist. It is the true Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus whom we receive and worship in every Mass. One participant noted eloquently that "the Holy Eucharist is the bread of the angels and should be treated as such." Everything that the Church

believes and does in the world is founded in and flows from Jesus in the mystery of the Eucharist. Others observed that "[we need more] education on the Most Holy Eucharist, this precious gift of our faith. We invite and encourage people to attend Mass. We evangelize by speaking to others and sharing how God has worked in our lives."

"Through the Eucharist we are to be united and this is the focal point of our belief. One bread, one body, one Lord, and it continues... Gentile, Jew, servant, free, woman, man, doctors, lawyers, and so on. No favorites. Everyone is always welcome." "We need to place greater emphasis on the Eucharist and making it the center of our daily lives and the center of our lives as believers in the Catholic faith."

Jesus has made
Himself the Bread of
Life to give us life.
Night and day, He is
there. If you really
want to grow in love,
come back to the
Eucharist, come back
to that Adoration.

*// saint mother teresa
of calcutta*

Some participants expressed an interest in the Tridentine Mass and were disappointed that the Holy See has placed restrictions on these celebrations. Other participants were open to women deacons, married priests and other means of greater participation.

Mission – Momentum

A constant theme which emerged throughout the consultation process was the notion of service both within the inner life of the church as well as the wider civic community.

This was communicated by the ideal of spiritual conversion and renewal within the local church which would spill over

into transformation of the world through the church's outreach efforts. This was reflected in the following comment:

"There is a need to apply the Gospel to everyday life. To apply the Bible to everyday life and experience. We seek a deeper sense of spirituality and a deeper prayer life. Not just going to Mass for cultural reasons, but out of a deeper sense of spirituality."

A desire was also expressed with regard to preaching and the teaching of the faith through high quality homilies and formation programs:

"We want teaching beyond the homily. There was a year-long bible study conducted for a group that went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It was immersive. We need more programs and education like this. We want to go deeper into our faith and into the Bible."

"Priests have many years of seminary education. We think that the laity could be formed by priests. The laity can take charge of day to day administration of the life of the parish. This could open up new avenues for priests to form the laity and deacons for ministry and for a more powerful outreach. Priests get all that education. They need to put it to work for more than just the homily."

"The laity have so much zeal. We want to participate in the new evangelization. We need to create new and innovative ways to bring families together. To form young people. To form the catechists who teach our young people."

"We need good formation from our priests. We want to truly understand what the Mass is and what the Eucharist is. We want to understand what the church truly represents: Christ in the world."

A Protestant contributor stated that "there is a lot of beautiful tradition in the Catholic faith. But we must always remember that faith is about a personal relationship with God. [If I am] sitting in church and saying I'm a Christian, it is just like me sitting in my garage and saying that I'm a car. I have to have a relationship with God first. Then the traditions will take on more meaning."

Another common theme that arose in all meetings was the desire for consistent retreats and days of renewal for adult women and men as well as youth.

Discussions about charitable outreach in the wider local community sparked enthusiastic

Behold,
I make
all things new.

// revelation 21: 5

dialogue and innovative ideas. Comments came forth concerning this area are as follows:

"We could bring meals to the sick. An elderly gentleman had surgery and the parish reached out and brought his family food and supplies. They really appreciated that. It really meant a lot to them in that moment. It was a form of laity to laity outreach."

"We must look to the early church. We can see the importance of family ministry and spreading the faith through the life of the home. We must evangelize in our homes and then beyond the four walls of our homes and churches and into the wider community."

"The A.C.T.S. community has the Helping Hands ministry. They assist people on Saturday mornings. They paint, do odd jobs, and help with handyman work. This is a lay ministry in our Diocese."

"We need to meet people in their communities with the issues that they are facing. What is the Church doing to address poverty in the inner city? What are we doing to build a path forward for young people who have no training, educational or job opportunities. What are we doing to reach out to minority youth who are at risk in our local communities?"

Conclusion

The Synodal process has given fresh impetus to continue the work of renewal in the Diocese of Alexandria. The lay faithful who participated in the Synodal process and listening sessions gave a rich witness to their love of the faith and their local parishes. They expressed their love for the sacramental life of the Church as well as their love and appreciation for the clergy who serve them, both priests and deacons.

Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr., will continue to review the major themes surfaced in this Synodal process to determine how the Diocese of Alexandria can

better serve the People of God in our region. He has already noted the need for additional attention to the liturgical celebrations – which will be a focus in the Diocese during the National Eucharistic Revival begun on Corpus Christi of this year and continuing through 2025. This will assist the Bishop in the realm of pastoral planning as the People of God in Central Louisiana look forward to the National Eucharistic Revival which will last from 2022 until 2025. As the Eucharist forms the "source and summit of the Christian life" (Lumen Gentium n. 11), a renewal of our "full, conscious and active participation" (Sacrosanctum Concilium n. 14) in the liturgy unites all the faithful and confirms our love for the Church. This empowers all of the faithful for the task of the new evangelization. As Pope Francis has stated that "In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples." (Evangelii Gaudium n. 120).

Hearing the need for more opportunities for faith formation at all levels, the Diocese is in the process of hiring a Director of Religious Education and Faith Formation. It will be the task of that office to support the work of parishes in their faith formation efforts and to encourage smaller communities to collaborate to make additional opportunities available. This office will also work toward educational programs for those interested in the Ministry of Catechist.

The desire for additional charitable involvement in the larger community will be a primary task of Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana, Inc., a newly re-established outreach of the Diocese and a partner with Catholic Charities USA. This new initiative will work to meet the needs of many in the thirteen civil parishes that comprise the Diocese.

As Bishop Marshall works with the Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Finance Council and the many groups and ministries of the Diocese in the area of Pastoral Planning, the insights gained in this Synodal process will prove invaluable.

We, therefore, conclude the Diocesan phase of the Synodal process and lift our hearts in prayer for our Holy Father Pope Francis as he and the Bishops of the world reflect upon the results of the global Synod.

Practical strategies of evangelization

By Bishop Robert Barron
Word on Fire

Over the years, I have been laying out what I take to be the basics of evangelization. Proclaiming the Good News has to do with announcing the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, declaring that Jesus is divine, celebrating the deep humanism of Christianity, and finally, insisting on the indispensability of the church as the mystical body of the Lord. In this column, I would like to reflect, however briefly, on some simple practical strategies for evangelization, things that you can do to make this message public.

First, deepen your knowledge of the Catholic tradition.

A recent survey showed that, among the various religious groups, young Jews have the weakest sense of their own religious heritage, but second only to the Jews in this dubious distinction were young Catholics. This is nothing short of tragic. We have an extremely smart, rich, and profound tradition, including the incomparable Scriptures, treasures of theology, spirituality, art, architecture, literature, and the inspiring witness of the saints. To know this tradition is to enter into a densely textured and illuminating world of meaning; not to know it deprives one of spiritual joy, and perhaps even more regrettably, renders one incapable of explaining the Catholic faith to those who seek to understand it better. Most Catholics stopped their formal religious education in eighth grade, or perhaps in senior year of high school.

No wonder we are relatively poor evangelists. So resolve this year to read a good and serious book of theology, perhaps a classic such as St. Augustine's *Confessions* or Thomas Merton's *Seven Storey Mountain*. Make an effort this year to delve into a great Catholic literary master



such as Dante, G.K. Chesterton or Flannery O'Connor. Or study the paintings of Caravaggio and Michelangelo, and the sculptures and architecture of Bernini. Enter into the prayerful reading of the Bible.

In a word, learn the tradition of Catholic Christianity, so as to be a better bearer of it to others.

Second, invite someone you know to come back to church.

Evangelization can focus on the conversion of the nations, or on the Catholicizing of Protestant Christians, but it can also focus much more narrowly on the reactivizing of inactive Catholics. Everyone reading these words knows someone—a friend, a co-worker, a family member, perhaps even a godson or goddaughter—who has stopped attending Mass or availing himself of the sacraments. Resolve in the next year to send that person a note, give him or her a phone call, sit

down for a good conversation—and urge him or her to come home to church. This overture might cost you; it might prove a bit uncomfortable or embarrassing. Evangelization is always a risk. For the sake of that person's spiritual health, take it.

Third, let the language of the faith be naturally on your lips.

Many of us Catholics—consciously or unconsciously—censor our own speech against anything smacking of our religious convictions. We learn early on the etiquette of a pluralist society: it is not polite to talk in public settings about politics or especially religion. To be sure, we should never be aggressive or overbearing in regard to our faith, but we should never acquiesce to social conventions that require a privatization of our religion.

Our faith must be all-pervasive, invading and

influencing every dimension of our lives, both public and private, both personal and professional. Thus, at your place of work, at social gatherings, among friends, allow your Catholic convictions to come to verbal expression. And the non-verbal can be just as important: put a crucifix or a picture of a favorite saint up in your office; arrange to have a Biblical quote as the screensaver on your computer. If this prompts a reaction or a question, so much the better for evangelical purposes. How many people in your circle of acquaintances or in your place of business even know that you are a Catholic? I would submit that if the answer to that question is few to none, then you have been too reticent in your everyday evangelizing.

Fourth, don't be afraid to pray in public.

How many times have you sat down with your family or with Catholic friends at a restaurant and have simply dug into your food without offering a word of thanks? Again, you

need not be ostentatious, but a simple, unaffected prayer, publicly offered, can be a powerful witness to those around you. Do you remember that sentimental but effective painting by Norman Rockwell depicting an elderly woman and her grandchildren bowing their heads in prayer before taking a meal in a truck stop? What I've always loved are the looks of bewildered admiration on the faces of the regular denizens of the place. Don't underestimate the evangelical power of demonstrating your faith in public.

Jesus told his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations. This call went out, not simply to the leaders of the church then and now, but to all of us, to all the baptized, to every one of the people of God. Don't miss the opportunity to be an angel of God, a bearer of the impossibly good news.

This piece was originally published on WordonFire.org.

Deacon Jason Lavergne hired as Director of a newly formed Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation for the Diocese



Dcn. Jason Lavergne

announced Deacon Jason Lavergne to be Director of that office.

Deacon Lavergne is one of thirteen men recently ordained a permanent deacon in June and brings great enthusiasm and energy to this position. He will begin his work with us on August 8, 2022.

Deacon Lavergne's office will be located in the Saint Joseph Catholic Center and more contact information will be provided in the near future. Please support him as he begins the task of creating this new office.

Please welcome Deacon Lavergne and pray for him that that he may be successful in helping spread the good news of Jesus Christ in educational and faith formation programs.

Bishop Robert Marshall has established a newly formed Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation and has

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for August 2022

Small Businesses // We pray for small and medium sized businesses; in the midst of economic and social crisis, may they find ways to continue operating, and serving their communities.

Standing with moms in need

“[E]very human life, unique and unrepeatable, has value in and of itself; it is of inestimable value. This must always be proclaimed anew with the courage of the Word and the courage of actions. It calls us to solidarity and fraternal love for the great human family and for each of its members.”

// Pope Francis on the 25th anniversary of Evangelium Vitae (March 25, 2020)

As our nation awaits the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, we join together in prayer and expectant hope that states will again be able to protect women and children from the injustice of abortion. As we affirm the value of every human life, we welcome the possibility of saving countless unborn children as well as sparing women and families the pain of abortion.

The Catholic Church has a long history of service to those who are most vulnerable and remains the largest private provider of social services in the United States. Through the sacrificial efforts of faithful Catholics, the Church serves millions through diocesan ministries and agencies, Catholic hospitals and healthcare systems, immigration clinics, shelters, and Catholic schools and parishes. From religious communities to pregnancy care centers, from refugee resettlement services to foster care and adoption agencies, and from maternity homes to parish-based ministries, the Church consistently bears witness in word and deed to the beauty and dignity of every human life - including both mother and child.

As the chairmen of committees serving the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, we proclaim a vision for our society that upholds the truth that every human life is sacred and inviolable - a society in which the legal protection of human life is accompanied by



profound care for mothers and their children. We exhort our nation to prioritize the well-being of women, children, and families with both material resources and personal accompaniment so that no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child.

In that effort, we recommit our committees and urge our dioceses, parishes, and Catholic agencies and institutions:

- To redouble our efforts to accompany women and couples who are facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies, and during the early years of parenthood, offering them loving and compassionate care through initiatives such as Walking with Moms in Need and countless others.

- To ensure our Catholic parishes are places of welcome

for women facing challenging pregnancies or who find it difficult to care for their children after birth, so that any mother needing assistance will receive life-affirming support and be connected to appropriate programs and resources where she can get help.

- To help Catholics recognize the needs of pregnant and parenting moms in their communities, enabling parishioners to know these mothers, to listen to them, and to help them obtain the necessities of life for themselves and their children.

- To be witnesses of love and life by expanding and improving the extensive network of comprehensive care including pregnancy help centers, maternity homes, and Catholic health care and social service agencies.

- To proclaim with a clear

and united voice that our society can and must protect and care for both women and their children.

- To redouble our advocacy for laws that ensure the right to life for unborn children and that no mother or family lacks the basic resources needed to care for their children, regardless of race, age, immigration status, or any other factor.

- To continue to support and advocate for public policies and programs directed toward building up the common good and fostering integral human development, with a special concern for the needs of immigrants and low-income families.

We are deeply conscious that, after nearly half a century of legalized abortion, more than 65 million children have died from abortion and an untold number of women, men, and families suffer in the aftermath. **Recognizing this pain and loss, we also recommit our committees and urge our dioceses, parishes, and Catholic agencies and institutions:**

- To proclaim God’s

mercy after abortion and compassionately accompany women and men who are suffering after an abortion.

- To expand our diocesan abortion healing ministries, most often called Project Rachel Ministry, so that women and men receive forgiveness, healing, and spiritual renewal through Christ’s infinite mercy.

- To transform our parishes into what Pope Francis calls “islands of mercy in a sea of indifference” by raising Catholic awareness of the great struggle involved in an abortion, and the guilt, pain, and grief that follow.

In all these ways and more, the Catholic Church witnesses to the sanctity of all human life, from conception to natural death, and works to build a true culture of life in our nation. May a renewed commitment to life overflow into increased protection of unborn children and expanded support for their mothers and families.

The above is a statement issued by the USCCB, March 2022.

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

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

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

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

2220 Bonaventure Court, Alexandria

Cenla Pregnancy Center to hold 4th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet

The Cenla Pregnancy Center has set Tuesday, September 13, 6:30 p.m. for its 4th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria.

Special guest speaker will be Kirk Cameron, known by millions as “Mike Seaver” from the 1980’s hit sit-com, GROWING PAINS. Since then, he’s invested his time and energy into faith and family-



focused films, television shows, and live events. Kirk’s newest feature film with the Kendrick Brothers, called LIFEMARK, is set to hit theaters in September, 2022, and is about the value of life in the womb and the beauty of adoption.

He and his wife, Chelsea, met on the set of GROWING PAINS and have been married for 31 years. They have six children and host an all-expenses-paid summer camp for terminally ill children and their families called Camp Firefly.

Sponsorships for the banquet are available:

Presenting Sponsor for Life: \$15,000

- Corporate or Personal Name included in Premier Publicity
- 2 tables of 8 (16 seats) with Reserved Premier Seating (dinner included)
- Premier Advertising
- Name Displayed as Presenting Sponsor at Event
- Listed in Program, Website, and Social Media
- 4 pieces of pro-life artwork
- 4 Lifemark DVDs
- Meet-and-Greet and Photo Op with Kirk Cameron

Platinum Sponsor for Life: \$10,000

- Corporate or Personal Name included in Premier Publicity
- Table of 8 with Reserved Premier Seating (dinner included)
- Premier Advertising *Name Displayed as Platinum Sponsor at Event
- Listed in Program, Website, and Social Media
- 2 pieces of pro-life artwork
- 2 Lifemark DVDs
- Meet-and-Greet and Photo Op with Kirk Cameron

Diamond Sponsor for Life: \$5,000

- Corporate or Personal Name included in all Publicity
- Table for 8 with Reserved Premier Seating (dinner included)
- Premier Advertising
- Name Displayed as Sponsor at Event
- Listed in Program, Website, and Social Media
- 1 piece of pro-life artwork
- 1 Lifemark DVD
- Photo Op with Kirk Cameron

Gold Sponsor for Life: \$3,000

- Corporate or Personal Name in select Publicity
- Table for 8 with Reserved Premier Seating (dinner included)
- Name Displayed as Sponsor at Event
- Listed in Program, Website, and Social Media
- 1 piece of pro-life artwork

Silver Sponsor for Life: \$1,500

- Corporate or Personal Name in select Publicity
- Table for 8 with Reserved Seating (dinner included)
- Name displayed as Sponsor at Event
- Listed in Program, Website, and Social Media

Patron for Life: \$800

- Table for 8 with Reserved Seating (dinner included) *Does not include publicity

Contact Cenla Pregnancy Center to complete your sponsorship: (318) 314-3061.

For INDIVIDUAL ticket sales, please visit the Cenla Pregnancy Center website at www.cenlapc.com.

Cenla Pregnancy Center is a pro life pregnancy resource center in Central Louisiana and operates two satellite centers, one in Avoyelles Parish and one in Concordia Parish.

This annual Gift of Life Fundraising event is their largest fundraiser of the year, and in a post-Roe v. Wade Louisiana, the pregnancy center ministries (even more-so now) are a vital part of supporting mothers in an unplanned pregnancy.



PREGNANCY CENTER OPENS IN VIDALIA. On July 11, Father Taylor Reynolds and diocesan seminarian, Blaine Phillips, went to the new Miss-Lou Pregnancy Center, located in Vidalia, LA, to offer blessings and sacramentals to the facility, scheduled to open on Monday, July 18. Pictured left to right: Fr. Taylor Reynolds, Kimberly Butler DeLoach, the center’s director and seminarian Blaine Phillips.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on Monday, July 18 at 11:00 a.m. at the new Miss-Lou Pregnancy Center in Vidalia, LA.

The Miss-Lou Pregnancy Center will provide the same services as the Cenla Pregnancy Center in Alexandria and the Avoyelles Pregnancy Center in Marksville, such as pregnancy tests, consultation, ultrasounds, support, education and material support. The hours of operation will be limited to Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

“We discovered a need for support in this area of the state. We recognized the limited support especially in the area of maternal health and

found ourselves in a position to consider opening up another satellite center in Vidalia to serve the women of Concordia and Catahoula Parish, Adams County and surrounding areas,” said Claire Lemoine, director of the Cenla Pregnancy Center.”

For over one year now, we have been meeting with community leaders and making a plan as to how we can best serve this area. In January, we found a location, had some construction done to meet the needs of the center and progressed in preparation for the center’s opening on Monday,” said Lemoine.

Director of the Miss-Lou Pregnancy Center will be Kimberly Butler DeLoach.

Cenla Pregnancy Center welcomes new Executive Director

The Cenla Pregnancy Center Board of Directors is announcing the selection of Kim Lyons of Alexandria as the next Executive Director. Claire Lemoine of Marksville, who has served as Executive Director since inception of the pregnancy center, is stepping down from her position effective September 15, 2022.

Ed Tarpley, President of the Board of Directors, said that the board unanimously approved the recommendation of the hiring

committee which conducted an extensive search and interview process for the incoming Executive Director.

In announcing the selection of a new Executive Director, Tarpley paid tribute to the leadership of outgoing Executive Director, Claire Lemoine. He said, “The Board is grateful for the five years of outstanding leadership and dedicated service by Claire Lemoine. Her commitment to the cause of life and protection of the unborn

is an example for everyone to follow. She has helped build a solid foundation for this ministry which will touch the lives of young women and their babies for years to come.”

Claire Lemoine said, “I am incredibly grateful for having the opportunity to serve within the pregnancy center ministry and will forever cherish the time spent serving mothers, fathers, and babies across Cenla. My decision to step down as Executive Director came after

much prayer and discernment. I am looking forward to the future and how the Lord will move across Central Louisiana in spreading the Gospel of Life.”

Kim Lyons will begin working with Claire Lemoine on August 1, 2022, as she transitions into her role as Executive Director. She will be formally introduced at the 4th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet on September 13, 2022, at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria.

Tarpley asked everyone to “pray for the pregnancy center ministry during this time of transition.”

Contact Claire Lemoine at 318-314-3061 for any further information.

saint gianna,
pray for us

Completed Burses at \$15,000.00 each:

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

The Following is a list of established burses and amounts in each:

St. Damien De Veuster 175.00
 Bishop William Friend 100.00
 Bishop Lawrence P. Graves 5,805.00
 Bishop Charles P. Greco 1,600.00
 Bishop Ronald P. Herzog 450.00
 Bishop Sam G. Jacobs 1,100.00
 Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr. 200.00
 Bishop David P. Talley 525.00
 Monsignor Marcel J. Anderson 100.00
 Monsignor Leon R. Aycock 1,535.00
 Monsignor Norman C. Buvens 100.00
 Monsignor Paul E. Conway 825.00
 Monsignor Allen M. Chenevert 1,000.00
 Monsignor Isidore Deceulaer 160.00
 Monsignor S. J. Dekeuwer 650.00
 Monsignor Gerald J. Ducote 560.00
 Monsignor Robert C. Friend 50.00
 Monsignor Ronald C. Hoppe 1,000.00
 Monsignor James E. Howard 50.00
 Monsignor Charles M. Jekeler 325.00
 Monsignor Joseph F. Kidd 1,500.00
 Monsignor William Kwaitaal 850.00
 Monsignor Warren T. Larroque 800.00
 Monsignor Terrence J. Lennon 125.00
 Monsignor George W. Martinez 500.00
 Monsignor Bruce Miller 300.00
 Monsignor Patrick Murphy 2,304.00
 Monsignor William C. O'Hanlon 5,000.00
 Monsignor Aloysius O. Olinger 965.00
 Monsignor Mozart Pelletier 100.00
 Monsignor John V. Plauche 400.00
 Monsignor F. Joseph Rateau 570.00
 Monsignor Russell J. Richie 616.14
 Monsignor B. A. Scallan 10,085.90
 Monsignor Matthew J. Scanlon 310.00
 Monsignor Joseph M. Susi 9,906.00
 Monsignor Steve J. Testa 10,755.00
 Monsignor Henry A. Thompson 360.00
 Monsignor John M. Timmermans 9,570.00
 Monsignor Martin J. Tyrrell 4,250.00
 Monsignor Henry Van der Putten 1,291.89
 Monsignor John C. Vandegaer 1,350.00
 Monsignor Nicholas F. Vandegaer 1,350.00
 Monsignor John J. Wakeman 100.00
 Monsignor Julius G. Walle 2,170.00
 Father Walter Ajaero 50.00
 Father William G. Allison 160.00
 Father Peter J. Besselaar 50.00
 Father Michael Bodnar 50.00
 Father Lawrence Bonin 70.00
 Father H. Gerald Bordelon 13,885.00
 Father Vernon Bordelon 445.00
 Father Gilles Boyer 85.00
 Father Basil Burns 100.00
 Father Scott Chemino 575.00
 Father Alfred Chlebowczyk 375.00
 Father Jules L. Claes, CICM 4,761.00
 Father Wilbur G. Cloutier 3,690.50
 Father Daniel Cook 2,500.00
 Father Daniel Corkery 7,100.00
 Father Anthony N. Cumella 1,500.00
 Father John H. Cunningham 1,475.00
 Father Dennis A. Curren 750.00
 Father Leonard Curtis, OP 1,050.00

Seminary Burses

Father Ferreolus D'Cruz 875.00
 Father Edward Deasy 625.00
 Father Blake Deshautelle 250.00
 Father Derek Ducote 792.00
 Father Randolph J. Engelen 550.00
 Father Richard Fale 5,700.00
 Father James Ferguson 1,150.00
 Father Harvey J. Fortier 1,475.00
 Father Joseph Alfred Fortin 200.00
 Father James Foster 280.00
 Father Louis Gagnard 50.00
 Father John M. Gayer 970.00
 Father William Gearheard 100.00
 Father Serafin Glasnovic 150.00
 Father Rickey Gremillion 12,540.00
 Father Daniel Hart 3,450.00
 Father William M. Hopp 10.00
 Father Mark W. Horacek 50.00
 Father Bartholomew Ibe 200.00
 Father Tom Jezek 400.45
 Father Michael P. Kammer 921.00
 Father W. John Kiley 625.00
 Father Francis X. Kronemeyer 100.00
 Father George Krosfield 50.00
 Father Peter Kuligowski 1,408.00
 Father Paul Kunnumpuram, MSFS 475.00
 Father Henri Jacquemain 50.00
 Father Luke LaFleur 25.00
 Father Russell J. Lemoine 425.00
 Father Frederick J. Lyons 1,600.00
 Father Bernard F. Maguire 105.00
 Father Robert M. Maure 10.00
 Father Jamie Medina-Cruz 200.00
 Father Jack Michalchuk 150.00
 Father Adrian Molenschot 5,100.00
 Father Joseph Montalbano 400.00
 Father Govie J. Moraus, Jr. 200.00
 Father Christudas Nayak 250.00
 Father Peter T. Norek 900.00
 Father Dan O'Connor 2,093.00
 Father Thomas O'Connors 10.00
 Father Chad Partain 175.00
 Father Martin L. Plauche 50.00
 Father Samuel J. Polizzi 1,000.00
 Father George Pookkattu 50.00
 Father William B. Provosty 105.00
 Father Rusty Rabalais 100.00
 Father Charles Ray 550.00
 Father Frederick Taylor Reynolds 1,190.00
 Father Yves J. Robitaille 1,900.00
 Father José Robles-Sanchez 1,580.00
 Father Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez 50.00
 Father James Roy 100.00
 Father Kenneth Roy 3,505.00
 Father Sheldon Roy 250.00
 Father Lloyd M. Samson 50.00
 Father Craig Scott 2,000.00
 Father Louis Sklar, III 650.00
 Father Paul B. Smith 250.00
 Father Irion St. Romain 100.00
 Father Ker Texada 200.00
 Father August Thompson 1,390.00
 Father Adam Travis 100.00
 Father Antonio E. Villaverde 1,300.00
 Father Nino G. Viviano 200.00
 Father Gus Voltz 1,075.00
 Father Silvan A. Waterkotte, OFM 160.00
 Father Kenneth Williams 880.00
 Father John Wiltse 175.00
 Father Joseph Xavier 100.00
 Father Bernard Zagst 1,275.00
 Reverend H. Biggers 158.50
 Deacon Emile "E. J." Barre, III 100.00
 Deacon L. G. DeLoach 675.00
 Deacon Darrell Dubroc 200.00
 Deacon Raymond J. Dunn 300.00
 Deacon Ray D. Gibson 100.00
 Deacon Charles A. Jones 1,150.00
 Deacon Gregory P. LeBlanc 100.00
 Deacon Todd Marye 100.00
 Deacon Patrick C. McCusker 100.00
 Deacon Richard W. Mitchell 250.00
 Deacon Ted A. Moulard 300.00
 Deacon Clifton "Kip" Pelto 100.00
 Deacon William E. Shaidnagle 100.00
 Deacon Gary A. Schupbach 1,225.00

Deacon William "Bill" Travis 200.00
 Deacon John L. Whitehead 100.00
 Deacon Michael L. Young 200.00
 Sister Margaret McCaffrey 300.00
 Sister Marie Therese McGee, OP 100.00
 Sister Virginia Lee Vanderlick, CDP 100.00
 Seminarian Matthew Bonner 1,200.00
 Ismael and Libby Agosto 250.00
 Shirley Alexander 1,125.00
 Charles P. and Florence C. Anastasio 880.00
 Germaine Armand 550.00
 Virgie D. Aymond 225.00
 Delores Basco 150.00
 Harold and Lillie Beridon 7,750.00
 John M. Bauer 150.00
 Dr. Lamar and Jean Boese 50.00
 Will Bollich 100.00
 J. V. Bonnette 50.00
 Carolyn Brouillette 50.00
 Nathan Cannella 225.00
 Frank V. Cariere 175.00
 Dylan Michael Cashio 400.00
 T. W. Clark 50.00
 James Curley 50.00
 Charles D'Amico 50.00
 Leo P. Dobard 6,400.00
 Gerald Flynn 50.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Philip Flynn 100.00
 Anne Berry Gallagher 2,025.00
 Anthony and Mary Glorioso 150.00
 Toby Guedry 1,000.00
 Gail T. Gutierrez 100.00
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 Louis Lowrey 470.00
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 Huey and Ethel Mathews 1,000.00
 Louis Henry "Dump" Mathews, Sr. 100.00
 Daryl "Pat" Mauterer 6,100.00
 Ethel Miller 100.00
 Odis James Miller 190.00
 Yvonne Moore 150.00
 Gerald Moreau 215.00
 Helen Morgan 12,000.00
 Marge Murrin 315.00
 Alcide A. Nassif 522.29
 Kitty Treadway Nassif 100.00
 Maurice Noel 295.00
 N. J. and Hannah Nolan 10,000.00
 Harvey Miller "Buddy" Normand 100.00
 Lois Jeansonne Normand 1,200.00
 W. D. O'Neal 8,159.00
 Danny O'Quinn 100.00
 Albert and Elsie Poche 900.00
 Kathleen Poole 375.00
 Edna Rabalais 3,032.50
 Rita Juneau Rabalais 4,000.00
 Dr. Sidney Rud 50.00
 Luis R. Robles-Cortez 125.00
 Dr. Brenda V. Seiler 1,100.00
 Josephine G. Serio 275.00
 John Gregory Simms 4,275.00
 Robert Upton 100.00
 Dr. Charles Vanderlick 200.00
 Henry Vanderlick 400.00
 Jerome and Audrey Vandersypen 115.00
 Patsy Dekeyzer Vincik 200.00
 Gus Voltz, Jr. 6,135.00
 Larry Lee Wiltse 1,925.00
 Tracy P. Wiltse 1,825.00
 Mary Virginia Young 100.00
 Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence 100.00
 Deceased Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Regina Pacis #1372, Natchitoches ... 775.00
 In Honor of Providence Central High School Class of 1959 1,450.00
 Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches 100.00
 Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish, Alexandria 3,260.00
 St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Tallulah 100.00
 St. Mary's Assumption Parish, Cottonport 700.00
 General Fund 2,000.00
Total 695,382.17

Supper with the Seminarians

Thank you everyone who came out and supported our seminarians at the three Supper with the Seminarian events held in June. Top photo: Seminarians Jacob Cass, Matthew Bonner, Deacon Josh Burch and Bishop Robert Marshall serve guests. Bottom photo: Seminarians Gabe Dowden and Blaine Phillips chat with a guest. All donations from the events go into the Seminarian Education Fund.



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.

Seminarian Burses

June 2022 Donations

Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Dan O'Connor Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$50.00
Deacon Gary Schupbach Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach	\$100.00
Monsignor Steve Testa Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Marion French	\$100.00
Father Gus Voltz Burse	
Mrs. Barbara Rigby	\$100.00
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller	\$200.00
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
Total	\$600.00

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

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Fri.-Sat. 4 p.m. - 10 p.m.

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



Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

Psalm 33: 12b | Responsorial Psalm for August 7 | Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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.

Parish Spotlight: St. Juliana Church, Alexandria established 1959



ST. JULIANA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA.

In the mid 1950's, Alexandria's population was moving southward and a new subdivision of homes called Willow Glen was being developed. A group of men led by J. A. Bennett, Neil Daspit and Chester Wells donated five and a half acres of land for a new church in the new development.

In 1959, St. Juliana Catholic Church was established by Bishop Charles Greco as an independent parish. At the time of its founding, St. Juliana's congregation was primarily white but as integration proceeded the congregation became predominately black.

In 1970, under the direction of Msgr. Henry Thompson, St. Juliana's began to incorporate

African-American culture as a part of its liturgical and parochial life. The Love Choir, under the direction of Paul Desselle, Jr., was formed to integrate gospel sounds into the Sunday liturgies. Msgr. Thompson remained at St. Juliana until 1978.

In 1982, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion were introduced and a permanent deacon, Dcn. Raymond Jones, was appointed to assist the pastor, Fr. Kenneth Williams. The Knights of St. Peter Claver, Council 268 was formed in 1985. The Ladies of St. Peter Claver organized in 1986. Under Fr. Williams, the church and rectory were remodeled. In 1991, Fr. August Thompson was assigned as pastor. He introduced the Renew program and dedicated a new multi-purpose building, the Kumba Center, for the use of St. James and St. Juliana parishes. In 2001, a new activities building was completed under Fr. Vincent Manuel.



FAREWELL, FATHER DANIEL HART. The Catholic Daughters of America, Court Bishop Desmond #1459 of St. Rita Church in Alexandria, wished Fr. Daniel Hart farewell at their monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 22. Fr. Daniel was assigned as pastoral administrator of St. Mary Church in Jena effective July 1.



45TH YEAR CDA. Evelyn Caldwell, seated right, receives her 45 year pin for being a member of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Padre Pio #2141 of St. Mary's Assumption Church in Cottonport. She is actually a 46 year member but nursing home restrictions prevented her from receiving it last year. Presenting the pin are (left to right) Seminarian Derrick Rials; Sharon Juneau, Vice-Regent, Vickie Mayeux, Regent; Evelyn Caldwell; Mary Marchand and Nita Brouillette. The Court also presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

Lord, come to my aid!

Psalm 40: 14b | Responsorial Psalm for August 14 | Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

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

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CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS CHECK PRESENTATION. Recently, Bishop Robert Marshall accepted a donation for the Diocesan Seminarians Education Fund from the Catholic Daughters Court Bishop Greco #2072 (Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Pineville). Pictured with Bishop Marshall: on his left, Edna Smith, Court Treasurer and right, Nita St. Andria, Court Recording Secretary.

MINOR BASILICA WELCOMES NEW PASTOR. The Social Committee at The Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Church in Natchitoches recently hosted a welcome reception at St. Mary's Catholic School to give parishioners and families an opportunity to visit with their new Pastor and Chancellor, Fr. Irion St. Romain. Pictured are Fr. Irion St. Romain and Deacon John Whitehead.



Visit the sign-up form at www.diocesealex.org, or email starver@diocesealex.org with your name and mailing address to receive the Church Today FREE of charge!

Thomas Roque, Sr. receives LA Library Association award



Thomas Roque, Sr., Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Alexandria, received the Louisiana Library Association's Trustee Award during their annual conference held at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria on Friday, July 8. He received the award to honor his ongoing distinguished service to libraries in Louisiana.

Mr. Roque has served on the Natchitoches Library board since 1986 and is currently the president of that board.

Thomas Roque, Sr.



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You're invited to join us at the table. To see available Mass times near you, visit www.masstimes.org.

BRUMFIELD vs DODD POLICY.

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the following statement is published:

DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA NON-DISCRIMINATORY SCHOOL POLICY August 2022

The Diocese of Alexandria School System re-affirms its non-discriminatory policy on the basis of race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin in its educational programs, activities and employment policies in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments and Sections 4.03(a) and 4.03 (c) Revenue Procedure 75-50.

All students, faculty members and staff, without exception, are admitted to all rights, privileges and activities generally accorded or made available at the schools which do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its employment policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school-administered programs.

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Sacred Heart School, Moreauville | • St. Mary's Elementary and High, Natchitoches |
| • St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie | • Holy Savior Menard Central High, Alexandria |
| • St. Joseph Elementary and High, Plaquemine | • Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria |
| • St. Mary Assumption School, Cottonport | • St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria |

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

FORMER SOCIAL SECURITY JUDGE

PETER J. LEMOINE

Social Security Disability Law

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

Adjunct Professor, Southern University Law Center

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

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

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FEARLESS

Jn 16:33

The Steubenville South High School Youth Conference was held June 24 - 26, 2022 at the Randolph Riverfront Center in downtown Alexandria, hosting 1,400 youth, chaperones, volunteers, priests, and guests.

Thank you to all who gave of your time, talent, and treasure to make this weekend such a memorable event for all who participated!

Pictures by Lilly B. Photography



ENNIE HICKMAN AND LISA COTTER. Conference host, Ennie Hickman, leads the speaking team in a game of "What's in the Box" to open the conference Friday evening. Pictured above, speaker Lisa Cotter tried to guess what's in the box simply by touch.



BLESSING OF THE WEEKEND. Bishop Robert Marshall led the priests in attendance in opening the conference weekend with a blessing for all those in attendance. Thirty priests from across Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi helped to celebrate Mass and hear confessions throughout the weekend.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION. (ABOVE) Father Rufino Corona led all teens and chaperones in a time of Eucharistic Adoration and prayer. **(BELOW)** Fr. Rufino also explained how to conduct an examination of conscience and encouraged participants to visit the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



SPEAKING TEAM. (ABOVE) Nic Frank, member of the speaking team, kicked off the weekend with a talk entitled *Created Fearless*. **(BELOW)** Host Ennie Hickman introduced the participants to the rest of the speaking team, including Father Joe Freedy, Father Rufino Corona, Lisa Cotter, Nic Frank, and Sr. Josephine Garrett.





STEUBENVILLE SOUTH CONFERENCE. The Steubenville South Conference was held June 24 - 26 at the Randolph Riverfront Center, hosting over 1,400 youth, chaperones, volunteers, priests, and guests for the weekend. Participants came from Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, and Arkansas, joining speakers Ennie Hickman, Fr. Joe Freedy, Fr. Rufino Corona, Lisa Cotter, Nic Frank, and Sr. Josephine Garrett.



JOSH BLAKESLEY BAND. Josh Blakesley led participants and volunteers in worship and song throughout the weekend, along with band members, Kelly Lombardi (pictured RIGHT), Grae Mculough, Blake Powell, and Corban Calhoun.



STEUBENVILLE SOUTH CONFERENCE. Participants kneel for a time of prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Starting a parish ministry: our story

By *MaryRuth Hackett*
Parenting with Peer Review

A few months after coming into The Church, I was approached by a parish staff member and asked to take over one of the struggling ministries. Our parish had sort-of started implementing an Elizabeth Ministry and it was not getting a very strong response from the community. I raised the issue with my husband and his response was great. He pointed out that my dissertation (I graduated the year before with my PhD in Education Psychology) was on the transition to parenting, and finding ways of supporting parents in this transition.

The Elizabeth Ministry is an international movement designed to offer hope and healing on issues related to childbearing, sexuality, and relationships (<http://www.elizabethministry.com>). When he pointed out that this was an invitation to do at a parish level, precisely what I had always talked about wanting to do on a community level, there was no further discussion. But after assessing our needs, looking at the Elizabeth Ministry curriculum and talking to their offices, I decided to take the ministry in a slightly different direction.

Our parish community was really needing to be knit closer. We have a wonderful parish school but had many young families (like myself) who were not connected at that time with the school. Even things like the parish festival didn't seem like they were for 'us'. We showed up for mass, shook hands, smiled at other parents with little ones, and then left without even getting their names. Having grown up in a church that was more 'social club' than 'scripture', I wanted a little more social time. I craved meeting other Catholic couples with little ones.

I put the Elizabeth Ministry to the side, and based our



program off of MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers), which is another huge international Christian (mostly/all protestant) organization. I was attending at MOPS at a local big-bible church and loving it. They were light on the message of God, but it was present. They met every two weeks for great food (and lots of it!), childcare, coffee, fellowship and either an awesome craft or a great speaker.

My first step was to get some other women involved. At our fall ministry fair, I walked around and asked anyone with kids "would you be interested in meeting other mom's in the parish?" I remember meeting my (now) best friend this way. She was surrounded by the most precious 4 little girls dressed in matching dresses. They had been sitting behind us in mass and since I only had the two boys at the time it really made an impression. I approached her and she responded like a drowning woman who had been thrown a life preserver. I loved her enthusiasm and optimism! Responses like hers told me we were on to something special!

At the ministry fair I was able to gather the names and contact information for women

who were interested in serving in the ministry, and also those who were interested in participation. Having a ministry run by the very same people it is trying to serve can be a little tough. We want community, but we aren't exactly at a stage in life where we have an abundance of free time or energy. We were at that point in life (still are!) where we were lucky to be able to shower for 5 minutes without being interrupted and now I was asking these women to help me start an entire ministry? I did find a handful of wonderful women however who had great ideas. After a few months we had a rough framework to continue to build upon in the following years. Each 'semester' I would sit down and prayerfully plan things out. I am a huge planner so I had to remind myself to pray more and plan less.

We met regularly every 2 weeks and took a break in the summer. We had light snacks, and usually had a speaker or discussion topic or craft. We had local Catholic authors come speak and we even did a book study. My favorite discussion was on NFP - I had the moms send me lists of questions to ask our priest, then I brought those answers to

our group. I did not enjoy the uncomfortable conversation with the priest (he was probably more uncomfortable than I was!), but the moms had a stellar discussion and we packed the room that night! We had playmates at the park and started a Monday morning rosary "pray and play" group that still meets after mass in one of the spare rooms of the parish. We did a few fundraisers and hosted a beautiful, huge, Mother-Daughter Tea each spring. I would send out supportive notes to the group via email and our email list grew to well over a hundred. We had a prayer warrior who would take prayer request from the group and send our prayer intention email blasts as they came up, and slowly, the women of the parish began to be connected online and in our church home as well.

After being the face behind the ministry (there were lots of hands doing the work!) for about 5 years, I turned the ministry over to another young mom. I spent a year with her shadowing me and slowly taking over responsibility, and then she took off with it. Another mom took it over when she moved the next year and it still evolving to meet the needs of the parish.

I share this post with you, along with the 'how to' post, because it is important that you tailor any ministry to meet the needs of your parish.

This ministry was never MY ministry - it belonged to God. I was merely the hands he chose to use to get it started. What I wanted, or what I envisioned was less important than being open to what the parish needed and God intended. There was one night in particular that I really did NOT want to go. I prayed about it a little in the car along the way. I was just feeling run down and attendance was always low in May. We had a talk about Mary planned and I was worried that we wouldn't have a good turnout. A random woman from the parking lot ended up joining us that night for the presentation. Afterwards she shared that she had been contemplating suicide as she was driving that night. She just drove by the church and on a whim turned into the parking lot. She was not a parishioner and had been away from the church for years. She was just one woman feeling lost and alone in the world and God directed her to us.

We never know why God has called us to do something, but when we feel his call, it is our duty as faithful servants to respond with a loving "yes". If you are feeling God's call, then open your heart. Ask him to provide you with the people and the guidance you need. Go to adoration with a notebook and just listen to what he speaks to your heart. I will be praying for you.



Upcoming Retreats

• August 11 - 14, 2022
OLPS, Alexandria
Men's ACTS

• August 25 - 28, 2022
St. Joseph's, Marksville
Women's ACTS

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

Let's stop telling other people that the plants are dying, and start watering them ourselves! Is God tugging on your heart to start a ministry at your parish? See a few ideas here.

What would you add?

- Pro-life Ministry
- Rosary Prayer Group
- New Moms Ministry
- Rosary-making ministry
- Miscarriage Ministry
- Young Families Ministry
- Midnight Run (for the homeless)
- Potluck/Fellowship Ministry
- Bible Study
- Men's Ministry
- Mary Grotto/
Groundskeeping Ministry
- Bereavement Ministry

Starting a parish ministry: 10 practical “how to” tips

By *MaryRuth Hackett*
Parenting with Peer Review

Recently quite a few people have asked me tell them about the process by which I started a ministry at our church. After writing out my story of how it happened and where it is today, I found that although it was personal, the post lacked the practicality advice that I so desire in life! This post is designed to provide just that - The practical How To's for starting your own ministry. There will be a lot of questions, and a lot of individuality, because really you are needing to tap into God's actual intentions for your specific work he has designed you to complete for Him. That is a pretty amazing thing! I write this prayerfully with the hope that He will guide us both - me as a write and you as you read!

#1 - Do your homework. Find out what ministries are currently at your parish and find out what they do. The worst thing in the word is to go to your priest with an idea only to be told “um - we have that already”.

#2 - Create a mission statement and an outline for your ministry. Know who you are serving and in what

capacity you will serve. What is your purpose and how does it differ from the purposes of other ministries currently serving your parish? How does your purpose align with the purpose of Our Church?

#3 - You must have your priest's support. Not just permission. Get him jazzed about the ministry. You really need to have him on your team. Starting anything new is generally a challenge met with much opposition and more differing opinions as there are people involved. If you know you have his support, you will have the confidence and ability to put much aside and proceed. A bulletin announcement is great, but to have him speak from the pulpit about how essential your ministry is - or to have him attend an event and tell other about it - well that is the best publicity you can have.

#4- Start to network. Once you see the need, confirm that it is not the prevue of another ministry, have the priest's support in filling the need, start reaching out to other ministries. Key things to remember here - there are generally never enough volunteers for anything. Folks who have been working in ministries have

often been doing loads of work without ‘recognition’ and many are already bordering on burnout. Don't threaten to take away the few volunteers they do have. Be supportive of what they are doing and emphasize your desire to bring more un-involved people into ministry life.

#5- Make friends with the office staff. One of my best friends was at the time in charge of scheduling. She conveniently came on as Parish Liaison for our ministry. She was already part of the staff at the parish so she had the ear of the priest, she knew what was going on politically, and she was able to easily process the paperwork stuff (announcements, reimbursements, deposits, PO's etc) for our group. We have retained a deep and lasting friendship through our early ministry work with one another and my job was made so much easier by having her as a part of our core team.

#6- Create a marketing plan. You already have your mission statement and an outline of you ministry. Now you need to market it. How do you make it something others will remember and want to be a part of? We did little business cards, pew cards,

hilarious videos to play after mass. We had donuts and muffins for sale - not to make money but to bring attention. We made & sold chic looking t-shirts by a local t-shirt company. Even our big Mother-Daughter Tea was a chance to sign up more moms to our group.

#7-Create a business plan. How are you going to run this group? My mission was that we never take money from our parish, but rather be able to give back to the parish. In order to do that I needed to have fundraisers, and a budget because refreshments & speakers get expensive. But there was also plenty of free stuff too. We started with some easy things like bake sales - to both raise awareness of our group and give us some seed money. If you have the intention of growing beyond your parish someday that should be a part of your plan too.

#8- Pray pray pray. This really should be number one but if you are reading this you probably have already been in conversation with Our Lord about the topic! So keep praying.

#9-Don't be easily offended. Critiques of the ministry are not critiques of YOU. Just because

you are the head of a ministry that does not mean that every misstep is a reflection on your character. You are going to forget deadlines and loose receipts, misinterpret words and step on toes. Don't take things personally. Act out of love and practice humility and you will be just fine.

#10- Know when to turn it over. Ministries need to be bigger than one person. The Women's Sodality at our parish began in 1949! It has been running for 65 years. They have a new prefect each year. They have circles and prayer teams and a budget. It is amazing to see. Once you have helped create the ministry, bring in others and give it some longevity. It is God's ministry, not yours, and it will last as long as the parish responds to His call to keep it going. Even if it lasts for just a season, it was important for that season. So know when to turn it over to fresh ideas and a new face.

Starting the Mom's Ministry at our parish was an amazing adventure for me. It was hard work filled with joy, done in the company of some wonderful women who are my closest friends still today.

“Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire.” // *Saint Catherine of Siena*

Adoration Chapel // Daily

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville, Perpetual Adoration Chapel will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in the Community Center. You will need to call the office during office hours to obtain the code to the chapel: 318-445-2497.

Grief Support Group // 1st Wednesday of the month

Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pineville's Grief Support Group meeting dates for June, July, and August will only meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month, in the Community Center at 6:00 p.m. We will have a potluck dinner and fellowship. The next meeting will be July 6. For more information, call Tammy Magnano at 318-229-7455.

The Real Presence Prayer Group // every Wednesday

The Real Presence Prayer Group will meet every Wednesday evening at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville. Rosary begins at 7:00 p.m. with Charismatic Praise & High Worship at 7:20 p.m., and Healing Prayer at 8:00 p.m. (Closing by 11:00 p.m.) Wheelchair accessible. For more information, call Joey LaFossee at 318-332-2234 or Bob Weeks at 318-442-1794.

Outdoor lighted rosary, Marksville // every Thursday

St. Joseph Church in Marksville has begun its weekly outdoor lighted rosary every Thursday now through October. The rosary begins at 8:00 p.m. in the parking lot next to the church hall. In inclement weather, the rosary is prayed in St. Joseph church. Participants may bring chairs to sit outside or remain in their vehicles. The lighted rosary is facilitated by St. Joseph Knights of Columbus Council #1217.

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.

National Eucharistic Congress to have a Catholic millennial as executive director

By *Zelda Caldwell*
Aleteia

Catholics from all walks of life will be coming together in Indianapolis in July of 2024 in a large-scale in-person event focused on encountering Jesus in the Eucharist. Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens, Chairman of the Board of the National Eucharistic Congress, Inc., announced today that Tim Glemkowski, will serve as executive director of the event.

Glemkowski is a millennial with a “fresh” vision for the future of the Church and “how it can re-engage many from his generation who are uncertain about the Church and its role in modern life,” according to the press release announcing his appointment.

“Tim is a real leader with a heart on fire for Jesus Christ and a desire to invite people to encounter his love in the Eucharist. He brings a unique blend of skill sets to this important role - from strategic vision and operational excellence to theological insight and a missionary mindset,” says Bishop Cozzens of the Diocese of Crookston, MN. “He has worked in evangelization and strategy in parishes and in the Archdiocese of Denver. He lives and breathes the call of Pope Francis for a pastoral and missionary conversion of the Church.”

The Eucharistic Congress in 2024 will be the first major event of a multi-year National Eucharistic Revival that began earlier this year. In November of 2021, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops voted to hold the event following the publication of a Pew Research survey that found a decline in the number of Catholics who believe that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.

Bishop Cozzens, in an interview with John Burger, explained that in spite of the Pew survey, there is a growing



devotion to the Eucharist among young Catholics. Plans for the Eucharistic Congress were born out of the idea that young people could serve as missionaries, bringing their love for the Eucharist back to their churches.

“The revival is counting on young people and all who are already on fire with love for the Eucharist,” said Bishop Cozzens.

Glemkowski, as the executive director of the Eucharistic Congress, sees the revival as a way to attract people to the Church.

“God is doing something important in His Church through this multi-year national Eucharistic Revival. At its core, I believe the Congress is a critical moment for how we fulfill Pope Francis’ vision of becoming a more missionary Church,” states Glemkowski. “It is the fire of charity, born in our hearts from the reception of Jesus in the Eucharist, which impels us on mission. This is a phenomenal opportunity for our Church to draw closer to Christ and to be prepared to better share Him with our postmodern world.”

“If we are going to be able to boldly proclaim the difference that a relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church can make, we have to allow our love for the Eucharist to grow and our lives to be changed by God. As the Church is reeling from the various crises and challenges over the past few years, this is an invitation from God to be revived in order to go on mission and show the



LEMONADE STAND BENEFITS ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY. The Varsity football team at St. Mary's Catholic School, Natchitoches, visited the lemonade stand for Hudson, Hendrix and Hayes Harrington, who are students at St. Mary's Catholic School and altar servers at The Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Church. All proceeds raised from lemonade sales benefitted the St. Vincent DePaul Society.

Prayer to Guardian Angel

O Angel of Light,
O Spirit so bright,
Show us the way
In this darkness of night.

Protect our souls
During the coming storm
And from all those things
That can cause us harm.

Please lead us to
Our Mother's side.
For, to Jesus through Mary
Our Hearts will reside.

by Marcus Descant, Leesville, Louisiana

lizdescant@gmail.com

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world and our fellow Catholics a compelling witness. God is telling us here how He wants us to move from maintenance to mission - by being transformed by His Real Presence, first.”

Glemkowski holds a B.A. in philosophy and theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville, as well as an M.A. in theology from Augustine Institute. He founded and served as the President of L'Alto Catholic Institute and most recently served as Director of Strategy for the Archdiocese of Denver.

We want to start a fire, not a program.

11 bishop andrew cozzens
chairman of the usccb committee on evangelization and catechesis

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Saint Charles Center holding various retreats in August

Men's Retreat, August 11-14

Men's DEEP Retreat to be held at the Saint Charles Center, Thursday, August 11, through Sunday, August 14, 2022. The cost of the retreat for the weekend is \$290 per person. Please call the Saint Charles Center at 337-855-1232 to register. Capacity is limited to 22 men.

Silent Preached Retreat, August 19-21

The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, is the daily prayer of the Church, marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. The Very Reverend Ruben Buller, Vicar General for the Diocese of Lake Charles, will present a Silent Preached Retreat at Saint Charles Center, Friday, August 19, through Sunday, August 21, 2022. The cost of the retreat for the weekend is \$195 per person. Please call the Saint Charles Center at 337-855-1232 to register. Capacity is limited to 36 men and women.

Women's Retreat, August 25-28

The Icon of Love: On Being a Woman, a Theology of the Body Retreat for Women to be held at the Saint Charles Center Thursday, August 25, through Sunday, August 28, 2022. The cost of the retreat for the weekend is \$245 per person. Please call the Saint Charles Center at 337-855-1232 to register. Capacity is limited to 36 women.



CORRECTION FROM JULY ISSUE OF CHURCH TODAY – SEASON OF SERVICE, ST. RICHARDS CHAPEL, HICKORY HILL. St. Richards Prayer Warriors got together each Friday during lent to pray the rosary for the sick and shut-in and for the people of Ukraine. The team plan to continue to render their service to the community once a month. Team members: Ardrianna Lonzo, Patricia Lavallais, Geraldine Lavallais, Frances Gulliot, Mary L. Ford, Team captain Velma Lockwood. Back row: Deacon Ted Moulard, Diane Lonzo, Larry Johnson, Mary D. Simon, Beatrice Barton, John Augustine, Lena Lavallais, Angie Champ and visiting priest, Father William (Bill) Gearheard. (Photo description corrected to show correct names. We apologize for the error.)

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August 3, 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center
Alexandria

August 24, 6:00 p.m.
St. Anthony of Padua
Church (Brother Francis
Center), Bunkie

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

When our children leave the nest

*By Sarah Damm
Blessed is She*

This spring, my oldest daughter graduated from high school. It was one of those milestones that I never thought I would reach. But now, it has come and gone. And as of yesterday, my daughter has officially left our nest to serve as a missionary for the next year.

Once Upon a Time

When I was a young mom, with five children in preschool and younger, I remember a more seasoned mom telling me how quickly the years would go by.

I also remember not believing her.

This mom was well-meaning, but her solicitation came in the midst of sleepless nights, dirty diapers, potty training, and naptime battles. I was also in the midst of cuddles, bedtime stories, sticky smiles, and so many new beginnings.

In the thick of all the beautiful, sweet, tiresome, and challenging moments of young family life, I could not imagine that a day would ever come when my children would turn 18, graduate from high school, and leave the house for their next adventure.

It just seemed too far away.

Believe it or not, it's true

But here I am. The day has come. And now, I am a mom who has just sent off her oldest child and who is preparing to send off two more children in the next two years.



Transitions Lead to Reflection

Realizing now that the 18 years we have to raise our children go by more quickly than we can fathom, I cannot help but wonder:

How do I avoid living with regret, wishing I could take back those unkind words and maybe even get a couple of do-overs on those not-so-great days?

How do I simply savor the good memories, seek forgiveness for the bad ones, and remain content in this transition that is the present moment?

Moreover, how do I parent my daughter in her new season of life, while she is serving high school youth across the United States?

How do I let her go?

Let's Walk this Road Together

If you also find yourself in this next phase of mothering, I do not begin to have many answers to the questions I ask above. Because let's face it: mothering a young adult can make even the most experienced mom feel like a new mom all over again—totally unsure of herself.

In many ways, mothering young adults requires new skills and a fresh perspective. Right now, I am receiving a crash course in how to advise, encourage, bite my tongue, and let go. It reminds me of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, where it talks about a season for every matter under Heaven.

I am learning that there is a time to suggest and a time to back off; a time to help and a time to let them figure it out for themselves; a time to put my foot down and a time to lighten up; a time to speak truth and a time to silently pray.

And so, while I am not an expert in parenting young adults, I am learning, and I can offer some reflection, prayer support, and companionship as our children become young adults and as we share in the experience of their leaving the nest.

Lean on the Lord

This leads me to convey what I know for certain: As our children leave the nest and as we learn to let go, we cannot lean on our own understanding. We must remember that God's ways are not our ways, and His plans for our children far surpass anything we could ever imagine for them.

We need to entrust our young adult children to the Lord. For they are His children more than they are ours, and He knows and loves them so much more than we ever could.

And so, let us seek God's guidance and assurance by turning to His Word for strength and comfort. And let us increasingly trust Him and surrender our children to Him through Catholic prayers, litanies, and novenas.

Scripture Verses to Pray When Children Leave the Nest

For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me my petition which I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord. // 1 Samuel 27-28

Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. // Psalm 16:11

The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. // Psalm 28:7

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on

your own insight. // Proverbs 3:5

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. // Isaiah 43:19

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. // Isaiah 55:8-11

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. // Philippians 4:19

And so, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. // Colossians 1:9-12

Catholic Prayers When the Nest Begins Emptying

Thanks to our beautiful and rich Catholic Faith, we have a treasure trove of prayers, litanies, and novenas for just about every life circumstance, including the

*Go out to all
the world
and tell the
Good News.*

Mark 16:15
Responsorial Psalm
for August 21
Twenty-first Sunday
in Ordinary Time

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time when our children leave the nest.

Here are four that will certainly help us entrust our children to the Lord as they begin this new chapter of their lives ... away from us.

- Surrender Novena
- Litany of Trust
- Efficacious Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Litany of the Guardian Angels

Whether your first or last child is leaving the nest this fall, sending them off won't be easy. There certainly will be a learning curve. But when we turn to God's promising words in Sacred Scripture and prayerfully entrust our children to the Lord, we can

let them leave the nest and enter this next chapter with greater peace and confidence.

Sarah is a Catholic wife and mother of six children, living in

Minnesota. She spends her days running errands, helping with homework, and keeping up with laundry and the family schedule. Sarah loves her faith, coffee, and good books. You can find out more about her at sarahdamm.com.

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Psalm 68: 11b
Responsorial Psalm for August 28
Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

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a note from the catholic schools office

- Counselors have been actively working with seniors to apply for and receive acceptance to various colleges and universities. If your high school student needs assistance with applying for acceptance, please contact your school guidance counselor.
- Looking to register your child at one of our Catholic schools? Now is the time! Contact the individual school or the Catholic Schools Office for more information. Please also contact us for information on financial assistance and scholarship opportunities.
- Our Catholic schools are always searching for teachers, staff, and lunchroom personnel to join us! Check with individual schools for more information on how to apply for specific positions.

school start dates

- July 25** St. Mary's Assumption School, Cottonport
August 8 Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria
 Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria
 Sacred Heart School, Moreauville
 St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie
 St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria
 St. Joseph School, Plaquemine
August 10 St. Mary's School, Natchitoches

Daily school breakfast/lunch menus can be found at www.diocesealex.org/events/category/school/



ST. MARY'S STUDENT ELECTED NATIONAL BETA PRESIDENT. Mason McCart, a senior at St. Mary's Catholic School, was recently elected as the President of the National Beta Club at the National Beta Club Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Mason also serves as the president of the Louisiana State Beta Club, after being elected to that office in March. The mission of the Beta Club is to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students. Mr. Michael Landry, a history teacher at St. Mary's, has been the club sponsor for the last thirty years. This is the second consecutive year for the school's club to have a national officer. Anna Kate Jackson was elected as national president in 2021. Pictured L-R: Mason Melder, Mason McCart, Reaves Hogg and Mr. Michael Landry.



VBS SACRED HEART OF JESUS, PINEVILLE. The theme was MONUMENTAL from June 13-17. Sacred Heart of Jesus hosted 87 kids ages PreK through 6th grade for Vacation Bible School. Their project raised \$1,145 for the church's food pantry!



OLL WINNFIELD COLLEGE GRADUATION SUNDAY. On Sunday, June 26, Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Winnfield celebrated Graduation Sunday. Jennifer Rodriguez, Marisa Mercer, and Guadalupe Guerrero were the honorees. Father Wade DeCoste gave a special blessing to each of the college graduates. They also received Bibles. Following Mass the congregation enjoyed a reception with punch and cake.

**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

VBS! Monumental!

ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION IN COTTONPORT HOSTED PARACHUTE WITH THE ANGELS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL on June 13-17. We had over 100 kids in attendance from grades PreK 4 through 6th grade. Our students in grade 7th-12th were our crew leaders/helpers. We spent the week learning about the Angels while engaging in bible lessons, making crafts, playing games and singing together. We ended our week with a super fun Foam Party (pictured below). The kids and adults enjoyed learning about the Angels and growing closer to God and one another.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, MARKSVILLE VBS was held July 11-15. This year's theme was "Marvelous Mystery: The Mass Comes Alive!" Music, Scripture, crafts, games and snacks were focused on the Mass as Mystery, a Gift, a Celebration, a Meal, and a Call for each of us to say "yes" to Jesus. Children also learned a virtue of the day and a saint of the day. The week ended with children, volunteers and parents attending Mass with celebrant, Fr. Dan O'Connor followed by fun outdoor activities with a Bouncy House, Hamster Wheels, Foam Party, Snow Cones and picnic lunch.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, WOODWORTH. Mary, Mother of Jesus held their MONUMENTAL Vacation Bible School from June 20-24. Ages PreK through 5th Grade attended.

VBS ST. RITA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA. It was also Monumental from June 20-24 at St. Rita Church Holy Family Center. A week of fun and fellowship and celebrating GOD's greatness. Student attending were grades PK-6th.

Youth Group Garage Sale Fundraiser - August 6

Sacred Heart of Jesus Youth Group, Pineville will have a Garage Sale Fundraiser on Saturday, August 6 from 6:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church Youth Center, Pineville on Sanders/Lakeview Streets. For more information, contact Dawn Parker at 318-446-6557 or angelicdawnparker@gmail.com, Laura Luneau at 318-447-0510, or the Church Office at 318-445-2497.

Heart of St. Kateri Circle meeting - August 11

The next Heart of Kateri Circle meeting will be Aug. 11, 5:30 p.m. at the Tekakwitha Conference Center located at 2225 North Bolton Ave., Alexandria. We will review and evaluate the National Conference that was held at the Riverfront Center in July. How did we feel attending as individuals? What is our future growing in our the Circle? How do we increase our numbers? All are welcome to come. For more information, contact Scotty Durio at (318) 483-3908 or finance@tekconf.org

Discalced Carmelite Meeting - August 13

The Order of the 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 at 318-346-6860 or 318-481-9638.

Men's Silent Retreat, Grand Coteau - August 25-28

Join us at Our Lady of the Oaks Jesuit Retreat House, located in Grand Coteau, LA for a men's silent retreat. Take time to reflect, refresh, and renew! You may even discover the inner strength to help with issues that may be facing you. Spiritual counseling will be available or just the sympathetic ear of someone else who has been where you are now. If you've considered a retreat in the past, don't miss this opportunity for an uplifting and fulfilling experience! The retreat weekend suggested offering is \$310.00 which includes a \$50 non-refundable fee at the time of application. If you need financial assistance, please contact either of the retreat coordinators. Jason Lavergne, 318-446-0217 or jasonlavergne@aol.com or Gary Bonnette at 318-793-9063 or gbonnette@suddenlink.net.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Pilgrimage to UK - October 10-19

Fr. Thomas Kennedy will be the spiritual director for a pilgrimage to England and Scotland this fall. Visit beautiful holy sites including the Durham Cathedral, Our Lady of Walsingham Shrine and the ruins of St. Andrew's Cathedral. Other highlights include: Westminster Cathedral and the Tower of London; Shrine of St. Margaret and Edinburgh Castle, both in Scotland. Limited space left! Contact Magnificat Travel at <https://holytravels.org/englandandscotland> or call (337) 291-1933.

Feast for Good with Chef John Folse - October 12

Save the date for an exquisite culinary experience in support of your neighbors with developmental disabilities. Chef John Folse will be at the England Airpark Community Center to help raise money for St. Mary's Residential Training Facility. To save your seat, visit the reservation website: <https://app.mobilecause.com/e/hSw04g?vid=sxqo7>

Silent Directed Retreat - November 3-6

The Diocese of Alexandria will offer a Silent Directed Retreat: Building Relationship with God, on November 3-6 at Maryhill Renewal Center. A silent directed retreat offers an environment of both inner and outer silence to foster a closer relationship with Christ through prayer, meditation, journaling, adoration, and the sacraments. All spiritual directors are trained and are certified. The retreat differs from a "preached" retreat. Discussions with retreatants are confidential. While God is ultimately the director, the assigned director will assist you in discerning the movement of God during your prayer and reflections. Space is limited. Cost is \$275, including room and meals. For more information, or to register please contact Ingrid Cannella 318-792-3331 or icnewell@yahoo.com or Renee Aldridge 318-542-1966 or renee.aldrige1@gmail.com

Day of Recollection - November 12

The Carmelite Community of Alexandria will host a DAY of RECOLLECTION on November 12, 2022 at Maryhill Renewal Center. Father Ryan Humphries will present talks on "Stress, Anxiety, and the Practical Spiritual Life in our Times". More information will be sent to those who would like to attend. Contact Mary Jo McCoy at (318) 346-6860 or (318) 481-9638.

Adoration Chapel - Daily

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville, Perpetual Adoration Chapel will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in the Community Center. You will need to call the office during office hours to obtain the code to the chapel: 318-445-2497.

Grief Support Group

- 1st Wednesday of the month

Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pineville's Grief Support Group meeting dates for June, July, and August will only meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month, in the Community Center at 6:00 p.m. We will have a potluck dinner and fellowship. For more information, call Tammy Magnano at 318-229-7455.

Outdoor lighted rosary, Marksville - every Thursday

St. Joseph Church in Marksville has begun its weekly outdoor lighted rosary every Thursday now through October. The rosary begins at 8:00 p.m. in the parking lot next to the church hall. In inclement weather, the rosary is prayed in St. Joseph church. Participants may bring chairs to sit outside or remain in their vehicles. The lighted rosary is facilitated by St. Joseph Knights of Columbus Council #1217.

Serra Club of Alexandria 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.

Church Today News Deadlines

August 29
Deadline for news:
Thursday, August 18

September 26
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Sept. 15



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August 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AUGUST 1 PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL	2 VIRTUS Training 1:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria PRAY FOR DCN. W. ENDRIS	3 VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria Grief Support Group , 6:30 p.m. Sacred Heart Church, Pineville The Real Presence Prayer Group 7:00 p.m., Maryhill PRAY FOR FR. P. FAULK	4 Outdoor Lighted Rosary 8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville PRAY FOR DCN. L. FELDKAMP	5 Divine Mercy Hour 3:00 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. FERGUSON	6 Youth Group Garage Sale 6:00-11:00 a.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville FEAST of the TRANSFIGURATION of the LORD FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. W. GEARHEARD	7 PRAY FOR DCN. L. GLANKLER
8 School starts: Holy Savior Menard OLPS Sacred Heart, Moreauville St. Anthony, Bunkie St. Frances Cabrini St. Joseph, Plaqueville PRAY FOR FR. J. GOOTEE	9 PRAY FOR DCN. S. GRAMIGNA	10 School starts: St. Mary School Natchitoches The Real Presence Prayer Group 7:00 p.m., Maryhill Food Pantry , 8:00 a.m. Sacred Heart Church, Pineville PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION	11 Heart of Kateri Circle Meeting 5:30 p.m. Tekawitha Conf. Center Alexandria Outdoor Lighted Rosary 8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville PRAY FOR DCN. M. GUIDRY	12 Divine Mercy Hour 3:00 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville PRAY FOR FR. D. HART	13 Discalced Carmelites monthly meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center PRAY FOR FR. J. HASIEBER	14 PRAY FOR FR. R. HUMPHRIES
Cenla Men's ACTS Retreat -- Maryhill Renewal Center						
Men's Retreat -- Lake Charles						
15 SOLEMNITY of the ASSUMPTION of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (not a holy day of obligation) PRAY FOR FR. H. IMAMSHAH	16 PRAY FOR FR. R. JOHNSON	17 The Real Presence Prayer Group 7:00 p.m., Maryhill PRAY FOR DCN. S. JONES	18 Outdoor Lighted Rosary 8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville PRAY FOR FR. T. KENNEDY	19 Divine Mercy Hour 3:00 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville PRAY FR. P. KULIGOWSKI	20 PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUMPURAM	21 PRAY FOR FR. L. LAFLEUR
Silent Preached Retreat -- Lake Charles						
22 PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD	23 PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME	24 VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Anthony Bunkie Real Presence Prayer Group 7:00 p.m. Maryhill Food Pantry , 8:00 a.m. Sacred Heart Church, Pineville PRAY FOR DCN. J. LAVERGNE	25 Outdoor Lighted Rosary 8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church Marksville, PRAY FOR DCN. G. LEBLANC	26 Divine Mercy Hour 3:00 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville PRAY FOR DCN. ALEX MANGINI	27 PRAY FOR FR. V. MANUEL	28 PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL
St. Joseph's, Marksville Women's ACTS Retreat -- Maryhill Renewal Center						
Women's Retreat -- Lake Charles						
Men's Silent Retreat -- Grand Coteau						
29 PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS	30 PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER	31 The Real Presence Prayer Group 7:00 p.m., Maryhill PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE	1 SEPTEMBER Outdoor Lighted Rosary 8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER	2 Divine Mercy Hour 3:00 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK	3 PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS	4 PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER

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