
CHURCH TODAY

Volume LIV, No. 2

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

February 20, 2023



*Reigniting our
Eucharistic faith*

As we prepare for the return of the Precious Blood to the liturgy on Sunday, April 16, Divine Mercy Sunday, we must remember that Jesus Christ is present, both in His physical and divine. See page 6 for information on this exciting news for our diocese.

INSIDE

Making eye contact with Jesus

“The merciful gaze of the Lord reaches us before we ourselves realize that we need it in order to be saved.” See page 2 for a letter from Bishop Marshall encouraging us in our journey in prayer and the Sacraments.

Ash Wednesday - February 22

See page 14 for a list of Lenten activities, including fish fries, devotional series, and lenten penance services, beginning Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22. Please visit the website at www.diocesealex.org, or the Diocese of Alexandria page on Facebook for updated information.

Steubenville South 2023 won't be the same without your teens!

Gather your high school students to join us this summer for a life-changing encounter: June 23 - 25! See page 21 for the speaker line-up and registration information.

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

Publisher:

Most. Rev. Robert Marshall
Publication Manager / Editor:
Cari Terracina, ext. 255,
cterracina@diocesealex.org

Multimedia Manager /

Advertising:

Joan Ferguson, ext. 264;
joanferguson@diocesealex.org
Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209;
starver@diocesealex.org

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In the first chapter of this letter, we discussed ways to focus our minds and hearts in our times of prayer. As humans, we often need some sensory help to set aside the distractions of the world in order to center ourselves on Jesus. We pay attention to the “voice” of our prayer time, whether audible to others when we pray aloud or just in the quiet of our internal conversation. We may find it helpful to have some external stimulus for our thoughts – Scripture or other spiritual reading or the rosary, for example. We also suggested that prayer happen in a special place in our home or garden and/or while looking at a particular image – a crucifix or icon or painting or statue. Of course, when we are in church, we naturally turn our attention to the Blessed Sacrament, whether in the tabernacle or exposed for adoration in a monstrance. Eucharistic adoration is a particularly effective way of focusing ourselves on Christ. Though under the appearance of bread, gazing upon the Body of Christ with eyes of faith helps us to remember that we are always in the holy presence of God. Yes, we humans often need assistance if we want to maintain our connection, our “eye contact” with God in prayer.

When we enter a crowded room, we often look around to see if there is someone we know, someone with whom we can connect and speak with. Usually in these crowds, two or more people will be gathered in small groups having conversations. We sometimes find it difficult to break into one of these conversations, to capture someone’s attention, to “catch their eye.” Sometimes, we feel most alone in a crowded room when we feel unseen, invisible. Too often, we carry that same experience into our prayer. We sometimes imagine that we have to compete with others for God’s attention – we have to do something to get God to look over at us. The fact is that God is continually looking at each one of us. His eyes never leave us. We are the ones who get distracted. We are the ones who look away, or turn our backs, or hide in shame. God never takes his eyes off of us.

In his homilies, audiences and exhortations, Pope Francis has frequently spoken about “the gaze of Jesus.”ⁱ In reflecting upon the call of Matthew (Matt. 9:9), the Holy Father says that, “It all starts, then, with the gaze of Jesus.” The gospel account is clear – Jesus



Live, Jesus, in our Hearts Forever
The Joy and Promise of
the Most Holy Eucharist

By Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr.

Making Eye Contact with Jesus

“saw a man” (that is, Matthew) before Matthew saw Jesus. It was clear to all that Matthew was a tax collector, a collaborator with the Roman Empire, a sinner, but Jesus saw a man. Pope Francis emphasizes that humans often see “the adjective” first – “sinful man” – rather than just the noun – “a man.” The gaze of Jesus “goes to the essence,” and looks upon us with the unconditional love of God. Every human person is beloved of God and God sees us in this context.

In speaking of another passage of Scripture – the encounter with Zacchaeus (Luke 19:5) – the Holy Father says,

And this is important: the first glance is not from Zacchaeus, but from Jesus, who among the many faces that surrounded Him – the crowd – seeks precisely that one. The merciful gaze of the Lord reaches us before we ourselves realize that we need it in order to be saved. And with this gaze of the divine Master there begins the miracle of the conversion of the sinner.ⁱⁱ

Just as St. John reminds us that we love God because he first loved us (1 John 4: 19), so Pope Francis reminds us that we see Jesus because he first sees us. Christ always sees us with love and mercy and compassion – often not in the way we view other people and, indeed, often not in the way we view ourselves. We see ourselves and others as loaded with the “adjectives” of the world – unworthy, sinful, flawed, rejected, while God sees us as the “noun” – his beloved child. Yes, we are called to do better, to leave our lives of sin behind – but sin is what we do; it is not who we are. Repentance, conversion, begins with the loving gaze of the Lord. Continuing his reflection on the encounter between Jesus and Zacchaeus, the Holy Father states,

[T]he gaze of God never stops at our past, full of errors, but

looks with infinite confidence at what we can become. And if at times we feel we are people who are “short in stature”, not up to the challenges of life and far less of the Gospel, mired in problems and sins, Jesus always looks at us with love, he looks at us: as with Zacchaeus, he comes towards us, he calls us by name and, if we welcome him, he comes to our home.ⁱⁱⁱ

We need not fear the eyes of God. Pope Francis reminds us that God never looks down on us to humiliate us; rather, Christ lowers himself so that he may wash our feet. In this posture, he looks *up* at us and restores us to our human dignity.^{iv} It is no accident that Christ lowered himself to wash our feet at the Last Supper, on the same night and in the same Upper Room where he established the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. In the Eucharist, God places himself at our level and offers himself to us, for us. He seeks communion with us – feeding and nourishing us, renewing a heart-to-heart connection, making and maintaining eye contact with us.

In our prayer, we turn our minds and hearts *and eyes* toward God. When we look at the Blessed Sacrament, we see the real presence of Jesus – his Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity under the appearance of bread. With eyes of faith, our eyes can connect with the eyes of Christ. That should be a goal of our prayer – to maintain eye contact with Jesus. Remembering that Christ is always looking at us with love, we need to return his gaze. We need, in the words of St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, to “remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” We need to experience his unconditional love and his abundant mercy. We need the grace to see ourselves as Jesus sees us – without the adjectives that the world imposes on us, without the labels we put on ourselves. And we need to look on others as Christ looks at us. As Pope

Francis observes, “Remember that it is legitimate to look down on someone only to help them get up again: nothing more.”^v Christ is always there, looking at us with love, washing our feet and helping us to get up again. Why would we ever look away?

Questions for Reflection or Discussion:

- How often do you seek to make eye contact with Jesus in prayer? Are you interested in looking into his eyes? Are you afraid of how he will look at you?
- Do you find yourself looking for God? Is it difficult to remember that he is always looking at you?
- Are you looking up to heaven to see God? Do you ever remember that Jesus is the one looking up at you while washing your feet?
- Do you find yourself getting self-conscious when maintaining eye contact with another person? Do you have the same experience with God?
- Do you find yourself looking down on others? To judge them or to help them get up?

ⁱ Pope Francis, General Audience, January 11, 2023.

ⁱⁱ Pope Francis, Angelus, November 3, 2019.

ⁱⁱⁱ Pope Francis, Angelus, October 30, 2022.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

Kansas City, Philadelphia Catholic leaders make wager ahead of Super Bowl LVII

*By Megan Marley
Our Sunday Visitor*

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (OSV News) — The Catholic leadership of both Philadelphia and Kansas City, Missouri, are going the whole nine yards with their Super Bowl wager this year.

In what has become a tradition between bishops when their hometown teams face off at the Super Bowl, Bishop James V. Johnston Jr. of Kansas City-St. Joseph and Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia kicked off the weekend with a friendly wager.

Depending on the outcome of the game, the losing city’s bishop will make a \$500 donation to the winning city’s Catholic Charities or Catholic social services. The two clergy exchanged banter about the game on the weekly EWTN News “In Depth” TV program Feb. 10, with Archbishop Pérez warning his brother bishop to get the checkbook ready.

The archbishop also said there are life lessons to be drawn from the game. Archbishop Pérez noted that the Super Bowl is a time to step away from everyday life and rally as a community and as a family.

“People are passionate about their sports teams, and that’s a wonderful thing, right?” said the archbishop. “It celebrates life, and it celebrates achievement and it celebrates teamwork ...



that’s why both of them have gotten to the Super Bowl. So our families also have to work as a team because a team that doesn’t work that way doesn’t win.”

Bishop Johnston also gave

some prayerful advice.

“It’s OK to pray for your own team to play to the best of their ability so they can be victorious,” he shared. “I never

advise people to pray for bad

things to happen to other people. So we just pray, focus on our own team and their excelling to the best of their abilities.”

For the past several Big Games, bishops have made wagers of food and/or charitable donations on the outcome of the Super Bowl.

For the 2022 Super Bowl, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles and Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati made a friendly wager over the outcome of the gridiron faceoff between the Los Angeles Rams and the Cincinnati Bengals.

The Rams won Super Bowl LVI, but students in Catholic schools in both archdioceses were winners as well. Donors contributed more than \$22,000 for tuition assistance scholarships to each archdiocese’s Catholic Education Foundation. The archbishops invited supporters to become involved in their good-gesture wager through the Bishops Big Game challenge.

For Super Bowl LV in 2021, Bishop Johnston was again in the spotlight for a wager with the Chiefs’ competitor that year: the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, home team for Bishop Gregory L. Parkes of St. Petersburg, Florida.

Schools in their respective dioceses — St. Elizabeth’s in Kansas City and St. Paul’s in St. Petersburg — collected cans of soup for a Souper Bowl food drive for local food pantries and made a wager to contribute

to each other’s efforts. The outcome of the games meant St. Elizabeth’s sent barbecue to their Florida counterpart.

The Kansas City Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles will face each other in Super Bowl LVII at 6:30 p.m. (EST) Feb. 12 at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Ariz. This year’s game is expected to be a close one; both teams are evenly matched in win-loss totals (16-3) and number of points over the regular season and postseason (546), and both teams have been in the Super Bowl within the past five years. The Eagles are considered to have the defensive edge, while the Chiefs’ usually strong offense may be hampered by quarterback Patrick Mahomes’ recent ankle injury.

However, “we’re kind of living through the golden age of Kansas City Chiefs football here in Kansas City, and they’re going to their third Super Bowl in four years,” Johnston said. “So we’re hoping to bring home another one back and hoping we can stand up to that good Philadelphia defense.”

Megan Marley is digital editor for OSV News. Follow her on Twitter @mymarley. Contributing to this story was Julie Asher, senior editor for OSV News. Follow her on Twitter @jlasher.new practices to enhance their own faith; and he hopes, in this same spirit, that we are able to do the same.

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!

2023 Directory is now available online

The 2023 Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Directory is now available online to download.

Visit www.diocesealex.org/people-by-name/ and press the red button (“Download the 2023 Diocesan Directory”) to view, download, and print.

HOLY FATHER’S PRAYER INTENTIONS for March 2023

For victims of abuse //

We pray for those who have suffered from harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering. Amen.



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2023 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL

Thank you to the parishes/missions who exceeded their 2022 Annual Appeal Goal!

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church – Alexandria, LA

St. Francis Xavier Cathedral – Alexandria, LA

St. Rita Church – Alexandria, LA

St. Martin of Tours Church – Belledeau

St. Margaret Church – Boyce, LA

St. Anthony of Padua Church – Bunkie, LA

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church – Campti, LA

Our Lady of the Rosary Mission – Black Lake, LA

St. Joseph Chapel – Trichel, LA

St. Joseph Church – Cheneyville, LA

St. Edward Mission – Fishville, LA

St. Mary's Assumption Church – Cottonport, LA

St. John the Baptist Church – Deville, LA

Sts. Francis and Anne Church – Kolin, LA

St. John the Baptist Mission – Moncla, LA

Church of the Little Flower – Evergreen, LA

St. Charles Chapel – Goudeau, LA

St. Francis of Assisi Mission – Waterproof, LA

St. Louis Church – Glenmora, LA

St. Peter Mission – Elmer, LA

St. Jude Mission – Seiper, LA

St. Augustine Church – Isle Brevelle, LA

St. William Chapel – Olla, LA

Mary, Mother of Jesus Church – Woodworth, LA

St. Joseph Church – Marksville, LA

Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
– Natchitoches, LA

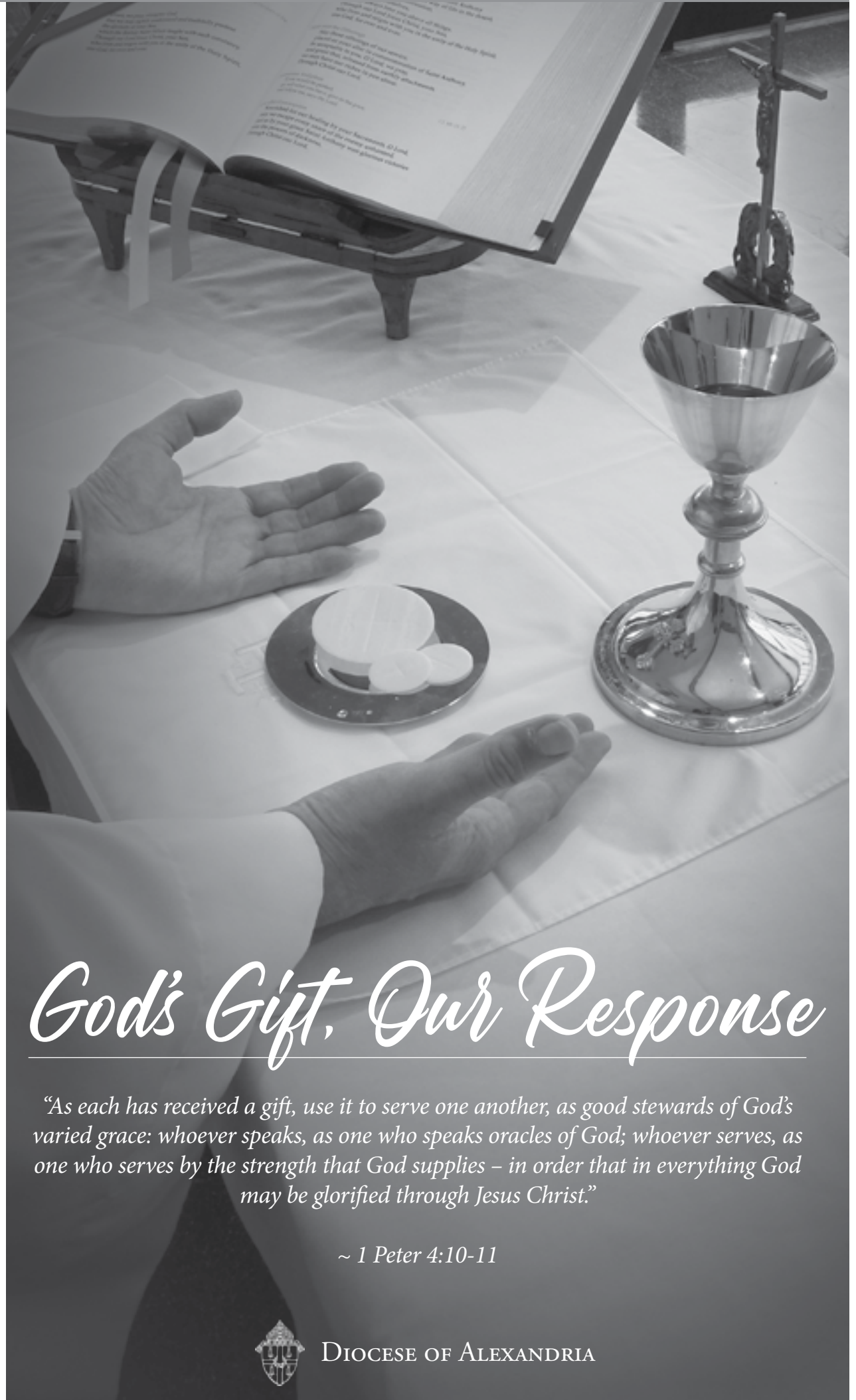
St. Anthony of Padua Church – Natchitoches, LA

St. Joseph Church – St. Joseph, LA

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church – Tioga, LA

Our Lady of Lourdes Church – Winnfield, LA

St. Mary Church – Winnsboro, LA



God's Gift, Our Response

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

~ 1 Peter 4:10-11



DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA

The countdown has begun



NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

In support of the National Eucharistic Revival, Bishop Robert Marshall asked for each of the four deaneries in the Diocese of Alexandria to host a Deanery 40-Hours Devotion at some point during the months of November 2022 through February 2023.

The Central Deanery was the first to host theirs on Nov. 3-6 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral and the Eastern Deanery held theirs Dec. 8-10 at St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA and the Natchitoches Deanery was at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Natchitoches from Jan. 12-14.

The last opportunity to participate in a 40-Hour Devotion was in the Avoyelles Deanery at St. Joseph Church in Marksville from Feb. 23-25.

Hundreds participated in these events.

The devotions began with an opening Mass on Thursday, followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and concluded with Mass and Benediction on Saturday.

The next phase of the National Eucharistic Revival is a “Year of Parish Revival” (2023 – 2024). During this phase, each church parish in the diocese is encouraged to discern ways to help parishioners encounter and grow in the love for Jesus, especially in the Eucharist. The four pillars of the phase are: personal encounter with Jesus, reinvigorating devotion, deepening formation, and missionary sending. As parishes publish their planned activities, the information will be posted on the diocesan website and in the Church Today.

Thank you for participating.

National Eucharistic Congress: July 2024

Registration for the National Eucharistic Congress launched on February 15. Space at the venue is limited, and with the amount of interest the Congress has gathered, around 80,000 seats are expected to fill FAST.

Share your excitement about this historic event with your family, friends, and parish!

Don’t miss the beginning of this new chapter for the Church in the United States. Together, we will experience a renewal of grace and healing in our nation as we approach our loving God with expectant faith.

Don’t forget to follow the Revival on social media, and share the excitement with your community.

Thinking about becoming a deacon? Join us for an information meeting on April 1

Do you have a desire to serve the Church in a deeper way? Do you have the heart for serving others? If so, you may be interested in learning more about becoming a Permanent Deacon for the Diocese of Alexandria.

Deacon Richard Mitchell, director for the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, is now taking contact information and fielding questions from men who may be interested in discerning this ministry to begin formation late August, 2023.

If interested, contact Deacon Mitchell at (318) 445-6424, ext. 206 or email: dcnmitchell@diocesealex.org.

The qualifications for the permanent diaconate include: must be at least 35 years old at the time of ordination, must have wife’s consent (if married) and can be married, but can’t marry or re-marry after ordination.

The four dimensions of formation -- Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral -- are learned throughout the five-year formation process that consists of Aspirancy, Candidacy, and Post-Ordination.

In the Aspirancy and Candidacy stages, the men and their wives are required to

attend classes. One weekend a month, an instructor from Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans comes to Alexandria to teach the aspirants philosophy and the theory of ministry. A psychological exam will also be done at this time.

The next four years include the formal study of theology for the Candidates. Church history, the Sacraments, Preaching, Moral Theology, and Scripture are some of the courses the men and their wives will study in classes held from September to July.

After the Candidate passes the theology curriculum and the psychological exam, the Bishop makes a final determination of his readiness for ordination.

Just as priests and bishops are ordained, a deacon is the third order in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

After ordination, the deacon becomes incardinated into the Diocese of Alexandria. The Bishop assigns the deacon to a parish or charitable ministry.

An informational meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Apr. 1 at 10 a.m. at the St. Joseph Catholic Center. To register, email dcnmitchell@diocesealex.org.

The spiritual and corporal works of mercy remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit:
by feeding, visiting, comforting, and instructing them. *|| pope francis*

Position available: Line Cook at Manna House

Manna House needs a Line Cook. Skills and qualifications required include:

- Knowledge of safety procedures, including safe temperatures at which ingredients must be stored and which food must be prepared to avoid food borne illness.
- At least 1 year of cooking or food experience.
- Excellent kitchen administration knowledge and ability to work as part of a team.
- Follows directions and instructions.
- Ability to stand in one place for hours at a time, handle extreme heat and work shifts.
- The ability to work on your feet for most of the day and lift 50 pounds at a time several times a day.
- Ability to place cases, pans, utensils, and plates on both low and high shelves.
- Manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination to handle tools, such as knife techniques for chopping, slicing, cutting, and dicing.
- Accuracy and speed in executing tasks.
- Valid Louisiana driver’s license.
- Ability to respond to emergency situations to avoid endangering themselves or others.

Send your resume to cenlamannahouse@gmail.com

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Tuesday, Mar. 21, 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center,
Alexandria

Tuesday, Mar. 28, 6:00 p.m.
Minor Basilica of the
Immaculate Conception,
Natchitoches

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.

*Lord, let
your mercy
be on us,
as we place our
trust in you.*

Psalm 33: 22
Responsorial Psalm for
March 5
Second Sunday of Lent

Here comes Lent! Let the saints help us out

By Rachel Bulman
Word on Fire

A friend in seminary once shared how all of the students would try to “outdo” one another during Lent. They would wake up to screams in the morning because a handful of them gave up hot water and couldn’t hold back their wailing during that icy morning wake-up call. Some of them wouldn’t be able to sit long during class because of aching backs from trading the comfort of mattresses for their hardwood floors. Seems a bit excessive, right?

Maybe, but it shines the light on the person making such an effort. We fast to strip away the things that keep us from the One whom we truly desire to meet, to imitate, and to love. We deny ourselves comforts, and suffer through hunger and cold showers and hard floors, because our misery becomes company when it draws us to Christ, when we are joining our sufferings to his for the sake of the world and our own souls.

Tomorrow, the Catholic Church kicks off the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday, a day of fasting and abstinence. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us:

The seasons and days of penance in the course of the liturgical year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church’s penitential practice. These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works). (CCC 1438)

Every Ash Wednesday, social media is flooded with cries of only remembering the abstinence “after I finished the last piece of chicken on my plate!” There will be complaints about how hard it is to skip the meat and to fast (we’re only asked to endure two very small meals, along with one ordinary meal!), questions about what constitutes a small meal, and more. But our fasts and abstinences, our extra devotions and disciplines, are about more than just “following rules.”



Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the bookends to the journey of Lent, and they rightly ask each of us to make meaningful sacrifices. While we focus on the particulars, our desire for an interior life of peace should be the fuel that helps us burn through the uncomfortable days of fasting and abstinence, and the forty days of doing something more.

One Lent, I was moved to do the “if possible” part of the Lenten abstinence and fasting guidelines, and fasted from Holy Thursday until after the conclusion of the Easter Vigil on Saturday night. I remember visiting my spiritual director on Holy Saturday, and we sat down to pray Morning Prayer. During the pauses, you could hear my stomach growling, and he responded, “Don’t worry about that. Those noises will pass.”

I have not taken on that particular discipline again since, and I only share it now in order to say that it can be done by mere mortal laypeople, when they feel called to it, as well as to attest to the discomfort of long days of fasting. But it’s no Ramadan (thirty days of no food or drink from sunrise to sunset); our bodies are capable of giving up

much more than we think, and such denial often provides healing and focus in areas of profound woundedness or complacency.

Eventually, the bodily aches of fasting and abstinence give way to virtue. Although it may feel like we are taking something away from ourselves, it is better understood as a reorienting of our appetites in order to answer the call to holiness. The entire season of Lent calls us to this, but its bookends are opportunities to shout down the rumbling stomach, stop aching for more luxury and exterior focus; take away a few small comforts until you are left in the silence and beauty of interior freedom.

There will be moments when you want to give up, because sometimes, yes, it’s difficult. You will want to order a chicken salad sandwich on a Friday; you will naturally turn on the hot water in the shower, or lay down on your mattress—“just for a moment”—and end up sleeping the night. None of that means you’ve failed, so keep going. When those moments come, remember the communion of saints and let those who have gone before us instruct and inspire, for they have faced the same difficulties and found

the determination to overcome. And remember, in the words of St. Josemaría Escrivá, “A saint is a sinner who keeps trying.”

Here are some insights from the saints to help with our Lenten journey:

“Temper all your works with moderation, that is to say, all your abstinence, your fasting, your vigils, and your prayers, for temperance sustains your body and soul with the proper measure, lest they fail. It reminds an honorable person that he is ashes and shall return to ashes [cf. Gen 3.19] —St. Hildegard of Bingen

“Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one’s flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, kindles the true light of chastity.” —St. Augustine

“How shall we have the means to help our brother who is in need? We can do without those unnecessary things which become habits, cigarettes, liquor, coffee, tea, candy, sodas, soft drinks and those foods at meals which only titillate the palate. We all have these habits, the youngest and the oldest. And we have to die to ourselves in order to live, we have to put off the old man and put on Christ. That it is so hard, that it arouses so much opposition, serves to show what an accumulation there is in all of us of unnecessary desires.” —Dorothy Day

“Never forget that there are only two philosophies to rule your life: the one of the cross, which starts with the fast and ends with the feast. The other of Satan, which starts with the feast and ends with the headache.” —Archbishop Fulton Sheen

“There are a lot of things you can give to Jesus—I don’t like to say, ‘Give it up.’ Well, you’re going to take it back. But give it to Jesus for Lent.” —Mother Angelica

“Fasting is directed to two things, the deletion of sin, and the raising of the mind to heavenly things.” —St. Thomas Aquinas

“Fasting of the body is food for the soul.” —St. John Chrysostom

“Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring.” —St. Catherine of Siena

“I do not know you, God, because I am in the way. Please help me to push myself aside.” —Flannery O’Connor

“Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism for what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes but bite and devour our brothers.” —St. John Chrysostom

“Where there is no prayer and fasting, there are demons.” —St. Theophan the Recluse

“If you are able to fast, you will do well to observe some days beyond what are ordered by the Church, for besides the ordinary effect of fasting in raising the mind, subduing the flesh, confirming goodness, and obtaining a heavenly reward, it is also a great matter to be able to control greediness, and to keep the sensual appetites and the whole body subject to the law of the Spirit; and although we may be able to do but little, the enemy nevertheless stands more in awe of those whom he knows can fast.” —St. Francis de Sales

“This exercise of bodily mortification—far removed from any form of stoicism—does not imply a condemnation of the flesh which sons of God deign to assume. On the contrary, mortification aims at the ‘liberation’ of man, who often finds himself, because of concupiscence, almost chained by his own senses. Through ‘corporal fasting’ man regains strength and the ‘wound inflicted on the dignity of our nature by intemperance is cured by the medicine of a salutary abstinence.’” —Pope Paul VI

“Today, especially in affluent societies, St. Augustine’s warning is more timely than ever: ‘Enter again into yourself.’ Yes, we must enter again into ourselves, if we want to find ourselves. Not only our spiritual life is at stake, but indeed, our personal, family, and social equilibrium itself. One of the meanings of penitential fasting is to help us recover an interior life. Moderation, recollection, and prayer go hand in hand.” —Pope John Paul II and truly reflect on the words in scripture to come to know the one better whom sacrificed his life for the world and left us the precious gift of his Body as true food and Blood as true drink.

Reigniting your Eucharistic faith

By Colleen R. Schena
National Eucharistic Revival



For the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin, this year of the National Eucharistic Revival proves doubly exciting. The Eucharistic Revival coincides with their own diocesan renewal, Disciples on the Way. Bishop David L. Ricken emphasizes that Disciples on the Way, rooted in the Emmaus story (Lk. 24:13-35), uniquely includes and highlights the centrality of the Eucharist in our discipleship and prayer. His recent pastoral letter—“Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist”—provides a guide to truly living a sacramental faith in which he shows how embracing Christ’s Real Presence in our daily lives is essential!

But where do we begin? Where did Bishop Ricken begin when he sought to guide his diocese in renewal? His pastoral letter introduces the “Five Alive”—what he calls five crucial pillars to cultivating a Eucharistic faith: the Mass, Lectio Divina (prayerful meditation on a passage of Scripture in which we listen for God’s voice), Eucharistic Adoration, Confession, and the Rosary. The “Five Alive” are “ways to enkindle and renew the fire of eucharistic devotion” that “will help us to come truly alive in the Mass” (Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist, 33).

Our Interview with Bishop Ricken

Colleen: Bishop Ricken, I understand that this is the third phase of your diocesan renewal, Disciples on the Way. What kind of need were you seeing within

your diocese that prompted you to initiate Disciples on the Way, and what makes your format different?

Bishop Ricken: With the New Evangelization, we had begun exploring discipleship formats from all over the country. We were very much aware that the New Evangelization was a beautiful reality, but how do you carry it out? How do you assimilate it in a way that actually delivers the message and introduces others to Christ?

Disciples on the Way developed from thinking about how best to train people for discipleship. This approach, borrowed from several sources, has four parts: Discover, Encounter, Worship, and Share

Jesus. Most discipleship formats do not have a Worship section, but I really wanted to include that because if we don’t have the Eucharist leading to the worship of Our Lord—if we don’t include the Eucharist in the kerygmatic framework, the way of learning—then we’re going to miss a wonderful opportunity. We’re a sacramental people. Why wouldn’t we want to share this with others, prepare them for worship and the sacrament, and invite them to it?

We were already aware that explaining the Eucharist and the Mass was going to be really important because many people don’t truly understand what the Church teaches. If they truly

appreciated the Mass, our churches would be packed! They aren’t full, I believe, because people don’t have an appreciation of the reality of what the Mass is. They haven’t been properly initiated.

Another thing was really important to us: a lot of those who have been newly received into the Church stay with us for a while and then wander off because they haven’t been immersed deeply enough in the whole mystery. Their catechumenate (or other period of preparation for reception into the Church) was probably not long enough.

I would also say there are many generations now that haven’t understood why we even go to Mass—that it’s worship and not entertainment. We’re there to give honor, glory, and praise to God because we owe him gratitude for the gift of life itself and all the other gifts he gives to us.

If people don’t live their lives with this sense of gratitude to God, they’re going to wind up not going to Mass and not seeing the Mass as important.

Where to Begin

Colleen: Gratitude is a major theme in your letter, especially in the “Five Alive” practices for a Eucharistic faith. Which of these “Five Alive” practices would you suggest as a good place to begin developing a deeper Eucharistic devotion?

Bishop Ricken: I would say that one of the best places to begin would be Lectio Divina. That’s one of the practices that we’ll be learning and teaching this coming year. Lectio Divina is praying with and studying Scripture in order to

hear what God is trying to tell you through his Word. I would really recommend everyone practicing Lectio Divina each week on the coming Sunday’s Gospel.

Lectors and deacons, take time to sit with the reading you will be proclaiming on Sunday. Study it. Pray with it. Read it several times so that when you proclaim it at Mass, the community will hear it anew and afresh.

I think these “Five Alive” pillars lead us into the liturgy beautifully. I like to think about it like this: David in the Bible had five stones. It took only one stone for him to defeat Goliath. The “Five Alive” are like David’s stones—if you have these five “stones” in your arsenal, then you will have spiritual weaponry straight out of Tradition for living the faith.

Another “Five Alive” practice I would recommend as a starting point would be Eucharistic adoration. I remember when I was in the seventh grade, after class I would take my first-grade sister and make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, just for five to seven minutes. For me, that was a beautiful experience of the Eucharistic Lord. I know I was growing even in that short visit with Jesus. I spoke about this at an all-school Mass in September this past year. Afterward, one of the servers’ mothers wrote me a letter telling me that her daughter wanted to be picked up from school ten minutes later every day so that she could make a short visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

See FAITH, page 9

Training workshops for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

The Diocese of Alexandria will be offering training workshops for those individuals who are interested, who currently may serve, or who have served in the past as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in their parish. To serve in this role, one must be of good standing with their Catholic faith and need the approval of their pastor. Training sessions will cover theology of the Eucharist, practicalities of distribution of Communion at Mass under both

species and taking Communion to the sick or homebound. If you have any questions, please email or call Deacon Jason Lavergne in the Office of Religious Education and Faith formation at dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org or 318-445-6424, ext. 207.

All training workshops will present the same material and will last no longer than three hours. Please sign up for any one that best fits your schedule, at the Diocese website at www.diocesealex.org.

Training workshops will be held:

<p>Saturday, March 4 9:00 a.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria,</p>	<p>Tuesday, March 14 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center Conference Room, Alexandria</p>	<p>Saturday, March 25 9:00 a.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</p>
<p>Saturday, March 11 9:00 a.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches.</p>	<p>Saturday, March 18 9:00 a.m. St. Patrick Church, Ferriday</p>	<p>Saturday, April 15 9:00 a.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria</p>

Catholic aid agencies launch emergency collections for quake victims in Turkey, Syria

NEW YORK (OSV News) — Catholic humanitarian agencies are launching emergency relief campaigns following Feb. 6's devastating earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, which have so far killed more than 7,200 and injured upward of 35,000.

The Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), an agency of the Holy See, is looking to aid over 2,000 families in Syria's Aleppo and Hama regions — already long ravaged by conflict — by providing bedding, food, medicines, infant formula, diapers and clothing. Donations can be made online at <https://cnewa.org/work/emergency-syria>; by phone at 800-442-6392; or by mail to CNEWA headquarters, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the U.S. Catholic Church's overseas relief and development agency, also is accepting donations through its website, crs.org. CRS is partnering with Caritas Turkey, Caritas Syria and Caritas Anatolia — members of Caritas Internationalis, a global confederation of Catholic relief organizations — to shelter displaced victims while ensuring access to food, clean water and hygiene supplies.

CNEWA president Msgr. Peter I. Vaccari said in a Feb. 7 news release his agency's effort



was “a preliminary response” to the disaster, which saw two powerful quakes strike southern Turkey and northern Syria mere hours apart.

The first quake, a 7.8 magnitude tremor, occurred just after 4 a.m. during a winter storm, followed by a 6.7 magnitude aftershock. The second quake, registering 7.5, hit nine hours later some 60 miles away. Numerous aftershocks have followed the quakes, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Thousands of buildings have collapsed, with rescue efforts hampered by inclement weather

and damaged roads. Rescuers, joined by international teams, are racing against time to extricate survivors from the rubble.

“Survivors are still processing the shock of the earthquake, searching through the rubble and assisting in rescue efforts,” said CNEWA Beirut regional director Michel Constantin, whose team manages emergency programs throughout the region. “There is a general

state of panic, exacerbated by the harsh weather, complicating rescue efforts and the capacity to collect and assess data and plan accordingly.”

Even prior to the quake, 4.1 million in Syria depended on humanitarian aid due to a long-running civil war that since 2011 has ravaged the nation.

“The situation is tragic. ... We have opened our convent

doors to hundreds of families who have lost their houses, and their number is increasing by the hour,” said Blue Marist Brother Georges Sabe, whose order — which CNEWA's campaign will aid — is sheltering up to 1,000 families in Aleppo, coordinating with the Franciscan Friars and the Salesian Fathers.

Brother Sabe said, “The elderly, children and women ... are now in urgent need of food, clothes, medications and most of all, comfort and warmth in this harsh winter.”

CNEWA's campaign also will bolster outreach by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which currently aids more than 850 families in the Aleppo region through local churches' extensive network of parishes and schools. Through CNEWA, the society will receive mattresses, pillows, blankets, food, water and medicines, as well as milk, infant formula and diapers.

In the Syrian city of Hama, about 153 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake, CNEWA will assist three emergency shelters for more than 150 families who have lost their homes due to the quakes.

“We lived and survived the long years of war but never experienced this kind of fear,” said Bishop Abdo Abrash of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Homs, Hama and Yabroud, which is running the shelters. “It is true misery ... there is a lack of first aid equipment to tend to the survivors.”

Constantin said amid the “chaotic” situation on the ground, “this is a critical moment to help heal those who have survived, those who ‘saw death,’ as one of our partners told me.”

Along with financial support, prayer remains an essential response to the tragedy, said Msgr. Vaccari.

“Even though we at CNEWA are accustomed to tragedies and emergencies, we are not immune to their toll,” he said. “We ask for your prayers of support and consolation for the victims of this horror, your prayers for those who have lost their lives and those who mourn them.”

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45 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD. Fr. Ramji Shoury, pastor of Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen, LA, celebrated 45th anniversary of priesthood last month.

Seminary Come and See Weekend

St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College will have its Spring Come and See weekend from March 31 - April 2, 2023. This is a great opportunity for any male 16 years old or older to come and see the seminary campus and what seminary life is like. For more information, please contact the Director of Vocations, Father Luke LaFleur at frllafleur@diocesealex.org.

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

January 2023 Donations

Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Rickey Gremillion Burse	
Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Vanderlick	\$100.00
Monsignor Julius G. Walle Burse	
Mrs. Barbara Rigby	\$100.00
Leo P. Dobard Burse	
Ms. Patricia Vandersypen-Basco	\$100.00
Jerome and Audrey Vandersypen Burse	
Dr. Joseph W. Landreneau	\$500.00
Edna Rabalais Burse	
Total	\$850.00

Correction from Complete Seminary Burse List:

Left off of Completed Burses at \$15,000 each:
Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Shores

FAITH

(continued from pg. 7)

Praying the Mass

Colleen: Do you have any tips for paying better attention during the Mass?

Bishop Ricken: In the sacristies of the Sisters of Charity, a priest will always find these words: "Father, pray this Mass as if it were your first Mass. Pray this Mass as if it were your last Mass. Pray this Mass as if it were your only Mass." I would like to say that this is the key to really praying the Mass for the whole congregation.

Everybody is invited to pray the Mass. You, too, brothers and sisters, pray this Mass as if it were the first time you ever attended Mass. Pray this Mass as if you were going to die today. Pray this Mass as if it were the only time you ever got to go. Even if we just did this alone, we would change the culture.

A Cause for Hope

Colleen: Bishop, what do you see in your diocese and parishes today that gives you hope?

Bishop Ricken: I see a lot of spiritual hunger among the young adults and families, and that gives me hope.

I believe that connecting

with young adults is vital. Of course, they approach things very differently. We need to listen to them, engage with them, and get ideas from them. Young people want to be invited in a different way. I have a lot of hope that we can be more welcoming in the proper sense and rejoice in the fact that young people are among us in our parishes! I trust that we can learn their language and that, as we welcome them, they in turn will feel so much at home that they will want to then welcome their own friends. It is my great hope that a few of our parishes will develop strong young adult ministries, and from there it'll grow throughout the diocese.

I have a lot of hope in the young generation. I really do.

With the encouragement to be open and welcoming, Bishop Ricken hopes that we will carry this sense of renewal with us, to one another, and into our relationship with our Eucharistic Lord. In joy and gratitude, he has seen his own diocese embrace new practices to enhance their own faith; and he hopes, in this same spirit, that we are able to do the same.

seminary bursees

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. A Seminary Burse may be names of anyone - bishop, priests, religious, or lay person - chosen by the original donor, and may be added to and allowed to grow. A burse is completed when it reaches \$15,000.00 but another burse of the same name can be started. Contributions to any of the bursees or to establish a new burse should be sent to the Chancery Office, Post Office Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306-0417.
--- Very Reverend M. Craig Scott

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.

11 prayer for priests

Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville appointed fifth bishop of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux

Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, STL, D.Min., currently an auxiliary bishop and vicar general of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. The announcement was made the morning of Feb. 1 in Rome and Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.

"I am deeply humbled and thankful to our holy Father for his acceptance of me as the next Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux," says Bishop Dorsonville. "I have a deep love for the Lord and His Church, and a keen interest in learning more about Houma-Thibodaux, listening to her needs and dreams, and discerning where the Holy Spirit will lead us."

Bishop Dorsonville will be installed as the new Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux on Wednesday, March 29, 2023, at the Cathedral of St. Francis de Sales in Houma. He will succeed bishop Shelton J. Fabre, who was installed as Archbishop of Louisville, Kentucky, on March 30, 2022. Very Rev. Patrick "P.J." Madden has served Houma-Thibodaux as the diocesan administrator since April 1, 2022, during Sede Vacante.

"With great gratitude to the Holy Spirit and to our diocesan family for their prayers, I am delighted by the appointment of Bishop Mario Dorsonville to pastor our diocese into the future for the glory of God and the salvation of souls," says Very



B MARIO E. DORSONVILLE. On Feb. 1, Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville was appointed fifth bishop of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

Rev. Madden.

Bishop Dorsonville was born October 31, 1960, in Bogota, Colombia, and attended the Major Seminary of the Archdiocese of Bogota, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy in 1981 and a Bachelor's degree in Sacred Theology in 1985. He was ordained to the priesthood on November 23, 1985, in Bogota. Following ordination, he served as a priest in Bogota and Professor of Business Ethics (1990-1991) at the National University of Colombia, Bogota.

Bishop Dorsonville received a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogota in 1991 and a Doctorate in Ministry from The

Catholic University of America in 1996. He returned briefly to Colombia to serve as Chaplain and Professor of Business Ethics at the National University of Colombia and Professor of Pastoral Counseling and Catechesis at the Major Seminary of the Archdiocese of Bogota from 1995 - 1996.

His first appointment within the Archdiocese of Washington was as Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Bethesda, Maryland (1997 - 2004). He also served as Parochial Vicar of St. Mark the Evangelist parish in Hyattsville, Maryland (2004 - 2005).

He was named an Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of

Washington by Pope Francis on March 20, 2015, and ordained to the episcopate on April 20, 2015. He has served as Vicar General for the Archdiocese of Washington since 2015. Bishop Dorsonville was the chairman of the Migration and Refugee Services committee

for the USCCB (2019 - 2022). Currently, he serves as a member of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, Committee on Migration and Refugees, Committee on Religious Liberty, and the Adhoc Committee Against Racism.



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The Kingdom

by Marcus Descant, Leesville, LA

Our Lord and Savior came
down to earth
Opening the gates of HIS Kingdom
by HIS birth.

The Kingdom is a place we
all want to be
A place of beauty we all need to see.

HIS love for us is ever so great
If we follow HIS will,
It will never be too late.

By HIS death and resurrection
HE opened the door
Because of HIS mercy we were
given a chance once more.

So to be with HIM in
HIS kingdom above
We should treat all people with
HIS kind of love.

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Let your inconvenience be for Him.

By *Laura Kelly Fanucci*

Lent is so inconvenient. More prayer, more penance. Less feasting, less indulgence. Honestly, I'm tired and cranky and selfish—and Lent brings all of these to the forefront. It is my least favorite liturgical season because it forces me to confront my flaws and fears and failings. Inconvenient. (Coincidentally, this is why I need Lent the most.)

Inconvenience isn't something we celebrate in our culture. When was the last time you bought a product that promised to be inconvenient? We want faster, smarter, sleeker, better. We are creatures of comfort, and we purr happily when we stroke our egos. We believe convenience is a necessity of modern living. I need my calendar, my contacts, my deadlines and distractions right at my fingertips. Excuse me while I sync my devices so everything is up to speed.

But here we go again

with that counter-cultural call of Christ. See today's First Reading: that righteous one who is inconvenient to the rest. Who really wants to change their ways to be holy and blameless in the sight of God?

Except here's the rub. All this seeking to do the will of God, all this obedience we're supposed to be about as people of faith? It was inconvenient for Christ, too.

See today's Gospel. Jesus can't travel freely because His enemies want to kill Him. Inconvenient. He has to keep preaching the same message because people misunderstand. Inconvenient. Authorities seek to arrest and kill Him. Super inconvenient.

But Jesus keeps on with His inconvenient ways because they are God's ways. Holy, righteous, and true. This is Lent's reminder, too. Discipleship is not meant to be comfortable and convenient. It is meant to draw us closer to Christ.

So when you turn down that glass of wine or piece of cake or meat on Fridays, let your inconvenience be for Him.

When you turn the light back on to pray before bed, or when you rearrange your schedule to get to Mass, let your inconvenience be for Him.

When you squeeze your budget to give to the poor, or when you stop from splurging on yourself so you can share with others, let all your inconvenience be for Him.

Let us be inconvenient Christians. Let our words ring true and our trust run deep. Let us be called children of an inconvenient God.

Laura Kelly Fanucci is a mother, writer, and theological researcher. She and her husband are raising three little boys in the suburban wilds of Minnesota.



MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS, WOODWORTH. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass on Sunday, Jan. 29 at Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH. On Jan. 10, St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA had a new stained glass window installed. On Jan. 22, the window was formally blessed with the parish present after the Sunday Mass. The window depicts the traditional image of St. Joseph holding the child Jesus.



Off Campus Mass Schedule

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville would like to share their off-campus Mass schedule for the following locations:

Tuesday of the 1st full week of the month:
Hilltop Nursing Home at 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday of the 2nd full week of the month:
The Oaks Care Center at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday of the 3rd full week of the month:
St. Christina Nursing and Rehabilitation Center at 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday of the 4th full week of the month:
Pine Grove Apartments at 9:00 a.m.

*celebrating life
around our diocese*



MARCH FOR LIFE CENLA. Parishioners from Mater Dolorosa (ABOVE) and Holy Savior Menard students and faculty (BELOW) showed their support for life by participating in the March for Life in Pineville.



MARCH FOR LIFE NATCHITOCHE'S. The second annual Natchitoches March for Life was hosted by the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception and St. Mary's Catholic School on Jan. 28.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass and visited OLPS School on Feb. 3 as part of their Catholic Schools Week celebration.



PILGRIMAGE TO WASHINGTON, DC. From Jan. 18-22, Father Luke Lafleur, vocations director for the diocese, traveled with Holy Savior Menard students and chaperones on their recent pilgrimage to Washington, DC and Emmitsburg, Maryland. Part of the trip was to attend the March for Life in Washington, DC, and the other part was to visit several holy sites. Some of the sites visited were: The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in DC, the Dominican House of Studies in DC, the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, and the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Emmitsburg.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. Grandparent's Day during Catholic Schools week at St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. Bishop Robert Marshall visited with principal Sandra Norsworthy and students during Catholic Schools Week.



HOLY SAVIOR MENARD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Grandparents Day Mass during Catholic Schools Week.



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE. Bishop Robert Marshall visited with pastor Fr. Martin Laird and students during Catholic Schools Week.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL, BUNKIE. Bishop Robert Marshall visited with principal Sandra Norsworthy and students during Catholic Schools Week.



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEs. During Catholic Schools Week, students from St. Mary's Catholic School hosted a "Baby Shower For Jesus" by collecting infant supplies for the Women's Resource Center. The donation was given to the center during morning prayer. Morgan LaCaze, Executive Director, informed the student body of the array of services that WRC provides to women in the community. Front row (l-r): Lisa Guillet, Brandi Harrington,



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION SCHOOL, COTTONPORT. On Friday, Jan. 20, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass with the Angels of St. Mary's Assumption School in Cottonport. Thank you to Father John Wiltse, Deacon Doug Moureau, Principal Mr. Blaine Dauzat, and the faculty, administration, parents, and students for their welcome. Bishop was photographed with the eighth grade students and with the impressive sixty voice choir. After Mass and photos, Fr. Wiltse, Mr. Dauzat, and Bishop Marshall visited the classrooms and saw the students at work.

Dynamic Catholic partners with Flocknote to deliver life-changing content directly to parishes nationwide

ERLANGER, KY, -- Dynamic Catholic, an organization founded by Matthew Kelly and best known for its innovative approach to evangelization and life-changing content, has partnered with Flocknote, the premier communication management tool helping Catholic parishes engage, inform, and inspire their parishioners.

For each of the past five years, Dynamic Catholic's Best Lent Ever experience has inspired over a million Catholics worldwide to rediscover the meaning and joy that comes through a life with God. Now, when the partnership with Flocknote is formally launched this Lent, parishes will be able to offer that same experience directly to their parishioners.

"The impact Best Lent Ever has had on millions of people is



rewarding and life-changing, but we felt called to more," said Jack Beers, Vice President of Ministry at Dynamic Catholic. "Giving the keys to this content directly to parishes via Flocknote means those parishes will soon see the life-altering impact it has in the context of their own community.

They'll get the credit, and that's what we want."

Flocknote, used by thousands of parishes nationwide, includes email, texting, and development tools to make engagement with parishioners effortless. Instead of Catholics going directly to Dynamic Catholic for Best Lent

Ever, the parish gets the full benefit of a community-wide experience through Flocknote. Matthew Warner, founder and CEO of Flocknote, says he's ecstatic that whole parish communities will have the opportunity to go through this life-changing program together, creating a real spark in the life of the parish community.

"The ability to unleash Dynamic Catholic's Best Lent Ever program free to parishes nationwide is a powerful next step in our mission to support the evangelization efforts of every parish in America," said Matthew Warner, founder and CEO of Flocknote. "With this life-changing content, parishes can enter into a dynamic conversation within their faith community, leading to renewed commitment to God, one another, and their parish."

The partnership with Flocknote is Dynamic Catholic's first in several years. Beer says that this was intentional:

"At Dynamic Catholic, we've been very disciplined for many years in delivering the promises of the mission. As a result of that, we haven't had the bandwidth for collaboration. That's changed now. And it's a strategic move. The first of many collaborations to come. I'm so glad it's starting with Flocknote and serving parishes directly. So there will definitely be more exciting content from Dynamic Catholic made available to parishes through Flocknote all year long. What's next exactly, depends on what we learn from Best Lent Ever!"

For parishes interested in doing Best Lent Ever with their whole parish this Lent, visit flocknote.com/best-lent-ever.

Lenten activities around the diocese

Adult Faith Formation Series

Tuesdays during Lent, 10:00-11:30 a.m., Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth

Lenten Adult Education Series on racism

Wednesdays March 1, 8, 15, 22, 5:30 p.m., St. James Memorial Church, Alexandria

Lenten Reflection Series

Thursdays during Lent, 6:00 p.m., St. Frances Cabrini Church Ducote Hall, Alexandria

Penance Services

Thursday, March 30, 6:30 p.m., St Rita Church Alexandria

Wednesday, April 5, 6:00 p.m., Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth

Stations of the Cross

Fridays: 12:05 and 5:30 p.m. St. Joseph Church (Outdoor Prayer Garden), Marksville
2:00 and 5:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria
5:30 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria (followed by Lenten supper)
5:30 p.m. St. Mary's Church, Winnsboro
6:00 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria
6:00 p.m., Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
6:00 p.m., Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen

Stations of the Cross, continued:

Mondays, before 9:30 a.m. Mass, St. Charles Chapel, Goudeau

Monday, March 13, TBA, St. Rita Church, Alexandria

Fish Fry

Fridays during Lent (not on Good Friday), 4:30-6:30 p.m., St. Rita Holy Family Center, Alexandria, \$10 each.

Fridays during Lent, 5:00-7:00 p.m., Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth.

Fridays during Lent, Feb. 24, March 3, 10, 17: Sacred Heart of Jesus will be selling fish plates in Mac's Grocery parking lot on Hwy 28E in Pineville from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. or until sold out. Cost is \$12 per plate and includes 1/2 pound Louisiana catfish, 1/2 pound french fries, 3 hush puppies.

"Lent comes providentially to reawaken us,
to shake us from our lethargy."

// pope francis



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

Psalm 95: 8 | Responsorial Psalm for March 12
Third Sunday of Lent

“The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.”

// pope benedict xvi

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.

Insights Prayer Group // every Tuesday

The Insights Prayer Group (formerly Tuesday Afternoon Prayer Group) has resumed its weekly meetings every Tuesday at 12:45 p.m. in the **Sacred Heart of Jesus Church Community Center, Pineville**. Anyone interested in gaining insight into the role of Sacred Scripture and power of prayer as tools to navigate Catholic life in the present is invited to attend. For more information, contact Melba LaCaze at 318-445-6851 or Rhonda England at 318-452-9739.

St. Nicholas Thrift Shop // Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Church St. Nicholas Thrift Shop is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. The Thrift Shop is located at 616 Lakeview Street, Pineville. For more information, call 318-442-2072.

Food Pantry Distribution, Pineville // every other Wednesday

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 600 Lakeview Street, Pineville. Distribution bags are for “cook” and “non cook,” bread, sandwiches, personal hygiene items (when in supply) will be available. Food distribution will be every other Wednesday, from 8:00 a.m. until noon, in front of the church office. Please call Linda Boniol for more information at 318-623-1492.

Book Study on Saints // every Wednesday

Every Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m., Father Taylor Reynolds will lead a book study on his recently published book titled, “*No Longer Strangers*.” Discussion will follow 5:00 p.m. Adoration and confession, and 6:00 p.m. Mass at **St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA**. For more information or to acquire a book, contact Fr. Taylor at stjosephinstjoe@gmail.com or 318-766-3565.

Maryhill 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 and High Worship at 7:20 p.m. and Healing Prayer at 8:00 p.m. (Closing by 11:00 p.m.). Wheelchair accessible. Directed by Jim Gootee. For more information, call Joey LaFossee at 318-332-2234 or Bob Weeks at 318-442-1794.

Food Pantry // every 2nd and 4th Thursday

The St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry is open every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. It is a walk-in style pantry, located on the backside of **St. Francis of Assisi Church in Waterproof, LA**. All are welcome to come and receive or to donate.

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.

Disalced Carmelites Meeting // every 2nd Saturday

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

St. Timothy Food Pantry // last Saturday every month

Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Alexandria conducts St. Timothy Food Pantry distributions on the last Saturday of every month from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at the St. Timothy Center, 409 21st Street. Anyone in need of food is welcome to come. For more information, contact Chris Bayonne at 318-955-1222.

Holy Hour with Benediction, Moreauville // every weekend

Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville has Holy Hour with Benediction every weekend before Mass. The times are: before Saturday Vigil Mass, starting at 3:00 p.m., and before Sunday evening Mass starting at 4:00 p.m.

National Eucharistic Revival - sign up for the newsletter!

The Diocese of Alexandria is participating in the National Eucharistic Revival. The mission of this three-year revival is “To renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.” Stay current with the National movement by registering to receive the weekly “Heart of the Revival Newsletter.” To do so, visit eucharisticrevival.org, and provide your name and email address.

Please visit www.diocesealex.org, the Diocese of Alexandria on Facebook, or your church parish’s website for the most up to date information on ministries and service opportunities.

Why we need Hispanic teachers in Catholic schools

By *Hosffman Ospino*
Our Sunday Visitor

It's been a year since Boston College released the results of "Cultivating Talent: A Summary of Findings from the National Study Examining Pathways to Increase the Presence of Hispanic Teachers and Leaders in Catholic Schools." My colleague Dr. Melodie Wytenbach and I served as the principal investigators for the project.

Much has happened during this time. More than 100 Catholic leaders met last October at Boston College for a national summit on Hispanic Catholic educators. In December, the *Journal of Catholic Education* published a special issue based on the study (accessible without cost).

Blogs, podcasts, interviews, presentations, magazine articles and many conversations have engaged the results of the study during this time. The conversation is just beginning.

Why must the conversation about the need to increase the number of Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools continue? Why should we support these educators? Here are three main reasons, which are spelled out in more detail in the "Cultivating Talent" report.

First, demographics. Yes, knowing who we are today can help us plan better for tomorrow.



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE. On Friday, Jan. 27, St. Joseph School in Plaucheville celebrated the 100th day of school. Students were asked to wear a 100th Day of School shirt or dress as a 100 year-old person.



About 45% of Catholics in the United States are Hispanic. So is nearly 60% of the school-age Catholic population. Catholic school populations need to keep working at mirroring the population in our Catholic parishes and neighborhoods. In many corners of the country, that population is Hispanic.

Increasing the Hispanic population in Catholic schools cannot be limited to student enrollment. We need more Hispanic teachers and leaders as well. They serve as role models for all students, particularly Hispanic students.

Any Hispanic student should be able to say, "One day I want to be a teacher — or a leader — like my Hispanic teacher." Seeing oneself reflected in those we admire is important. That includes finding connections on matters such as race, ethnicity, culture and language.

Second, Hispanic teachers and leaders naturally embody important intercultural competencies necessary to

educate the next generation of Catholics and citizens to succeed in a diverse society. Most of these teachers are bilingual and bicultural. They enter the classroom as cultural brokers who connect well with children who are Hispanic, as well as children from other cultures and races and their families.

Living amidst diversity requires that our children in Catholic schools learn skills and attitudes that help them to appreciate difference. They also need to learn how to live amid tensions and disagreements. Most Hispanic teachers and leaders learned these competencies growing up in the U.S. or adapting to this society as immigrants. Their wisdom enhances the Catholic educational experience in unimaginable ways.

Finally, most Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools are practicing Catholics. They value the richness of the church's sacramental and spiritual life, and are sincerely committed to strengthening the Catholic

identity of our schools. They often draw from the vibrancy that identifies practices of popular Catholicism. Their presence is positive for our schools.

The "Cultivating Talent" report shows that Hispanic teachers and leaders have a special commitment to advocacy and the church's social teaching. They are aware of the struggles that large numbers of Hispanics face in our society, since many of them face similar struggles, and want to ensure everyone they engage lives with dignity.

For Hispanic teachers and

leaders in Catholic schools, the education of the next generation of Catholics, a largely Hispanic body, is a personal responsibility shaped by their cultural identity. They are leading the way. May the conversation about increasing the number of Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools continue with the same vibrancy as in the last year.

Hosffman Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.



Upcoming Retreats

March 16 - 19
St. Michael, Leesville
Men's ACTS

March 23 - 26
Sacred Heart, Pineville
Men's ACTS

March 30 - April 2
St. Joseph, Marksville
Men's ACTS

A list of ACTS Retreat dates can be found at www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/. All retreats are held at Maryhill Renewal Center.

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**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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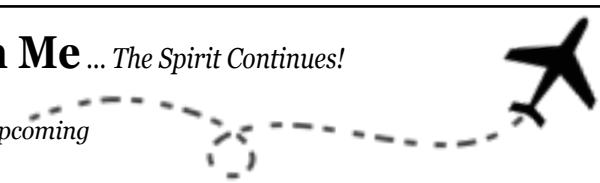
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there is nothing I shall want.*

Psalm 23: 1 | Responsorial Psalm for March 19
Fourth Sunday of Lent

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I said to him, 'Do you see this vessel...? Can it be called by any other name than what it is? So also I cannot call myself by any other name than what I am - a Christian.

// saint perpetua

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Parenting the digital world

*By Kristin Bird
Life Teen International*

About a month ago, I was sitting in the toasty warm ski chalet with a group of fellow parent ski club chaperones watching our middle schoolers brave the slopes when the conversation turned to social media.

“It seems like it causes SO much drama,” one mom said. “I just don’t know enough about how anything other than Facebook works to be able to do anything about it.”

“I agree 100%,” another dad chimed in. “I have no idea what my son is doing on there most of the time, and I don’t have any idea how to check.”

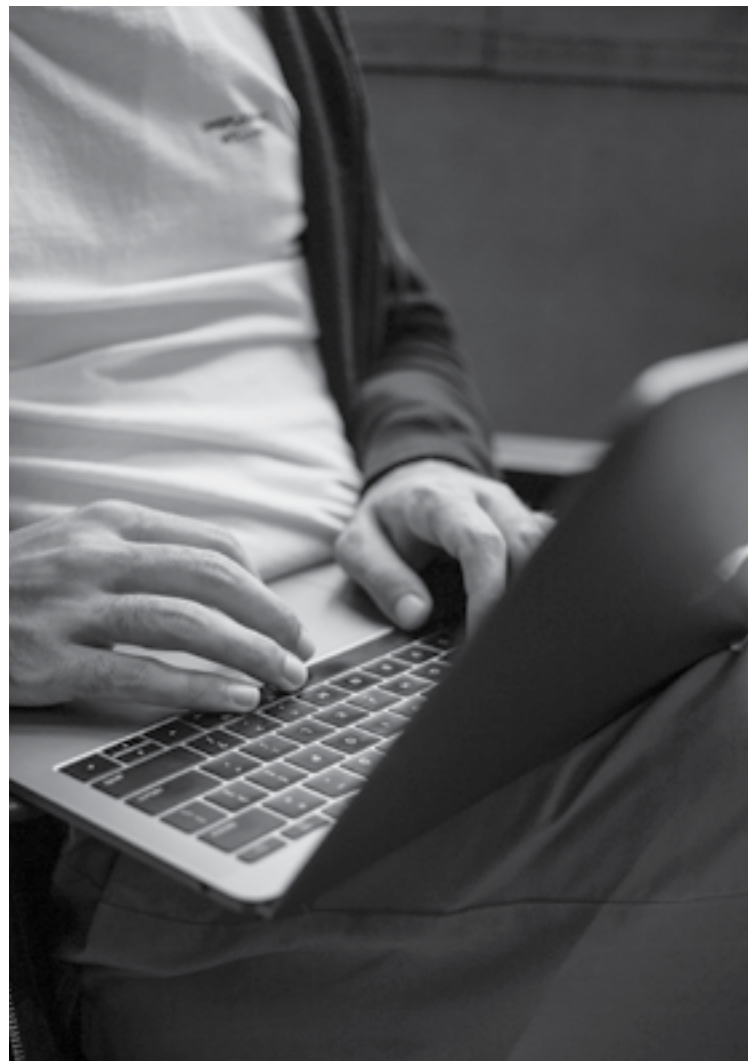
Before offering my own thoughts, I braced myself. I anticipated that most parents would be shocked to discover

that our teenagers (a 6th grader, a Freshman, and a Junior) don’t get smartphones until Freshman year. They are not allowed to have social media of any kind until age 17, and their use of technology is regularly monitored. What I didn’t anticipate was the questions, interest, and affirmation that quickly followed.

How do your kids stay connected to their friends without social media? Isn’t it socially necessary for them in today’s world?

Social media – particularly Snapchat – is one of the primary ways teenagers today communicate. In a 2020 survey, 34% of teenagers listed Snapchat as their favorite social media, followed closely by TikTok (29%) and Instagram (25%).

However, social media is not



How do I start a conversation about this with my teens?

When we initially decided to hold off on smartphones until high school and social media until age 17, we got a lot of pushback from our kids. “But why?” they asked repeatedly. We found the best way to start the conversation was to share our own struggles.

“Do you think we spend too much time on our phones?” we asked them. They agreed immediately. “We think so too. We’re adults, with fully developed brains, pretty well-formed consciences, and years of practice controlling our impulses...but we still struggle not to let these devices consume our lives. It doesn’t seem fair to ask you to try to regulate your technology use when we can’t even do it well ourselves.”

My kids know way more about this stuff than I do. What can I do to help my teenagers?

Today, many teens are allowed to have unfiltered Internet access, and parents feel they don’t know enough or don’t have the time to sufficiently monitor their activity. However, we cannot assume that our teens self-monitor and self-regulate their own usage. After all, they are still teenagers and can struggle just as much as we did as teenagers with some of those self-regulation and impulse control skills.

At some point, they will have to learn how to use social media and technology well, and that’s something we can help teach and coach our children to do.

Monitor Use

My husband is a public high

the only way they stay connected. Texting, Google chat and the voice and text chat options available through many game consoles (Xbox, Playstation, etc.) are other ways to stay connected. Our teenagers have used and still use all of these to communicate with their friends.

That’s not to say they never feel left out. The two high schoolers have shared with us that there are times they have struggled socially because of our family’s social media

restrictions. However, our kids have also acknowledged the value of not having social media. For example, when her friend group was going through a turbulent time of elevated drama, our Freshman daughter came to us and said, “As much as I still want Snapchat, right now I’m kind of glad I don’t have it. Everyone else is totally consumed by the drama, but I have a built-in excuse not to get involved.”

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school principal. He often makes phone calls home to parents about bullying, nudity, or illegal activity popping up on a student's social media account. He always starts by asking parents if they have their child's login and password for the phone or the relevant app. All too often, the answer is, "No."

Teens should not be allowed to have any account – social media or otherwise – that parents do not have to access to. This does not mean that you have to constantly be scrolling through their text conversations or Instagram DMs. You don't even have to know what an Instagram DM is!

What's important is that our teens know that we could, at any time, be checking in on their online behavior the same way we check in on their grades. This is a lot easier to set up as an expectation from the beginning than it is to institute later. If

you want to check in but don't understand the technology, many online tutorials and platforms can help.

We also use monitoring software to alert us to anything suspicious that pops up on our kids' phones. Bark, Covenant Eyes, Disney Circle, and iOS Screen Time are all technologies we have used. Just be aware that there are some apps (Snapchat & Discord) that monitoring software usually cannot track.

Graduated Technology Licensing

We recommend starting teens off with a phone restricted to just the essential apps: call, text, map, weather, and calculator. Then, as they demonstrate more responsibility, add the apps that are most important to them (games, Netflix, email, etc.). The best part about this is that if they

misuse or overuse an app, you can remove that app (rather than having to take away the whole phone) until they can re-earn that trust.

Set Expectations & Consequences Early

We give our kids cell phone contracts when they first get their smartphones. Those contracts included the cost of the phone plan and how much we expected them to contribute to that cost. It also included some of our rules for technology use in our home:

- No phones are allowed in bedrooms
- Phones must be in the centrally located charging station (in our kitchen) by XX time each evening.
- All new apps downloaded require parental permission
- Parents must be given all passwords and login information
- No nudity, illegal activity, or bullying

It also spelled out the consequences for breaking these rules.

When faced with taking away a phone or deactivating a social media account due to misuse, parents often fear that it will just "make things terrible at home." Setting these expectations up from the beginning helps us not respond out of anger when something goes wrong. Instead, we can calmly look at the expectations and consequences together and implement what we all agreed to when tempers weren't so hot.

Be a Good Role Model

Our 6th grader wears his lack of smartphone as a badge of honor right now. "I'm the only one whose face isn't constantly on a screen," he said during a recent family dinner. He wasn't wrong. The hardest challenge we've faced is recognizing when our own social media & technology use is getting in the way of our time with our family.

My phone is where I get my daily news, sports updates, and side-splitting laughs that brighten my day. Social media helps me stay connected with people I have not seen in years. At the push of a button, I can

see my nephew in another state receive an award from school or watch my godson's basketball game on livestream. But it can also get in the way of quality time I need to spend with my spouse and children. I can easily escape into a world of endless scrolling instead of being present to the people right in front of me.

We've added a few additional safeguards in our family to try to help us all with this temptation. We've implemented "No Screen Sunday," where the only screentime allowed is a sporting event or movie the whole family watches together. In addition, we've designated our dinner table as a "Screen-Free Zone."

Kristin Bird is a wife, mother, disciple of Jesus, and Catholic evangelizer. Her gift of teaching, love of storytelling, and passion for the faith help her live her mission in life: to set the world ablaze from the frozen tundra (Luke 12: 49). Kristin and her husband Tony live in Oshkosh, WI with their three teenage children.

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*With the Lord there is mercy
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Psalm 130: 7 | Responsorial Psalm for March 26
Fifth Sunday of Lent

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LSU-ALEXANDRIA CATHOLIC STUDENT ORGANIZATION LUNCH. On Wednesday, Jan. 25, following the 11:00 a.m. Mass, the Belgian American Club of Alexandria cooked hamburgers and fed the students, faculty, and staff of LSU-Alexandria.

SEEK CONFERENCE. Students from LSU-Alexandria Catholic Student Organization attended the SEEK Conference in St. Louis, MO, Jan. 1 - 6. SEEK Conferences, part of the ministry of FOCUS International, features prayer, adoration, Scripture, and the sacraments.

JUNIOR STATE BETA CONVENTION, LAFAYETTE.

St Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie went to Junior State Beta Convention in Lafayette early February participating in over 20 different categories including group performing arts, various art categories, academic testing, spelling bee, creative writing, and speech. Student Brees V. [redacted] was awarded second place in the state speech competition, earning an invitation to compete at national beta convention this summer and Lilly N. [redacted] and Kami T. [redacted] earned premier performer junior dancer recognitions, earning them each an invitation to perform in the opening ceremony at national beta convention this summer.



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STUDENT OF THE YEAR. The Student of the Year competition was held at the St. Joseph Catholic Center on Jan. 26. 5th grade winners were: 1st Place, Eve H [redacted], OLPS; 2nd Place, Parker S [redacted], Cabrini; 3rd Place, Katie M [redacted], St. Anthony. 8th grade winners were: 1st place, Emily W [redacted], Menard; 2nd Place, Natalie P [redacted], Cabrini; 3rd Place, Parker P [redacted], St. Anthony. 12th grade winners were: 1st Place, Noah G [redacted], Menard; 2nd Place, Mason M [redacted], St. Mary's (Natchitoches); 3rd Place, Bryce D [redacted], St. Joseph.



PATRIOTIC ESSAY WINNER. Marley S [redacted] was recognized as the Knights of Columbus Patriotic Essay 11th grade winner at the diocesan level. Her essay will not move to be judged at the state level. Congratulations, Marley!

Steubenville South 2023 won't be the same without your teens! // Register now!



Gather your high school students to join us this summer for a life-changing encounter.

At the Steubenville South High School Youth Conference, June 23 - 25, your teens will experience the peace of Jesus Christ through inspiring talks, praise and worship, and the sacraments; connect with hundreds of other Catholic teens; return home with memories that will last a lifetime, knowing that they are never alone.

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

We would so love for you and your teens to join us! Registration is now open. Visit www.steubenvillesouth.com to register, or contact the Steubenville South Office at info@steubenvillesouth.com or 318-448-6120 for more information. Follow us on Instagram @steubiesouth for updates.

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

June 23 - 25, 2023

**Join Host Chris Padgett
Speakers Bishop Joseph Espallat,
Jason Evert,
Jackie Francois Angel,
and Chris Mueller
Worship Leader Josh Blakesley**

*"Come to me all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."
// Matthew 11: 28*

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Lenten Adult Education Series**- March 1, 8, 15, 22**

"I Do Believe: Confronting Racism Through The Eyes of The Gospel" at St. James Memorial Church, Alexandria. All are welcome.

Each evening begins with Mass at 5:30 p.m., followed by presentations/discussions until 7:30 p.m.; presented by Fr. Craig Scott, VG and pastor of St. James Memorial, and Sharon Metoyerjones, retired educator of 33 years.

We will:

- Explore the roots of African-American Catholicism
- Present a history of racism and its causes and evils
- Reflect on Pastoral documents of the US Bishops, including Brothers and Sisters To Us (1979) and its following document (2004); Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love (2018); and Radiate Christ (2020)

- Discuss realistic ways to confront and eventually overcome racism

For more information, contact Fr. Scott at 445-6424, ext. 204

Silent Directed Retreat - March 2-5

The Diocese of Alexandria, along with clergy, deacons and spiritual directors are hosting a silent retreat during lent, on March 2-5 at Maryhill. This retreat is to all men and women 18 or older, who are seeking quiet reflective prayer time. Your time at Maryhill will include daily Mass and adoration, daily time with a spiritual director and the sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered. The Retreat starts on Thursday night and ends Sunday at 3pm. Retreat fees of \$275 include a private room on the north side of Maryhill and meals. A deposit of \$75 and a registration form is needed to secure your spot. Limited availability. To register contact Renée Aldridge 318-542-1966 at renee.aldridge1@gmail.com or Ingrid Canella at icnewell@yahoo.com.

ATP Pro Golf Tour benefitting Manna House - March 8-11

The annual ATP Pro Golf Tour and the Hixson Ford ProAm Golf Tournament will be held March 8-11 in Alexandria and benefit Manna House.

Professional golfers from all over the world will travel to Alexandria for the Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper Open

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

March 8 - 11 and the Hixson Ford ProAM Tournament will be held on Tuesday, March 7 at Links on the Bayou Golf Course. Each ProAM team of three (3) will be paired with a professional golfer. Entry fee is \$1,000 per team and includes green fees, golf cart, hole sponsorship, food and drinks including the opportunity to play with a professional golfer. Entry forms are available on the Manna House website at www.givetomannahouse.com.

Sponsorship packages are available including Presenting Sponsors, Driving Range, Putting Green, Cart Sign, Hole Sponsors. For more information contact Theresa Slater, tournament chairperson at 318-664-3603 or Jessica Viator at 318-445-9053.

Marriage Help - March 10-12

Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi) has helped tens of thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment or misery in their marriage. This program can help you, too. For confidential information about, or to register for the program beginning with a weekend on March 10 - 12, call Randall and Robin at 225-271-4092, or visit the website at www.helpourmarriage.org. Retrouvaille is a three-phase program for marriages that helps couples face their marriage challenges in a productive and healthy way. It begins with a weekend retreat, followed by post weekend follow-up sessions, and ongoing monthly marriage support.

Pro-Life Pulse Immersion**• March 11**

PULSE Immersion Days are Saturday retreats designed to educate and empower pro-life young people to carry the pro-life message back to their schools, churches, and peers! Sessions cover why we're pro-life and the impact of abortion, pro-life persuasion, the adoption option, woman's resources, and how to be an advocate for life! Join us on Saturday, March 11 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at St. Mary's School, Natchitoches. For more information

contact abbyrose@prolifelouisiana.org, or to register visit profilepulsela.com.

Discalced Carmelite meeting**- March 11**

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. **If you plan to attend.....Please call Mary Jo McCoy at the numbers listed above OR Deacon Bill Travis at 318 640-2827 or 318 664-7069 and someone will meet you at the Maryhill gate.

2nd Annual Women's Day of Reflection:**- March 11**

Sponsored by St. Frances Cabrini Sanctuary Society. The "All About Eve" Women's Day of Reflection will take place on Saturday, March 11 from 9:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. at St. Frances Cabrini Church 2211 E. Texas Ave. Alexandria, LA 71301 in Ducote Hall. (Registration begins at 8:45 a.m.) Speakers will be Fr. Chad Partain, pastor of Cabrini Church, and Fr. Robert Johnson, parochial vicar. The day will end with opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (3:30 - 4:15 p.m.) and Holy Mass at 4:30 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided. \$20 per person.

ShamRockin' FEST - March 17

ShamRockin' FEST will be held at Lagniappe Theatre on Friday, Mar. 17 starting at 7:00 p.m. Dancing, cash bar, food, silent auction, pub crawl. Tickets are \$50 per person. Interested in forming a drink team? Call Mallory at (985) 991-6601. To purchase tickets, visit HSMFEST.com. All proceeds benefit Holy Savior Menard Central High School. This is not a school event and is for adults only.

Quiz Bowl - March 18

The Diocesan Quiz Bowl competition for Jr. High students will be held at St. Frances Cabrini School on Saturday, March 18 beginning at 9:00 a.m. For information and study guides contact Emily Ann at 318-448-3333.

Please visit www.diocesealex.org, the Diocese of Alexandria on Facebook, or your church parish's website for the most up to date information on ministries, parish activities, and service opportunities.

Church Today News Deadlines

March 27
Deadline for news:
Thursday, March 16

April 24
Deadline for news:
Thursday, April 13



Emile P. Oestrieche, III, CPA

Anne M. Oestrieche, CPA, CFP®

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March 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
FEBRUARY 27 PRAY FOR DCN. L. FELDKAMP	28 Adult Faith Formation Series 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth	MARCH 1 Lenten Adult Education Series 5:30 p.m. St. James Memorial, Alexandria	2 Lenten Series 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ducote Hall, Alexandria	3 Fish Fry 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria Fish Fry 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth	4 EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria	5 Second Sunday of Lent PRAY FOR DCN. S. GRAMIGNA
SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT -- MARYHILL RENEWAL CENTER						
6 PRAY FOR FR. R. GREMILLION	7 Adult Faith Formation Series 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth	8 Lenten Adult Education Series 5:30 p.m. St. James Memorial, Alexandria	9 Lenten Series 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ducote Hall, Alexandria	10 Fish Fry 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria Fish Fry 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth	11 EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. MBIC Natchitoches Women's Day of Reflection 9:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Cabrini, Alexandria Discalced Carmelites 9:30 a.m. Maryhill	12 Third Sunday of Lent PRAY FOR FR. R. JOHNSON
MARRIAGE HELP RETREAT (RETROUVAILLE)						
ATP Pro Golf tour/Hixson Ford ProAm Golf Tournament for Manna House - Links on the Bayou						
13 PRAY FOR DCN. S. JONES	14 Adult Faith Formation Series 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth	15 Lenten Adult Education Series 5:30 p.m. St. James Memorial, Alexandria	16 Lenten Series 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ducote Hall, Alexandria	17 Fish Fry 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria ShamRockin' FEST 7:00 p.m. Lagniappe Theatre Fish Fry 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth	18 Bible Quiz Bowl 9:00 a.m. St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. St. Patrick Church, Ferriday	19 Fourth Sunday of Lent PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME
20 SOLEMNITY of ST. JOSEPH, HUSBAND of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY PRAY FOR DCN. J. LAVERGNE	21 Adult Faith Formation Series 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth	22 Lenten Adult Education Series 5:30 p.m. St. James Memorial, Alexandria	23 Lenten Series 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Ducote Hall, Alexandria	24 Fish Fry 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria Fish Fry 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth	25 EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville SOLEMNITY of the ANNUNCIATION of the LORD PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS	26 Fifth Sunday of Lent PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER
27 PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE	28 VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches	29 PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK	30 Penance Service 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria	31 PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL	APRIL 1 EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. SJCC, Alexandria Deacon Formation Informational meeting 10:00 a.m. SJCC, Alexandria	2 Palm Sunday PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL
COME AND SEE WEEKEND, ST. JOSEPH SEMINARY, COVINGTON						
PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER	PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL					



You're Invited
to

CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital's

CABRINI BALL

SAT | 18 | MAR

Edward G. Ned Randolph Riverfront Center

Funds from this year's event will support
CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini's
Rehabilitative Therapy Programs

Tickets

CHRISTUSCABRINIFOUNDATION.ORG/CABRINI-BALL

— BLACK TIE ATTIRE —

COCKTAIL RECEPTION 6:30PM

SEATED DINNER 7:30PM

ENTERTAINMENT 9PM TO 12AM