

CHURCH TODAY

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

March 27, 2023



*Your guide to
Holy Week*

Throughout Holy Week, the Church's liturgies walk the faithful through the most dramatic events of salvation history. See pages 3 and 11 for a guide to Holy Week through the eyes of a priest.

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Eucharistic Prayer: Thanksgiving, Offering, Invoking, and Remembering

When we look for a structure for our times of prayer, consider the structure of the Eucharistic Prayer. See pages 2 and 4 for the 4 touchstones that may aid in your prayer time.

Join the Catholic Schools newsletter

A Catholic education is unlike any other learning experience. See page 4 for a list of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Alexandria, and to learn how you can join the Catholic Schools newsletter.

8 things you need to know about Confirmation

Many have celebrated the sacrament of confirmation throughout the Diocese of Alexandria within the past few weeks. See pages 12 and 13 for pictures from recent confirmations and eight things you might need to know about the sacrament.

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In previous chapters, we have discussed focusing our prayer on the Holy Eucharist, especially through participation at Mass and in private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. We discussed praying with Scripture or with other spiritual reading material. Yet the Mass itself – and particularly the extended prayer of the priest and people which we call the “Eucharistic Prayer” – provides an excellent instructional manual for the content and structure of our prayer.

As we have heard many times, the word “Eucharist” means “thanksgiving.” We are called to give thanks to God not just for one day each November, but each and every day. God has abundantly blessed us throughout our lives. Jesus Christ suffered, died and rose from the dead to save us. Gratitude, therefore, must be a consistent part of our daily prayer. Our society speaks often of rights, entitlements, those things which we are “owed.” There is some value in that approach – after all, many people live with an overabundance of wealth and privilege while others are denied even the basic necessities of life. As people of faith, we must work to ensure that everyone has adequate food, clothing and shelter, that the sick are cared for and that each person is treated with dignity. At the same time, we Christians must move beyond a perpetual search for what we are due, a constant drive to acquire more – and instead open our eyes and our hearts to the many blessings our loving God has poured into our lives. Expressing our gratitude to God forms us into people who recognize that we are completely dependent upon God for our very life’s breath. A Eucharistic-centered life is one lived in gratitude to Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Recall that the Mass is divided into the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In the Liturgy of the Word, we hear and reflect upon the Sacred Scriptures and seek insight on how the Word of God impacts my life, my prayer, my relationships. Each time we encounter Scripture, we hear the divinely inspired Word of God – we meet Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we encounter Christ in the flesh – under the appearance of bread and wine



Live, Jesus, in our Hearts Forever

The Joy and Promise of the Most Holy Eucharist

By Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr.

Eucharistic Prayer: Thanksgiving, Offering, Invoking, and Remembering

– and we seek nourishment and communion (both topics we have covered before in this letter). Of course, the prayer through which ordinary bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ is called the Eucharistic Prayer. It begins with the “Preface Dialogue” (The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.) and concludes with the Doxology (Through him and with him and in him . . .) and the Great Amen. This Eucharistic Prayer is prayed primarily by the priest celebrant, though we have responses and add our affirmation in the Great Amen. There are actually four primary Eucharistic Prayers (and several other special ones) from which the priest-celebrant can choose, but all include certain basic elements which form the basis of our further reflections.

The entire Eucharistic Prayer, as it is now called, has traditionally be referred to as the anaphora – a Greek word that in this context means “carrying up” or “offering.” It is a word that continues to be used in the Churches of the East. It is a very appropriate word because in this prayer the people of God offer back their lives, their very selves – in the form of bread and wine, which we ask the Father to change into the very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of his beloved Son. Each Eucharistic Prayer is Trinitarian, it is addressed (or offered) to God the Father, through God the Son, by the power of God the Holy Spirit. Our prayer should also be Trinitarian in that we should acknowledge and address Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At various times in our day or in a particular situation, we might address one Divine Person in particular – seeking the guidance of the Holy

Spirit as we make decisions, for example, or conversing with Jesus when reflecting on a particular gospel passage. Yet at some point each day, we should pray directly to each member of the Trinity, offering our prayer to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit individually. The beauty of our Triune God is that we are invited into a divine community of love – not just one relationship, and if we neglect the Trinitarian nature of God then we risk making our faith only one-dimensional.

In each Eucharistic Prayer, we express our thanks, our gratitude to God, and we offer him our prayer, our lives, our joys and sorrows. Each Eucharistic Prayer also includes two invocations of the Holy Spirit called an epiclesis. The first of these is quite visible – the priest-celebrant extends his hands over the bread and wine and asks that the Holy Spirit “make holy these gifts” so that they “may become the Body and Blood of your Son.” (Eucharistic Prayer III). We ask the Holy Spirit to take our humble offerings and sanctify them, make them holy, so that God the Father may be pleased to make present God the Son. In our private prayer, we could include a similar epiclesis, a similar invocation of the Holy Spirit, asking the Spirit to sanctify our entire lives, or heal a particular situation or relationship that we have brought to prayer. Seeking the power of the Holy Spirit is a wonderful way of making our prayer both Trinitarian and Eucharistic – embracing the full dimension of the God who is Love.

There are, in fact, two invocations of the Holy Spirit in most of the Eucharistic Prayers. In the first epiclesis, we ask the Holy Spirit to make our gifts

holy so that they might become the Body and Blood of Christ. In the second epiclesis, we ask that the Holy Spirit sanctify us who receive the Eucharist – that “we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.” (Eucharistic Prayer II). In addition to asking the Holy Spirit to sanctify our lives, we might also invoke his power to heal a relationship, to draw us away from sin and make us better disciple.

Finally, each Eucharistic Prayer also includes a memorial, a passage in which we remember the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ which is made present for us in the Eucharist. This remembering is called the anamnesis, another Greek term, which means reminiscence or memorial sacrifice. When we pause to remember our loved ones who have died, we make them present in our thoughts. We relive in those moments the times of joy, or the times of struggle, that we shared with them. In the same way, when we remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus at each Mass, we make those events real for us – though none of us witnessed them first hand. When we pray privately, we might also include an anamnesis, a remembering of the Paschal Mystery – the life, death and resurrection of Christ – for it is only by the love and mercy of God made present in those events that we have the blessed hope of eternal salvation. We should remember the saving work of Jesus Christ not only at every Mass but in our own prayers as Jesus died and rose for all of us and for each of us.

When we look for a structure for our times of prayer, consider

A guide to Holy Week through the eyes of a priest

By Daniel Esparza
Our Sunday Visitor

Throughout Holy Week, the Church's liturgies walk the faithful through the most dramatic events of salvation history. They are longer, typically, and not necessarily what the lay faithful are used to experiencing on most Sundays and holy days of obligation throughout the Church's liturgical year.

"But it's worth it to put in the effort," said Father Roger Landry, a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts, who serves as a papal-appointed missionary of mercy and is the chaplain of the Leonine Forum in New York City.

Beginning on Palm Sunday and culminating at the Easter Vigil, Holy Week brings thousands of years of salvation history to a dramatic and climactic moment where the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity suffers and dies on a Roman cross, only to be resurrected on the third day.

The liturgies of Holy Week take the faithful through the events of that pivotal week in human history from more than 2,000 years ago, immersing them into the Last Supper, the institution of the Eucharist and priesthood, the Lord's agony in Gethsemane, Judas' betrayal, the Passion, the Crucifixion, Jesus' burial and the empty tomb — the turning point that makes our salvation possible.

Below, Father Landry guides readers through Holy Week, exploring the history and tradition of the liturgies and providing a better understanding of what makes this the most sacred time of the year.

Palm Sunday

Observed on the sixth

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for April 2023

For a culture of peace
and non-violence //

We pray for the spread
of peace and non-violence,
by decreasing the use of weapons
by States and citizens.
Amen.



Sunday in Lent, Palm Sunday marks the official beginning of Holy Week. The liturgy commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, where residents hailed him as their king and laid down palm branches as he entered the city on a donkey.

"We ponder with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem whether we are truly open to him as he desires and deserves of us," said Father Landry, who added that the crowds who chant, "Hosannah!" at Jesus' arrival should prompt a question in all of us.

"How joyful are we when Jesus comes into our life? Do we lay out the red carpet for him, or has it become a little routinized? Holy Week is a time, especially Palm Sunday, where first we ponder our receptivity to the Lord and our joy at his coming."

On Palm Sunday, the Passion is read from either the Gospel of Matthew, Mark or Luke, depending on the year's lectionary cycle. This year, Mark's account of the Passion will be read.

"When we ponder the proclamation of the Passion on Palm Sunday, it's supposed to set the tone for the entire week," Father Landry said.

Chrism Mass

Traditionally held on Holy Thursday, the Chrism Mass today is normally celebrated at the diocesan cathedral sometime between Palm Sunday and the

Wednesday of Holy Week in most dioceses. In this liturgy, the local bishop blesses the three sacred oils — the oil of the sick, the oil of the catechumens and the sacred chrism. The blessed holy oils are then distributed to churches throughout the diocese.

The sacred chrism will be used to confirm the elect at the Easter Vigil and also for priestly ordinations and certain sacramental blessings and consecrations. The oil of the catechumens is used throughout the year for baptisms, while the oil of the sick will be used during the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

"The name of the Chrism Mass comes ultimately from blessing the holy chrism, which is used in three sacraments, but really makes possible the sacrament of holy orders," said Father Landry, who added that the liturgy also has a special focus on the renewal of the clergy's priestly promises.

"This in the heart of Holy Week, foreseen on Holy Thursday, is supposed to be a chance for every priest to recommit himself to his holy vocation and for the entire people of God to pray for their priests to be faithful to their promises so that they might be instruments of salvation in every faithful person's life," Father Landry said.

At the Chrism Mass, the presbyterate of a diocese assembles together. Other than

ordinations, it's normally the only time in the year where the priests of the diocese will see each other as an entire body, especially in a liturgical setting.

"It's a time where the priests come together in which their gratitude for each other's priesthood and their own grows, their prayer for themselves and for others, and for a hearty prayer for the People of God who show their appreciation for faithful priests in carrying out God's plans in their lives," Father Landry said

Monday through Wednesday of Holy Week

These three days set the stage for the events of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The Mass readings encompass the historical events that precede the Last Supper, but they also take the faithful through various interior reflections in preparation for the Sacred Triduum.

On Monday, the Gospel reading has the contrast between Mary of Bethany and Judas with regard to the value of Jesus.

"Mary of Bethany expends a whole year's worth of salary just to anoint Jesus' feet," Father Landry said. "Judas complains because he thought the money could go toward the poor. But he then goes to sell Jesus for one-ninth of the spikenard that was poured over Jesus' feet."

In Tuesday's Gospel reading, Judas' betrayal and death are foreshadowed.

"When Judas left the Upper Room, nobody would have guessed that he would have been dead by suicide even before Jesus died to execution," Father Landry said.

Tuesday's Gospel also shows the stark difference between how Judas and Peter will later respond to the Lord's mercy. A despondent Judas will take his own life, while Peter, who denied Jesus, will repent and ask for forgiveness from the Risen Christ.

"Judas, after he had sinned, had obviously never gotten the first thing about Jesus and his mission of mercy," Father Landry said. "So he wouldn't go back to Jesus and say, 'I'm so sorry.' Whereas Peter, who had said that he would die before denying the Lord, then went out and three times denied the Lord, had gotten that Jesus was mercy incarnate. When Jesus looked at him, Peter was touched with bitter remorse, and he was able to ask for repentance for his sins, unlike Judas.

"It's a huge contrast in how we approach Jesus with our sins," Father Landry said. "Do we do so like Judas? Or do we do so like Peter?"

On Wednesday, the Gospel's focus again is on Judas and the actions he took to betray Jesus that led to the Crucifixion.

"He is not the only one in history who has betrayed Jesus, and sometimes we'll betray Jesus for far less than 30 pieces of silver," said Father Landry, who added that the message in these Holy Week Gospel readings is not so much a warning not to imitate Judas, but to recognize that he could have sought the Lord's saving mercy as well.

"If only he would have opened himself up to receive the gift of the Lord's mercy," Father Landry said. "For us, that's another appeal as we get into the heart of Holy Week, to open ourselves up to God and what he wants to do in us in the week we call holy."

See HOLY WEEK, page 11



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EUCHARIST

(continued from pg. 2)

the structure of the Eucharistic Prayer: a heartfelt expression of gratitude, an offering to God of the joys and struggles of our lives, an invocation of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the subject of our prayer, and a constant memory of the saving action of Jesus Christ. These four touchstones will not only enhance our private prayer but will call us back to Mass again and again so that we might be drawn into a deeper Communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion:

- Do you live a life of gratitude or one of entitlement? How do you express your gratitude to others? To God?
- Do you see your life as an offering to God? What kind of offering is it? If you are not offering your life to God, are you offering it to something or

someone else?

- Do you consciously pray to the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit beyond saying the words when making the sign of the cross? Are you drawn to one Divine Person more than another? Why might that be?
- Do you ever invoke the Holy Spirit in your prayer? Do you ask the Spirit to make your life or a particular situation holy? Are you actively seeking holiness? Are you presuming that holiness will just happen if you do the right things?
- Do you ask the Holy Spirit to draw you closer to your family? Your loved ones? Your brothers and sisters in faith? Have you thought of the Eucharist as drawing us together as one body?
- In prayer, do you consciously remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus? Do you see his presence in your life? In the sorrows that you experience? In the joys?

Catholic schools: An education like no other



ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL MASS. On Friday, Feb. 10, on the Memorial of St. Scholastica, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass for the community of St. Frances Cabrini School in Alexandria. He was joined by Superintendent Thomas Roque and were photographed with Jr. Beta Club winners. Thank you to Father Chad Partain, pastor, and Sister Nina Vincent, OLS, principal, for their welcome.

A Catholic education is unlike any other learning experience. Why? Regardless of faith background, the Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools educate the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

“The students who spend a good deal of time at a Catholic school are better formed not just academically but spiritually and as good citizens of the community,” says Father Brian Seiler, pastor Sacred Heart School in Moreauville.

The Diocese of Alexandria

boasts 8 Catholic schools, including: Sacred Heart School, Moreauville; St. Anthony School, Bunkie; St. Joseph Elementary and High School, Plaquemine; St. Mary’s Assumption School, Cottonport; St. Mary’s Catholic School, Natchitoches; Holy Savior Menard High School, Alexandria; Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria; and St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria.

At each, we weave Catholicism throughout the school, and our faith provides the heartbeat of our curriculum.

“We want to strive for academic excellence, but we especially want to form disciples. We want to touch their hearts,” says Bishop Robert Marshall.

To learn more about the Catholic schools within the Diocese of Alexandria, including educational resources, tuition costs, what life looks like on campus, and so much more, visit www.facebook.com/DioceesofAlexandria to sign up for the Catholic Schools Office newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you in the classroom in Fall 2023!



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EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE HOLY COMMUNION WORKSHOPS. One of several EMHC Training Workshops was held Tuesday, Mar. 14 at the St. Joseph Catholic Center in Alexandria. Over 60 people attended this session. Sessions were scheduled in each Deanery of the diocese during the month of March in order to help those interested in this ministry be certified before Holy Week.

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Praying in thunder

By Donna Culotta
Guest Contributor

Two Catholics, a Methodist, and a Charismatic walk into a... no, not a bar, actually it was a shed and they started to pray.

Vic Saucier, Ashton Caubarreaux, Frank Havard, and Mac Dautat, all of Marksville, started praying together in Ashton's shed back in early 1992.

Their prayer of choice was the rosary, a devotion prayed on a series of beads that focuses on the life of Jesus.

The official title of the group is Marian Men's Movement, and has grown from the original four to over 40.

"Its beginning and growth is a testimony of its roots in Jesus Christ," Vic said. "The organization has no other purpose than to serve our Lord through his mother."

Vic was praying his rosary one day and felt like he needed to pray a rosary with his good friend, Frank Havard.

"I was hesitant because Frank is a very devout Methodist, and I would never do anything to impose on him."

But Frank was very open to praying. His response was simple and direct, "Yes, let's do it on Friday." He even suggested Ashton's shed, and at 7:00 a.m.

And after 31 years, the group still meets on Fridays at 7:00 in the morning at Ashton's shed.

Frank also suggested they invite Mac to come.

When Vic approached Frank to pray a rosary, he said, "I know Vic, I trust him, I had not problem of going to pray the rosary."

He added, "There is no focus on Mary in the Methodist



MARKSVILLE ROSARY GROUP. Rosary Group Marksville Ashton Caubarreaux, Frank Harvard, and Vic Saucier. (Photo by Donna Culotta)

Church, outside of Christmas, and when I prayed my first rosary, I was very comfortable."

With such a solid foundation of committed men, the group grew. As Vic said, "Other men came to join us, but the growth wasn't so much in numbers than spirituality."

If the original men are there, the shed is not.

"The shed burned in February of 2014," Ashton said. He remembers it well because it was the day of his mother's funeral.

"My daughter, Tara, said 'Maw Maw died and took the shed with her.'"

It was a Friday and Ashton was getting the shed ready for the men when they came to pray.

"I had gone in the shed and started a fire in the wood heater, then went inside to clean up."

The fire never stopped the men who came from praying.

"They were sitting on the tailgates of their trucks praying the rosary," Ashton recalled.

It took months for a new and bigger shed to be built because of permits and FEMA, but that never stopped the men from coming.

"We still met out here on the property, and one time we were in my living room," Ashton said.

The group is for anyone.

"We have priests, deacons, Baptists, Jewish, Pentecostals, and politicians," Vic said. "Senator Heather Cloud and State Representative Daryl Deshotel have come."

Numbers are not important as well as creed or religion, it's all about what's in the hearts of the men who come seeking.

In the cooler months, there's a roaring fire in the fire place. Its warmth fills the room and a pleasant greeting to all who enter.

"God is humorous." Frank added, "we do laugh, a spirit comes in the room, and there's no doubt it's the Spirit."

The same joy of friendship exists among Frank, Vic, and Ashton. After being in their company for two minutes, I saw immediately how close these men are. Their easy bantering and teasing spoke of the depth of how they love each other.

Prayer starts with someone ringing a big cow bell. As startling as that is, it makes sense because the men are visiting with each other, and the bell brings everyone to attention.

A very important part of the morning is the intercessions the men bring to the rosary.

Before each decade, there's a pause and petitions are offered. The needs are varied, and great. The men are open about what they want to pray for, and there is an underlying trust in the room. They trust the Lord and they trust each other.

"The time between decades is very important because this is the time spent responding to that loving nudge being placed in our hearts while praying or being quiet," Vic related.

"Praying is the easy part, hearing is another thing altogether because you have to be quiet in your soul to hear what Our Lord wants of you."

Vic continued, "We have seen so many miracles."

The Friday group has spawned other groups. One is in Marksville on Wednesday afternoons at the Knights of Columbus hall at 3:00 p.m., the hour Jesus died.

The group also created a card to send to people who are sick. The front has a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and

inside is a prayer for healing.

"We have sent out over 400 cards," Ashton said.

When all the men respond to certain prayers together and lift their voices to heaven, "we call that praying in thunder," Ashton said. "It's our way of sending prayers like lightning."

Men praying together, definitely thunder and lightning.

For more information on the men's rosary group or directions to the shed, call Vic at 318-447-4746.



Upcoming Retreats

April 20 - 23
St. Mary's Assumption,
Cottonport
Men's ACTS

May 4 - 7
Our Lady of Guadalupe
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.

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Tuesday, Mar. 28, 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Church,
Marksville

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

Sunday, April 2, 2:30 p.m.
Our Lady of Prompt Succor
Church, Alexandria

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

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.



ST. JOSEPH ALTAR AT ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA. On Sunday, Mar. 19 St. Joseph Church blessed the Feast of St. Joseph altar following Mass with food provided by the parishoners for kids and families.



ST. CHARLES IN GOUDEAU. Parishioners and Fr. Ramji Shoury, pastor of St. Charles Church in Goudeau, along with parishioners, celebrated with a St. Joseph's Altar on Sunday, Mar. 19. The celebration began with Mass at 8:00, followed by the blessing of the altar.

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."

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

Psalm 22: 2
Responsorial Psalm for
April 2
Palm Sunday



**St. Joseph,
Protector of Families,
Pray for Us.**

by Marcus Descant, Leesville, LA

In Praise of St. Joseph

Good St. Joseph, guardian of the Most High,
A soul who wandered, but never asked why.
An Angel came down from heaven one night,
And told him he would aid him on his flight.

The night was cold with no place to stay,
The only bed was one of hay.
To the glorious Mother, a Child was born.
Into the world He came, and would
receive much scorn.

His name was Jesus, a Savior for all,
He was protected by Joseph, a mighty wall.
An Angel led them to safety one night,
With Joseph always there during the flight.

Thanks to St. Joseph, who was led by the dove.
He protected the Savior, the God of Love.
So I praise You, O Lord, from Your birth,
You, the King of Heaven and Earth.

You came down from heaven to help us all,
We who have sinned, because of the fall.
Through Your goodness, You gave us new life,
To handle problems, grief and strife.

Because of Your mercy and love for the lost,
Another chance was given to all who were lost.
We all confess and say from the heart.
Forgive us Lord, and thanks for a new start.

lizdescant@gmail.com
Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant

St. Joseph's Table

Originally published at
yearofstjoseph.org



The Feast of St. Joseph, which always falls in the middle of Lent, is especially commemorated and celebrated in Italy in general, and Sicily in particular, where St. Joseph has been long-regarded as the island's Patron saint. It is there, among Sicilians, that the tradition of the "Tavola di San Giuseppe" or "St. Joseph's Table" has its origins.

March 19th is, in Italy, also Father's Day—which isn't at all surprising, as St. Joseph was, of course, the foster father of Jesus. This celebration is a symbolic "thank you" and a renewal of the Sicilian people's devotion to Saint Joseph.

It is a shared celebration with the entire community where the riches of food are given as alms to the poor: traditional etiquette is that no one can be turned away from this table.

Origins

Legends from the Middle Ages attributed the end of a devastating drought to a prayer-devotion that the Sicilian people made to St. Joseph.

During a time of drought and famine, no rain fell on Medieval Sicily. Food crops for both people and livestock withered and died. The people prayed to St. Joseph for help.

When the clouds opened, the desperately-needed rain poured down, and there was much rejoicing! After the harvest, to show their gratitude, they prepared a table with special foods to honor St. Joseph and to share with the poor. After thanking and honoring the saint, they distributed the food to the less fortunate.

This celebration became an annual tradition. Each year, wealthy families prepared huge buffets. The less fortunate people of the community, especially the homeless and sick, were invited, and all the remaining food and proceeds were given to the poor.

Through the years, the tradition has remained throughout Italy, and is also prevalent in Poland, Malta, Spain, the Phillipines, and, with the influx of Sicilian immigrants to the US, here in our own country.

Three-Fold Purpose

The heart of this tradition can be found in these three aspects:

Veneration—special recognition of St. Joseph during Mass and at the "table."

The Table—both a kind of "altar of reverence", and a communal celebration.

The Poor—The intention of all the gifts is to help those in need.

Veneration

The festive nature of the table celebration is all about St. Joseph, but the primary veneration is during Mass. When the "table" is part of a parish activity, the "celebration" follows Mass. At Mass, St. Joseph, Mary and the child Jesus bring up the gifts; parishioners dressed as the Holy Family emphasize the stewardship of St. Joseph's gifts to the Church. Included with the normal sacramental gifts are some representative food items from the "table", especially hand-fashioned breads. In many parishes, after Mass, the statue of St. Joseph is carried, procession-style, into the parish hall to be placed in a prominent spot on the "altar", surrounded by lilies and other items.

The Table

Preparation and Symbolism

A St. Joseph's Day "Table" or "Altar" is a makeshift shrine/dinner festival that can be held in one's home, or in a church hall or club hall. The host family or parish group creates what amounts

to a living work of art.

A parish St. Joseph's Table is typically a three-tiered display covered with white linen tablecloths. The three tiers represent the Holy Trinity, and the ascent from earth to heaven. A statue of St. Joseph is placed on the top tier.

The other tiers might hold flowers (especially lilies), candles, statues and holy cards. Then an array of symbolic breads and pastries are displayed. There may also be wine, symbolizing the wedding feast at Cana; pineapple symbolizing hospitality; lemons and limes and other fruit. There is typically a basket in which the faithful place prayer petitions.

An at-home version of this can be simpler, but should follow the same themes, and is often the setting for a gathering of several families to celebrate together.

The effect of the table design is meant to be dignified, solemn, yet festive, grand and inspiring.

Much symbolism should be incorporated into the shape and decoration of the table. For example, vigil lights of green, brown and deep yellow, representing St. Joseph's attire, can be placed all around, and the table can be surrounded by palms reminiscent of the Holy Land.

In many parish celebrations, a special smaller table is set for the "Holy Family" right in front of the display. This is where those who portrayed Jesus, Mary and Joseph

at Mass will eat—a place of high honor.

The "Table" is also a celebration

In its most elaborate form, the celebration may include a religious tableau. The volunteers who portray the Holy Family—an older man, a lovely young woman, and a little child—enter the room and are seated at the head table and remain there during the early part of the festivity. Others accompanying this "Holy Family" are twelve men or boys, representing the Apostles and other children, attired as angels.

The priest blesses the food, and the "Holy Family" is served first. Then, the celebration can begin. Visitors line up for food (buffet style), and, in most cases, joyful (and respectful) Italian-style music is played, either live or recorded.

In cases where St. Joseph's Day falls mid-week and Mass is celebrated in the evening, the celebration may be more abbreviated in the interest of the time of day or can be moved to the nearest weekend day that is practical.

Often, in consideration of the closeness of St. Patrick's Day, St. Pat is included and represented at the table celebration, and Irish food is also available.

The Foods

And, as it has developed, there are two constants for the "table": there is no meat (since it's

Lent) and the presence of sesame-coated breads in symbolic shapes.

(Again, if the celebration happens after an evening Mass, the food that is served may simply be desserts and coffee.)

Breads, baked into symbolic shapes, are the centerpiece of the food table and the altar. The breads themselves are made from the same dough that forms traditional Italian bread and are often made into interesting and symbolic shapes for St. Joseph's Day. For examples, see the section below.

Other foods that are often present at more elaborate St. Joseph's Table "feasts" include:

Minestras, or very thick soups, are made of lentils, favas and other types of beans, together with escarole, broccoli or cauliflower. Other vegetables—celery, fennel stalks, boiled and stuffed artichokes—are also traditional.

St. Joseph's Day Pasta, also called Sawdust Pasta or Carpenter's Pasta, made with bread crumbs sautéed in butter to resemble wood sawdust. Cheese isn't used, symbolic of the food shortage experienced in the origin legend of the tradition.

Sweet Pasta, a pasta dish made with honey.

Olives, figs, and other side dishes.

As no feast is complete without dessert, no Saint Joseph's altar would be finished without the flourish of sweet items. There is typically a plethora of cakes, biscotti and cookies, many of which are embellished with almonds.

Two particularly traditional desserts found at St. Joseph's tables are sfingi—fried pieces of bread dough rolled in sugar—and zeppoli—a pastry shaped like a donut, fried or baked, and filled with a sweet pastry crème, then garnished with a dusting of powdered sugar and a maraschino cherry.

The Poor

Beautiful as the Saint Joseph's Day Table is to behold, it is a work of art that is also practical, meant to not only feed not only those present, but also the absent hungry.

The table's breads, cookies and pastries are sold to raise funds for the parish or for charity.

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana Clergy Celebrity Waiter Dinner is a fundraising success!

Our first fundraiser of 2023 was held on Lundi Gras, February 20, at Tunk's Cypress Inn on beautiful Kincaid Lake. It was a sold-out event with a good time had by all! We extend a huge thank you to Bishop Robert Marshall, Father Derek Ducote, Father Peter Faulk, Father Jim Ferguson, Father Bill Gearheard, Father Robert Johnson, Father Anthony Dharmaraj, Father Craig Scott, and Deacons Bill Aldridge, Les Glankler, Sam Jones, Jason Lavergne, Richard Mitchell, and Luke White, and special guest Tom Constanza from the LACCB, who graced us with their hosting and serving talent.

An extension of gratitude as well to our two special guests and former recipients of Catholic Charities services, Ms. Cynthia Cobb and Ms. Sliska Larry. Both shared their heart with us as they spoke of their financial challenges with disconnected utilities and with a destroyed home from Hurricane Laura. We were able to help Ms. Cynthia get her electricity back on so her medication would not be lost and her medical devices would be operable. She is an employee of Re-Entry Solutions, a community partner that welcomes our interns to enroll persons for SNAP benefits in their office.

Ms. Sliska was offered the opportunity to purchase her FEMA Temporary Housing Unity



CATHOLIC CHARITIES CELEBRITY CLERGY FUNDRAISER. The event was held at Tunk's Cypress Inn and was a huge success! Servers were priests and deacons of the diocese. Pictured left to right, front row: Heidi Wampler of Catholic Charities, Tom Constanza, Dcn. Bill Aldridge, Fr. Jim Ferguson, Fr. Anthony Dharmaraj, Bishop Robert Marshall, Fr. Bill Gearheard, Dcn. Richard Mitchell, Jennifer Gilchrist of Catholic Charities. Back row, left to right: Fr. Derek Ducote, Dcn. Les Glankler, Fr. Robert Johnson, Dcn. Sam Jones, Dcn. Jason Lavergne and Dcn. Luke White.

(THU), and Catholic Charities, through a CC USA grant, was able to fully cover this cost, ensuring her of a permanent home that is livable and safe.

Our Silent Auction featured local artists, Jason Ashley

offered not only his beautiful music but a live auction gift to host a private party, and many attendees extended support after an exciting evening of fun and emotional moments highlighting social needs. All this made for a tremendous night of fellowship, awareness and assistance for the good and worthy work of Catholic

Charities.

For more information about our initiatives, please visit www.cccenla.org.

To get involved, either fill out the online volunteer form or email Jennifer at jgilchrist@ccenla.org.

Thanks to all who made this event successful!



CCCLA CELEBRITY CLERGY FUNDRAISER. Celebrity Clergy Waiter, Fr. Jim Ferguson and his table of guests.

ST. JOSEPH— (continued from pg. 7)

Donations of other food items, as well as cash donations, are encouraged.

Even if celebrated privately, at home, a plan should be in place to make sure that the entire celebration and charitable nature of the event serve those most in need.

Other Interesting St. Joseph's Table Traditions:

No cheese is eaten on St. Joseph's day, a remembrance that during the famine that spawned this devotion, cheese was not available. Pasta is not sprinkled with grated cheese, but in its place a traditional mixture of tasted dry bread crumbs with fresh sardines and fennel sauce is used.

Blessed fava beans are often given out at St. Joseph's Tables. Once considered cattle feed, fava beans were the one food which survived the Sicilian drought, sustained the people, and saved them from starvation.

The use of bread crumbs in food preparation is said to represent saw dust in commemoration of St. Joseph's work as a carpenter.

St. Joseph's Day is also the day that the "swallows return to Capistrano."

St. Joseph's Staff: Legend has it that St. Joseph's staff blossomed into a lily, a symbol both of life and death.

A Sheaf of Wheat: Wheat is a reminder that, when a single, tiny grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it bears much more food at harvest time—and that the early spring harvest of greens is almost here.

St. Joseph's Beard: This is actually just the Sheaf of Wheat turned upside down, but young children delight when their fathers and grandfathers hold their beard up to their face. It is another reminder of Joseph's wisdom and old age.

Heart: A symbol of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary that flourished throughout Italy in general and Sicily in particular in the 19th century.

The Crown of Thorns: This is in remembrance of Christ's passion and a reminder that, despite the day's feasting among Lent's fasting, Lent is still a season of sorrow—but of hope, too!

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HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY TO FR. DANIEL CORKERY. On Friday, March 17, St. Patrick's Day, Bishop Robert Marshall had the great pleasure of visiting with Father Daniel Corkery, 93 years old and a native of County Cork, Ireland, who has been a priest of the Diocese of Alexandria for 68 years. Prior to his retirement in 2009, Father Corkery served in various parishes in the diocese for 54 years - including 29 years as Pastor of St. Mary's Church in Winnsboro. Thank you to Deacon Darrell Dubroc who assists Father Corkery and who accompanied Bishop on the visit. Thank you, Father Corkery, for your many years of dedicated service to the people of God here in the Diocese of Alexandria.



DIocese OF ALEXANDRIA SEMINARIANS. Thursday, March 9, Bishop Robert Marshall traveled to St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington to participate in the meetings of the respective Boards of Trustees of Notre Dame Seminary and SJSC. Pictured from left to right: Alexandria seminarians Gabe Dowden, Blaine Phillips, and Donnie Kuzma. Gabe and Blaine are completing their senior year at SJSC. Donnie is completing his third Theology year at NDS and came to the Board meeting in his capacity as President of the Student Association to give a presentation to the Board. It was great to see our seminarians doing so well.

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

February 2023 Donations

Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez Burse	
Ms. Patricia Vandersypen-Basco	\$100.00
Jerome and Andrey Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller	\$200.00
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
Dr. Joseph W. Landreneau	\$500.00
Mary Lee and Gerald Robichaux, Sr. Burse	
Total	\$850.00

A Seminary Burse is an invested sum of money, the interest of which is used in perpetuity to help fund the education of men to the priesthood. 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 burses 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

Come and See Weekend

Have you thought about the priesthood lately?

Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College invites you to come and see what God has to say about it! The 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.

The weekend is all about how to discern God's call for your life. Meals and beds are

provided (please bring bed linens, pillow, towels and personal items).

For more information, please contact the Director of Vocations, Father Luke LaFleur at frllafleur@diocesealex.org.

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

Psalm 118: 24 | Responsorial Psalm for April 9
The Resurrection of the Lord - The Mass of Easter Day

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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



Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship

“Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship” is being held on April 2 at St. Joseph Church Hall in Marksville from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m!

We will have 30 teams competing and cooking 15,000 pounds of all-you-can-eat crawfish. Three local bands will be playing for your entertainment. There will be vendor booths selling locally produced items, foods, and drinks along with lots of free kids activities.

Bring a chair and come join us for a fun filled time as well as the best boiled crawfish in the State. We still have room for Boiling Teams, Sponsors, and Vendors! SEARCH FOR US ON FACEBOOK AT: DA PARISH CRAWFISH BOILING CHAMPIONSHIP. Advance ticket sales are available on Eventbrite.com and available at the gate: Adults \$30; Children (ages 5-12) \$15; Children under 5 get in free.

Pilgrimages

Join St. Michael the Archangel Church in Leesville on a pilgrimage to Egypt plus Constantinople! This pilgrimage includes a 4-night Nile River Cruise. Father Kenneth Michiels will be the spiritual director. Trave dates are November 7 - 19, 2023. For more information, visit www.selectinternationaltours.com or call 1800-842-4842.

Join St. Mary’s Assumption in Cottonport on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico! This pilgrimage is in honor of the life and ministry of Fr. Jose Robles-Sanchez. Fr. John Wiltse will be the spiritual director. Travel dates are November 13-18, 2023. For more information, visit www.holytravels.org/frwiltsemexico or call Magnificat Travel at 337-291-1933.



ST. JULIANA LADIES AUXILIARY. The Ladies of St. Peter Claver Court #268 pose outside of St. Juliana Church after celebrating Black History Month. During mass, the Ladies made monetary contributions to several of their church organizations as a part of The Season of Service Program.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL VOCATIONS DAY. Celebrating Our Faith and Vocation Day! Fr. Brian Seiler and Sr. Sandra Norsworthy invited Fr. Thomas Kennedy, Sr. Nicole Cancel, and Sr. Liza Gomes to share their vocation journeys with our junior high students. We will continue to pray for vocations daily to the priesthood and religious life. Pictured left to right: Sr. Sandra Norsworthy, OLS, Fr. Thomas Kennedy, Fr. Brian Seiler, Sr. Nicole Cancel, OLS, Sr. Liza Gomes, OLS and Sr. Lizbeth Gutierrez, OLS.

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 after the first Sunday of the month:**
10:00 a.m. Hilltop Nursing Home, 336 Edgewood Dr., Pineville
- Wednesday after the second Sunday of the month:**
10:00 a.m. The Oaks Care Center, 50 Pinecrest Dr., Pineville
- Tuesday after the third Sunday of the month:**
9:30 a.m. St. Christina Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
122 Hillsdale Dr., Pineville
- Tuesday after the fourth Sunday of the month:**
9:00 a.m. Pine Grove Apartments, 60 Pinecrest Dr., Pineville

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MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS WOODWORTH YOUTH. On Feb. 12, youth (grades 6-12) at Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth helped to host the monthly 2nd Sunday breakfast for the parish. The youth arrived early to cook and prepare breakfast pizzas, waffles, and raisin bread. They helped serve the meal (and enjoyed the food themselves), and then cleaned up afterwards.



ANNIVERSARY COUPLES AT ST. RITA IN ALEXANDRIA. St. Rita Church celebrated their anniversary couples on Feb. 12 along with Fr. Anthony Dharmaraj's 30th Anniversary Priestly Ordination. Anniversaries that were celebrated: 25 years, 40 years, 50 years, 60 and 65 years.

HOLY WEEK -

(continued from pg. 3)

Holy Thursday

The Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday commemorates Jesus' institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper and the institution of the priesthood. Holy Thursday is also the beginning of the sacred Triduum.

"This is a night to thank God more than any other night for the gift of the holy Eucharist, for the gift of the priesthood that makes the holy Eucharist possible, and for the way that the Lord did everything he needed to in order to give us all that he had, even to washing our feet as if he were a slave and we were his masters," Father Landry said.

St. John's Gospel records the foot washing as an instruction for the entire life of the Christian community. "If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet," Christ says in John 13:14.

A liturgical reenactment of the foot washing is a distinctive rite in the Holy Thursday liturgy. The priest washes and dries the feet of several members of his flock, emphasizing the ministerial role of the priesthood that Jesus instituted and the humble service that Christ modeled for the apostles.

"When I look at Holy Thursday, I hear Jesus' words from St. Luke: 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,'" Father Landry said. "For those of us who love Jesus, we need to meet that eagerness. This is the most incredible invitation any of us would ever receive, and many of us don't respond to that invitation. The crowds of Holy Thursday night are basically the crowds we should see on a holy day of obligation."

Normally, the Holy Thursday liturgy concludes with the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to an altar of repose, separate from the main altar and tabernacle. COVID-related restrictions this year will lead to the procession to the altar of repose being canceled.

The procession echoes the journey that Jesus and the apostles took across the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane after sharing the Passover meal. The faithful then keep vigil throughout the evening and night, echoing the Lord's words to Peter in the Garden: "Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?"

"Keeping vigil with Jesus in prayer strengthens our weak flesh," Father Landry said. "One of the reasons Jesus appreciates our time with him is because he strengthens us in that time while he is praying so that our flesh might be strong to remain faithful to him in tests, big and small."

Good Friday

The Good Friday service — the liturgy is not a Mass — usually begins at 3 p.m., which marks the time of Christ's death. The day's liturgy commemorates Christ's crucifixion and death. The Passion as told by St. John is chanted or proclaimed.

Like Holy Thursday, Good Friday is not a holy day of obligation, though the faithful are encouraged to attend.

"Almost all of us would want to be present at the bedside of a loved one," Father Landry said. "We would take time off of work. We would even quit our jobs sometimes if our loved one were dying. We should have a similar love for Jesus. If it requires taking vacation days so that we have one fewer day at the beach in order to be present, for those of us who have any control whatsoever over our schedule, it's really essential for us in faith to be present with the Lord as he was dying out of love for us. So we enter into that mystery of his crucifixion and his death."

The liturgy also includes the adoration of the cross, where the faithful recognize the cross not so much as an instrument of torture and pain, but a sign of the radical love that made even that much pain endurable.

"It's venerating the new tree of life by which Jesus, the fruit of that tree of life, has given us new life that is meant to last forever," Father Landry said.

While not a Mass, Eucharistic hosts consecrated on Holy Thursday are distributed to the faithful, who also pray for Christian unity and that non-Christians may come to embrace the fullness of Christ's truth.

Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil

Early Saturday is a solemn day as the faithful reflect on the mystery of Christ's descent into Sheol to free the dead.

"It's a real day of silence in which we ponder Jesus in the tomb and what Jesus is doing as

his body lay in the tomb," Father Landry said.

Easter Vigil

As sundown arrives, the Church celebrates the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus in the Easter Vigil, the high point of the entire liturgical year. The Mass consists of the Service of Light, the Liturgy of the Word, The Liturgy of Baptism with Christian Initiation, confirmation and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

"It's by far the most beautiful Mass of the year," Father Landry said. "There's a 17 course meal of the word of God, with seven Old Testament readings, seven psalms, a New Testament reading, another psalm and the Gospel."

"We retrace all of salvation history that got us to the moment that we're in," Father Landry said. "It's an opportunity for us to welcome new brothers and sisters in the Faith. For us to be there to welcome new family members is such a beautiful witness to what the Church is. Likewise, we're able to receive the risen body of the Lord within us. That's the newness of life that is proclaimed that we don't just celebrate a fact, but we enter into a relationship with him who says 'I am the resurrection and the life.'"

Brian Fraga is a contributing editor for Our Sunday Visitor.

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

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

Confirmation



CONFIRMATION, LEESVILLE. On Wednesday, Mar. 1, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the first Confirmation of 2023 at St. Michael the Archangel in Leesville. Thank you to Fr. Kenneth Michiels, Deacons Stephen Gramigna, Jason Lavergne, and Richard Mitchell, the catechists and parishioners for their support of the Confirmandi.



ST. PETER CHURCH, BORDELONVILLE. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass on Saturday, Mar. 4 for the Second Sunday of Lent and the Sacrament of Confirmation with six young parishioners of St. Peter and St. Michael Church in Rexmere. Thank you to Fr. Louis Sklar, pastor of both parishes.



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH, ECHO. Confirmation was held Sunday, Mar. 5. Bishop Marshall celebrated the Second Sunday of Lent with a morning Mass and Confirmation at St. Francis de Sales Church in Echo. Thank you to Father Dwight DeJesus, pastor.



MATER DOLOROSA CHURCH, PLAUCHEVILLE. Confirmation was held Friday, Mar. 10. A total of 21 parishioners were confirmed from Mater Dolorosa Church and Immaculate Conception Church in Dupont. Thank you to Fr. Martin Laird, Fr. Joseph Desimone, the catechists and parishioners of both churches for their prayers and support of these newly confirmed!



ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH, BROUILLETTE. Confirmation was held Saturday, Mar. 11. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Third Sunday of Lent and the Sacrament of Confirmation with three young parishioners at St. Genevieve Church. Thank you to Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira, the catechists, sponsors and parishioners who nurtured the faith of these disciples.



SACRED HEART AND OUR LADY OF SORROWS, MOREAUVILLE. Confirmation was held Sunday, Mar. 12. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Third Sunday of Lent confirmed a total of 12 parishioners from Our Lady of Sorrows and Sacred Heart parishes in Moreauville. Thank you to Fr. Brian Seiler, Dcn. Reggie Ducote, the catechists and parishioners of both parishes for their prayers and support of these young disciples and future saints.



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHURCH, TIOGA. Confirmation was held Monday, Mar. 13. Bishop Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Four young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Fr. Rick Gremillion, Deacon Roger Christopher, and the wonderful parishioners for their prayers and support.



ST. RICHARD CHURCH, HICKORY HILL. Confirmation was held Wednesday, Mar. 15 at St. Richard Chapel in the Hickory Hill community. Thank you to the parishioners of St. Richard, to Fr. Abraham Varghese (Pastor), Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira (visiting from St. Genevieve), and Dcn. Ted Moulard for their welcome and support of the Confirmand.



MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS CHURCH, WOODWORTH. Confirmation was held Saturday, Mar. 18. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Fourth Sunday of Lent and the Sacrament of Confirmation at Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth. Thank you to Fr. Paul LaPalme, the catechists, parents, sponsors and parishioners for their support of these four confirmands.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH, FIFTH WARD. Confirmation was held Sunday, Mar. 19. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Laetare Sunday and the Sacrament of Confirmation with six young parishioners. Thank you to Fr. Kurian Zachariah, Deacons Darrell Dubroc and Ted Moulard, the catechists, parents and sponsors for their support of these Confirmands. May they - and all of us - live as children of light.

8 Things you need to know about Confirmation

*By Trenton Mattingly
Life Teen, Intl.*

Maybe you have recently been dedicating a lot of time preparing and learning about the Sacrament of Confirmation so that, in the next few weeks, you can count yourself as one of the thousands of Catholics who receive the Sacrament every year. If this is the case, congratulations! Read on for some crucial facts that everyone preparing for Confirmation should know.

1. Confirmation is the completion of Baptism.

Baptism marked the start of your relationship with Christ. Your soul changed permanently and you were filled with grace from God. Through Confirmation, the Holy Spirit strengthens these graces, gives you more of them, and seals them all inside you - like a carefully wrapped present! This brings you closer to Christ and better prepares you to face the daily challenges of Christian life.

2. Confirmation increases the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Want to know more about these graces sealed inside of you? They are called the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis has actually done a homily on each of them: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, fortitude, piety, counsel, and fear of the Lord. You've had these gifts since your Baptism, but Confirmation deepens and strengthens them since it draws you even closer to Christ and the greater Catholic community.

3. A Mission from God: Operation Confirmation

Did you know that when you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation you accept a mission from God? In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells His disciples to

baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Later on, the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples at Pentecost and they receive the courage to take on the mission Jesus gave them earlier. Confirmation is your own personal Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descends upon you and you accept the same challenge given you by Jesus to the disciples.

4. Chrism is much more than a sweet-smelling oil.

Chrism, the perfumed oil that the bishop uses to make the sign of the cross on your forehead, signifies a lot more than just a shower in your future. It helps show a connection to your Baptism - the first time you were anointed with oil. It shows healing and cleansing, too. Believe it or not, it also signifies preparation to do spiritual battle with the devil. Why? Oil is slippery, and in ancient times, warriors would cover themselves in it before battle to make it difficult for their enemies to grab them. In other words, Chrism makes it hard for the devil to grab you!

5. Why my forehead?

You probably wondered this as it dripped down your face during your Confirmation. St. Thomas Aquinas explained that this is because your forehead is part of your face - the first thing people see when they talk to you. Having the Chrism spread on your forehead proclaims to the world that the first thing people should notice about you is your faith in Christ.

6. What's in a name?

Many Catholics adopt the name of a biblical figure or saint that they find inspiring at their Confirmation. This shows your intention to copy their dedication to God. It makes you a heavenly friend who

Rite of Election

We welcome individuals into the Church during the Rite of Election, always held the Sunday following Ash Wednesday in our diocese, this year it was held on Feb. 26. During this service we celebrate the rite of election of Catechumens and the call to continuing conversion of the Candidates who are preparing for reception into the full Communion of the Catholic Church.



HOLY CROSS AND NSU CATHOLIC CAMPUS MINISTRY, NATCHITOCHEs.



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHURCH, TIOGA.



MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS CHURCH, WOODWORTH.



MINOR BASILICA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, NATCHITOCHEs.



NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY CHURCH, CAMPTI.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA.

“Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy.” // *pope francis*

“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.



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SACRED HEART OF JESUS CHURCH, PINEVILLE.



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL, ALEXANDRIA.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, MARKSVILLE

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for he is good,
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everlasting.*

Psalm 16
Responsorial Psalm
for April 16
Second Sunday of Easter

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Child Abuse Awareness Month

By Paul Ashton,
Psy. D., D. Min.
VIRTUS Program

“Then I proclaimed a fast... that we might humble ourselves before our God to petition from Him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all of our possessions.” // Ezra 8: 21

Along with the celebration of Easter, April is also Child Abuse Prevention Month. As “Easter People whose song is Alleluia” (Saint Augustine), there is no better time to celebrate the protection of our most valuable gift from God - our children. Alleluia people are those who live in the fullness of the resurrection drawing all around them to a place of light, wholeness, and the richness of the graces made available to them by the power



of the passion and redemption of Jesus.

There is no bargaining with an Alleluia person - they are “all-or-nothing” types of people who demand of themselves and of all those around them the complete message of the gospels and the charge of Jesus to love one another, caring most especially for those who are most valuable in our communities. It is most appropriate then that Child Abuse Prevention Month is held during the Easter season.

The origin of child abuse prevention has its roots in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). In 1866, New York passed the country’s first anti-cruelty law for animals. In 1874, in New York City, 9-year-old Mary Ellen Wilson was rescued from abuse by Eha Wheeler, a social worker, and Henry Bergh, founder of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

It was when Mary Ellen’s story reached the courts that people began to recognize the need for the protection of children.

The Massachusetts legislature noticed that factory owners were recruiting children to leave school and work long hours - regardless of their age. In 1877, this practice resulted in the creation of Boston’s first protective society for children. In that same year, 27 groups from 10 states joined together to create the Humane Society. “American Humane envisions a nation where no child nor animal will ever be a victim of willful abuse or neglect.” Some interesting milestones include:

- 1866: Henry Bergh founded the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
- 1874: Bergh helped found the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

- 1878: On April 23, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children set about to awaken interest in the abuses to which children were exposed by parents and guardians, and to help enforce existing laws, which offered some protection.

- 1884: Legislation was passed banning the exhibition of deformed children for entertainment and money.

- 1889: “Baby farms” regulation was passed. For a fee of \$25, an unwanted baby could be left at one of these farms.

- 1903: Agencies began to move away from a response to child abuse that was based solely on enforcement of child abuse laws and toward an approach that also involved prevention.

- 1930: The Third White House Conference on Children determines that prevention of abuse and neglect must become a national priority.

- 1974: The Child Abuse Treatment Act was passed into law. It mandated reporting of child abuse, and was amended several times.

- 1979: Proclaimed as United Nations ‘Year of the Child’ and focused attention and education on the Child Abuse Treatment Act.

- 1983: President Ronald Reagan proclaims April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

- 1996: The Child Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Adoption Act was passed into law.

- 2002: The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is the first secular organization to take a

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stand in response to the recently exposed sex abuse cases involving the Catholic Church.

As we can see from this limited timeline, society has struggled greatly - even in recent history - to make even incremental progress toward protecting children. In looking back, we see that beliefs, policies, procedures, and practices in society, greatly failed to answer the call of Jesus and the mandate of service passed on to us through His example at the Last Supper. Sexual abuse and exploitation, physical abuse, neglect, and the emotional abuse of children have been the bane of our society for generations. But there is hope.

Our Catholic history shows us that we have led the world in taking sin and evil and turning it upside down to find the good. Even as we hold on to the slightest glimmer of God's goodness,

we hold fast until justice and peace result. For some, this "big picture" struggle has not been as easy as adopting and promoting some individual cause and supporting that cause through their good works. Meanwhile, many faithful have devoted their lives to promoting the full message of the gospels, and some have literally died in this pursuit.

Today we stand on the shoulders of these brave men and women. Never before have our efforts as Catholics been so focused and determined in such a steadfast manner as in our present efforts to protect children from all manners of abuse and neglect. The Holy Spirit has worked among and through us, despite our angers, hurts, resentments, and feelings of betrayal. Through the Protecting God's Children program, thousands have found a place to begin the journey toward

wholeness - a bridge that will help others cross to a place where hope and healing await.

The opening reflection from Ezra states that we are on a journey. In preparing for that safe journey, we call upon the power of God through our fasting and sacrifice. We have much to be grateful for, and much to remind us of the Alleluia people we are all called to be. We continue to recognize our brothers and sisters who remain trapped in pain and agony, and we focus on our mission:

"Dioceses/eparchies will reach out to victims/survivors and their families, and demonstrate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being. The first obligation of the Church with regard to the victim is for healing and reconciliation."

- *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, Revised Edition, Article 1*

Wearing a blue ribbon signifies solidarity with all those who promote child abuse prevention. Participation in the Protecting God's Children program is a wonderful way to celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month and is a powerful example of how to become an Alleluia person "from head to toe" (Saint Thomas Aquinas).

YOUR COMMUNITY STORES



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CONFIRMATION-

(continued from pg. 13)

will pray and intercede for you on your christian journey. Other Catholics choose not to select a new name, and stick with the one that they were baptized with to show Confirmation's close connection with Baptism.

7. Confirmation is ancient.

Faithful people have been receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation for almost 2,000 years. There are even examples of it recorded in the Bible! In Acts 19, Paul the Apostle lays his hands (just like the bishop does during Confirmation today) on a group of believers and the Holy Spirit descends upon them. So, when you are confirmed, you are sharing in an ancient and rich

tradition that millions of Catholic have participated in throughout history.

8. You aren't alone.

To be confirmed, you must select a sponsor to help guide you through the process. This person is a great example of what it means to be a Catholic. They pray for you and provide a support system for your faith. Confirmation certainly makes you better equipped to handle life as a Christian, but that doesn't mean things will always be easy. During those more difficult times, don't forget about your sponsor.

Hopefully, these facts will help you on your journey to Confirmation. It might be a lot of work now, but it will all be worth it soon. The whole Church is rooting for you!

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Lord, you will show us the path of life.
 Psalm 16: 11 | Responsorial Psalm for April 23 | Third Sunday of Easter

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 Northwestern State University
 July 2-22, 2023

Northwestern State's ADVANCE Program for Young Scholars (ADVANCE) is a three-week summer residential program in Natchitoches, Louisiana, that offers challenging classes for honors, gifted, and/or talented students currently in grades 7 - 11. Course offerings include arts, computer science, finance, humanities, math and science. Visit the website, www.advance.nsula.edu or call 318-357-4500 for more information!

Program dates: July 2-22, 2023
Financial Aid application deadline: April 1, 2023
Application: May 1, 2023



III NORTHWESTERN STATE

SACRED HEART SCHOOL ESSAY WINNERS. Mr. Tim Bordelon, from the 4th Degree KC Assembly #2333 presented monetary awards and certificates to winners of this year's essay contest. The topic this year was: "What does it mean to you to be an American Patriot today?" and was open to 7th and 8th grade Catholic students. Leah D. [redacted] won 1st place and received a check for \$200; 2nd place went to Reid J. [redacted] who received a check for \$100. The KC Assembly received 29 essay entries from five participating area schools.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL REGION IV SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS. Congratulations to our 1st Place winners who won in their category at the LSUA Region IV Science Fair on March 11 at LSUA. Hadleigh J. [redacted], Eric B. [redacted], and McKinley H. [redacted]. SHS won as Best Overall School!



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE. Exploring the world of physics! SJS seniors tested their projects that they have been building for Physics. Groups of three students were required to make a working catapult and the photo was taken during the testing phase of their projects. St. Joseph Physics class is taught by Mr. Ben Dufour.

*The Lord is my shepherd;
 there is nothing I shall want.*

Psalm 23:1 | Responsorial Psalm for April 30
 Fourth Sunday of Easter

Catholic Campus Ministry at our local universities:

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

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

Louisiana College:
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ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEs. Junior high students in Mrs. Brandi Harrington's Religion classes visited Natchitoches Community Care Nursing Home. They visited and played Bingo games with the residents. The students have been learning about the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception to natural death. Back row (l-r): Carter J. [redacted], Emme E. [redacted], Ava K. [redacted], Beau C. [redacted], Tripp F. [redacted], Blanchard W. [redacted], Fisher Y. [redacted] and Jackson Y. [redacted]. Front row: resident, Elizabeth Johnson.



LSUA CAMPUS MINISTRY FREE LUNCH WEDNESDAY. Our free lunch cooks from February from St. Martin Church Knights of Columbus Council in Lecompte who cooked hamburgers on February 8 for the students and staff and KC Council from Sts. Francis and Anne Church in Kolin prepared tuna and egg salad sandwiches for the students and staff on Ash Wednesday, February 28. All of the lunches followed a Mass we celebrated in our chapel by various priests in our Diocese.

SACRED HEART SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR WINNER. Sixth grade student, Hadleigh J. [REDACTED], won 1st place and Overall in the 2023 Catholic Schools Week Science Fair on Feb. 2. Her project was in the category of Translational Medical Science, and her topic was "Color Blindness, What's That?" Congratulations to all of our winners!



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 Legal Services for Purposes of Disability Committee (Louisiana State
 Bar Association).

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

318-717-1995

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 | June 23 - 25, 2023
Students in grades 8 - 12

Join Host Chris Padgett
Speakers Bishop Joseph Espallat,
Jason Evert,
Jackie Francois Angel,
and Chris Mueller
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 // Matthew 11: 28

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Deacon Formation Informational meeting - 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.

An informational meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Apr. 1 at 10:00 a.m. at the St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd. To register, email denrmitchell@diocesealex.org.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Training Workshop - April 15

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. If you have any questions, please email or call Deacon Jason Lavergne 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.

The workshop on April 15 will be held at 9:00 a.m. at the St. Joseph Catholic Center in Alexandria.

Disalced Carmelite meeting - April 15

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. **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.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship - April 22

“Da Parish Crawfish Boiling Championship” being held at St. Joseph Church Hall in Marksville from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m! We will have 30 teams competing and cooking 15,000 pounds of crawfish served “All You Can Eat”. Three local bands will be playing for your entertainment. There will be vendor booths selling locally produced items, foods, and drinks along with lots of free kid’s activities. Bring a chair and come join us for a fun filled time as well as the best boiled crawfish in the State. We still have room for Boiling Teams, Sponsors, and Vendors! Tickets available on Eventbrite and at the Gate: Everyone over age 12: \$30, Children (ages 5-12) \$15, Children under 5: free.

Chords of Blue - April 26

You are invited to join St. Mary’s Residential Training School at the annual Chords of Blue Benefit Concert in honor of Autism awareness. Scheduled for April 26 at the Randolph Riverfront Center, guests will enjoy a night of great music and entertainment provided by the United by Music All-Star Showcase Featuring Curley Taylor and the Zydeco Trouble. Tickets start at \$75 each and can be purchased online at chordsofblue.com or by calling St. Mary’s at 318-445-6443, ext. 2144. All proceeds benefit St. Mary’s Residential Training School and local people living with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Cheneyville Crawfish Boil - April 29

St. Joseph Church in Cheneyville will hold their annual Crawfish Boil fundraiser on April 29 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$20 and includes 4lbs of crawfish

with potato, corn, dessert and one drink. Dine in or take out but you must bring your own containers for take out. Tickets must be purchased in advance by calling 337-224-2132. If no answer, please leave a message.

LCCB Catholic Faithful Citizenship Day - May 3

The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops is having its Catholic Faithful Citizenship Day at the Capitol on May 3. Our goal is to continue educating and engaging Catholics on Catholic Social Teaching and legislation, LCCB positions, and to develop relationships with each other and legislators. We invite you to attend. It is going to be a great event! For questions or to sign up, please contact Susan Wolf at swolf@laccb.org.

Hole Lotta Fun Golf Tournament - May 19

The “Hole Lotta Fun” Golf Tournament benefitting Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana will be held Friday, May 19 at Tamahka Trails Golf Course at Paragon Casino in Marksville. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the shotgun start begins at 1:00 p.m. For more information, visit www.cccenla.org or contact Heidi Wampler at 318-445-2401, ext. 510 or email hwampler@cccenla.org.

Steubenville South Conference - June 23 - 25

Calling all high schoolers! In our ever-changing world, Jesus is the answer to the longing of our hearts for meaning, fulfillment, security, and love. Join hundreds of Catholic teens at Steubenville South on June 23 - 25 to experience the peace of Jesus Christ, who is our refuge and never wearies of loving us.

All rising freshmen in high school through rising freshmen in college are invited to attend this weekend retreat. Learn more at www.steubenvillesouth.com, or contact your youth minister if you’re interested in attending.

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

April 24
Deadline for news:
Thursday, April 13

May 22
Deadline for news:
Thursday, May 11



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April 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>MARCH 27</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE</p>	<p>28</p> <p>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Lenten Adult Education Series 5:30 p.m. St. James Memorial, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Penance Service 6:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS</p>	<p>31</p> <p>PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER</p>	<p>APRIL 1</p> <p>EMHC Workshop 9:00 a.m. SJCC, Alexandria</p> <p>Deacon Formation Informational meeting 10:00 a.m. SJCC, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Palm Sunday VIRTUS Training 2:30 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL</p>
COME AND SEE WEEKEND, ST. JOSEPH SEMINARY, COVINGTON						
<p>3</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</p>	<p>4</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. D. MOREAU</p>	<p>5</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. L. MOREAU</p>	<p>6</p> <p>HOLY THURSDAY PRAY FOR DCN. T. MOULARD</p>	<p>7</p> <p>GOOD FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. A. MULLOTH</p>	<p>8</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</p>	<p>9</p> <p>EASTER PRAY FOR DCN. S. NEWBURY</p>
<p>10</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</p>	<p>11</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE</p>	<p>12</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</p>	<p>13</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</p>	<p>14</p> <p>PRAY FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Discaled Carmelite meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center</p> <p>EMHC Training Workshop 9:00 a.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL</p>	<p>16</p> <p>DIVINE MERCY PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH</p>
<p>17</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE</p>	<p>18</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN</p>	<p>19</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL</p>	St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport Men's ACTS Retreat			
			PRAY FOR DCN. C. PELTO	PRAY FOR DCN. K. PRIMEAUX	PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY
<p>24</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS</p>	<p>25</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. T. ROBICHAUX</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Chords of Blue Randolph Riverfront Center</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ</p>	<p>27</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. K. SAYES</p>	<p>28</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. G. SCHUPBACH</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Crawfish Boil 5:00-8:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Cheneyville</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</p>	<p>30</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER</p>

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