

CHURCH TODAY

Volume LIV, No. 6

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

June 26, 2023



Ordination to the Priesthood

Father Joshua Gavin Burch was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, June 10 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. More photos on page 8.

INSIDE

Eucharistic Revival: Year of Parish Renewal

As we transition to the second year of the Eucharistic Revival, it's time to bring it to parish leaders throughout the diocese to discuss ideas to support the National Eucharistic Revival efforts. See page 2 for more.

Ongoing renovations at Maryhill Renewal Center

Thousands of people attend retreats and functions held at Maryhill throughout the year. See page 5 for a peek at what's going on as far as renovations and remodeling throughout the campus.

Catholic Charities of Central LA hosts a "Hole Lotta Fun" Golf Tournament

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana had their second big fundraiser of 2023, and it was a "Hole Lotta Fun!" See page 15 for more information on Catholic Charities in Cenla.

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Eucharistic Revival: Year of Parish Renewal

Transitioning from the diocesan level to the parish phase of 3-year movement

By Dcn. Richard Mitchell
Director of
Worship and Liturgy

The results of a 2019 poll of Catholics in the United States made headlines when it revealed that only 31% of Catholics believed in the Catholic doctrine that “during Catholic Mass the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus.” Meaning 7 out of 10 Catholics do not believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Statistically speaking, this means that many reading this article may fall into the “nonbelief” or maybe “I’m not sure” category.

This is a sobering fact in our Church today, and I suspect is a good reason why the Church continues to see an overall downward turn in Mass attendance. I must admit that if I did not believe Jesus was present, I would not attend regularly either. I can watch Mass online with a nice cup of coffee in hand in the comfort of my home. I can read great books on scripture and even YouTube sermons from the best preachers. I can put in my earbuds and listen to Christian music just about any time or anywhere I want. I am a “spiritual person” who loves the Lord and prays regularly, so why do I need to be in a church building be a faithful Catholic?

Though each of these are wonderful in their own right, none individually nor collectively compare with the graces we receive when we are gathered as the Mystical Body of Christ in His Church and partake in the Body and Blood of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Bishop Robert Marshall said it beautifully in a recent homily at a priesthood ordination: “...at each Mass we have a privileged encounter with the Risen Christ, who is truly present in the Word that is proclaimed and in the assembly that is gathered in his name...Jesus is really, profoundly present in the Sacrament of the Altar – in his Body and Blood by which we are nourished...”

Even if the cantor is offkey or the homily is less than inspirational, as Catholics we believe we receive the Lord

NATIONAL
Eucharistic
Revival

wholly and completely in being physically present and through our participation at the Mass and especially in the reception of the Eucharist.

So as a practicing devout Catholic I DO believe in the “Real Presence” and as a deacon, I am passionate about the Eucharist and the liturgy of the Mass. So, when I see statistics that “most” people do not believe, I can easily become disheartened and wonder if my evangelization efforts are making a difference. But then I remember that Jesus experienced the same disbelief among his disciples. We read in the “Bread of Life Discourse” taken from the gospel of John that Jesus boldly exclaims: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?” (John 6:51-52). Later in the gospel passage, John informs us that: “As a result of this, many [of] his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.” (John 6:66)

Those who walked away from Jesus did not have the benefit of 2000 years of theological explanation of transubstantiation (the change of ordinary bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Christ through the words of consecration at Mass) nor the exegesis (critical explanation of the scripture) from the doctors of the Church explaining the significance of His words and teaching. Some of those in the 69% who do not believe or have some doubt in the Real Presence may simply not be aware of the doctrine of the Catholic Church or the scripture that supports our beliefs. Others may have so many distractions in life that they have slowly pushed going to Mass aside

for so long that they have lost that connection with our Lord. Still others may have never had an encounter with Jesus nor felt His love and mercy through the sacraments.

To address these issues and many others, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) began a three-year movement called the **National Eucharistic Revival** in 2022 to take on the task of (re)educating us all on the Eucharist and promote the importance of Eucharist in our Church and most importantly in our lives.

From June 2022 until May 2023 the Eucharistic Revival focused on a diocesan-wide education. To show his support of this movement, Bishop Marshall published a series of articles in *The Church Today* titled Live, Jesus, in our Hearts Forever: The Joy and Promise of the Most Holy Eucharist to help us learn more about the Eucharist and included some thought-provoking questions. If you missed them, we are in the process of combining the articles and will publish them soon or you can read them on the diocesan website.

Now we transition to the second year of the Eucharistic Revival (June 2023-May 2024) which is known as the **Year of Parish Renewal**. We are working with parish leaders throughout the diocese to discuss ideas for programs and liturgies your parish can host to support the **National Eucharistic Revival** efforts. Thankfully, many parishes already have in place some of the things suggested such as Adoration, Holy Hours, Bible Studies, and Book Studies.

Our bishops are encouraging ALL of us to be a part of the **National Eucharistic Revival**. Being involved in this movement will help inspire us, educate us, and unite us in worshiping our

Lord. To join in this movement, there are a few suggested actions to take:

1) Attend the programs and/or liturgies your church parish offers. Visit our Lord in adoration, go to confession, and attend Mass. If you have fallen away or stopped going to Mass, speak to the pastor of the Catholic Church near you. “It is not too late nor are your sins to great” to experience the love and mercy of Jesus!

2) Sign up to receive the National Eucharist Revival Newsletter called **Heart of the Revival** which can be found at www.eucharisticrevival.org. You will receive reflections, videos, and resources to help enkindle, rekindle, and deepen your relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist. Signing up is easy and free!

3) Become familiar with the verses that contain the “institution narrative”, or the words that Jesus spoke at the last supper which are the same words the priest says at the consecration at Mass. These are found in Mathew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, and Luke 22:19-20 and clearly quote Jesus when he says to take and eat the bread that has become his body and to take and drink the wine that has become his blood.

4) Have a Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) to reference when you have questions on the belief and teachings of the Church. Information on the Eucharist is found beginning with CCC #1322.

Let us pray together for the success of this National Eucharistic Revival in helping us all understand our Catholic faith, believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, experience Jesus in the Sacraments, so 100% of us can participate in the Great Commission to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...” (Mt 28:19-20)

Deacon Richard Mitchell
is the Diocese of Alexandria
Point Person for the National
Eucharistic Revival

Processions' public witness expresses National Eucharistic Revival's evangelistic vision, as movement begins parish year

By Maria Wiering
OSV News

(OSV News) — With the feast of Corpus Christi, the National Eucharistic Revival enters its second year and shifts its focus to parish renewal — a year organizers expect will inspire more parishes to increase the Eucharist's visibility in their communities through Eucharistic processions.

“Processions have been a very public witness and display of faith,” said Joel Stepanek, the National Eucharistic Revival's chief mission officer. Because of that public nature, they can be “jarring,” he said, prompting both Catholics and non-Catholics to reflect on the Real Presence.

“Just the stories and the images of the various processions that have been undertaken ... have been some of the most striking examples of how, on a diocesan level, there has been a response to this call for revival,” he said.

Launched as an initiative of the U.S. Catholic bishops in June 2022, the National Eucharistic Revival is a three-year movement that aims to deepen Catholics' love for Jesus through encountering him in the Eucharist. The revival's second year leads up to a National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis.

The revival's first year was titled “The Year of Diocesan Revival,” and efforts focused



on formation for diocesan leadership and diocesan-wide events. The revival's second year, “The Year of Parish Revival,” aims to reach Catholics in their parishes through renewed attention to the “art” of the Mass, Eucharistic devotions, and small-group faith sharing and formation.

Eucharistic processions — which consist of the Eucharist, typically displayed in a monstrance, followed by the faithful for any length of distance inside or outside of a church — became common forms of public devotion for Catholics at points in the church's history when the teaching on the real presence was questioned. Catholics believe the Eucharist truly is the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, who instituted this sacrament at the Last Supper.

As part of the Counter-Reformation, Pope Julius III issued a decree in 1551 during the Council of Trent that said

the Eucharist “is to be honored with extraordinary festive celebrations (and) solemnly carried from place to place in processions according to the praiseworthy universal rite and custom of the holy Church.”

Processions have been visible signs of the National Eucharistic Revival, organizers say, with dioceses introducing new events or expanding long-standing ones. Among them was a two-hour Eucharistic procession in New York City, which on Pentecost May 28 brought more than 4,000 Catholics to Times Square and ended with Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Other dioceses have shared stories of evangelism through their processions, such as in Helena, Montana, where Catholics had a spontaneous, prayerful encounter with homeless people. In another city, Catholics planned to route their procession past the busiest brunch spot.

Processions are a traditional means of commemorating the feast of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, commonly known by its Latin name, Corpus Christi, meaning “body of Christ.” In many U.S. dioceses, the June 8 feast is transferred to the following Sunday, June 11.

David Spesia, executive director of the Committee for Evangelization and Catechesis at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the bishops' committee spearheading the revival led by Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, said he hopes Corpus Christi processions create awareness “that this is the year for parishes to engage” with “that flowing of the love of the Lord out into the streets.”

“We've taken Jesus to the people,” he said. “Processions are a really unique opportunity for neighbors, for people who maybe don't know anything about the faith to say, ‘Wow,

what's going on? Who is that passing by?’”

Eucharistic processions also will be a key part of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, four routes pilgrims will travel with the Eucharist across the United States culminating in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress, July 17-21, 2024. Organizers expect the Congress to draw 80,000 people.

In contrast to the magnitude of the national event, revival organizers are encouraging parishes to organize in small groups for formation and faith sharing, and are preparing online study resources to aid them.

While organizers expect “getting people back into the pews” to be a “fruit” of the revival, “the goal is really this encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist, and to understand that, when he promised he was with us always, the most unique and precious way that happens is with the gift of the Eucharist and the celebration of the Mass,” Spesia said.

Devotions and acts of popular piety such as Eucharistic processions and Eucharistic adoration do not compete with the Mass, but rather continue its celebration, he added.

“We all know that the celebration of the Sunday Mass is the key experience of the church, worshipping the Father, with the Son, through the Holy Spirit,” he said. “Those devotions — that time of adoration — is the continuation of that celebration, that presence that comes from the sacrifice of the Mass. The Eucharistic processions flow from the Mass, and they're designed to lead people back to the Sunday liturgy.”

Maria Wiering is senior writer for OSV News.

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for July 2023

For a Eucharistic life //

We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way, and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.

Amen.



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PERMANENT DIACONATE EXCEEDS AVERAGE IN DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA. Thirteen deacons were ordained to the permanent diaconate in 2022. A new group of men will begin formation this fall, to be ordained in 2027.

State of the Permanent Diaconate in the Church

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations has released its annual survey, *A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate in 2022: A Study for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*.

Since 2005, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University has conducted this survey which provides important statistics and forecasting trends on the state of the permanent diaconate in the Church in the United States.

Bishop Earl A. Boyea of Lansing, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations expressed his gratitude for the service of permanent deacons in the Church: "Permanent deacons are essential to the Church's ministry of love and service, especially to the poor and vulnerable. By virtue of their ordination, they give witness to Christ the Servant in the daily exercise of their work and ministry. I invite all the faithful to continue to pray for our deacons that they may remain faithful to their vocation of bringing Christ's presence to all."

The survey utilized contact information from the National Association of Diaconate

Directors (NADD) and was sent to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in the Latin and Eastern Rite (arch)dioceses and eparchies. In total, CARA received responses from 143 of the 183 (arch) dioceses/eparchies whose bishops are members of the USCCB and have an active Office of Deacons, for a 78% response rate.

- The estimated number of permanent deacons in active ministry was 13,695 in 2022, the lowest amount since 2011. While the share of active permanent deacons in the Latin Church is forecasted to remain relatively stable (72%±3% in 2027), this trend is in keeping with the slow decline in the diaconate over the past several years.

- The Archdiocese of Chicago had the greatest number of permanent deacons (868) followed by Galveston-Houston (361), New York (350), Joliet (322), and Rockville Centre (318).

- An unusually high number of men (910) were ordained to the permanent diaconate in 2022. Since 2014, the estimated number of ordinations averaged 642.

Most active deacons are between 60-69 years old (41%) or aged 70 or older (36%).

- Most permanent deacons are Caucasian/white (76%)

followed by Hispanic/Latino (18%), Asian/Pacific Islander (3%), African American/black (3%), and Native American/other (1%).

- Deacons fill a wide range of ministerial positions in the Church. The most common position is a parish ministerial position, such as a DRE or youth minister, (22%) followed by ensuring the pastoral care of one or more parishes (21%), a parish non-ministerial position, such as administration or business (15%), diocesan non-ministerial positions (9%), and hospital ministry (9%).

The full survey conducted by CARA may be accessed here: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/diaconate-portrait-2022-2023.pdf>

Deacon Richard Mitchell, Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Alexandria, reports there are 30 permanent deacons serving in the diocese in parish ministry. Of those, 13 recently celebrated their one-year anniversary of ordination (June 4). A new cohort of deacon aspirants will begin formation in the fall of 2023 with an anticipated ordination in 2027. For more questions or information on a possible vocation to diaconate ministry, please email Deacon Mitchell at [dcmitchell@diocesealex.org](mailto:dcnrmitchell@diocesealex.org).



CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL. We had beautiful weather though the winds were quite strong! Thank you to the Knights of Columbus who got a real workout holding on to the canopy as we made our way through downtown Alexandria. Grateful to all of those who participated in the procession and who gave witness to our common faith in Jesus Christ!

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA. Fr. Taylor Reynolds celebrated Mass on Sunday, June 11 for the Most Holy Blood and Body of Christ (Corpus Christi) .



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Ongoing renovations at Maryhill Renewal Center

Thousands of people attend retreats and functions held at Maryhill throughout the year and as such, the grounds and facilities require a great amount of maintenance.

The ongoing renovations at the North-side Youth Center include fresh new flooring and ceiling tile, the kitchen counters were replaced with stainless steel tables and stainless steel shelving. The hot food service bar on the dining area side was updated with a new stainless steel serving unit.

Future plans include filling in the old swimming pool adjacent to the Youth Center and remodeling the old bathhouse located there into restrooms.

On the South Side, the chapel is undergoing an update to the confessional with new paint, lighting and removal of a door. The sanctuary sound system equipment area has been remodeled with a partition and new flooring. A new sound system will also be installed soon.

Also currently, some overdue forest management is occurring in the wooded acreage of the facility. Large, older growth trees are being removed to allow younger, healthier trees to thrive. This will also allow more flexibility and greater access to some of the remote areas.

Bishop Charles Greco's original intent was for the income generated from harvested timber to fund the ongoing maintenance of the 187 acre property and its buildings so that Maryhill may continue to serve as the spiritual heart of the Diocese of Alexandria for years to come.



PRAYER FOR PROTECTION THIS HURRICANE SEASON

O God, Master of this passing world,
hear the humble voices of your children.
The Sea of Galilee obeyed Your order and returned to its former quietude.
You are still the Master of land and sea.
We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control;
the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant,
can awake from its seeming lethargy,
overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land,
and spread chaos and disaster.
During this hurricane season, we turn to You, O loving Father.
Spare us from past tragedies whose memories are still so vivid,
and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with the passing of time.

O Virgin, Star of the Sea, Our beloved Mother,
we ask you to plead with your Son of our behalf
so that spared from the calamities common to this area
and animated with a true spirit of gratitude,
we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son
to reach the heavenly Jerusalem, where a stormless eternity awaits us.
Amen.

*Composed by Most Rev. Maurice Schexnayder (1985 - 1981)
Second Bishop of Lafayette (1956 - 1973),
following Hurricane Audrey in 1957*



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August 10-13
Cenla ACTS
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A list of ACTS Retreat dates can be found at www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/acts/. All retreats are held at Maryhill Renewal Center.

U.S. Bishops advance pastoral initiatives to strengthen church amid discussions on Eucharist, priesthood, synodality

By Peter Smith
Our Sunday Visitor

ORLANDO, Fla. (OSV News) — Meeting in Orlando for their spring assembly, the U.S. bishops moved ahead on some efforts to advance the church's mission in the U.S., including new pastoral initiatives aimed at activating Catholics as missionary disciples. The gathering's June 15-16 plenary sessions proved relatively smooth, but featured moments of vigorous discussion at a few points, particularly around the formation of priests.

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services gave his first address as U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops president presiding over the bishops' plenary assembly. He covered a variety of issues of concern to Catholics, such as the need for Congress to pass a comprehensive immigration reform and for an end to Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

"We cannot fail to see the face of Christ in all of those who need our assistance, especially the poor and the vulnerable," he said.

The papal nuncio to the U.S., Archbishop Christophe Pierre, made his case to the U.S. bishops June 15 that synodality, oriented to Jesus Christ as their "true north," unleashes missionary activity.

"The purpose of walking this synodal path is to make our evangelization more effective



USCCB. Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski attends a June 16, 2023, session of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring plenary assembly in Orlando. (OSV News photo / Bob Roller).

in the context of the precise challenges that we face today," Archbishop Pierre said in his address at the U.S. bishops' spring plenary assembly in Orlando.

The archbishop also singled out Auxiliary Bishop David G. O'Connell of Los Angeles, who was shot to death earlier this year, as "a model of synodal service, combined with Eucharistic charity."

The U.S. Catholic bishops gathered voiced their approval for the advancement of a cause to canonize five missionary priests from Brittany, France, known as the "Shreveport martyrs."

"They demonstrated heroic charity during the third worst pandemic in U.S. history," said Bishop Francis I. Malone of

Shreveport, noting they were all young men who voluntarily sacrificed their own lives to journey with the dying and bring the Eucharist to the faithful.

In their message to Pope Francis, the bishops also strongly condemned an execution that the state of Florida carried out June 15 in the evening following their meeting.

Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, updated the bishops on the progress of the 2023-2024 global Synod on Synodality. Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, presented on the National Eucharistic Revival, and outlined how the "small group initiative" in the parish year could help deepen people's relationship

to Christ in the Eucharist.

"We all know how much our church needs to move from maintenance to mission ... this is really the heart of what we're attempting to do," he said.

Most votes taking place had near unanimous approval, such as the agenda items related to retranslating the Liturgy of the Hours into English, including having the future edition include

some prayer texts in Latin.

The bishops approved the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Latino Ministry with 167 in favor and 2 against and 2 abstentions. The 62-page plan seeks to respond to the needs of about 30 million Hispanic/Latino Catholics in the U.S. and strengthen Hispanic/Latino ministries at the national, local and parish level.

Ahead of the vote, Bishop Oscar Cantú of San Jose, California, chairman of the bishops' Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs, told OSV News there was a great need to "get moving so that (the new pastoral plan) can be implemented in our dioceses and parishes."

A day before the vote took place, Detroit Auxiliary Bishop J. Arturo Cepeda, who chairs the USCCB's Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, called the plan a sign of the times that recognizes Hispanic/Latino Catholics — who account for more than 40% of U.S. Catholics — as "missionaries among us" that can reinvigorate the life of the church.

The most contentious discussion took place regarding

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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*For ever
I will sing
the goodness
of the Lord.*

Psalm 89: 2
Responsorial Psalm
for July 2
Thirteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

the proposed second edition of the “Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests.” Some bishops took to the floor to object they had not had time to read the document, or that it was so lengthy priests would likely not read it and dismiss its contents.

Other bishops expressed concern that the discussion on “spiritual fatherhood” needed to be fleshed out, expressing concern that otherwise it could fuel the “narcissistic tendencies” and “hubris” of some priests.

Bishop Steven R. Biegler of Cheyenne, Wyoming, said he appreciated the document’s beautiful description of the Christian relationship to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. “What I find lacking is that communal relationship to the Body of Christ ... that puts us in solidarity with one another as brother and sister,” he said.

However, other bishops pushed back against delaying the document, noting the hard work that went into developing it, and that the document was meant to be a guide adapted to the realities of local churches.

Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt, ordained as a priest for the Servants of the Eucharist and Mary, who is an auxiliary for the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, said the term “spiritual fatherhood” is “actually a term that is more familiar and clear for those who are younger in the priesthood.”

Ultimately, the bishops approved the formation document with 144 voting in favor, 24 against, and 8 abstentions.

The discussion and vote on priorities for the 2025-28 USCCB strategic plan were put on hold so that the bishops could reflect upon and, presumably, include

some of the discussion from the synod conversations.

In a voice vote, the bishops approved beginning the process of consultation and revision of ethical directives for Catholic health care facilities to guide them in caring for people suffering from gender dysphoria and who identify as transgender.

Bishop Flores said potential changes would be “limited and very focused” in nature, and involve extensive consultation. He praised the calls from bishops on the floor for a “pastorally sensitive” approach to the complex topic.

The U.S. bishops also voiced approval for the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth to move ahead on drafting a new pastoral statement for persons with disabilities.

“We do believe a new statement is needed to address disability concerns in the 21st century,” Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, the committee’s chair, told the bishops June 16. The intended statement aims to emphasize the giftedness of persons with disabilities, eliminate outdated

forms of referring to persons with disabilities, and would be inclusive of persons who have mental illnesses.

During the discussion, Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley of Boston joined Bishop John T. Folda of Fargo, North Dakota, in noting the importance of Catholics being allied with the disability community against assisted suicide, and the cardinal asked for more attention to support parents of children with autism.

The bishops also heard an update on the upcoming World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, and were encouraged to have their own stateside events for youth and young adults “to form them as missionary disciples.”

Finally, just before the bishops concluded their assembly, Bishop Earl A. Boyea of Lansing, Michigan, chair of the bishops’ Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, discussed The Catholic Project’s 2022 study of 10,000 Catholic religious and diocesan priests that found most priests distrust their bishops with only 24% saying they had confidence in bishops in

general.

Bishop Boyea encouraged the bishops to help priests “feel kinship and fraternity with us” through better personal communication, such as recognizing important moments in their lives, and better lines of communicating information to them.

“This is not the completion, but a beginning, to heal our relationship,” he said of the report.

At the conclusion of their assembly, recognizing it was the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the bishops prayed together the Litany of the Sacred Heart, invoking Jesus’ heart repeatedly to “have mercy on us.”

Peter Jesserer Smith is the national news and features editor for OSV News. Kate Scanlon is a national reporter for OSV News covering Washington. Contributing to this report were Jean Gonzalez, projects editor for The Florida Catholic Media in Orlando; Tony Gutiérrez, writing for OSV News from Arizona; and Maria-Pia Negro Chin, Spanish editor for OSV News.ordination in 2027.



HOPE

by Marcus Descant, Leesville, LA

Lord, give to us the gift of hope,
When it seems we are at the end of our rope.

When things happen in life and all looks dim,
We can get on our knees and pray to HIM.

HIS love for us is ever so great
With HIM at hand it is never too late.

We can turn to our Father in Heaven above,
Knowing HE is always there with HIS love.

So, if we pray to HIM we can always cope,
Because of HIS love there is always hope.

lizdescant@gmail.com

Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant

U.S. Bishops affirm advancement of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of five priests known as the “Shreveport Martyrs”

ORLANDO, Fla. - At their annual spring Plenary Assembly, the bishops of the United States held a canonical consultation on the cause of beatification and canonization of the Servants of God Jean Pierre, Isidore Quémerais, Jean Marie Biler, Louis Gergaud, and François LeVézouët, five French-born priests who came to Louisiana during the yellow fever epidemic of 1873. They served in the area in what is today the Diocese of Shreveport. The Vatican’s Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, which oversees the steps and process for canonization, granted that the five causes be considered together as one cause; the priests are referred to locally in the diocese as the “Shreveport Martyrs.”

Archbishop Jerome E.

Listecki of Milwaukee, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance, and Bishop Francis I. Malone of Shreveport, facilitated the discussion by the bishops. By a voice vote on June 15, the bishops affirmed their support for the advancement of the cause of beatification and canonization on the diocesan level.

The five French-born priests left their homeland to minister to the people in what was then a newly erected diocese which was in the frontier wilderness of northern Louisiana. As yellow fever hit the community in 1873, they ministered to the locals, assisted at the bedsides of the sick, and anointed the dying. A New Orleans newspaper described

the outbreak in Shreveport as “fourfold worse” than anything seen in decades, yet the five priests chose to remain in the community and continue to serve despite the dire conditions, and each succumbed to yellow fever.

In his request to open the diocesan phase of investigation into the lives of the five priests, Bishop Malone cited the benefit to the faithful that the lives and virtues of the priests have to the Church in the United States in light of the recent COVID pandemic.

Watch a special interview with Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States: https://youtu.be/i-x_9PIsVck

Read more about the cause for beatification and canonization: <https://shreveportmartyrs.org>.



ORDINATION OF JOSHUA BURCH TO PRIESTHOOD. Joshua Gavin Burch was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, June 10 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral with Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr., officiating.



LAYING ON HANDS. Through the laying on of hands, the gift of the Holy Spirit for the priestly office is conferred upon the candidate.



VESTING. By this investiture the ministry he will henceforth fulfill in the Liturgy is outwardly manifested. Fr. Blake Deshautelle assists.



FRATERNAL KISS. The priests welcome the newly ordained to a shared ministry in their Order. Fr. John Cunningham, our oldest active priest, hugs our newest priest.



(left) FATHER JOSHUA BURCH. Fr. Burch participates as a priest for the first time in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

(above right) FIRST BLESSING. Father Burch bestows his first priestly blessing on Bishop Robert Marshall.



*I will praise your name for ever,
my king and my God.*

Psalm 145: 1 | Responsorial Psalm for July 9
Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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.



TRANSITIONAL DEACON ORDINATION. On Saturday, May 20 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Diaconate Ordination of Larry Donald “Donnie” Kuzma, Jr. Deacon Donnie is from Indiana and came to the Diocese of Alexandria to serve as a Focus missionary in Natchitoches. He just completed his third of four years of theological studies at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. He will work in St. Joseph parish in Marksville through October before his return to seminary. We hope that he will be ordained to the priesthood next spring. Pictured left to right: (at the time) Transitional Deacon Josh Burch, Transitional Deacon Donnie Kuzma, Bishop Robert Marshall and Director of Vocations Father Luke LaFleur.



EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION WORKSHOP. On Tuesday, May 16, over 60 people gathered for the EMHC Workshop held at the St. Joseph Catholic Center in Alexandria. Dcn. Jason Lavergne, Director of Religious Education and Faith Formation for the diocese, was the facilitator. The response to this series of workshops have been overwhelming. The tentative plan is to offer a workshop in a different deanery each quarter beginning this fall. Date and location will be announced when plans are finalized.



EMHC ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH, BROUILLETTE. Congratulations to the Eucharistic Ministers installed on Sunday, April 16: Bonnie Walker, Bonnie Ponthier, Janice Brevelle, Don Brevelle, Glenda Gremillion, Debra McNeal, Tammy Normand, and Debra Bordelon.



Congratulations to Eucharistic Ministers installed Saturday, April 15: Jane Bordelon, Judy Decuir, Winnie Daniel, Fay Brevelle, and Cecile Bordelon, with Father Abraham Palakkattuchira.

Seminarian Burses

May 2023 Donations

Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
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Mr. Dwight E. Beridon	\$250.00
Harold and Lillie Beridon Burse	
Deacon and Mrs. William Travis	\$1,000.00
Cecilia M. McDowell Burse	
Total	\$1,950.00

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

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

(right and below) FATHER RICKEY J. GREMILLION, SILVER JUBILEE.

Congratulations, Father Rick, on your 25th Priestly ordination Anniversary! For months, Immaculate Heart of Mary parish was bubbling over with excitement to celebrate this special day. Starting with the 11:00 a.m. Mass on May 21, and continuing with festivities in our parish hall, fellow priests, deacons, parishioners, family and friends, gathered for a reception in Father Rick's honor as he celebrated his 25th Anniversary of priesthood.



FATHER BLAKE CELEBRATES 16TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRIESTHOOD.

On Wednesday, May 10, Fr. Blake Deshautelle attended St. Paul's Ladies Altar Society Meeting and was surprised with a cake to celebrate his Anniversary. He has been a Priest for 16 Years.



(above) OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR CHURCH 75TH ANNIVERSARY. Sister Mildred Leonards (center), a relative of Msgr. A.O. Olinger and firer teacher at OLPS school is pictured with Mike Bordelon and Nelwyn Gentry.

(right) OLPS 75TH ANNIVERSARY MASS. Current and former clergy and servers of OLPS prepare to celebrate the 75th Anniversary Mass held on Sunday, June 4. A special dinner followed in the Divine Providence Center. Along with current pastor, Fr. Rusty Rabalais, Fr. Vic Vead, Msgr. Steve Testa and Fr. Dan O'Connor, past pastors of OLPS, were among the co-celebrants.



“The Church (like so many other things in life) is not so much something we inherit from generations past or take over from our predecessors as it is something on loan to us from future generations.”

|| matthew kelly



CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS COURT BISHOP DESMOND #1459. The CDA at St. Rita Church celebrated their 75th Anniversary of organization in May 27 with a Mass followed by a dinner at the Holy Family Center in Alexandria.

CDA Court Bishop Desmond 75th Anniversary

Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Bishop Desmond #1459 (St. Rita Church, Alexandria), celebrated their 75th Anniversary on May 27.

An Anniversary Mass was celebrated on May 27, with Fr. Anthony Dharmaraj, Court Chaplain and pastor of St. Rita Church, officiating. Guest speaker was Fr. Craig Scott, pastor of St. James Memorial Church, Alexandria followed by a celebration and dinner with Ona Wilson, Court Regent, as master of ceremonies.

Court Bishop Desmond #1459 was organized on January 25, 1948 and its first chaplain was Fr. Hermel Dube. The first Regent was Mrs. Drussie Doiron. This court belongs to the National

and State Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

Throughout the years, the Court members have actively been involved in a number of charitable projects within the community and at the diocesan level such as Hope House, the Shepard Center, Manna House, Radio Maria, Boys and Girls Club in Pineville, Veterans Affairs residents, Hope Fund for emergencies, St. Christina's Nursing Home and more. They continue to raise funds for priests' retirement, the seminarian education fund and scholarships. On the state level, they donate and support the CDS Kid project and projects that fight human trafficking.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas was founded in

1903 as the National Order of the Daughters of Isabelle and a helper for the Knights of Columbus. The (now named) Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) is the largest organization of Catholic women in the world. There are approximately 95,000 members in at least 44 states including Puerto Rico, Guam, Saipan, the Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Washington D.C. and Mexico. The National Headquarters is in New York City. The CDA mission is to strive to embrace the principle of faith, working through love in the promotion of justice, equality, and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all mankind. Their motto is: **UNITY AND CLARITY.**



SECULAR ORDER OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITES OF ALEXANDRIA. Members of the Alexandria OCDS Carmelite Community of Elijah the Prophet and St. Mary of Jesus Crucified celebrated with Sharon Bourgoyne as she made her Definitive Promise to the order on May 13 at Maryhill Renewal Center. Celebrating with her were friends and husband, Lyndon. Fr. Louis Sklar presided at the mass. Sharon made her promises of the three evangelical counsels of poverty, obedience, and chastity.



(left) FATHER CHRISTIAN OGBONNA CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY. The parishioners of St. John the Baptist Church in Cloutierville and Holy Family Chapel in Monet Ferry gave a surprise birthday party for Fr. Christian Ogbonna on Sunday, May 21. Those in attendance were his parishioners and Fr. Kenneth Obiekwe. His birthday is on May 23.



(below) CHURCH OF THE LITTLE FLOWER, EVERGREEN. A Devotion to Sacred Heart of Jesus was held in our Chapel with Novena prayers and reparation for the Heart of Jesus for all the sins and abuses committed against the heart of Jesus.



Pilgrimages

Egypt/Nile River

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.

Mexico/OLG Shrine

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.



CONFIRMATION, OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR, ALEXANDRIA. Monday, May 22, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria. Thirty-nine young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father Rusty Rabalais, Father Thomas Kennedy, Deacon Les Glankler, Deacon Alex Mangini, Deacon Richard Mitchell, the small group leaders-catechists, parents, sponsors, and parishioners for their support of these Confirmandi.



CONFIRMATION, STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE, KOLIN. Thursday, May 25, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Vigil Mass of the Solemnity of Pentecost and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Martin Church in Lecompte. Four young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father Marc Noel, Pastor, Deacon Richard Mitchell (who took this photo), the catechists, sponsors, parents, and parishioners for their welcome and their support of these Confirmandi. Come, Holy Spirit!



CONFIRMATION, ST. MARTIN CHURCH, LECOMPTE. Saturday, May 27, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Vigil Mass of the Solemnity of Pentecost and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Martin Church in Lecompte. Four young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father Marc Noel, Pastor, Deacon Richard Mitchell (who took this photo), the catechists, sponsors, parents, and parishioners for their welcome and their support of these Confirmandi. Come, Holy Spirit!



CONFIRMATION, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL AND ST. FRANCES CABRINI CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA. Sunday, May 28, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Solemnity of Pentecost and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Eight young disciples were confirmed: 4 from Cathedral parish, 2 from Sacred Heart of Jesus parish in Pineville, 1 from St. Frances Cabrini parish in Alexandria, and 1 from Sts. Francis and Anne parish in Kolin. Thank you to the concelebrating priests: Father Chad Partain, Father Bino Pallipparambil, and Father Bill Gearheard; two assisting deacons: Deacon Jason Lavergne and Deacon Richard Mitchell; the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners of all four parishes for their support of these Confirmandi.



CONFIRMATION, OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE MISSION CHURCH, FOREST HILL. Wednesday, May 31, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated confirmation at Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission Church in Forest Hill. This mission church had 31 Confirmands and the small church was overflowing with family, friends, and other parishioners. Thank you to Father Marc Noel, Deacons Alex Mangini and Richard Mitchell, the catechists, sponsors and all who supported these young people in their faith journey. What a wonderful way to close out our Confirmation season!

Please visit the photo galleries at www.diocesealex.org to see all photos from this year's sacraments



(left) **MOTHERS DAY AT ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH, ECHO.** Mother's Day and Celebration of Women Luncheon was enjoyed by friends and church family on May 12 at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, Echo.

(below) **BLESSING OF THE BOATS** on May 28 at on Lake Bruin in Tensas Parish. Father Taylor Reynolds, pastor of St. Joseph Church, St. Joseph, LA and Seminarian Blaine Phillips blessed the boats on Lake Bruin on Memorial Day weekend at Netterville Landing.



NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY ANNUAL CCD FAMILY FUN DAY. The CCD students, volunteers and their families enjoyed a fun filled excursion, on the Cane River Queen paddle boat, on Cane River in Natchitoches, on April 30.



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CATHOLIC CHURCH and pastor, Fr. Dwight DeJesus, sponsored a day trip to New Roads and St. Francisville on April 14. First stop was St. Mary's Catholic Church in New Roads.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BISHOP GRECO COUNCIL #1134 of St. Rita Church in Alexandria, hosted a summer party for the residents of local OLS group homes.

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana Services Offered

SNAP Enrollment Assistance

(in person or by phone)

By appointment only on Mondays and

Tuesdays: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Location varies - see website

By phone: flexible days

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/basic-needs>

Emergency Basic Needs Assistance

- Utilities, rent, fire, information and referral.

By appointment only:

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/basic-needs>

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Facilitated by Ramsey Solutions

Master Financial Coaches

2nd Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m., Westside Library

By appointment only

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/basic-needs>

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<https://cccenla.org/mental-health-services#COUNSELING>

Volunteers

Help is needed in all service areas.

If interested, please contact Jennifer Gilchrist, at

jgilchrist@cccenla.org or call 318.445.2401,

EXT 533

Christian Life Coaching

(for personal life changes)

By appointment only

To schedule visit:

<https://cccenla.org/mental-health-services#COACHING>

Peace in the Midst of Crisis

Divorce Support

By appointment only

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/mental-health-services#SUPPORTGROUPS>

Veteran's Support Group

- A new session will begin in mid-summer

By appointment only

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/mental-health-services#VeteransSupportGroup>

Vaping/Tobacco Cessation

For teens and adults

American Lung Association evidenced-based

10 session program by Certified Tobacco

Treatment Specialist

Group or individual sessions: Dates TBD

By appointment only

To schedule visit: <https://cccenla.org/mental-health-services#VAPING-TOBACCO>

Coming soon!

Grief/Loss Support

Families/Substance Use Support

Disaster Relief

Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program:

<https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/resource/cdpp/>

If interested in supporting preparedness in your

parish, please contact Jennifer Gilchrist, at

jgilchrist@cccenla.org or call 318.445.2401,

EXT 533

“And the King will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

1 matthew 25: 40



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A Hole Lotta Fun Golf Tournament

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana had their second big fundraiser of 2023, and it was a “Hole Lotta Fun”! They hosted a golf tournament at Tamahka Trails at Paragon Casino Resort on May 19. Starting with lunch sponsored by Walker Automotive, the shotgun start kicked off the tournament at 1:00 p.m. Teams from across Central Louisiana spent the afternoon playing golf. Players competed to win a 2023 Mazda MX-5 Miata by attempting to get a hole-in-one at Hole 8. Unfortunately, no one won but there’s always next year! Several specialty contests allowed players to win prizes. The winner of the Putting Contest won a “Stay and Play” package from Paragon Casino Resort which included a hotel stay, 2 rounds of golf, 2 movie tickets, and a restaurant gift card. The Longest Drive Contest winner received a \$100 gift certificate to Run Wild and a golf umbrella. The Closest



TAMAHKA TRAILS GOLF COURSE, MARKSVILLE. Catholic Charities held a fundraising golf tournament on May 19 at the golf course located at Paragon Casino in Marksville and it was “A Hole Lotta Fun!”

to the Hole Contest winner won a \$25 gift certificate to Firehouse Subs, a golf umbrella, and a bottle of spirits. Thank you to these Specialty Contest Sponsors! Players also won many door prizes including swag and gift cards from businesses throughout our area. Thank you, door prize sponsors! The overall winners won a bottle of spirits, gift cards, and sleeves of golf balls. There

were great prizes available to the participants thanks to the many sponsors! We also want to thank all of our hole sponsors! For a full list of sponsors, visit our Facebook page.

Special thanks to our Beverage Sponsors who kept our golfers hydrated throughout the afternoon – Oestriecher & Company and Oestriecher Financial Management Services! Also, special thanks to our Hole-in-One Sponsor – Walker Automotive! Overall, it was a successful first golf tournament. We look forward to increasing participation next year! Be on the lookout for information on the upcoming Skeet Shoot which will be held around September.

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

July 11, 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center,
ALEXANDRIA

August 2, 1:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center,
ALEXANDRIA

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

July 14
Feast of
St. Kateri Tekakwitha
 the first Native American
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If you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, and that the abuse is by a parent or caretaker, please first call the Louisiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) and/or your local law enforcement agency. If suspected abuse is related to a diocesan/church/school program, or if abuse occurred by anyone acting in Church services, a report should then also be made to the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Dr. Lee Kneipp, Clinical Psychologist at 318-542-9805.

Revival begins in the home

By Katie Prejean-McGrady
Our Sunday Visitor

I stuck the prayer card into the visor of the minivan, hoping that at least the sight of it each morning would remind me to say a quick prayer as we got on the road for school drop-offs and then the afternoon pickups.

Within 24 hours of putting it there, my 5-year-old questioned its existence.

“Mom, why is the ‘monsterance’ in our van?”

“The what?” I replied. I was thrown off by her mispronunciation.

“The ‘monsterance.’ Jesus’ sun house.”

“Oh! The ‘monstrance!’” I quickly realized. “It’s a new prayer card the Sisters sent me.”

Confused, my daughter replied, “So our van is a church now?”

“No ...” How’d she jump to that conclusion, I thought.

“Jesus can buckle up next to me. I’ll share my booster seat.”

And with this matter-of-fact declaration, she asked if I could turn on a song from our morning playlist.

I couldn’t get this description of a monstrance out of my head, though. Jesus’ sun house. As if Our Lord is working on his beach body tan for the coming summer.

Seeing and hearing

Kids just simply call it as they see it, though, and here was a little girl who sort of knew the name for the object that displays our Eucharistic Lord so we can adore him. I could be proud she was close to getting it right, and proud she wanted Jesus to buckle up next to her in her booster seat.

This isn’t necessarily due to my deeply involved efforts to teach profound Eucharistic theology to my kindergartner, by the way. This is not a reflection on how good my husband and I are at raising our kids Catholic. She knows the name of the monstrance (sort of) because she’s come with me to my regular



Holy Hour, goes to adoration at her Catholic school and has heard the term used a time or two in casual conversation around our dinner table with more than a few priests as regular guests.

That quick conversation is simply evidence that love of the Eucharist sort of happens by osmosis, at least at first. It’s an absorbed understanding, that this tiny white host held high by Father in the latter half of Sunday Mass is somehow important. It’s this visible reality, that mommy and daddy bow their heads out of reverence and love as they step forward to consume that tiny white host, all while pinning the

toddler’s arms to her side so she doesn’t reach forward and try to swipe it. It’s this understood concept, that we genuflect when we see the red candle, we sit quietly and gaze in the direction of the gold sun-looking statue, that we order the entire weekend around when we’re going to see Jesus at church.

As with most things, kids pick it up when it’s seen, heard and experienced, usually bit by

“what if revival didn’t begin in the places we expected, or the events we planned, or the buildings where we say revival should be? What if revival began at the kitchen tables, and in the nighttime prayers, and in the quick holy half-hour with a squirmy toddler on the floor, and in the pew the family slides into five minutes late on Sunday morning?”

*The seed
that falls
on good
ground
will yield
a fruitful
harvest.*

Luke 8: 8
Responsorial Psalm
for July 16
Fifteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

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

bit. Words. Walking. Using a fork. Going potty in the potty. Reading. Writing. Making a bed. All things I've done my darndest to instruct my children on how to do, and all things they've eventually learned to do in their own way, usually by watching others.

When my 5-year-old first walked, we noticed she put her hand on her hip, much the same way I'd stand at the stove and walk back and forth between the kitchen island and the sink. When my 2-year-old began talking, she called her older sister "Rosie," a name she only ever heard her sister call herself.

Learned behavior becomes lived behavior, and this becomes the root of one's reality.

Where revival begins

When it comes to our faith, the best religious education programs and the finest curriculums and the glitziest videos don't hold a

candle to a faithful family that attends Mass, prays at the dinner table and keeps Jesus at the heart of the home. It is there, in the home, where the learned behavior of faith becomes a lived behavior that establishes a clear and present reality: that Jesus matters, that our faith is important, and that everything is rooted in his perfect love for us.

There's been much talk of revival lately. Prayer meetings lasting days. Big events with speakers and processions and expositions. Many books, and countless more articles, and endless videos about what revival is, and should be, and could be, and where and when it'll happen. It's obvious there's a desire for renewal, that there is a clear and present hunger for an awakening to the Lord in a hurt and troubled world.

But what if revival didn't begin in the places we expected, or the events we planned, or the buildings where we say revival

should be? What if revival began at the kitchen tables, and in the nighttime prayers, and in the quick holy half-hour with a squirmy toddler on the floor, and in the pew the family slides into five minutes late on Sunday morning? What if revival began in the home, not in some orchestrated or managed way, but because a love of the Eucharist is witnessed, learned, lived and then becomes the foundation of a new reality, in even the youngest of

hearts in the simplest of ways?

Grassroots renewal

I'm always struck by the fact that Jesus gives himself to us over a meal, at a supper, gathered with a found family of sorts. These misfit disciples, questioning and confused and perhaps a little frightened, witnessing a love the likes of which the world has never seen before. Instructed to do this again and again, to take and eat, this bread and wine, true flesh and

true blood. Most of us eat meals where? With our family, at a table, gathered together at the end of long and busy days. Again and again, consuming that which is so familiar, but which tethers us together in new ways each time.

What's more familiar than the meals we eat? What a gift, then, that the greatest thing we have as Catholics — the Eucharist — is something we encounter, receive and worship all within the context of a meal. What better way for us to teach our children that our lives must be oriented around this reality than to express to them that Jesus comes to us small, simple, humble and easy to receive, at a table of abundance to which we are welcomed? What could be more familiar to our little ones than to share with them that Jesus brings himself close to us, and so we can come close to him and be changed forever.

We're often told it's best to do this thing or buy this program or go to that event, all in pursuit of the revival we so desperately need. And those things and programs and events are all good and well, necessary even. Those things have good people, and those programs are quite thorough, and those events are well-planned. We'd all do well to participate in some of those things and programs and events.

But what if it was a little simpler than that? What if revival, at the root of which is a renewal of our faith and a desire to be ever closer to the Lord, started in the places we already find ourselves most — at home? What if revival, this renewal and reawakening of the reality that Jesus loves us so much that he'd make himself tiny and small to consume, happened right where we are, doing perhaps the most important thing we'll ever do — raising children, loving our kids, and sharing with them that God is real and loves them. What if revival, with all its trappings and plans and efforts, was this quite simple movement of the hearts of individuals who find themselves with the people they love and care for most, loving Jesus together?

If revival is a restoration of life, then that revival begins in the places where life is lived — the homes, among families, at dinner tables, in chapels filled with children, in Masses burgeoning with kids and in minivans on the way to school, with prayer cards of the Eucharist tucked into the visor.

Heart of Saint Kateri Circle

Do you have a devotion to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha?

Do you have a desire to learn and become more involved with this vital ministry to and with our indigenous brothers and sisters?

Are you looking for new opportunities to pray, serve and grow alongside believers right in your own community?

You are invited to **COME & SEE** what we're all about!

- Tribal affiliation, though welcome, is not a requirement •

The "Heart of Saint Kateri" Circle meets:

2nd Thursday of each month 5:30 p.m.

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OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH, WINNFIELD held May Crowning on May 7. Ava [redacted] was the crown bearer and Zoey [redacted] crowned the Blessed Mother. Flower receivers were Alonzo [redacted] and Sebastian [redacted]



MAY CROWNING AT SACRED HEART SCHOOL was held on May 5. Victoria [redacted] crowned Our Blessed Mother. She is the daughter of Brittany [redacted] of Marksville. Ava [redacted], daughter of Bristol and Dustin [redacted] of Hessmer, served as her flower girl.



MAY CROWNING, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL, ALEXANDRIA. May Crowning was held on Sunday, May 7. Children from the CCD program participated.

Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Psalm 86: 5 | Responsorial Psalm for July 23
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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MAY CROWNING ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE, MANSURA. Blair [redacted] crowned the Blessed Virgin Mary at Mass celebrated by pastor, Fr. Blake Deshautelle, on May 7.



MAY CROWNING, NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY CHURCH, CAMPTI. May Crowning at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Campti.



MAY CROWNING, ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH, BROUILLETTE. May Crowning at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Campti on May 14. Pastor, Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira with the students.



MAY CROWNING AT MATER DOLOROSA CHURCH, PLAUCHEVILLE was held May. Seniors Abigail [redacted] and Bryce [redacted] had the honor of crowning Mary.



MAY CROWNING, ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL, BUNKIE. St. Anthony School May Crowning on May 5. Pictured with the students is pastor, Fr. Scott Chemino.



(left) CDA CHECK PRESENTATION. Catholic Daughters Bishop Greco Court #2072, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville, pose under the portrait of Bishop Charles Greco as they recently presented a check for the Seminarian Education Fund to Bishop Robert Marshall. Picture left to right: Susi Minton, Vice Regent; Edna Smith, Treasurer; Vivian Myers, member; Murlene McKnight, member; and Nita St. Andria, Secretary. Funds are typically raised during their popular, twice-a-year bake sales.



CDA CONTEST WINNER. Fr. John Wiltse, pastor of St. Mary's Assumption in Cottonport, presented the Catholic Daughter Court Padre Pio #2141 1st place Poetry Contest and 1st Place Essay Contest awards to Justice [redacted]. Both entries went to the State level where he won 1st place in the Essay Contest. Justice won \$25 for each first place award.

CDA ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION, COTTONPORT. Catholic Daughters Court Padre Pio #2141 at St. Mary's Assumption in Cottonport awarded two high school seniors \$300 each for college. Fr. John Wiltse presented the checks to Austin [redacted] and Lawson [redacted].

“The Eucharist is the heart of the Church. Where Eucharistic life flourishes, there the life of the church will blossom.”

11 pope saint john paul ii



MAY 7, FIRST COMMUNION AT ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH, MANSURA.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION, ST. FRANCES CABRINI CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION, ST. JAMES MEMORIAL CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA, SUNDAY, MAY 21.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION, IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, TIOGA, APRIL 16.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AT ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH, IN BROUILLETTE WAS APRIL 17. Congratulations to our precious First Holy Communion

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Lord, I love your commands.

Psalm 119: 97 | Responsorial Psalm for July 30
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



8TH GRADE GRADUATION, SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. Sacred Heart School held its eighth grade graduation on May 18, following Baccalaureate Mass.



BACCALAUREATE MASS, MOREAUVILLE. Participants from Sacred Heart Church and Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Moreauville.



ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE. The annual Ring Ceremony for this year's Junior class (Class of 2024) was held on Friday, May 5 at Mater Dolorosa Church.



FIRST COMMUNION, STS. FRANCIS & ANNE CHURCH, KOLIN.

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Louisiana College:
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Discalced Carmelite meeting - July 8

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.

Cathedral Altar Society Semi-Annual Bake Sale - July 8 - 9

The Cathedral Altar Society will have their Semi-Annual Bake Sale in Xavier Hall on July 8 - 9, after the 4:00 p.m. Saturday Mass and after the 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. Masses on Sunday. Donations of baked goods can be dropped off in the church hall on Saturday, July 9 between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, or before each weekend Mass. Please come by and support the Altar Society. Your contributions help pay for the necessary items for the upkeep of the Cathedral sanctuary.

Vacation Bible School - July 11-14

St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria will hold its Vacation Bible School from July 11-14, 8:00 a.m. -12:00 noon for kids Kindergarten-6th grade. Cost is \$30.00 per child, for 3 children \$75.00. For more information call the Church Office at 318-445-4588.

Women's Silent Retreat - July 14-16

Retreat Director, Claire Gallagher, will lead a weekend silent retreat at Maryhill Renewal Center where she will invite women to sit at the feet of Christ. The retreat will explore the spirituality of the feminine genius. Claire will draw on scripture, the wisdom of St. Therese of Lisieux and her own life experiences to help women grow in their spirituality and intimacy with Christ. Visit www.diocesealex.org to register. For more information, contact Deacon Jason Lavergne at dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org. Sponsored by the Diocese of Alexandria.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS**Vacation Bible School - July 16-20**

Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville will hold its VBS from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. For kids in grades PK3-5th, kids in grades 6 and up may apply as teen volunteers. This year's theme: "Stellar-Shine Jesus' Light". Supper will be served every night. T-shirts for participants and volunteer staff. No registration fee required however, cash donations accepted and appreciated Contact person: Andre' Spruill at (318) 359-7542.

Vacation Bible School - July 17-21

St. John the Baptist, Deville will hold "Birthday Blast, A Celebration of Life." VBS from 6:00-8:30 p.m. on July 17-21 for grades Pre K-6th grade Supper served every night. For more information, please contact Lejean Moore at 318-466-3693 or Sheri Paul at 318-623-2320.

Vacation Bible School - July 17-21

Sts. Francis & Anne Church in Kolin will have Vacation Bible School from July 17-21, 6:00-8:00 p.m. each evening, for ages 4-10. We are launching kids on a Cosmic Quest where they'll have a Blast shining Jesus' light to the world!

Supper with the Seminarians - July 18, 27

Bring your friends and family because everyone is invited! These events are free, but donations are welcome. All donations will be used to assist in funding our Seminarians' education. The diocese has five men in priestly formation at this time: Donnie Kuzma, Matthew Bonner, Blaine Phillips, Jacob Cass, and Gabe Dowden. This year's dates and locations are:

- Tuesday, July 18, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Campti.
- Thursday, July 27, St. Rita Church, Alexandria.

To reserve your seat, contact Sandi Tarver at 318-445-6424, ext. 209, or email starver@diocesealex.org.

Married Couples Retreat - August 18 - 20

Retreat Director, Dr. Mario Sacasa, a licensed marriage and family therapist in practice for over 15 years, will lead couples in presentations and time for reflection during the weekend at Maryhill Renewal Center. Dr. Sacasa brings years of combined ministry to married couples and offers insightful, practical, and humorous ways that will encourage and bless your marriage. Visit www.diocesealex.org to register. For more information, contact Deacon Jason Lavergne at dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org. Sponsored by the Diocese of Alexandria.

Calling all graduates of the Christos Encounter Course!

If you are a graduate of the Christos Encounter Course, facilitated by Jim and Christy Gootee, please email Jim Gottee at jimgootee3@gmail.com with your name, mailing address, and phone number. Thank you in advance!

Steubenville South Conference thank you!

This month we invited the Lord to remind us and the youth of our region that we have a refuge in Jesus and His Church. This refuge is not an escape or a place, but an embrace of a relationship with the One who animates and gives purpose to our lives. Thanks to you - whether volunteer, group leader, priest, donor, or intercessor - we were able to gather with over 1,600 youth to remind them that Jesus isn't just one option among many to answer the longing of our hearts - rather, only Jesus will provide all that we need and desire.

Thank you for being a part of this community! It's a gift to grow in faith with you. --- Cari Terracina

Pilgrimage to Egypt - November 7-19

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

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

July 24
Deadline for news:
Thursday, July 13

August 28
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Aug. 17



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July 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>JUNE 26</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. R. JOHNSON</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Supper with the Seminarians 5:00 p.m. St. Mary's Church, Winnsboro</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. S. JONES</p>	<p>28</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. T. KENNEDY</p>	<p>29</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. KULIGOWSKI</p>	<p>30</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. P. KUNNUPURAM</p>	<p>JULY 1</p> <p>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>	<p>2</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. L. LAFLEUR</p>
<p>3</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. M. LAIRD</p>	<p>4</p> <p>INDEPENDENCE DAY PRAY FOR FR. P. LAPALME</p>	<p>5</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. J. LAVERGNE</p>	<p>6</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. G. LEBLANC</p>	<p>7</p> <p>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR DCN. A. MANGINI</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Discalced Carmelites monthly meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center</p> <p>Cathedral Altar Society Bake Sale</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. V. MANUEL</p>	<p>9</p> <p>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL</p>
<p>10</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS</p>	<p>11</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER</p>	<p>12</p> <p>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria</p> <p>Vacation Bible School, Cabrini, Alexandria -- 8:00 a.m.-12 noon</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE</p>	<p>13</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER</p>	<p>14</p> <p>MEMORIAL of ST. KATERI TEKAKWITHA PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</p> <p>Women's Silent Retreat -- Maryhill</p>	<p>15</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS</p>	<p>16</p> <p>VBS Moreauville PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER</p>
<p>17</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Supper with the Seminarians 5:00 p.m. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Campiti</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</p>	<p>19</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. D. MOREAU</p>	<p>20</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. L. MOREAU</p>	<p>21</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. T. MOULARD</p>	<p>22</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. MULLOTH</p>	<p>23</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</p>
<p>24</p> <p>First Day of Classes St. Mary's Assumption School, Cottonport</p> <p>PRAY FOR DCN. S. NEWBURY</p>	<p>25</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</p>	<p>26</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIKWE</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Supper with the Seminarians 5:00 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</p>	<p>28</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</p>	<p>29</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA</p>	<p>30</p> <p>PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRAO</p>

Living the Gift of Marriage

Married Couples Retreat • August 18-20, 2023



With humor, story, and lecture, this retreat engages couples to see the great gift God has given them in their marriage and practical ways to love their spouse in their day-to-day encounters. Whether you are looking for something to bolster your marriage or need tangible skills to help through some troubled times, this is the event for you. This retreat will help discover the mysteries of Marriage and the grace that flows from this great Sacrament!

“*Living the Gift of Marriage*” covers four major themes of married life: Seeing the Sacrament of Marriage, Growing in Spiritual Intimacy, Renewing Emotional Intimacy, and Sharing the Marital Embrace. Following each presentation there is a growth exercise or couple sharing time. The weekend will also include times for mass, adoration and reconciliation.

Location: Maryhill Renewal Center

Cost: \$285 per couple includes all meals and lodging.



Mario Sacasa holds a Ph.D. in Counselor Education from the University of Holy Cross and is a licensed marriage and family therapist. He has been in practice for over 15 years, integrating the riches of the Catholic faith with counseling practices. He serves married couples and individuals on their journey of faith through his podcast *Always Hope*, writing for the blog, speaking engagements, directing retreats, and having an active social media presence. Dr. Mario is married to his wife of 20 years, Kristin, with whom he shares the joy parenting their four sons.

Special guests, Paul and Heather Augustin from the Diocese of Lafayette, will offer a witness of their marriage to the couples.

To register, please visit www.diocesealex.org
For more information, contact Dcn. Jason Lavergne
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