

CHURCH TODAY

Volume LIV, No. 8

www.diocesealex.org

Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

August 28, 2023



Back to School!

Saint Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie kicked off the 2023-2024 school year on Friday, August 11. See page 10 for more pictures from the beginning of the school year!

INSIDE

Eight spiritual directors to assist you in your prayer life

Finding a spiritual director you connect with is a true blessing, and now the Diocese has 4 new certified spiritual directors for you to consider! See page 5 for more information.

How long does it take to study for the Priesthood?

See pages 8 and 9 for the answer, as well as the list of current seminarians for the diocese, and pictures from the Supper with the Seminarians.

Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools acquire accreditation through COGNIA

Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools have earned system-wide accreditation by Cognia. See page 16 for more information on this incredible achievement!

INDEX

Diocese News..... 2
 National / World News3
 Features..... 4
 Vocations and Burses 8
 Picture Spread..... 10
 Social Justice12
 Multicultural 13
 Features..... 14
 Schools / Youth..... 16
 Diocesan Briefs 18
 Calendar 19



(right) KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #1134, ST. RITA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA. On July 5, 2023, Rev. Anthony Dharmaraj and the members of KC Council #1134, St. Rita Catholic Church, Alexandria, Louisiana, gathered in the Family Center to celebrate and install the newly elected and reappointed officials. Those Council positions filled included Donnie Bolton, Grand Knight; Rev. Anthony Dhmaraj, Chaplain; Gene Prevot, Deputy Grand Knight; Eugene Alford, Chancellor; Ross Mathews, Recorder; Scott Speir, Treasurer; Chris Cancienne, Lecturer; Charles Thiels, Advocate; Wayne Alford, Warden; Hunter Andries, Inside Guard; Alan Daenen, Outside Guard; Edwin Hadley, one-year Trustee; Peter Mahfouz, two-year Trustee; Philip Chatelain, three-year Trustee and Philip DeVaine, Financial Secretary. Congratulations!



**Welcome
 Fr. MacGrace
 Onwumere, SMMM.**

Fr. MacGrace Onwumere comes to us from Boston. Fr. Mac will be in residence at Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pineville and will take Fr. Gearheard's place as Chaplain and Rapides Regional Medical Center. Fr. Gearheard was assigned to St. Augustine Church in Isle Brevelle, just outside Natchitoches. Originally, Fr. Remi Owoamanam, SMMM was to return to our diocese but he was asked to remain in California.

**CHURCH
 TODAY**



Volume LIV, No. 8
 August 28, 2023

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

Publisher:
 Most. Rev. Robert Marshall
 Publication Manager / Editor:
 Cari Terracina, ext. 255,
 cterracina@diocesealex.org
**Multimedia Manager /
 Advertising:**
 Joan Ferguson, ext. 264;
 joanferguson@diocesealex.org
 Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209;
 starver@diocesealex.org

The CHURCH TODAY (USPS 393-240) is published by the Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, once a month, free of charge to members of the parishes in the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana. Out of diocese subscriptions are \$20 a year.

The office is located at 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria, LA 71303. Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, LA.

Postmaster:
 Send address changes to The CHURCH TODAY, P. O. Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306
 Website: www.diocesealex.org
 To receive a free subscription, call 318-445-6424, ext 255 or e-mail starver@diocesealex.org

**SABINE STATE
 BANK**
 & Trust Company
 Member FDIC

Call your local branch for information.
 (318) 256-7000

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Welcome Fr. Mac!

**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*

YOU GET IT ALL AT

SAYES
 OFFICE SUPPLY

WWW.SAYESOFFICE.COM

Alexandria: 318.448.4225 • Ville Platte: 337.363.6322 • Toll Free: 800.766.4819

**OFFICE SUPPLIES • OFFICE FURNITURE • OFFICE MACHINES
 PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS • BREAKROOM & FOOD SERVICE SUPPLIES
 JANITORIAL SUPPLIES • JANITORIAL EQUIPMENT • PRINTING**

My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Psalm 63: 2 | Responsorial Psalm for September 3 | Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

'Heed their cries and help': U.S. bishop pleads for hungry as Russia attacks Ukraine's grain

By Gina Christian
Our Sunday Visitor

(OSV News) — As Russia attacks Ukraine's grain exports — which feed millions in several nations — a U.S. bishop is calling on global leaders to ensure food security.

"Russia's recent decision no longer to allow Ukraine to export tons of grain means more people are likely to go hungry," said Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, in an Aug. 7 statement.

Last month, Russia walked away from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which expired July 17. Brokered by the United Nations and Turkey in July 2022, the agreement enabled vitally needed food supplies from Ukraine to reach global markets amid Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which was launched in February 2022 following aggression begun in 2014.

Global food prices soared as Russia blocked Ukraine's ports, preventing crucial agricultural



U.S. BISHOP CALLS ON GLOBAL LEADERS TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy discusses a restoration of the Black Sea Grain Initiative with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan via a phone line in this file photo from July 27, 2023. (OSV News photo/Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/Handout via Reuters)

exports from the nation known as "Europe's breadbasket."

Under the Black Sea grain deal, close to 33 million tons of grain and agricultural products were exported from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports — Odesa, Chernomorsk and Yuzhny/Pivdennyi — to 45 countries.

More than half of the shipments were maize, with wheat, sunflower product and other agricultural goods comprising the balance. Sixty-five percent of the wheat exported through the initiative reached developing countries.

As a result of the grain initiative, the World Food Program

transported more than 725,000 tons of wheat to vulnerable populations in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. In both 2022 and the year prior, Ukraine supplied more than half of the program's wheat grain.

Since walking away from the Black Sea grain deal, Russia has relentlessly struck Ukraine's ports, including Odesa and Mykolaiv, as well as IZMAIL, located on the Danube River across from Romania. In addition, Russia announced it would regard all ships heading for Ukrainian waters to be military targets. (An Israeli cargo vessel became the first to defy the blockade on July 31, followed by other ships registered with Greece, Turkey and Georgia, according to at least one report.)

"Russia's decision to withdraw from the BSGI and its bombing of grain storage facilities in Ukraine will greatly impact the availability of food supplies at a time when more people are in dire need of food," said Bishop Malloy. "With the number of forcibly displaced people at a record high, the World Food Programme estimates 345 million people will

face acute hunger this year, with 129,000 potentially facing famine in places like Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, the Horn of Africa and Myanmar."

The bishop quoted a plea made by Pope Francis during a June 1, 2022, audience, during which the pope issued "a heartfelt appeal that every effort be made to resolve this issue and to guarantee the universal human right to food."

"Please do not use wheat, a staple food, as a weapon of war!" Pope Francis said at the time.

Noting that "the food crisis is intertwined with persistence of conflicts," Bishop Malloy said he joined with Pope Francis "in calling on global leaders to look beyond narrow national interests, focus on the common good, and join in ensuring that critical food supplies can flow to those most in need."

"The most vulnerable are crying in hunger," said Bishop Malloy. "With the compassion of Christ, we need to heed their cries and help."

Gina Christian is a national reporter for OSV News. Follow her on Twitter at @GinaJesseReina.



TERRY'S D.J. SERVICE
Music & Light Show
Country, Rock, Zydeco, Oldies, Rap

The Cajun D.J.
Terry Laborde
(318) 253-8949
Cell (318) 305-7186
E-mail: terrylaborde77@gmail.com

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.

FLYING WOK
BUFFET

(formerly Panda Restaurant)

2401 S. MacArthur Dr. • Alexandria, LA

Ph: (318) 767-8596

Dine in or Take out . . . order from our extensive menu
or enjoy our all-you-can-eat buffet.

CLOSED TUESDAYS

Lunch: Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m. - 3:30 pm.

Dinner: Mon.-Thurs. 4 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. • Fri.-Sat. 4 p.m. - 10 p.m.

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

Sept. 8

**Feast of the
Nativity of the
Blessed Virgin Mary**

**HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER
INTENTIONS
for September 2023**

For people living
on the margins //

We pray the
World Youth Day
in Lisbon will help
young people
to live and witness
the Gospel
in their own lives.

Amen.

Uniquely formed: Helping others through spiritual direction

By Melinda LeBlanc
beckyeldredge.com

Drew Brees was born to play football. Winston Churchill was born to lead. St. Teresa of Calcutta was born to serve the poor. I'm convinced I am called to do spiritual direction ministry.

I didn't always think that. In fact, for most of my life, I had no idea what I was called to do. But I've always known two things about myself: I'm an introvert and I enjoy helping others. Knowing these two things helped me recognize God's call to serve.

I'm sure there were times when I was growing up when my family worried about me. I come from a Cajun family, and Cajuns like to talk and socialize. Not me. I was the quiet one in the family, the observer, the listener,



the one who processed everything internally. I've always been more comfortable with a book and a quiet nook in which to read it. I've always been the person in the background, observing and listening instead of doing and talking. Even my hobbies are introverted: baking, gardening, birdwatching. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against interacting with people, but it's definitely not my natural choice.

Which brings me to the second thing that makes me "me". I like helping people, and that goes back a long way. One of my earliest memories is volunteering to clean the blackboards and chalk erasers for my second grade teacher every day after school. (I realize many of you are too young to remember

blackboards and erasers.) Being available to help others, no matter how small the task, is a way for me to express gratitude for God's generosity.

Fast forward to my present vocation, spiritual direction. As retirement from thirty years in state government approached, I wondered how I could use my introversion and desire to help others in this new phase.

In the months before retirement, I noticed my co-workers would stop by my office just to chat. They said they felt welcomed there. Some came to talk, some just came to sit and regroup mentally and emotionally. Many times I didn't have to say anything, I just had to be there and listen. It was becoming apparent to

me that I enjoyed listening one-on-one to people. It felt very natural and helpful. About this time, I made my annual retreat during which I shared my retirement concerns with my director. She suggested I consider the ministry of spiritual direction. I was caught off guard by her suggestion, but at the same time I was curious. When I attended an informational meeting and listened to the information being given, I felt an attraction, a longing almost, a peace and certainty about becoming a spiritual director. I registered for the training that very evening. It's been eight years since then and I have not regretted that decision.

Looking back, I can see that God was forming me to be where I am today. My introversion, my listening skills, my desire to help others were all coming together at a time in my life when I had the time and the life experience to use them. God is doing the same in your life, that is, revealing your innate gifts, giving you life experiences, and putting mentors in your life. It's just a matter of being aware and being open to where God is leading you. May you each come to know and follow God's unique call in your life.

Go Deeper:

- It's never too early (or too

late!) to notice where God might be leading you. Think of Drew Brees on his high school football team. He surely was aware he had a natural ability to throw the ball; Winston Churchill must have known he could debate and make decisions; St. Teresa of Calcutta always lived a life of service. These were things they all noticed about themselves. God gave them their special unique abilities and provided them with people who could reveal and nurture what God had given them. So become aware of your gifts, talents, and natural leanings.

- Watch for God's hand leading you to use them. Everything in our lives can be used to serve God. Notice where God is each day. Even the not so great things in your day can be ways to learn and grow in grace. We are called to share what we have learned from God with others.

- Pray with Jeremiah 18, "The Potter". Imagine yourself in God's pottery workshop. Watch as God lovingly looks upon you and creates something out of the clay. See how pleased God is to create it. What does it look like? What kind of shape did it take? What does the shape mean to you? What do you say as God gifts you with it? Let this give you insight into how uniquely created and formed you are.

Lector Formation and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Workshops will be offered this fall at the St. Joseph Catholic Center!

- **Lector Workshop:** October 7, 9:00 a.m.
- **Extraordinary Minister Workshop:** October 10, 6:00 p.m.

More information and dates will be available at www.diocesealex.org.

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

Psalm 95: 8
Responsorial Psalm
for September 10
Twenty-third Sunday
in Ordinary Time

FORMER SOCIAL SECURITY JUDGE PETER J. LEMOINE Social Security Disability Law

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

MEMBER: Louisiana State Bar Association, Lafayette Bar Association, Baton Rouge Bar Association, Avoyelles Parish Bar Association, National Organization of Social Security Claimant Representatives,

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

Admitted to Practice: US District Court For Western District, Eastern District, Middle District and US Court of Appeal Fifth Circuit.

(318) 717-1995

Eight Spiritual Directors to assist in your prayer life

It was about 4 a.m. one morning in September 2017 when I heard my cellphone notification inform me of a new email. Since I was recently hired by the diocese and this was a new email address, I did not think the message would be “Junk Mail”. I could not resist and decided to look to see who in the world would be sending me an email so early in the morning. To my surprise it was from our bishop (at the time) Bishop David Talley. The email simply said “Come to my office when you get in.”

As my heart began racing and my mind running, I tried to think of what I had done wrong in the one month since being hired. Did I offend someone? Did I eat someone’s leftovers in the refrigerator? I began recalling my conversations and actions for the last few weeks. Of course, I could not go back to sleep and had a few hours before arriving at the office.

As you can image, I arrived to work early that day and headed straight to the bishop’s office. As I sat in front of him expecting the worst, he began speaking about the lack of certified spiritual directors in the diocese. He

asked if I was available to travel to Shreveport to participate in an informational session for a program that was offered by the Archdiocese of New Orleans. “So I’m not in trouble?” I asked. With a puzzled look, he asked me: “Why would you be in trouble?”

It did not take too many more 4 a.m. emails for me to realize these were common with him and for my sanity I needed to silence my phone!

I share that story for two reasons. First to explain the origins of how our current spiritual direction program was adopted by the diocese. Secondly (and more importantly) is to prove a point that sometimes we need to have someone in our spiritual life that can help us discern and grow in our relationship with the Lord and help direct us away from our own insecurities and other static in our spiritual lives that is not of God.

The informational session went very well and I learned the program is a two-year internship with an intense study of the theology of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola and practical experience in journeying with God’s people.

Those who graduate and become certified have met monthly, participated in peer group feedback sessions, have directed 8-day retreats under supervision and many other activities to ensure they are well qualified.

In August 2021 our first group of 4 graduated from the program. More recently, with the continued blessing of Bishop Marshall, another 4 graduated in August 2023 which brings us to 8 certified spiritual directors in the diocese.

Those eight are: Renee

Aldridge, Maria Burke, Ingrid Canella, Joan Dobard, Nicole Mitchell, Patrick Moore, Tracy Simpson, and Charlotte Wasmer.

Graduates are obviously committed to this ministry, and we are blessed to have them.

So you may be asking yourself “Would I benefit from having a Spiritual Director?” The short answer is “Yes!” We can all benefit from speaking with someone about our prayer life and ways to strengthen our relationship with our Lord. To challenge us in those times we

seem to have it all together and to help guide us through those times when we feel separated from God.

Finding a spiritual director you connect with is a true blessing and now we have a short list for you to consider. To learn more about this ministry and contact information for our 8 certified spiritual directors, please visit our website at <https://www.diocesealex.org/our-faith/spiritual-direction/> or send me an email and I am happy to help you find a good fit.



Melanie Blanchard, Broker
Donald Baker, Agent
Robert Tassin, Agent

Licensed in Louisiana, USA
Phone: 318-473-8751
3306 Giamanco St. Alexandria, LA

Website: bakeragproperties.com

We specialize in forest, recreation, and agriculture properties.

Sept. 14
Feast of the
Exaltation of the
Holy Cross



Flu Shots & Vaccinations

Many gifts including large selection of religious items:

- My Saint My Hero religious jewelry
- Holy Medals
- Jesus Calling & other inspirational books
- Rosaries
- ACTS bracelets
- First Communion, Confirmation & Baptism gifts

Follow us on Facebook @ Cottonportcornerdrug.giftboutique

(318) 876-3665
Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm
206 Choupique Lane • Cottonport, LA 71327
Kim & Stewart Wixson, Owners



NEBLETT, BEARD & ARSENAULT
SERVING LOUISIANA FOR CAR, TRUCK, OFFSHORE ACCIDENTS, WORKERS COMPENSATION AND SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY?

318-561-2500

RICHARD J. ARSENAULT ALEXANDRIA, LA WWW.NBALAWFIRM.COM LA-23-14823

Lacombe Floor Finishing
310 N. Briarwood, Bunkie, LA 71322
Specializing in installation

- Floor Finishing
- Ceramic Tile Floors
- Hardwood Floors
- Reseal Tile Floors

Ph: (318) 481-0950
Morgan Newton, Owner



Upcoming Retreats:
September 7 - 10
St. Alphonsus, Hessmer Women’s Retreat

September 21 - 24
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Forest Hill ACTS Retreat

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!

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

“Who Do You Say That I Am?”

By Marcus Descant and Liz Descant

40 Poems of praise and inspiration that recall the life and works of Jesus Christ.

The prayer poems that you see published in the Church Today every month are now included in a 200-page compilation titled: Who Do You Say That I Am?, an easy-to-read book of Christian poetry. It is a collection of 40 poems written over the past 40 years by Marcus Descant of Leesville, Louisiana.

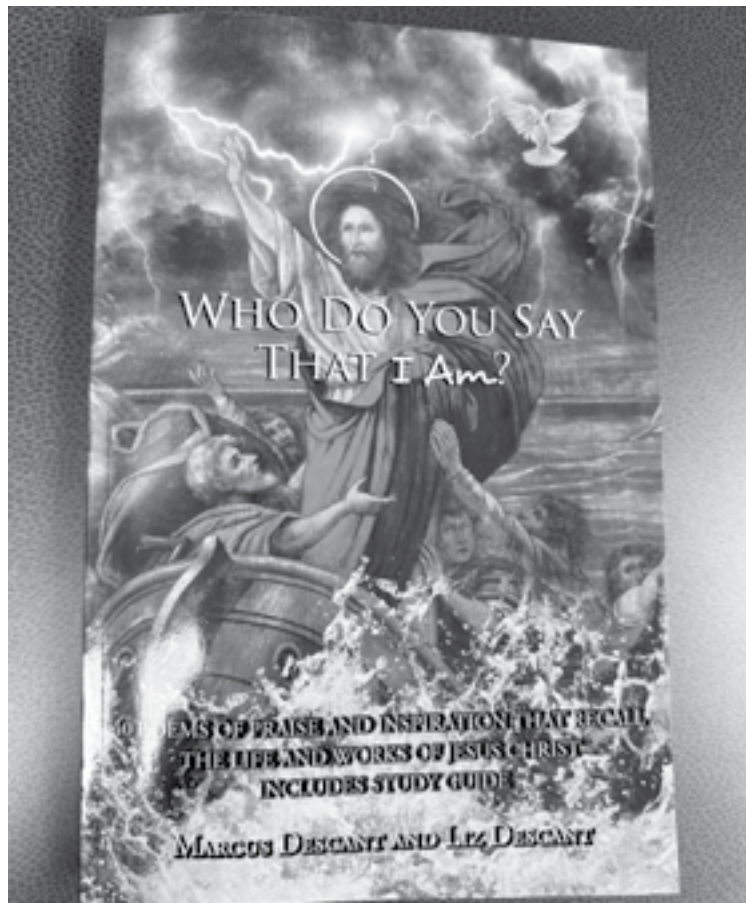
About the book, Mr. Descant says:

“Writing this book fulfilled a personal goal of mine and has covered a span of forty years to completion. As you know, forty is a significant number in the Bible. There are over 150 times where the number forty is mentioned in the Bible, giving the number forty a great significance. For example: Moses and the Israelites wandered forty years in the desert; God destroyed the world in the great flood, lasting forty days and forty nights; Jesus wandered in the desert for forty days of prayer and fasting; and many more examples can be found.

The format of the book is arranged in order to tell the story of Jesus’s life on earth through poetry. It begins with His birth and progresses on to the resurrection and descent of the Holy Spirit. This book can be read for enjoyment or used to extend your knowledge and reinforcement of our Christian beliefs. After each poem, study guides have been developed for individual or group study, depending on the needs of the reader. The study guide is designed to have the reader dig deeper into the content of the poetry and how it relates to our faith.

It has been a joy to write this book, and I hope it is helpful for anyone wanting to develop a relationship with the Lord or strengthening the relationship they already have.”

Many are familiar with the names Marcus and Liz Descant. You may have seen Mr. Descant’s large collection of religious relics



in-person which he displays from time to time at schools and church events as well as at the Steubenville South Youth Conference, or you may have read about them in past issues of the Church Today.

Mr. Descant was born and raised in Alexandria, Louisiana. He graduated high school in 1958 and completed a bachelor of science degree in pharmacy from Northeast State University (now ULM) in Monroe, Louisiana in 1963. He has been a practicing pharmacist for sixty years.

In 2001, Descant married his wife, Liz, a retired teacher and school administrator. They founded Holy Trinity Ministries of Louisiana in 2016. They visit prayer groups, churches, and schools sharing their ministry.

It was during the 1980s when he became inspired to begin writing prayer poems. The prayer poems he writes are for all denominations. Over the years, he

had the poems printed on cards and gave them away by the thousands. Many people kept asking him to publish a book but he resisted due to the fact he nor Liz knew anything about book publishing. As time went on, people kept asking which led them to finally do the research about publishing a book. After a long, 16-month process, here we are!

Mr. Descant continues to work as a pharmacist part time while writing prayer poems and sharing their ministry. Between the couple are five children and twenty-two grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They have a busy and blessed life!

Who Do You Say That I Am? will be available for purchase for your digital devices beginning Aug. 12 from Amazon (Kindle), Barnes & Noble (Nook), Google Play (Android), Apple Books (iPad) and physical books can be purchased locally from Mary’s

Heart Catholic Book Store in Alexandria as well as by contacting lizdescant@gmail.com.

The Descants will appear on KALB-TV’s Good Day Cenla Sept. 8 at 11:00 a.m.

A book signing will be held

at Mary’s Heart Catholic Book Store on Sept. 13 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. and a book signing will be held at Rapides Parish Library Westside on Hwy. 28W, Alexandria on Sept. 23, 12 noon-2:00 p.m.

BRIGITTE KELSO
INSURANCE, LLC

Brigitte Kelso
Owner/Agent
2918 S. MacArthur Dr.
Alexandria, La. 71301

Phone: 318.448.2226
Fax: 318.448.2280
bkello@kelsoinsurance.com

Auto, Home, Recreational Vehicles, Collector Cars, Commercial

Petrus
FEED & SEED

2914 N. Bolton Ave. • Alexandria, LA
442-2325



KYRLE'S

Seafood & Steak House

MANSURA, LA

318-964-2448

TIRE
DESPINO'S
SERVICE

visit us at
DESPINOTIRE.COM

LIKE US ON
f facebook

*The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger,
and rich in compassion.*

Psalm 103: 8 | Responsorial Psalm for September 17
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Completed Burses at \$15,000.00 each:

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

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

St. Damien De Veuster	175.00
Bishop William Friend	100.00
Bishop Lawrence P. Graves	5,805.00
Bishop Charles P. Greco	1,650.00
Bishop Ronald P. Herzog	450.00
Bishop Sam G. Jacobs	1,100.00
Bishop Robert W. Marshall, Jr.	200.00
Bishop David P. Talley	525.00
Monsignor Marcel J. Anderson	100.00
Monsignor Leon R. Aycock	1,535.00
Monsignor Norman C. Buvens	100.00
Monsignor Paul E. Conway	825.00
Monsignor Scott Chemino	600.00
Monsignor Allen M. Chenevert	1,000.00
Monsignor Isidore Deceulaer	160.00
Monsignor S. J. Dekeuwer	650.00
Monsignor Gerald J. Ducote	560.00
Monsignor James Ferguson	1,150.00
Monsignor Robert C. Friend	50.00
Monsignor Ronald C. Hoppe	1,000.00
Monsignor James E. Howard	50.00
Monsignor Charles M. Jekeler	325.00
Monsignor Joseph F. Kidd	1,500.00
Monsignor William Kwaitaal	850.00
Monsignor Warren T. Larroque	800.00
Monsignor Terrence J. Lennon	125.00
Monsignor George W. Martinez	500.00
Monsignor Bruce Miller	300.00
Monsignor Patrick Murphy	2,304.00
Monsignor William C. O'Hanlon	5,000.00
Monsignor Aloysius O. Olinger	965.00
Monsignor Mozart Pelletier	100.00
Monsignor John V. Plauche	400.00
Monsignor F. Joseph Rateau	570.00
Monsignor Russell J. Richie	616.14
Monsignor B. A. Scallan	10,085.90
Monsignor Matthew J. Scanlon	310.00
Monsignor Joseph M. Susi	9,906.00
Monsignor Steve J. Testa	10,755.00
Monsignor Henry A. Thompson	360.00
Monsignor John M. Timmermans	10,070.00
Monsignor Martin J. Tyrrell	4,250.00
Monsignor Henry Van der Putten	1,291.89
Monsignor John C. Vandegaer	1,350.00
Monsignor Nicholas F. Vandegaer	1,350.00
Monsignor John J. Wakeman	100.00
Monsignor Julius G. Walle	2,470.00
Father Walter Ajaero	50.00
Father William G. Allison	160.00
Father Peter J. Besselaar	50.00
Father Michael Bodnar	50.00
Father Lawrence Bonin	70.00
Father H. Gerald Bordelon	13,885.00
Father Vernon Bordelon	445.00
Father Gilles Boyer	85.00
Father Basil Burns	100.00
Father Alfred Chlebowczyk	375.00
Father Jules L. Claes, CICM	4,761.00
Father Wilbur G. Cloutier	3,690.50
Father Daniel Cook	2,500.00
Father Daniel Corkery	13,150.00
Father Anthony N. Cumella	1,750.00
Father John H. Cunningham	1,700.00
Father Dennis A. Curren	850.00
Father Leonard Curtis, OP	1,050.00
Father Ferreolus D'Cruz	875.00
Father Dwight de Jesus	500.00
Father Edward Deasy	625.00
Father Blake Deshautelle	300.00
Father Derek Ducote	792.00
Father Randolph J. Engelen	550.00
Father Richard Fale	5,700.00
Father Harvey J. Fortier	1,475.00
Father Joseph Alfred Fortin	200.00

Seminary Burses

Father James Foster	280.00
Father Louis Gagnard	50.00
Father John M. Gayer	970.00
Father William Gearheard	100.00
Father Serafin Glasnovic	150.00
Father Rickey Gremillion	13,065.00
Father Daniel Hart	5,550.00
Father William M. Hopp	10.00
Father Mark W. Horacek	50.00
Father Bartholomew Ibe	200.00
Father Tom Jezek	400.45
Father Michael P. Kammer	921.00
Father W. John Kiley	625.00
Father Francis X. Kronemeyer	100.00
Father George Krosfield	50.00
Father Peter Kuligowski	1,408.00
Father Paul Kunnumpuram, MSFS	475.00
Father Henri Jacquemain	50.00
Father Luke LaFleur	25.00
Father Paul LaPalme	50.00
Father Russell J. Lemoine	425.00
Father Frederick J. Lyons	1,600.00
Father Bernard F. Maguire	105.00
Father Robert M. Maure	10.00
Father Jamie Medina-Cruz	200.00
Father Jack Michalchuk	150.00
Father Adrian Molenschot	5,400.00
Father Joseph Montalbano	400.00
Father Govie J. Moraus, Jr.	200.00
Father Christudas Nayak	250.00
Father Peter T. Norek	1,150.00
Father Daniel O'Connor	2,093.00
Father Thomas O'Connors	10.00
Father Chad Partain	200.00
Father Martin L. Plauche	50.00
Father Samuel J. Polizzi	1,000.00
Father George Pookkattu	50.00
Father William B. Provosty	105.00
Father Rusty Rabalais	125.00
Father Charles Ray	550.00
Father Frederick Taylor Reynolds	1,190.00
Father Yves J. Robitaille	1,900.00
Father José Robles-Sanchez	1,580.00
Father Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez	75.00
Father James Roy	100.00
Father Kenneth Roy	3,505.00
Father Sheldon Roy	250.00
Father Lloyd M. Samson	50.00
Father Craig Scott	2,000.00
Father Brian Seiler	25.00
Father Louis Sklar, III	950.00
Father Paul B. Smith	250.00
Father Irion St. Romain	100.00
Father Ker Texada	200.00
Father August Thompson	1,390.00
Father Adam Travis	100.00
Father Antonio E. Villaverde	1,300.00
Father Nino G. Viviano	200.00
Father Gus Voltz	1,575.00
Father Silvan A. Watercotte, OFM	160.00
Father Kenneth Williams	880.00
Father John Wiltse	250.00
Father Joseph Xavier	100.00
Father Bernard Zagst	1,275.00
Reverend H. Biggers	158.50
Deacon Emile "E. J." Barre, III	100.00
Deacon L. G. Deloach	675.00
Deacon Darrell Dubroc	200.00
Deacon Raymond J. Dunn	300.00
Deacon Ray D. Gibson	100.00
Deacon Charles A. Jones	1,150.00
Deacon Gregory P. LeBlanc	100.00
Deacon Todd Marye	100.00
Deacon Patrick C. McCusker	100.00
Deacon Richard W. Mitchell	250.00
Deacon Ted A. Moulard	300.00
Deacon Clifton "Kip" Pelto	100.00
Deacon William E. Shaidnagle	100.00
Deacon Gary A. Schupbach	1,225.00
Deacon William "Bill" Travis	200.00
Deacon Luther "Luke" White	25.00
Deacon John L. Whitehead	100.00
Deacon Michael L. Young	200.00
Sister Margaret McCaffrey	300.00
Sister Marie Therese McGee, OP	100.00

Sister Virginia Lee Vanderlick, CDP	100.00
Seminarian Matthew Bonner	4,200.00
Ismael and Libby Agosto	250.00
Shirley Alexander	1,125.00
Charles P. and Florence C. Anastasio	880.00
Germaine Armand	550.00
Virgie D. Aymond	225.00
Delores Basco	150.00
Harold and Lillie Beridon	8,250.00
John M. Bauer	150.00
Dr. Lamar and Jean Boese	50.00
Will Bollich	100.00
J. V. Bonnette	50.00
Carolyn Brouillette	50.00
Nathan Cannella	225.00
Frank V. Cariere	175.00
Dylan Michael Cashio	400.00
T. W. Clark	50.00
James Curley	50.00
Charles D'Amico	50.00
Leo P. Dobard	7,100.00
Gerald Flynn	50.00
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Flynn	100.00
Anne Berry Gallagher	2,025.00
Anthony and Mary Glorioso	350.00
Toby Guedry	1,000.00
Gail T. Gutierrez	100.00
William J. Hamlin	500.00
Madeline Jeansonne	100.00
Leonard E. and Marjorie V. Johnson	2,950.00
Richard Kelly	100.00
Marie S. Keran	1,000.00
Floyd J. LaCour, Jr.	9,100.00
Eugene and Rita LaPalme	300.00
Gerry and Connie Leglue	100.00
Huey and Neen Lemoine	150.00
Louis Lowrey	470.00
Judge Alfred and Mary Jo Mansour	2,050.00
Cecilia Vanderlick Mathews	100.00
Huey and Ethel Mathews	1,000.00
Louis Henry "Dump" Mathews, Sr.	100.00
Daryl "Pat" Mauterer	6,100.00
Cecilia M. McDowell	1,000.00
Ethel Miller	100.00
Odis James Miller	190.00
Yvonne More	150.00
Gerald Moreau	215.00
Helen Morgan	12,000.00
Marge Murrin	315.00
Alcide A. Nassif	522.29
Kitty Treadway Nassif	100.00
Maurice Noel	295.00
N. J. and Hannah Nolan	10,000.00
Harvey Miller "Buddy" Normand	100.00
Louis Jeansonne Normand	1,200.00
Shirley O'Connor	100.00
W. D. O'Neal	8,159.00
Danny O'Quinn	100.00
Albert and Elsie Poche	900.00
Kathleen Poole	375.00
Edna Rabalais	3,532.50
Rita Juneau Rabalais	4,000.00
William F. Reynolds	3,000.00
Mary Lee and Gerald Robichaux, Sr.	2,450.00
Dr. Sidney Rud	50.00
Luis R. Robles-Cortez	125.00
Dr. Brenda V. Seiler	1,200.00
Josephine G. Serio	275.00
John Gregory Simms	4,275.00
Robert Upton	100.00
Dr. Charles Vanderlick	200.00
Henry Vanderlick	400.00
Jerome and Audrey Vandersypen	1,165.00
Mark Vilar	250.00
Patsy Dekeyzer Vincik	200.00
Gus Voltz, Jr.	6,135.00
Larry Lee Wiltse	1,925.00
Tracy P. Wiltse	1,825.00
Mary Virginia Young	100.00
Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence	100.00
Deceased Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Regina Pacis #1372, Natchitoches	775.00
In Honor of Providence Central High School Class of 1959	1,450.00
Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches	100.00
Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish, Alexandria	3,260.00
St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Tallulah	100.00
St. Mary's Assumption Parish, Cottonport	700.00
General Fund	2,000.00
Total	721,507.17

How long does it take to study for Priesthood?

**Answer:
Six to nine years!**

Rome has recently made some changes to the seminary formation process.

No matter the age of the seminarian, his first year is called a **propaedeutic year** (preliminary year) which is a year focusing on the basics of seminary life, prayer life, service, human maturity, and a few general education classes. After the propaedeutic year, the seminarian will begin his studies in philosophy.

If a seminarian does not have a college Bachelor's Degree, he will attend a College Seminary where he will obtain a Bachelor of Arts Degree with 36 hours of study in **Philosophy** after completing his propaedeutic year. However, if a seminarian already has a bachelor's degree from an accredited college, he will begin **Pre-Theological Studies** after his propaedeutic year.

If he continues in responding to his call to priesthood, he will go forward for 3.5 years of theological studies and obtain a **Masters of Divinity** or a **Masters of Theology** (depending upon the seminary).

Upon completion of studies, he is eligible to be **ordained a deacon** and will serve as a transitional deacon in a parish in our diocese for 6 months. After this deacon internship, the transitional deacon will become eligible to be **ordained a priest**. In his first 3-5 years of priesthood, he will serve as a parochial vicar or associate pastor in a parish!

CANDIDACY MASS. A Candidacy Mass was celebrated by Bishop Robert Marshall at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on Thursday, Aug. 3 for three of the seminarians of the diocese: Blaine Phillips, Gabe Dowden and Jacob Cass. During this Mass, the seminarians make a public declaration of their desire to devote themselves to the service of God and others in Holy Orders. They will continue their priestly formation in greater depth from this day forward. Pictured left to right: Gabe Dowden, Blaine Phillips, Bishop Marshall, Fr. Luke LaFleur, direction of vocations and Jacob Cass.

2023 Seminarians for the Diocese of Alexandria



Deacon Donnie Kuzma
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: St. Anthony of Padua, Natchitoches



Matthew Bonner
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville



Gabe Dowden
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: MB of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches



Jacob Cass
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: St. Joseph Church, Marksville



Blaine Phillips
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria



Graham Descant
Notre Dame Seminary
Home parish: St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport



Troy Cannon
St. Benedict Seminary
Home parish: St. John the Baptist, Cloutierville



Matthew Kramer
St. Benedict Seminary
Home parish: St. Mary Church, Winnsboro

Bishop's Invitational Golf Tournament • October 9 • Oakwing Golf Course, Alexandria
Benefiting Seminarian Education. To sign up or sponsor, contact Sandi Tarver at starver@diocesealex.org



Choosing Kramer Funeral Home means choosing 145 years of compassion, respect, and dignity.

Since no two people are alike, no two funerals should be alike.

We are here for you and your family yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

KRAMER
Funeral Home and Cremation Service
Est 1875
www.KramerFunerals.com 318-445-6311

2023 Supper with the Seminarians



(above) EASTERN DEANERY EVENT AT ST. MARY CHURCH, WINNSBORO HELD ON JUNE 27.



CENTRAL DEANERY EVENT AT ST. RITA CHURCH'S HOLY FAMILY CENTER IN ALEXANDRIA, HELD ON JULY 27.

Seminarian Burses

July 2023 Donations

Knights of Columbus Council #9217	\$25.00
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Silton Innerarity	\$25.00
Father Abraham Varghese Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Vanderlick	\$100.00
Monsignor Julius G. Walle Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. William F. James, Jr.	
In memory of Mrs. Shirley O'Connor	\$100.00
Father Daniel O'Connor Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Marian French	\$100.00
Father Gus Voltz Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Miller	\$200.00
Father Daniel Corkery Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel C. Brockner	\$5,000.00
Father Christian Ogbonna Burse	
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel C. Brockner	\$5,000.00
Daryl "Pat" Mauterer Burse	
Total	\$10,550.00

Corrections from July 24, 2023 Church Today Page 9:

June 2023 Donations:

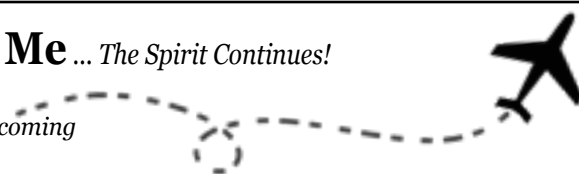
The Robichaux Children	1,850.00
Mary Lee and Gerald Robichaux, Sr. Burse	

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, Chairman

Travel and Cruise With Me ... *The Spirit Continues!*

As your "one stop" travel agency for 32 years, we are excited to offer some upcoming destinations for your consideration!



Viking on SALE! FREE Air! Duo River & Portugal, December 2023

CARNIVAL CRUISE from Galveston, Texas, April 2024

Now Booking: BEST of IRELAND, August 9-18, 2024
Land package \$3,330 double occupancy (air TBA)

PLEASE NOTE our new email address marieshaheen42@gmail.com
Call Marie Michael at **(318) 449-9746** with questions, feedback, and for all your travel - domestic and international!

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



Back to School



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEES. First day of classes was Friday, Aug. 11.



HOLY SAVIOR MENARD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. First day of classes was Friday, Aug. 11.



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEES. A grant for \$10,000 was presented to St. Mary's Catholic School in Natchitoches to assist in funding their program to increase reading skills in their lower elementary grades. The contribution is from the Hope F. Kramer Endowment managed by the Catholic Foundation of North-Central Louisiana. Left to right are Becky Crooks, chairperson of the Catholic Foundation, Sarah Kramer, representing the Kramer Family and Stephen Wren, principal of St. Mary's Catholic School.

(right) **ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.** First day of classes was Friday, Aug. 11. Pictured: this year's Yearbook Team.

(right) **ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA.** First day of classes was Monday, Aug. 14.

(ON THE FRONT PAGE: **ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL, BUNKIE.** First day of classes was Monday, Aug. 14



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION SCHOOL, COTTONPORT. First day of classes was Monday, July 24. Fr. Charlie Ray starts the day with prayer.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. First day of classes was Monday, Aug. 14



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. First day of classes was Friday, Aug. 11. Fr. Thomas Kennedy with the kids!



Vacation Bible School



(above) **STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE CHURCH IN KOLIN** held their Vacation Bible School the week of July 17-21. The kids as well as the teen and adult workers had a Stellar week learning how to Shine Jesus' Light through all of life's circumstances.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA held its Vacation Bible school from July 17-21. Galactic games, Bible adventures, imagination station and Saints Session were part of the week's fun. Fr. Taylor Reynolds leads an activity.

(right) **SACRED HEART CHURCH, MOREAUVILLE** held their Vacation Bible School from July 17-21. Each day at Stellar VBS, kids were launched into "space stations" where a daily Bible Buddy's bible point was reinforced. Fr. Brian Seiler, pastor of Sacred Heart Church and School, dances and sings the theme song "This Little Light of Mine" with VBS participants and volunteers at the Cosmic Closing session of Stellar VBS.



(above) **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WINNFIELD**, held Bible School the week of July 31- Aug. 3. The theme of Bible School was "God's Living Water". Pastor, Father Louis Sklar, assisted in the activities! Everyone had a great time!

Seminarians



SEMINARIANS HELP OUT AT MANNA HOUSE.

The seminarians of the Diocese of Alexandria volunteered to serve the community at Manna House on Wednesday, Aug. 2. They were joined by Vocations Director, Fr. Luke LaFleur. Manna House is grateful to them for their service, support and for making a difference in our community. Please keep these men in your daily prayer as they continue their formation for the priesthood. Pictured front row left to right: Transitional Deacon Donnie Kuzma from St. Anthony of Padua in Natchitoches; Blaine Phillips, St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria; Matthew Bonner, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville; Graham Descant, St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport. Back row left to right: Troy Cannon from St. John the Baptist Church, Cloutierville; Director of Vocations, Fr. Luke LaFleur; Gabe Dowden, Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches; Matthew Kramer, St. Mary Church, Winnsboro and Jacob Cass from St. Joseph Church, Marksville.

See more photos from across the diocese at www.diocesealex.org/our-diocese/all-photo-galleries/

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>

Budget Class

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>

Clothes Closet and Food Pantry

Monday through Saturday

No Limit for Recovery Clubhouse

2403 Harris Street

Alexandria, 71302

Call 318.277.0203

Coming Soon! Counseling

- For professional therapy

By appointment only

To learn more, visit:

<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

Catholic Charities Volunteer Spotlight Jeri Forbis, Financial Coach

*By Jeri Forbis
Ramsey Solutions
Master Financial Coach*

I am honored to have the opportunity to volunteer with Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana. With Disaster Relief, Mental Health, and Basic Needs Services as the organization's three main initiatives, there are many areas where one can lend a helping hand. The services they provide integrate and complement each other very nicely. Any one area can affect all three areas.

Although as a volunteer, a person can assist in any of these areas, as a Certified Master Financial Coach with Ramsey Solutions, my focus is Basic Needs, offering a free budgeting class for anyone who would like to participate. However, for anyone who receives financial assistance from Catholic Charities, it is required they attend the class within a six-month period before they receive additional financial assistance. The budget class is an additional support to help them rise out of the cycle of being short every month. To register for the class, go to www.cccenla.org/basic-needs

The idea is to help others who have not been fortunate enough to have been taught how to manage money, which would be most Americans! Money needs to be given intentional direction, whether someone has an income of \$2,000 or \$20,000 per month.

The class is held monthly from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon every 2nd Wednesday at Westside Rapides Parish Library, Provine Place, in Alexandria.

The information shared in this class is based on the thirty-year proven system of Ramsey Solutions Financial Peace University, which is a biblically based financial strategy. The budget class is basically an

introduction to FPU to teach the basics of budgeting.

For those who would like to have an opportunity to have a deeper understanding of the decision-making process with their finances, we are offering a Financial Peace University Virtual Class. There are "7 Baby Steps" that are designed to help people become debt-free, save, and give!

FPU is a nine-week course, one night a week for about one hour. Beginning Sept. 6, it will be held on Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m. The instruction is free; however, the participant must purchase the class materials from Ramsey Solutions. The class is streamed and will be available for one year online. The cost is \$79.00.

The link to purchase the class materials is <https://www.fpu.com/937025> or use the QR Code below.



Did you know?

78% of people are living paycheck to paycheck. After retiring for an average of 4 years, 1 in 6 adults are returning to work. The average American household carries \$10,000 in credit card debt. The average student loan debt owed is \$28,950.

In this class you will learn how to create a family budget based upon your income and family needs. You will gain new insight as you learn how to save money and pay off debt in a consistent manner. And you will discover that it is possible to break-free from debt, no matter your current situation.

LEGLUE NISSAN INC.

**NEW & USED CARS •
SALES • SERVICE • PARTS**

6400 COLISEUM BLVD.

WWW.LEGLUENISSAN.COM

318-767-3300



BUDGET CLASS 9-week series

Begins September 6

**and every 2nd Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.
Westside Rapides Parish Library, Provine Place, Alexandria**

Classes are free of charge but you must purchase the class materials (\$79)

Registration required, NO WALKINS.

To register visit: www.cccenla.org/budget-classes

'Never, never lose faith,' says man whose miraculous cure as child led to St. Kateri Tekakwitha's canonization

By Katie Yoder
Our Sunday Visitor



CELEBRATING ST. KATERI'S CANONIZATION. Sister Kateri Mitchell, a member of the Sisters of St. Anne, carries a relic of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, and Jake Finkbonner of Ferndale, Wash., carries a turtle shell as they process into St. James Cathedral in Seattle Oct. 22, 2022, for a Mass celebrating the 10th anniversary of St. Kateri's canonization. (OSV News photo/Stephen Brasher, Northwest Catholic)

(OSV News) — Jake Finkbonner first decided to become a medical doctor when he was in middle school.

"I'd love to help people the same way that so many people have helped me," the 23-year-old from Ferndale, Washington, explained to OSV News.

The recent college graduate drew his inspiration from the doctors who rushed to rescue him from an aggressive flesh-eating bacteria that tore through his face more than 17 years ago. They had help: Finkbonner's family and community turned to then-Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha to intercede for the 6-year-old's life. The day after her relic entered his hospital room, the infection — without explanation — stopped.

The cure became the second and final miracle needed for the canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, a 17th-century Kanien'kéha:ka (Mohawk) Catholic and the first Native American woman to be declared a saint. She was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI Oct. 21, 2012.

Finkbonner recently spoke with OSV News about the miracle, his apparent visit to heaven while hospitalized, his faith, and his special connection to St. Kateri Tekakwitha, including his own Native American heritage.

When people hear his story, Finkbonner hopes that they first take away the importance of having faith.

"I can't really convey this message as well as my parents, but in listening to them tell their story of watching me and everything that they went through, I would say that it would be to never, never lose faith," he said.

In 2006, Finkbonner was playing basketball with the local Boys & Girls Club when he cut his lip on the supporting bar at the base of the portable basketball hoop.

At first, doctors assured his family that Finkbonner, who was almost 6 years old, would be fine. But after he visited the family doctor a third time, this time with a dangerously swollen face, he was sent to the local emergency room. From there, he flew via airlift to

Seattle Children's Hospital.

Medical professionals later discovered that Finkbonner had contracted flesh-eating bacteria called strep A through his cut.

For most of his time in the hospital, Finkbonner said, he remained unconscious in a drug-induced coma. He underwent daily surgeries as doctors removed the accumulating dead scar tissue from his face.

His sixth birthday came and went before his parents contacted Father Tim Sauer, then-pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Ferndale, about administering last rites. He coordinated for a priest to visit and, at the same time, recommended the family turn to Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha for help.

Finkbonner and the holy woman shared similarities, from their Native American heritage (Finkbonner is a quarter Native American, of the Lummi nation) to suffering from attacks to their faces (smallpox scarred St. Kateri Tekakwitha's face).

Soon after, Finkbonner's mother, Elsa, began praying to God for a sign. That sign arrived when his father's aunt, who is a religious sister, visited the hospital — and brought a friend with her.

Upon arrival, his relative introduced her friend as "Sister Kateri," Finkbonner said. Sister Kateri not only shared a name with Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha,

but also placed a relic of the holy woman by his bedside.

"It was actually that next day that (the doctors) said, 'Yeah, the infection stopped, and we don't know why,'" Finkbonner said. "It was all recovery from that point."

A few weeks later, he returned home after months in the hospital. He faced a long road ahead: Every year, until he turned 18, he underwent reconstructive surgery.

"I had to learn how to walk again," he remembered. "Talking was a little tough because of still much scar tissue on my face. They gave me a big plastic mask to wear because so much of my skin had been exposed."

His family, friends, and school community at Assumption Catholic School in Bellingham, Washington, supported him and his family every step of the way, he emphasized. He remembered, in particular, when his kindergarten teacher held a "mask day" where all of the students wore masks that they made so that he did not feel alone.

While he was unconscious for most of his hospital stay, Finkbonner remembers at least one incident he believed took place: visiting heaven.

"I had a sensation that I was waking up, that I could hear doctors talking to my parents," he described. "I could feel my body start to be lighter. And, instead of

standing, I flew upwards."

When he opened his eyes, he found himself in heaven.

"I remember a feeling of warmth and comfort and everything was very bright," he said.

He also spotted familiar faces: his Uncle Tom, his godfather who had passed away just two weeks before of a heart attack, and his mother's grandmother, who died before he was born.

"I went up and I gave him a hug and I remember he breathed warm air on me," he revealed. "For a moment, his heart left his body and it came into mine and I had two beating hearts."

When Finkbonner asked if he could stay, Jesus responded that everyone back home still needed him.

"I remember feeling super crushed and terribly sad about the whole thing," Finkbonner said, "but in my heart I knew that he was right."

Before leaving, he recalled hearing what he described as 1,000 pennies dropping on concrete all at once. His body started to feel heavy.

"Just like that," he said, "I was back."

According to his mother, the experience occurred after his "initial waking up" from the coma.

"I don't remember any of that (initial waking up) part, but I certainly remember waking up from that one," Finkbonner said. "For me, I'd say, that was my awakening."

Finkbonner recalled hearing about how, before his recovery, his parents, Donny and Elsa, placed their trust in God.

One day, he said, his mother read the Bible verses where God commands Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Afterward, his parents entered the hospital chapel to pray.

"They essentially said, 'He is yours. Do with him what you will,'" Finkbonner said. "And if it was God's will to take me home, then so be it. They will accept that."

His parents' faith in that moment inspired him, he said.

"For them to never lose faith and to believe in God so heavily, I can only be filled with admiration for them," he commented.

In addition to attending Sunday Mass, Finkbonner participated in activities at the Newman Center, or Catholic campus ministry, at Western Washington University before graduating in June.

During his daily prayers, he regularly turns to St. Kateri Tekakwitha. He frequently prays in his car where, he said, a rosary hangs from the rearview mirror.

"As far as daily prayers go, (the) majority of my prayer is gratitude," he said. "There's a lot of stuff for me to be grateful for."

Katie Yoder writes for OSV News from the Washington, D.C., area.

National Tekakwitha Conference moves headquarters to Minnesota

The national office of the St. Kateri Tekakwitha Conference Center has moved its headquarters to the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The headquarters had been located at 2225 N. Bolton Ave., Alexandria, since October 2013.

Before coming to Louisiana, the headquarters for the Conference was located in Montana and was moved to Alexandria by then executive director, Sister Kateri Mitchell, SSA. Sister Kateri retired in 2018.

The Conference has been searching for an executive director for several years now and the hope is that they will be successful in their new location due to the large population of Catholic Native Americans in that area of the United States.

The mission of the Tekakwitha Conference national office is two-fold: -- evangelization among indigenous Catholics of North America under the protection of St. Kateri, and promotion of the devotion to St. Kateri, the first North American indigenous saint (canonized Oct. 21, 2012).

Cenla Pregnancy Center holds its 5th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet, "The Royal Homecoming"

Cenla Pregnancy Center's 5th Annual Gift of Life Banquet, "The Royal Homecoming," will feature former "America's Top Model" reality show contestant Leah Darrow.

Leah will share her personal testimony of finding the Lord in a very unlikely place: during a photoshoot in New York. With a passion for advocating for all people to know their true value and worth is found in Christ, Leah now travels and shares her stories with crowds of all ages.

The 5th Annual Gift of Life Fundraising Banquet will be held at the Randolph Riverfront Center on September 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Join Cenla Pregnancy Center for a time filled with inspiration and fun, including a powerful client testimony, live music led by a variety of denominational churches, dinner, and a ministry update on the impact of how God has used this ministry to change client's lives and generations to come.

Cenla Pregnancy Center opened their first clinic in Alexandria in 2017, and have served women since with confidential services at no cost, expanding to satellite centers in Marksville and Vidalia. These services include over 1,700 pregnancy tests, 1,200 ultrasounds, and over 25,000 resources provided through counseling, referrals, education,



CENLA PREGNANCY CENTER TO HOST ITS 5TH ANNUAL GIFT OF LIFE BANQUET. On September 12, Cenla Pregnancy Center will host its 5th Annual Gift of Life Banquet, "The Royal Homecoming," featuring former "America's Top Model" reality show contestant Leah Darrow. Darrow is mom to six, and founder of the Motivated Mompreneur program, empowering mamas to thrive in business and make a difference with their God-given gifts and callings.

and material support. Kim Lyons, Executive Director, shares, "I am so proud of the work this team does, showing up every time a mom comes to us, pouring out every single time a mom presents a need, providing each woman who enters our doors exactly what she

needs, amidst the anxiety and fear she is often feeling. For the six of us, this is not just a job, but a calling to a ministry that is like no other. A calling to love women right where they are, holding their hand, journeying alongside each one through the pregnancy and for two years into the child's life."

"What we do would not be possible without the support of our donors. While the services are at no cost to our clients, they do come with a cost," continues Lyons. "The financial burden of maintaining highly trained professionals cannot be overlooked, the financial burden of opening three centers in 5 years, while tremendous, does come with costs. We are asking for your financial support to ensure we can continue to serve the moms of our community; to assure them that they are loved and to guide them along the way with healthy pregnancies and healthy babies."

Visit cenlapc.com or Cenla Pregnancy Center's Facebook page to reserve a table or purchase tickets.

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." // *jeremiah 1: 5*

**Pre-Cana
(Marriage Preparation)
Day of Reflection
Sept. 23
St. Frances Cabrini Church
Alexandria**

Budget Blinds
a style for every point of view™

Custom Window Coverings
Shutters • Draperies • Blinds

Huge selection of the best brands!

(318) 443-9730
FREE In-Home Consultation & Estimates

Professional Installation • Low Price Promise
Each Franchise Independently Owned and Operated
www.budgetblinds.com

Signature Series • Lafayette Interior Fashions
Exterior Window Screens

BU'S PIZZA HOUSE

COMPARE QUALITY - TASTE - QUANTITY - PRICE

WE DELIVER!

WITHIN LIMITED AREA • CHECKS ACCEPTABLE

Everything from cheese to our "Full House"

#1 ALEXANDRIA 902 VERSAILLES BLVD. 448-4104	#2 BALL 6301 MONROE HWY 640-2983	#3 PINEVILLE HWY 28E AT STILLLEY RD 445-9249
---------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

VALUABLE COUPON

Two Medium Pizzas \$22.99
Single Topping only

Additional Toppings Extra • Not valid with any other coupon
All prices subject to change

Expires 9/25/23

Marriage Help - Sept. 15-17

Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi) has helped tens of thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment or misery in their marriage. This program can help you too.

In marriage, communication is more than just talking. At some point, did you stop sharing about the things that were important to you? Did your spouse?

Improving a marriage takes time and a conscious effort to learn about your spouse. Growing closer in a marriage does not happen automatically. Retrouvaille is a marriage program dedicated to helping couples grow closer and develop a stronger bond. You give your heart and soul to everything you do, between your work and your family. Are you giving your heart and soul to your marriage? Sometimes the distance between a husband and wife can seem so wide that it cannot be repaired. Retrouvaille is a marriage program designed to bring couples closer together. For more information about the upcoming local Retrouvaille Weekend program for couples, September 15-17, contact Randall and Robin Bellard at 225-271-4092 or visit www.helpourmarriage.org.

For more information about the September 15-17 program in Baton Rouge, please call 225-271-4092 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, CHENEYVILLE. On July 30, Fr. Dwight DeJesus, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Cheneyville, helped celebrate lifelong parishioner, Mr. Dan Vanderlick's 90th birthday. Also, he and his wife, Mrs. Mary Vanderlick, celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary.



(left) WOMENS SILENT RETREAT AT MARYHILL. Nineteen attended the Women's Silent Retreat held at Maryhill from July 14-16. Retreat leader, Claire Gallagher, led the attendees in talks focused on spirituality of the feminine genius.

Telephone 318-445-1446
Fax 318-445-1449

Certified Gemologists
Registered Jewelers

Under the clocktower
Schnack's
FINE JEWELRY
Established 1865
1438 Dorchester Drive
Alexandria, Louisiana 71301-3408
www.schnacks.com

American Gem Society

YOUR COMMUNITY STORES

Y-NOT STOP

Refueling
& Refreshing
Communities
Since 1970

WWW.YNOTSTOP.COM

**NEBLETT, BEARD
& ARSENAULT**

**Need Social Security
Disability Benefits?**

561-2500

NBALawFirm.com

Richard J. Arsenault 2220 Bonaventure Court, Alexandria

B.K. ROOFING, LLC

Call the Pros!
Residential Roofing Experts

www.bkroofingllc.com

Brian Maddox, Owner
13 years experience
Licensed & insured • References available

"It doesn't cost any more to get it done right!"

Free estimates!
Most estimates in 2 days

Experienced in dealing with Insurance Companies
Let us handle the details!

318-201-9065
17 Glade St. • Pineville, LA 71460

Emergency service available

Pilgrimages

Medjugorje

Father Ramji Shoury, pastor of Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen, will be leading a pilgrimage to Medjugorje this Sept. 19-27. The tour will include daily Mass, Apparition Hill, Mt. Krizevac (Cross Mountain), Apparitions: join the villagers and fellow pilgrims in praying the Rosary in St. James Church and stay for the apparition of Our Lady to the visionaries; Croatian Mass; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; meetings with the Visionaries (pending their availability); visit to the community of Cenacolo; prayer at the Statue of the Risen Christ; Pray at the bronze statue located on the grounds of St. James Church and witness the droplets of water that miraculously seep out of Christ's right knee. The cost of the pilgrimage for one adult is \$2,659. If you would like to make this pilgrimage please call Father Shoury at (318) 346-2840 or (318) 500-9116 for more information.

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 1-800-842-4842.

Mexico/OLG Shrine

Join St. Mary's Assumption in Cottonport on a journey to Mexico City, Mexico, in honor of the life and ministry of Fr. José Robles-Sánchez, to see sites significant to the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego. Fr. Charles Ray will be the spiritual director. Travel dates are November 13-18, 2023. For more information, visit www.holytravels.org/tour/stmarysmexico/ or call Magnificat Travel at 337-291-1933.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ACCREDITATION. As of August, 2023, all Catholic schools within the Diocese of Alexandria are now accredited through Cognia. Bishop Robert Marshall shared the news to all school principals and assistant principals during the 2023-2024 School year Mass held at St. Frances Cabrini Church on Monday, August 7. Previously, only several schools within the diocese were accredited but now all schools have reached this achievement. Pictured first row, left to right: Sr. Sandra Norsworthy, Sacred Heart School; Megan Beck, OLPS; Bishop Robert Marshall; Janet Burgess; Sylvia Davis. Back row, left to right: Kim Swart, St. Frances Cabrini School; Fr. Craig Scott; Chris Gatlin, Holy Savior Menard; Fr. Chad Partain; Fr. Luke LaFleur; Rhiannan Moreau, St. Joseph School; Blaine Dauzat, St. Mary's Assumption School; Sadie LaPoint, St. Anthony of Padua School; Stephen Wren, St. Mary's Catholic School.

Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools acquires accreditation through COGNIA

The Diocese of Alexandria announces that Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools have earned system-wide accreditation by Cognia™, a nonprofit organization that provides quality assurance for schools, school districts, and education service providers.

Cognia (formerly AdvancED), nationally recognizes districts that meet rigorous standards that focus on productive learning environments, equitable resource allocation that meet the needs of learners, and effective leadership. Earning accreditation from the Cognia Global Accreditation Commission means that the system and all of its schools are accredited, and that the Diocese of Alexandria School System is recognized across the nation as a school system that meets Cognia Standards of Quality, and maintains a commitment to continuous improvement.

"Systems accreditation as conferred by the Cognia Global Accreditation Commission provides the Diocese of Alexandria Schools a nationally recognized mark of quality for our school system and each school within our system," shared Bishop Robert Marshall. "It demonstrates to our community our commitment to excellence, our openness to external review and feedback, and our desire to be the best we can be on behalf of the students we serve."



To earn accreditation from Cognia, a school district also must implement a continuous process of improvement, and submit to internal and external review. School systems in good standing can maintain their accreditation for a five-year term.

Dr. Mark A. Elgart, president and CEO of Cognia, stated, "Cognia System Accreditation is a rigorous process that focuses the entire school system and its community on the primary goal of preparing lifelong learners in engaging environments where all students can flourish. Diocese of Alexandria schools are to be commended for demonstrating that it has met high standards, is making progress on key indicators that impact student learning."

Cognia is the parent organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of

Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). Parents and interested community members can learn more about the Cognia Accreditation at cognia.org.

Cognia offers accreditation and certification, assessment, professional learning, and improvement services to institutions and other education providers. The result of the merger of AdvancED and Measured Progress, Cognia was formed to bridge the gap between school evaluation and student assessment. As a global nonprofit working in over 80 countries, our 36,000 institutions serve and support nearly 25 million students and five million educators every day. Cognia serves as trusted partner in advancing learning for all learners. Find out more at cognia.org.

Some of our schools had been individually accredited through Cognia; this system-wide accreditation renews and expands that recognition. The eight schools of the Diocese of Alexandria are Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria; St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria; Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria, St. Mary's Catholic School, Natchitoches; Sacred Heart School, Moreauville; St. Joseph School, Plaquemine; St. Mary's Assumption School, Cottonport and St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie.

BRUMFIELD vs DODD POLICY.

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

DIOCESE OF ALEXANDRIA NON-DISCRIMINATORY SCHOOL POLICY | July 2023

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

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

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

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

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."

Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Thomas Roque, Sr. retires

The Diocese of Alexandria announced the retirement of Catholic Schools Superintendent, Mr. Thomas E. Roque, Sr. effective August 4, 2023.

Mr. Roque has served the diocese as Catholic school superintendent for the past twelve years during which time the schools advanced in many important areas and successfully navigated the challenges during the years of the global pandemic.

The Diocese of Alexandria Catholic Schools' Office assists the bishop in implementing his vision for Catholic education and provides support to principals and pastors of the eight schools located in the Diocese.

Accepting Mr. Roque's decision, Bishop Robert Marshall stated, "The Diocese of Alexandria is very grateful to Mr. Roque for his dedicated service as Superintendent of Catholic Schools. He was of great assistance to me when I



Thomas E. Roque, Sr.

arrived in Alexandria in 2020, helping me to learn about our parishes and schools. Mr. Roque noted in his letter to me that he reached this decision after prayer and consultation with his family. Our heartfelt prayers go with him and his family in all their future endeavors."

In this interim period, Mrs. Sylvia Davis will serve as the Coordinator of the Catholic Schools and will be assisted in this

task by Mrs. Janet Burgess. Mrs. Davis is presently the Curriculum Specialist for Middle and High Schools and the Administrative Secretary for the Catholic Schools Office. Mrs. Burgess is the Curriculum Specialist for Elementary Grades as well as the Child Nutrition Supervisor for the Catholic Schools Office. Mrs. Burgess is a retired public school principal with 43 years of experience.

The Catholic Schools Office will continue to provide support for our Catholic schools to ensure that we offer the highest quality education for our young people. Over the next months, the Diocese will undertake a thorough assessment of the present and future needs of the schools and of the Catholic Schools Office.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH, BUNKIE. The Children of Mary Congregation of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Bunkie celebrated the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary on Saturday, June 17, 2023. The focus of the meeting was the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Mrs. Debbie and Mr. Tommy Thayer, who run the Food Pantry for St. Anthony, came to speak to the children about how the Food Pantry operates. The children collected food items and also created beautiful handwritten notes of inspiration to put in the food bags.

The Lord is near to all who call upon him.
Psalm 145: 18 | Responsorial Psalm for September 24
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sept. 29
Feast of the Saints
Michael, Gabriel and Raphael
the Archangels

Campus Ministry:
LSU of Alexandria: Catholic Student Organization, 318-447-2956
Northwestern State University Catholic Student Organization
FOCUS Ministries:
<https://nsucatholic.org/focus> | evan.morley@focus.org
Louisiana College: Catholic Student Organization, 318-447-2956

LUMBER MILLWORK **Jeansonne's Millworks & Cabinet Shop**
* Architectural Millwork
* Custom Cabinets & Moulding
Phone 445-5665 * FAX 445-5276
GUY JEANSONNE Owner 1843 Sterckx Road Alexandria, LA 71301

Listen to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on
KLIL 92.1 KZLG 95.9
8 a.m. Sunday Mass 7 a.m. Sunday Mass

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions
September 12, 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center, ALEXANDRIA
September 14, 6:00 p.m.
St. Alphonsus Church, HESSMER
September 26, 6:00 p.m.
MB of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches
NOTE: Minors are not allowed to attend because of the adult content of the videos and discussions. To register, go to www.virtus.org. For more information, call 318-445-6424, ext. 213.

Hixson-Ducote Funeral Home
Avoyelles Monuments
Ray and Marie Ducote, Owners
Bunkie (318) 346-6346 **Plaucheville (318) 922-3200**

PEST AID CO.
We Sell Do-It-Yourself Pest Control Supplies
Termites • Ants • Fleas • Rodents • Mice • Fleas
COMPLETE TERMITE & PEST CONTROL.
Home Owned & Operated • Raymond J. Constantino, Sr.
473-0228
pestaiddrbellsouth.net
www.pestaideola.com
2828 Jackson St. • Alexandria, LA

Sharing Your Catholic Faith, 10-week series - begins Sept. 6

Join Fr. Thomas Kennedy at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria for a weekly faith series beginning Wednesday, Sept. 6 at 6:30 p.m. and every Wednesday through Nov. 8. Strategies to faithfully proclaiming the Gospel will be discussed. Learn how to share the truth of Christ with confidence.

Spiritual Warfare Retreat - Sept. 8-9

Spiritual Warfare and the Family: Practical Lessons from David and Goliath, a retreat conducted by Dr. Dan Schneider, will be held Friday, Sept. 8, 6:00-8:00 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 9, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Mater Dolorosa Church, Plaquemine. The world around us is changing fast, and today's Catholic families are facing many challenges. In this conference, you will learn practical tips for spiritual warfare that affects the family. Join Dr. Dan Schneider as he explores the strategies, weapons and tactics of the Catholic Faith and learn how you can fight, and win, your spiritual battles. No registration required.

Genesis of Eve Women's Conference - Sept. 8-10

Join us for a weekend of spiritual encounter, intellectual empowerment and apostolic evangelization. The 2023 Genesis of Eve conference theme this year is "Be Not Afraid." Joan of Arc is our featured saint for this year's conference. To purchase your ticket please visit genesisofeve.org.

Discalced Carmelite meeting - Sept. 9

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.

Back-to-School Bash! - Sept. 10

St. Rita Church in Alexandria will hold a Back to School Bash on Sunday, Sept. 10. Grades Pre-K through 8th are invited to attend at 12:00 p.m. and grades 9-12 at 6:30 p.m. Come enjoy faith and fellowship and lots of activities! There will be waterslides, music, food, games! We look forward to see you there! (This event has been

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

rescheduled from an earlier date due to extreme weather temperatures.)

Marriage Help - Sept. 15-17

Is your marriage going down the right road . . . or is it a little off track? Life can be difficult, and so can the challenges you face in marriage. Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Looking for a better way? Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. Retrouvaille is a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy and heal, just as they have done in their own marriages. Retrouvaille is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, but welcomes couples of all faiths as well as non-religious couples. Retrouvaille can help get your relationship back on track. For more information about the upcoming local Retrouvaille Weekend program for couples, (September 15-17) contact: Randall and Robin Bellard @ 225-271-4092 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org

Beginning Experience - Sept. 15-17

Widowed, separated, or divorced? Don't know where to turn? Struggling with grief or loss? Beginning Experience of Alexandria is registering now for a weekend away that provides an individual with the opportunity to encounter self and to grow with a purpose to achieve inner peace. The experience is to help close the door gently on the past and move on with renewed hope and purpose. The weekend will be held at Maryhill Renewal Center - Pineville, LA on September 15 - 17, 2023. Cost is \$185, which includes two nights' lodging and meals. For more information, visit the website at www.beginningexperience.org, or to register, contact Anna at 318-448-1990, asweat7@aol.com, or John at 504-355-6524 or tubamaniem@gmail.com.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje - Sept.19-27

Father Ramji Shoury, pastor of Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen, will be leading a pilgrimage to Medjugorje this Sept. 19-27. The tour will include: daily Mass, Apparition Hill, Mt. Krizevac (Cross Mountain), Apparitions: join the villagers and fellow pilgrims in praying the Rosary in St. James Church and stay for the

apparition of Our Lady to the visionaries; Croatian Mass; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; meetings with the Visionaries (pending their availability); visit to the community of Cenacolo; prayer at the Statue of the Risen Christ; Pray at the bronze statue located on the grounds of St. James Church and witness the droplets of water that miraculously seep out of Christ's right knee. The cost of the pilgrimage for one adult is \$2,659. If you would like to make this pilgrimage, please call Father Shoury at (318) 346-2840 or (318) 500-9116 for more information.

Pre-Cana Day of Reflection for Engaged Couples - Sept. 23

Pre Cana Day of Reflection for Engaged Couples will be held at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Alexandria on Saturday, Sept. 23 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Cost is \$50 per couple. Breakfast and lunch provided. Call 445-4588 to register.

2023 Annual Creole Festival - Oct. 13-15

Celebrating more than 200 years of culture, cuisine, faith, family and friends! Join us on the grounds of St. Augustine Church in Isle Brevelle starting at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13 for a fish fry while listening to the music of Deep Water Rehab band. On Saturday, the fun begins at 10:00 a.m. and includes a bike tour, river tour, bingo, raffles, gumbo, meat pies, tamales and more! Mass will be celebrated at 5:00 p.m. On Sunday, activities begin again following 10:30 a.m. Mass. Music for Saturday and Sunday provided by DJ Doc Couty. Everything is free and family friendly! Please do not park on the river bank. For more information contact the church office at (318) 379-2521 or watch our Facebook page: [facebook.com/staugustineontheisle](https://www.facebook.com/staugustineontheisle)

Silent Directed Retreat for everyone Save the date! - Nov. 2-5

The Diocese of Alexandria, along with clergy, deacons and spiritual directors are hosting a silent retreat, "Growing In Holiness," on Nov. 2-5 at Maryhill Renewal Center. This retreat is open to all, men and women, 18 or older, who are seeking quiet reflective prayer time. This retreat will include daily Mass and adoration, daily time with a spiritual director and the sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered. It begins Thursday night and ends Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Cost of \$275 includes: private room and meals. A deposit of \$75 and a registration form is required. Limited availability. To register contact Renée Aldridge 318-542-1966 at renee.aldrige1@gmail.com or Ingrid Canella at icnewell@yahoo.com.

Church Today News Deadlines

September 25
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Sept. 25

October 23
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Oct. 12



Emile P. Oestrieche, III, CPA

Anne M. Oestrieche, CPA, CFP®

Oestrieche Financial Management Services

Let us help your family pursue your financial goals.

4641 Windermere Place, Alexandria, LA 71303

(318) 448-3556

www.o-fms.com

Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC



genesis of eve

BE NOT AFRAID WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 8-10, 2023

DOWNTOWN ALEXANDRIA, LA



Join us for a weekend of spiritual encounter, intellectual empowerment and apostolic evangelization. The 2023 conference theme is "Be Not Afraid". Joan of Arc is our featured saint for the 2023 conference.

GET YOUR
TICKET TODAY!



GENESISOFEVE.ORG