

CHURCH TODAY

Volume LV, No. 2

www.diocesealex.org

Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

February 26, 2024



Rite of Election

Catechumens and Candidates from St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, Louisiana, participated in the Rite of Election at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria on Feb. 18, the first Sunday of Lent. Over 90 individuals were presented to Bishop Robert Marshall as they continue on their faith formation journey to be brought into full communion of the Catholic Church at Easter Vigil. See page 9 for more photos or visit www.diocesealex.org/our-diocese/all-photo-galleries/2024-ocia/

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Synod listening sessions scheduled during March

Under the guidance of Pope Francis and in preparation for the second and final session of the ongoing Synod for the universal church, every diocese in the world has been asked to host listening sessions for the public. Please see page 2 for dates, locations and time.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the teaching document from the USCCB, is now available online, a document to aid and shape political choices in the upcoming election in light of Catholic teaching. See page 3 to learn how to acquire the document.

2024 Annual Diocesan Appeal kicks off

It is time to begin our 2024 Annual Diocesan Appeal. You may have already received a letter from Bishop Robert Marshall in the mail. Please consider supporting this year's Appeal and thank you to all who continuously support the ministries within the Diocese. See page 4.

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Synod listening sessions to be held across the diocese during Lent

Under the guidance of Pope Francis and in preparation for the second and final session of the ongoing Synod for the universal church, every diocese in the world has been asked to host listening sessions for the public. The Diocese of Alexandria has scheduled three sessions on the following dates:

Monday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m.

St. Joseph Church, Marksville, in the parish hall

Monday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m.

St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria

Monday, March 18

Holy Cross Church, Natchitoches, in the parish hall.

The Synod on Synodality is a three-year process of listening and

dialogue on communion, participation, and mission for the Catholic Church. It began in October 2021 and concludes in October 2024.

A synod is, by definition, an assembly of clergy and laity in the Church. This reality is rooted in the early church where broad consultation would take place involving all members of the local church, including the lay faithful. Pope Francis has revived this ancient institution in the life of the Church which has lain dormant for several centuries. The intent of this current Synod of Synodality is not to be a one-time experience but an ongoing opportunity for discernment and collectively moving the Church closer to the heart of Christ.

Listening sessions are for Catholics, practicing and non-practicing, as well as non-Catholics to express their thoughts and reflections.

These planned listening sessions are an important part of this worldwide synodal process of engagement and collective commitment by people of God to grow and journey together.

Diocese of Alexandria financial information for the year ended June 30, 2023

Balance Sheet

Assets	
Cash	2,802,432
Accounts Receivable	1,177,644
Pledges Receivable	178,241
Note Receivable	940,787
Other Receivables	7,131
Prepaid Expenses	13,483
Investments	8,965,950
Interest in Trusts	1,341,776
Land/Buildings/Equipment	3,820,174
Equity in Workers Comp Pool	1,444,354
Other Assets	15,000
Total Assets	20,706,972

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	459,530
Loan Debt	5,710
Accrued Payables	7,692,518
Insurance Reserves	150,250
National Collections	79,379
Deferred Revenue	47,715
Total Liabilities	8,435,102

Net Assets

Unrestricted - Undesignated	1,499,776
Unrestricted - Designated	6,991,917
Restricted	3,780,177
Total Net Assets	12,271,870
Total Liabilities / Net Assets	20,706,972

Revenue and Expense Statement

Revenue	
Parish Assessments	1,580,628
Priest Benefit Charge	436,235
Contributions / Grants	3,054,065
Maryhill	284,811
Church Today	23,673
Investment Income	219,033
Market Gain on Investments	809,046
Insurance Premiums	3,396,266
Steubenville Conference	356,980
Other Revenue	215,771
Total Revenue	10,376,508

Expenses

Spiritual Development	958,522
Vocations	301,948
Infirm / Retired Priests	558,307
Educational Ministry	368,233
Pastoral Services	788,701
Communications	209,190
Tribunal	257,057
Insurance Programs	3,335,545
Steubenville Conference	202,542
Administrative	901,371
Development	253,492
Interest Expense	399
Diocesan Buildings / Properties	406,489
Total Expenses	8,541,796
Net Income	1,834,712
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	10,437,158
Net Assets - End of Year	12,271,870

For further information, please contact the Diocesan Business Office at (318) 445-6424 x 215

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

Let us look to the example of the Good Samaritan. Jesus' parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond. This summons is ever new, yet it is grounded in a fundamental law of our being: we are called to direct society to the pursuit of the common good and, with this purpose in mind, to persevere in consolidating its political and social order, its fabric of relations, its human goals. (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 66)

As Catholics and Americans, we are blessed to be able to participate in our nation's political and public life. Our freedoms respect the dignity of individuals and their consciences and allow us to come together for the common good. Election seasons, therefore, should contain a sense of gratitude and hope. Our love for this country, our patriotism, properly impels us to vote.

But increasingly, it seems, election seasons are a time of anxiety and spiritual trial. Political rhetoric is increasingly angry, seeking to motivate primarily through division and hatred. Fear can be an effective tool for raising money. The most heated arguments online often get the most clicks. Demonizing the other can win votes.

We propose once more the moral framework of *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* precisely as pastors, inspired by the Good Samaritan, with the hope of binding these



wounds and healing these bitter divisions. This document is not based on personalities or partisanship, the latest news cycle, or what's trending on social media. Instead, it reflects the perennial role of the Church in public life in proclaiming timeless principles: the infinite worth and dignity of every human life, the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity. Not sure what these mean? We invite you to read a copy of *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* and learn more.

Allowing your conscience to be stretched and formed by these reflections can give you peace! They point to Jesus' challenge to show mercy to those in need, just as the Good Samaritan. As Pope Francis writes, "Here, all our distinctions, labels and masks fall away: it is the moment of truth. Will we bend down to touch and heal the wounds of others?" (*Fratelli Tutti*, no. 70). Let this

be in our hearts when we talk about politics and make political choices.

Some might be tempted to say: yes, of course, we will be the ones who help by promoting good and opposing evil. But when confronted with so much good at risk and so much evil, it is a great challenge to avoid fear and anger. The threat of abortion remains our pre-eminent priority because it directly attacks our most vulnerable and voiceless brothers and sisters and destroys more than a million lives per year in our country alone. Other grave threats to the life and dignity of the human person include euthanasia, gun violence, terrorism, the death penalty, and human trafficking. There is also the redefinition of marriage and gender, threats to religious freedom at home and abroad, lack of justice for the poor, the suffering of migrants and refugees, wars and famines around the world, racism, the need for greater access to healthcare and education, care for our common home, and more. All threaten the dignity of the human person.

So precisely how we promote good and oppose evil is an essential part of answering the Lord's call, of being a disciple. As St. Paul reminds us:

Never let evil talk pass your lips; say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them. Do nothing that will sadden the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed against

Scan the code to access online resources for *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*.



the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, all passion and anger, harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one another, compassionate, and mutually forgiving, just as God has forgiven you in Christ (Eph. 4:29-32).

Thus, Pope Francis exhorts us to "genuine dialogue and openness to others," by which we may "be frank and open about our beliefs, while continuing to discuss, to seek points of contact, and above all, to work and struggle together" (*Fratelli Tutti*, no. 203). This applies to the faithful both as voters and as candidates—we must consider not only candidates' positions on these issues, but their character and integrity as well.

How can we meet this challenge? Again, St. Paul gives us a way: Put on "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Take time away from social media and spend time with Holy Scripture and the Blessed Sacrament. Turn off the TV and the podcast, and listen in silence. Volunteer at a soup kitchen, a homeless shelter, a crisis pregnancy center. Serve the poor, the needy, the outcast. Pray often, letting faith inform your political participation.

Participation in political life also requires judgments about concrete circumstances. While the bishops help form the laity in accordance with basic principles, they do not tell the laity to vote for particular candidates. On these often complex matters, it is the

laity's responsibility to form their consciences and grow in the virtue of prudence to approach the many and varied issues of the day with the mind of Christ. Conscience is "a judgment of reason" by which one determines whether an action is right or wrong (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1778). It does not allow us to justify doing whatever we want, nor is it a mere "feeling." Conscience—properly formed according to God's revelation and the teaching of the Church—is a means by which one listens to God and discerns how to act in accordance with the truth. The truth is something we receive, not something we make. We can only judge using the conscience we have, but our judgments do not make things true.

It is our responsibility to learn more of Catholic teaching and tradition, to participate in Church life, to learn from trustworthy sources about the issues facing our communities, and to do our best to make wise judgments about candidates and government actions.

We must also seek wisdom, as Holy Scripture instructs:

Wisdom from above is first of all innocent. It is also peaceable, lenient, docile, rich in sympathy and the kindly deeds that are its fruits, impartial and sincere. The harvest of justice is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace (Jas. 3:17-18).

The teachings of the Church, moreover, offer a vision of hope, where justice and mercy abound, because God is the infinite source of all goodness and love. With this wisdom and hope, we can find a way to bend down as the Good Samaritan did, through the fear and divisions, to touch and heal the wounds.

May God bless you as you consider and pray over these challenging decisions. May God bless our nation with true wisdom, peace, and mutual forgiveness, that we may decide together, through our democratic processes, to uphold the dignity of life and the common good.

Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

Psalm 19:8 | Responsorial Psalm for March 3
Third Sunday of Lent (Year B)

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.



Diocese of Alexandria Website
www.diocesealex.org



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God's Gift. Our Response

2024 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."
- 1 Peter 4:10-11

It is time to begin our 2024 Annual Diocesan Appeal. We want to take the time to thank the 2,700 + donors to the 2023 ADA. This number means that 26.38% of our registered families donated to the 2023 ADA. As a result of their generosity, we exceeded our goal again this year.

A special thanks to the following thirty-five parishes/missions for meeting and/or exceeding their goals!

- Our Lady of Prompt Succor-Alexandria
- St. Francis Xavier Cathedral-Alexandria
- St. James Catholic Church-Alexandria
- St. Rita Catholic Church-Alexandria
- St. Margaret Church-Boyce
- St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church-Bunkie
- Our Lady of the Rosary-Blacklake
- St. Joseph Chapel-Trichel
- St. Joseph Church-Cheneyville
- Holy Rosary Mission-Emanuel
- St. Margaret Mary Chapel-Gorum
- St. Joseph Church-Colfax
- St. Edward Church-Fishville
- St. Mary's Assumption Church-Cottonport
- St. John the Baptist-Deville
- Sts. Francis and Anne Church-Kolin
- St. Winifred Chapel-Effie
- St. John the Baptist-Moncla
- Church of the Little Flower-Evergreen
- St. Charles-Goudeau
- St. Patrick-Ferriday
- St. Francis of Assisi Church-Waterproof
- St. Louis Church-Glenmora
- St. Peter Mission-Elmer
- St. Jude Mission-Seiper
- St. Augustine Church-Isle Brevelle
- St. Anne Chapel-Old River
- St. William Chapel-Olla
- Mary, Mother of Jesus Church-Woodworth
- St. Joseph Church-Marksville
- Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Church-Natchitoches
- St. Anthony of Padua Church-Natchitoches
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Church-Tioga
- Our Lady of Lourdes Church-Vidalia
- Our Lady of Lourdes Church-Winnfield
- St. Mary Catholic Church-Winnboro

Thank you to all the families who sacrificed to support our diocesan ministries. Your contributions help the Catholic Church to serve so many of our brothers and sisters in our thirteen civil parishes.

Live Jesus in our hearts,

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

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Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

Psalm 137:1 | Responsorial Psalm for March 10 | Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

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Lenten Missions and Bible Studies:

**Mondays, February 5, 12, 19; March 4, 11, 18 and April 8
Lenten Reflection 7-part Series**

St. Rita Church will have JESUS & THE EUCHARIST STUDY SERIES from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on these Mondays: February 5, 12, 19, March 4, 11, 18 ending on Monday, April 8.

**Tuesdays, beginning February 13
Lenten Reflection 7-part Series**

Join us for the "Jesus and the Eucharist" seven-week Small Group Study which will be held on Tuesdays starting February 13 at 6:00 p.m. in Xavier Hall, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. This group study was produced by the National Eucharistic Congress in conjunction with The Augustine Institute.

**Wednesdays, March 6, 13, 20
Lenten Mission**

Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen will have a Lenten Mission every Wednesday in March: 6, 13, 20 at 6:00 p.m.

**Saturday, March 2
Lenten Pilgrimage: "Stations of the Seven Churches"**

St. Rita Church will embark on a pilgrimage on Saturday, March 2 as we visit seven churches for "Stations of the Seven Churches" Pilgrimage. Locations we will visit: St. John the Baptist, Deville; St. Gerard Church, Jonesville; St. Patrick Church, Ferriday; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Natchez, MS; Holy Family Church, Natchez, MS; St. Mary's Basilica, Natchez, MS, concluding with Mass at 4:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Vidalia. The bus will leave St. Rita promptly at 7:00 a.m. and we should be back to Alexandria by 7:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided at St. Patrick Church in Ferriday. Cost is \$20 per person. To make your reservation, call (318) 445-7141 ext. 214.

**Tuesday, March 5
Lenten Pilgrimage to New Orleans**

St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie is sponsoring a Lenten Pilgrimage to New Orleans on Tuesday, March 5. Pilgrimage sites include the National Shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succor (with Mass) and the National Shrine of Father Francis Xavier Seelos. \$79.00 per pilgrim. Call the church office for more information: (318) 346-7274.

Fish Fries:

**St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria
Ash Wednesday Fish Fry**

Knights of Columbus Council #3200 will have their annual Lenten Fish Fry in Xavier Hall from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14. Menu includes fried fish, french fries, hush puppies, and coleslaw and is dine in or take-out. Price is \$10.00 a plate. For take-out delivery call 447-3663 with a minimum of four orders.

**St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria
Every Friday Fish Fry**

Every Friday during Lent (not on Good Friday). Menu includes fried fish, french fries, hush puppies, and coleslaw and is dine in or take-out. Price is \$10.00 a plate. For take-out delivery call 447-3663 with a minimum of four orders.

**St. Rita Church, Alexandria
Ash Wednesday Fish Fry**

St. Rita's annual Lenten Friday Fish Fry on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 4:30 p.m. until sold out at the Holy Family Center.

**St. Rita Church, Alexandria
Every Friday Fish Fry/Shrimp Fry**

St. Rita Church will alternate between Fish Fry and Shrimp Fry dinners beginning Friday, Feb. 16 with shrimp! \$10.00 a plate : US Catfish or Shrimp, French Fries, Hush Puppies, Coleslaw in Holy Family Center. Eat in or drive thru from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Sponsored by the KC Council #1134

**Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
Every Friday Fish Fry**

Every Friday during Lent, serving begins at 5:00 p.m. \$9 per plate, dine in or takeout

**Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville
Friday Feb. 16, 23 and March 1 Fish Fry**

Feb. 16, 23, March 1: Sacred Heart of Jesus will be selling fish plates in Mac's Grocery parking lot on Hwy 28E in Pineville from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. or until sold out. Cost is \$10 per plate and includes 1/2 pound fish, fries, hush puppies and corn on the cob.

**St. Martin of Tours Church, Belledeau
Friday, Feb. 23 Fish Fry**

The Belledeau Knights of Columbus (Council #9217) are holding their annual fish fry on Friday, Feb. 23, at the church hall. Serving time is from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Tickets may be purchased from any St. Martin of Tours Knights of Columbus member. The Altar Society will also be selling cakes.

St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie, March 22

St. Anthony Knights of Columbus will hold the annual Fish Fry Dinner on Friday, March 22 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. \$12.00 offering. Drive-thru purchases on Louisiana Avenue. Tickets available from Knights and the Rectory Office and School Office.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward, March 24

The Knights of Columbus (Council #9418) Sunday Dinner will be held on Palm Sunday, March 24. The dinner includes your choice of pork or chicken, with rice dressing, corn, and coleslaw. Tickets are \$10.00 a plate, and are on sale now. They are available from any OLL Knights of Columbus member and available at the church office. Pick up time for the dinners will be 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at the K.C. Hall in Fifth Ward.

Stations of the Cross during Lent:

Fridays during Lent:

- 9:00 a.m. – St. Martin of Tours Church, Belledeau
- 2:00 p.m. – St. Rita Church, Alexandria
- 5:00 p.m. – St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie
- 5:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward
- 5:30 p.m. – St. Rita Church, Alexandria
- 6:00 p.m. – Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
- 6:00 p.m. – Church of the Little Flower, Evergreen
- 7:00 p.m. – (Spanish) St. Rita Church, Alexandria

Penance services:

March 14, St. Rita Church, Alexandria
Penance Service, 6:30 p.m.

March 27, Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth
Communal Service with individual confession at 6:00 p.m.

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Lenten Regulations

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. This means that we do not eat meat and we have only one full meal.

The other Fridays of the season of Lent are days of abstinence from meat. The obligation to abstain from meat binds Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to fast, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18 to 59. Those who are younger or older may freely embrace these disciplines. But Lenten disciplines should never endanger your health.

It is obvious that abstaining from meat is meaningless for vegetarians, who must choose some other form of abstinence. It is equally obvious that replacing meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with the spirit of Lent.

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**Upcoming
VIRTUS Sessions**

- Thursday, Feb. 29, 6:00 p.m.**
Sacred Heart School,
MOREAUVILLE
- Tuesday, Mar. 19, 6:00 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.

**LECTOR FORMATION
WORKSHOP**

6:00 p.m. April 9
St. Joseph Catholic Center
Alexandria



ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH GUMBO COOKOFF. On Saturday, Feb. 3, the St Alphonsus Knights of Columbus Council #3088 held their 8th annual gumbo cookoff.

Despite the rain throughout the day, the Lord blessed the community with a double rainbow over the Rateau center where many gathered to eat their fill of gumbo, play bingo and fellowship.

Congratulations to the Knights on another successful family event, to all those who participated in the cookoff and those who placed.
 1st place team:
 Beclair (Kenneth Beclair)
 2nd place team:
 Roux crew (Craig Bordelon)
 3rd place team:
 Triple M farms (Laken Moreau)
 People's Choice was team Flawless Accounting (Tyler Fogelman) The Kingdom of Heaven is in Hessmer!

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Our Lady of Prompt Succor School seeks an enthusiastic, dedicated, and qualified principal to minister in leadership for a school community of almost 400 students in Grades Pre-School – 6. Applications will be accepted through Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

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- Master's Degree, preferably in Educational Leadership
- Minimum of 5 years' experience in education (preferably Catholic education)
- Credentials meeting Non-Public School Certification for State of Louisiana
- Demonstrated Leadership Ability in Education
- Availability on or before July 1, 2024

For Application Packets, please contact:
 Rev. Rusty Rabalais, Pastor. (318) 445-3693

Inquiries and applications may be sent to:
 Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church
 Principal Search Committee
 401 21st Street
 Alexandria, Louisiana 71301

The schools of the Diocese of Alexandria admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

March 19
Solemnity of St. Joseph,
husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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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".

(318)717-1995

Une patate ou des gratons 🎵🎵

by **Deacon Jason Lavergne**
 Director, Office of Faith
 Formation and Religious
 Education

Growing up in south Louisiana, this time of the year always brings back many memories of growing up in the small town of Ville Platte. Many times, like our secular world, when Christmas is over and the decorations are being put away, it's time to prepare for the Mardi Gras season.

When many think of Mardi Gras they may think of the revelry in New Orleans – the many parades that roll in the city, the many nights of balls, to the special custom throws known for each krewe. Likewise, here in our own diocese, the Krewe Parade will roll through Alexandria, offering throws of beads and doubloons to the crowds gathering street-side, many with BBQ pits or pots of something good stewing to feed all those who await the passing parade – all aspects of Mardi Gras I was unfamiliar with while growing up in small Ville Platte.

On Saturday, Feb. 3, in the small community of Brouillette, it was a type of celebration in this Mardi Gras season that was better known to me. A sold-out crowd attended the annual event begun in 2011 by Fr. Jose Pallipurath. Starting with the vigil Mass celebrated by Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira and assisted by Deacon Reginald Ducote, we then moved to the church hall



TASTE FROM THE COUNTRY, ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH, BROUILLETTE. Pictured: (top photo) An estimated crowd of over 250 attended the annual food sampling event; (left photo) Deacon Jason Lavergne, Deacon Reggie Ducote, Fr. Abraham Palakkattuchira and Don Brevelle; (right photo) Each station offered a sample of their specialty dish and there were over 25 different dishes to choose from!

for a “Taste from the Country.” If you are not versed in reading Cajun French, the title of the article above translates to, “A potato or some cracklins,” which is a line from the popular Cajun Mardi Gras song “La Danse de Mardi Gras” or “Mardi Gras Dance” recorded by the group The Balfa Brothers in 1973. It is a song steeped in tradition of South Louisiana culture.

The 25-plus dishes served at the event were a great deal more than a potato and some cracklins mentioned in the lyrics of the song! The variety offered included boudin, fried pork, pork and chicken stew, fried fish along with stuffed pork loin, potatoes, and mushrooms. And then all the sweets you wanted from blackberry cobbler, homemade pecan filled cake and of course traditional king cake.

Similar to the Cajun Mardi Gras traditions I grew up with, St. Genevieve Church in Brouillette offered a true “Taste from the Country” affair that everyone should experience or consider beginning in their own parish. Thank you Fr. Abraham and the families of the parish for hosting a great event for families and friends of the community.

If your church parish hosts an event you would like highlighted, please reach out to Dcn. Jason Lavergne at (318) 445-6424 ext. 207 or dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org

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- Assist in liturgical planning
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Easter Sunday
of the Resurrection
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Chancery Office,
Post Office Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306-0417.
--- Very Reverend M. Craig Scott, Chairman

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

2024 Rite of Election

The Rite of Election was held Sunday, Feb. 18 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria with Bishop Robert Marshall officiating. During the ceremony, Catechumens who are completing their formation and Candidates who are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church were recognized and welcomed by Bishop Marshall.



CDA COURT PADRE PIO #2141, COTTONPORT. Bishop Robert Marshall accepts a donation from the Catholic Daughters Court Padre Pio #2141, St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport. The funds are for seminarian education, in honor of Graham Descant, currently a seminarian at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans and also a former student of St. Mary's Assumption School.



FR. RAMJI SHOURY. Fr. Shoury, pastor of Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen, celebrated his 46th anniversary of ordination on Wednesday, Jan. 31.

Rev. George Krosfield dies

Fr. George Thomas Krosfield, a priest of the Diocese of Alexandria, was born on Nov. 3, 1945, in the province of Kerala in India. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Cochin in India on Dec. 19, 1970. He came to the United States with the permission of his Ordinary to pursue higher studies.

Fr. Krosfield came to the Diocese of Alexandria in 1990 and was incardinated as a priest of the diocese in 2015. He served until his retirement in 2018.

Fr. Krosfield served as pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Mansura, as administrator for St. Peter's Church in Bordelonville, as pastor



Fr. George Krosfield

of Christ the King Church in Simmesport, as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville, as pastor of Immaculate Heart

of Mary Church in Tioga and as pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Dupont.

Fr. Krosfield served the diocese as a member of the Priests Personnel Advisory Committee and as a member of the Presbyteral Council. He also assisted his brother priests as a liaison and support for those priests who came to minister in the diocese from other countries.

Fr. Krosfield return to Bangalore, India in 2018 and passed from this life on Jan. 29, 2024. A Mass of Christian Burial was offered at St. Sebastian's Church in Cochin on Feb. 1, 2024 with burial in the parish cemetery.

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ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHEES. Bishop Robert Marshall got a head start on Catholic Schools Week by celebrating an all school Mass at St. Mary's School in Natchitoches on Wednesday, Jan. 24. After Mass, Principal Mr. Stephen Wren took Father Irion St. Romain, Pastor, and Bishop Marshall to visit the students in their classrooms, the library and the cafeteria. It was great to see such prayerful students in such a great learning environment!

ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL. Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass for St. Frances Cabrini School on Friday, Jan. 26. Bishop then visited Cabrini School classrooms with Father Chad Partain, Pastor, and Sister Nina Vincent, OLS, Principal. It was the 100th Day of School, so some students were having fun with balloons.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK, ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL, BUNKIE. (above) Bishop Robert Marshall spent time with students at St. Anthony School, Bunkie.

OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL. (below) Bishop Marshall, Fr. Rusty Rabalais and Principal, Megan Beck, visit classrooms at Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria.



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION SCHOOL, COTTONPORT. Monday, Jan. 29, the second day of Celebrate Catholic Schools Week, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass at St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport. After Mass, Bishop Marshall had the pleasure of visiting the classrooms. Thank you to Father Charlie Ray, Pastor, Mr. Blaine Dauzat, Principal, the students, faculty, administration and staff for their warm welcome!

ST. JOSEPH ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.

Celebrate Catholic Schools Week officially began Sunday, Jan. 28. To mark the occasion, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass at Mater Dolorosa Church in Plaucheville - home to St. Joseph Elementary and High School. Many students came to Mass in their school uniforms and took part in the liturgy as altar servers, choir members, and gift bearers. Thank you to Father Martin Laird, Pastor, Mrs. Rhiannon Moreau, Principal, the faculty, students, and parishioners.



(below) HOLY SAVIOR MENARD HIGH SCHOOL.

Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Grandparent's Day Mass at Menard on Wednesday, Jan. 21. Fr. Luke LaFleur was concelebrating and Deacon Les Glankler assisted.



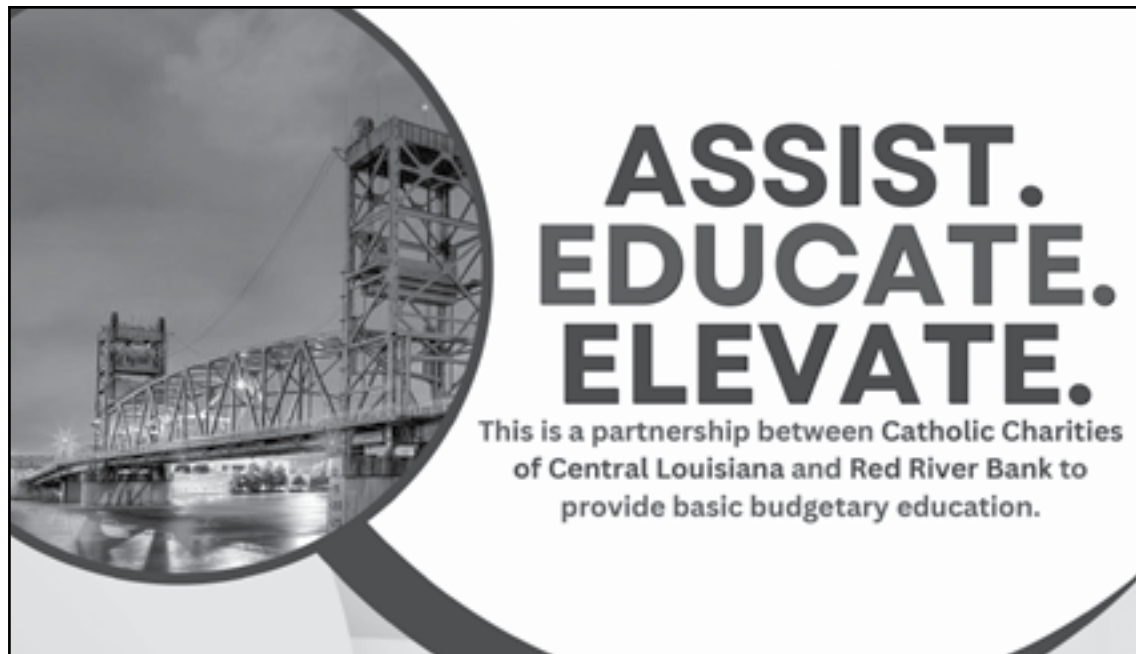
OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL'S "ALADDIN". This year, the students at Our Lady of Prompt Succor participated in the Aladdin, Jr. Play. They enthusiastically showcased their singing and dancing skills, captivating our hearts. We were thrilled to see each and every one of them shine on stage. We were also delighted to have our teachers and staff make special guest appearances. Congratulations to the cast and a big thank you to Lagniappe Theatre for their invaluable support in helping us create another amazing show!

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

Catholic Charities initiative to include budget education

The Corporal Works of Mercy - feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and imprisoned, and bury the dead. This is Catholic Charities. It is where we started in New Orleans in 1727 by French Ursuline Sisters who founded an orphanage, the first Catholic charitable institution in the United States. This is a primary initiative of Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana along with mental health and disaster relief services. And since our programs began in September of 2022, we have helped over 650 people with the basic needs of life including food, clothing, utilities, and housing assistance.

For 2024 we have shifted our approach to include budget education prior to assistance. The purpose of Assist. Educate. Elevate. is not only to provide monetary assistance with rent and utility bills for at-risk households, but also to educate them on how to budget on their constrained



income, how to prepare for financial emergencies, and how to problem-solve financial challenges. By teaching new skills to heads of households, who may have never been taught how to manage money, we hope to elevate individuals and families out of the

cycle of monthly budget shortages. Those requesting assistance will receive case management services from Catholic Charities, wrapping additional services around individuals to provide additional help and resources to ease the financial burdens

of the household. The whole case management process in conjunction with the monetary and budgetary assistance should improve client's problem-solving and personal budget management. We are pleased and proud to share that Red River Bank

is a partner with us to provide budgetary education. Together we are optimistic that our efforts will bear fruit in the lives of those we touch.

Thank you for supporting our charitable work in the Diocese of Alexandria. Without you we would not be able to extend these works of Mercy to the people of Central Louisiana. To find out more about Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana please visit www.cccenla.org

Upcoming Fundraiser:

2nd annual Hole Lotta Fun Golf Tournament in memory of Mr. Kenny Brocato on April 26, at Tamahka Trails, Paragon Casino Resort, Marksville. If you are interested in sponsorship and/or signing up a team, please contact Kevin Switzer at kgswitz@bellsouth.net or Heidi Wampler at hwampler@cccenla.org. The deadline to register is April 12.

Services Offered by Catholic Charities of Central LA

Counseling Services For professional therapy

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Christian Life Coaching For personal life changes

By appointment only. To schedule, visit: cccenla.org/mental-health-services#COACHING

Peace in the Midst of Crisis Divorce Support

By appointment only. To schedule, visit: cccenla.org/mental-health-services#SUPPORTGROUPS

Vaping/Tobacco Cessation

For teens and adults

Group or individual sessions

By appointment only

To schedule, visit: cccenla.org/mental-health-services#VAPING-TOBACCO

Disaster Relief Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program

www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/resource/cdpp/
If interested in supporting preparedness in your parish, please email info@cccenla.org

Emergency Basic Needs Assistance

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By appointment only

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SNAP Enrollment Assistance Over the phone enrollment

By appointment only. To schedule, visit: cccenla.org/basic-needs#SNAP

Budget Class

Facilitated by Ramsey Solutions Financial Coach

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

By appointment only

To schedule, visit: cccenla.org/basic-needs#BudgetingClasses

Volunteers

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*Create a
clean heart
in me,
O God.*

Psalm 51:3
Responsorial Psalm
for March 17
Fifth Sunday of Lent
(Year B)

Spiritual Communion Prayer

†

My Jesus, I believe that
You are present in the
Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all
things, and I desire to
receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at
this moment receive You
sacramentally, come at
least spiritually into
my heart.
I embrace You as if You
were already there and
unite myself wholly
to You.
Never permit me to be
separated from You.
Amen

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Let the (Loud?) Children Come to Me

by Nell O'Leary
www.wordonfire.org

What are fair expectations for children's behavior at Mass? Are there objective standards, or is it all subjective according to the parent's circumstances and judgment? What are the consequences, intended and unintended, of bystander comments and corrections to parents and young children who are struggling to be quiet and still at Mass?

In a report out in late 2023, the Catholic Church has seen massive declines in attendance: "In 2022, a near-majority of Hispanic Catholics, or 47 percent, reported attending religious services at least a few times each year, down from 65 percent in 2019. For white Catholics, the drop was even sharper, down to 45 percent in 2022 from 73 percent just three years earlier." The reasons vary, but a case can be made to encourage those who are still attending religious services to bring their children and to raise them in the Catholic faith, even if that means some occasional disruptions to the quiet and the stillness of Mass.

I experienced a zero-stillness Mass personally just the other day. My three-year-old son squirmed away from me and darted across the back of the church. I lumbered after him in the way only a middle-aged mom can so as to minimize the noise of her boots and maximize the chance she won't need Motrin afterwards. It was



a speed shuffle. I realized all too late that my instinct to pause and genuflect as I crossed the center aisle of the church left me at the distinct disadvantage as he had already passed through the doors and into the vestibule. He went left, so I went right, and met him in the very back of our beloved 150 year-old parish, alongside the doors that still let in a bit of the gusting winter air outside.

It was early Sunday morning, and I was solo-parenting with five kids at church.

At the moment of our reunion in that drafty old vestibule, I scooped him up. I peeked at the altar to make sure my two boys serving had their cassocks on straight. I wondered if my two daughters in the pew were still...well, in the pew where I had left them. Just then an older woman leaned forward from her vestibule perch near the collection for the pro-life movement to ask his age,

name, my name, and whether or not he was developmentally disabled. I shifted his squirming forty-pounds to my other hip. I answered the first few questions but trailed off as she continued. His running was irreverent. Other children in the back were not running. And it seemed to displease her enough to ensure that I knew it.

For the parents of small children, this scenario might ring a rueful bell. The awkward line between wanting to bring your young children to church and not wanting the exhaustion that accompanies it: physical (taking them out of the pew when they cannot contain themselves), emotional (wondering how many looks or comments you will get about said lack of containment), spiritual (desiring to be able to hear the readings and enter into interior silence while coping with the containment).

Here's where the controversy

about children's volume and movement at a sacred place really comes to a head: when and where and why.

The first question is subjective. When does a child's behavior warrant leaving the pew during the Mass? And the second question is locationally specific. Where is it appropriate to relocate with a child who is struggling? The third question is the most universal. Why do children belong at Mass, and why should they be included, not in a "children's liturgy" or relegated strictly to the cry room, but in witnessing the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

To hone in on these particulars merits examining the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the USCCB's statement on "Let the Children Come: The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Children," and Pope St. John Paul II's Letter to Children.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church § 2223, we are taught that it is parents who are the primary educators of their children, including discipline, instruction in prayer, even to "teach their children to subordinate the 'material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.'" Parents need to determine if their child is crying, shouting, hitting a sibling, or ripping their mother's earrings out at too high a volume and for too long of a duration to stick around the pew. The duration of disruption depends on the child's age, ability to get the hint about violence in the pew, and where they're seated at church. Front row versus back row, lasting ten seconds or two minutes, etc. It's up to the parents to use their best judgment without outsider glares,

comments, or criticisms.

In a directive on confession and children, the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops addresses beautifully Jesus' love for children, his desire to bless them, and his concern for their spiritual development. In St. Matthew's Gospel, when his disciples tried to stop people from bringing children to Jesus to be blessed, he said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Mt. 19:14). Blessings and spiritual development are available to babies, small children, and older children in the context of the Mass. If children are constantly taken out and kept out of Mass, how can they just show up for First Confession or First Holy Communion and be expected to have any context for what Jesus' death, resurrection, and mercy mean for them? Stepping out to calm a child down or correct them and then returning to the pew (rinse repeat) shows them (over time) how to enter into prayer at Mass. Relegating a nursing mom to the cry room or bathroom or an overstimulated child to the basement sends the message that they do not belong.

But most importantly, why should children be at Mass in the first place? Do they belong? Shouldn't they just show up when they're older or can be still and quiet? Pope Saint John Paul II reminded children that they are important when he wrote in his Letter to Children:

Jesus and his Mother often choose children and give them important tasks for the life of the Church and of humanity. I have named only a few who are known everywhere, but how many others there are who are less widely known! The Redeemer of humanity seems to share with them his concern for others: for parents, for other boys and girls. He eagerly awaits their prayers. What enormous power the prayer of children has! This becomes a model for grown-ups themselves: praying with simple and complete trust means praying as children pray.

Now if you're thinking, JP II, you haven't seen how wild the kids are at my parish! "Praying as they pray" would look like ripping

continued on next page...

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

Psalm 22:8
Responsorial Psalm
for March 24
Palm Sunday
of the Lord's Passion



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continued from previous page...

pages out of the hymnal and dumping Cheerios everywhere! (Were you watching my kid at Mass?) I'm not advocating for some zoo-circus free-for-all approach where anything goes. But if we discourage parents with small children and/or neuro-diverse children from coming because their children don't matter or disrupt us "too much," we're committing a three-fold robbery.

We rob the congregation of an opportunity to grow in patience and charity. We rob the parents and children of the opportunity to worship, however fractured that worship looks. And most keenly, we rob Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ of the joy of gazing upon the parents and children alike from the Blessed Sacrament. He longs to see us and be seen by us in the Eucharist.

If a situation is repeatedly troubling you, instead of offering unsolicited questions or

corrections to the family, talk to your pastor. If you feel unwelcome because of your child's special needs, talk to your pastor. If you're about to throw in the towel and stop bringing your child to Mass, talk to your pastor.

My request is simple: instead of fighting over whether or not children should be in the pew, in the basement, or even in the building, could we all pray for a deeper conversion of our own hearts to believe Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament? Could we pray that our own hearts desire him more? Could we pray that our pastors have the prudence necessary to help families and disturbed congregants alike?

I'm praying for you; please pray for me.

Nell O'Leary is an attorney-turned-writer, editor, speaker, community maker, wife, and mother. She and her husband live with their five kids in Saint Paul, Minnesota.



ST. RITA ANNIVERSARY COUPLES were honored on Sunday, Feb. 11, World Marriage Day, with a Papal Blessing from Pope Francis. Those couples in our parish to be honored are: **25 years:** John and Heather Ball, Jr.; Clint and Shannon Harris. **40 years:** Russell and Sabra Day; Jay and Janet Rachall; Terry and Nancy Young. **50 years:** Roger and Lynn Black; Darrell and Cindy Campbell; Danny and Terry Coombs; Charles and Janel Gaines; Edwin and Nancy Hadley; Jimbo and Sandy Thiels. **60 years:** Chris and Delphine Gremillion. **65 years:** Knight and Meta Doggett; Charles and Marion Rine; Gene and Barbara Leckie. **70 years:** Joseph and Shirley Brouillette. Please join us in congratulating these couples.

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

Psalm 22:8
Responsorial Psalm
for March 31
Easter Sunday
The Resurrection of the Lord

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."



SACRED HEART PATRIOT PEN WINNER. Sacred Heart School Student Leah [redacted] also won 1st place in The Patriot Pen competition from VFW post 3139. Pictured: Mr. James Rabalais, Mrs. Katherine Freeman, Leah [redacted] Sr. Sandra Norsworthy, principal, and Mr. Michael Veade.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. 8th grader Beau S [redacted] won First and Overall at Sacred Heart School's CSW Science Fair. His project was on an "Electrolyte Drink Test" where he was the subject of the experiment as an athlete. Congratulations!

SACRED HEART PATRIOTIC ESSAY WINNERS. Congratulations to 8th graders Rylee [redacted] and Isabella [redacted] who won 1st and 2nd place in the 4th Degree Patriotic Essay Contest sponsored by the Msgr. Van der Putten Assembly #2333 on Jan. 26. Both students won a cash prize and will move on to the Diocesan Level. Thank you KC 4th Degree member Mr. Jimmy Armand for presenting these awards to our SHS students.



2024 STUDENT OF THE YEAR. The Student of the Year awards were determined on Monday, Jan. 29 at the St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria.



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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.

save the dates:

steubenville south conference:
June 21-23, 2024

Registration opens January 16

more information available
at the newly updated

steubenvillesouth.com





OLPS SCHOOL 100 DAYS SMARTER CELEBRATION IN KINDERGARTEN! Our little Einsteins in Kindergarten had a fantastic day celebrating their 100th day of school! They have grown so much, both academically, spiritually, and personally. To make the day even more special, we became adorable little grandmas and grandpas! Our students had a blast dressing up, and embracing the wisdom and love of our beloved grandparents.

Holy Savior Menard Theater Productions invites you to join us at the Coughlin-Saunders Theater for **NEWSIES, The Musical:**

Friday, March 1, 7:00 p.m.
 Saturday, March 2, 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday, March 3, 2:30 p.m.

Tickets are available at www.slocaltix.com

WWW.SLOCALTIX.COM



ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL, BUNKIE. Every year, a thank you card is mailed to all of the major donors for the Annual Diocesan Appeal. The card is created from student artwork submitted and chosen by Bishop Marshall. This year's card was created by St. Anthony School student, Brees [REDACTED].

ADVANCE
 Program for Young Scholars
 Northwestern State University
 July 7-27, 2024

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

Program dates: July 7-27, 2024
Financial Aid application deadline: April 1, 2024
Application deadline: May 1, 2024

NORTHWESTERN STATE



MARDI GRAS AT SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. On Jan. 26, Sacred Heart School held its annual Father/Daughter - Mother/Son Mardi Gras Dance. Reece [REDACTED] and Ella [REDACTED] were chosen by luck of the draw to be King and Queen at the dance. On Feb. 8, SHS held its annual Mardi Gras Parade. Reece and Ella were the Grand Marshals of the school parade.

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

St. Rita Lenten Pilgrimage - March 2

Join us Saturday, March 2 as we visit seven churches for "Stations of the Seven Churches" Pilgrimage. Locations we will visit: St. John the Baptist, Deville; St. Gerard Church, Jonesville; St. Patrick Church, Ferriday; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Natchez, MS; Holy Family Church, Natchez, MS; St. Mary's Basilica, Natchez, MS, concluding with Mass at 4:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Vidalia. The bus will leave St. Rita promptly at 7:00 a.m. and we should be back to Alexandria by 7:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided at St. Patrick Church in Ferriday. Cost is \$20 per person. To make your reservation, call (318) 445-7141 ext. 214.

Lenten Pilgrimage to New Orleans - March 5

St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie is sponsoring a Lenten Pilgrimage to New Orleans on Tuesday, March 5, 2024. Pilgrimage sites include the National Shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succor (with Mass) and the National Shrine of Father Francis Xavier Seelos. \$79.00 per pilgrim. Please call (318) 346-7274 to reserve your seat.

Shamrockin' Fest to benefit Holy Savior Menard technology upgrades - March 9

Grown ups! Join us at 6:00 p.m., March 9 at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria for Shamrockin' Fest! As technology constantly evolves, we strive to provide Holy Savior Menard students with the most up-to-date resources. Technology is a necessity in today's world. We want to be able to continue to utilize advanced technology for our students, our classrooms and to ensure our school and students are kept safe. Proceeds from Shamrockin' Fest will benefit technology upgrades at HSM. Please consider contributing to our Shamrockin' Fest by purchasing a table, an individual ticket, contributing to a mixology team and/or making a monetary donation. Visit www.givebutter.com/hsmfest. This event is for adults only.

Disalced Carmelite meeting - March 9

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

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

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.

Pilgrimage to view St. Jude relic - March 14

The arm of St. Jude the Apostle, Patron Saint of Hopeless causes, will be coming to Louisiana in March. Fr. Taylor Reynolds will lead a pilgrimage to go and venerate the relic on Wednesday, March 14 in Lafayette at Our Lady of Fatima Church. If you are interested in attending, please email Fr. Taylor at: stjosephinstjoe@gmail.com. To see the full schedule go to <https://apostleoftheimpossible.com/tour-schedule/>

Golf Tournament benefits Manna House - March 19-23

The annual APT All Pro Golf Tour and the Walker GMC ProAM Golf Tournament, hosted at Links on the Bayou Golf Course in Alexandria, will once again benefit Manna House. Professional golfers from all over the world will travel to Alexandria for the Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper Open on March 20-23 which will be played at Links on the Bayou Golf Course.

If you are not a golfer and would like to make a donation or purchase a sponsorship visit our website: givetomannahouse.com or send a check to Manna House P.O. Box 6011 Alexandria, LA. 71307.

For more information contact Theresa Slater, tournament chairperson at (318) 664-3603 or Jessica Viator at (318) 445-9053.

Seminary Come and See Weekend - March 22-24

St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College is scheduled to have its Spring "Come and See" weekend from March 22-24. This is a great opportunity for any male 16 years old or older to come and see the seminary campus and what seminary life is like. For more information, please contact the Director of Vocations, Fr. Luke LaFleur at frllafleur@diocesealex.org.

Diocesan Quiz Bowl - March 23

The Diocesan Quiz Bowl competition for Jr. High students will be held at St. Frances Cabrini School's Activities Building on Saturday, March 23 beginning at 10:00 a.m. For information and study guides contact Emily Ann at 318-448-3333.

Lector Formation Workshop - April 9

The Diocese of Alexandria is offering Lector workshops for those individuals who are interested in serving or who currently may serve as a Lector in their parish. To serve in this role, one must be of good standing with their Catholic faith and need the approval of their pastor. If you have any questions, please email or call Deacon Jason Lavergne at dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org or 318-445-6424, ext. 207. All training workshops will present the same material and will last no longer than two and a half hours. Please sign up at the Diocese website at www.diocesealex.org.

The next times and locations are:

Tuesday, April 9 at 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Catholic Center
4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria.

4th Annual Adam Jeansonne Golf Tournament - April 12

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church Youth Group is having their 4th annual Adam Jeansonne Memorial Golf Tournament at Links on the Bayou on Friday, April 12th, 2024. Proceeds help fund summer camps. Tournament format is four person scramble. Lunch and beverages included, great prizes, team entry fee is \$400 or \$125 a person. To register a team of four go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/4th-annual-adam-jeansonne-memorial-golf-tournament-tickets-793709696067?ref=eios> or church office. For more information email or call Felicia Schneider at : jrhigh@olpschurch.org or call (318) 445-9748, ext. 228.

Women's Silent Retreat - April 26-28

SAVE THE DATE! "Seeking Grace" Women's Silent Ignition Retreat will be held at Maryhill Renewal Center from April 26-28. Author, speaker, spiritual director and retreat facilitator, Becky Eldridge, will guide this women's preached retreat. Deadline to register is April 19. Cost is \$225 per person. \$100 deposit in the form of a check is required. To register, visit www.diocesealex.org.

Church Today News Deadlines

March 25
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Mar. 14

April 22
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Apr. 11



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March 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
FEBRUARY 26 PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL	27	28 Sharing Your Faith Series 6:30 p.m. OLPS, Alexandria	29 VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. Sacred Heart School, Moreauville High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria	MARCH 1	2 Stations of the Seven Churches Pilgrimage 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Leaving from St. Rita Church, Alexandria	3 Third Sunday of Lent
				NEWSIES, The Musical -- Coughlin-Saunders Performing Arts Center		
		PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN	PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR	PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL	PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA	PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA
4	5 Lenten Pilgrimage to New Orleans Sponsored by St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie	6 Sharing Your Faith Series 6:30 p.m. OLPS, Alexandria	7 High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria	8	9 Discalced Carmelite Meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center, Pineville Shamrockin' Fest to benefit Menard 6:00 p.m. Randolph Riverfront Center, Alexandria	10 Fourth Sunday of Lent
"Reflections" Silent Lenten Retreat - Maryhill Renewal Center						
PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL	PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE	PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN	PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL	PRAY FOR DCN. C. PELTO	PRAY FOR DCN. K. PRIMEAUX
11	12	13 Sharing Your Faith Series 6:30 p.m. OLPS, Alexandria	14 High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria Pilgrimage to Lafayette for St. Jude Relic	15	16	17 Fifth Sunday of Lent
PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY	PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS	PRAY FOR DCN. T. ROBICHAUX	PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ	PRAY FOR DCN. K. SAYES	PRAY FOR DCN. G. SCHUPBACH
18	19	20 Sharing Your Faith Series 6:30 p.m. OLPS, Alexandria	21 High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria	22	23 Diocesan Quiz Bowl 10:00 a.m. St. Frances Cabrini School Activities Bldg., Alexandria	24
"Come & See" Weekend at St. Joseph Seminary, Covington						
Annual APT All Pro Golf Tour and Walker GMC ProAM Golf Tournament benefitting Manna House						
PRAY FOR FR. M.C. SCOTT	SOLEMNITY of ST. JOSEPH PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER	PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY	PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA	PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR	PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN	PALM SUNDAY PRAY FOR DCN. P. SUNDERHAUS
25	26 Chrism Mass 11:00 a.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria	27 Sharing Your Faith Series 6:30 p.m. OLPS, Alexandria	28 High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria	29	30	31
PRAY FOR DCN. C. THIBODEAUX	PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS	PRAY FOR FR. A. TRAVIS	HOLY THURSDAY PRAY FOR DCN. W. TRAVIS	GOOD FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE	HOLY SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD	EASTER PRAY FOR FR. G. VOLTZ



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