CHURCH TODAY

Volume LV. No. 5

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

May 27, 2024



National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

The National Eucharistic Revival is approaching the close of its second year. See page 3 for information on a local pilgrimage, and reserve your spot today!

Clergy assignments

The Most Rev. Bishop Robert Marshall has announced several clergy assignments, effective July 1, 2024. See page 5 for details.

New faces at the St. Joseph Catholic Center

Kecia Coco and Hannah Morgan join the Chancery staff! See page 8 for more information, and please give our new employees a warm welcome next time you are visiting the Chancery building!

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CHURCH TODAY



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call 318-445-6424, ext 255 or

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Phay

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA. Sunday, May 5, Fr. Taylor Reynolds looks on as the Blessed Mother is crowned by one of the children of the parish.





ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH, ECHO. May Crowning was held May 5.



Crowning on May 5. The children of St Joseph Church showered Our Loving Mother Mary with Roses.



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL CELEBRATED MAY CROWNING ON MAY 3. Marley (Senior) Crowned Mary. She was escorted by Brody and Breckon were the crown and cape bearer. All of the Class of 2024 participated in the beautiful Mass.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. May Crowning on May 1. Fr. Brian Seiler with: 8th Grade girls



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH. BUNKIE. Pictured: SAS student, Brees with Monsignor cott Chemino, crowning Mary.

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



LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR, ALEXANDRIA. On May 2, Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Alexandria held its annual May Crowning Mass. We look forward to this Mass every year to commemorate Our Lady! Students from Preschool to 6th Grade joyfully presented flowers before Mass. The 6th-grade students selected Maci S. and Paxton H. to be the Queen and King of the May Crowning Court.

Cardinal Tagle to be Pope's special envoy to National Eucharistic Congress

WASHINGTON - As the Catholic Church in the United States prepares to celebrate its first National Eucharistic Congress in over half a century, Pope Francis will send His Eminence Luis Cardinal Tagle as his special envoy. His Eminence currently serves as Pro-Prefect of the Section the First Evangelization and New Particular Churches of the Holy See's Dicastery for Evangelization. Cardinal Tagle will celebrate the closing Mass of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress being held July 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Commenting on the announcement, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called the appointment by Pope Francis "a gift to the Eucharistic Congress." Archbishop Broglio said Cardinal Tagle's "deep passion for apostolic mission rooted in the Eucharist is sure to have an inspirational impact for everyone attending



CARDINAL LUIS ANTONIO TAGLE, PREFECT OF THE CONGREGATION FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES, seen in Maryknoll, N.Y., June 3, 2022, will be Pope Francis' special envoy to the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis July 17-21, it was announced May 18. (OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

the Congress," adding that the Cardinal knows the United States well, having earned a doctorate in theology at The Catholic University of America in 1991.

The congress is the culmination of the three-year National Eucharistic Revival launched in 2022 by the U.S.

bishops to renew and strengthen Catholics' understanding of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. It will be held at Lucas Oil Stadium and the adjacent Indiana Convention Center in downtown Indianapolis and is expected to draw about 50,000 Catholics from around the U.S.

The event is the first such national congress in the U.S. in 83 years, and in 48 years since the 1976 International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia.

Leading up to the congress is the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, launching Pentecost weekend, May 18-19. The pilgrimage consists of four cross-country routes coming from four directions: the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Route (East), starting in New Haven, Connecticut; the St. Junipero Serra Route (West), starting in San Francisco; the St. Juan Diego Route (South), starting in Brownsville, Texas; and the Marian Route (North), starting in Northern Minnesota.

Among those walking the routes will be perpetual pilgrims, seminarians and priest chaplains, accompanied by the Eucharist, often exposed in a monstrance. Each route has stops along the way for Mass, prayer and Eucharistic adoration at parishes, shrines, charities and other

Catholic institutions. The routes will converge in Indianapolis for the July 17 start of the congress.

Looking to bring the Catholic Church together for a national celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, the bishops of the United States approved the National Eucharistic Congress as a milestone moment the three-year National Eucharistic Revival with the vision that it would flow into the final year of the Revival, the Year of Missionary Sending. "The Congress will give public witness to the Church's core identity rooted in the Eucharist, and we pray that it will inspire a renewed sense of mission as we live out the gifts of unity and charity. May it be the catalyst for a continued deepening of our faith in the Real Presence," said Archbishop Broglio.

For more information on the Eucharistic Revival, Pilgrimage, and Congress, please visit https://www.eucharisticrevival.org.

A grassroots response to God's invitation, local pilgrimage set

The National Eucharistic Revival is approaching the close of its second year. But what exactly is a revival? Discerned and called for by the bishops of the United States, this movement is designed to rekindle a living faith in the hearts of Catholics across America and unleash a new missionary chapter at this pivotal moment in Church history.

Throughout the revival, local parishes have been gathering in response to God's invitation for renewal. Centered within this three-year period, is a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. During this historic journey, four Eucharistic Pilgrimages will be occurring throughout the United States. In these four routes (Marian, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Juan Diego, and St. Junipero Serra), pilgrims will be accompanying Jesus from city to city, lighting hearts on fire along their way. These four routes will join together at the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, IN from July 17-21. This is the first National Eucharistic Congress in 83 years, and it is anticipated that up to 80,000 pilgrims will be present in Indiana for the Congress. Will you be one of them?



Understandably, everyone can make it to Indiana, and thankfully there are more opportunities for the church to participate in this movement. The St. Juan Diego route that started on May 17 in Brownsville, Texas, will be passing through our state. This route will wind around the Gulf of Mexico, pass through Louisiana, and later end on July 16 in Indianapolis. While in Louisiana, the pilgrimage will make stops in the Dioceses of Lake Charles, Lafavette, Houma-Thibodaux, Baton Rouge, and finally the Archdiocese of New Orleans on June 7-8.

Locally, the Diocese of Alexandria has organized a pilgrimage to New Orleans to participate in the June 7 events.

The trip will include a chartered bus, lodging, and participation in the events of Friday night which include a Eucharistic procession from Notre Dame Seminary to St. Rita's Church located on Lowerline Street, followed by a time of reflection, Eucharistic Adoration, and music by the Vigil Project.

The following day the group will attend mass celebrated by Bishop Robert Marshall at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succor on State Street, as well as take a guided tour of the Shrine. Spaces are limited and filling up quickly, information regarding remaining availability can be found at www.diocesealex.

org. Other Louisiana events and stops for the St. Juan Diego route are as follows:

June 4, Lake Charles June 5, Lafayette June 6, Houma-Thibodeaux June 7, Baton Rogue More details on each location can be found at https://www. eucharisticpilgrimage.org/st-juandiego-route

Eucharistic Miracles of the World Exhibit

Showcasing 158 documented Eucharistic miracles from 22 countries. Visitors can enjoy this special event, free of charge, for two days only.

Friday, June 21, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Saturday, June 22, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Hotel Bentley Ballroom 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA 71301

Hosted by the Steubenville South Conference Office and the Diocese of Alexandria

For more information concerning the exhibit, please visit miracolieucaristici.org.

Parishes to receive grant for Catholic Extension family faith initiative

Only twenty church parishes in the entire United States were awarded grants in the "Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative" of the Catholic Extension Society - and three of them are in the Diocese of Alexandria!

The project began on May 1 at Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth. Starting with a meal for the parish families, the evening transitioned into a listening session on the challenges and blessings of passing on the faith to children. Jenny Black Bear, a Catholic Extension collaborator and the Director of Religious Education at St. Francis Mission on the Rosebud Reservation of South Dakota, was the Facilitator of the session.

At the parish listening sessions, parents where able to express their challenges and offer ideas that will help them hand down the Catholic Faith to the next generation.

Parish leaders participated in the listening sessions and are tasked with presenting a plan to Catholic Extension that will

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS for June 2024

For migrants
fleeing their homes:
We pray that migrants fleeing
from war or hunger, forced
to undertake journeys full
of danger and violence,
find welcome and new
opportunities in the countries
that receive them.

Upcoming VIRTUS Sessions

Wed., June 19, 6:00 p.m. St. Alphonsus Church (red building), HESSMER

Tuesday, June 25, 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.

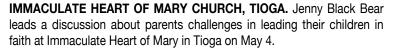
address their concerns. Catholic Extension will review their plans and offer up to \$15,000 per site to fund the programs and/or supplies needed to execute their program ideas.

Similar sessions were held at Immaculate Heart of Mary parish in Tioga and at St. Joseph parish in St. Joseph, LA. Thank you to Catholic Extension, Deacon Jason Lavergne, Father Paul LaPalme, and the people of MMJ for their active participation.

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS, WOODWORTH. A large turnout of parishioners attend the first listening session held on May 1.









ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA. Father Taylor Reynolds participates in the listening session held at his church on May 5.

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

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MEMBER: Louisiana State Bar Association, Lafayette Bar Association, Avoyelles Parish Bar Association, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' 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".

(318)717-1995

Clergy Assignments

The Most Reverend Robert W. Marshall, Jr., Bishop of Alexandria, has made the following clergy appointments, to be effective on July 1, 2024:



Monsignor Scott Chemino Pastor (re-appointed) St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie



Father Wade DeCoste
Pastor
St. Joseph Church,
Marksville



Father Joseph Desimone
Pastor of Holy Ghost
Church, Marksville and
St. Richard Chapel,
Hickory Hill



Msgr. James Ferguson Rector (re-appointed) St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria



Father Robert Johnson
Parochial Vicar
St. Joseph Church,
Marksville



Father Kenneth Michiels
Pastor
St. Alphonsus Church,
Hessmer



Father Dan O'Connor Pastor Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Vidalia



Father Adam Travis
Pastor
St. Michael the Archangel,
Leesville



Father Joseph Xavier
Parochial Vicar
St. Francis Cabrini Church,
Alexandria



Father Abraham Varghese
Pastor
Immaculate Conception
Church, Dupont



Father Derek Ducote Leave of Absence



Father Donnie Kuzma Parochial Vicar TBA

LECTOR FORMATION WORKSHOPS

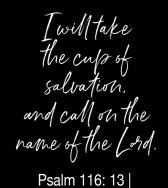
8:00 a.m. June 15: St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport

To sign up, visit www. diocesealex.org



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Responsorial Psalm for June 2 Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

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Gracious and loving God,
we thank you for the gift of our priests.

Through them, we experience
your presence in the sacraments.

Help our priests to be strong in their vocation.
Set their souls on fire with love for your people.
Grant them the wisdom, understanding,
and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of
Jesus. Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom.
Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.
Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.
Help them to become instruments of your divine
grace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives
and reigns as our Eternal Priest. Amen.

Il prayer for priests



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA, celebrated First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 20 with 47 new communicants. We are so proud of these beautiful souls who now get to encounter Jesus in the blessed sacrament.



MAY 27, 2024

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, TIOGA. Sacrament of First Holy Communion was celebrated on Sunday, April 7.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH IN ST. JOSEPH, LA. First Communion was on April 21. Fr. Taylor Reynolds and the three communicants.



was May 12, left to right Father Dutch and Hazel



NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR, TALLULAH had two First Communions this year, one in English on Sunday, MARY, CAMPTI. First Holy Communion May 5 and one in Spanish on Wednesday, May 8. Left photo: Candler ; pastor, Fr. Ryan Humphries, . Right photo: Max , Franco and lan along with teachers Louise and Dcn Chad Thibodeaux. Magoun and Leslye Ellerbee and Fr. Humphries.



FIRST COMMUNION AT ST. JULIANA in Alexandria, held on April 28. Fr. Luke LaFleur and the two communicants.



ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, MARKSVILLE, FIRST HOLY COMMUNION was held on Saturday, April 14. Pictured with the communicants (L to R) are catechist Evelyn Cass, Deacon Ken Primeaux, Fr. Wade DeCoste and Sondra Andes, DRE.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AT ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL, MAY 5. Msgr. James Ferguson, Jyllian Maria , Faith and Rylee



ST. FRANCIS DESALES CHURCH, ECHO. First Holy Communion April 21. Pictured with them is Fr. Dwight DeJesus and



STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE CHURCH, KOLIN. First Holy Communion was held on April 7. Pictured with them are Dcn. Greg LeBlanc, Fr. Bino Jacob.



ST. JAMES MEMORIAL, ALEXANDRIA. Fr. Craig Scott with Layla who made her First Holy Communion Saturday, April 27.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI CHURCH had their First Communion on Sunday, April 14. Pictured with the communicants are Sister Elizabeth Holmes, Father Chad Partain and Leigh Schneider.





ST. JOSEPH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE. Congratulations to all of our St. Joseph students who made their First Holy Communion on May 5 at Mater Dolorosa Church. May God bless and keep them. Pictured with them is Fr. Martin Laird, pastor.



New faces at the St. Joseph Catholic Center

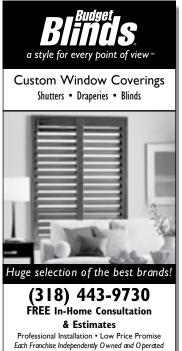
Pamela Delrie retires as Safe **Environment Coordinator**

Mrs. Pamela Delrie will retire at the end of this month. Pam has done a fantastic job over the years at keeping us all in compliance with all of the requirements of the Safe Environment program and ensuring everyone's proper Virtus training. Pam will retire as a 45 year employee of the Diocese of Alexandria and she will be missed.

Her replacement in the Safe Environment Office is Mrs. Kecia Coco.

Kecia has been a teacher at Blue Cliff College for years as well as a CASA advocate for children in Rapides and Avoyelles Parishes. She is the wife of Scott Coco, long-time trooper and detective with the Louisiana State Police.





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Kecia Coco

Office of Development

Mrs. Hannah Morgan has been hired as the executive assistant for the Office of Development/ Diaconate Program/Worship and Liturgy (and everything else Dcn. Richard Mitchell does) as well as assisting Dcn. Jason Lavergne in the Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation. Her extension is 205. Her email is hmorgan@diocesealex.org.

Hannah received her MBA from LSUS and is also a mother of six.

Please give our employees a warm welcome next time you are visiting the Chancery building!



Hannah Morgan

St. Mary's **Catholic School Natchitoches** Positions open for the 2024-2025 school year:

Varsity Girls Basketball Coach Varsity Football Coach High School Math Teacher High School Science Teacher Librarian

For information about any of these positions, please contact: (318) 352-8394 Principal, Stephen Wren: swren@smstigers.org www.smstigers.org



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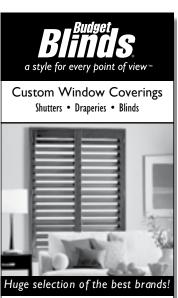
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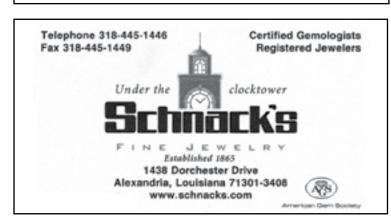
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by Marcus Descant

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He taught us to love and not to hate, Showing us how to forgive before it is too late.

We have all sinned and hurt one another, Knowing the one we hurt is our brother.

> Sometimes our heart will shed a tear, But, we always know God is near.

We must now forgive and make a new start, Because God's love and mercy comes from the heart.

lizdescant@gmail.com Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant



(above) WOMEN'S SILENT IGNATION RETREAT. Becky Eldredge, Ignation Spiritual Director, author and retreat facilitator, led women through St. Ignatious spiritual exercises during a women's silent retreat held at Maryhill April 26-28. Nineteen women enjoyed talks, times of reflection, mass and adoration. It truly was a spirit led weekend.

Safe Environment session facilitator training being offered.

The Safe Environment Office is in need of VIRTUS Awareness training facilitator volunteers.

A day of training will be held on Saturday, June 29, 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria.

The training day is free of charge. We will provide all materials/binders, breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.

Ideally, we ask a volunteer

faciliator to commit to a 2-3 year time period to facilitate VIRTUS Training sessions 2-3 times per year. These sessions last about 3-hours and are usually held on a weekday evening at church parishes and schools throughout the diocese. Mileage is reimbursed.

If you are interested, please attend this training session for facilitators. For more information, contact Kecia Coco at (318) 445-6424, ext. 213.

"Our destination must be what infinite, not what is finite. Infinity is our homeland. We have been expected in Heaven since time immemorial."

blessed carlos acutis

Priest Ordination



Rev. Donnie Kuzma

Rev. Larry Donald Kuzma, Jr. was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, May 25. Photos from the ordination will appear in the June issue of the Church Today, as this issue went to press before the ordination.



Upcoming Retreats: June 27 - 30, 2024 Teen ACTS Retreat for more information OLPS at (318) 445-3693

All retreats are held at Maryhill Renewal Center.

Extraordinary Minister Workshops

July 27, 2024 St. Patrick Church, Ferriday

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

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Seminarian Burses

April 2024 Donations

Correction from April 22, 2024, Church Today, Page 9, March 2024 Donations:

Dr. and Mrs. Phillip Carney, Jr.
In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. John O'Connor \$100.00
Monsignor Henry A. Thompson 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:

Chancery Office, Post Office Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306-0417.

--- Very Reverend M. Craig Scott, Chairman

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

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SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY?





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Psalm 92: 2
Responsorial Psalm
for June 16
Eleventh Sunday
in Ordinary Time

CHURCH TODAY Confirmation



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, DEVILLE. On Thursday, April 18, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at St. John the Baptist Church in Deville. Four young men were confirmed. Thank you to Father Albi Mulloth, the catechists, sponsors, parents, and parishioners for supporting these Confirmandi.



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH, BUNKIE. Saturday, April 20, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Fourth Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday) and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Bunkie. Nine young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Monsignor Scott Chemino, Deacon Richard Mitchell, the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners for their prayers and support of these Confirmandi.



ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH AND OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR CHURCH, MANSURA. Sunday, April 21, Bishop Marshall celebrated Mass and confirmed 9 young parishioners of Our Lady of Prompt Succor parish and St. Paul the Apostle parish. Thank you to Father Blake Deshautelle, pastor of both parishes, the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners of both churches for their prayers and support of these Confirmandi.



ST. RITA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA. Monday, April 22, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at at St. Rita Church in Alexandria. Thirty-one young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Fathers Raj Dharmaraj, MSFS, and Joshua Burch of St. Rita, Father Anthony Bonela, MSFS, the Fransalian Provincial, Father Luke LaFleur, Chaplain of Holy Savior Menard, Deacons Kenny Sayes and Richard Mitchell, and all who participated in the liturgy. Many thanks to the catechists, sponsors and parents for supporting these Confirmandi.



MINOR BASILICA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, NATCHITOCHES. On Thursday, May 2, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Confirmation Mass at the MBIC. Eleven young disciples from the Basilica parish and one from St. Augustine parish in Isle Brevelle were sealed in the Holy Spirit. Thank you to Father Irion St. Romain, Father William Gearheard, Deacon Chad Thibodaux, Ms. Kathleen Hicks, and the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners for their prayers and support for the Confirmandi.



HOLY CROSS CHURCH, NATCHITOCHES. On Friday, May 3, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at Holy Cross Church in Natchitoches. Seven young disciples were confirmed - five are students at Louisiana School of Math, Science and the Arts and two are students at Northwestern State University. Thank you to Father Jose Palliparuth, Deacon Chad Thibodaux, the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners for their support of the Confirmandi.



ST. ANTHONY CHURCH, NATCHITOCHES. On Saturday, May 4, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated the Sixth Sunday of Easter and the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Natchitoches. Four young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father John O'Brien, Deacon Steven Newbury, the catechists, sponsors, parents, and parishioners for their support of these Confirmandi.



OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR, ALEXANDRIA. Monday, May 6, Bishop Robert Marshall confirmed Thirty-three young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Fathers Rusty Rabalais and Luke LaFleur, Deacons Les Glankler and Richard Mitchell, the small group leaders/catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners for their prayers and support for the Confirmandi.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI, ALEXANDRIA. Wednesday, May 8, Bishop Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Alexandria. Ten parishioners were confirmed - both high school students and adults. Thank you to Father Chad Partain, Deacons Larry Feldcamp and Richard Mitchell and the catechists, sponsors, families and parishioners for their prayers and support for these Confirmandi.



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION CHURCH, COTTONPORT. Thursday, May 9, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at St. Mary's Assumption Church in Cottonport. Ten young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father Charlie Ray, Deacons Doug Moreau and Richard Mitchell, the catechists, sponsors, parents and parishioners for their welcome and their support of these Confirmandi.



STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE CHURCH, KOLIN. On Wednesday, May 22, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated a Confirmation Mass at Sts. Francis and Anne Church in Kolin. Eleven young disciples were confirmed. Thank you to Father Bino Pallipparambil, Deacon Greg LeBlanc, Deacon Richard Mitchell (who served as MC and took this photo, the parents, sponsors, catechists and parishioners for their support of these Confirmandi.

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

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Catholics observe legislative session through lens of social justice at Faithful Citizenship Day

by Debbie Shelley Diocese of Baton Rouge

Catholics were powerfully present at the Louisiana State Capitol in terms of numbers of attendees and their commitment in standing up for social justice issues during this year's Faithful Citizenship Day, sponsored by the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops (LCCB), on April 17.

year's This Faithful Citizenship Day attendance was more than double from last year, from 38 at last year's event to 92 this year, according to LCCB.

The day, themed, "Send a Clear, Consistent, Life Ethic Message," began at St. Joseph Cathedral Parish Hall.

Tom Costanza, executive director LCCB, began his welcome by noting the youthful presence from Rummel High School in New Orleans and Notre Dame High School in Crowley.

"It's great to see so many young faces," said Costanza.

He gave an overview of



USCCB FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP DAY. Louisiana legislators convene a session and are joined by members of the LCCB.

LCCB's priorities at this year's Louisiana regular legislative session: life and dignity of the human person - protecting life from conception to natural death; call to family – parental choice in education and assisting pregnant for the poor and vulnerable -

improving wages for struggling families and addressing poverty; and solidarity in restorative justice – improving mental health, victims' services, re-entry and juvenile justice programs.

Then, fortified with prayer and parenting moms; options and information, the attendees walked down the street to the capitol to sit in on committee hearings addressing topics of interest for them.

The participants described the day as a well-rounded experience in approaching the political realm through a faithbased perspective.

Jorje Lavastida, coordinator of the Office of Life, Peace, and Justice of the Diocese of Baton Rouge said, "It was a great day shared with many people and groups who want to be educated. I was glad to hear that this event keeps growing and that this year we had the largest number of attendees. It is important that we Catholics are very well educated on civic matters and on topics that should inform our vote. These Faithful Citizenship Days do that."

Deacon Shelley Joseph, deacon assistant at St. Isidore the Farmer Church in Baker, learned about the legislative process and how it impacts the people he

He noted that during a health and welfare committee hearing, one senator brought in several expert witnesses and discussed issues related to a bill.

"I have done hospital and nursing home visits, so it was so good to get an overview of that process, how the legislature interacted with it," said Deacon Joseph.

Sister Maura O'Donovan, a Sister of the Holy Faith of New Orleans and leader of the grassroots Burning Bush, a ministry dedicated to ending violence, followed legislation that involved supporting life and human dignity.

"I was born during World War II. As a child I didn't understand everything that was happening," Sister Maura, who is an Irish immigrant. "But when I began to read and be interested in the world around me, what had gone in the world just at my doorstep (such as the Holocaust), I was horrified that such things could happen."

She added, "A lot of work can

continued on next page

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

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Continued from previous page

be done in our churches, our faith communities, and I'm not just talking about Catholic churches, to help people realize they have a voice and the importance of exercising it."

Likewise, Douglas Kariker, case management worker for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese New Orleans found the committee hearings to be exciting and heartwarming.

"While in one of the sessions there was a vote in favor of a bill that LCCB was supporting," said Kariker. "The person sitting at the desk advocating for the passage of this bill cried when the vote was taken and there



FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP DAY. Catholic school students join the adult attendees for the session.

was unanimous approval. There were a lot of teary eyes in the committee room."

After attending the morning

session, the group returned to St. Joseph Cathedral for Mass, celebrated by Bishop Michael G. Duca, and listened to and visited with Catholic legislators during lunch. Attendees returned to the capitol and in a proud moment were recognized by the House of Representatives.

Many attendees said such moments showed that

when Catholics come together legislators notice.

Dr. Susan Weishar, a Fellow at the Jesuit Social Research Institute/Loyola University New Orleans, said, "The turnout of almost 100 Catholics from across the state committed to learning more about how they can advocate for just government policies at this year's Faithful Citizenship was amazing. I know that for the past three years (Costanza) has been working hard to engage people in the pews in public policy advocacy with frequent Action Alert emails and weekly video updates. He has been accessible to other organizations working for the common good, and it has really paid off.

"I came away from the day with a renewed appreciation of how the social teachings of the Catholic Church can provide a beautiful, coherent, and practical 'roadmap' for building a more just and humane society."

Bridget Soileau, President of Baton Rouge Right to Life, agreed.

"It was interesting to learn how we can actually affect the legislative process, even if in a small way. However, if enough faithful Catholics participate and stand up for our moral values, we can make a big difference. I thoroughly enjoyed the day."

The current legislative session is scheduled to end Monday, June 3. To track action taken on bills and other information, visit legis.la.gov/legis.



USCCB FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP DAY 2024 on April 17 at the Louisiana State Capitol. Participants attended House Committee Meetings, we toured the Capitol, celebrated Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral with Bishop Duca and enjoyed lunch with Catholic Legislators. We met up with Robbie Laborde (OLPS) to round out our Alexandria crew! Pictured left to right: Robbie Laborde, Jennifer Gilchrist and Madison Smith.

Psalm 107: 1

Responsorial Psalm

for June 23 Twelfth Sunday

in Ordinary Time

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HOLE LOTTA FUN GOLF TOURNAMENT. Golfers get ready to tee-off for the annual Hole Lotta Fun Golf Tournament held at Tamahka Trails golf course in Marksville on April 26. This event benefits Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana and their many ministries. Thank you to all of the sponsors, the volunteers, and the golfers who are supporting CCCenLa!

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8 a.m. Sunday Mass

7 a.m. Sunday Mass

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ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, MONCLA. On April 16, the Rosary Group from St. John the Baptist Church in Moncla, LA visited the beautiful Prayer Garden at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Fifth Ward, LA. The Rosary was recited and prayer intentions were spoken. Our Lady provided us with beautiful weather, and as the rosary was recited the birds provided the music. A special thanks to Mrs. Elaine Bordelon and Faye Borrell for inviting us.

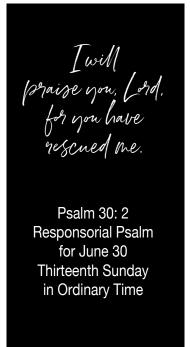


MARY MOTHER OF JESUS. Lenten Fish Fries at Mary Mother of Jesus in connection with the Season of Service Program.



ST. MARY'S STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT HEALTHCARE CAREERS. On Friday April 11, Outpatient Medical Center (OMC) staff welcomed almost 40 St. Mary's Catholic School ninth graders and staff. They toured the facility, learned how to take vitals, studied and ate healthy foods, learned about healthcare professions, met patients of the clinic, and received a presentation on the healing ministry of Jesus by Dcn. Dr. Mark Guidry, CEO and CMO. OMC is a nonprofit organization that provides primary care health services to the under served and low income in Natchitoches.

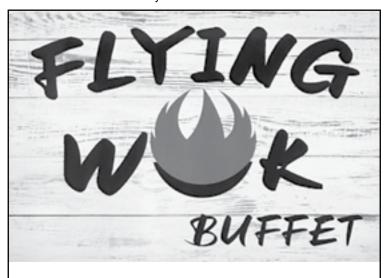
Visit the sign-up form at www.diocesealex.org, or email starver@diocesealex.org with your name and mailing address to receive the Church Today FREE of charge!







ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH, HESSMER. The St. Alphonsus Ladies' Altar Society gathered for prayer at a bi-annual event to honor their deceased members on the Sixth Sunday of Easter.



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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.

Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre honors Allemonds with Silver Palm of Jerusalem

His Eminence, Fernando Cardinal Filoni, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, bestowed the Silver Palm of Jerusalem to Mr. Pierre Allemond and Mrs. Roz Allemond during the Southeastern Lieutenancy meeting held in Biloxi, MS held April 26-29.

Most Reverend Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans and Grand Prior for the Southeastern Lieutenancy, presented the honors in person to Mr. and Mrs. Allemond during a special award announcement following the Ceremony of Investiture on Sunday, April 28.

Mr. Allemond is the Diocesan President of the Order here in our diocese and he and his wife have made numerous pilgrimages to the Holy Land, bringing hundreds of people along with them in group trips.

Amongst the lay investees the Ceremony of Investiture were Alexandria members, Mr. Karl Morley and Mrs. Paula Morley, becoming Knight and Dame of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Deceased members from the Diocese of Alexandria: Mr. Ismael "Gus" Agosto, Mr. Preston Stemmann, Mrs. Anna Connella and Mrs. Evelyn James, were among those remembered during the Memorial Mass held on April 26.

The Palm of Jerusalem, which can be gold, silver or bronze, is an award of the Order and may be conferred by the



Gregory Aymond following the presention of the Silver Palm of Jerusalem.

SILVER PALM OF JERUSALEM. Mr. and Mrs. Allemond with Archbishop

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St. Mary's Assumption School seeks an enthusiastic, dedicated, and qualified principal to minister in leadership for a school community of almost 250 students in Grades Pre-School - 8. Applications will be accepted through Friday, May 3, 2024.

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- Practicing Catholic
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- · 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. Charles Ray, Pastor

Inquiries and applications may be sent to:

St. Mary's Assumption Church (not school) 820 Front St, Cottonport, LA (318) 876-3681

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, ons policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Cardinal Grand Master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre to a person of flawless moral conduct, especially meritorious on behalf of the order or the Holy Land.

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is an ancient chivalric order and legend has it was established as early as 81 A.D. when Pope Anaclet assigned the custody of Christ's tomb to a confraternity of hermits who constituted the forerunners of the present Order.

It was in 1099, with the capture of Jerusalem by the first Crusade, that the history of the Order emerges from the uncertainty of legend. In 1113, Pope Pascal II, by Bull of Approbation, formally approved the Order.

Today, there are now 26,000 Knights and Ladies of the Order in 52 countries across the world.



SILVER PALM MEDAL. The medals given to Mr. & Mrs. Allemond.



EOHSJ INVESTITURE. Mr. & Mrs. Karl Morley with Archbishop Gregory Aymond.



BACCALAUREATE SACRED HEART CHURCH, MOREAUVILLE. 2024 High School graduates are from Avoyelles High School, Avoyelles Public Charter High School, Louisiana School for the Agricultural Sciences, and Bunkie High School.



GRADUATING CLASS
OF 2024, HOLY SAVIOR
MENARD CENTRAL HIGH
SCHOOL. Graduation was
held Tuesday, May 14.





SENIOR MASS, ST. RITA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA. A Mass was celebrated on Sunday, May 12 for the high school seniors graduating this year from Menard and ASH and who attend St. Rita Church in Alexandria.





ST JOSEPH CHURCH, MARKSVILLE. On Sunday May 12, a Baccalaureate Mass was held celebrating the class of 2024 high school graduates. Congratulations to all 2024 graduates!



(above)
GRADUATING CLASS
OF OF ST. JOSEPH HIGH
SCHOOL, PLAUCHEVILLE.
Commencement Exercises
were held Friday, May 17.

GRADUATING CLASS OF

OF ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC

SCHOOL, NATCHITOCHES.Commencement Exercises were held Friday, May 17.

(left)



BACCALAUREATE, HOLY SAVIOR MENARD HIGH SCHOOL. Baccalaureate was held at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on Sunday, May 5 celebrated by Fr. Craig Scott, VG with Fr. Luke LaFleur and Fr. Josh Burch.

FIVERESIDENTS OF ST. MARY'S RESIDENTIAL TRAINING FACILITY CELEBRATED THEIR **GRADUATION** from Rapides Training Academy (RTA) on May 8. Graduates, Ashton Guidry, Henry Vo, Phillip Reynolds, Cameron Rodriquez and Trenton Ervin all took the stage to accept their certificate of completion for finishing their high school experience. RTA is a unique public school that caters to the needs of children with autism and severe developmental disabilities. Their partnership with St. Mary's has allowed countless young people with special needs to enjoy a unique sense of achievement that comes with high school graduation. To learn more about St. Mary's and their mission caring for young people with intellectual disabilities, visit their website at www.stmarysalexandria.org.



FOCUS CAMPUS MINISTRY, NATCHITOCHES. This afternoon I had the pleasure of learning about Catholic campus ministry at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches. I visited the Catholic Student Center and spoke with (I to r) Father Jose Pallipurath, Pastor of Holy Cross Church, and FOCUS missionaries Abigail Gutierrez, Adam Berdych and Kelby Toups about the many ways in which the ministry serves the NSU community.

(below) LSUA CSO FREE LUNCH WEDNESDAY. Cooks from KC Council #3200, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, cooked and prepared meatball subs for the LSUA campus on Wednesday, April 10. The Catholic Daughters Court Bishop Greco #2072, Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pineville, cooked for LSUA on April 17 and the Catholic Daughters Court Padre Pio #2141, St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport, served Mexican Casserole on May 1.







Illuminate: Steubenville South 2024

"This conference gives our kids a way to experience their faith like nowhere else. It enables the kids to receive the sacraments in an environment geared towards them, completely focused on their age group. As a chaperone, I am happy to bring the kids year after year, but I am just as excited to see what they weekend will bring."

- Steubenville 2023 Chaperone Calling all high school students! In our ever-changing world, Jesus is the answer to the longing of our hearts for meaning, fulfillment, security, and love. Join hundreds of Catholic teens at Steubenville South, June 21 - 23, to be illuminated in the light of Christ.

All rising freshmen in high school through rising freshmen in college are invited to attend this weekend retreat with teens from all across Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, and Florida.

Registration is almost completely full, with only 100 seats remaining! But, we still want to see your face there! To get your teen or parish youth

group registered, please visit www.steubenvillesouth.com/ register and register for our wait list as soon as possible!

Speakers include Kris Frank, Father John Burns, Sarah Swafford, David Calavitta, Mari Pablo, and worship leader Josh Blakesley. For more information, visit www.steubenvillesouth.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." - John 1:5

Can't wait to see you this summer!



stenbenville south conference: June 21-23, 2024 more information available at steubenvillesouth.com

save the dates:

rally: day of formation for adults saturday, september 14, 2024

beyond the limits in high conference saturday, december 7, 2024



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Vacation Bible School: Mary, Mother of Jesus, Woodworth - June 3-7

8:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m.. Early drop off begins at 7:30 a.m. Theme: "Discovery Mission." Register online under the Faith Formation tab at mmjchurch.org.

Discalced Carmelite meeting - June 8

The Order of the Discalced Carmelites holds its monthly meeting at 9:00 a.m. every second Saturday, at Maryhill Renewal Center. Anyone is invited to attend morning prayer followed by Mass and then the meeting. If you are interested in Carmelite spiritual studies, please contact Mary Jo McCoy at 318-346-6860 or 318-481-9638. **If you plan to attend......Please call Mary Jo McCoy at the numbers listed above OR Deacon Bill Travis at 318 640-2827 or 318 664-7069 and someone will meet you at the Maryhill gate.

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

The Cathedral Altar Society will have their Semi-Annual Bake Sale in Xavier Hall on June 8-9, after the 4:00 p.m. Saturday Mass and after the 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 5:30 p.m. Masses on Sunday. Donations of baked goods can be dropped off in the church hall on Saturday, July 9 between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, or before each weekend Mass. Please come by and support the Altar Society. Your contributions help pay for the necessary items for the upkeep of the Cathedral sanctuary.

Vacation Bible School: OLPS, Alexandria - June 10-14

8:00 a.m. - 12 noon. For ages entering Pre-K through 6th Grade. Theme "SCUBA diving into friendship with God." Cost is \$10 per child. Register at www.olpschurch. org.

OLPS is also looking for business, individual and family partnerships to help make VBS affordable for all students. If you are interested in being a sponsor for our VBS, please contact Blair Jeanise, Coordinator of CCD, OCIC, and VBS, at (318) 445-3693 ext 211 or email blair. jeanise@olpschurch.org for more information.

Lector Formation Workshop - June 15

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

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

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. Saturday, June 15, 8:00 a.m., St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport. Please note that if a date results in low registration, it may be cancelled.

Vacation Bible School: St. Rita, Alexandria - June 17-21

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. Cost is \$10 per child max \$30 per family. You can go online at www.strita.org and follow the "VBS Scuba" link to register your child (PK-Gr. 6) or register as a volunteer (Grade 7 - Adult). For more information, contact Courtney Brinkman at (318) 445-7141 ext. 217.

Summer Camp, St. Joseph Church, St. Joseph, LA - June 17-29

St. Joseph Church in St. Joseph, LA will be welcoming visiting missionaries from the Institute of the Incarnate Word for a summer mission from June 17-29.

The mission will include an "Oratory" summer camp for kids Pre-k4 through high school with games, crafts and faith building activities! We will start each morning at 8:00 a.m. and end the day in the evenings with family fun, festivities, talks, bonfires and more!

Email stjosephinstjoe@gmail.com for more info. St. Joseph Catholic Church, 919 Plank Rd., St. Joseph, LA (318) 766-3565.

Eucharistic Miracles of the World Exhibit - June 21-22

Showcasing 158 documented Eucharistic miracles from 22 countries, this exhibit is open to the public, free of charge, for two days only. Friday, June 21, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., and Saturday, June 22, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. in the Hotel Bentley Ballroom, located at 200 Desoto Street, Alexandria, LA 71301. For more information concerning the exhibit, visit miracolieucaristici.org. This exhibit is

hosted by the Steubenville South Conference Office and the Diocese of Alexandria.

Steubenville South Conference - June 21-23

In our ever-changing world, Jesus is the answer to the longing of our hearts for meaning, fulfillment, security, and love. Hundreds of Catholic teens will converge at Steubenville South on June 21-23 to experience the peace of Jesus Christ, who is our refuge and never wearies of loving us. To get on a waitlist to attend, contact the Steubenville team at hello@steubenvillesouth.com and put "Put me on the wait list!" in the subject line.

Vacation Bible School, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville - July 8-12

8:30 a.m.-12:00 noon for ages Pre-K through 6th Grade. T-shirts available for purchase the week of VBS. To preregister, email the Sacred Heart of Pineville Church office at rgraham@sacredheartpineville.com

Vacation Bible School: Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville - July 14-17

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Supper provided. T-shirts, crafts, music, fun, friends, outdoor activities Registration opens Saturday, June 15. No registration fee. Monetary donations appreciated! Contact the church office at (318) 985-2774.

St. Mary's Catholic School, Natchitoches - Positions open for the 2024-2025 school vear:

- Varisty Girls Basketball Coach
- Varsity Football Coach
- High School Math Teacher
- High School Science Teacher
- Librarian

For information about any of these positions, please contact 318-352-8394, Principal, Stephen Wren: swren@smstigers.org.

Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria - Positions open for the 2024-2025 school year:

- High School Theology Teacher
- Science Teacher

Contact us at: (318) 445-8233 or communications@holysaviormenard.com.

Church Today News Deadlines

June 24
Deadline for news:
Thursday, June 13

July 22 Deadline for news: Thursday, July 11



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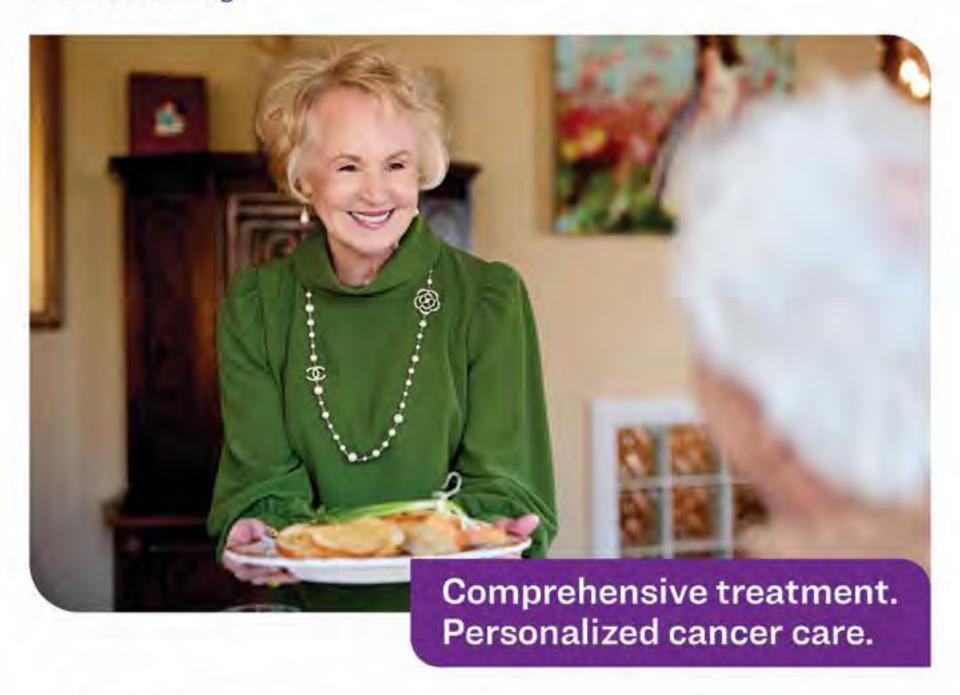
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June 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
MAY 27	28	29	30	31	JUNE 1	2	
MEMORIAL DAY PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL	PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS	PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER	PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE	PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER	PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL Discalced Carmelite meeting 9:00 a.m. Maryhill Renewal Center	SOLEMNITY of the MOST HOLY BODY and BLOOD of CHRIST (Corpus Christi) PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK	
VACATI	ON BIBLE SCHOOL MA	RY, MOTHER OF JESUS, 1	WOODWORTH 8:00 TO	11:30 AM	SEMI-ANNUAL BAKE	SALE CATHEDRAL	
PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS	PRAY FOR MSGR. B. MILLER	PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL	PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN	FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR DCN. D. MOREAU	FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR DCN. L. MOREAU	PRAY FOR DCN. T. MOULARD	
10	11	12	13	14	Lector Formation Workshop 8:00 a.m. St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport	16	
VACATION D							
PRAY FOR FR. A. MULLOTH	PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK	OY OF PROMPT SUCCOR, PRAY FOR DCN. S. NEWBURY	PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL	PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE	PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN	FATHER'S DAY PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR	
17	18	VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Alphonsus, Hessmer	20	21	22	23	
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL ST. RITA CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA 8:00 AM TO 12 NOON							
ORATORY SUMMER CAMP ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH, LA							
				EUCHARISTIC MIRA	CLES EXHIBIT HOTEL E	ENTLEY BALLROOM	
DDAY FOR FR. O. CORONNA	DRAY FOR FR. A. DALAKWATTHOURDA	DDAY FOR FR. R. DALL IDADAMBII	DDAY FOR FR. I. DALLIDUDATU		enville South Youth Confe		
PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA 24	PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA 25 VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria	PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL	PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE	PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN 29	PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL	
	ORATOR	Y SUMMER CAMP ST	JOSEPH CHURCH, ST. JO	SEPH, LA			
PRAY FOR DCN. C. PELTO	PRAY FOR DCN. K. PRIMEAUX	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	

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