HUMBLED BUT HOPEFUL

Praying for peace

(Below is Bishop Robert W. Muench’s homily during a Mass for peace celebrated July 24 at St. Joseph Cathedral.)

warmly greet and heartily welcome civic officials, law enforcement personnel, clergy, religious, parishioners of our cathedral parish and other parishes, ecumenical and inter-faith leaders and members, relatives and friends of the slain officers, and all. Thank you so much for being with us today.

We gather as a grieving community and a grieving church. Funeral services were held for Officer Matthew Gerald on Friday and for Deputy Bradley Garafola yesterday. Tomorrow Corporal Montrell Jackson will be buried. As we speak, Officer Nicholas Tullier is in critical condition in the hospital. Let us pray to God for them, their families and friends and for us all. In the midst of our profound sadness, we heed the teaching of St. Paul “not to grieve as those who have no hope” (1 Th 4:13).

We are familiar with Jesus entering the synagogue on the Sabbath and being handed a scroll from the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling it, he found the passage, which in part was

Seeds of faith offer spiritual solace for incoming college freshmen

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

That was the pond, this is the ocean, many incoming freshmen and transfer students think when stepping onto the college campus.

The experiences and stress may cause Catholic students to believe they are “going under” and attending Mass or nurturing their spiritual life through prayer, service or gathering with their Catholic peers must be tossed overboard to “lighten the load.”

Campus ministers and students at colleges throughout the Diocese of Baton Rouge point out that the seeds of faith can buffer them from worldly influences. By inviting God into their experiences, they don’t have to choose between faith “or” college life, but can have a fulfilling faith “and” college life.

Sister Renee Daigle, assistant director and campus minister at St. Albert the Great Chapel and Student Center in Hammond, which serves students attending Southeastern Louisiana University, said it’s important for Catholic students to meet other students with similar core values.

“If they are not grounded in their faith, they can be dissuaded to not go to church or practice their faith. When you are confirmed, that’s not a graduation from the faith,” said Sister Renee.

She said the college’s Catholic student centers help students meet spiritual companions on their college journey. There, students can receive the sacraments and participate in various forms of prayers, devotions, small faith groups and praise and worship. There’s also free lunches.

Andrew Cowan, senator of the Catholic Student Association at St. Albert, which helps students meet and share faith-based values as part of an organized Catholic presence on campus, agreed. He said there are ideas and erroneous perspectives presented in college. Students who are focused on their faith can understand the principles being taught, but know they don’t have to accept them as truth. While many think the purpose of college is to set goals to achieve a life of happiness materially, a faith-filled perspective helps students understand the most important decisions they make concern the next life, said Cowan.

Hayden Songy, who was CSA president last year, said college is a time of “discovering oneself” and faithful friends and organizations such as CSA help “stretch” them to their full potential.

“I never thought I could be a leader,” said Songy, who learned being a leader is setting a good example for the next generation.

Victoria Mercer, who was CSA treasurer last year, said she was “scared” when she first stepped onto campus. By stepping outside of her comfort zone, she learned about leadership and working within a group.

Mercer said embracing the faith is embracing the diversity of all students and taking Jesus into all areas of campus.
and their annulments. I prefer them to tell me the secure anchor of prayer and hope. I need people to weather spiritual storms with me and I need to prepare and encourage you to do the same. I especially encourage our priests in the archdiocese… particularly when the unexpected happens and you must encourage those in need. Listening to our clients’ stories, their struggles, and their victories is a wonderful part of my seminary adjustment. A priest must be able to focus and get the job done in a more efficient manner.

Q: You love to go to Disney World. What draws you there, what is your favorite attraction and what makes it your favorite?
A: With all the problems in the world, and what we priests hear in the confessions on a daily basis, I like to spend a few days in “Fantasyland” each year. While most of my brother priests think of Florida and the beach, my favorite memories are riding Splash Mountain because of the engineering it took to make them a reality. I consider him one of my archetypes, because I like to create impossible stories and make them a reality. I consider him one of my favorite attractions.

Q: One of your passions is taking old items and making them new. What type in real time, which helps them concentrate and get the job done in a more efficient manner.

A: Located next to the statue of St. Anthony in St. Philomena Church in Labadieville is a reliquary. Inside the simple glass box is a cross-shaped receptacle holding a first-class relic of St. Philomena. St. Philomena lived during the early years of the church. She died around 14-years-old, but not much was known about her until her remains, which were covered in stones, were discovered in the catacomb of St. Priscilla Church in Rome in 1802. Symbols on the stones revealed that she had died a martyr. In 1837, St. Philomena was canonized after miracles were reported at a shrine dedicated to her in Italy. She is considered the patron saint of babies, infants and youth. Her feast day is August 11. Photo by Rachel Smith | The Catholic Commentator

Sweet 15?

Sweet 16.
The sweetest moment of a young girl’s life, complete with parties, a new dress, lots of friends and a day to be remembered forever as she takes the first step into womanhood.

In the Hispanic community, that special day arrives a year earlier, and it has strong connections to the Catholic faith. Quinceanera, which means “one who is 15” in Spanish, is a traditional celebration of life and gratitude to God on the occasion of the 15th birthday of a young Hispanic woman, according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Although the origin of the practice remains unclear, some believe it may date as far back to 500 B.C. and eventually brought to the Americas by the Spanish conquistadors. What is known is the practice is frequently celebrated in Mexico as well as Central and South America and has increased in popularity in the United States.

On her special day, the young woman will process into a Catholic church for a special Mass accompanied by her parents and godparents, and possibly 15 hand-picked friends. She might or might not serve as a lector. After the Liturgy of the Word she makes her commitment to God and the Blessed Virgin through the renewal of her baptismal promises.

At that point, she is given several spiritual gifts, including a rosary, Bible, medal and prayer book, all of which have been blessed. Naturally, those gifts depend on her family.

A special blessing concludes the ceremony, which is followed by a fiesta in her honor. Tradition calls for a mariachi band to perform, with the food plentiful before the Quinceanera cuts what is likely an elaborate cake.

Similar to a girl’s 16th birthday party, the Quinceanera dances the first dance with her father or at least a close male relative.

According to the USCCB, the traditional blessing is so popular in Latin American countries has developed in an unofficial rite in the United States. The Quinceanera ritual was approved for use in the U.S. in 2007 by the SCUB.

Far more important than the party, the band and the food, however, is that the ritual is significant for the message it sends, not only to young people, but to adults as well in calling them to pray together to make a commitment to God and the church.

Q: One of your passions is taking old items and making them new. What was your most challenging restoration project and how did it turn out?
A: I do consider myself a “resurrectionist.” There are three projects that were challenging for various reasons. The first was the old St. Joseph Church, because it is now 127 years old. We re-purposed it in 2010 for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and meetings. The building simply needed to breathe, so we pulled out carpet as well as other additions to the structure through the years, and we’re really proud of it today. It is the oldest surviving church in Livingston Civil Parish.

The second challenging project was renovating St. Stephen Church in Whitehouse. The third challenging project was renovating Plaquemine Church in Livingston County and the Blessed Virgin through the renewal of her baptismal promises.

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A meeting of the Baton Rouge Planning Commission scheduled Monday, Aug. 15 might well determine the fate of an archives building the Diocese of Baton Rouge is proposing to build on the campus of the Catholic Life Center.

The meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. at the city offices on Laurel Street.

“We certainly hope the planning commission will approve our project so we can move forward,” said Ann Boltin, director of archives for the diocese. “I definitely feel like (at the meeting) there will at least be an answer where we can move forward or not.”

Neighbors have been vocal in their opposition to the proposed 7,500-square-foot building since plans were first announced by the diocese in the spring. Opponents claim the building will increase traffic in the area, as well as affect the aesthetics of their neighborhood.

Plans call for the building to be built on Parker Street, at the rear of the property owned by the diocese. It would sit adjacent to the Sisters of St. Joseph residence and house a 5,000-square-foot climate controlled vault to safely preserve church and civil records that in some cases are more than 200 years old. The remainder of the building will be dedicated to office space, but the majority of that will be accessible to staff only.

In two previous meetings with neighbors, Boltin and other diocesan officials stressed the building would accommodate three full-time employees, be open from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and not be used at night or on the weekends.

Additionally, Boltin said researchers must make appointments and added the department averages one-and-a-half visitors per week.

“I don’t think it’s going to change the face of the neighborhood; I don’t think it’s going to change the community feel,” she said. “We are a small staff, we are caretakers of records. We are not noisy.”

Storage has become a particular concern for Boltin and her staff. The current vault is at capacity, forcing some records to be stored in various closets throughout the Catholic Life Center.

Because of the storage crunch, no additional records, including those from church parishes, can be accepted.

“There’s a danger (those records) could be lost,” she said, “and that’s not only our history right now but our future history. This is everybody’s history, not just Catholics. These are the vital records of the area, for the most part.”

“I’m optimistic that people are going to realize that first of all how important our mission is and how important these records are and how importantly it is these records are preserved,” she added. “But secondly, how good neighbors we have been for the past 50 years and what little impact we are going to have on the neighborhood.”

Boltin said the process has allowed her to meet with neighbors, an opportunity she has welcomed and embraced.

“We know who they are, we’ve been able to put a face with a name,” she said. “I’m hoping we can work together to come up with the best plan that can work for everyone. We want to be good neighbors. We want to be welcomed into the neighborhood.”

Also on the Aug. 15 agenda is a proposal by St. Joseph’s Academy to build a multi-purpose gymnasium that will seat 1,750 and a fitness center on existing property owned by the school on Parker and Broussard streets. The project was originally scheduled to be heard at the commission’s July 18 meeting but was deferred.

Unlike the archives building, St. Joseph’s only needs the approval of the planning commission to move forward.

An architect’s drawing of the proposed archives building for the Diocese of Baton Rouge shows the structure will have the exterior characteristics of a home to fit in with the surrounding neighborhood. The architects are Bani, Carville & Brown AIA Architects, Inc. of Baton Rouge.
Pope expresses shock over violence in French church

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The murder of a priest in northern France, taken hostage with a handful of other faithful during a weekday morning Mass July 26, is another act of “absurd violence” added to too many stories of senseless violence and death, said the Vatican spokesman.

Pope Francis was informed about the hostage situation at the church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray near Rouen and the murder of 85-year-old Father Jacques Hamel, said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman.

“With pain and horror” for the “absurd violence,” Pope Francis expressed his condemnation of “every form of hatred” and offered his prayers for all those involved.

“We are particularly stricken because this horrible violence occurred in a church – a sacred place in which the love of God is proclaimed – with the barbaric killing of a priest,” Father Lombardi said.

Police said two men, armed with knives, entered the church during Mass. They reportedly slit the throat of Father Hamel. They said another person present at the Mass was in serious condition at the hospital. An Interior Ministry spokesman said the attackers were killed by police, ending the hostage situation.

A nun who witnessed the attack described the scene to French radio station RMC.

“In the church, everyone screamed ‘Stop, you don’t know what you’re doing.’ They didn’t stop. They forced him to his knees; he tried to defend himself, and it was then that the drama began,” said the nun, who identified herself as Sister Danielle.

Father Jacques Hamel is seen during a church service June 11 in this handout photo from his parish in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, France. He was killed by two attackers July 26. (Photo provided by OSF)

“They recorded themselves (on video). They did a little – like a sermon – around the altar in Arabic. It was a horror.”

The sister managed to escape the church and flag down a car for help, RMC reported.

She told the station about her respect for her colleague.

“It’s necessary to remember that this was an extraordinary priest,” Sister Danielle told RMC. “That’s all I want to say. He’s great, Father Jacques.”

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack via its news site, though the group’s involvement has not been confirmed by French police. French President Francois Hollande suggested the group was behind the attack.

Hollande called Pope Francis to express “the grief of the French people after the odious assassination of Father Jacques Hamel by two terrorists,” said a statement from the president’s office.

Archbishop Joseph K. Kurtz of Louisville, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, said Catholic faithfulness around the world experienced the shock and sadness of the attack “as if the loss was in our very own parish.”

“The Holy Mass is the most sacred and joyful act we, as Catholics, celebrate,” Archbishop Kurtz said. “Never are we closer to our Lord Jesus Christ than we are when we receive the Eucharist. No act of desecration – no matter how vile – can obscure the merciful presence of God.”

Archbishop Dominique Lebrun of Rouen, who was in Krakow, Poland, with World Youth Day pilgrims when the attack occurred, returned to his archdiocese.

“The Catholic Church can take up no weapons other than those of prayer and brotherhood among people of goodwill,” the archbishop said in a statement from Krakow.

Msgr. Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, secretary-general of the French bishops’ conference, also was in Krakow for World Youth Day. He told media: “We know now they were both terrorists.”

“We believe that evil and violence will not have the upper hand, and all the French bishops share this opinion,” he said.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, sent a message of condolence to Archbishop Lebrun. The cardinal said Pope Francis was “particularly upset that this act of violence took place in a church during Mass, the liturgical act that implores God’s peace for the world.”

In the latest event of violence, the cardinal said, the pope prayed God would “inspire in all thoughts of reconciliation and brotherhood.”

A nun who witnessed the hostage situation at the church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, France. (Photo provided by OSF)
Conference attendees urged to spread the power of the Holy Spirit

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Tears of repentance often stream during the conversion of individuals, as well as communities, as seen in the Baton Rouge area following the recent shootings of Alton Sterling and three officers. In these water shed moments many people receive a new baptism by the Holy Spirit. Some receive God’s gift of grace and salvation for the first time and others receive God’s invitation that “there’s still more.”

At the Catholic Charismatic Day of Renewal July 30 at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge, sponsored by the diocesan charismatic renewal office, there were conversions and a sending forth to spread the Holy Spirit’s power into the city.

“Times in the city have been very hard, times in the country have been hard and times in the world have been very hard,” said Dotty Loar, lay director of Charismatic Renewal of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. She reminded those present that the number one goal during these times is to praise and worship Jesus, which they did in a lively manner after praying for the city, nation and world and singing “America the Beautiful.”

On that theme of being open to the Lord and conversion, Deacon Alex Jones talked about points of conversion in his life. He spoke of how in his teenage years he was a member of a strict pentecostal church, where there was a lot of “nos,” which to him meant “no fun” and he drifted from the faith.

He said he even had a “crazy idea” of joining the Marines so he could go to Vietnam and “kill some people.”

That’s when the conviction of God through the Holy Spirit stepped in, and he understood he was standing in the presence of God.

“I grieved and tears came like a flood,” said Deacon Jones. “A flood of requests asking for God’s forgiveness and cleansing.”

Deacon Jones eventually became a preacher of some well-known pentecostal churches in Detroit. But he then had another conversion — to the Catholic faith.

The preacher loved and was loved by his Pentecostal flock. He wanted to give his members the most genuine experience of the early church and worship service.

“In March 1998, while reading the apostolic fathers and subsequent church history in preparation for a Wednesday evening Bible study, I discovered the (Catholic) Church to be charismatic/liturgical, hierarchical and charismatic-centered,” said Deacon Jones.

He and his wife began a two-year journey into the Catholic faith that culminated in 54 members of his previous congregation entering the Catholic Church at an Easter Vigil Mass on April 14, 2001. He was ordained a deacon in 2005.

But there was another deeper conversion for Deacon Jones, in which a person “gets down to the nitty gritty call to prayer and holiness … to sell out and pick up the cross and follow Jesus.”

He said everything was going well in his life, yet he felt an unexplainable spiritual dryness or what St. John of the Cross called “The Dark Night of the Soul.”

“It was a difficult season. It wasn’t depression, I felt good, just stripped of faith,” the deacon said.

He discussed this with his spiritual advisor, who recommended he read “Philokalia,” a collection of writings centering on practicing the virtues and spiritual living in a monastery.

“Suddenly, the sun shone …” said Deacon Jones. He saw clearly that in all his preaching, healings and deliverances, it wasn’t him, but God at work.

That is the kind of conversion God calls everyone to, according to Deacon Jones. They are called to a deeper love of God and neighbor.

“We are impelled to love our neighbors and to accept our neighbors. The charismatic gifts makes us serve the church and neighbor,” said the deacon.

He admonished the attendees that they cannot say they love God if they do not love their brother and sister, who are made in his image.

“Don’t criticize a person because they don’t think like you,” said Deacon Jones. “The love of God does not rest on feelings, it is an act of the will.”

The afternoon session included charismatic adoration and testimonies by Judy Holston, a member of the diocesan inner healing prayer team and the charismatic prayer group at St. Alphonsus Church in Greenwell Springs, who spoke about her dramatic physical and spiritual healing, and Ashley Armstrong, a member of the core prayer team of the charismatic prayer group at Our Lady of Mercy, who spoke about her experiences of being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Loar concluded the meeting by urging attendees to be thank-ful for the opportunity to come together and worship and to bring the messages they heard into the community.

“We’re all in this together,” said Loar. “Let’s go out and spread the holiness, peace and joy to the community.”

Finding God in the present moment

Spirituality For Today
Father John Catoir

With patience, you will learn to trust your good intentions. In other words, by living in the present, you can become “fully alive.”

St. Irenaeus said, “The glory of God is man fully alive.” As a saint-in-training, you have what it takes to produce rich and abundant fruit. The Lord himself has told you this. Trust the words of Jesus more than your own fears.

Fifty years ago, I was in the military police at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. The post chaplain asked me to be his assistant and my high school dreams of becoming a priest began to stir in me again. The rest is history.

The decisions we make today have consequences tomorrow.

Deciding to be holy doesn’t mean that you have a call to the priesthood or consecrated life, but it does mean that you are willing to follow the Lord’s direction. For this, he will give you supernatural hope, and you will enjoy a meaningful life.

A simple prayer to say daily is: “Grant me O Lord, the joy of loving you and trusting your promises, for you always supply guidance to those who live on the foundation of your love, day by day.”

What you are right now is plain to see, but what you can be in the future, with the help of God’s grace, is hidden from your eyes. Jesus urges, “Do not be afraid” (Mt 28:10).

How are you using the present moment?

Put on the will to choose an upright life each day. Expect a good outcome, so that, as Christ says, “your joy may be complete” (Jn 15:11).

FATHER CATOR writes on issues of spirituality for today’s Catholic for Catholic News Service.
Bad Moms
STX
A stressed-out suburban mother (Mila Kunis) rebels against her taxing daily routine, demanding that her kids (Emjay Anthony and Oona Laurence) start fending for themselves in minor ways and indulging herself by skipping work, breaking up her marriage to new husband (David Walton) and her discovery of fresh romance with the widowed father (Jay Hernandez) of one of her daughter’s classmates. While the dialogue suggests that her marriage may have been flawed from the start, her new relationship turns physical long before any potential divorce proceedings have even begun. Strong sexual content including full nudity, masturbation and semi-graphic adultery, a frivolous attitude toward homosexuality and narcotics use, pervasive sexual humor, about a half-dozen uses of profanity; constant rough and crude language. O; R

Ice Age: Collision Course

for
Weak fifth installment in the animated franchise for children finds the good-hearted but overprotective father (voice of Ray Romano) of a family of wooly mammoths leading his levelheaded wife (voice of Queen Latifah), sunny daughter (voiced by Keke Palmer) and soon-to-be son-in-law (voice of Adam Devine) on an unlikely quest: They’re out to use magnetic rocks to divert a giant asteroid that’s headed for a potentially cataclysmic collision with the Earth. Their guide on the journey is an eccentric, British-accented weasel (voice of Simon Pegg). Directed by Michael Thurmeier and Galen Tan Chu, the scattershot proceedings also take in the outer-space adventures of an acorn-obsessed squirrel and a lonely sloth’s (voice of John Leguizamo) search for love. While the slapstick comedy around which the shaky plot is built is aimed at kids, some of the vocabulary and humor is inappropriate for them. Parents may also be concerned by a vaguely anti-religious undertone that seems to exalt science at the expense of faith. Occasional peril, mildly scatological and anatomical humor, a single cuss word. A-II; PG

Star Trek Beyond
Paramount
The 13th big-screen outing for the sci-fi franchise that began as a 1960s TV series is, overall, a rousing and rambling 3-D adventure. Capt. James T. Kirk (Chris Pine) of the Starship Enterprise and his crew (including Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana and Karl Urban) respond to a distress call in a remote part of the galaxy. It’s a trap set by a reptilian megalomaniac (Idris Elba) bent, like many a villain before him, on the wholesale destruction of humanity through use of the ultimate weapon. With its skillful blend of thrills and quieter moments devoted to character development, director Justin Lin’s film could normally be endorsed as a fun popcorn movie, though its action is too intense for kids. However, the inclusion of a scene revealing that helmsman Sulu (John Cho) is gay—he’s briefly shown with a male partner and a young daughter sets the filmmakers at odds, however incidentally, with Christian values. Given the broad cultural impact of this widely loved franchise, and the clear intent to make a statement, even grown moviegoers need to take note of this unwelcome development. Considerable mostly bloodless violence, including torture, a benign view of homosexual acts and a fleeting sexual reference. L; PG-13

For more Movie Reviews, visit thecatholiccommentator.org and look under ENTERTAINMENT.
**A path to feeling brand new**

_Here’s a question for you:_

What makes you feel brand new?

I considered this question as I listened to Ben Rector’s latest single, “Brand New.” The song is off his latest album by the same name and has been getting radio play time.

The song’s character is clearly in an upbeat mood. His new relationship, presumably a romance, has made him feel “like I can fly and don’t even think of touching the ground, like a heartbeat skip, like an open page.”

In fact, when “I close my eyes,” he doesn’t care “if anyone sees me dancing,” and when it comes to this relationship he feels “brand new.” Now that’s a lot of positive energy!

At times, the excitement of a new romance can certainly fuel us with such exuberance. However, the larger concern is for us to look beyond the wonderful feelings of falling in love. Fortunately, there is no sure way to rediscover this way of feeling good, perhaps even feeling like a young John Cusack, like making big mistakes, like feeling good for the first time in a long time I am not afraid, like feeling a kid, never thought it’d feel like this.

**Refrain:**

Like when I close my eyes and don’t even care if anyone sees me dancing
Like I can fly and don’t even think of touching the ground
Like a heartbeat skip, like an open page
Like a one way trip on an aeroplane
It’s the way that I feel when I’m with you, brand new
Brand new
Brand new

**Feeling brand new**

I feel like a young John Cusack, like making big mistakes
I feel like for the first time in a long time I am not afraid
I feel like a kid, never thought it’d feel like this
(Repeat refrain.)

Time will always try to make us fold
You remind me what I used to know
(Repeat refrain.)

Brand new, yeah, yeah, yeah
I feel And I feel
And I feel brand new
I feel brand new
I feel brand new

Sung by Ben Rector | Copyright © 2015, Aplyt Named Recordings

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**On The Record**

**Charlie Martin**

**Write to:** chmartin@hughes.net; or 7125 West CR 200 South, Rockport, IN 47975, or like this column on Facebook at “Charlie Martin’s Today’s Music Column.”

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**ACROSS**

1. What Judas was in charge of
2. Jesus compared a rich man to this animal in Mk. 10:25
3. Triangular sail
4. Korean or Japanese, for example
5. The Audacity of Hope author
6. “Ona ___ nobis”
7. “So the king ordered Daniel to be brought and cast into the ___ den.” (Dan 6:17)
8. Servant
10. Afternoon shows
11. “Call”
12. 27th president of the United States
13. Fabled loser
14. According to Matthew, where your 37th is, your 26A will be
15. Does the books
16. Catholic football great Brett ___
17. Catholic composer of the “Sur- prise” Symphony
18. Uncooked
19. Where many users shop
20. Area and zip
21. (pref.)
22. Completed
23. “We are ___ on Christ’s account” (1 Cor 4:10)
24. Imbibed
25. Furtive
26. Judges
27. Greek vowel
28. Goat’s milk cheese
29. Mountain range
30. Sacerdotal
31. OT prophetic book
32. Eskimo dwelling
33. Bureaucracy that assists the pope
34. Self-esteem
35. Trades
36. Outdo
37. Abb. at the top of a column
38. Annual horse race in England
39. Oozes

**DOWN**

1. Sunday in Lent
2. Former overseer of the VOA
3. Public disturbance
4. Free from dirt
5. Catch in
6. Commandment word
7. French protest cry
8. OT prophetic book
9. According to Tobit 13, the gates of Jerusalem will be built with sapphires and these precious stones
10. Treaty of 1929
11. Fond name for pope whose coat of arms display an “M” for Mary
12. The feel of clay in Daniel stood on legs of this
13. Raton
14. Next
15. Bible openener (abbr.)
16. Catholic actress and First Lady of the American Theatre
17. Religious garb
18. Elude
19. In an inadequate manner
20. Fatty part of milk
21. “Whoever corrects the arrogant ___ insults” (Prov 9:7)
22. Letters on an envelope
24. Upcoat
25. Small houses
26. According to Matthew, where 37th is, your 26A will be
27. Denials of arms display an “M” for Mary
28. The feet of clay in Daniel stood on legs of this
29. The Diocese of Pensacola is here
30. Discoverers
31. The new MacBook
32. Opus
33. Father of Elam and Aram
34. Othello’s betrayer
35. Black
36. Water sport
37. “…from ___ God, begotten, not ___ on Christ’s account”
38. Resinous deposit

**Solution on page 18**

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I have noticed that more often than not, the Confiteor (“I confess”) is skipped at Mass, and the priest or deacon goes right into the “Lord, have mercy” prayer (Kyrie). I have inquired as to why they do this but cannot get an answer. In the Tridentine Mass, the Confiteor was important enough to be said twice – initially by the priest and then repeated by the altar servers. Is this just to save time or are we forgetting the importance of asking for forgiveness before we ask for mercy? (Atlanta)

The writer is evidently unaware of the options offered in the current edition of the Roman Missal, which was introduced in 2011. One of three different formulas may be chosen for the penitential rite, recited by the penitent to confess to a priest all mortal sins … after a diligent examination of conscience.” The church’s Code of Canon Law indicates that this integral confession of sins by number and kind constitutes “the only ordinary means by which a member of the faithful conscious of grave sin is reconciled with God and the church” (Canon 960).

But quickly, that same canon goes on to allow that “physical or moral impossibility” can excuse one from confession of this type. In their pastoral wisdom, confessors have typically applied this to someone with a very scrupulous conscience, for whom a detailed and comprehensive listing of sins would be too troubling as to be practically impossible.

I can see your own situation as being similar: The deep and immediate anxiety that you experience upon entering the confessional might allow a priest to dispense you from what is known as the “integrity of confession.”

Why not visit with a priest you know and explain your situation? He might decide that it would be sufficient for you to indicate in a general way your sorrow for any sins and then receive absolution.

Yes, I understand that a certain sense of guilt and shame for sin is a normal and healthy part of penance, but the experience is meant fundamentally to be one in which the penitent can rejoice in the Lord’s presence and relax in the assurance of his mercy.

The fact that this has not been so for you in the past tells me that a different approach is warranted, and the church’s compassionate guidelines envision this.

FATHER DOYLE is chancellor for public information and a pastor in the Diocese of Albany, New York. Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, NY 12208.

Question Corner
Father Kenneth Doyle

I have always had a great fear of confession. Once I got in there, I would be so scared that I would just say the first thing I could think of, in order to get it over with. As a result, I have never really made a good confession in my entire life.

I am now 70 years old. I have asked God to forgive me, but I wonder if that’s enough. Our parish is small; the priest knows everyone and that is part of the problem. But don’t tell me to go to another church for confession, because that wouldn’t help; I would still just clam up.

Can Jesus forgive me for this? I do try to be a good person and a good Catholic. (Des Moines, Iowa)

In the words of the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, the sacrament of penance “requires each penitent to confess to a priest all mortal sins … after a diligent examination of conscience.” The church’s Code of Canon Law indicates that this integral confession of sins by number and kind constitutes “the only ordinary means by which a member of the faithful conscious of grave sin is reconciled with God and the church” (Canon 960).

But quickly, that same canon goes on to allow that “physical or moral impossibility” can excuse one from confession of this type. In their pastoral wisdom, confessors have typically applied this to someone with a very scrupulous conscience, for whom a detailed and comprehensive listing of sins would be too troubling as to be practically impossible.

I can see your own situation as being similar: The deep and immediate anxiety that you experience upon entering the confessional might allow a priest to dispense you from what is known as the “integrity of confession.”

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Faith as a form of art for artist

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

Stacie Leonard Burke prefers not to call herself an artist.

Despite the many works she has created, including the paintings now on display and designed to complement the worship space at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge, Burke sees her talent as part of a spiritual journey, one that is leading her, humbled and grateful, back to God.

She said by painting, God helped her overcome challenges in her life, moving her from a place of fear and uncertainty to thankfulness and comfort.

"Like many women, I guess, I was filled with worry. I worried if I was doing enough or not doing enough," she said.

Caught in the hustle and bustle of life, Burke's feelings were confusing because as a wife and mother, she knew she really had everything she ever wanted.

Then two significant events happened. First, after drifting away from Church, she began to attend Mass faithfully again at SJV, and even joined "Refuge," the church's LifeTeen band.

Outside of church, she enrolled in a painting class. It was just a way to have some "mom time," but when she mixed the paint and watched each image form, she became lost in prayer.

"There was a healing for me. It was a type of meditation," she said, adding that at first she would paint what she was told to paint, but as she grew through her craft, that has changed.

"It's much more emotional now for me," she said.

While not one to talk about her art, eventually, Burke's talent was discovered by friends at SJV, ultimately leading her to Father Tom Ranzino, general vicar of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and pastor of St. Jean Vianney Church.

"He saw something I had painted, and he wanted me to do something similar (for the church). He just said, 'I trust you,'" said Burke, adding that everything since then has been "surreal.

Working with Father Ranzino and liturgical artist Marchita Mauck, who helped her appreciate the architecture of the church, Burke's first series called "The Resurrection" was unveiled in 2014. The next year, she painted "The Resurrection," was unveiled in 2015 and follows the journey of Christ through his Passion, death and ultimately his resurrection, as illustrated through the golden hues seen in the top painting. The next series, right, was unveiled in 2015 and is called "The Seed." The green colors evoke Ordinary Time and remind the faithful of Jesus' ministry on Earth. The third group, bottom, was placed on display in April. Known as "Living Waters," the canvases reflect the living waters of baptism and of Christ himself.

Over the past years, three sets of paintings have graced the walls at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge. The first, top, called "The Resurrection," was unveiled in 2014 and follows the journey of Christ through his Passion, death and ultimately his resurrection, as illustrated through the golden hues seen in the top painting. The next series, right, was unveiled in 2015 and is called "The Seed." The green colors evoke Ordinary Time and remind the faithful of Jesus' ministry on Earth. The third group, bottom, was placed on display in April. Known as "Living Waters," the canvases reflect the living waters of baptism and of Christ himself.

Photos by Rachele Smith | The Catholic Commentator

In creating her work, Burke said she relied on her faith in recognizing when each painting was complete, noting her utmost desire was to respect the intention of the church's architecture that the people added the color. Burke's hope is that she has created something that sparks a similar emotion in others, so when they reflect on these paintings during worship, they can find whatever they need at that time and walk, humbled and grateful, with God.
May your Holy Spirit, O Lord, heal the lives of those who have lost those they love.

**Daily Prayers for Peace and Healing**

**Monday**

For those who have been wounded in the Violence of War and Oppression. Because of their war, poverty, political orientation, and economic status, O, Lord, you grant all others with the mixed and heart of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Tuesday**

For those who have been wounded by Gun Violence: for those law enforcement officers who have given their lives to the line of duty, for their families and community for all victims of gun violence and anyone and others on the streets of our cities. May your Holy Spirit heal the lives of those who have lost those they love. Amen.

**Wednesday**

For those who suffer the Violence of Prejudice: because of their race, gender, sexual orientation and others. O Lord, Mary greet all others with the混合心 and heart of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Thursday**

For all children (and all those who have been) victimized by bullying, cyber bullying, harassment and exclusion. Restore the child’s faith and compassion upon the hearts of our children O Lord. Amen.

**Friday**

For those who suffer the Violence of Abuse: domestic abuse, sexual abuse and physical abuse in any form. O Lord, Grant, those who have suffered these sins against your love. Amen.

**Saturday**

For those whose families, friendships and relationships are injured by the Violence of Physical Illness, Emotional Illness and Addiction. Give comfort to the many and healing to the sick. Amen.

**Sunday**

For those whose lives lack peace due to the Violence of Unknowing. For all who are alone and feel a sense of loneliness, give us the grace to find peace in God. Amen.

**God Bless Our Men & Women In Blue**

*The Lord is my strength and my shield.*

**Proverbs 28:7**

Thank You, St. Theresa of Avila Church

Father Gerard Martin, pastor at St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville, had 400 yard signs printed up with the message of peace. The signs were distributed at a prayer service at St. Mark Catholic Church in Gonzales on July 21 and at Sunday Masses at St. Joseph Catholic Church at noon on July 24.

By Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

**Catholic churches welcome all for services**

Tears flowed as it rains of sorrow, huge translucent all-ethnic and religious backgrounds, candles flickered for peace and countless prayers were offered.

As a community took in the wake of the fatal shootings of Alton Sterling and Baton Rouge law enforcement officials, prayer services touched every corner of the Diocese of Baton Rouge in the hope of helping to bring peace to a war-torn community.

“Jesus taught us the power of compassion,” Father Rick Andrus, pastor at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge said July 24 after a morning Mass and before nearly 200 Balloons were released. “We all have something to do in the midst of this as the people of Christ to show love, mercy and compassion.”

Since the shootings, Catholic churches have held special Masses, prayer services and other events to pray for peace and honor law enforcement officials. Some of the events have included gatherings, such as two appreciation lunches hosted by St. Theresa of Avila in Gonzales. On July 26 and again July 27 law enforcement officials were invited to a lunch featuring during afternoon.

Additionally, St. Mark’s Vacation Bible School students wrote thank you cards and made up snack bags to present to officials.

Bishop Robert W. Jueniak celebrated a Mass for peace at St. Joseph Cathedral at noon on July 24, which was then followed by six hours of eucharistic adoration. At 6 p.m., Father Joshua Johnson, parochial vicar at St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge, led benediction, when he movingly spoke of the importance of spending time with the Lord in order to show compassion to others.

Father Johnson recalled how St. John Paul II ministered in the midst of Nazi persecution in his native Poland and how the pope later forgave the man who attempted to assassinate him. Father Johnson said the pope was able to offer such forgiveness because he spent time before the Blessed Sacrament and in deep prayer.

Dina DePardi, director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the diocese, said the prayer services were crucial for healing because they were “unifying.”

“What happens when a tragedy happens, something that causes us unrest and a heightened sense of insecurity, there’s a natural reaction to want to get together and draw together and draw upon each other’s strengths,” DePardi said. “Naturally, when you pray you are asking the Lord for strength together as a community. You have each other and that hope, faith and trust in God.

“Together, with all of us praying together in harmony as one we are stronger, the healing is more effective. The services were crucial for healing and those in attendance.

**SEE SERVICES PAGES 15**

**“What happens when a tragedy happens, something that causes us unrest and a heightened sense of insecurity, there’s a natural reaction to want to get together and draw together and draw upon each other’s strengths.”**

Dina DePardi, Director of Education at a Catechesis of Peace

**“In the midst of suffering and trial, God is good.”**

St. Jude Church

Children at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge made individual signs in support of law enforcement officials following the deaths of two police officers and one sheriff’s deputy July 17. The signs were delivered to a police substation near the church. Photo by Jeremy Sanchez

**“God is good.”**

St. Jude Church

Parishioners at Holy Family Church in Port Allen gathered to pray the Prayer of St. Francis, followed by a few words from pastor Father Deirdre Hecht, and then some hour of eucharistic adoration. Three red candles were placed on the altar representing the life of each officer who was killed July 17. Photo by Penny Saia | The Catholic Commentator

**“May we greet all others with the mixture of heart and heart of your Son, Jesus Christ.”**

St. Theresa of Avila Church

Father Joshua Johnson, parochial vicar at St. Aloysius Church, Baton Rouge, raises the monstrance during benediction at the closing of an afternoon of eucharistic adoration for peace, justice and reconciliation in the Baton Rouge Community at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge on July 24. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

**“Heal, O Lord, those who have suffered so unjustly for the cause of freedom.”**

Baton Rouge Community at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge. Mayor Kip Holden led the prayer service for peace and balloon release following the 10:00 a.m. Mass on July 24. The attendees gathered in a circle. The balloons released included red, for the senseless shedding of blood due to violence, blue, for hope, green, for new life coming out of death; and white, for Christ, in the midst of all it. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator
Faith and relationships lead students to Christ

From page 1

Koonce said.

She goes to Mass, so I think I will too,“ my small group and she’s pretty cool.

will be able to identify with them.

tionships and sharing faith, Koonce said.

Back Week” at LSU, according to Jordan

and Student Center at LSU, “Arise,”

in programming specifics: www.csobr.org

the horizons of freshmen and incom-

ing students is retreats held specifically

For information and to register call 985-345-7206 or email re-

The retreat at Christ the King Church and Student Center at LSU, “Arise,”

Koonce, CTK evangelization director.

will be Aug. 27, at the end of “Welcome

in homecoming activities last year.

the first non-Greek organization to place

pus life. She pointed out St. Albert was

Merce

er said an effective tool to broad-

en the horizons of freshmen and incom-

ing students is retreats held specifically

for them. She organized last year’s St.

trct, “Lion Awakening,” which this

year will be held Friday, Sept. 30 –

Sunday, Oct. 2. For information and to

neemscc@outlook.com.

This gives them the chance to decom-

press from their first week at LSU and re-

and celebrate,” said Koonce.

This will be a time of forming rela-

tionships and sharing faith, Koonce said.

Upperclassmen will lead the small group

sessions and activities, so the freshmen

will be able to identify with them.

“Someone might say, ‘This girl is in

my small group and she’s pretty cool.

She goes to Mass, so I think I will too,’”

Koonce said.

While the student center is a hub of

faith activities and is “always there” for

all students, its central purpose is to be a

school of evangelization, said Koonce.

“We want to form them and send them

back onto the campus to get in other

activities and organizations and bring

Christ with them,” Koonce said.

For information about the Arise re-

treat, visit ctk-lsu.org or email jkoonce@ctk-lsu.org.

At the St. Joseph Chapel and Martin

Luther King Jr. Center at Southern Uni-

versity, there has been a revival in the

outreach to students, led by Father Tom

Clark, pastor of Immaculate Conception

Church in Baton Rouge and campus min-

ister, and lay campus minister Ephraim

White.

Much of this has been attributed to

getting the message out to students to “be

themselves,” said White.

“Some students are afraid to come into

the Catholic student center because they

feel they aren’t worthy. They think ‘The

Catholic Church is up there and I’m down

here,’” White said.

White, who, as a young adult connects

with students, counters these thoughts by

telling them they don’t have “to walk on

egg shells” and to be themselves.

White said he and Father Clark, whom

he calls his mentor, provide a comfortable

environment to study, talk, print out doc-

uments or “chill out and watch TV.”

There are many heartfelt, faith-filled

discussions at the student centers cen-

tered around events in Baton Rouge and

what the students response should be,

White said. He added that this fall he is

planning to have a forum with Baton

Rouge Police about the events surround-

ing the shooting of Alton Sterling and the

subsequent killing of three police officers.

But not content to “sit and wait” for

people to come to them, White has been

walking the campus talking to students

and organizations and inviting them to “come see.” And on Sunday mornings a

bus picks up students for Mass at Immac-

ulate Conception.

These efforts have led to organizations,

students and the college knocking on the

doors of the Martin Luther King Student

Center, said White.

“We are really getting a foothold on the

campus,” said White, who acknowledges,

however that they are “running a mara-

ton in and not a race.”

At commuter campuses, such as Our

Lady of the Lake College, students might

find it challenging to build a community

and get engaged. The OLOL college cam-

pus ministry provides opportunities to

meet students where they are, said Tam-

my Vidrine, director of campus ministry.

One way of helping students is through

the exploration of their life vocation.

“Most students know that they want to

go into health care, but are not quite sure

if they fit in as a nurse, radiology tech-

nician, physician’s assistant, or biology

major, but through reflection and service

learning students begin to clearly un-

derstand their vocation,” said Vidrine.

Other ways of meeting spiritual needs

include Bible studies and two retreat set-

tings offerings. One is a busy person’s

retreat, in which a student meets for a

two-hour session with a spiritual direc-

tor over a five-day period. There’s also the

Discovery 1 AM weekend retreat where

students explore who they are, who God

is and their calling in life.

Vidrine added, “Mass on a Catholic col-

lege campus is central to our identity. Since

OLOL College does not have a chapel on

campus, the Wednesday Mass at Our Lady

of the Lake Regional Medical Center is

‘the college Mass.’ Here Catholic students,

faculty and staff along with non-Catholic

students gather for Mass and a meal after-

ward,” said Vidrine. “The campus also of-

fers Communion service on Mondays in its

reflection oratory as an additional option

for students, faculty and staff.”

There are also prayer days for Catho-

lics and non-Catholics to gather.

“Mondays are set aside for reflection

and rosary and Fridays are set aside for

prayers for healing. Recently, the campus

gathered for prayer for the victims of the

(Orlando) Florida shootings and collabo-

rated with the hospital to offer a Mass for

peace and prayer for the Baton Rouge

community,” Vidrine said.

Additionally, OLOL college campus

ministry helps students understand faith tradition
differences through “Finding Common

Ground” gatherings at Thanksgiving, a

panel where students, faculty and staff

discuss differences in current issues in life

and faith. Pilgrimages to Assisi offer the

students, staff and faculty and opportunity

to connect with the roots of OLOL College’s

heritage by immersing themselves in the

culture and spirituality of St. Francis.

Throughout the liturgical year, cam-

pus ministry intentionally gears pro-

grams to spiritually enrich the students,

faculty and staff. Bringing Lenten and

Advent practices to campus helps to foster

a parish feel for the students, faculty and

staff to engage in their spiritual develop-

ment,” said Vidrine. “One size does not fit

all, but offering diverse opportunities will

assist those searching to find the best fit

for them.”
Pope urges World Youth Day volunteers to be ‘hope of the future’

KRAKOW, Poland (CNS) – Pope Francis thanked World Youth Day organizers and volunteers and urged them to be “the hope of the future.” “I had a speech of five pages, but it’s boring,” Pope Francis said in Spanish, setting aside his prepared remarks.

“Do you want to be the hope for the future? Well, there’s no need to pay an entry fee – you just have to meet some conditions. The first is to preserve your memory: of your people, your family and where you come from, the memory of your journey and what you received from those closest to you. A young person without a memory isn’t a hope for the future.”

He thanked more than 15,000 organizers and volunteers gathered at Tauron Arena for their “hours of prayer.” He also thanked the estimated 50,000 priests and religious order members who had accompanied pilgrims from around the world to the festival.

“How do we have a memory? It’s by talking to our parents and elders, and especially with our grandparents. If we want to be the hope of the future, we have to receive the torch from our grandfathers and their grandfathers,” Pope Francis said.

“But the second condition for the future of hope, aside from memory of the past, is to have courage to be courageous, not fearful.”

The pope also prayed briefly before an image of Our Lady of Calvary, an image closely associated with St. John Paul II.

He also heard testimonies from four volunteers, including Michal Ciesla, whose brother, Maciej, a graphic artist, died of cancer July 2 after volunteering to help at the festival, and Cristian Gregorio Ruiz Luque, a volunteer from Panama. Earlier, Pope Francis announced Panama as the venue for World Youth Day in 2019.

Ruiz told Pope Francis he believed the experience of volunteering was a way of “growing in holiness through a witness of mercy,” adding that he had also tried to follow the pope’s call to “make a stir.”

Pope Francis praised Maciej Ciesla for having “sowed hope” by having “the courage to continue fighting even in the worst conditions.”

“Preparing a World Youth Day is an adventure – people laugh, work, do things and are then dismissed, but the adventure is one of generosity,” the pope told organizers and volunteers.

“I do not know if I will be in Panama – but Peter will be in Panama, and he will ask you if you kept your memory, your courage and your hope.”

The pope, who asked young participants to pray for him, left Krakow’s John Paul II International Airport aboard a LOT Polish Airlines 787 Dreamliner, without making a departure speech.
Father Tom Ranziino’s funeral homily for the Funeral Mass of Bradford Allen Garafola celebrated July 23 at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge.

It is such a difficult time for all of us. Nothing feels comfortable; the bad news seems to echo in an empty chamber that makes living all the more threatening. Sorrow is the face we wear because into our tranquil lives come thunderbolts of evil and we are knocked to the ground.

It is such a difficult time for all of us. I don’t say these words again to remind you of what I know you already know. I say it because all of us are humbled before the mystery of evil that overwhelms our power and which can, at times, leave us temuous in our hope. While acknowledging that in life’s most difficult times, we are often compelled to speak of the Lord’s faithfulness that is greater than evil. God has not abandoned us to fate. God is faithful, and God alone can accompany us in difficult times with a companionship that already knows deeply our sorrow. God weeps for us, as we do not yet know how to live out his dream of peace for us in our own time.

The scriptural word is the place which gathers all of our fractured feelings, so that God’s word can help us interpret these past days’ events. These words from Scripture penetrate us, offering us a lens through which we remember Bradford Allen Garafola; to remember what has been eroded. We have ahead of us many more miles to heal the sorrowful and gave people back to each other, even those who could never have imagined their become brother or sister to each other ever again. Here is where Jesus Christ’s greater love, his extra mile must be experienced: here and now in the midst of this complex, painful and divisive times. Brad’s gift of self for his neighbor was the extra mile — it was far as we humans can go. This extra mile will be asked of us in the times ahead in ways which we may not yet comprehend and in ways that will remind us of what we have prayed for this day. If we can summon that kind of generosity with courage and compassion to face the reality of our living, with greater love, extra mile love, then Brad’s death will not have been in vain.

Swift the cloud of glory came, God the Father’s voice was heard. "Jesus the Son by name! Nations cry aloud in wonder: Praise and glory, praise and glory, praise and glory to our Lord! Jesus the Son by name! Nations cry aloud in wonder. * So I will tell you of another mystery. We who grieve would want to know something more than sorrow. It is good to remember our brother — but even this we shall not admit our need for God’s mercy to push against the darkness with that other greater mystery whom we name divine love, the one who in turn names us, each one, as beloved sons and daughters. We must forget that the word has already been won. Death’s hold has been defeated and those baptized into Christ Jesus will not have death as their only end. Here is where the reality of death meets the reality of life. Trembling at his feet we saw Moses and Elijah speaking. All the prophets and the law shout through them their joyful greeting. Praise and glory, praise and glory praise and glory to our Lord! All the prophet and the law shout through them their joyful greeting. * This kind of greater love, this extra mile love, is necessary for us to bridge the imposing divides that still separate us in this day and time and place. Our world is too loud, too deaf, too blind, too fast, too selfish and too forgetful to figure out what it means to be a hopeful human. Common respect for human life has been eroded. We have ahead of us many more difficult but necessary conversations as a community in order to find our way to that new place where God’s justice and God’s love breaks through hardened human hearts. If there is anything Jesus Christ did it was go the extra mile to open eyes, open ears, open hearts, open minds, calm storms — he went the extra mile to heal the sorrowful and gave people back to each other, even those who could never have imagined their become brother or sister to each other ever again. The secret of life: that is the pattern. We who are baptismal life to the fullness – so that God will be faithful to Brad, to you, to me. So we have our memories this July morning.

—Your memories of a kind, generous man formed in the spirit of his family, his church, his profession. The church’s memories are captured in the final words of the Book of Revelation: Behold, I make all things new again. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty, I will give a gift from the springs of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts and I shall be his God, and he shall be my son.

God will be faithful in just this way. May God be praised for what we cannot understand or bear alone. God can grant to the church the constant awareness of our own baptismal life to the fullness — so that our hope may be as fulfilled as we trust Brad’s hope now is.

Jesus is the chosen one, living hope of every nation, hear and heed him, everyone; sing, with earth and all creation: Alleluia, alleluia, Alleluia!

Hear and heed him, everyone; Sing with earth and all creation. *

*Text: Brian Wren c. 1977, 1995, Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
from page 1

written: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the broken-hearted, to comfort all who mourn” (Is. 61:1a, 2).

One of the most compelling chapters of the New Testament is St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, Chapter 8. In it St. Paul writes: “I consider the sufferings of this present time as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us… If God is for us who can be against us??… For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor heights, nor depths, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus Our Lord” (8:18, 31, 39). Elsewhere he recorded: “The love of God impels us” (II Cor. 5:14).


A study published three decades ago alleged that only 268 of the past 3400 years of “civilization” were free from war. (R. Paul Shaw and Yuwa Wang, Genetic Seeds of Warfare: Evolution, Nationalism, and Patriotism, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1989, p. 3). It can also be said that even in those scant years, preparations for war were underway.

Much prayer, reflection, and acts of fasting and self-denial have been carried out this month by church members here and beyond. On behalf of the local church, a number of us, including me, have engaged in public and private prayer, participated in meetings, released statements and given interviews the local, national and inter-national levels. Who and what in this city are have been variously perceived and portrayed. Let it be clear that last Sunday’s local incident of multiple loss of lives and the occurrence of injuries was perpetuated by a loner from outside our state, which further complicated the unfortunate bloodshed on July 5. We in the Baton Rouge community understand the continuing need for us (as well as others in our country and in our world, I parenthetically add) to intentionally and conscientiously galvanize our efforts to improve communication and cooperation among us as public officials, law enforcement personnel, members of faith-based communities and citizens. We know we neither live in paradise (that is in the next world) nor in Camelot (that is a fictional creation). We own what happened in our city on July 5 and July 17. Yet these tragedies do not identify, characterize, represent nor define us. Let no one mistake what I am saying. We have been chastened, humbled and called to ever deeper commitment for prayer, dialogue, and work to better address questions including human relations, poverty, education, health care, and other concerns. These challenges have been with us for quite some time and will require special efforts in the long as well as short term to resolve. But let us courageously take up the challenge.

In declaring this a Year of Mercy (Laudato Si), Pope Francis powerfully wrote: “It is my burning desire that, during this jubilee, Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Let us rediscover the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us now forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offenses, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.” (#15). The Holy Father further stated to Catholics: “So many people, including young people, are returning to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; through this experience they are rediscovering a path back to the Lord, living a moment of intense prayer and finding meaning in their lives. Let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the center once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God’s mercy with their own hands. For every penitent, it will be a source of true interior peace” (#17).

Let us realize our current circumstances place us in the middle not only of a conflict of human origin but one of spiritual origin as well. St. Peter famously wrote: “Be sober and vigilant. Your enemy the devil, as prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus will himself restore, confirm, strengthen and establish you after you have suffered a little. To him be dominion forever. Amen” (1 Peter 5:8-11).

In 1944 a distressed woman almost lost her life through an attempted suicide. She later recounted it was at that moment that she first experienced unconditional love—which is God, and an eternal moment of beauty, that she was on earth for a purpose. In 1955 she composed the lyrics and her husband the melody for a song we all know. Jill Jackson and Sy Miller were their names, and the song was: “Let there be peace on earth.” The lyrics both begin and end: “Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.” Indeed, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with each of us. Let us allow now to refer back to St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, Chapter 8, this time citing verse 32. “We know that all things work for good for those who love God.” The tragedy that we have experienced would become even worse if we didn’t frankly view it as an unwelcome, but nonetheless, grace, opportunity to look inside ourselves and hold ourselves accountable. It requires us to decide to become more compassionate, empathic and resourceful. Let us pray, reflect, sacrifice, and work for justice and peace, relying on the God’s grace to lead us. As the late Belgian Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenens once wrote: “Happy are those who dream, and are willing to pay the price to make them come true.”

I close by offering the peace prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is error, truth; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not seek so much to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

At St. Paul Church in Baton Rouge, 200 balloons of green, blue and red were released into backdrop of a blue sky. According to Father Andrus, the green balloons symbolized a sign of new life, the blue balloons a sign of hope and the red balloons the blood that is “been lost senselessly and needlessly.”

Father Gerard Martin, pastor at St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville, had 400 yard signs made up proclaiming, “Pray and Work for Peace.” The signs were distributed during a prayer service at St. Mark Church in Gonzales as well as during the vigil Mass and Sunday Masses at St. John. Father Martin said all of the signs were distributed by the 9:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday.

“It was a surprise to run out that quick, but I think the people were appreciative of it,” Father Martin said. “I think it has definitely helped to bring all of our different groups of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds together.” Father Gerard Martin, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville, said of the 400 yard signs he had made up proclaiming a message of peace.

At St. Mary of False River Church in New Roads approxi- mately 250 people, including civic and law officials attended a healing and peace service on July 19. Concelebrants were Father Jack Nutter, parochial vicar at St. Mary, Father Patrick Healy SSJ, pastor at St. Augustin- e Church in New Roads, and Father Joseph Doyle SSJ, novice master for the Josephites.

The Knights of Columbus at St. Patrick Church in Baton Rouge, St. Thomas More in Baton Rouge and St. Louis King of France in Baton Rouge, led scriptural services and rosaries for peace on the evening of July 22 in the church.

St. John the Evangelist Church in Plaquemine celebrated a Mass for peace and healing on July 19. An estimated 900 people were in attendance, including first responders and law enforcement officials.

St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge held a prayer service July 24. During the ser- vice, pastor Father Trey Nelson prayed Daily Prayers for Peace and Healing.

Additionally, members of the church parish’s family life ministry collected sports drinks and protein bars to distribute to Baton Rouge Police officers and Louisiana State Police. Collections were so numerous that the remainder of the items were donated to families at a local hospital.

St. Ann Church in Morganza held a Mass for peace followed by a eucharistic holy hour that included the rosary and prayers for peace.

On July 17, only hours after the shootings of the officers, Father Jeff Bayhi, pastor at St. John the Baptist Church in Zachary, held a prayer service that included pastors from the area.

“Human is in God’s hands,” said Mgr. Robert Berggreen, pastor at St. Mary. “He alone has the power to change what needs to be changed and to inspire people to change. The only way we will have peace and love is to let God into us. It has to begin with each of us.”
Spirituality of marriage and the family

Another Perspective

Father John Carville

wishes to be saved he must take up his cross and follow him. In other words, sacrifice and suffering is part of the plan. Everyone will have his or her crosses, but through them we will learn what love truly is and be transformed by that love, and in the end Jesus joins in his resurrection. That is the good news of the Gospel. Jesus is our leader and our guide in practicing that kind of love.

Family spirituality is the combination of the many ways we learn and practice the love that Jesus showed us by his life, death and resurrection. As Pope Francis writes, “The spirituality of family love is made up of thousands of small but real gestures... The sorrows and difficulties of the family unite us to the suffering Christ.” Like his, they become acts of love. “If a family is centered on Christ, he will unify and illumine its entire life. Moments of pain and difficulty will be experienced in union with the Lord’s cross, and his closeness will make it possible to surmount them.” I think of couples who are crushed with dismay and fear when they discover that they have a special needs child. Yet, they often find their own union strengthened by their mutual love and care for the child. Likewise, the pope continues, “moments of joy, relaxation, celebration and even sexuality can be experienced as sharing in the full life of resurrection.” God does want us to find joy in life.

Trying always to imitate the love of Christ wherever life takes us, family love spills over into the wider community. The pope writes: “Led by the spirit, the family circle is not only open to life by generating it within itself, but also by going forth and spreading life by caring for others and seeking their happiness. ... All family life is a shepherding in mercy. Each of us, by our love and care, leaves a mark on the lives of others; with Paul, we can say, ‘You are our letter of recommendation on your hearts—not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God’” (2 Cor 3: 2-3). In other words, when we love others outside of our family, we really do have a lasting effect on them, and they will be our proof before God that we “lived as the Lord lived.” Family prayer, even if it is grace over meals, or a family rosary or family Christmas carols are moments of shared spirituality. Jesus not only taught his disciples to pray the perfect prayer of the Mass, including the “Our Father,” but he also prayed with them traditional Jewish prayers in the temple and in synagogues. As Catholic Christians, however, we should remember what Jesus said about Mass: “Do this in memory of me.” Sunday Mass, even with all the chaos of getting children cleaned up and dressed and to the church on time, is a beautiful experience of Eucharist thanksgiving for the presence of God in the life of one’s family. Through that family experience together with all the acts of love within and beyond the family that they are sent out to perform, the family becomes a domestic church.

For us as Catholics, marriage is truly a sacrament. The couple’s devotion to each other, their faithfulness to one another as they grow old together, is a sign of God’s faithfulness to his promise to be with them through all their years together. Marriage is such an awesome responsibility, freely chosen. Pope Francis says that it is a call “to bestow life and to care for life.”

I remember a family vacation in a large chalet above Gatlinburg, Tennessee, with all my parents’ nine children, the brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, the youngest sister with her fiancee and as many of the 22 grandchildren as were then born. My father turned to my mother and, with a smile of wonder and pride on his face said, “You know, June, we are responsible for all of this.” Responsible, blessed, grateful. As Pope Francis concludes: “to want to form a family is to resolve to be a part of God’s dream, to choose to dream with him, to want to build with him, to join him in this saga of building a world where no one will feel alone.”

Father John Carville is a retired priest in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and writes on current topics for The Catholic Commentator. He can be reached at johnycarville@gmail.com.

Mission Statement

The mission of The Catholic Commentator is to provide news, information and commentary to the people of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholics and their neighbors alike. In doing so, The Catholic Commentator strives to further the wider mission of the Church: to evangelize, to communicate, to educate and to give the Catholic viewpoint on important issues of the present day.
Suicide and mental health

As young boy, I longed to be a professional athlete but I had to soon accept the unspoken fact that I simply wasn’t gifted with an athlete’s body. Speed, strength, coordination, instinct, vision, I got by in ordinary life with what I had been given of these, but I wasn’t physically robust enough to be an athlete.

It took some years to make peace with that, and it took me even longer, well into mid-life, before I came to both acknowledge and give thanks for the fact that, while I wasn’t blessed with an athlete’s body, I had been given a robust mental health, and that this was a mammish undeserved blessing, more important for life than an athlete’s body. I had often wondered what it would be like to have an athlete’s body, to possess that kind of speed, strength and grace, but I had never wondered what it must be like not to have a strong, steady, resilient mind, one that knows how to return a lob, split a defense, not be afraid of contact, absorb a hit and not let the rigors of the game break you.

And that recognition was bought and paid for by some of the most painful moments of my life. As I aged, year after year, I began to see a number of my former classmates, colleagues, trusted friends lose their battle with death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death.

Moreover just as diabetes, arthritis, cancer, stroke, heart attacks, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and multiple sclerosis, can cause debilitation and death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death, so too can mental diseases wreak death.

It’s neither. Rather it is steadiness, a capacity to somehow always be anchored, balanced, buoyant and resilient in the face of all that life throws at you, good and bad. Indeed, sometimes it can be a positive blockage to creativity and brilliance. Some people, it seems, are just too grounded and sane to be brilliant! And brilliant people, gifted artists, poets, musicians, not infrequently struggle to stay solidly grounded. Brilliance and steadiness are frequently very different gifts. Through the years that I have been writing on suicide, I have received many letters, emails and phone calls, with anguish concerns about understanding mental health. One letter came from a woman, a brilliant psychoanalyst, somewhat anxious about her own steadiness and that of her family, who wrote: “Everyone in my family is brilliant, but none of us is very steady!” Of course, we all know families where the reverse is true.

In short, we need a better understanding of mental health; perhaps not so much among doctors, psychiatrists and mental health professionals, where there is already a considerable understanding of mental health and where valuable research goes on, but within the culture at large, particularly as this pertains to suicide.

When we see someone suffering from a physical disability or a bodily disease, it’s easy to understand this limitation and be moved to empathy. But this is not so overt or easily understood. This is a special healing and miracle. We need to better understand mental health and mental breakdown. Psychologically and emotionally, we are not immune to all kinds of cancers, strokes, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. And they too can be terminal, as is the case with suicide.

OBLATE FATHER Rolheiser, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted at ronrolheiser.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/ronrolheiser.
Schoenstatt Shrine Meeting – The Schoenstatt Shrine meeting will be at Immaculate Conception Church, 865 Hatchell Lane, Denham Springs, on Sunday, Aug. 21, 2 p.m. Information on Paul Polzon will be available. There will be a re-appointment of coordinators. Please bring hall in 2011. We wanted to update it, repair termite damage, and “dress it up” a little bit without losing its primitive and rural feel that our parishioners loved so much. We did a lot to the church, but the most memorable part of that project was painting the yellowed ceiling myself. I spent many hours (usually late into the night) on a scissors lift. The fourth coat of white paint finally did the job! I could then relate to Michelangelo painting the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

The final challenging project was tearing down St. William Church in Port Vincent – brick by brick – and salvaging as many bricks as possible to build a smaller chapel. The new chapel will be finished soon, but it took four months for us to raise the funds for this purpose. Port Vincent is the place that Catholicism entered Livingston Parish in 1839 and there has been a church in that community since that time, so we will continue that tradition. However, I am tired of handling, stacking, and cleaning all of those bricks!

Tell us about your Christmas village.

As a person who loves to eat, what is your most favorite dish?

Pizza is – and has always been – my most favorite food. I like it loaded down with toppings – I truly believe that “just cheese and pepperoni” is a waste of good pizza sauce and dough.

Tell us something most people may not know about you.

In addition to being a pastor of two parishes and serving in various other capacities in the diocese (most of our priests wear several hats), I also serve as a police chaplain and do uniform patrol in the evenings. My father was a World War II veteran, and I always wanted to serve my country as he did, but in my own unique way. When the French Settlement Police Department asked me to serve as their commissioned chaplain, I surprised them all by voluntarily attending police academy with the Livingston Parish Sheriff’s Office (which was a brutal endeavor for 22 weeks – on top of my priestly duties). I now volunteer for night duty when my schedule allows. I have come to know many law enforcement officers over the last two years, and I truly believe that priests can learn a lot from the strong fraternity that police officers share, as well as the mentoring that officers receive as they work up the ranks. Our police officers need a listening ear at times, and when they do, they want to speak to someone who has walked in their boots.

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Summer a time of a planning, organization for teachers

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

Walk into any local store this time of year and the tell-tale signs emerge: hanging apples-and-shape figures, posters that look like yellow buses and probably the biggest revelation of all, sale tags on everything from pencils and notebooks to glue sticks and backpacks. Yep, there’s no mistake. It’s back to school time.

For many parents, the start of a new school year means buying uniforms, stocking up on school supplies and getting the kids back on a decent bedtime routine for early morning school days. It can be a busy time.

But parents are not the only ones making preparations.

Across the diocese, Catholic school teachers are back in their classrooms, creating bulletin boards, setting up learning centers and organizing supplies. At first, it looks like a busy time for teachers, too. But go beyond the classroom, and you will find teachers have been busy preparing for this new school year all summer long.

“I actually start planning as soon as school gets out in May,” said Rose Rinaudo, a kindergarten teacher at Our Lady of Mercy School.

Rinaudo, who admits she is “passionate about teaching,” explained that she keeps her eye on various websites and other resources.

“I’m always looking at Pinterest and teaching blogs to get new ideas and activities for my students,” she said.

Rinaudo’s sister-in-law, Polly Rinaudo, who teaches kindergarten, too, continually searches for new teaching ideas as well.

“I love doing new and different things each year,” the Most Blessed Sacrament School faculty member said.

Of course, both Baton Rouge teachers noted there are some activities that score high marks every year and make learning fun.

“I look forward to the beginning of the school year because we read ‘The Gingerbread Man’ and make homemade gingerbread men,” said Polly Rinaudo, who noted, that just like in the story, the gingerbread men “run away” and the children must search for them.

“It is a great way (for the students) to learn about their new school and where all the different places are in the school,” she said.

Tracy Gaspard, a third-grade teacher at St. Thomas More School in Baton Rouge, has also been using the summer months to prepare for the start of school. For Gaspard, preparation means attending workshops, meeting with colleagues and collaborating on lesson plans and curriculum strategies, but it also means using her vacation time with family to prepare.

“While on vacation this summer, I took many pictures to share throughout the year based on the different units we cover,” she said, explaining that she took pictures of mountains, valleys, Hoover Dam, lakes and other sites to help her students better understand land forms and water systems.

“I also brought home rocks from the Grand Canyon for our rock unit,” Gaspard added.

Denise Picknering, a fourth-grade teacher at St. Alphonsus Liguori School in Greenwell Springs, spent a better part of her summer vacation at school this year.

“We’ve been up here (to the school) since June, working part-time here and there to get ready,” she said.

While “getting ready” included doing physical things, like moving furniture and organizing cabinets, it also involved creating new lessons and evaluating previous ones to make sure they met her goals and objectives.

Picknering, who begins her eighth year teaching this year, knows that preparing for the new school year is important. As someone who is “big on organization,” she believes being prepared helps her focus on what is most important: her students.

“I want my students to be successful. I want them to want to come to school and to enjoy it,” she said. “That’s my hope.”

Picknering’s colleague, Ally Smith, the technology coordinator and computer teacher Ally Smith works on one of the student computers. Smith created most of the posters and other learning aids displayed in her classroom, including the large keyboard behind her.

Photo by Rachele Smith | The Catholic Commentator

With students heading back to school soon, St. Alphonsus technology coordinator and computer teacher Ally Smith works on one of the student computers. Smith created most of the posters and other learning aids displayed in her classroom, including the large keyboard behind her.

Photo by Rachele Smith | The Catholic Commentator

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TEACHERS ▼
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is preparing a technology lesson for teachers as well as working on a new website.

Josie Duke, a middle school religion teacher at St. George School in Baton Rouge, is eager to see her new students. From her many years of teaching, she knows that some students will be apprehensive that first day, but she said, “I enjoy seeing that give way to a sense of ease about the new year, especially when they come to understand that we teachers are here to help them succeed, not fail.”

This summer, school has taken on a double meaning for Duke. As a teacher, she has been preparing for her new students by attending in-service training days and pouring over new textbooks and preparing everything from lesson plans to study guides and tests.

Denise Pickering, a fourth-grade teacher at St. Alphonsus Liguori School in Greenwell Springs, finishes her classroom bulletin board in anticipation of the start of the school year. Photo by Rachele Smith | The Catholic Commentator

But Duke has also been a student herself. A graduate student at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Duke has spent May through July “researching and preparing for my comprehensive examinations in moral and dogmatic theology this fall,” she said.

By extending herself through more education and work before school even begins, Duke reveals a passion many teachers have about their profession.

“As a religion teacher to middle schoolers, my hope this year and every year is that my students understand that they are here for a purpose chosen by God himself and that they are loved beyond measure,” she said.

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Saturday, August 20, 2016
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School Sisters of Notre Dame
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Osyka, MS 39657

RSVP
by August 16 ~ http://bit.ly/1U3uP5B
More information:
drohrichtyle@ssndcp.org or 314-633-7032

EVENTS ▼
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at the Table,” with Father Joseph Nasso CP. More for information, visit retreats.arch-no.org or call 504-267-9604.

Magnificat Meeting
Donna Speeg, an apostle of the divine mercy devotion, will speak at the meeting of Magnificat, a ministry to women, Saturday, Aug. 27, 9 a.m. – noon, at the Oak Lodge Reception Center, 2834 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Baton Rouge. Reservations are $22 each and can be made through Tuesday, Aug. 23, with a check made out to BR Magnificat along with attendee names to Kathy Simonneau, 9650 Victory Lane, Denham Springs, LA 70726.

Bayou Teche Eucharistic Procession
A eucharistic procession along Bayou Teche will be held on the feast of Assumption of the Blessed Mary, Monday, Aug. 15. The events begin with Mass at St. Leo the Great Church, 126 Church Road, Leonville at 8 a.m., after which there will there will be a procession to the boat landing. The boat leaves at 9:30 a.m., and there will be stops at each church on the bayou along the way. After disembarking at Eunice’s Oak Lodge Reception Center, 5244 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Eunice. Commuters are welcome as space permits. For registration and information, visit retreats.arch-no.org or call 504-267-9604.

MBS Tribute to Mother Teresa
In preparation for Mother Teresa’s upcoming canonization on Sept. 4, Most Blessed Sacrament Church and School will be hosting an exhibit of photos, media and art reflecting upon her life and ministry, Wednesday, Aug. 31, 6-8 p.m., at the MBS School campus, 8033 Barringer Road, Baton Rouge. For more information, call 225-751-5867.

Holy Spirit Retreat
Father John Gordon of the Archdiocese of Newark will lead a Holy Spirit Retreat, “Majesty and Mercy,” open to men and women, Friday, Sept. 20 – Sunday, Oct. 20, at the Lumen Christi Retreat Center in Schriever. The retreat is sponsored by the Catholic Charismatic Movement of New Orleans. Commuters are welcome as space permits. For registration and information, visit crcn.org, call 504-828-1386 or email info@ccrno.org.

Saving Self-Esteem – One Child at a Time

So many school children like Gabrielle, Hannah, Manuel, Marley, and Antonio need your help! For low-income families, the top priorities are food and housing, and too often, there’s nothing left to spend on school uniforms. Education is the key that can open the door to a new way of life, and the two uniforms we give to each needy child cost only $24.00 – a small price to pay for a child’s self-esteem. With your support they can go to school properly dressed, without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. Our Uniforms for Kids effort will help needy children in 12 parishes. This summer, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul asks you to consider how you can give hope to the most vulnerable children in our community.

Join us in helping needy children like Gabrielle, Hannah, Manuel, Marley, and Antonio by sending a financial gift using the form below or by giving online at svdpr.br.org.

Clip and send in your Uniforms for Kids Donation Form

Yes, I would like to help clothe needy school children. Please find enclosed my gift of $__________.

Please mark the parish where you would like to direct your help.

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Assumption
East Baton Rouge
East Feliciana
Iberville
Livingston
Pointe Coupee
Tangipahoa
West Baton Rouge
West Feliciana
St. Helena
St. James

Please mail to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, P.O. Box 127, Baton Rouge, LA 70821 or call us at (225) 383-7837.