Bishop Muench renews call for prayer, peace

Words cannot express the emotions we feel for those who have lost loved ones in the tragic events of (July 17). Their entire lives have been unexpectedly and terribly turned upside down. In visiting this afternoon with two of the families affected by these shootings, Father Tom Ranzino and I shared prayer and support in the midst of their shock, horror and grief. Prayer is a powerful path to follow when tragedy happens, but even the most devout of us sometime question: “What good could come of this?” Only the Word of God has the answer to the questions that shake our faith: The answer is our Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus, hope ultimately triumphs over despair; love ultimately triumphs over hate; and resurrection ultimately triumphs over death. Standing firmly on the pillars of these eternal truths, we look to his words of promise in the Sermon on the Mount, and we recall two beatitudes that speak to the hope we should hold, especially today: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God,” and “Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Mt. 5:9, 4). We renew our call for a diocesan-wide week of prayer and fasting as we reflect on the events of the last several days, and as we work toward a lasting peace in our communities.

Shootings shock victims’ friends

By Debbie Shelley and Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

Gerri Marino’s greatest fear was realized on July 17.
As a former deputy with the East Baton Rouge sheriff’s office, Marino, a parishioner at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge, said she was shocked to learn that one of the three officers shot and killed during the morning police assault was a friend and someone she used to work with.
“Brad (Garafola) was just a great guy,” she said.

Described by his wife, Tonja, on Facebook as a “wonderful husband, father and friend,” Deputy Brad Garafola, 45, along with city police officers Matthew Gerald, 41, and Kentrell Jackson, 32, were shot and killed during an early morning police assault on Airline Highway. Three other law enforcement officers were also wounded, with one, 41-year-old Nicholas Tullier, listed in critical condition at press time.

The assailant, who investigators said targeted police officers, was identified as Gavin Eugene Long of Kansas City, Missouri. Long was shot and died at the scene. In YouTube videos posted before the assault, Long expressed his anger with the death of Alton Sterling.

Members of the St. John the Baptist Church choir in Zachary sing while Zachary police officers look on during a prayer service July 17 at the church. Pastors from several churches of all denominations spoke during the service, which lasted about one hour. Many of those in attendance stayed after to pray the rosary. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

Catholic community responds to violence

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

As tragic events of the past two weeks unfolded in the Baton Rouge area, the Catholic community has been at the forefront of helping to spread the message of peace.
From prayer services to opening churches to hosting community meetings, Catholic leaders have been involved in every step since the death of Alton Sterling in the early morning of July 5 to the shooting of three law enforcement officials July 17.
“I thought coming together in the presence of God and showing our love and support was the right thing to do,” said Father Jeff Bayhi, pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Zachary, where a prayer service was held July 17 that attracted community members from all races and religious beliefs.
“I love it,” Father Bayhi added of the cultural diversity of the standing...
St. Joseph holding the infant Jesus is one of three statues at St. Joseph Church in French Settlement that are of Portuguese origin and date to the 1200s. Two of the statues are in the old church, and the other is in the parish hall. Former pastor Father James Kinkead, who served for 18 years in French Settlement, obtained the statues, although it is uncertain how. They were found during a renovation of the rectory and eventually restored. The attention to detail on the statues is remarkable, even to the hand warmers on the hands of the infant Jesus. The statues are made of single block wood, and weigh about 85 to 90 pounds. The skin tone is darker than traditional statues, and the style is patterned after those in Europe, especially in Poland and France, but not common in the United States. Photo by Richard Meek. The Catholic Commentator

The Via Matris, known as“The Way of the Sorrowful Mother,” is one of several devotions that have grown out of the preaching of the Servants of Mary.

The Via Matris is believed to be based on private revelations reported by the founders of the Servants of Mary in the 13th century, with one study suggesting the devotion existed as early as the 14th century.

However, others believe it is not of Servite origin but was the Franciscans who initiated the devotion. Regardless of the origin it is generally accepted that Via Matris was embraced by the Servite friars who brought the devotion in its present form to the public.

The Way of the Mother was practiced for centuries in Servite churches in other parts of the world but did not become popular in the United States until 1937 when the Sorrowful Mother Novena was established.

The devotion is based on the contemplation of the life of the Blessed Virgin, from the Annunciation to the death of Christ. Patterned after the Way of the Cross, the Via Matris has seven stations corresponding to seven events in Mary’s life that the church has traditionally identified as her seven principal sorrows.

The stations are canonically erected in churches, although in earlier years the blessing and erection of these stations were reserved for the Servite order.

Since Vatican II any priest is allowed to celebrate the ritual, The stations were first indulgenced by Pope Gregory XVI. Currently, there are five alternative versions of the Via Matris, with new Gospel passages and prayers. Each version is consistent with an introduction, a series of stations and a conclusion.

The church celebrates Our Lady of Sorrows on Sept. 15. In central Europe the feast is known as Schmerzensfreitag and the feast even includes the making of a special soup of seven bitter herbs to be served at dinner.

The stations of the Via Matris are:
1. Mary embraces in faith the prophecy of Simeon
2. Mary flees with Jesus and St. Joseph to Egypt
3. Mary and St. Joseph search for their lost son in the temple.
4. Mary meets Jesus on the road to Calvary
5. Jesus dies on the cross
6. Jesus is taken down from the cross
7. Mary receives his body in her arms
8. Jesus is laid in the tomb

TREASURES FROM THE DIOCESE

If you have news or events coming up in your church parish, school or organization, please let us know about it so we can spread the word!

Email Richard Meek at rmeek@diobr.org; or fax to 225-336-8710.

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Bishop meets with Lutheran leaders to work collaboratively for peace

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

The vicar general for the Diocese of Baton Rouge said the past few weeks have been difficult on a number of fronts but also has been a time of charity and hope.

Father Tom Ranzino said recent events have caused a “difficult week of violence, confrontations, accusations and death.”

But, he quickly added, “It has also been a remarkable time of charity, peacemaking, engagement and hope. Difficult but necessary conversations have been held around the home tables of Catholics and across the diocese fervent prayers have been offered around parish altars.”

He said seldom have the issues of racial relationships, civic responsibility, the role of police and their most difficult duties, and the histories of diverse people with very different narratives been more contentious. But he said that difficult but necessary conversations are not only needed but expected and hoped from the church with the goal of finding a way through to a new place of understanding and restorative reconciliation.

To address those issues, Bishop Robert W. Muench has embarked on a number of initiatives, including meeting with the Baton Rouge chief of police, city officials and ministers to pray, work collaboratively, communicate the known facts and to consider ways for the city to move forward in a peaceful direction.

“Taking time to first ‘get our own souls in order,’ that is, to reflect, pray and fast can hopefully open a space in which hospitable reverence for the neighbor can enlighten us about what it means to act with charity, act for human justice and act in faithfulness to Christ and Christ’s command to love thy neighbor,” Father Ranzino said.

Father Camilleri retires

Bishop Robert W. Muench has accepted the resignation of Father Joseph Camilleri.

Father Camilleri was born Oct. 22, 1948 in Zebbug-Gozo, Malta and attended Sacred Heart Minor Seminary in Victoria-Gozo, Malta for five years. He also attended St. Augustine College in Rabat, Malta for two years before continuing his education at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

He was ordained May 25, 1974 by Bishop Charles Greco at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Baton Rouge.

Father Camilleri served as pastor at St. Agnes Church in Baton Rouge, St. Helena Church in Amite, and St. Joan of Arc Church in Bayou Pigeon.

He also served as administrator at St. Joan of Arc.

Father Camilleri served as parochial vicar at Sacred Heart, St. Jules Church in Belle Rose, Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge, St. James Church in St. James, St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge, St. John the Evangelist Church in Plaquemine, Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in White Castle, Sacred Heart, St. Joseph the Worker Church in Pierre Part and St. Louis King of France Church in Baton Rouge.

From May 1979-August 1989 Father Camilleri served in Malta.

Bishop Robert W. Muench recently met with leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the wake of the shooting of Alton Sterling. Pictured, from left, are Rev. Michael of Button of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Baton Rouge; Judith Roberts from the ELCA office in Chicago; Rev. Michael Rinehart, bishop from the ELCA Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod; Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop from Chicago; Bishop Muench; Dr. Stephen Bouman, director of director domestic mission of the ELCA office in Chicago; and Rev. Brenda Smith, also from Chicago.
Robicheaux brings commitment to special education to her new role

By Rachelle Smith
The Catholic Commentator

"Extensive experience, incredible talent, faith commitment and exceptional energy." That’s how Dr. Melanie Verges, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, described Bethany Robicheaux, the new director of special education.

Verges made the comments in a July 1 letter to parents, teachers and other stakeholders of special education in the diocese.

Robicheaux, whose appointment was effective July 14, has served as a member of the diocese’s advisory board for special education. Most recently, she was with the Louisiana State Department of Education, working to support teachers and administrators throughout the state in many roles, including as an instructional specialist, an institute director, a program chief of staff and an academic content logistic coordinator.

But Robicheaux’s experience also extends beyond organizational and administrative leadership. She also knows what it’s like to be in the classroom, the place where she said, “the real work is done.”

A native of Menomonie, Wisconsin and a graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in Minnesota and a graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in Minnesota and a graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in Minnesota and a graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in Minnesota and a graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in Minnesota, Robicheaux found her way to Louisiana, and ultimately her passion for teaching, through the Teach for America program.

“I taught seventh-grade special education and served 11 students that first year (at Southeast Middle School in Baton Rouge), and I just fell in love with them,” she said.

As a teacher, Robicheaux knew instinctively that she wanted the best for her students. To help each reach his or her potential, she created a writing workshop course (which Robicheaux later taught) and also worked with a team of educators at her school in developing a multi-tiered adolescent literacy program.

“I think this was that first special presence; one that showed me this might be a calling for my life,” she said.

As the diocese’s new director of special education, Robicheaux, who holds a master’s degree in public administration from LSU, has already hit the ground running. In addition to reaching out to everyone involved in the program, including every parent and teacher, she is also planning to meet with the six individual school sites where classes for autism and intellectual disabilities, as well as lab services for dyslexia and resource are held.

“It is a gift to be at these schools. We are part of their community and we want to understand how we can best integrate the work that is happening there with the special education program on their site and with the way each school functions,” said Robicheaux, who holds a master’s degree in public administration from LSU, has already hit the ground running. In addition to reaching out to everyone involved in the program, including every parent and teacher, she is also planning to meet with the six individual school sites where classes for autism and intellectual disabilities, as well as lab services for dyslexia and resource are held.

“When I first took over the program on their site and with the way each school functions,” she said, adding that having an open and ongoing dialogue with everyone involved in the program is important.

“I’m a huge advocate of over-communicating,” she said.

For Robicheaux, that also means finding and establishing additional advocates for each student in the program. While she believes strongly that parents are the first advocates for their child, she also recognizes the importance of having additional supporters.

She says these backers can be spiritual, someone who supports through prayer, or financial, someone who sees the importance of special education and wants to make sure that it reaches its potential.

But there is also another type of advocate.

“A physical advocate is also important. This can simply be another student at the school who offers a high-five in the hall or otherwise makes that (special education) student feel welcome,” she said.

Robicheaux is quick to point out that while encouraging advocates and opening a dialogue is important, good communication also includes listening, which is something she is ready to do. In the end, she says, she wants to do it right because the work that needs to be done is just that important.

“What we’re about is creating the best outcomes for our kids,” she said. “After all, if we’re not working for the kids, then what are we working for?”

Photo by Rachele Smith | The Catholic Commentator
Family relies on faith in determined fight against cancer

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

Susan Frugé only had to look at her husband’s face to know.

Walking into his hospital room in March 2015, she could tell his diagnosis was not what they wanted, not what they prayed for.

At 45-years-old, her husband, Todd Frugé, was diagnosed with stage III colon cancer.

Immediately the couple turned their thoughts to their three children, who were not aware at the time that cancer was even a possibility.

“I told Todd that I could tell them that night, but he said, ‘No, I don’t want you to tell them by yourself,’” said Susan.

While hearing the news about their dad’s illness was difficult, the entire family began to lean on their faith. As they prayed and sought solace from each other, the children, Hunter, a senior at St. Michael High School in Baton Rouge, and his twin sisters, Ashlyn and Londyn, both eighth-graders at St. Thomas More School in Baton Rouge, also began to unite the family in one cause, ultimately finding support with #Team Frugé and inspiring others with their faith and hope.

“It’s truly a team because we have so many people praying for us and helping us in so many different ways,” said Susan, who added that some people comment and wonder how they can look so happy.

“We don’t know any other way to be. It’s hard, but we’re learning how to do it,” she said.

“During certain periods, you have to remind yourself that God has a plan,” added Todd, who admitted he has periods of frustration, especially in the beginning, when he asked the question, “Why me?”

“I don’t really have an answer for that,” he said.

But he noted daily prayer, including saying the rosary every day, reciting special prayers he has in a pouch nearby and just talking in conversation with God helps.

But there’s also something else that Todd uses to draw inspiration: his children. Admittingly, keeping up with active teenagers can be difficult, but Todd enjoys their busy lifestyle and refuses to let anything stop him from being there.

For example, last fall, only days after enduring a round of chemotherapy treatment, Todd managed to attend a St. Michael football game so he could watch Hunter play. Sitting in the stands was difficult, but it was something he wanted to do.

“I was really happy to see him there,” said Hunter. And Hunter wasn’t the only one.

Todd’s determination to beat cancer has inspired other people from the St. Michael community, including players and coaches not even associated with football.

“We enjoy going to the baseball games, and one player (Hayden Salles) hit a home-run and gave me the ball,” said Todd, who added during another game, the same player hit another home- run, but this time he did something different.

“He brought me the ball and every player had signed it. Their coach told me, ‘You just don’t know how much you have inspired these boys,’” said Todd, fighting back emotion.

For the Frugé family, Todd’s cancer journey is not over. While there was some good news following his first rounds of chemotherapy treatment, new suspicious spots were found in January of this year.

In May, they learned the cancer had not only returned to his liver, but had spread to his lungs.

The family, however, is determined to fight back, continuing to place their trust in prayer and their hope in faith.

Early on, the Frugé children chose a scripture verse to help them. From 2 Corinthians 5:7, “For we walk by faith, not by sight,” helps them realize God will see them through this.

“There’s something about this one (verse) that reminds us of what we need to focus on. It kind of brings us back,” said Susan, adding the verse was printed on bracelets, which were given to others to show their appreciation for continued prayers.

In addition to bracelets, Susan knew her children also wanted something else to show their outward support for their dad. So, using a design drawn by Ashlyn and suggestions on placement and color by Hunter and Londyn, t-shirts were created.

Susan said friends and those cheering for Todd especially like the purple and gold colors as they know Todd is a huge LSU fan. Todd’s love of anything LSU is also generating a lot of support with an upcoming fundraiser called “Tiger Tailgating for Todd.”

Designed to help the family with expenses, the fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, July 30 from 6-10 p.m. and will offer lots of food, fun, and oh yeah, expect to see lots of #Team Frugé bracelets and t-shirts, too.

For more information on the event, visit “Tiger Tailgating for Todd” on Facebook.
Weddings during Lent/Purgatory and the good thief

Q We just learned that a close family member will be getting married next year during Lent. We, of course, are excited about the couple’s pending nuptials, but we thought that the church frowned upon weddings during Lent. Since they are getting married in another Midwestern state, it seems that the local church there must permit the practice. Does each diocese make its own decision on this issue? (Indianapolis)

A I have heard that there are parishes or even dioceses that discourage the celebration of marriages during Lent, but there is actually no universal rule of the church that would ban them.

Q I would even argue that it would be a violation of canon law to rule out Lenten weddings altogether based on Canon 843, Paragraph 1, which states that Catholics cannot be denied the sacraments if they ask for them and are properly disposed, and Canon 18, which indicates that the rights of the faithful cannot be limited unless the law clearly permits it.

A In 1988, the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments did rule that weddings may not take place on Good Friday or Holy Saturday, but those are the only days so indicated.

Q Liturgical guidelines of the church do indicate, though, that if weddings are held during Lent, both music and church decorations should be less lavish, in keeping with the penitential nature of the season.

A As I understand purgatory, it is a place where a cleansing is done, even if we have received the sacrament of anointing of the sick and/or made a good confession and had our sins absolved before death. My question is this: On the day Jesus was crucified, he told the good thief, “Today you will be with me in paradise;” so are we to assume that no cleansing in purgatory was required for him? And if that’s the case, why not? (Philadelphia)

Q Your understanding of purgatory is correct. It has been a clear and consistent belief of the church, as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven” (No. 1030).

A What we don’t know, of course, is just what this transitional state consists of. How long it lasts, whether it might even be instantaneous and what it feels like are questions beyond our reckoning so long as we are still on this side of eternity.

Q What needs to be factored in, too — and some might be unaware of this — is a prayer called the “Apostolic Pardon.” This prayer of blessing is customarily administered by a priest when someone is close to death and follows the anointing of the sick and, if possible, the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist as viaticum, bread for the journey.

A In this prayer, the priest says, “Through the holy mysteries of our redemption, may Almighty God release you from all punishments in this life and in the life to come. May he open to you the gates of paradise and welcome you to everlasting joy.”

And even if a priest is unavailable, the church provides in the Handbook of Indulgences that a dying person who is rightly disposed and has prayed regularly during life may be granted this same plenary indulgence (No. 28).

So to me, it’s quite reasonable that Jesus could have absolved the repentant thief of both sin and of punishment. If a priest can do it, why not Christ?

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.
New program offers hope to those suffering from the pains of divorce

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Their stories are different – some divorced because of infidelity, others over financial tensions or substance abuse and others because “real life” doused the passionate flame of young love. But the divorced and divorcing all have something in common – the need to heal and renew their faith after the breakup of their relationship.

St. Alphonsus Church in Greenwell Springs is beginning a program for men and women who are in the process of divorce or who are divorced. They will start with a 12-week program, beginning Tuesday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m., at the St. Francis Room. The program will cover topics such as grief, denial, anger, guilt, forgiveness, money, the courts, children, the ex-spouse, annulments, dating, sexuality, remarriage and staying single.

A group organizing the program said, “Whether you got a divorce 10 days ago or 10 years ago, this program offers valuable insight and hope to those suffering from the pains of divorce.”

Theresa Tranchina, another organizing team member, said, “I’m just now getting able to sit in church without crying.”

The program offers hope to those suffering from the pains of divorce. It will help them find a path to healing and renewal of their faith. Men and women who are in the process of divorce or who are divorced will have the opportunity to explore their faith in a supportive environment.

The sessions include DVD presentations, group discussions and a journal. The program will cover topics such as grief, denial, anger, guilt, forgiveness, money, the courts, children, the ex-spouse, annulments, dating, sexuality, remarriage and staying single.

The program is open to anyone who has experienced divorce or is currently going through the process. It is led by Father John Catoir, a Catholic priest who has experience in counseling and helping people through difficult times.

Father Catoir said, “I was turning 50. I had to start all over,” said Tranchina, who said the breakup destroyed nearly everything in her life.

She found it difficult to go to church, even though her children went to St. Alphonsus School and served in the church. “I’m just now getting able to sit in church without crying,” said Tranchina.

While the women stay committed to their faith, there are still those “down times” where they need people so they can help pick each other up.

Men, as well, go through misery and need support following a divorce, according to organizing team members Steve LeBlanc Sr., who divorced after being married for 18 years, and Jeff Ward, who divorced after eight years of marriage.

“It was extremely painful,” said LeBlanc. “I couldn’t work. I think I had a mental breakdown. I was in a fog. I was wanting to be vindictive, and I wanted to get revenge.”

He lost 25 pounds and went through many personal struggles. Father Jeff Bayhi helped direct him to the resources to get his life back on track.

He said the journey is still difficult, but he has reconnected with his faith and believes that a support group, such as the one formed by The Catholic’s Divorce Healing Program, can help him continue his journey.

Ward, who divorced 30 years ago after being married eight years, said the divorce process is terrible and he found himself at “wit’s end.”

The anchor during the stormy time was, and continues to be, his Catholic faith. “It’s much more intense. It’s helped guide me about what I need to do,” said Ward.

The team members said they have been encouraged by Pope Francis’ appeal to the church to reach out to the divorced and welcome them at God’s family table. They, likewise, want to spread hope through this ministry and let the divorced and divorcing know their life stories are of value to others.

“It brings Christians back together. Just because you made a mistake you don’t have to be a victim. You are forgiven,” said Ward.

“I’m happier than I have ever been in my life,” said LeBlanc. “You give and share your story. The next person who comes in will say, ‘I have a different story,’ and I’m going to learn from that story.”

Registration forms can be accessed at st-alphonsus.net. For information, call 225-261-4044.

Finding God in the present moment

Spirituality For Today
Father John Catoir

Communion with God should be a natural part of your life, like your very own heartbeat. Being aware of the presence of God is automatic, even if you only consciously admit to God a few times a day. The Lord is present, whether you are praying or not.

Jean-Pierre de Caussade, a Jesuit spiritual writer, says that “sanctity can be reduced to one single practice, fidelity to the duties appointed by God.” This, he continues, “consists in accomplishing the duties which devolve upon us” and accepting with love “all that God sends us at each moment.”

You might think that this refers to duties like performing the corporal of works of mercy, but it also refers to ordinary, everyday tasks like doing the dishes and taking care of your health.

Living in the present moment means not letting the past drag you down or letting any fear of the future cloud you with doubt. It takes willpower, decision-making and the desire to be your best self. This leads to a state of peace.

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 begin 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 CATOIR writes on issues of spirituality for today’s Catholic for Catholic News Service.
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament to be held at St. Joseph Cathedral July 24

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge on Sunday, July 24 following the noon Mass. Bishop Robert W. Muench will celebrate the Mass, and then adoration will be held until 6 p.m. Father Josh Johnson, parochial vicar at St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge, will preside at the benediction. Bishop Muench is also scheduled to be at the benediction.

Vicar general Father Tom Ranzino, pastor at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge, said all are invited.

“It is an opportunity to be in the presence of the Lord and pray for peace in our city and pray for those they love,” Father Ranzino said.

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About Your Speaker: Hi, I’m Laura Poché, an attorney with Rabalais Estate Planning, certified in Estate Planning and Administration by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. I have spent my entire lifetime in Louisiana, where my husband, Jay, and I have raised our three sons. I’ll be sharing my newest facts about how to protect your life savings at my upcoming estate planning events.

What Her Clients Say!

Laura Poché
Estate Planning Attorney

To register call: 225-282-0612
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Register and attend an upcoming event to receive a copy of Laura Poché’s book, “Estate Planning Advice By A Woman For Louisiana Women, A Guide For Women And Those They Care For About: Wills, Trusts, Probate, Power of Attorney, Medicaid, Living Wills and Taxes.”

House bill would protect religious freedom at federal level

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee July 12 held a hearing on the First Amendment Defense Act, a bill two U.S. archbishops said would provide “a measure of protection for religious freedom at the federal level.”

The legislation was introduced June 17 by Rep. Raul Labrador, R-Idaho. The same day Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, introduced the measure as S. 1598 in the Senate.

The day of the hearing Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore issued a joint statement urging support for the measure. They are, respectively, chairmen of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittees for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage and the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

They said the bill is “a modest but important step in ensuring conscience protection to faith-based organizations and people of all faiths and of no faith who believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, protecting them from discrimination by the federal government.”

Archbishops Cordileone and Lori noted an “increasing intolerance toward religious belief and belief in the conjugal meaning of marriage,” which they said makes the bill’s protections “essential for continuing faithful-based charitable work, which supports the common good of our society.”

“Faith-based agencies and schools should not lose their licenses or accreditation simply because they hold reasonable views on marriage that differ from the federal government’s view,” the prelates said.

The bill, known as H.R. 2802, defines “discriminatory action” as any federal government action to discriminate against a person with such beliefs or convictions.

Those actions include altering the federal tax treatment of, causing any tax, penalty or payment to be assessed against, or denying, delaying or revoking certain tax exemptions of any such person; withholding, reducing, excluding, terminating or otherwise denying any benefit under a federal benefit program; or disallowing a deduction of any charitable contribution “made to or by such person.”

“The definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman, universally held for centuries, has nothing to do with disrespect for others, nor does it depend on religious belief.”

Archbishops Salvatore J. Cordileone and William E. Lori

“The definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman ... has nothing to do with disrespect for others, nor does it depend on religious belief.”
CSAA announces inaugural director

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

An educator with more than 35 years experience, Daryl Michael Glueck has been selected as the league director of the new Catholic Schools Athletic Association.

Glueck, who most recently served as a principal mentor with the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, brings to the position extensive experience in administration, teaching and coaching.

As a principal, Glueck led Redemptorist and Broadmoor high schools in Baton Rouge. He also worked as an assistant principal of administration at Broadmoor and served on the faculty at Broadmoor, Woodlawn and Walker high schools.

During his time in the classroom, Glueck, who holds both a bachelor’s and master’s degree from LSU, also coached several sports, working as an assistant coach in football, baseball and boys’ basketball and as a head coach in baseball and girls’ basketball.

Outside of school, Glueck, who is a parishioner of St. Thomas More Church in Baton Rouge, has offered his time generously to organizations committed to fostering youth athletic development. He has served as a volunteer coach, high school official and as an executive committee member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association. In addition, he was the baseball director for American Legion A and Metro leagues for eight years and served as president of the Baton Rouge Area Officials Association for 10 years.

As someone who has been around Catholic schools and Catholic school athletics for a long time, our principals know him and he knows them,” said Miller.

In his new position, Glueck, who will work as an independent contractor, will be responsible for constructing both competitive and development league play for Catholic school elementary sports. Glueck said he is excited to begin work with the CSAA and is hoping to do “some good things.”

Working with an advisory board of elementary school principals and a representative of the superintendent of Catholic schools, he is planning a smooth transition for schools, coaches and parents as they move to the new league.

The CSAA was formed in early summer after the Catholic Youth Organization or CYO, which administered Catholic elementary school sports programming, including the competitive branch, known as the Catholic Schools Athletic League, announced it would close July 31.

In noting that the CYO and CSAL were “run very well” by Bonnie McCoy, executive director of the CYO, and George Cunningham, CSAL director, Glueck said he hopes to continue their efforts to serve students who want to play sports.

“As we move further along, we can see if there is any way we can expand the program and improve it,” he said, noting that providing an opportunity to play sports is important for the total development of each child.

“It’s not about a place just to develop athletically, (playing sports) also develops character,” he said.

California continues to force health plans to cover elective abortions

WASHINGTON – On June 21, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) declared that the California Department of Managed Health Care can continue to force all health plans under its jurisdiction to cover elective abortions. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is calling for an immediate federal legislative remedy.

“It is shocking that HHS has allowed the State of California to force all employers even churches to fund and facilitate elective abortions in their health insurance plans. Even those who disagree on the issue of life should be able to respect the conscience rights of those who wish not to be involved in supporting abortion,” Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore said in a statement. Cardinal Dolan is chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities and Archbishop Lori chairs the USC- CB Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

“This administrative ruling fails to respect not only the rights to life and religious freedom, but also the will of Congress and the rule of law,” the chairman added.

“As a remedy to the Administration’s unwillingness to fulfill its responsibilities, we urge Congress to pass the Conscience Protection Act (H.R. 4828, S. 2927) and stop further discrimination against people of faith and against all who respect unborn human life.”

Several churches and other religious organizations had filed complaints with the HHS Office for Civil Rights asserting that California’s reinterpretation of state law violated the federal Weldon Amendment prohibiting discrimination by states against health insurance plans that do not cover abortion. The Conscience Protection Act would provide specific relief for those who decline to participate in abortion rather than relying solely upon HHS to defend their rights.

In its letter to the state and objecting sponsors, the HHS said that the organization refuses to take any action because the insurance companies have no moral or religious objection to abortion coverage.
Campaign launched to refurbish convent at Ascension Catholic

By Richard Meek

Listen hard enough and one just might hear the voices of the past, reverberating through the nearly 200-year-old plaster walls of the original convent at Ascension Catholic Elementary School in Donaldsonville.

The three-story brick structure dates to 1850, a time when the south was painted in the soft-white hue of cotton and the melodious sounds of calliopes from riverboats making their way down the Mississippi River provided at least a musical relief on a humid afternoon.

It was then that the convent opened, housing six Daughters of Charity who in 1845 completed a 44-day journey by boat from Emmitsburg, Maryland to Donaldsonville to establish what would become the first Catholic Elementary School in Donaldsonville.

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The nuns may be long gone, but the original convent still houses several classrooms for Ascension Catholic as well as the library and administration offices. However, the beautiful grand ole dame, which proudly sits in the Donaldsonville Historic District, has been pillaged by time’s merciless march. The roof leaks, some of the windows are damaged, and the interior of the building is in dire need of renovation.

The foundation has been raised, including $50,000 from an ongoing buy-a-brick campaign and the majority of the roof coming from a fundraiser that included food, drink and entertainment. The campaign is fittingly operating under the moniker: Restore the convent. Where the tradition began. People are excited about it,” Thibaut said. “They are jumping on board and people are making donations we didn’t expect.”

Landscape architect Trey Hymel has donated plans and drawings for a semi-circular driveway to be placed in front of the convent. Someone else has donated the concrete for the driveway.

Other donations include a volunteer committing to relocating the HVAC units and someone offering to bear the cost of building a new coopla, replacing the old one that was torn off the roof years ago.

Additionally, a volunteer paid the entire cost of removing the 1850s convent and architectural drawings for the convent at no charge.

“This is a little family community where everybody knows your name,” she said. “It’s the charm the school offers. Many of our alumni don’t live here but are committed to the school.”

The restoration is being planned in phases, with phase one being a new roof, as well as painting the interior. Refurbishing the windows, which are original, is in phase two.

“People are excited about it. They are jumping on board and people are making donations we didn’t expect.”

Barbara Thibaut

Utilitarian and committee member

The building also housed a Catholic school in the territory that is now part of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. The building also housed a Catholic school in the territory that is now part of the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

A set of steps is shown but the destination at the end of the steps is uncertain. The belief is that it leads to the area where their classrooms were and where the nuns praised the food in the cafeteria where they ate.

The cafeteria where the nuns used to eat now serves as a school library. An old pass-through where the nuns would get their food is now boarded up in the room.

This is the room where the nuns would eat and now serves as a school library.

“People are excited about it. They are jumping on board and people are making donations we didn’t expect.”

Barbara Thibaut
Utilitarian and committee member

The beauty of the original convent at Ascension Catholic School in Donaldsonville was revealed after an old building adjacent to the structure was torn down. After that, a campaign was launched to renovate the convent, which dates to 1850. (Photo by Richard Meek)

The cafeteria where the nuns used to eat now serves as a school library.

“This building is very sound to be as old as it is,” Thibaut said. “We want it to be authentic as it can be. This is just my passion right now.”

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Four Mater Dolorosa athletes qualify for AAU Junior Olympics

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Several athletes from Mater Dolorosa School in Independence were running, throwing javelins and shotputts and jumping under a broiling afternoon sun at St. Thomas Aquinas Diocesan Regional High School in Hammond as they prepared for national athletic competitions. They are part of the big athletic talent coming out of the small school.

One of the events the students will compete in is the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Junior Olympic Games in Humble, Texas scheduled July 30 – Aug. 6. The Junior Olympic games are known as the largest national multi-sport event for youth. Only the top five finishers in the regional field event are invited to participate.

The Mater Dolorosa qualifiers included Nunzio and Luciana Martello, members of the Southeast Louisiana Roadrunners Club.

Nunzio, a rising seventh-grader, qualified by winning a gold medal in shot put, with a throw of 39-01.25 and winning two silver medals, one in javelin, with a throw of 95.08, and discus, with a throw of 160.4-04 feet, at the AAU regional qualifier June 14 –18 in Covington.

Danny Bergeron, Nunzio and Luciana’s coach, noted the talent of the siblings.

“They are fast learners. They want to learn and they want to be competitive,” said Bergeron, a Mater Dolorosa alumnus. “When you (athletically) get out of the private schools to compete, you have to step it up, and they did.”

He said this is the first time in his 15 years of coaching that he has seen such a large number of qualifiers coming out of the school.

Bergeron said the athletes worked hard to meet his benchmarks of improving from one meet to the next.

“If they do 40 (feet) one meet, then I want them to do 48 next,” said Bergeron.

Nunzio is a gifted athlete in football, baseball, basketball and track. Football is his passion. An altar server at Mater Dolorosa Church, Nunzio weight lifts and trains in football two hours a day, four days a week in addition to his track training.

He was selected MVP, winning nine medals, for his school at the state junior high track and field championship this past year, which helped Mater Dolorosa win third place overall.

Nunzio had doubts that he would qualify, but his determination won out.

“I didn’t think I would be able to do it, but you do what you have to do. You put those emotions aside,” said Nunzio.

The Junior Olympics qualifier was not easy, and Nunzio expects even stiffer competition at the championship. But the competition also draws him. He is confident in his sister’s abilities, as he spoke proudly about them.

Luciana, a rising fifth-grader qualified in the 11-year-old category in discus, with a throw of 52-08, earning her a silver medal; shot put, with a throw of 20-04.50, earning her a bronze medal; and high jump, clearing a mark of 3-08 in high jump, another bronze.

An avid basketball player, Luciana received the coach’s choices award in MDS varsity basketball as a fourth-grader at the school.

“I was nervous,” conceded Luciana about the regionals. “I was surprised that I qualified.”

The competition at the Junior Olympics is daunting. But, as she did to win medals and other accomplishments for the MDS track team, she said she will "push through it.”

She said she will do so with help from her brother, who gave her words of advice and encouragement several times during practice.

“He helps me in all my events and tells me how to get first place,” said Luciana.

She is also excited about the trip.

“My mom is going to put me, my brother and her on a plane to Texas and I’m happy,” said Luciana.

Rising second graders Kelise Lee, and Kyea Ross, both 7, qualified for the Junior Olympics as well as the Club National Championships in Orlando.

Lee qualified by winning a bronze medal in shot put, with a throw of 13-09.50.

“I was nervous, but I thought, ‘I can do this,’” said Lee.

It’s the thrill of being around children from other states and possibly making more friends that Lee looked forward to about the events.

Mental preparation is equally important as physical training for athletes to win, said Ross, who said she focuses on the joy of running.

Competing and taking in the sites at Disney World Resort were the highlights for the athlete.

Lee brought home the bronze medal in the shot put, with a throw of 15-09.25. She will also compete in the Junior Olympics.

Lee and Ross’ coach, Jose Becerra, also principal of St. Thomas Aquinas, commended the girls on their focus during their stringent training and competitions.

“They’ve improved a lot and they’ve worked very hard,” said Becerra. “They’ve advanced tremendously.”
ST. THOMAS AWARD – Juliette LeRay, second from left, an eighth-grader at Holy Ghost School in Hammond, received the first Holy Ghost Church St. Thomas Award at her school’s graduation ceremony. The newly established award recognizes a student who is an academic and spiritual role model, an active participant in his/her faith and is also planning to continue his/her Catholic education at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. Pictured with LeRay are, from left, Father Robert Merced OP, Father Cayet Mangiaracina OP and Brother Mauricio OP. Photo provided by Cindy Wagner | Holy Ghost School

READY TO PLAY – Ten senior athletes at St. Michael High School in Baton Rouge have signed scholarships to play college ball. They are first row, from left, Clarissa McGarner, track, University of New Orleans; Tyler Morrison, girls basketball, Southeastern Louisiana University; Sabree Wilson, girls basketball, Nicholls State University; Amari Bellard, volleyball, Nicholls State University; Essa Badon, girls basketball, Centenary College; back row, C.J. McGarner, football, Texas Southern University; Jeremiah Campbell, football, Mississippi College; Michael Smith, baseball, Baton Rouge Community College; Beau Morris, football, McNeese State University; and Michael Alfred, basketball, University of St. Thomas. Photo provided by Kristi Watts | St. Michael High School

STA ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS – While at least three other senior athletes are still fielding offers, 12 members of the Class of 2016 at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Hammond have signed their intent to participate in athletics at the college level. They are, front row, from left Lindsey Dettwiller, swimming, Centenary College of Louisiana; Chloe Chauvin, dance, Southeastern Louisiana University; Emily Owens, Dance, University of Mississippi; Olivia Bates, soccer, Evangel University; Courtney Dawsey, basketball, Southeastern Louisiana University; back row, Cailin Sampay, dance, Southeastern Louisiana University; Madison Lymon, track and field, University of New Orleans; Madelyne Miley, dance, Southeastern Louisiana University; Cameron Dantzler, football, Mississippi State University; Edwin Alexander, football, Louisiana State University; Hunter Stanley, baseball, Meridian Community College; and Regan Bolton, basketball, McNeese State University. Photo provided by Michelle Chauvin | St. Thomas Aquinas High School

The Catholic Commentator wants your school news and photos! Send them to Rachele Smith, at rsmith@diobr.org.

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The Catholic Commentator

ENTERTAINMENT

July 22, 2016

The Legend of Tarzan
Warner Bros.

The latest big-screen take on Edgar Rice Burroughs’ “Lord of the Jungle” creation is a wee bit silly and unspools just a few Victorian gentleman’s whiskers shy of an overblown parody. A loud summertime diversion, it follows Lord Greystoke aka John Clayton (Alexander Skarsgaard) and his wife Jane (Margot Robbie) from England to the African Congo where they both were raised and where the wicked emissary (Christophe Waltz) of Belgium’s King Leopold plots to enslave the people and extract all the natural resources. Straining to be relevant, director David Yates handles the material in such a clumsily overt manner that both the seriousness and the fun are drained out of the experience. An eagerness to please prevents a consistently entertaining yarn from being spun. Visually, the film alternates between a stiff cartoon and a perfume commercial, although the animal sequences are comparatively realistic. Catholic viewers will be dismayed by the startlingly inappropriate use of a rosary. Frequent non-graphic violence, a scene of mild marital sensuality, irreverent behavior and humor, several uses of profanity, crass language and rude banter, A-III; PG-13

The Secret Life of Pets
Universal

When a pampered terrier (voice of Louis C.K.) is forced to make room for the new dog (voice of Eric Stonestreet) his owner (voice of Ellie Kemper) has rescued from the pound, their rivalry leads to a series of comic misadventures over the course of which their mutual hostility begins to soften in the face of adversity. Romance also blossoms as one of the cosseted protagonist’s neighbors a fluffy Pomeranian (voice of Jenny Slates) who harbors a secret crush on him proves her mettle in his hour of need. Together with co-director Yarrow Cheney, Chris Renaud helms an entertaining free-for-all in which amusing characters and pleasing visuals of the Manhattan setting predominate over a serviceable but sketchy plot. Targeted tots will learn lessons about accepting the arrival of a younger sibling and about the value of self-sacrifice. But the smallest may be put off by the dangers that loom on screen while some parents may not be pleased by all the litterbox humor on display there. Potentially frightening scenes of peril, considerable cartoon violence, occasional sexual and scatological humor, involving animals. A-I; PG

Ghostbusters
Columbia

The tone is light and the emphasis on special effects heavy in this 3-D reboot of the franchise that began with the eponymous 1984 comedy. Director and co-writer Paul Feig shifts the gender balance of the original as three parapsychologists (Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig and Kate McKinnon) band together to track the numerous ghosts that have suddenly started popping up around New York City, eventually being joined on their hunt by a no-nonsense transit worker (Leslie Jones) whose subway station has fallen victim to one of the hauntings. Chris Hemsworth in the role of the ladies’ ditzy hunk of a secretary provides some of the laughs. While the film’s treatment of the supernatural is unlikely to lead even the impressionable astray, the jokes, though generally harmless, are sometimes mildly raunchy, making this suitable for grownups only. Occult themes, some strong but stylized violence, a suicide, brief irreverence, occasional sexual and scatological humor, at least one use each of profanity and crude language, several crass terms, a series of obscene gestures. A-III; PG-13

The Infiltrator
Broad Green

Bankers, not cocaine smugglers, are the real villains in this lackluster adaptation of Robert Mazur’s memoir of his takedown of the Medellin drug cartel in the 1980s. Mazur (Bryan Cranston) a U.S. Customs agent, passes himself off as an international financier by day, yet manages to return each evening to a quiet domestic life in Tampa, Florida. Though his hair has been combed complete with an elaborate fake office and a private airplane supplied through government seizure, his struggle with an array of bad guys — including a flamboyant Colombian drug lord (Yul Vazquez) and the kingpin’s chief distributor (Benjamin Bratt) — also involves fighting gun battles and getting run off roads in high-speed chases. This obviously must have taken a psychological toll. But, working from a script by his mother, Ellen Brown Furman, director Brad Furman downplays this aspect in favor of keeping the multitudinal deceptions going. Somewhere along the way, the suspense goes missing. Gun violence with some gore, drug use, implied aberrant sexual activity, frequent profane, rough and crude language. A-III; R

Papal Ninja’ brings message of faith to TV

OAKLAND, Calif. (CNS) – In what has become a staple of summer television, scores of athletic folks run an obstacle course that looks like a cross between a playground on steroids and the inner workings of a pinball machine.

They race against the clock; if they miss an obstacle, they fall ignominiously into water. In cities across the United States, about 100 carefully screened contestants give “American Ninja Warrior” their best shot, vying for a chance to reach the finals, which are held in Las Vegas, with a chance at an elusive $1 million payday.

Over the series’ eight summers, some regulars have developed followings, competing year after year. But this year, newcomer Yarrow Cheney, Chris Renaud helms an entertaining free-for-all in which amusing characters and pleasing visuals of the Manhattan setting predominate over a serviceable but sketchy plot. Targeted tots will learn lessons about accepting the arrival of a younger sibling and about the value of self-sacrifice. But the smallest may be put off by the dangers that loom on screen while some parents may not be pleased by all the litterbox humor on display there. Potentially frightening scenes of peril, considerable cartoon violence, occasional sexual and scatological humor, involving animals. A-I; PG

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Over the series’ eight summers, some regulars have developed followings, competing year after year. But this year, Sean Bryan the “Papal Ninja” was a newcomer. Spurred on by friends including a priest-friend, his performance qualified him for the city finals in Los Angeles July 11.

Although he fell and did not advance to the semi-finals to be held in Atlanta, Bryan said in a Facebook post that he’ll be back next year. He also has been given plenty of credit for telling his story of faith in prime time.

In a brief video segment, he was shown in prayer and at play near his home and at his alma mater, the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley.

“Faith is not something separated from society, and it should be integrated,” he told The Catholic Voice, newspaper of the Diocese of Oakland. “I certainly hope it (the video) cast a good light on the church, to some degree. I’m not going to expect it to change anyone’s life, but it could trigger a process. You never know.”

Beyond his notoriety for competing in “American Ninja Warrior” and climbing its famed warped wall, Bryan is one of the masters of ceremonies for the bishop of Oakland. The diocese is headed by Bishop Michael C. Barber.

At the request of Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto, he also is working with Dominican Father Michael Sweeney and the Western Dominicans on a formation program for the Diocese of Sacramento to develop lay leadership in the church.
Runaway

Runaway

I was listening to the ocean
you were here
And I kept running for a soft
And I kept running for a soft
place to fall
place to fall

But when I picked it up
But then again, it wasn’t true
But now take me home
But now take me home
Then it vanished away from
And all this time I have been
Take me home where I
Take me home where I
my hands – down
lying
belong

I had a dream I was seven
And I kept running for a soft
Climbing my way in a tree
place to fall
I saw a piece of heaven
And I was running far away
Waiting, impatient, for me
Would I run off the world
(Repeat second verse)

And I was running far away
And I was running far away
Somebody knows, nobody knows
Would I run off the world
And I was dancing in the rain
But I kept running for a soft
I felt alive and I can’t com-
Now take me home, home
Now take me home, home

Nobody knows, nobody knows
That I belong
And I was dancing in the rain
But I kept running for a soft
And I felt alive and I can’t com-
Now take me home, home

But I kept running for a soft
And I felt alive and I can’t com-
place to fall
plain

But now take me home
But now take me home
And I kept running for a soft
And I kept running for a soft
Take me home where I
Take me home where I

But now take me home
Take me home where I
belong
belong

And I kept running for a soft
And I kept running for a soft
place to fall
place to fall

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But I kept running for a soft
And I felt alive and I can’t com-
place to fall
plain

For today’s recording artists, the whole world is their stage. Due to 21st-century technology, artists from anywhere can gain recognition in every venue or country. Such is true of Norwegian pop/synth artist Aurora. Her single “Runaway” is climbing countdown charts in several countries and recently debuted on the U.S. chart. The single is off her debut disc: “All My Demons Greeting Me as a Friend.”

The song presents the story of a person trying to escape from some unidentified, hurtful reality. Something has occurred and she has been “lying in secret to myself.” Not wanting to face these circumstances, she has been “putting sorrow on the farthest place on my shelf.” Not wanting to face these circumstances, she has been pretending you are “fine,” move beyond this self is more possible when you know there will be support as you face it. Even if you have been pretending you are “fine,” move beyond this act and let them know what you face. Ask for their understanding and support.

Ask your allies to help you put together a step-by-step plan. Quick fixes usually are just illusions. Instead, assemble a sensible approach that can rectify what remains under your influence. Perhaps the circumstances themselves can no longer be altered, but your reactions are always under your power. Start with compassion for yourself, but also a commitment to change how you are suffering.

The “home” that the song’s character mentions is a willingness to be yourself. No situation ever takes away who God made you to be, and this begins by recognizing that you are forever the son or daughter of the Father. In your plan for dealing with the hurt, be sure to keep a perspective on your value as God’s beloved.

Don’t be afraid of the need to grieve. If the circumstances are connected to genuine loss, be kind with yourself and allow any tears. God knows each one of your tears and will guide you toward healing. Ask God for guidance toward who and what can bring you his healing. Ask God for guidance toward who and what can bring you his healing. In your plan for dealing with the hurt, be sure to keep a perspective on your value as God’s beloved.

Resist any temptation to “runaway” into any drug or alcohol. Such escapism only delays the healing that you need and deserve. Call on someone you trust – a friend, teacher or counselor – if you need help. If you are sure to keep a perspective on your value as God’s beloved.

There is no perfect approach to get through hurt. Yet, God is always on your side and wants you to experience a renewed and healed life. Trust that God will show you the way to a life of new satisfaction and meaning.

**On The Record**

**Charlie Martin**

Sung by Aurora | Copyright © 2016, Decca Records

**ACROSS**

1. Our ___ of Lourdes
2. Prepares for publication
3. ____ take away the sins of the world.
4. 9th letter of the Hebrew alphabet
5. Sand hills
6. “Dies ____.”
7. First of all
8. Thi ___
9. Vane reading
10. Closing hymn
11. Fail at a premature stage
12. Small canyon
13. Finished
14. ____ partnership
15. Catholics Ted Kennedy and Alec Guinness
16. The first electric motor was made by a monk of this order
17. Snicker
18. Undesirable plant
19. First of all
20. Trillion (pref.)
21. _____ reading
22. Church section
23. _____ carrier
24. Map of a town
25. Parisian friends
26. Catholic cartoonist of “Family Circus”
27. 40th president of the United States
28. Razzle-dazzle
29. Loincloth worn by Hindu men
30. Assisted
31. Hi-Q organization
32. Biblical name for Syria
33. Church section
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45. Hi-Q organization
46. “____ will be first…” (Mt 20:16)
47. Breaks the eighth commandment
48. 40th president of the United States
49. Bible reading
50. Doctrines
51. Agile
52. Parisian friends
53. Printer’s measures
54. The ____ Dolorosa
55. Fighting Tigers’ school
56. Solution on page 18

**DOWN**

1. Diocese of Honolulu necklaces
2. Woody’s son, a convert to Catholicism
3. Child’s toy
4. “____ take away the sins of the world.”
5. Elijah’s successor
6. ____ reading
7. Vane reading
8. Closing hymn
9. Fail at a premature stage
10. Small canyon
11. Finished
12. ____ partnership
13. Catholics Ted Kennedy and Alec Guinness
14. The first electric motor was made by a monk of this order
15. Snicker
16. Undesirable plant
17. First of all
18. Trillion (pref.)
19. _____ reading
20. Church section
21. _____ carrier
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45. Agile
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47. The ____ Dolorosa
48. Fighting Tigers’ school
49. Solution on page 18

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I have covered parts of chapter eight already in my previous column on the “Resurrection of Good Conscience Cases.” Most national and international commentary on Pope Francis’ exhortation, “The Gospel of Joy,” focused on this chapter. Here Pope Francis accepted the Synod on the Family’s recommendation that Catholics in “irregular marriages” (particularly a second marriage following divorce) file an internal forum, meaning the sacrament of reconciliation and related counseling, to come to a decision of conscience on their spiritual position before God. The confessor or pastor should help the penitent come to the best possible way to return to the practice of his or her faith and the reception of other sacraments.

The “irregular marriages” to which the pope refers may include civil marriages, marriages witnessed by a minister who was not a Catholic priest without a special dispensation, or simple cohabitation without marriage. In these cases the couples should be counseled toward having their marriage “blessed,” or, the official term — “validated” — by the Catholic Church. This is really rather simple. It requires only collecting documents like the previous marriage license plus the baptismal certificates. With the help of the priest-counselor, or deacon, their marriage can be validated in a short time.

The most difficult situation is the Catholic who is in a second marriage after a divorce which may have been caused by infidelity or abuse or psychological problems on the part of the previous partner. And the second marriage may involve children. Separation may not be possible without harming others. The complexity of such situations led the synod fathers, and now Pope Francis, to consider the following truths: 1) “No one can be condemned forever, because that is not the logic of the Gospel.” 2) “... the baptized and civilly remarried need to be more fully integrated into Christian communities in the variety of ways possible, while avoiding any occasion of scandal.” 3) “Since the degree of responsibility is not equal in all cases, the consequences or effects of a rule need not necessarily be the same.” 4) “The church possesses a solid body of reflection concerning mitigating factors and situations. Hence, it can no longer simply be said that all those in any ‘irregular’ situation are living in a state of mortal sin and are deprived of sanctifying grace.” (And all Catholics in the state of grace may receive the Eucharist.)

What about God not wanting divorce, according to Jesus’ own teaching? Pope Francis answers this very biblical objection by saying, “Yet conscience can do more than recognize that a given situation does not correspond objectively to the overall demands of the Gospel. It can also recognize with sincerity and honesty what for now is the most generous response which can be given to God, and come to see with a certain moral security that it is what God himself is asking amid the concrete complexity of one’s limits, while yet not fully the objective ideal.”

In other words, (here my own) the Catholic Church, to the best of its ability, tries by its canonical laws to put structure and fairness into the application of the Gospel to the lives of its faithful.

In fact, last year Pope Francis streamlined the handling of annulment cases, highlighting Gospel values even in tribunal ministry. The Gospel is the revelation of the word of God given to us by the life and teaching of Jesus. Since Jesus is the Son of God, both his teaching and his actions reveal to us God’s will. God so loved us, St. Paul says, that, while we were sinners God sent his own son to become one of us and redeem us. The revelation of God’s loving and forgiving will is given to us in human form through Jesus. But, because Jesus’ words and actions were limited to what human words and actions can express (miracles excepted), and the story of what Jesus did and said was reported to us in the Gospels by very human evangelists, we don’t always know from the Gospels exactly what Jesus would do or say in a given situation today.

For example, when Jesus taught about marriage, he said that from the beginning God did not want divorce, and ... whenever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery” (Mt 5:32). So, whoever divorces his wife, except when the marriage was forbidden by Jewish law in the first place, for some impediment like close blood relationship, “causes her to commit adultery.” It would seem that Jesus expected her to need to marry again. In his society, she may have had to marry again to support herself and her children. In some societies today, that still may be the case. I wonder if similar cases were what the synod fathers and Pope Francis were thinking of.

However, Jesus did not leave us orphans. He left us the help of his spirit and our own God-given consciences. Like Jesus’ own mother, with the Gospels as a guide and amid the workings of God’s Spirit and the challenges of human life, we have to ponder many things in humility and prayer. God is always calling us back, and accepting the best we can do.

FATHER 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.
Listening to others: first step in solving problems in the community

In recent weeks, I have received a lot of questions from people as racially charged events have appeared in the news. I’m often asked what I think about these events.

The deaths of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Philando Castille in Falcon Heights, Minnesota, and the five Dallas Police officers: Brent Thompson, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael J. Smith, Michael Krol and Lorne Ahrens have understandably been the source of much mourning. These deaths have led to much anger, confusion, tension, division and fear amongst people in our city, state and country.

So in the midst of all of this, what should our response be? Though I am certainly not an expert on anything, my thoughts after much time spent in prayer are quite simple: WE SHOULD ALL PRACTICE LISTENING!

With that being said, I would like to invite you all to listen to some of my thoughts:

To put things in a little perspective I would like to share my background with those of you who are not aware of where I come from. My father is an African American and was for many years the captain of the police department in Baton Rouge. My mother is white and for many years a nurse at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital.

Growing up as a bi-racial male in Louisiana wasn’t always easy and in many cases not much has changed since my teenage years.

I can remember being in the grocery store after a basketball game as a teenager and being followed by the security guard and/or the cashier. Though this experience was always aggravating to me, I was used to it because in many cases, no matter how well a black man is dressed in our society, he will probably be followed around because of the color of his skin. It’s interesting, since I have become a priest not much has changed. After working out at the gym two weeks ago, I was followed in a store the entire time I shopped by the cashier.

When I wear clerics people respect me. But when I wear civilian clothes to work out, my experience growing up and being judged for the color of my skin continues to this very day. This is very disappointing and this disappointment is shared by many African Americans in our country. Some of you may have never experienced discrimination in this way but this is NORMAL for US! And THIS IS NOT OKAY! Hence, many black people in this country are hurt and angry. I remember a number of my friends growing up hated cops because their only experience of cops were the bad ones who relentlessly harassed them for no other reason than because of the color of their skin and the neighborhood they lived in.

Their hatred for the police was obviously problematic for me as a young man because my father was a cop ... and a very good cop at that. In fact, on one occasion, a man attempted to rob a bank here in Baton Rouge and shot my father in the back of his head. My father, being the good cop that he was, immediately chased the guy to protect the lives of the civilians at the bank. I tried to express to my friends that there were good cops but some of them, because they were close minded and thought they knew everything chose not to listen.

Here is something I want everyone to hear: White people are not the problem. Black people are not the problem. Cops are not the problem. Refugees are not the problem.

THE DEVIL IS THE PROBLEM. And the tool the devil has been using to divide and conquer us with violence and racism and fear is THE LIE that “I know more than you so I don’t have to listen to you.”

This is a big problem! Because if we don’t listen to one another then we cannot know the person as another person, and if we don’t know them as another person then we probably won’t be willing to enter into a relationship with the other person and if there is no relationship then there is no possibility that the other may be judged and categorized into a box and from that categorization become our enemy and this is a BIG PROBLEM because our real enemy is not flesh and blood but is actually SATAN!

So how can we practically fight against the vice and the lie from Satan that we “KNOW MORE THAN OTHERS!” First, by turning to our Lord in prayer. The Blessed Virgin Mary has been appearing from heaven to earth for hundreds of years and her message is always the same ... “COME BACK TO MY SON JESUS CHRIST THROUGH PRAYING ROSARY AND YOU WILL HAVE ... PEACE!”

How is this practical? Because when we pray the rosary we meditate on Jesus Christ who is the prince of peace, and we spend time actively listening to the story of Jesus, to his story, and then we spend time in silence trying to listen more to the God we encountered in the Scriptures as we prayed the rosary. This can be difficult. But if we persevere in trying to hear his voice in prayer then our disposition in prayer, that is, listening, will overtime become our disposition in relationships with other people!

If we can listen to God who we cannot see, then we can certainly begin to listen to our brothers and sisters who are different than us and whom we can see!

If we want peace with others then we have to know others, and the most practical way to know others is by first knowing God.

So I invite you to join me in committing to praying every day for at least 30 minutes if possible, and in that time of prayer carving out space for silence so we can intentionally not speak, but struggle to listen to the voice of Jesus, who will no doubt enable us to be an instrument of peace after spending time with him who is the Prince of Peace.

FATHER JOSHUA JOHNSON is parochial vicar of St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge.

(THIS was written before the shooting of six police officers on July 7)

Bishop’s request for prayer to bring peace

As we mourn the deaths of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Philando Castille in Falcon Heights, and the five Dallas Police Officers: Brent Thompson, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael J. Smith, Michael Krol, and Lorne Ahrens, we acknowledge that we those whom you perceive as “different” from you.

Peace prayer of 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, the truth;
Where there is doubt, the 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 so much seek 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.

(Statement released by Bishop Robert W. McChesney on Friday, July 15, two days prior to the shooting of six police officers in Baton Rouge.)

CHALLENGES ▼ From page 16

comfort to those in need, consoling our neighbor no matter the circumstances and living out Christ’s message through our words and actions.

This includes being accepting of everyone, not only those with the same skin color or belief system or political agenda.

If there are any lessons to be learned from these tragedies in Baton Rouge and elsewhere, it is that value systems influence to any extent by prejudice and mistrust are toxic to any community.

Peace can only be achieved through actions that come from reflective prayer, prayer based on love, specifically the love of Christ and on our embracing his love for us, all of us.

Only then will our hearts be able to change, only then will we be more accepting of each other, regardless of our perceived differences. And only then will there be peace in a divided community.
Seniors Dance – The Single Seniors of St. Thomas More Church, 11441 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, will sponsor a dance, “Step Out with the Platinum Sound Orchestra,” on Friday, Aug. 5, 7 p.m., at the STM Parish Activity Center. Tickets are $5 each and can be purchased by check only at the STM church office. The evening will include cocktails and music from the 40s, 50s and 60s. All seniors are invited. For information, call 225-933-9240 or 225-275-1436.

Mass Honoring God the Father – Msgr. Robert Berggreen will celebrate a Mass honoring God the Father on Monday, Aug. 8 at St. Agnes Church, 749 East Blvd., Baton Rouge. The rosary will be prayed and confessions will be heard at 5:30 p.m. Mass will begin at 6 p.m. Please bring palms. For information, email saab@bellsouth.net.

Mercy Mass – Father Brad Doyle, parochial vicar at St. George Church, 7808 St. George Drive, Baton Rouge, will celebrate a mercy Mass, sponsored by the Marian Servants of the Eucharist, on Wednesday, Aug. 17, 7 p.m., at St. George. For information, call 225-293-2212.

Rosaryville Silent Retreat – A women’s Ignatian silent retreat, “Finding God in All Things: Encountering the Living God in Our Everyday Lives,” will be held Thursday, Aug. 4 – Sunday, Aug. 7 at Rosaryville Spirit Life Center, 39003 Rosaryville Road, Ponchatoula. Cost of the retreat is $280 for a single room and $250 for a double room. For information, call 225-294-5039, email sdavis@oppeace.org or visit visitrosaryville.com.

Metairie Retreats – The Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center, 5500 St. Mary St., Metairie, will host the following events in August: Friday, Aug. 5. “Receiving the Gifts of Our Heritage,” with Father Matt Linn SJ, who will also present “Healing Our Relationships” Friday, Aug. 5 – Sunday, Aug. 7. For more information, visit retreats.arch-no.org or call 504-267-9604.

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room only crowd. “It tells you that there is not as much separation as the media would like for you to think.

“So what I'm saying is that the majority of the people aren't looking to separate each other. We're looking to bring others together.”

A Mass of healing and guidance for Baton Rouge was celebrated at St. Gerard Majella Church in Baton Rouge, also on July 17. Retired Baton Rouge police chief Pat Englade spoke, noting that many of those in attendance had probably just heard the news of the shootings. He said the incident highlighted the purpose of the Mass, which was scheduled before the police shootings, even more.

“I don’t know what’s it’s like to be a black man or black woman,” Englade said. “But I know what it’s like to put on a uniform to protect the community you love.”

Mr. Kennedy, president of the newly incorporated Redemptorist High School and Friends Association that put on the event, said residents would not let the shooting deter their mission of bringing unity to the community.

“This is all the reason more why we need to increase our efforts to unite the community,” she said.

In the days following the death of Sterling, St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge held an emotional prayer service that also drew a large crowd. Pastor Father Randy Cuevas, at times succumbing to the tears he had been fighting, read a message from parochial vicar Father Joshua Johnson, the only African-American priest in the diocese. (For the complete text of Father Johnson’s message, please turn to page 17.)

Also, shortly after the shooting, St. Paul Church in Baton Rouge hosted a Together Baton Rouge meeting, which drew several hundred people. Father Richard Andrus SVD, pastor at St. Paul and a leading advocate of civil rights and justice in the community, said the meeting crossed “every racial, geographical and religious line.”

“People came together, first of all to express their hurt, fear, anger (and) frustration,” he added. “It was a very emotional gathering with tears and hugs of support. It’s a sign that gives me hope.”

He said there was a commitment among those present to find a way together to move forward and heal so that Baton Rouge emerges as “greater than it has ever been.

“Hope swells (because) of a deeply imbedded faith passed down in the black community generation to generation in the most difficult of times: post slavery, Jim Crow, fight for civil rights, fight for voting rights. It’s that faith, that immersion of self determination that has allowed us not to give up but to press on even in the most painful, difficult time.”

During the past few weeks, Catholic leaders have repeatedly issued calls for peace, even during tense standoffs between police and protestors at police headquarters and the site where Sterling was shot. Peace appeared to reign until two Baton Rouge Police officers and an East Baton Rouge sheriff’s deputy were killed at a business on Airline Highway.

“God is faithful and because of that, I believe God is (here) in the midst of this confusion and chaos,” said vicar general Father Tom Ranzino, pastor of St. Jean Vianney Parish in Baton Rouge. “If I can look above the conflict and see the pattern in suffering and death, we see that Christ is here.

“We are deeply saddened by the lives taken and angry, we also have to remember that in the midst of this sin, God’s faithfulness is here and that faithfulness is for us and will always be with us.”

While celebrating Mass on the evening of the police shootings, Father Johnson once again addressed the subject during his homily. For Father Johnson, the issue on the surface, could appear to be a conflict between his heritage and his own personal faith, especially compounded by the fact his father is a former Baton Rouge police officer. But he finds solace in his own spirituality and commitment to a prayerful life.

“It’s disheartening,” Father Johnson said, adding that he found it interesting that the officers were shot on a day when Bishop Robert W. Muench announced a week of prayer and fasting. “And at the same time I feel even more resolve to do what we can to pray and fast.”

“The authentic Catholic response is to pray and fast,” he added. “From there we open ourselves up to hear what God wants us to do next. This is an invitation from the Lord to drop to our knees and consult with the Lord to see what he wants us to do to bring about dialogue with people who are different than us. Whenever we open ourselves to hear their story, we can build a relationship with people. But the only way we can open ourselves up to listen to people and hear what they have to say is if we are in a disposition to listen to God. That is what will bring people together.

Pastors from throughout the Zachary community joined Father Bayhi to preach the message of hope and peace. Rev. Stephen Byrd, pastor at First Baptist Church in Zachary, said the answer is not a political answer but “the answer is Jesus Christ and the message of his Gospel.” He said with God, there is no color. And in a more pragmatic approach, he said everyone “might as well start getting used to each other because we are going to spend the rest of our (time) together.”

Father Bayhi said the original idea was to pray the rosary by 6 p.m. but after the noon Mass people said a prayer service uniting people of all faith was needed. During his brief homily, he said people are quick to look at what is wrong with someone but not as quick to look at what is right. He even admitted to his own guilt, especially in the past few weeks.

“I am not proud,” he admitted from the pulpit. “My emotions were leading me away from God, leading me to my ego and not to the grace of God.”

He said society is in a cultural war and that “we’ve been slouching toward this for a long time.

“We've been saying we don't want God to interfere with our country, our polices, our beliefs. They took ‘one nation under God’ out of the (Pledge of Allegiance). When are we going to learn? We have to blame ourselves.

“We have let our society legislate that some lives are not worth living,” he added. “It’s a dignity and sanctity of life issue.”

Father Andrus said he has spent several days praying with others, being a Catholic presence at the site where Sterling was killed. He said he is doing everything in his power to work for peace, struggle for peace but to also work for justice.

“You can’t spread peace unless there is some form of justice,” he said. “We have done too much praying, although prayer has to continue to be our focus, we have bent too many knees, we have too many flags at half staff, we have had too many moments with silence. It’s time to start doing something.

“People don’t want to see policeman shot up, they don’t want to see police killed. They don’t want to see anybody shot and killed.”

He said the gathering shows the true core of the people of Baton Rouge. He said racism exists but at the core there is an ability to come together.

“It’s there,” he said. “It’s got to be waken up, stirred up, channeled and directed in the right way. That is what we as church and community have to be about.

“Jesus challenges us.”

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FRIENDS ▼

From page 1

who was shot by police investigating a gun complaint on July 5.

“It was really hard (to hear the news about Garafola),” Marino said.

In a news conference one day after the shooting, East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff Sid Gautreaux said Garafola, whose parents are parishioners at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge, was a hero and was shot while trying to help other fallen officers.

“As an ex-police officer, you can put yourself in that position. You know what they are going through,” Marino said, noting from her own experience that every call is different, “You just don’t know.”

However, Marino said she could always count on her fellow officers.

“They had my back and I had theirs. When they (police officers) say they are family, they truly are family,” she said, adding, “I pray that they are all safe.”

Betty Wright, religious education assistant at St. Jean Vianney, said she is also praying for the safety of the city’s law enforcement officers. As the mother of a city police officer, Wright recalled how anxious she was when she first heard the news of the police assault, which occurred when Wright was at Mass.

“We were in church at the chapel at Ollie Steele Burden, and I could feel my heart pounding,” she said.

At first her daughter called, then family and friends. Recognizing something was happening, Wright decided to text her brother who shared the tragic news of the shooting.

Familiar with her son’s schedule, Wright knew he was not expected to be at work that morning, but she also knew she had to make sure.

“He got off work that morning, and had just gone to sleep. He was just coming off eight straight nights,” she said, noting that her son, with only one hour of sleep, got up to go back to work to help.

“He just couldn’t abandon them,” said Wright, explaining that in her son’s police family, they “lost their brothers.”

Wright added that her son is an army veteran, a husband and father of four.

As a mom, Wright continues to rely on her faith to support her and her family in difficult times. She noted that her family is also close, which helps.

“It’s tough, but we all stick together,” she said.

Parishioners at St. Isidore the Farmer Church in Baker have been coming together in an outpouring of love and support to the family of slain officer Gerald.

“The phone has not stopped ringing with people reaching out to the family to comfort and console them,” said Monica Oliphant, religious formation and youth director at St. Isidore.

Father Frank Iwan, who has been spending time with the family since Gerald’s death, said church members have been at the home of his parents, Ronnie and Tish Gerald, answering the phone, cooking and “taking care of the family.” He noted that this is an example of St. Isidore coming together as a faith family to celebrate good times and console in times of tragedy.

Gerald attended St. Isidore School. He was also an active member of the youth softball team and played in the diocesan softball tournament, according to Father Jerry Martin, who was pastor at St. Isidore in the late 1980s.

“He had an uplifting personality. He brought energy and enthusiasm to the group. That was his gift,” said Father Martin.

Now pastor at St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville, Father Martin said the last time he had seen Gerald was when he was 15-16 years old, so he thinks of Gerald in a youthful state.

“When I saw that he had died, I thought, ‘Oh, no, one of my kids has died,’” said Father Martin.

Father Bass and Father Martin both noted that Gerald’s mother is active at St. Isidore, serving as a lector at Mass and a leader at the church’s Vacation Bible School. A Mass was held to pray for peace and in remembrance of Gerald on July 19. It was followed by the praying of the divine mercy chaplet.

Gerald served as a crew chief on a helicopter crew during multiple U.S. Army tours in Iraq. He was a husband, father, brother and patriot.

“It’s tragic to me that he was in the military and in Iraq in so many life threatening situations and then he came home and was killed,” said Father Bass.

Which leads many to think, “What good can come out of evil?”

Father Bass further noted that one of the most tragic, evil incidents to ever happen was when Christ died on the cross. But that was followed three days later with his resurrection, which is the basis of faith and hope to everyone.

That thread of hope helps stitch together a wounded world.

According to Deacon Alfred Adams, director of the Office of Black Catholics for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, the only way to overcome the divisiveness that led to the tragic police shootings in Baton Rouge is to see and treat others as brothers and sisters in Christ.

“We are all made in the image of God and we need to see and treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ,” said Deacon Adams, who shared his reflections with a meeting of the Knights of Peter Claver at St. John the Baptist Church in Edgar the night of the police killings.

“We hear about people saying ‘black lives matter’ or ‘white lives matter.’ We need to get caught up in the concept that all lives matter,” said the deacon.

The issue is not ‘how you blacks or whites,’” said the deacon in emphasizing that the issue is deeper than race, it is a humanitarian issue.

Like many, Deacon Adams said he was angry when he first heard the news reports about the shooting of Sterling. But he said through prayer, he has a “let the facts come out” mindset.

Deacon Adams has talked to St. James Parish Sheriff Willie J. Martin Jr. about getting the people of the community together to “talk about things.”

“We need to get it out,” said Deacon Adams, pointing out that not talking about things directly leads to a communication breakdown, and the festering wounds lead to more violence.

Dialogue helps people get to know each other and better understand “why they do the things they do,” said the deacon.

“People need to get it out,” said Deacon Adams.

Marino said that includes praying for God’s mercy and treating others with mercy.

“When you look at another person, you are looking at one person, and that is Jesus,” said Deacon Adams.

And seeing the face of Jesus brings peace.

“Quoting John 14:27, Deacon Adams said, “Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”

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So many school children like Gabrielle, Hannah, Manuel, Marley, and Antonio need your help!

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 in the envelope enclosed in this issue of the Catholic Commentator or by giving online at svdpbr.org.