‘EVERYTHING IS GONE’

Families rebuild after deadly storm

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Homes looked like either a bomb had exploded in them, their frameworks had been swept off their foundation by a push broom or like boxes without lids because of missing roofs after a deadly tornados plowed through Assumption, Ascension, St. James and Livingston Civil Parishes on Feb. 23.

There were 11 confirmed in Southeast Louisiana that day, a record.

In Assumption Parish, one of the hardest hit places was the Magnolia Subdivision in Belle Rose, where family and neighbors are one in the same. Most of the residents, who are parishioners of St. Benedict Church in Bertandville, lost most or all that they had in an instant.

Irvin Fleming and his wife, Ruth, members of St. Benedict the Moor, were at home when the electricity went off.

“I said, ‘look at the sky, something is definitely wrong,’ ” said Irvin Fleming. “When I looked again, it (a tornado) was right there in the trees. It was brown with debris and dirt. I said, ‘Quick, get in the bathtub.’ Two seconds and it was over with.”

SEE STORM PAGE 4

St. Mary launches campaign to renovate historic church

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

The grand dame of False River, whose elegance has been a bit tarnished by age, will soon be receiving a facelift to restore her to her original beauty and charm.

Significant renovations scheduled at St. Mary Church on False River could potentially begin as early as April, according to pastor Msgr. Robert Berggreen. The church parish recently launched a $1.5-million campaign to renovate and repair the historic church, which was originally built in 1904 and was the site of the wedding of former U.S. House representatives Hale and Lindy Boggs.

The list of repairs is lengthy but perhaps none as important as the roof, which was most recently replaced in 1952. As if to punctuate the need to parishioners, a leak developed in front of the tabernacle during a recent rainstorm while Mass was being celebrated. A wooden board now directs the flow of the leak into a bucket placed in front of the sacristy.

“We had a good visual aide,” Msgr. Berggreen said with a laugh, saying rainwater has previously seeped into the church. He added a parishioner at the church immediately made a campaign donation following Mass.

“Now they saw it,” she said.

SEE RENOVATION PAGE 28
Commingling dates to Gospel

Perhaps one of the greatest mysteries at Mass is com mingling, when the priest drops a part of the host into the chalice.

Com mingling, which dates to at least the 8th century, is rooted in the Gospel, when Jesus, at the Last Supper, broke the bread and gave it to his apostles.

Ancient church tradition says the bread used for the Eucharist is unleavened and usually baked into small round forms, call “hosts.” The word host is taken from the Latin word hostia, which means victims, reminding Catholics that Christ is the paschal victim who was slain so that our sins would be forgiven.

Before the actual com mingling begins, the host is “fractioned,” meaning the priest breaks a large perforated host into smaller pieces. The risen Christ is recognized through the breaking of the bread.

Com mingling also has a deeper meaning, dating to old Roman traditions that had part of the host from the previous Mass, call the sancta, placed in the chalice before Communion. This act represented the unity of the specific sacrifice of the Mass that also dates to the Last Supper.

Additionally, the pope would send portions of the Eucharist from his own Masses to his Roman titular priests, which they in turn would add to the Sacred Blood at their parishes.

Justin Martyr, who was born toward the beginning of the second century and was eventually tortured and beheaded with six of his companions by the Roman Emperor Julius Rusticus because they would not sacrifice to Roman idols, said commingling is an important part of the Eucharist celebration. He said the Eucharist is a “participating of that over which thanks has been given,” describing the bread and wine consecrated by the priest. The thanks he describes is the prayer offered by the priest as well as the congregation.

In the modern Western church, com mingling is less elaborate, with the priest breaking off a small fraction of the larger host used at that Mass and placing it into the chalice while quietly praying.

In Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Churches, Communion is often distributed by immersing the consecrated bread into the chalice with the consecrated wine. Individuals receive Communion from the eucharistic minister under both species deposited directly in the communicant’s mouth by means of a spoon.

Bishop Muench announces pastoral assignments

Bishop Robert W. Muench announced the appointments of Father Michael Alello as pastor of St. Louis King of France Church in Baton Rouge and Father Chris Decker pastor of the cluster church parishes of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Maringouin, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini in Livonia and St. Joseph in Grosse Tete.

The appointments are effective July 1. Father Alello, who was ordained May 26, 2007 by Bishop Muench at St. Joseph Cathedral, has been serving as pastor at St. Philomena in Labadieville since July 1, 2009. He has also served as parochial vicar at St. John the Evangelist in Prairieville, St. Joseph in Paulina, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in Gramercy and St. Michael in Convent.

Father Decker, who was in the same ordination class with Father Alello, has been serving as pastor at the cluster parishes of St. Philip in Vacherie and St. James in St. James since July 1, 2010 and chaplain at Ascension Catholic Regional High School since 2014. He has previously served as parochial vicar and administrator at St. Thomas More in Baton Rouge and parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Denham Springs and St. Jude the Apostle in Baton Rouge.
Ruling affirms First Amendment rights

On Friday, Feb. 26 a state district judge in Baton Rouge handed down a major decision in a case that involves a lawsuit against the Diocese of Baton Rouge and one of its priests.

While the full text of the ruling is not yet available, it affirms First Amendment rights to free exercise of religion and the sanctity of the confessional. The judge found unconstitutional the attempt by a state statute to force a priest to choose between his sacred vows of keeping the seal of confession or testifying in a civil case.

Bishop Robert W. Muench issued the following statement after the ruling: “As Bishop of the Diocese of Baton Rouge I extend my compassion and offer prayer not only for the plaintiff who may have been harmed by the actions of a man who was not an employee of the church, but also for all who have been abused by anyone.

“The court’s decision to uphold the First Amendment right to free exercise of religion is essential and we appreciate the ruling. The Diocese of Baton Rouge will continue to do all that is legal and possible to prevent and stop the abuse of children and young people by faithfully following the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.”

Bluebonnet boulevards, near OLOL’s main campus. John Paul, president of the Our Lady of the Lake Foundation, said about half of the initial goal of raising $50 million has been met, and said the fundraising effort is “ongoing and will not stop once we reach our goal.”

OLOL breaks ground on new children’s hospital

By Richard Meek

A flock of pastel balloons colored a cloudless sky, each balloon representing hope of a healthy future for the children of the Baton Rouge area and beyond.

The balloons were released as part of a groundbreaking ceremony for Our Lady of the Lake Children’s Hospital on Feb. 18. Several hundred people, including Bishop Robert W. Muench and many political and civic leaders, gathered for the event, which featured Bishop Muench giving the blessing.

“After more than a decade of planning the strategic vision to design and build a hospital that will change the lives of Louisiana’s children is coming to fruition,” OLOL chief executive officer Scott Wester said. “Our goal is to build a hospital that will further advance care and research for children through greater recruitment of pediatric specialists, continue to grow our successful pediatric residency program that trains future Louisiana pediatricians and capitalize upon strategic partnerships like that of our relationship with St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital (in Memphis, Tenn.).”

OLOL Children’s Hospital, scheduled to be completed in 2018, will feature 350,000 square feet and six floors that will include inpatient beds, a pediatric emergency room, surgical units, a dedicated hematology/oncology unit that will serve inpatients and outpatients, a playroom on every floor and designated space that will allow for future growth.

Plans also include construction of a four-story, 95,000-square-foot medical building that will primarily be used for pediatric medical specialists.

Each floor will also feature a flavor of Louisiana, with themes and mascots related to the state.

Wester noted the hospital would be the first children’s hospital to be built in Louisiana in more than 40 years. He said the facility is an “opportunity to provide long-term positive impact to children of Baton Rouge and beyond.”

“We will provide world-class healthcare,” he said, adding that the hospital will have the tools to teach young children how to be healthy and lead healthier lives.

“The groundbreaking ceremony was a spectacular event,” Bishop Muench said in a statement. “Through the indispensable leadership and inspiration of the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady, and the extreme helpfulness of (Our Lady of the Lake’s) board of directors, administrators and staff, this dream took a significant step. None of this could have been accomplished without the enthusiastic support and financial backing of so many talented and generous people in our community. What a joyous day of hope for us all. Congratulations to all who have enabled this significant progress.”

OLOL chief medical officer Dr. Shaun Kemmerly said the hospital will serve as an “icon of hope and healing for the children of Louisiana and beyond.”

Annually, Our Lady of the Lake provides care to approximately 100,000 pediatric patients from throughout Louisiana, and parts of Mississippi and Texas, making it one of the largest pediatric care providers in the state. In addition to Baton Rouge, Our Lady of the Lake Children’s Hospital pediatric specialty clinics are located in Hammond, Gonzales, Lafayette and Monroe.

Currently, a children’s hospital is operated within OLOL’s regional facility in Baton Rouge with approximately 60 pediatric medical subspecialists providing care in about 20 different medical specialties.

The new freestanding facility, which will come at a cost of $230 million, will be located on 66 acres of property that parallels Interstate 10 between Essen and Interstate 12.

The Catholic Commentator
Bishop Muench appoints new media liaison

Bishop Robert W. Muench has appointed Kelly King Alexander as media liaison for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, effective March 1.

Alexander succeeds Donna Carville, who is retiring. Carville has served as media liaison since June 1, 2012. Bishop Muench complimented and thanked Carville for her “exemplary service to the diocese” and welcomed Alexander to her new role.

Alexander has broad experience as a writer and editor. She earned a bachelor’s degree in English in 1986 from LSU and a master’s in journalism in 1988 after two years as an LSU Manship fellow. She has written for national publications for the past 25 years, including National Catholic Register, Ladies’ Home Journal, The Writer, Parenting, Southern Living, Baby Talk, The Olympian, McGraw-Hill’s Family Business Newsletter, and Catholic Digest. She served as contributing editor for Parents from 1998-2001, and served as senior editor, interim editor, and a regular columnist for Baton Rouge Business Report successively from 1992-2000.

Her areas of expertise include in-depth investigative reporting as well as writing about religion, education and health care, and she has won national, statewide and local writing awards.

A cradle Catholic, Alexander and her husband, Lathan, have been married for 27 years and are the parents of three young adult children. They’ve been members of St. George Catholic Church for 21 years, where they’ve served as baptismal preparation and confirmation preparation team leaders. She also served on the St. George School Advisory Council for two terms when her children attended school there, and is currently serving her second term on the board of Woman’s New Life Center of Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

A voracious reader with a particular interest in Catholic writers and “Catholic” novels, Alexander has participated in Bible studies at Our Lady of Mercy, St. John the Evangelist, and St. George for the past 12 years. In addition, she has written for The Catholic Commentator.

STORM ▼
From page 1

As was the case with his neighbors, the only room left standing in the house was the one they were in during the twister.

Valencia Williams, also a member of St. Benedict, and her three children were also at home, which was destroyed.

“The house started shaking, it was so scary,” Williams said. “We stood in the hallway and the roof of the house just came off.”

Williams’ aunt, Catherine Bougere, also a member of St. Benedict, received a weather alert, and her daughter called.

“She said, ‘Hurry and take cover, get in the hall. I was shaking, so scared,'” said Bougere. “She said, ‘Don’t move and she stayed with me on the phone and talked me through it.”

“I heard something like a train, and I heard a clacking like glass was breaking. The sound was horrible. It’s amazing that so many houses were destroyed and no one (here) was killed.”

As the storm hit, Patrick Oliver, St. Benedict parishioner, worried about his neighbor across the street, who just had open heart surgery. He and his wife were trapped in the back of the house by debris. With the assistance of others, Oliver pulled the couple out of the wreckage. Because ambulances could not get into the subdivision, Oliver and others rolled the husband in a chair out of the subdivision so that he could be transported to the hospital.

Oliver pointed to a collapsed yellow wooden house nearby on the levee and said, “My mother’s house is gone.” He was emotional over the loss. “I grew up in that house. I have many memories there,” he said.

Sharon Oliver’s mother also lives by the couple, and her home was destroyed as well. Her husband, St. Benedict parishioner, also lost her childhood home when her mother Ruth Johnson’s house was destroyed. Rebuilding her and her mother’s life will be done one day at a time she said.

Andrea Johnson Forté was driving home when her husband, Donovan, who was at home with their daughter when the tornado hit, called and said, “You better get home, everything is gone.”

Their daughter had tried to leave her bedroom as the tornado struck, but the door popped off, so she jumped in her bed, held on and covered her head and prayed.

“She prayed ‘God, help us, Jesus help us,'” said Forté. “She remained calm when she saw her house was torn up.

“During really hard times you have to stand on his word. People call and ask, ‘Why aren’t you upset? What is there to be upset about? It’s God. I would have been upset if I came home and my husband and daughter were dead,’ Forté said.

She cried with joy when she found the bag that contained the photographs of her children as they were growing up.

In fact, those most impacted by the storm are not counting their losses, but blessings after they realized material possessions are not important.

This gratitude was also expressed by the parishioners of St. Michael Church in Convent living on Schexnayder Street in Convent, just two streets over from where a twister leveled the Sugar Hill RV Park, killing two people and injuring 30.

Angéle Gandy said her husband James came into the living room from the kitchen before the tornado struck and said they needed to take cover. He went into a hallway closet and Angéle and her mother, Rose Mae Schexnayder, 92, went into the closet of Schexnayder’s room.

“The noise was terrible. It was a vom, voom boom, then there was pressure,” Angéle Gandy said. “Mom said, ‘What’s happening?” When they opened the closet afterwards, they were horrified when they saw the room was filled with glass and debris. Gandy quickly went to the end of the hallway, where there is a picture of Jesus wearing a crown of thorns looking painfully up to heaven.

“I said, ‘Thank you Jesus for saving me,’” said Gandy emotionally. “Her mother, who is now staying with a grandson in Gonzales, was distraught immediately after the storm but no longer remembers it, Gandy said. “I think the Lord spared her from the pain of all this.”

As she and her husband rebuild their lives, Gandy said, “Jesus says if you trust and stay thankful, he will see you through.”

Ralph Patin, District Four councilman on the St. James Parish Council and another St. Michael parishioner, said he remains optimistic about the future.

“I’m still standing, I have my faith life,” said Patin. “I think my faith is stronger because of the storm.”

Catherine Boudreaux said she and her husband, Roy were in their game room when the wind shook their home and they ran into the dining room. No sooner had they left the game room than glass and debris came flying into the game room.

“It’s very heartwarming,” Gros said.

So far the Rotary Club has raised $15,000. Once everyone’s electricity returns, it will use the rest of the money to assist people in need of assistance.

Parishioners at St. Michael have brought food, clothing and money, which is used to purchase gift cards for storm victims, to the church. The Knights and Ladies of Peter Claver have also been cooking meals for the Red Cross and first responders to take to them as well.

“They have been supportive and wanting to express their love and concern,” said Deacon Alfred Adams, deacon assistant at St. Michael.
By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Shortly after tornados ripped through the lives and hearts of families along the river parishes Feb. 23, Catholic Charities of Baton Rouge swiftly mobilized its disaster relief team.

By that evening, the agency had cots, blankets and other items ready to be distributed, if needed. By the middle and later parts of the week, the agency had sent gift cards to St. Michael Church in Convent, and those cards were distributed to the most needy, as determined by parish officials.

The gift cards were recently presented to Catholic Charities prior to the annual Catholic Schools Week Mass, when students from throughout the diocese brought donations collected from their schools to the agency.

“What a blessing to have those cards,” CCBDR executive director David Aguillard said, adding by the morning after the tornados his staff had begun contacting civil parishes to assess their needs.

Late in the week, CCBDR staff was spreading across some of the hardest hit areas to meet with civil parish emergency operations personnel and families most impacted by the deadly weather. They were assigned the task of assessing damage, the needs of the victims and meeting with the residents.

The data they collect, along with information provided by the civil parishes, will help CCBDR apply for relief grants, including a $10,000 disaster grant from Catholic Charities USA.

The agency will also be applying for grants through United Way and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

Monies from those grants will be allocated to help victims.

“No matter how many disasters I’ve witnessed, they are always emotionally draining,” said Aguillard, who toured the Convent area with St. Michael Church pastor Father Vincent Dufresne on Feb. 25. “And as always there’s the unanswerable, that the difference between life and death is a seeming act of random luck.”

Convent resident Jackie Chauvin told Aguillard she and her husband had only seconds to run into the bathroom of their home before their bedroom wall was literally ripped away by a tornado that had a direct hit to neighboring Sugar RV Park, where at least two lives were lost.

“I am just glad to be standing here today. This is just a building. I’ll cry but I’ll get over it.”

Jackie Chauvin
Convent resident

“I am just glad to be standing here today. This is just a building. I’ll cry but I’ll get over it.”

The damage field is so spread out. He said there are many isolated pockets of severe damage that affected small numbers of people in a specific area.

The damage in the Diocese of Baton Rouge is spread out from locations such as Bertrandville and Convent in the River Parish area to as far away as northern Livingston Parish.

Aguillard stressed that especially in the early days following a disaster, other than water and other essentials, the most valuable commodity for those impacted is cash. He noted there is always a time and place for donating material goods but cash was what was needed most to help families rebuild their lives.

He said following a storm one family might only be without power while a neighbor has lost everything, a common occurrence in tornado-stricken areas where the storms can literally hopscotch through a neighborhood. Because the needs are so dichotomous, cash or gift cards can better address the specific needs of each family.

“No matter how many disasters I’ve witnessed, they are always emotionally draining,” said Aguillard, who toured the Convent area with St. Michael Church pastor Father Vincent Dufresne on Feb. 25. “And as always there’s the unanswerable, that the difference between life and death is a seeming act of random luck.”

Convent resident Jackie Chauvin told Aguillard she and her husband had only seconds to run into the bathroom of their home before their bedroom wall was literally ripped away by a tornado that had a direct hit to neighboring Sugar RV Park, where at least two lives were lost.

“I am just glad to be standing here today,” Chauvin said. “This is just a building. I’ll cry but I’ll get over it.”

Aguillard said assessing the impact of the storms is particularly difficult because the damage field is so spread out. He said there are many isolated pockets of severe damage that affected small numbers of people in a specific area.

The damage in the Diocese of Baton Rouge is spread out from locations such as Bertrandville and Convent in the River Parish area to as far away as northern Livingston Parish.

Aguillard stressed that especially in the early days following a disaster, other than water and other essentials, the most valuable commodity for those impacted is cash. He noted there is always a time and place for donating material goods but cash was what was needed most to help families rebuild their lives.

He said following a storm one family might only be without power while a neighbor has lost everything, a common occurrence in tornado-stricken areas where the storms can literally hopscotch through a neighborhood. Because the needs are so dichotomous, cash or gift cards can better address the specific needs of each family.

“No matter how many disasters I’ve witnessed, they are always emotionally draining,” said Aguillard, who toured the Convent area with St. Michael Church pastor Father Vincent Dufresne on Feb. 25. “And as always there’s the unanswerable, that the difference between life and death is a seeming act of random luck.”

Convent resident Jackie Chauvin told Aguillard she and her husband had only seconds to run into the bathroom of their home before their bedroom wall was literally ripped away by a tornado that had a direct hit to neighboring Sugar RV Park, where at least two lives were lost.

“I am just glad to be standing here today,” Chauvin said. “This is just a building. I’ll cry but I’ll get over it.”

Aguillard said assessing the impact of the storms is particularly difficult because the damage field is so spread out. He said there are many isolated pockets of severe damage that affected small numbers of people in a specific area.

The damage in the Diocese of Baton Rouge is spread out from locations such as Bertrandville and Convent in the River Parish area to as far away as northern Livingston Parish.

Aguillard stressed that especially in the early days following a disaster, other than water and other essentials, the most valuable commodity for those impacted is cash. He noted there is always a time and place for donating material goods but cash was what was needed most to help families rebuild their lives.

He said following a storm one family might only be without power while a neighbor has lost everything, a common occurrence in tornado-stricken areas where the storms can literally hopscotch through a neighborhood. Because the needs are so dichotomous, cash or gift cards can better address the specific needs of each family.

“No matter how many disasters I’ve witnessed, they are always emotionally draining,” said Aguillard, who toured the Convent area with St. Michael Church pastor Father Vincent Dufresne on Feb. 25. “And as always there’s the unanswerable, that the difference between life and death is a seeming act of random luck.”

Convent resident Jackie Chauvin told Aguillard she and her husband had only seconds to run into the bathroom of their home before their bedroom wall was literally ripped away by a tornado that had a direct hit to neighboring Sugar RV Park, where at least two lives were lost.

“I am just glad to be standing here today,” Chauvin said. “This is just a building. I’ll cry but I’ll get over it.”

Aguillard said assessing the impact of the storms is particularly difficult because the damage field is so spread out. He said there are many isolated pockets of severe damage that affected small numbers of people in a specific area.

The damage in the Diocese of Baton Rouge is spread out from locations such as Bertrandville and Convent in the River Parish area to as far away as northern Livingston Parish.

Aguillard stressed that especially in the early days following a disaster, other than water and other essentials, the most valuable commodity for those impacted is cash. He noted there is always a time and place for donating material goods but cash was what was needed most to help families rebuild their lives.

He said following a storm one family might only be without power while a neighbor has lost everything, a common occurrence in tornado-stricken areas where the storms can literally hopscotch through a neighborhood. Because the needs are so dichotomous, cash or gift cards can better address the specific needs of each family.

“With the impacted area not large enough to be a federal disaster area, the resources we obtain may be the only assistance available for some families,” Aguillard said.

Several churches in the Diocese of Baton Rouge took up a special collection for storm victims on Feb. 28.

Anyone wishing to donate money through Catholic Charities can do so by visiting ccdiobr.org.
In the Bible, Jesus says: “Do this in memory of me.” But he doesn’t say that it has to be done every Sunday and holy day. So many young people are falling away from the church because of its rigidity. Please explain why we are obligated. (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

The responsibility to gather on Sundays for the Eucharist has been recognized by Christians since the earliest days of the church, although it was not specifically written into law until the fourth century. That obligation is codified in the current Code of Canon Law (in No. 1246), which says that “Sunday … must be observed in the universal church as the primordial holy day of obligation.” Sunday is singled out as sacred, of course, because it was the day of Christ’s resurrection. In the Didache, which was not specifically written into law until the earliest days of the church, although it was the day of Christ’s resurrection. In the Didache, which was compiled by Christian teaching written in the second half of the first century, believers were directed as follows: “On Sundays, get together and break the bread and give thanks, confessing your sins in order that your sacrifice may be pure.”

It is true, as you say, that the Sunday Mass obligation is a precept of the church rather than a verbatim command of Jesus, and therefore it could be modified by competent church authority. But it doesn’t seem to me that removing the obligation would serve to bring young people back to more regular eucharistic practice.

The solution, I think, has more to do with liturgies that celebrate joyfully what Jesus has done, with homilies that are well-prepared and directed to the challenges people face daily, and most of all with parents who show their children, by example, the importance of the Mass in their lives.

Recently we celebrated the feast of the Epiphany, and I was reminded what an important feast it is. (Jesus and Mary were present, and in some parts of the world, the feast is called “Little Christmas.”)

My question is this: Why isn’t the Epiphany one of the mysteries of the rosary? When St. John Paul II introduced the “luminous mysteries,” the Epiphany could have been the third of these mysteries instead of “the spread of the kingdom,” which is still a mystery to me!

I feel presumptuous second-guessing St. John Paul II, but would you please comment? (Dublin, Ohio)

When St. John Paul II in 2002 proposed a new set of mysteries, he did so because he wanted to make the rosary more of an overview of the entire life of Christ. He felt that there was a gap between the childhood of Jesus, which we meditate on in the joyful mysteries, and Christ’s passion and death, reflected on in the sorrowful mysteries. (The glorious mysteries celebrate the triumph over sin and death of Christ and the Virgin Mary.)

The pope pointed out that it is during his three years of public ministry that Jesus reveals his identity to us and invites us to share in his vision of God’s plan. (If the Epiphany were to be added, as you suggest, it would properly belong to the joyful mysteries — but that would make six of those, and our present rosary beads would be out of date!)

I agree with you that the third of these luminous mysteries (the proclamation of the kingdom) is rather generic and a bit harder to grasp than the other four, which highlight specific events (the baptism in the Jordan, the miracle at Cana, the Transfiguration and the institution of the Eucharist). That third mystery refers to the various parables, especially in Matthew’s Gospel, in which Jesus teaches us the great value of the kingdom of God (a treasure hidden in a field, a pearl of great price, the lever in the flour, a mustard seed, etc.).

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 askfoilher Doyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, NY 12208.

Who Else Wants To Avoid Probate Costs and Delays, Nursing Home Poverty, And Taxes

Louisiana Estate Planning Attorney Reveals What You Need To Know About The Louisiana Succession, Nursing Home Poverty, and Taxes

We’ve set a lofty goal for ourselves at Rabalais Law. And, what is that goal? To become your TRUSTED ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEY when it comes to protecting what you have and leaving it the right way to your family. It’s a commitment we take very seriously on a daily basis.

You will not build this type of relationship at any other law firm. Yes, we want to be your source for necessary legal services, including the preparation of any needed Last Wills, Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, Health Care Directives, and Trusts, but we also want to take it a step further by offering you sound advice on protecting your estate through our free educational events. This way, you’ll never have to worry whether you have the right plan in place to protect your estate for yourself and your loved ones.

“It is true, as you say, except death and taxes!”—Benjamin Franklin

The biggest worry our clients have these days is literally losing their money and property, either during their lifetimes or at their demise. Common concerns include suffering losses to government interference, probate, lawyers, nursing homes, and taxes that threaten your family’s independence and force loss of control to government or worse, burdening your family. Having what you own structured the wrong way can result in a wildly unpredictable and insecure legal, tax, and financial outlook for you and your family. Today can be the day that you STOP worrying about your estate, and for all.

Could an Hour with Laura Poché Give You The Answer To Protecting Your Estate?

We have spent my entire lifetime in Louisiana where the greatest worry our clients have these days is making a Last Will or Trust with the wrong information and a pastor in the Diocese of Albany, New York. Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfoilher Doyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, NY 12208.

Central/St. Francisville

Tuesday, March 15th

Sammy’s Grill

14800 Wax Road

11:30am-1:00pm

Lunch Provided!

Rammond/Ponchatula

Wednesday, March 16th

Jacinle Inn

903 W. Morris Street

11:30am-1:00pm

Lunch Provided!

Denham Springs/Walker

Tuesday, March 17th

Bass Pro Shops

Conservation Resort

175 Bass Pro Blvd.

11:00am-12:30pm

Lunch Provided!

Baton Rouge

Wednesday, March 16th

Tchefuncte Country Club

2 Country Club Park

11:00am-1:00pm

Lunch Provided!

Gonzales/Prairieville

Wednesday, March 23rd

Cabela’s

2nd Floor Conference Room

2200 W. Cabela’s Pkwy.

10:30am-12:00pm

Lunch Provided!

Covington/Mandeville

Tuesday, March 22nd

Chefmute Club

11:30am-1:00pm

Lunch Provided!

Baton Rouge

Wednesday, March 23rd

Rabalais Law Office

9191 Siegen Lane, Suite 5B

6:00pm-7:30pm

Refreshments Provided!

We’ve set a lofty goal for ourselves at Rabalais Law. And, what is that goal? To become your TRUSTED ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEY when it comes to protecting what you have and leaving it the right way to your family. It’s a commitment we take very seriously on a daily basis.

You will not build this type of relationship at any other law firm. Yes, we want to be your source for necessary legal services, including the preparation of any needed Last Wills, Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, Health Care Directives, and Trusts, but we also want to take it a step further by offering you sound advice on protecting your estate through our free educational events. This way, you’ll never have to worry whether you have the right plan in place to protect your estate for yourself and your loved ones.

“In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes!”—Benjamin Franklin

The biggest worry our clients have these days is literally losing their money and property, either during their lifetimes or at their demise. Common concerns include suffering losses to government interference, probate, lawyers, nursing homes, and taxes that threaten your family’s independence and force loss of control to government or worse, burdening your family. Having what you own structured the wrong way can result in a wildly unpredictable and insecure legal, tax, and financial outlook for you and your family. Today can be the day that you STOP worrying about your estate, and for all.

Could an Hour with Laura Poché Give You The Answer To Protecting Your Estate?

Rabalais Law

Planning and Settling Estates

To Register, Call: 225-282-0612

Scotting is limited, so register today! If you are married, you AND your spouse are strongly encouraged to attend together!

We’ve set a lofty goal for ourselves at Rabalais Law. And, what is that goal? To become your TRUSTED ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEY when it comes to protecting what you have and leaving it the right way to your family. It’s a commitment we take very seriously on a daily basis.

You will not build this type of relationship at any other law firm. Yes, we want to be your source for necessary legal services, including the preparation of any needed Last Wills, Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, Health Care Directives, and Trusts, but we also want to take it a step further by offering you sound advice on protecting your estate through our free educational events. This way, you’ll never have to worry whether you have the right plan in place to protect your estate for yourself and your loved ones.

“In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes!”—Benjamin Franklin

The biggest worry our clients have these days is literally losing their money and property, either during their lifetimes or at their demise. Common concerns include suffering losses to government interference, probate, lawyers, nursing homes, and taxes that threaten your family’s independence and force loss of control to government or worse, burdening your family. Having what you own structured the wrong way can result in a wildly unpredictable and insecure legal, tax, and financial outlook for you and your family. Today can be the day that you STOP worrying about your estate, and for all.

Could an Hour with Laura Poché Give You The Answer To Protecting Your Estate?

Rabalais Law

Planning and Settling Estates

To Register, Call: 225-282-0612

Scotting is limited, so register today! If you are married, you AND your spouse are strongly encouraged to attend together!
Spiritual roots examined during Lenten Day of Reflection

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

About 300 black Catholics throughout South Louisiana examined their spiritual roots during a Lenten Day of Reflection at the Catholic Life Center on Feb. 13.

The theme of the conference was “Sankofa,” translated “go back and get it” in the Twi language of Ghana, and is represented by the symbol of a bird with its head turned backwards as if looking back.

Sponsored by the Dioceses of Baton Rouge, Houma/Thibodaux, Lafayette and the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the event focused on looking at the challenges black Catholics faced in the past, what they are doing now to address them, as well as future promises. Attendees also heard inspirational music by the Diocese of Baton Rouge Gospel Choir.

“Sankofa is expressed as a mythic bird that flies forward while looking backward. It teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward,” said Deacon Alfred Adams, Director of the Office of Black Catholics for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. That is, we should reach back and gather the best of what our ancestors left as a heritage for us to build upon.

In her talk on “where Catholics are from,” Cassandra Will, who was a religion instructor at Redemptorist/St. Gerard School, focused on the history of the Plantevigne brothers of Pointe Coupee Civil Parish. Professor Pete Plantevigne and Father John Plantevigne played an integral part in educating black children in Pointe Coupee Parish. Professor Plantevigne was ambushed and killed in 1903 near Oscar, it is believed, because of his work to educate black children.

Will said the Sankofa Conference plays an important part in continuing the dialogue of the black Catholic community’s role in the Catholic Church.

“We have a long legacy in the church. Our legacy as Catholics begins with Jesus Christ. Simon of Cyrene from North Africa is our patriarch,” said Will. “As we reflect each Lent in the fifth station of the cross, when he helped Jesus carry his cross. Many of the earliest Christians were of African descent, such as the Ethiopian Eunuch in the Act of the Apostles, St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Monica, martyrs St. Felicity and St. Perpetua and numerous others.

“Black Catholics are not converts to faith after slavery. Our ancestry dates back to Jesus Christ himself.”

Cassandra Will
Instructor, Redemptorist/St. Gerard School

More than 300 black Catholics from around South Louisiana attended the Sankofa Lenten Day of Reflection at the Catholic Life Center on Feb. 13. Photo provided by Deacon Alfred Adams

“Don’t be unreachable,” advised Carter. He said older people can sometimes convey a “stolid,” “heavy, theological” attitude when interacting with the youth that turns them off. They speak of peace and joy, but don’t show it through their own lives.

He urged the attendees, rather, to invite young people into their circles, seek their advice and let them know they are all on a shared mission. This, he emphasized, is a “come Holy Spirit, united in faith” vision that helps the church to thrive.

He urged the attendees to do everything as Christ would – with love and compassion. That comes through self-examination to see how they can better themselves before trying to show anyone else how to do things better, according to Carter.

“If you want to change the culture, you first have to change yourself,” Carter said.

PANAL DISCUSSION ON ADOPTION – Catholic Charities Maternity & Adoption department sponsored a panel discussion on how life decisions are impacted by relationships Feb. 25 at the main library of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. The event also included the showing of the movie, “Bella.” Following the movie the panel answered questions from those in attendance related to the life-long journey of adoption. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator
Bishop calls RCIA candidates to be ‘sharers of the mystery of love’

By Marilyn Goff
Special to The Catholic Commentator

Bishop Robert W. Muench wholeheartedly and warmly welcomed the largest number of participants in the Rite of Election since 2002 at St. Joseph’s Cathedral in Baton Rouge on Sunday, Feb. 14.

For the 572 candidates, the Rite of Election is an important step for those from the Diocese of Baton Rouge who want to be received into the Catholic Church. During the Lenten season the candidates are completing their study and formation in the faith to receive the sacraments at Easter.

The elect-candidates are using Lent as a time of preparation to pray, study, and seek spiritual direction. The parish communities are also praying for the candidates. It is on Holy Saturday when the candidates receive the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy Eucharist. It is then that the person is fully initiated into the Catholic Church.

The call, or the election, asks the candidates, “Do you wish to enter fully into the life of the church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist,” the bishop asked.

The candidates all responded, “We do.”

On Feb. 14, Right of Election services were held at 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. to accommodate the large number of candidates. Receptions followed each in the new cathedral parish hall.

Speaking to the candidates, their sponsors and guests, Bishop Muench focused on the theme of God’s love. The Rite of Election was a celebration of God’s love and the day was an especially joyous occasion because “God has called you to be a part of the Catholic family … to share in his presence, grace and love.” He also said the church is open to its members as active participants with their unique talents.

“We are all called to share that love of forgiveness and sacrificial love with others,” said the bishop. Turning to the Gospel readings, Bishop Muench said that God has “taken away stony hearts and given you natural hearts. God didn’t create us as creatures, but as human beings.”

God has called us to be “sharers of the mystery of love … and has “commanded us to love one another as I love you. God has asked this of you and me,” Bishop Muench said.

“What makes us important,” said the bishop, “is the same God called all of us in his image and likeness and empowered us to be his people … in an act of faith and trust, living and sharing his love in a community of faith.”

The annual Rite of Election celebration at St. Joseph Cathedral on Feb. 14 included 572 candidates, the largest number since 2002. Bishop Robert W. Muench, who celebrated the Mass, told the candidates, “God has taken away stony hearts and given you natural hearts.”

The call, or the election, asks the candidates, “Do you wish to enter fully into the life of the church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist,” the bishop asked.

The annual Rite of Election celebration at St. Joseph Cathedral on Feb. 14 included 572 candidates, the largest number since 2002. Bishop Robert W. Muench, who celebrated the Mass, told the candidates, “God has taken away stony hearts and given you natural hearts.”

The candidates all responded, “We do.”

Send your church parish, school and organization news and photos to Richard Meek, editor, at rmeek@diobr.org.

Holy Year of Mercy Pilgrimage to Italy

Led by Fr. Cary Bani, Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, St. Francisville.

May 3 - 13, 2016

$3,795 All Inclusive from New Orleans

Including:
Assisi, Lanciano, San Giovanni Rotondo, Pompeii, Amalfi, Sorrento, Capri, Rome, the Vatican & Audience with Pope Francis

Mass Celebrated Daily

For more information, please call Pilgrimage Tours at 1-800-278-1351

OBITUARIES

Sister St. Pierre dies in Kansas

Sister Therese St. Pierre CJS died Feb. 11 at the age of 84 at the Wichita Center of the Adorers of the Precious Blood in Wichita, Kansas.

Sister Therese was born in Lucy, Louisiana to the late Albin J. and Leila Hymel St. Pierre and was educated in public schools in St. John the Baptist Civil Parish.


She graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans in 1962 with a bachelor's degree in education and did advanced studies at Xavier University in New Orleans, St. Catherine's College in St. Paul, Minnesota and the International Graduate School of Education in Colorado.

She taught at Sacred Heart and St. George schools in Baton Rouge and in 1999 received the Outstanding Elementary Teacher Award for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. She also taught at several schools in the Archdiocese of New Orleans and from 1981-87 served as an adult education teacher at Hope House in the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans.

She retired in 1997 and because of failing health moved to St. Mary's convent in Ponchatoula on Feb. 21. Interment followed in Rosaryville Spirit Life Center in Ponchatoula.

Memorial donations may be made to Dear Neighbor Ministries, Inc., 3700 E. Lincoln St., Wichita, KS 67218.

Sister Hilary dies

Sister Mary Hilary Simpson OP, a Dominican Sister of Peace, died Monday, Feb. 15, at North Oaks Medical Center in Hammond.

Born in New Orleans on Jan. 17, 1938, she was the daughter of Siguard Edgar Simpson Jr. and Beatrice Vitrano Simpson.

Sister Hilary was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, Siguard E. Simpson III.

In 1955, Sister Hilary entered the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary, now known as the Dominican Sisters of Peace. She earned her bachelor's degree in music education from Loyola University in New Orleans and her masters from LSU.

Sister Hilary served in the Diocese of Baton Rouge as well as the Archdiocese of New Orleans. For several years, Sister Hilary, well-known for her ability to play the trumpet, directed the music education program in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated by Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond at Rosaryville Spirit Life Center in Ponchatoula on Feb. 21. Interment followed in Rosaryville Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Dominican Sisters of Peace, 2320 Airport Drive, Columbus, OH 43219 or online at OPPeace.org.
Couples honored at annual Wedding Anniversary Mass

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

As a high school student in the early 1940’s, Frank Stabiler would often go downtown to visit his grandmother. She lived in a large home in Baton Rouge and would routinely rent some of the extra rooms to women working at LSU. Stabiler didn’t know it at the time, but on one of these visits he would meet the woman he would marry and spend the next 72 years of his life with her.

“I wouldn’t call it love at first sight,” Stabiler said. “But it was something.”

That “something” is what they have used to raise a son together and to live out the sacramental bonds of their marriage for over seven decades.

To commemorate their commitment to each other, Stabiler and his wife, Ruth, joined other couples from throughout the diocese in a Mass. The Diocese of Baton Rouge’s annual Wedding Anniversary Mass and Celebration was held on Feb. 21 at Our Lady of Mercy Church.

Celebrated by Bishop Robert W. Muench with concelebrants Father Cleo Milano and Father Nantun Minj, the Mass was attended by hundreds of couples marking their 25th, 50th, 65th and over anniversaries.

The longest married couple present was Charles and Rita Serio, who celebrated 73 years together. They received a bouquet of flowers from Bishop Muench.

During the Mass, the bishop led a blessing of married couples, giving each husband and wife an opportunity to reaffirm their love for each other and reflect on the great love that God has shown to all of mankind.

For Frank Stabiler, it was a time to think back to his own wedding, and the vows he and his wife took when they married on Dec. 28, 1943.

“Stabiler noted that being married means compromising. “You have to give and get,” he said.

In the beginning of his marriage, making ends meet was difficult, but he noted, “You just do what you have to do.”

In addition to working hard, there were also a lot of fun times. “We drove to Alaska, a 5,000-mile trip. We did that three times,” said Stabiler, who added that the family also enjoyed fishing and playing jokes on each other.

But 56 years ago, all of that changed. Ruth suffered a stroke. She has limited ability and hasn’t been able to talk since, but true to the words he recited to her decades ago, Stabiler lovingly takes care of his wife. The two demonstrate their obvious affection for each other through touching, eye contact and simple smiles.

“We hold hands in church a lot,” said Stabiler.

Like the Stabiler’s, Linda and Charles Roppolo express their marriage commitment to each other through simple ways. Celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year, the Roppolo’s say they genuinely enjoy each other’s company. Whether it’s attending a gathering with their three adult sons and their families or simply going to the grocery store, it’s being together that counts.

“I married a great woman. I never thought I would love her as much as I do today,” said Charles Roppolo.

Married on Aug. 6, 1966, the Roppolo’s credit their Italian families with helping them meet and eventually fall in love, but they also recognize the importance of something else in a marriage.

“Faith has a lot to do with it. Faith got us through the bad parts,” explained Charles Roppolo.

But is there a secret to a long and happy marriage?

“There really is no secret at all about being married for a long time. It’s about taking your marriage vows seriously,” said Linda Roppolo, who added that for some people today, the emphasis seems to be only on the wedding day itself.

“It’s just getting to be a big show for some people, but after the passion passes, true love comes out,” she added, explaining that in a marriage, every day you fall in love with each other more and more.

That’s what’s happening to Sam and Arline Mistretta. Celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary, the Mistrettas are only just starting out when compared to the Roppolo’s and the Stabiler’s, yet they are just as strong in their conviction about the seriousness of their marriage vows and in the parenting of their college son and teenage daughter.

“We had bad times, especially in the beginning when you are making that adjustment to each other, but we made the choice not to give up (on the marriage),” said Arline Mistretta.

Her husband agreed, noting that a lot of growth occurs as couples mature together, and that’s one reason why he doesn’t believe couples should live together before or instead of getting married. “The church has a lot of wisdom when it comes to this,” he said, adding without marriage, “there’s no commitment, and it’s too easy to walk out” during tough times.
Five women and men religious celebrate milestone jubilees

By Richard Meek  The Catholic Commentator

Five women and men religious with a combined 295 years of ministry recently celebrated milestone jubilees during a Mass at St. Joseph Chapel on the campus of the Catholic Life Center.

Bishop Robert W. Muench celebrated the Mass on Feb. 2.

Celebrating jubilees were Brother Eldon Crifasi SC (75 years), Sister Sandra Blanchard CSJ (60 years), Sister Adele Lambert CSJ (60 years), Sister Janet Franklin CSJ (50 years) and Father Bill Cawley SC (50 years).

“I feel such a close relationship with many of you,” said Bishop Muench, attributing his desire to choose a vocation to the community at Metuchen, (New Jersey) in 1939 after graduating from Catholic High School.

“The jubilarians) have served nearly 300 years but they don’t look that old,” the bishop joked.

Chancellor Father Paul Yi briefly spoke about each of the jubilarians. He said Brother Eldon grew up in Baton Rouge along with seven siblings and first met the brothers when he attended Catholic High School.

“Many of you,” said Bishop Muench, “are part of the same class at SJA and entered religious life together.

Sister Sandra served as an educator in Catholic schools in New Orleans, Harahan and Baton Rouge in many capacities, including teacher, principal, music teacher and counselor. Father Yi said she continues to serve as a member of the Diocesan School Board and the St. Joseph’s Alumni Association at Catholic High School.

Bishop Robert W. Muench leads five women and men religious in the renewal of their vows during a Jubilee and Consecrated Life Eucharistic celebration on Feb. 12 at St. Joseph Chapel on the campus of the Catholic Life Center. The five jubilarians had a combined 295 years of ministry.

Pro-life supporters praise ruling

By Richard Meek  The Catholic Commentator

Pro-life supporters hailed a decision by a federal appeals court upholding a Louisiana law that requires doctors who provide abortions to have admitting privileges to hospitals within 30 miles.

On Feb. 24, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued an emergency stay blocking a federal judge’s ruling that had found the admitting privileges component of the law unconstitutional. In January, U.S. District Judge John deGravelles blocked a federal judge’s ruling that had shutter as well as challenging deGravelles’ ruling that the law would deprive accessibility to abortions to 99 percent of women in the state.

U.S. Circuit Judge Jennifer Walter Elrod, who wrote the opinion for the circuit court, pointedug the 5th Circuit has previously upheld similar requirements for admitting privileges. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments on a similar Texas law March 2.

“As we expected, the 5th Circuit has upheld the common sense requirements of admitting privileges consistent with other decisions on this matter,” said Ben Clapper, executive director of Louisiana Right to Life. “Even while waiting for the case’s full appeal, we look forward to the health and safety of women being protected.”

Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry also applauded the decision to “halt the erroneous ruling and allow Louisiana’s pro-life and pro-woman admitting privileges law to go into effect.”

“Today is a victory for Louisiana,” he added.
Courtside chat leads to lifetime of ministry for Brother Eldon

By Rachele Smith
The Catholic Commentator

It started as a simple game of basketball, but a comment made on the court may have sparked a life’s ministry that today spans 75 years.

For Brother Eldon Crifasi SC, it’s only fitting that basketball, a sport he still plays a little even at 93 years old and one he dearly enjoyed coaching for decades, would somehow play a part in his calling to the religious life.

“When I was a junior (at Catholic High School), we were playing basketball with the brothers (of the Sacred Heart) one day, and one of them mentioned to me, ‘You’ll make a good brother, come play on our team,’” he said.

Brother Eldon held that comment close to his heart, and the next year, in 1939, when he graduated from the all-boys high school, which was located behind St. Joseph Cathedral at that time, A.J. Crifasi, who would later become Brother Eldon, decided to join the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

He began his formation at the order’s novitiate in Metuchen, New Jersey, leaving in August of that year.

“I remember my older brother telling my dad at that time, ‘Why don’t you get him a round trip ticket because he will be home in no time,’” Brother Eldon laughed.

Of course, he didn’t need that ticket. In 1941, when Americans kept a close watch on German aggression across the globe and would later that year join the war following Japan’s brutal attack on the US fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, Brother Eldon professed first vows.

He would go on to complete college work and take on many teaching and administrative positions in various schools operated by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

“For the first ten years, you change every year,” Brother Eldon said, explaining the different assignments and their purpose of obtaining experience at different types of schools. The constant moving, however, did cause one friend to joke that Brother Eldon was reassigned so often because no one wanted him.

“I said, ‘No, everyone wants me,’” Brother Eldon said, smiling.

As an educator at brother schools from New Orleans and Donaldsonville to Baton Rouge and even Dallas, Brother Eldon said he has enjoyed his life’s work. It’s an affirmation he receives especially when he sees former students.

“I always believed that it was important how you relate (to your students) and how you treat them; that you show interest in them. They are not going to remember everything you taught them, but they will remember how you made them feel,” he said, reflecting on his years in the classroom.

As he looks back to his calling, Brother Eldon’s teaching philosophy can also be found in what initially made him want to join the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. As a student at Catholic High, he said he was impressed with the community of the brothers and the interest that each showed in the students. Through the years, he has used his own ministry to continue that legacy and as he celebrates his diamond jubilee year, Brother Eldon is not slowing down.

Since returning to Catholic High in 1991, Brother Eldon has worked in many positions. As the emeritus director of alumni relations, he continues to assist when and wherever he is needed and doesn’t even balk at all of the new technology he has seen developed through the years. Of course, he has adapted it to suit his needs.

“I can get texts on my phone, but I still like to call people back,” he admitted.

As a testament to his years of service at Catholic High, the Brother Eldon 5k Race and 1-Mile Run/Walk/Jog was established with proceeds benefiting a scholarship in his name. True to his humble spirit, Brother Eldon explained the only reason the race was put in his honor was because he was not in the meeting when the name was being chosen.

Now in its 17th year, the annual race was held Feb. 27, and as in years past, Brother Eldon started it with a prayer. He said he used to run the race until a few years ago. He also stopped playing basketball for the Senior Olympics around the time he became 88 years old.

From the day he made the decision to join the Brothers of the Sacred Heart until today, Brother Eldon “has no doubt” that he is living out the life God intended for him.

With an obvious love for others and a faith filled with passion and gratitude, one of his favorite prayers has come to illustrate the meaning of his 75-year ministry.

“Lord God, in our daily lives, help us to be gentle with the young, understanding with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the wrong, for if we live long enough, we could be all of these.”

Bishop W. Muench gives Communion to Brother Eldon Crifasi SC during the Jubilee and Consecrated Life Eucharistic celebration on Feb. 12 at St. Joseph Chapel on the campus of the Catholic Life Center. Brother Eldon, 93, celebrated 75 years of ministry. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

JUBILEE ▼
from page 10
Academy Board of Trustees. She is also the director of the Baton Rouge CSJ Associates Program for St. Joseph Sisters Congregation.

Sister Janet grew up in New Orleans and was educated there and in Baton Rouge where she received bachelors and Masters of Art in English Studies with a concentration in African-American literature. She entered the founding congregation of Medaille in 1963, taught high school classes, and then received certification in spiritual direction and pastoral care.

She ministered in formation work with her congregation and was Vicar for Religious for 14 years in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Father Yi said her recent ministries have been pastoral care of elderly religious and laity in Merrill, Wisconsin with the Holy Cross Sisters and serving as the associate director for San Gregre de Cristo Sabbatical Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Currently she is giving retreats to religious and laity around the country.

Father Yi said Brother Bill arrived in Baton Rouge two years ago from his native state of New York. He is presently minis tering at the brothers’ New Hope Learning Center on Florida Street, helping high school dropouts obtain a degree.
Spreading the Good News!
Since 1963

Never miss a single issue!

Have The Catholic Commentator mailed directly to your mailbox for a little more than $1 a month.

Send a $14 check or money order with your name and mailing address to The Catholic Commentator, P.O. Box 3316, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3316 or call 225-387-0983 to pay by credit card.

Name

Address

City          State          Zip+4

Phone (for use only if clarification is needed)

Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office
Principal Opening
2016-17 School Year

St. Louis King of France Catholic School
Baton Rouge, LA

The Diocese of Baton Rouge has thirty schools in eight civil parishes, with strong Catholic identity the focus in all schools. The district is nationally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and standardized test scores are above state and national averages.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge
Evangelize Hearts, Educate Minds, Encourage Talent and Embrace the Future

Established in 1982, St. Louis King of France School provides Catholic formation to students in Grades PK4 – 8 and strives to form each child through service, love, knowledge and faith. With a student population of approximately 355, of which many are enrolled through the Louisiana State Scholarship Program and Student Tuition Organization funding, the school community focuses on creating an educational atmosphere which encourages and challenges students to develop their fullest potential.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Practicing Catholic
- Minimum of 5 years of Teaching or School Administration Experience
- Demonstrated Leadership Ability
- Master’s Degree, Preferably in Education
- Must be Available on or before July 1, 2016

Mail resume, copies of all college transcript(s) showing degrees, and three letters of recommendation to

St. Louis King of France Principal Search
Catholic Schools Office
P.O. Box 2028
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

Deadline for application: March 30, 2016

The schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.
Youth investigate their own faith during conference

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

FBI subject file report
Feb. 20, 2016 Catholic Life Center

Name: God, a.k.a. “Lord”, “the almighty” and “all powerful”

Modus operandi: Ruling over heaven and earth

Known associates: Scriptures, angels, saints and “believers”

Youth from the Diocese of Baton Rouge converged on the Catholic Life Center for the Diocesan Youth Conference, "FBI: Faith Based Investigators," to scrutinize the most famous subject since the beginning of time, God, and their beliefs. They discovered what they have always been looking for, a loving father with arms wide open, waiting for them. They joyfully left the center reporting that the investigation is ongoing for the rest of their lives.

The event began in high-energy gear with music led by Cooper Ray. Following the opening prayer and welcome by Bishop Robert W. Muench, the principals of the mystery of faith and Holy ‘Trinity taught in the Apostles’ Creed was reinforced through skits, prayer and song.

Speaker Oscar "Two Ten" Rivera Jr., hip hop artist and graduate of Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, who received his masters of art degree in St. Leo University in St. Leo, Florida, emphasized to the attendees that God is their "daddy."

Drawing on his own background as a father, Rivera said people, particularly children, are naturally curious.

“We want to know about our faith. We want to know, ‘What does it mean?’” Rivera said.

Many, however, look for the answers in the wrong way, according to Rivera.

“We talk about God – ‘I know God, like he’s a Gandolf (wizard) of the universe with magical powers... But the truth is we really don’t know him because we haven’t encountered him,” said Rivera.

He noted that God is, above all things, a loving "daddy" as emphasized by Scriptures with the story of the prodigal son. Even though the son essentially told his father, "I wish you were dead" by asking his father for his share of inheritance early, the father embraced and welcomed him home after he spent himself on a life of debauchery. He also stated that Jesus called his father "Abba" or "daddy."

"God the father is waiting for you to come back – waiting to reveal to you the mystery of his love through the sacraments," said Rivera. His message was confirmed by the fact that priests from the Diocese of Baton Rouge were available for the sacrament of reconciliation.

Rivera emphasized to the young Catholics that God will never leave them. He said when the disciples were in a boat during a storm on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus intended to walk by to the other side of the body of water. But when the terrified disciples saw him, they cried out for help.

"He had confidence that they would weather the storm and meet him on the other side," Rivera said. Yet, Jesus got in the boat so they could have peace of mind, just as he does with people today, he noted.

"When the going gets tough, all you have to do is say, 'Help,' and he will come in an instant," said Rivera.

In his Mass homily, Bishop Muench illustrated with the vastness of the universe to emphasize God’s call to the youth to strengthen their prayer life and relationship with him.

"Before you believed in God, God believed in you. And as the shepherd of this diocese, I believe in you," Bishop Muench said.

The messages presented at the conference hit home with conference attendees.

Charrissa Gibson, a member of the St. Francis Xavier Youth Group said, "God is not really just about one person but all of us, and God loves us individually. He loves us and would never turn his back on us."

She added, “I just want to strengthen my prayer life and tell God that I love him and I want to strengthen my relationship with him.”

Annie Laurie Guttzeit of the youth group at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Baton Rouge said, “I learned that God is always going to be there for me. I had felt that God had turned against me, but it is me who turned against him, and I need him.”

She added, “This (conference) helps me know that in any situation I am not alone.”

Ian Thomas, a member of the youth group at St. Mark Church, Gonzales, said he wants to use what he learned to evangelize his friends.

“I want to share with my friends just how much God loves them,” Thomas said.

The event concluded with eucharistic adoration.

During the conference, several youth received the Timothy Award, the highest recognition from the National Federation for Catholic youth ministry for a diocese or confessor to a high school junior or senior. The youth are recognized for living as disciples of Christ; witnessing their faith; demonstrating Gospel values through service; and exhibiting Christian leadership in their church parish, school or community settings. This year’s recipients are:

- Anthony Bueche, Immaculate Conception Church, Lakeland; Ashton Holmes, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Baton Rouge; Maria Mengis and Annie Lewis, St. Aloysius Church, Baton Rouge; and Sarah Nepveux, St. Joseph Church, Ponchatoula.

Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office
Principal Opening 2016-17 School Year

Redemptorist/St. Gerard Catholic School
Baton Rouge, LA

The Diocese of Baton Rouge has thirty schools in eight civil parishes, with strong Catholic identity the focus in all schools. The district is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and standardized test scores are above state and national averages. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge

Evangelize Hearts, Educate Minds, Encourage Talent and Embrace the Future

Redemptorist/St. Gerard School provides Catholic formation to students in Grades PKA – 8 and strives to enhance spirituality, pursue academic excellence, and create caring community. With a student population of approximately 200, of which 85% are enrolled through the Louisiana State Scholarship Program, the school community focuses on creating an educational atmosphere which encourages and challenges students to develop their fullest potential.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:
1. Practicing Catholic Required
2. Minimum of 5 years of Experience in Catholic Schools Preferred
3. Demonstrated Leadership Ability, Preferably in Catholic Education
4. Must meet LA State Dept. of Education Requirements as Non-Public Administrator
5. Must be Available on or before July 1, 2016

Mail resume, copies of all college transcript(s) showing degrees, and three letters of recommendation to Redemptorist/St. Gerard School Principal Search
Catholic Schools Office
P.O. Box 2028
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

Deadline for application: March 15, 2016

The schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.
Youth learned about the importance of teamwork at the Diocesan Youth Conference during an activity in which they worked through knots while some could not see because they were blindfolded and others could not speak because their mouths were covered by a handkerchief. Photos by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing.

Young Catholics jumped on stage when rapper/hip hop artist and guest speaker Oscar “Two Ten” Rivera entertained them.

Youth learned about the importance of teamwork at the Diocesan Youth Conference during an activity in which they worked through knots while some could not see because they were blindfolded and others could not speak because their mouths were covered by a handkerchief. Photos by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Young Catholics jumped on stage when rapper/hip hop artist and guest speaker Oscar “Two Ten” Rivera entertained them.

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Young Catholics jumped on stage when rapper/hip hop artist and guest speaker Oscar “Two Ten” Rivera entertained them.

Youth let off some steam after dinner at DYC by dancing. Line dancing was very popular with the youth at DYC.

Young Catholics jumped on stage when rapper/hip hop artist and guest speaker Oscar “Two Ten” Rivera entertained them.
Bishop Deshotel appointed to succeed Bishop Jarrell in Lafayette

By Rachelle Smith
The Catholic Commentator

Explaining that he will bring “much devotion, talent and experience to his new responsibility,” Bishop Robert W. Muench welcomed Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel as the new bishop of Lafayette.

Bishop Deshotel, who most recently served as auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Dallas, will succeed Bishop Michael Jarrell. Bishop Jarrell recently offered his resignation to Pope Francis as required by all bishops when they reach the mandatory retirement age of 75.

The new bishop will be installed on April 27. A Mass of Reception and Installation is scheduled at 2 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Lafayette. Vespers will be held the evening before.

Bishop Deshotel, who graduated from Holy Trinity Seminary and the University of Dallas, was ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Dallas in 1978. Even though he spent many decades ministering in Texas, Bishop Deshotel often returned to Louisiana to visit with friends and family. He was born in Basile, Louisiana and educated at immaculata Seminary High School in Lafayette.

“We heartily welcome him back to his home state of Louisiana and wish God’s blessing upon him and his ministry,” said Bishop Muench, who also expressed thanksgiving to Bishop Jarrell. Noting their long friendship “since our studies in the theology department of Catholic University,” Bishop Muench commended the service of Bishop Jarrell as the sixth bishop of Lafayette as well as his ministry as bishop of Houma-Thibodaux from 1993-2002 and as a priest from 1967-1993 in the Diocese of Lafayette.

“He (Bishop Jarrell) has always been an affable minister, a wise leader and an effective shepherd. His service will be long remembered and fondly appreciated,” said Bishop Muench.

Writings of G.K. Chesterton to be celebrated at state conference

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

G.K. Chesterton, known as the “prince of paradox,” wore many hats. He was an English writer, lay theologian, poet, philosopher, dramatist, orator, literary and art critic, biographer and Christian poet. A convert to Catholicism, he was influential in bringing others to the Catholic faith, including C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Yet, the large man has also been referred to as “the overlooked giant.”

With the resurgence of the writings of many notable Catholic literary and philosophical figures from the first half of the 20th century returning to print, there has been a resurgence of interest in Chesterton, according to Karen Hornsby, founder of the Chesterton Society of Baton Rouge and chair of the Louisiana Chesterton Conference. Long-time Chestertonians and those who don’t yet know him will have a chance to know more about “the apostle of common sense” at the Louisiana Chesterton Conference, “The Many Sides of G.K. Chesterton,” Saturday, March 5 at Chesterton Square in Ponchatoula.

“Because he (Chesterton) had so much common sense, which never goes out of fashion, nearly everything he wrote about has relevance today. He wrote about the permanent things: faith, family, love for babies, cultivating a sense of wonder, the magic of fairy tales, economics, as if families mattered. You name it, he wrote about it and so eloquently. Besides that he is hilariously funny, and who couldn’t use a good laugh now and then?” Hornsby said.

“People want to know more about him because he could talk and write about any subject, including such famous historical figures as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Francis of Assisi,” Hornsby said.

“He was great at one-liners verily and the rest pretty much is what they are quoting. He also revived the interest in reading Charles Dickens who had fallen out of fashion,” he added. Even the folks who disagreed with Chesterton, such as George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells, still loved him as a person.

“He was a humble, gentle giant weighing in at more than 300 lbs. and he had a rather tiny voice for such a large character. He was an enigma in so many ways.”

During the upcoming conference, Hornsby said, “We want folks to see Chesterton not only as a writer/journalist but as a polymath – he understood everything and all without a formal university education. He actually attended art school where he said about 10 percent work fervishly and the rest pretty much do nothing.”

Dale Ahlquist, president of the American Chesterton Society, creator of EWTN’s “The Apostle of Common Sense,” will speak on “Chesterton the poet.” Kevin O’Brien, Theater of the Word, who appears on the “Apostle of Common Sense” will speak about Chesterton, through the eyes of Tolkien. Brian Daigle, of Sequitur Classical Academy, will talk about “Chesterton the Christian.” Carl Hasler, philosophy professor at Collin College in McKinney, Texas, will speak about “Chesterton the philosopher.” Joseph Pearce, director of the Center for Faith and Culture at Aquinas College in Nashville, Tennessee, will talk about “Chesterton the progressive.”

Chuck Chalberg will portray Chesterton as he does on the “The Apostle of Common Sense.” For more information about the conference, visit chestertonbr.com.

HOSPICE is ABOUT LIVING

- We rely upon the intercession of our Blessed Mother to assist us in imitating the healing ministry of Jesus Christ as we care for terminally ill patients and their families.
- We call forth the compassion and kindness of our staff, who serve in this health care ministry, to respond to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of our patients and their families.
- We believe in the sacredness of life from conception to natural death, and we devote ourselves to supporting patients and families through the dying process at the end of life’s journey on this earth and new life in eternity.

Notre Dame Hospice does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability or age in admission, treatment, ability to pay, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

Notre Dame Hospice
A Catholic Healthcare Ministry
SERVING PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS
www.NotreDameHospice-N.O.org • (225) 243-7358
Bishop Robert E. Tracy Center
Baton Rouge

The Bishop Robert E. Tracy Center is available for spiritual renewal and growth, professional training and adult and youth formation. As part of the Catholic Life Center, the Tracy Center can provide space for day and overnight retreats, business and youth conferences.

The three-story overnight facility has 30 sleeping rooms like a hotel setting minus the TV and phone. Each of 24 rooms can accommodate up to four people. Five of the six suites consist of a bedroom with two single beds (one king if beds are joined) and a sitting room with two sofa sleepers. The smaller suite has one bedroom with two single beds and a love seat and chair in the sitting area. All rooms have a private bath.

The Westerfield Conference Center, adjacent to the overnight facility, is a state-of-the-art meeting facility with audio/visual technology. The conference center provides space for 120 people or can be divided into three separate meeting areas for smaller groups.

The Tracy Center Education Building has eight rooms available for day retreats, workshops or breakout sessions. Also available are two chapels seating 40 or 175, a theatre with fixed-style seating for 196, a ballroom that can seat up to 500 people or 400 seated at banquet tables, and three dining rooms. The Tracy Center has some green space for walking and sitting with beautiful large oak trees.

A full-time kitchen staff provides all meals and snacks. A maintenance staff is available should there be a need.

The Tracy Center welcomes private groups, prayer groups, small Christian communities and Bible-study groups. Though there is no spiritual director on staff, retreatants may bring their own director.

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Phone 225-242-0222; website tracycenter.org; email tracycenter@diobr.org; location 1800 S. Acadian Thruway, Baton Rouge; mailing address P. O. Box 2028, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028.

Directions: I-10 to Acadian Thruway exit; go north 3/4 of a mile. The Catholic Life Center and Bishop Robert E. Tracy Center are on the left.

Magnificat Center of the Holy Spirit
Ponchatoula

Magnificat Center of the Holy Spirit provides a relaxed setting for all types of retreats.

Opened in 1982 and located in the pine forest of the Florida Parishes, the center has 30 acres of wooded grounds for inspirational walks and porches for quiet reflection as well as outside stations of the cross.

The center offers a conference room with seating for up to 100 people, a dining hall and a small chapel in the main building. Overnight housing for retreatants is available in dormitory-style facilities that will sleep up to 79 with shared bathrooms.

There are additional facilities that are available for private, personal retreats.

SEE DIOCESE PAGE 20
Retreat centers available outside the Diocese of Baton Rouge

Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center
Metairie, Louisiana

The Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center, dedicated to Our Lady of the Cenacle, continues the tradition of the Cenacle Sisters begun in 1958 of providing a place to nurture the soul. Its location on the south shore of Lake Pontchartrain in Metairie offers a serene environment for spiritual contemplation. This is an ideal setting to hold overnight retreats, days of prayer or staff reflection days.

Located about an hour east of Baton Rouge, 15 minutes west of New Orleans, the retreat center has a chapel, dining room with buffet-style meals, a meeting hall, a library, a large parlor and several breakout rooms. Up to 50 guests in private rooms with private and semi-private bath facilities can be accommodated at the retreat house. The 12-landscaped acres offer grounds conducive to prayer and reflection that nurture spiritual lives.

We welcome you to draw near to God as you experience the peace and serenity that the Retreat Center has to offer.

Phone 504-887-1420 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday; email retreats@arch-no.org; website retreats.arch-no.org; 5500 St. Mary St., Metairie, LA 70006.

Directions: From Baton Rouge, take I-10 east to Williams Blvd. exit; go north to West Esplanade Avenue, turn right; travel on West Esplanade Avenue to the U-turn before Transcontinental Blvd.; make the U-turn; travel four blocks to St. Mary St.; turn right. The center’s driveway is at the end of St. Mary Street.

Christian Life Center
St. Benedict, Louisiana

Located four miles north of Covington on the grounds of St. Joseph Abbey, the Christian Life Center is open to individuals and groups seeking peace and recollection in a monastic setting suitable to their spirituality.

St. Joseph Abbey is home to the Benedictine monks, who conduct Retreat League weekends approximately 26 times per year for men, women and married couples. On the remaining weekends and during the week, the Christian Life Center is open to groups for religious, educational and charitable purposes.

The center has accommodations for 41 persons in modest but comfortable private rooms with private baths. Guest rooms, a chapel, a library and a dining room are located in the center. The larger St. Joseph Abbey Church is located on the grounds.

The 1,200 acres of pine woods and tranquil ponds offer retreatants the opportunity for quiet and reflective leisure.

The center strives to continue the tradition set down more than 14 centuries ago by St. Benedict, who believed that the stranger or guest who comes to the monastery is to be received as Christ, but, it reserves the right to decide which programs meet the stated goals of the facility.

Phone 985-892-3473; website saintjosephabbey.com/clc; email clc@sjac.edu; location 75376 River Road, St. Benedict, LA; mailing address Christian Life Center, St. Joseph Abbey, St. Benedict, LA 70457.

Directions: Take I-12 to exit 63-B Covington (U.S. Hwy. 190) north; continue past Hwv. 437 to Hwy. 25 (traffic light); continue north on Hwy. 25 about 300 yards; turn right on Airport Road and continue to the stop sign; turn left onto River Road; travel to the sign for St. Joseph Abbey and turn right onto the bridge.

Carmelite Spirituality Center
Lacombe, Louisiana

Located about 72 acres of towering pine trees, a picturesque lake and trails slicing through the property, the Carmelite Spirituality Center in Lacombe offers retreats to people of all faiths.

The center, which opened in 2005 and is operated by the Sisters of Mount Carmel. The center offers monthly mornings of prayer, directed and guided retreats, private retreats, group gatherings, couples nights parish retreats, spirituality workshops and even the ability to design your own program.

Overnight facilities accommodating up to 50 people in semi-private and private rooms are available as well as two cottages. Along with the piney woods, the grounds include a swimming pool, labyrinth and provides an idyllic venue for reflection and prayer.

While enjoying a meal from the full-service kitchen, diners can bask in a beautiful view of the azalea-lined patio, which nudes up against the dining room.

The library contains numerous resources and can also serve as a meeting room. The chapel can seat up to 50 people comfortably.

Phone 985-882-7579; website carmelitespirituality.org; email carmellecenter@bellsouth.net; location 62292 Fish Hatchery Road, Lacombe, LA; mailing address P.O. Box 130, Lacombe, LA 70445.

Directions: From I-12 east take Exit 74 (LA Hwy. 434), turn right toward Lacombe. Follow on LA Hwy. 434 to U.S. Hwy 190, turn right and cross bridge over Bayou Lacombe. Take first right at Fish Hatchery Road (Capital One Bank is the landmark). Proceed 1.9 miles and the center is on the right.

Jesuit Spirituality Center
Grand Coteau, Louisiana

The Jesuit Spirituality Center located in the heart of Acadiana, 11 miles north of Lafayette on I-49, is open to men and women of all faiths.

The former St. Charles College became the Jesuit Novitiate in 1922 and a retreat center in 1972, providing a quiet and restful environment for those seeking to listen and respond to God with generosity and openness through the experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.
Our Lady of the Oaks Retreat House
Grand Coteau, Louisiana

Our Lady of the Oaks Retreat House was built by the Diocese of Lafayette in 1938 and was dedicated to the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits have administered and cared for the house since that time. For more than 70 years, this oasis of prayer has been helping to form the spirituality of people in all walks of life.

Based on the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, a 15th century Basque saint and founder of the Jesuit order, Our Lady of the Oaks Retreat House offers conference style retreats for men, women, and couples. These retreats, directed by Jesuit priests and thoroughly trained lay directors, are based on St. Ignatius of Loyola’s famous Spiritual Exercises. Mass, reconciliation, stations of the cross and the rosary are also featured during the retreat experience.

The room capacity is 51 and most of the rooms have private baths. A gracious library, newly renovated chapel and colorfully painted vistas to explore nearby.

For more information about the retreats and programs available, call Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. See OUTSIDE PAGE 21.

Lumen Christi Retreat Center
Schriever, Louisiana

Since 1985, the Lumen Christi Retreat Center has offered spiritual renewal and development options such as women’s and men’s retreats, Teens Encounter Christ and First Friday Day of Prayer. Churches and groups also host retreats and workshops, providing their own speakers and developing their own theme and schedule.

The center provides a peaceful setting for guests to slow down and be sensitive to the presence of God. Surrounded by woods, the 30-acre retreat center features a pond with benches and two gazebos for those seeking the beauty and meditative solitude of the outdoors.

Indoor facilities include an adult center and a youth center, full kitchen and dining room, library, conference room, chapel and two pencean rooms that can accommodate five people each. The corridors and private rooms display more than 100 oil paintings of local topics by local artists.

The adult center can accommodate 80 overnight guests in double rooms with private bath facilities. The youth center, which also accommodates confirmation retreats and youth leadership programs, is ideal for groups who desire dormitory living. It can accommodate 100 overnight guests in bunk beds with common bath facilities.

For more information or to request a brochure, call the Lumen Christi Retreat Center Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Phone 925-868-1523; email lumenchristi@bidioce.org; mailing address Lumen Christi Court, Schriever, LA 70395.

Directions: From Baton Rouge take LA Hwy. 1 to Thibodaux; in Thibodaux take LA Hwy. 24 to Houma; outside of Thibodaux make a right turn at St. Bridge’s Church (about one mile past the overpass); turn left onto Hwy. 311 and continue past the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Look for the Lumen Christi sign on the left.

Can’t make one of the great retreats in our area? Don’t worry - we’ve got you covered!

- Bookmarks
- Bibles & Accessories
- Rosary CD’s
- Pocket Crown of Thorns
- Prayer Tokens

 ozoneville 70723

A Sanctuary of Peace and Beauty
The center’s beauty and tranquility makes a peaceful setting for retreats, days of prayer, meetings, workshops, family reunions, picnics, and programs for clergy, religious and laity.

We also offer Spiritual Direction
Visit our website to learn more about upcoming programs, Camp Kateri and Rosaryville’s New Cemetery

www.rosaryvillela.com • 225.294.5039

Join us for a weekend of Spiritual renewal . . .

March 12, 2016
Day of Prayer - Baton Rouge
The Holy Year
Rev. Donald Blanchard

March 15, 2016
Day of Prayer: Praying with Lenten Scriptural Readings
Archbishop Alfred Hughes

March 18-20, 2016
The Footpath to Peace & Joy
Rev. Donald Dorney

March 21 and 22, 2016
Dinner with Pope Francis
On Caring for Our Common Home
In English and in Spanish
of space for football, volleyball and the like. A large pit is available for bonfires. The center is run by a full-time director with a cook and volunteers on hand for mealtime. School led retreats, youth groups, adult spiritual led retreats, such as inner healing on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as any Christian groups are welcomed.

Phone 225-773-9583 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; location 23629 Faith Road, Ponchatoula; mailing address 4310 Sub-Station Rd., Hammond, LA 70401.

Directions: I-12 to exit 47; south on Roberts Road (Hwy. 45); right on Hwy. 22; left on Hwy. 445 (Lee's Landing Road). Magnificat is 1.25 miles on the right.

**Manresa House of Retreats Convention**

Manresa House of Retreats opened in 1929 as a retreat center for men. Since then, the Jesuit-run center has become a favorite retreat facility for men in the south. Manresa sits on 130 wooded acres along the Mississippi River.

Manresa offers sleeping accommodations for 111, all having private bath facilities, a main chapel and four reflection chapels, a library, gardens and shrines.

All retreats are in the manner of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

While most of the retreats are preached retreats for men, some spaces are available for individually directed retreats for men and women.

For more information, call between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Phone 800-782-9431; website manresala.org; location 5858 LA Hwy. 44, Convent; mailing address PO. Box 89, Convent, LA 70723-0089.

Directions: I-10 to Sorrento/Donaldsonville exit 192; south on Hwy. 70; left onto Hwy. 70 and left onto Hwy. 3125; right onto Hwy. 4423; and left at Hwy. 44 (River Road); continue five miles. Manresa is on the left.

**Our Lady of the Way Spiritual Life Center**

Our Lady of the Way Spiritual Life Center in Tickfaw, which opened Aug. 15, offers overnight facilities.

The facility is able to accommodate 40 people in a dormitory-like setting, as well as two private apartments that can sleep from six to eight people.

The center also offers a chapel, library, conference room that accommodates 50-plus people, a dining area with catering and two outdoor pools.

Our Lady of the Way is situated on 10 acres that offer a pleasant retreat facility located in a tranquil setting of pine trees and manicured grounds. It offers an escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Phone 985-402-3095; website ourladyoftheway.org; mailing address 50532 Antioch Road, Tickfaw, LA 70466.

Directions: I-12 east to Hammond; take Exit 38B to I-55 north; Take Exit 36 Tickfaw/LA 442; turn left on Hwy. 442 west; proceed 4.5 miles to Antioch Road; take right and go 0.7 miles; the center is on the right.

**Rosaryville Spirit Life Center**

Rosaryville Spirit Life Center is located approximately 45 miles east of Baton Rouge off of LA Hwy. 22 in Ponchatoula. Situated on 500-manicured acres of a 1,700-acre tract, it is a place for renewal of spirit, mind and body. Visitors can stroll the beautiful grounds, tour the facilities and see the picnic area complete with tables, pool and bathhouse. Beneath a canopy of trees along the meditation path stand outdoor shrines, grottos and stations of the cross. There is also a covered dock on the two-acre pond, a perfect place for reflection.

Rosaryville is staffed by the Dominican Sisters of Peace, formerly the Congregation of St. Mary, and their lay colleagues. Rosaryville Spirit Life Center opened in 1981, when the community of professed sisters in residence returned to a newly renovated motherhouse in New Orleans. At this time the congregation began its ministry of hosting and/or sponsoring retreats, days of prayer, workshops and other activities for religious, clergy and laity.

Rosary Hall, erected in 1955, is a three-story building. On the first floor are offices, an informal gathering area, three dining rooms and two kitchens. On the second floor are a library, an audio-visual center, a small conference room, a suite for visiting retreat directors, the Holy Rosary Chapel and a smaller area, the Upper Room that may be used for workshops and/or conferences for groups from 35 to 50 people. On the third floor are eight semi-private rooms and semi-private baths.

St. John Hall, erected in 1966, is adjacent to Rosary Hall and houses a large conference room, a small parlor, the gift shop, the massage therapy room and 34 private and semi-private bedrooms.

Kateri Hall has eight dormitory rooms with bunk beds. Five rooms can sleep eight each, two rooms can sleep ten each, and the one remaining room can sleep four. The hall has a spacious recreation/conference room and separate renovated bathrooms with showers for boys and girls. It is ideal for youth groups and Rosaryville’s Camp Kateri for boys and girls each summer. There is also a new chapel named Queen of the Most Holy Rosary that can hold about 80 retreatants. There is also a sports court adjacent to Kateri Hall as well as ample space for outdoor games.

Shalom House is a one-story, self-contained hermitage. It has sleeping capacity for six or more.
SPIRITUAL RETREATS

DIocese ▼

From page 20

outside ▼

From page 19

Phone 337-662-5410; website ourlaoaks@centurytel.net; mailing address P. O. Drawer D, Grand Coteau, LA 70541.

Directions: From Baton Rouge take I-10 to Lafayette; take I-49 north; go approximately 12 miles to Sunset/Grand Coteau exit 11 (Hwy. 93); turn right at the exit and go about 2 blocks; turn right on Martin Luther King Drive; go two blocks and turn left at the traffic light; Our Lady of the Oaks Retreat House entrance is the third driveway to the right, past the church and school.

Prairie Ronde Cursillo Center

Opelousas, Louisiana

Prairie Ronde Cursillo Center is open on weekends for Catholic men and women only. Cursillo means a short course in Christianity. The Cursillos are scheduled for men and for women on separate weekends throughout the year. Overnight facilities are available for up to 60 people in a dormitory-type setting, with shared bathrooms and showers. Separate housing is available for priests or deacons leading retreats. There is a chapel and a bookstore with an area for reading. Handicapped facilities are available.

Each person will need a sponsor for the weekend. The local contacts to assist with that are Gail Guidroz 225-603-2257, or Linda Daigle 225-627-6448.

Phone 337-543-7425; website howlilist.com; mailing address 3651 LA Hwy. 104, Opelousas, LA 70570-1808.

Rev. William Kelley Retreat Center

Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

The Rev. William Kelley Retreat Center in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi features 55 acres for peaceful reflection, located a block off the Bay of St. Louis.

The center, which is operated by the Divine Word Missionaries, is available for lay people, clergy, religious, singles and married persons.

The center offers 30 rooms with two beds in each room with private bathrooms. Some additional housing is available if needed.

The center has a conference center, smaller rooms for break-out sessions, library, chapel, hanging swings and a path through the woods. Specific retreats, such as Retrouvaille, can be requested although the majority of groups bring their own leadership. Also, private or directed retreats are available.

A kitchen and retreat staff is available. Divine Word Missionaries can be available for Mass and/or confessions upon request.

The center opened in 2002.

Available services include cooking, cleaning and a coordinator.

Phone: 228-467-2032; email svdtdreatcenter@bellsouth.net; website svdtd south.com; mailing address 510 N. Second Street, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Directions: I-12 east to Slidell; I-10 east to Bay St. Louis; take Exit 13, Hwy. 603 south to Hwy. 90 east (approximately six miles); pass seven red lights, after the seventh red light turn right on 2nd Street (a large Sacred Heart shrine is on your right shortly before reaching and Street; go approximately one-half of a mile, entrance to the retreat center is on the right.

St. Charles Center

Lake Charles, Louisiana

Opened in 1996 and operated by the Diocese of Lake Charles, the St. Charles Center offers preached and directed retreats in addition to a variety of other programs. Located near the Calcasieu River, the center provides a deep woods setting with walks along the swamp leading to the river.

Accommodations include separate facilities for 72 adults and 78 youth in double-occupancy rooms. Bath facilities are private on the adult side and shared on the youth side. Other amenities include three libraries, the Chapel of the Assumption, two small conference rooms for 50 people, two large conference rooms for more than 100 people and a dining room.

The center is staffed by spiritual directors and retreat directors and is open to people of all denominations. For more information, call 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (closed between noon and 1 p.m.), Monday through Friday.

Phone 337-855-1232; website live.lediocese.org/retreats; mailing address 2151 Sam Houston Jones Pkwy., Lake Charles, LA 70611.

Directions: I-10 to Lake Charles; take Exit 33 to LA Hwy. 171; travel 5 miles to LA Hwy. 378; turn left onto LA Hwy. 378; travel 2.5 miles; entrance is on the left.

DIOCESE ▼

From page 20

a fully equipped kitchen, two bathrooms, washer/dryer and large worktable. It is ideal for those seeking an extended private retreat or for small groups needing a meeting facility.

Rosaryville hosts retreats, conferences and events planned by church and civic organizations. It also sponsors retreats, workshops, prayer days as well as directed and/or individual retreats.

Rosaryville Retreat Center offers a new Memorial Cemetery to serve all faiths regardless of their particular faith tradition.

The St. Joseph Spirituality Center, a ministry of the Congregation of St. Joseph, offers activities that foster the consciousness of the role of the Christian in daily life. All programs include peer supervision for spiritual directors and half-day events or retreats on Friday evenings and Saturdays on the beautiful St. Joseph’s Academy campus. Staff members are also available as guest directors at retreat centers throughout the country and conduct on-site retreats and programs in area church parishes. There are no overnight accommodations.

The center welcomes all people who are seeking to deepen their faith life, regardless of their particular faith tradition.

The St. Joseph Spirituality Center, a ministry of the Congregation of St. Joseph, offers activities that foster the wholeness and holiness of each person, which leads to a deepening and effective consciousness of the role of the Christian in the world.

Services include: workshops that promote instruction in Scripture, theology, and prayer; workshops geared to self-understanding and improving relationships; days of prayer and retreats of longer duration, both preached and directed; private spiritual direction and pastoral counseling.

For information about the St. Joseph Spirituality Center, call 225-383-3349; email dianne@stjocenter.org; website stjocenter.org; mailing address 2980 Kleinert Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70806.

Directions: I-10 to exit 157B S. St. Acadian Thruway; go north to Broussard St., turn left; go one block to Parker St., turn right; go one block to Kleinert Ave., turn left.
missing corpse. But the hunt, in which the crucified man’s body, and recover the Firth) to investigate the disappearance of Curtis) is ordered by Pontius Pilate (Peter witnesses the execution of Jesus (Cliff resurrection. Fine acting, lavish settings for nonbelievers into the story of the res- its protagonist’s cynicism to clear a path have broad appeal, this biblical epic uses for the hard-bitten soldier. Designed to tested junior officer (Tom Felton), turns out to give special guidance for attendance of children under 13; some material may be inappropriate for young children R – Restricted; under 17 requires accom- panying parent or adult guardian NC-17 – No one under 17 admitted Risen
Columbia
A Roman tribune (Joseph Fiennes) who witnessed the execution of Jesus (Cliff Curtis) is ordered by Pontius Pilate (Peter Firth) to investigate the disappearance of Curtis) is ordered by Pontius Pilate (Peter witness the execution of Jesus (Cliff

Fifty Shades of Black
Open Road
This witless, aggressively foulmouthed, ultimately torturous spoof of 2015’s “Fifty Shades of Grey” swaps the original’s sadomasochism for mind-numbing amounts of dirty talk. Marlton Wayans, who co-wrote with Rick Alvarez, cavorts through unfunny sexual set pieces with Kali Hawk joining in the fetid frivolity and Michael Tiddes directing. Strong sexual content, including full nudity and lewd banter, oc-
casional drug use, pervasive rough and crude language. O; R

Hail, Caesar!
Universal

Set in 1950s Hollywood, this comedy’s plot about the kidnapping of a major star (George Clooney) and a conscientious studio executive’s (Josh Brolin) efforts to retrieve him without creating unwanted headlines is merely an excuse for writ-
ers and directors Joel and Ethan Coen to spoof golden-age Tinseltown. Those lovingly satirized include a goodhearted screen cowboy (Alden Ehrenreich), an Esther Williams-like swimmer (Scarlett Johansson), a handsome hoofer (Channing Tatum), a pretentious helmer (Ralph Fiennes) of drawing-room dramas and a pair of rival gospel columnists who also happen to be sisters (both played by Tilda Swinton). The fact that Brolin’s character is an absurdly scrupulous Catholic, and that Clooney’s leading man is playing a Roman officer in a biblical epic means, however, that religion also gets a ribbing. Adult viewers will need to discern wheth-
er, in their judgment, faith itself is being ridiculed or merely itscheapening at the hands of crude filmmakers and misguid-
ed devotees. Complex treatment of reli-
gious themes, including some irreverent humor, comic incongruities are dragged into this overextended skit, which also revels in immature sexual jokes. Sacriligious humor, a frivolous treatment of religious themes and of human sexuality, some ac-
tion violence, frequent crude and profane language. O; PG-13

How to Be Single
Warner Bros.
A discordant moral snap mars this oth-
erwise appealing, if slightly raunchy, ro-
tomedy about characters (Dakota Johnson, Leslie Mann and Alison Brie, among others) testing their capacity to settle into monogamous relationships and genuine adulthood. The overall positive trajectory of director Christian Ditter’s adaptation of Liz Tuccillo’s 2007 novel is impeded by a subplot involving single motherhood and artificial insemination. A sympathetic portrayal of morally unac-
cetable actions, fleeting rear male nu-
dity, frequent crude sexual humor, a few scen-
es of implied sexual activity, some rough language. O; R

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies
Screen Gems

Jane Austen’s classic 1813 tale of man-
ers and relationships in Regency Eng-
land is barely recognizable in this re-
visionist comedy-drama, adapted by
writer-director Burr Steers from the best-
selling novel by Seth Grahame-Smith. A gentee couple (Charles Dance and Sally Phillips) is anxious to marry off their five daughters, one of whom (Lily James) is a keen observer and critic of the court-
ing rituals that result, as several eligible suitors (Douglas Booth, Matt Smith, Jack Huston) come to call. In a bizarre twist on the original, the girls are warriors trained to combat the “zombie apocalypse” that has taken hold in Britain in the wake of a deadly plague in the 1700s. So, too, is yet another romantic prospect (Sam Riley) whose apparent arrogance is offset by his prowess in beheading and garroting the undead. The film collapses in on its own silliness, but not before several disturbing references to Christianity crop up, including a ghoulish, quasi-sacrilegious parody of the Eucharist. What could have been an amusing if occasionally gory trite is thus placed well outside acceptable bounds for viewers of faith. An exploitative use of the sacred, bloody violence, some sexual in-
mundo. O; PG-13

Zoolander 2
Paramount
This crude and unfunny sequel to the 2001 comedy is once again directed and co-written by Ben Stiller, who also stars as the world’s greatest male model. Like his former rival for that title (Owen Wilson), now a friend, the runaway king has long since retired. Both emerge from se-
cision, however, to help a fetching Inter-
topol agent (Penelope Cruz) solve a mys-
tery: someone is killing the world’s most beautiful people. The hunt leads to Rome where a top fashion designer (Kirsten Wiig) and a notorious criminal (Will Fer-
rell) have embarked on a murderous ramp-
page in search of the fountain of youth. The Creation story, the confessional and even the Crucifixion are dragged into this overextended skit, which also revels in immature sexual jokes. Sacriligious humor, a frivolous treatment of religious themes and of human sexuality, some ac-
tion violence, frequent crude and profane language. O; PG-13

Deadpool
Fox
Sarcasm and splatter add up to a nasty
odyssey in this vengeance-driven Mar-
vel Comics adaptation from director Tim
Miller. Diagnosed with terminal cancer shortly after finding true love (with More-
na Baccarin), a former Special Forces op-
erative (Ryan Reynolds) seizes on the of-
er of an underground cure. Though the treat-
ment to which he’s subjected not only heals him but endows him with super powers, it amounts to a round of horrific torture that also horribly disfigures him. So he sets out on a long quest to catch up with and kill his principal tormentor (Ed Skrein). Like the battered prize at the bot-
tom of a box of rancid Cracker Jacks, there are some hints of morality to be found in this profile of a smart-alecky antihero. Yet any rewards that might be gained by digging down for them are thoroughly canceled out by an ethics-empty conten-
tion blatantly denying the inherent value of human life. Skewed values, including a benign view of violent revenge, constant mayhem with extreme gore, strong sexual content including graphic premarital and aberrant activity as well as full nudity, a few uses of profanity, pervasive rough and crude language. O; R

Moving Picture Association of America
ratings:
G – General audiences; all ages admitted
PG – Parental guidance suggested; some material may not be suitable for children
PG-13 – Parents are strongly cautioned to give special guidance for attendance of children under 13; some material may be inappropriate for young children
R – Restricted; under 17 requires accom-
pelling parent or adult guardian
NC-17 – No one under 17 admitted

catholiclifetv.org
LIVE WEBCAST 24/7
Every Friday During Lent
LIVE from St. Joseph Cathedral
11:30a- Stations of the Cross
12p- Daily Mass
Way of the Cross
5:30a, 3p, 9p

225.242.0218

22 The Catholic Commentator ENTERTAINMENT March 4, 2016
‘Love’ is spelled ‘w-o-r-k’

Canadian Deborah Cox is a well-recognized R&B star, often compared to the legendary Whitney Houston. Many people see her cover of Houston’s all-time classic “I Will Always Love You” as artistically powerful as Houston’s original. Just out is Cox’s sixth album, “Work.”

The song is vintage Cox, with a powerful emotional tone and a sure R&B sound.

The song’s character has come to a sorrowful realization: She should have just problems! It’s funny how back then we always focused on the bad. It’s amazing, yeah, yeah yeah, yeah yeah. Yeah yeah yeah, yeah yeah.

Sung by Deborah Cox | Copyright © 2015, Deco Recording Group/Primary Wave Music

More than I knew

I gave you my heart on a platter
It was stupid
I gave you my life like it mattered
But you took it
I know that people tell me that it’s gonna take time
But time feels like forever when you ain’t by my side

Hook:
I was young and foolish for breaking the spell
And now it just feels like I’m guilting myself
I found every reason to spin this around
Oh, why, why, why, why, why

I miss(ed) you so much more than I ever loved you
(Loved you)
I’m better at needing you now than when I had you
(Had you)
Oh I, I know I complained
But now, you’re all that I crave
Maybe I just loved you more than I knew
The truth is so hard to remember
When it’s fading
And all I can think about is what worked
It’s amazing, yeah
It’s funny how back then we always focused on the bad
More than I knew

Refrain:
I gave you my heart on a platter
It was stupid
I gave you my life like it mattered
But you took it
I know that people tell me that it’s gonna take time
But time feels like forever when you ain’t by my side

I am not suggesting that problems should be avoided. However, when you put most of your focus on a problem, doing so will keep you from seeing what is going right, and, in most relationships, even where there are problems, there are other aspects of the relationship that are going well.

So, how do you balance such a situation, that is, address a problem and still remember to focus on the good in a relationship? Well, this is a tricky process. Problems often generate intense feelings, and these begin to dominate one’s attention.

Further, our brains have a natural tendency to pay more attention to the negative in any situation. Consequently, what is needed is a consistent effort to tell the whole truth, and this means identifying what is good and helpful as well as those situations that require growth and healing.

That is one reason why I often spell “love,” “w-o-r-k!” If you want a relationship to thrive, you need to do two “works.”

First, you must be consistent in affirming what is good, telling the other person what you appreciate about who he/she is, and name the beneficial in what is shared between the two of you.

Second, you must work at communication, sharing with each other your feelings related to problems without casting blame or fault. Doing both steps requires accepting the vulnerability of being emotionally intimate, and not everyone is willing to work this thoroughly. Only you can decide if the relationship is sufficiently meaningful to you that you are willing to take on both works.

The song’s character states, “I know in my heart we’re not meant to be” for “if things were that good, you’d be here with me.” I wonder how she knows this. She still has the choice of going “back to the relationship, but reaching out to him.”

There is no assurance that he will want to come back to her former partner and explain that she now realizes her mistake in ending their relationship.

I would encourage the song’s character to pray for God’s guidance. God is always ready to bring the grace of healing, but we need to cooperate with what God gives. She can fully acknowledge her mistakes, plus affirm how she will work toward change in her behavior and attitude.

Most likely he will need to commit to his own growth, but when both people agree to work on themselves and become better individuals, God can heal a relationship.

On The Record

Charlie Martin

Martin is an Indiana pastoral counselor who reviews music for Catholic News Service. Write to charmartin@hughes.net, or at: 7125 West CR 200 South, Rockport, IN 47635, or on Facebook at “Charlie Martin’s Today’s Music Columns.”
Prayer as a spiritual work of mercy

The seventh and final spiritual work of mercy is “Pray for the living and the dead.” St. Faustina, the patron saint of mercy, commented, “If I cannot show mercy by deeds, I can always do so by prayer. My prayer reaches out even there and can not reach out physically.” And prayer works. It is a spontaneous response when good things happen to those whom we love as well as when hardship or suffering strikes them. Prayer creates a solidarity between us who pray and those for whom we pray. It is a way to share their lives in joy and sorrow. And it is a great comfort to those who know that we are praying for them. I often wonder what saints do when their sons or daughters are fighting a war in Iraq or Afghanistan. I bet they pray, in spite of their belief that no God is there to listen.

The effects of our prayer can only be seen through a rear view mirror. We pray for someone who is seriously ill, and they get better for a time, and we rejoice and offer prayers of gratitude and Masses of thanksgiving. After a time, when we think they are cured, they become ill again. The first time we prayed we were already praying out of shock that someone with whom we shared life and expected to always be with us suddenly might be taken from us. Now we pray more soberly and with greater awareness of the fragility of life, theirs and ours. Somehow, all this works out in God’s providence. He knows what is best for our ultimate good. As St. Paul wrote, “Now we see through a mirror darkly.” We are only creatures who have little control over life itself, but if we pray, that murky mirror will, in the end, show us the true mercy of God.

Jesus prayed for others. His lengthiest prayer for others is found in his last supper discourse in St. John’s Gospel. He promises his disciples, that no matter what happens to himself or to them, he will have a place prepared for them in his Father’s heavenly house. He won’t leave them orphans because he will give them God’s own Spirit, and through that Spirit he will live in them. They must love one another and can ask God the Father for anything in his name. In the world they will have trouble, but they should take courage. “I pray for them,” Jesus says. He prays that God will “keep them ...” And he concludes saying, “I pray for them also for those who will believe in me through their word.”

Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me ...” Jesus told his disciples to follow him because he was the way, the truth and the life. He is our model. He prayed for others, and if we do the same, our prayer will be heard.

We do not pray to change God’s mind or to change his plan for the overall good of any of us, but to unite our desires and our love for them to his. And sometimes that allows us to see his spirit of mercy working in our world. We also call that mercy of God “grace.” In a recent column of “Children’s News Notes,” Bishop Edward Scharfenberger of Albany describes grace as “a favor, a free love-gift from God that is unearned ... which is spontaneously crafted by God as a personal gift.” That is what we are praying for, that others who are in need may experience God’s favor and protection through having enough food to eat, shelter to keep them warm and safe, clothing to give them comfort and dignity, acceptance in a foreign country to where they have been forced to flee by war, drug violence or just plain poverty. These things don’t drop down from heaven, but God who hears our prayers does inspire others to provide them.

Fourteen years ago there was a terrible civil war in Liberia, Africa. A woman went to another village to visit relatives. At the end of the day when she returned home she found her entire village burned down and all adults including her husband, murdered. There were only some children remaining alive. She gathered them and began walking many miles toward the capital, Monrovia, where, perhaps, they could be protected. Along the way she picked up many more children until she finally got to a small town near the capital and found some shelter. A reporter covering the war interviewed her and told her story. Reading it, a business man in California flew over and searched until he came upon the woman and her children. He bought land and built an orphanage on it. He got Catholic friends in the United States to contribute, and today some of those orphans are attending university and others are in high school. In the years since, others have been taken in, numbering about a hundred in the orphanage. They study in their own Catholic grammar school along with about 250 other children from nearby villages. Liberia Mission is thriving on the prayers and generosity of people from California, to Prairieville, Louisiana, to Trentwood, Tennessee, Chicago.

The seventh work of mercy also urges us to pray for the dead. And why not? Don’t we prayerfully remember our parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles who were God’s protection and care for us while they lived. Where would we be without them? And in the not so distant future we will join them. The communion of saints — living and dead — is one of the teachings of Catholicism that I have found the easiest to believe. Jesus prayed that we all would be one in him and in the Father and the Spirit. That is our destiny, and, praise God, we can anticipate it in prayer.

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.

Mar. 9 Rev. Philip F. Spano Dcn. Ricky A. Patterson Br. Edward Violet Sm
Mar. 13 Rev. Henry C. Vavasseur Dcn. Thomas M. Robinson
Mar. 15 Rev. Miles D. Walsh Dcn. Mario (Sam) Sammartino Br. Williams Cavile CSJ
Mar. 18 † Bishop Robert E. Tracy Dcn. Joseph M. Scimeca Sr. Frances Landry CSJ
Mar. 20 † Bishop Stanley J. Ott Dcn. Michael F. Thompson Sr. Rita Lanie FMOL
Mar. 21 Bishop Robert W. Muench Dcn. J. Thomas Traway Sr. Carl Evans SC

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

God’s mercy

“Love over law” (Dec. 11, The Catholic Commentator), “More than a law” (Feb. 5) and “Touch of Christ” (Feb. 19) acknowledge divorce and remarriage as adultery, a mortal sin (Mt 10:12-12; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1856, 1858, 2400; 6th Commandment). Advocacy of Communion as mercy, welcoming medicine for adultery is heartfelt, yet self-contradicting.

Communion is medicine strictly for venial sin (the Catechism 1394). Communion’s promise of life eternal (Jn 6:34) hinges entirely on obeying the commandments (Mk 10:17-19). Since Jesus won’t save an unrepen-}

---

**PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PRAY FOR US**

Please pray for the priests, deacons and religious women and men in the Baton Rouge Diocese.

| Mar. 22 | Rev. Howard R. Adkins |
| Dcn. John W. Vernon |
| Sr. Joan Laplace CSJ |

---

**Another Perspective**

Father John Carville

---

**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.
March 4, 2016

VIEWPOINT

The Catholic Commentator

In Exile

Father Ron Rolheiser

In an article published by the National Catholic Reporter, Father Reynolds expressed shock and bewilderment, blaming the excommunication on the fact that he promoted women’s ordination. “I am very surprised that this order has come under his watch; it seems so inconsistent with everything else he has said and done.” This gross miscalculation cost him dearly.

Another area where Pope Francis has been misjudged is on his courage. Is he too weak? Do you remember in 2014 when Pope Francis traveled to Calabria, Italy? He made big news by being the first pope to excommunicate all members of the mafia.

He did it at a public Mass in the strongest terms, blaming them all for following an evil, murderous path. There were many who feared for his life that day, because they knew that anyone who defies the mafia is targeted. Maybe that’s why Pope Francis has said that he doesn’t expect his papacy to last too long. The mafia excommunication was planned for maximum effect. In this Year of Mercy, you may ask whether it’s meretricious to excommunicate anyone? The answer is written in canon law. The penalty of excommunication is intended to be medicinal, not punitive. It is designed to give a serious warning to the recipients, hopefully, to turn them around so they may repent their sins before they face final judgment.

There have been many kings, bishops and cardinals, and even saints – Joan of Arc, for example – who were exonerated or they humbly atoned for their sins. Anyone who sees this pope as weak or indecisive is not paying attention. He has been consistently courageous in denouncing evil wherever he finds it. Even terrorists have felt the sting of his reproach.

After the 2015 attacks in Paris, Pope Francis condemned the terrorism as blaspheamous and barbaric. “The path of violence and hatred cannot resolve the problems of humanity, and using the name of God to justify this path is blasphemy,” he said. Maybe what he’s trying to tell us – and is leading by example – can be found in “The Joy of the Gospel,” where he gave us these words to help us move with similar courage: “But if we allow doubts and fears to dampen our courage, instead of being creative we will remain comfortable and make no progress whatsoever,” he said. “In this case we will not take an active part in historical processes, but become mere onlookers as the church gradually stagnates.”

FATHER JOHN CATOIR writes on issues of spirituality for today’s Catholic for Catholic News Service.

OBLATE FATHER ROLHEISER, theologian, teacher and award-winning author is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted at ronrolheiser.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/ronrolheiser.

Mourning our barrenness

Several years ago, while teaching a summer course at Seattle University, I had as one of my students, a woman who, while happily married, was unable to conceive a child. She had no illusions about what this meant for her. It bothered her a great deal. She found Mother’s Day very difficult. Among other things, she wrote a well-researched thesis on the concept of barrenness in Scripture and developed a retreat on that same theme which she offered at various renewal centers.

Being a celibate whose vows also conscript a certain biological barrenness, I went on one of her weekend retreats, the only male there. It was a powerful group experience, but it took most of the weekend for that to happen. Initially, most everyone on the retreat was tentative and shy, not wanting to admit to themselves or others the kind of pain the loss of biological parenthood was creating in their lives. But things broke open on the Saturday night, after the group watched a video of a 1990s British film, Secrets and Lies, a subtle but powerful drama about the pain of not having children. The tears in the movie catalyzed tears within our group and the floodgates opened. Tears began to flow freely and one by one the women began to tell their stories. Then, after the tears and stories had stopped, the atmosphere changed, as if a fog had lifted and a weight had been removed. Lightness set in. Each person in the group had mourned her loss and now each felt a lightness in knowing that one might never have a child and still be a happy person, without denying the pain in that.

Barrenness is not just a term that describes a biological incapacity to have children or a life-choice to not have them. It’s wider. Barrenness describes the universal human condition in its incapacity to be generative in the way it would like and the vacuum and frustration that leaves inside lives. Karl Rahner summarizes that in these words: “In the torment of the insufficiency of everything attainable we ultimately learn that here, in this life, all symphonies must remain unfinished. No matter if we have biological children of our own or not, we still all find ourselves barren in that for none of us is there a finished symphony here on earth. There’s always some barrenness left in our lives and biological barrenness is simply one analogate of that, though arguably the prime one. None of us die having given birth to all we wanted to in this world.”

What do we do in the face of this? Is there an answer? Is there a response that can take us beyond simply gritting our teeth and stoically getting on with it? There is. The answer is tears. In mid-life and beyond, we need, as Alice Miller normatively suggests in her classic essay, The Drama of the Gifted Child, to mourn so that our very foundations are shaped. Many of our wounds are irreversible and many of our shortcomings are permanent. We will go to our deaths with this incompleteness. Our loss cannot be reversed. But it can be mourned, both what we lost and what we failed to achieve. In that mourning there is freedom.

I have always been struck by the powerful metaphor inside the story of Jephthah’s daughter in the biblical story in the Book of Judges, chapter 11. It captures in an archetypal image the only answer there is, this side of eternity, to barrenness. Condemned to death in the prime of her youth by a foolish vow her father made, she tells her father that she is willing to die on the altar of sacrifice, but only on one condition. She will now die without experiencing either the consummation of marriage or the birthing of children. So she asks her father to give her two months before her death to “mourn her virginity.” Properly mourned, an incomplete life can be both lived in peace and left in peace.

Tears are the answer to barrenness, to all loss and inadequacy. Marilyn Chandler McIntyre, in her book, A Faithful Farewell, has this to say about tears: “Tears release me into honest sorrow. They release me from the strenuous business of being happy. They release me into a childlike place where I need to be held and find comfort in embrace – in the arms of others and in the arms of God. Tears release me from the treadmill of anxious thoughts, and even from fear. They release me from the strain of holding them back. Tears are a consent to what is. They wash away, at least for a time, denial and resistance. They allow me to relinquish the self-deceptive notion that I’m in control. Tears dilute resentment and wash away the flotsam left by waves of anger.”

Not insignificantly, tears are salt water. Human life originated in the oceans. Tears connect us to the source of all life on this earth, within which prodigal fecundity triumphs all barrenness.

The pope’s courage and his message to us

In Exile

Father Ron Rolheiser

Spirituality For Today

Father John Catoir
**COMING EVENTS**

**March 4, 2016**

---

**Xavier University Alumni Events** – The Baton Rouge Chapter of Xavier University Association will celebrate the feast day of St. Katharine Drexel, founder of Xavier University and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, at the 10:30 a.m. Mass Sunday, March 6 at Immaculate Conception Church, 1565 Curtis St., Baton Rouge. The organization will also sponsor a jazz brunch and silent auction Sunday, April 3, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., at the Renaissance Hotel, 7000 Bluebonnet Blvd., Baton Rouge. Proceeds will help provide scholarships for Xavier University students. Tickets are $30 each and are available by calling 225-803-0790 or emailing xualbralumni@gmail.com.

---

**24 Hours for the Lord** – As called for by Pope Francis during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, St. Aloysius Church, 2025 Stuart Ave., Baton Rouge, will celebrate “24 Hours for the Lord” Friday, March 4 – Saturday, March 5. The event will begin following the 9 a.m. school Mass. There will be adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and confession. For information, call 225-343-6657. To sign up for eucharistic adoration, visit signupgenius.com/go/100c4f4aa23e2b16-adoration/156f4897.

---

**Pro-Life Mass** – A monthly pro-life Mass will be celebrated Tuesday, March 8, 5:30 p.m., at St. Agnes Church, 749 East Blvd., Baton Rouge. Call 225-383-4127.

---

**Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites** – The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites welcomes all who are interested in developing their prayer life according to the Carmelite saints. The next meeting will be Sunday, March 13, 1:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Mercy Parish Activity Center in St. Gabriell’s Room, 444 Marquette Ave., Baton Rouge. Call 225-343-3181 or 225-803-3391, or email bertwhite456@att.net.

---

**Fill Up the Truck Drive** – St. Aloysius Church, 2025 Stuart Ave., Baton Rouge, will be collecting items for the St. Vincent de Paul Society in its “Fill Up the Truck” drive on Saturday, March 19, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Items to be donated include furniture, except mattresses or box springs, clothing, shoes, working appliances, cookware and tools. All donated items must be placed in plastic bags or boxes. Email kbuesche@ptpaln.brcxmail.com or call 225-939-6962.

---

**Breakfast with the Easter Bunny** – Holy Family Church, 39 N. Jefferson Ave., Port Allen, will host a Breakfast with the Easter Bunny in its parish hall on Saturday, March 19, 9 – 10:30 a.m. Cost is canned food items for the Port Allen Food Bank. Call 225-336-4463.

---

**St. Joseph Hospice Fundraiser** – The fifth annual St. Joseph Hospice Care to Dance, “Rock Around the Clock,” fund raiser will be held Friday, April 15, 7-10 p.m., at the Baton Rouge Gallery, 1515 Dalrymple Dr., Baton Rouge. There will be a silent auction, wine and hors d’oeuvres and live music by Rock-It Sound Company. Tickets are $30 per person and $50 per couple. Call 225-978-2756.

---

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**Ad Placements**

While we at The Catholic Commentator do our best to bring reliable advertisers to our readers, we are not responsible for any claims made by any advertiser.

---

**Business Service**

**St. Joseph is the Patron Saint of a Peaceful Death. St. Joseph Hospice is available to support families as they face end-of-life decisions. Peace, comfort, dignity and support can make every day “a good day.” Call 225-368-3100 for more information.**

---

**Donnie’s Furniture Repair & Upholstery**

We do refinishing, repairs, caning, painting of furniture and upholstery. In business 43 yrs. Pick up and delivery, 10876 Greenwell Springs Rd. 225-272-2577. See our showroom.

---

**THOMAS LUNDIN, CPA**

Accounting and taxes for businesses, non-profits and individuals; business, computer, financial and management services. 30 years experience; professional, prompt and personal attention. 225-296-0404.

---

**MUSICIAN FOR EVENTS AND RESTAURANTS**

Live one-man guitar/vocal act with over 120 pop music covers from the last 5 decades. Not loud and do not need much space. Perfect for small parties, crawfish boils, etc. donnie2051@gmail.com.

---

**Kentucky**

Pennington Lawn and Landscape

225-106-0008

Lawn & bed maintenance. Clean-up neglected. Call for your free estimate.


Mr. D’s Tree Service

3 Licensed Arborists

Fully Insured

Free Estimates

Don Decell & Carl Babin, owners

225-292-6756

BROUSSEAU’S Painting


---

**Help Wanted**

In sales employment advertisements, the advertiser must name the product or service to be sold. Advertisers may state how wages will be paid (salary, commissions, etc.) if money is mentioned. The ad must also state if there is an investment required.

---

**Legal Notice**

Anyone of knowledge of the whereabouts of Brian Berkeley Jones is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8725.

---

**Ad Placement**

To advertise to at least 40,000 people in outlets such as churches, retail stores, offices, schools and other businesses, please your ad in THE CATHOLIC COMMENTATOR! Call 225-387-0983 today to reach this trustworthy market!
St. Joseph’s Altars in the Diocese of Baton Rouge

**MARCH 12 & 13**
Grandsons of Italy
Sacred Heart of Jesus School
Gym and Cafeteria
2251 Main St., Baton Rouge
March 12 – Blessing of the altar at 5 p.m.
March 13 – Holy Family Tableau at 12:15 p.m. followed by feasting 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

**St. John the Evangelist**
Knights of Columbus Home
58715 Price Street, Plaquemine
Following 11 a.m. Mass
Betty Aucoin, 225-687-2111

**MARCH 14**
Azalea Estates
2305 S. Purpera Rd., Gonzales
2 p.m. Public invited

**St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church**
30300 Catholic Hall Road, Albany
(Hammond if using GPS)
After 10 a.m. Mass until 3 p.m.
John and Mary Gaeta, 225-567-2193

**St. Joseph Church and St. Anne Hall**
405 Franklin Street, Napoleonville
After 11 a.m. Mass short program and meal in hall; altar will be viewed from noon to 3 p.m.
985-513-0166

**MARCH 15**
St. John the Evangelist
Knights of Columbus Home
58715 Price Street, Plaquemine
Following 11 a.m. Mass
Betty Aucoin, 225-687-2111

**MARCH 16**
Immaculate Conception Church
Main Hall
865 Hatchell Lane, Denham Springs
March 18 – After 7 p.m. Mass, blessing of the altar
March 19 – Feeding of saints at 11 a.m.; altar viewing and feasting at noon

Our Lady of Pompeii Church
Pompeii Hall
14450 Hwy. 442 West, Tickfaw
March 18 – Viewing of the altar after novena and rosary
March 19 – Viewing at 11 a.m. and the traditional spaghetti milanese from noon to 2 p.m.
Church office 985-345-8957

**MARCH 19**
Azalea Estates
2305 S. Purpera Rd., Gonzales
2 p.m. Public invited

**St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church**
30300 Catholic Hall Road, Albany
(Hammond if using GPS)
After 10 a.m. Mass until 3 p.m.
John and Mary Gaeta, 225-567-2193

**St. Joseph Church and St. Anne Hall**
405 Franklin Street, Napoleonville
After 11 a.m. Mass short program and meal in hall; altar will be viewed from noon to 3 p.m.
985-513-0166

**MARCH 20**
San Giuseppi Ladies
St. Ann Church
Msgr. Paul J. Gauci Hall
182 Church Street, Morganza
After 11:30 a.m. Mass, blessing of the altar by Father Brest Maher; followed by the feeding of the children of Holy Family and meatless meal will be served to all
Bonnie Francois, 225-694-2149

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

---

**Marian Servants Gather**
Marian Servants of the Eucharist and Marian Servants of the Visitation, both of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, gathered with area Marian Servant communities for their annual Commitment Day on Feb. 20 at Holy Ghost Church in Hammond with their foundress, Diane Brown, director of the founding community, the Marian Servants of Divine Providence housed in Clearwater, Florida. Pictured, above, front row, from left, are Janet Lindsey, Joyce Dietrick, Marcy Holeman, Eve Carmena, Kathy Screen, Susan Gros, Lisette Borne and Mary Tauzin; back row, Ron Lindsey, Donna Campbell, Tonia Okpalobi, Theresa Hagen, Melinda Sanford, Monica Roussel, Shirley Sherman, Lisa Landry and Glen Landry. Pictured below, top row, from left, are Janeen Broussard, Richard Bailey, Mary Ann Henchy and Darrell Stutes; middle row, Dan Jarratt, Milton Vicksnair, Kathy Clark, Martha Maxwell, Joan Bly, Janet Cieutat, Sheryl Joseph, Virginia Sosnait and Frank Henchy; front row, Tricia Jarratt, Nancy Stutes, Pattie Schoen, Marie Vicksnair, Paulette Walkwitz, Peggy Bailey, Diane Brown, Mary Delaney, Connie Richard and Holly Strong. Photo provided by Lisette Borne

---

**New Seafood Creations**
Now featuring our newest seafood creations

LUMP CRABCAKES WITH ZUCCHINI BASIL “PASTA”
SEAFOOD STUFFED MUSHROOMS
GRILLED REDFISH ON THE HALF SHELL

4957 ESSEN LANE • BATON ROUGE, LA
WWW.COPELANDSOFNEWORLEANS.COM
Limited Time Only
Msgr. Berggreen pointed out.

The new roof will be slate along with an advanced gutter system. Currently, the gutter is part of the roof system, which has created problems, Crochet said.

Roofing is not the only issue affecting the church, however. Msgr. Berggreen said repairs will also include the bell tower, the two sacristies, several windows so as to protect the stained glass and waterproofing the church.

Termite damage and rotting wood are forcing both sacristies to be gutted. When completed, each sacristy will have a new copper roof as well as new clos- ets and other upgrades.

Sensitive to the historical val- ue of the church, Msgr. Berggreen said he is hoping the church will be kept visually the same as it is now. He added that he included in the $1.5 million is $250,000 earmarked for unexpected develop- ments that might surface when repairs get under way.

The parish officially kicked off the fundraising campaign Jan. 4 although what could be considered a soft launch was initia- ted in November when Msgr. Berggreen sent letters seeking donations. Crochet said many St. Mary’s parishioners are sugar cane farmers who are paid at the end of the season and could re- ceive tax benefits by donating.

“We had some good re- sponse,” she said.

Overall, Msgr. Berggreen said the response has been over- whelming but that came as no surprise to a priest who has spent much of his pastoral career min- istering along the river parishes.

“People along the river will support the church,” he said. “They are very Catholic. If they see a need they are going to sup- port it. They will go beyond to support the church.”

St. Mary’s campaign is be- ing staged simultaneously with a capital campaign recently ini- tiated by Catholic High School of Pointe Coupee. Despite what could have been a potential im- pediment, Msgr. Berggreen was quick to point out there is no ani- mosity between the two entities and that all “working out.”

“That’s unbelievable in a small town like (New Roads),” Msgr. Berggreen said. “The church is very central and im- cured before starting construc- tion, Msgr. Berggreen said the diocese has reduced that amount to 40 percent and will loan St. Mary the remainder, which he hopes will be paid off by the campaign funds.

Shannon Sullivan of Guid- ance and Giving, a national firm specializing in Catholic stewardship, development and fundrais- ing campaigns, said she has been impressed by how important the church is to the community.

“I have noticed parishioners are extremely, extremely gener- ous and really care about their church,” Sullivan said. “They’ll tell me they got married in the church or their children were baptized there. It goes back generations and holds a special place in a lot of people’s hearts.

“That definitely helps in the campaign.”

Of course, a few more rain- storms might add further assist- ance.

“If we get a couple of more visual aid treatments, we’re go- ing to be in good shape,” Msgr. Berggreen said with a chuckle.

“We need a good Sunday morn- ing rain.”