Diocesan Pastoral Planning Task Force releases summary

Special to The Catholic Commentator

The Pastoral Planning Task Force has released a summary of its recommendations that have been implemented since March 2016.

In 2015, Bishop Robert W. Muench announced during the Chrism Mass celebrated at St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Baton Rouge that a task force had been formed. At that time, he noted that because of a shrinking number of clergy members, “demographics clearly pose a challenge.”

Chairman Father Trey Nelson said the task force consists of 12 members that includes “lay persons, religious and priests have given this time of themselves freely because they believe in the church and the future of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. While implementation of the recommendations made has not always been easy and while there has often been high emotion, I have personally found every Catholic lay person to be open and confident that the Holy Spirit is guiding us into the future. (Bishop Muench) has continually called us to be more ecclesial and less parochial. This means more our church and less my parish.”

Father Nelson said each parish has its own needs that makes it unique and no two parishes are alike but added that the process has helped “us all to understand what it means to journey forward as one body of Christ. “Personally it is my heartfelt belief that we are going where God is leading us to go. Our works have born much fruit, as you see in the bullet points of this press release, and will continue to do so. How can we be church with fewer priests and more Catholics? We must choose and strive to do it together. Thank you to all of you for your courage and your openness and your prayers. It has been my privilege to serve as the chair of the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Task Force.”

Listed below is the summary of recommendation implemented since March 2016.

A more detailed description can be found at www.diobr.org.

1. Weekend Assistance for Priests

A centralized resource has been established to assist priests

WOUNDED HEART

Shroud of Turin used to evangelize

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

The image was daunting, piercing through the heart and right to the soul of Father Jason Palermo.

Before him was the Shroud of Turin, the stain of Jesus’ blood evidence of the torture and suffering he endured at the hands of Roman soldiers on the day he was crucified. The image is lasting and one that Father Palermo, who is pastor at St. Joseph Church in French Settlement and St. Stephen the Martyr in Maurepas, wants to share and educate others on the torturous sacrifice Christ endured.

“First impressions are often lasting ones,” Father Palermo said of his 2008 trip to Italy when he first saw a copy of the shroud. He and Father Paul Yi, who lived across the hall from each other while they were attending Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, had made the trip to Italy with six other people.

“Back then, (Father Yi) taught me many spiritual things and continues to do so,” Father Palermo said. “He had a list of places that he researched and wanted to visit and he invited me to tag along one day.”

One of the stops was the Church of Santa Croce, where the relics of the crucifixion are venerated. Father Palermo said he was awestruck by the sign that had been placed over the Jesus’ head, along with one of nails, some of the thorns from the crown, and even the finger bones of St. Thomas the Apostle that are among the relics.

However, for Father Palermo the best was yet to come. What he called “the icing on the cake” came when Father Yi, who is currently the chancellor for the Diocese of Baton Rouge along with pastor at Ascension of Our Lord Church and St. Francis of Assisi Church, both in Donaldsonville, as well as administrator at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in White Castle and St. Joan of Arc Church in Bayou Pigeon, showed Father Palermo a replica of the shroud in an adjacent room.

“I was engrossed by it,” Father Palermo said. “I thought to myself, as St. Thomas did, ‘My Lord and my God.’ “In my soul I felt a stirring. It was as if Jesus were saying, ‘Do you see what I endured out of love for you?’”

“When you look at the shroud, you see a different side of the crucifixion, you see a different side of Jesus’ suffering,” he added. “You don’t see an artist
First mission

By Amy Jones

In January of 1826, St. Joseph welcomed its seventh pastor to Baton Rouge. Father Antoine Blanc, a French cleric, had been recruited by Bishop Dubourg to serve as a missionary priest in Louisiana. Prior to his time in the Capital City, Father Blanc served the Indiana and Mississippi territories and had been appointed pastor to St. Francis Catholic Church of Pointe Coupee.

Steady growth continued in Baton Rouge, and the need for another Catholic church became increasingly apparent. In August 1826, Bishop Rosati approved the donation of a piece of land that James Hudson had reserved on his property for a Catholic church in an area north of Baton Rouge. Hudson had made a rolling sweep of land extending from Bayou Manchac to the Felicianas. Father Blanc approved construction of a little log chapel to be built on Hudson's donated land. On Jan. 30, 1827, the first mission of St. Joseph was established in the northern portion of the parish (the area now served by St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Zachary):

“The 13th day of January, 1827, I, the undersigned pastor of the Catholic flock scattered over the two parishes of East and West Baton Rouge, previous notice having been given one month before, did proceed to the dedication of the building, under the title of St. John's Chapel, which building, under the particular direction and best exertions of John Sullivan, has been erected on the settlement of St. John’s Plains by the munificence and labor of the Catholic settlers of that section of the country. Signed, Antoine Blanc, Missionary Pastor.”

Mass times varied at the St. John Chapel. When St. Joseph enjoyed the services of two priests, it became possible for Mass to be celebrated on a regular basis, sometimes every other week. At other times, the Eucharist was celebrated only once a month. While St. John's Chapel was under the jurisdiction of St. Joseph, priests from Pointe Coupee, Jackson and St. Francisville also ministered there. The original chapel building was in use until around 1870.

Father Blanc's pastoral administration in Baton Rouge lasted until the fall of 1831, when he left to serve as vicar general to Bishop de Neckere in New Orleans. He was elevated to bishop of New Orleans in 1835 and later became the first Archbishop of New Orleans in 1850.

Jones is associate archivist for the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

Hearing God’s words

By Dina Dow

“The kingdom of Heaven: Whoever has ears ought to hear”

The Gospel readings of the upcoming 16th and 17th Sundays in Ordinary Time are parables for the purpose of revealing and veiling the mysteries of the “kingdom of God.” They are meant to resonate with those who are humble in heart, the childlike in faith. Conversely, those who are proud lose their ability to see the real meaning behind Jesus’ message. What does the phrase “kingdom of God” mean for us? And how can we grasp the meaning of the parables which moves us to conversion of heart and mind?

The Kingdom of God

As we pray “The Lord’s Prayer,” we plea, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done...” Do we know what we are pleading for? How do we anticipate such a coming, or has it already happened?

Paragraph 2816 of “The Catechism of the Catholic Church” explains, “The Kingdom of God lies ahead of us. It is brought near in the Word incarnate, it is proclaimed throughout the whole Gospel, and it has come in Christ’s death and resurrection. The kingdom of God has been coming since the Last Supper and, in the Eucharist, it is in our midst.”

God’s transcendent power makes present what has been, what is and what will come. What has been is Jesus, God coming to us and showing us how to live, love, serve, die and be born anew in eternity. We know the final coming of Christ will happen to establish his eternal kingdom. Yet in the meantime, the faithful are called to live as if the coming is now. Some strong “tools” that assist us in cultivating the kingdom of God include wisdom, strength and lessons from the parables.

Wisdom

God asked Solomon what he desired most. Of all things presented, Solomon asked for “an understanding heart in order to distinguish between right and wrong.” Thus, God granted him wisdom. Pope Francis writes, “The Holy Spirit is always with us, always in us, in our hearts. If we listen to him he teaches us this path of wisdom, he gifts us wisdom which is seeing with God’s eyes, listening with God’s ears, loving with God’s heart, judging things with God’s judgment. These are the things that Holy Spirit gifts us and we can all have this. We just have to ask the Holy Spirit.” Today, ask the Lord to see, listen and love with his heart in order to build up the kingdom of God.

Strength

The Holy Spirit is a source of strength. St. Paul writes in his Letter to the Romans that the Spirit will aid in our weakness. The Lord will indeed intercede for us in times of struggle, despair and failings. But we must ask for the strength to endure that which binds us and trust in the love of God to answer our prayer. A trusting heart is a faithful soul. Those who call upon the Holy Spirit for strength and believe will receive. Be courageous and ask the Lord for strength to help fortify the kingdom of God.

Parables

The Gospel parables give five analogies in describing the kingdom of God: a sower, a tiny seed, yeast, a pearl and a net. The sower reminds us that despite the existence of evil, God will harvest what is fruitful and burn that which is fruitless. We are called to be life-giving disciples of Jesus simply by our love. He will take care of evil. Likewise, the tiny seed which grows into a large bush shows the power of faith. All we need is a little bit of faith to grow into a saint! Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta wrote, “The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service.”

The pearl is an indication of how precious the gift of faith from God is for us. The net serves as a reminder of how many are “caught” by God and move on to greater streams, while others will end up in the “frying pan,” because of sin.

The kingdom of God is yesterday, today and tomorrow. We are called follow Jesus’ teachings, cultivate a rich faith of love and mercy, and stay out of the frying pan! Peace.

Dow is the director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

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Bishop Muench announces appointments

Bishop Robert W. Muench has appointed Father Michael Galea as sacramental minister at Our Lady of Pompeii Church in Tickfaw effective Aug. 15 and Father Joey Angeles to serve as sacramental minister for the designated aged in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, with residence at St. Agnes Church in Baton Rouge, effective Aug. 1.

Father Galea, a native of Xaghra, Gozo, Malta, was born Oct. 8, 1951 and ordained May 21, 1980 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Baton Rouge by Bishop Abel Caillouet, who was then a retired bishop in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Most recently, Father Galea served as pastor at Our Lady of Holy Rosary Church in St. Amant from July 1, 2014 to Sept. 28, 2016. He served as pastor at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Darrow, St. Anne Church in Sorrento on two occasions, St. Francis of Assisi Church in Smoke Bend and St. Philomena Church in Labadieville.

Father Galea also served as parochial vicar at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Lakeland, Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Theresa of Avila Church in Gonzales on two occasions.

Father Galea has served as administrator at St. Stephen the Martyr Church in Whitehall, St. Anne and St. Anthony of Padua.

Father Galea is replacing Father Michael Miceli, who was appointed sacramental minister at Our Lady of Pompeii effective July 1. Father Miceli will continue serving as pastor at St. Albert the Great Chapel and Catholic Student Center in Hammond.

Father Angeles, born Aug. 24, 1958, is a native of Iloilo, Philippines. He was ordained by Bishop Albert C. Hughes on June 3, 2000 at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge.

He most recently served as pastor at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in White Castle beginning July 1, 2009.

He also served as pastor of St. Joan of Arc Church in Bayou Pigeon from July 11, 2005 until this past July 1.

Father Angeles additionally served as parochial vicar at St. George Church in Baton Rouge from 2000-2005.

House members approve measure to repeal D.C. assisted suicide law

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The House Appropriations Committee voted July 13 in favor of an amendment to repeal the District of Columbia’s assisted suicide law.

The day before the vote, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan sent a letter to members of the committee urging them to “nullify the D.C. City Council’s deceptively named ‘Death with Dignity Act’ that legalizes the dangerous and unethical practice of doctor-assisted suicide.”

The amendment to the fiscal year 2018 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill looks to repeal the assisted suicide law, which went into effect this past February. It was introduced by Rep. Andy Harris, R-Maryland, who told the committee there is “nothing dignified about suicide” in his opinion.

Harris also called the act “bad policy” and said that “physicians were playing God” by prescribing lethal medications to terminally ill patients who want to end their lives.

The legislation permits physicians in the District of Columbia to legally prescribe lethal drugs to patients who have been deemed mentally competent and who have received a terminal diagnosis of six months or less.

In his July 12 letter to House Appropriations Committee members, Cardinal Dolan said the law was “seriously flawed” and said it “promotes the greatest risks of abuse and coercion to those who are poor, elderly, disabled, members of a minority group or without access to good medical care.”

The cardinal, who is chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, also told committee members that the law could cause the deaths of many people who are not terminally ill and it also “reflects a bias against persons with disabilities and serious illness.”

He went on to say the legislation “undermines the very heart of medicine. Doctors vow to do no harm, and yet assisted suicide is the ultimate abandonment of their patients. Seriously ill patients – who are often depressed – need our authentic support, including doctors fully committed to their welfare and pain management as they enter their final days.”

The National Right to Life Committee similarly sent a July 12 letter urging House committee members to vote for the amendment to repeal the assisted-suicide measure.

In a statement, the group said the pro-life movement is as “concerned with protecting the lives of older people and people with disabilities as it has been dedicated to protecting unborn children from abortion.”

J.J. Hanson, president of the Patients Rights Action Funds, praised the committee’s vote to repeal the assisted-suicide measure, saying: “We welcome any efforts at the congressional level to halt assisted suicide policy which will only put vulnerable D.C. residents – the terminally ill, the disabled and the poor – at risk.”

The D.C. Catholic Conference, which represents the public policy interests of the Catholic Church in the District of Columbia, joined a broad-based coalition of other groups in opposing the assisted-suicide measure when it came up for a vote.

After the City Council approved it, the Catholic conference issued a statement saying the bill “imperils residents particularly those who are sick, elderly, disabled and uninsured in our communities. It allows for coercion and abuse including third-parties administering the lethal drugs to patients who may or may not be incapacitated and or even requesting assisted suicide.”

The District is the nation’s seventh jurisdiction to allow doctors to assist the terminally ill to kill themselves. Six states – Vermont, Oregon, Washington state, Montana, California and Colorado – also have legalized allowed assisted suicide.

Similar physician-assisted suicide laws have been introduced and have failed in 22 states.
Diocese of Baton Rouge Seminary Scholarship Funds

What is a Seminary Scholarship fund?
A seminary scholarship fund is an invested sum of money, the interest of which is used in perpetuity to help fund the education of men studying for the priesthood.

How does someone establish a fund?
It is simple. A fund may be established and named for anyone you choose – friend, family, bishop, priest, religious, etc. Anyone can name or establish a fund.

Contributions from February through June 2017

Archbishop Antoine Blanc
In Memory of:
- Randall Andre .................................................$20.00
- Sir Knight Paul Baker ............................................$20.00
In Memory of:
- Deceased Members of KC Council 8878
  By: KC Council 8878 ..............................................$145.00
In Memory of:
- Ludovic Aucoin ....................................................$10.00
- Randall Andre .........................................................$10.00
- Beverly Killeen .....................................................$10.00
- Paul Baker .............................................................$10.00
- Charles “Bootsi” De Antoine ...................................$10.00
By: Joseph/Linda Daigle ............................................$20,823.31

Catholic Daughters of the Americas
By: Louisiana State CDA ...........................................$1,050.00

Father Matthew Faschan
By: M/M L. F. Aguillard ............................................$250.00

Father Leo Guillot
By: Lumina Newchurch ............................................$50.00

St. Margaret Queen of Scotland
In Memory of:
- Jeanne L. Dauterive ...............................................$10.00
In Honor of:
- Rev. Jamin Scott David .........................................$20.00
  - Dominican Sisters of Illinois who served at
    - St. Thomas Aquinas ............................................$20.00
    - Fr. Ryan Halford ............................................$10.00
    - Fr. Pat Brousard ...........................................$10.00
    - Deacon John & Lisa Veron ................................$10.00
    - Deacon Tim Grimes .........................................$10.00
    - Deacon Tim Messenger .....................................$10.00
    - Deacon William (Byrd) ....................................$10.00
    - Corbett .........................................................$10.00

Julian Dufreche
Kenny Dupont
Ruby Landry
Catherine Palisi
Dorothy Hanewinkel
By: Jimmy/Shirley Darouse .......................................$100.00

In Thanksgiving for:
- Nick Lyons .......................................................$100.00
  - Bro. Nicholas Courtney, SJ ....................................$10.00
  - Fr. Augustine DeArmond ....................................$10.00
By: St. Margaret Queen of Scotland ..........................$2,649.08

In Honor of:
- Fr. Jamin David ..................................................$1,400.00
  - Diocesan Class 2017/Wives .................................$9,821.85

Father John Spriggs
In Memory of:
- Leighton Delahaye ..............................................$10,227.42
  - Anonymous .......................................................$20,000.00

Tomorrows Priest
By: #iGiveCatholic 2016 .........................................$975.00
  - Ethel Guedry ......................................................$500.00
In Honor of:
- Seminarian Mathew Dunn ....................................$500.00
  - Dr./Mrs. Carl Poche

Who do I contact to establish or contribute to a fund?
To create a fund or to make a contribution to an existing fund, please send it to the Vocations and Seminarians Department, P. O. Box 2028, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028.
For information call 225-336-8778.
This is only a partial list of all Seminary Scholarship Funds.
Visit our website at www.diobr.org/vocations for a complete list of Seminary Scholarship Funds.

Additional Scholarship Funds

James Calvin Devillier ............................................$22,400.00
Diebricht/Bourgeois Families ................................$21,240.00
Issac Diez, Jr., USMA .............................................$20,071.70
Father Gustave Dorval ..........................................$20,000.00
Archbishop Drossaerts .........................................$6,418.38
Stephan Dugas ......................................................$8,365.90
Oliver H. Engerran ...............................................$20,382.89
Eugene E. Esnault ................................................$20,000.00
Father Matthew Faschan .......................................$3,807.89
Monsignor James J. Finnegans ................................$5,275.41
Monsignor Andrew Frey .........................................$77,800.00
Monsignor Leo Gassier ..........................................$20,100.00
Monsignor Paul J. Gauci ........................................$20,000.00
Edward C. Gauthier ..............................................$20,940.16
Monsignor Patrick Gillespie ..................................$20,000.00
Monsignor Cage Gordon ........................................$20,000.00
Mr. & Mrs. A. X. Guillot .......................................$20,000.00
Kathlyn Elise Heroman .........................................$20,000.00
Father Maynard “Tippy” Hurst ................................$13,179.00
Father Salvador Impastato ....................................$20,000.00
Alvy Dee and Rezelte Alleman Jenkins Family
  Living/Deceased .................................................$5,000.00
  Alene Kaylor .....................................................$18,518.68
  Rev. Vincent Kleinpeter .......................................$20,000.00
  Father Wilfred Knobloch .....................................$20,000.00
  Mr. & Mrs. Albert J. Koppel ..................................$20,000.00
  Father John Koppel ............................................$20,115.00
  Monsignor Paul Landsman ....................................$20,000.00
  Gerald T. Leblanc .............................................$20,475.00
  Edith Louise Leonard ..........................................$10,000.00
  Madonna Chapel ...............................................$15,711.12
  Monsignor Louis E. Marionneaux #2 ......................$20,000.00
  Monsignor Louis E. Marionneaux #2 ......................$20,000.00
  Fathers Martens & Perino ....................................$24,095.00
  Thomas Beatty Mary ...........................................$18,483.63
  Dr. McCaa and Monsignor Marionneaux .................$20,000.00
  Father Charles McConvile ..................................$20,000.00
  John McGinnis .................................................$6,238.46
  Father Joseph E. McLaughlin ................................$20,424.06
  Deceased Members of KC Council #3298 .................$6,721.39
  Deceased Members St. Alphonsus ..........................$20,000.00

In Memory of:
- Cesarea T. Charmont .........................................$500.00
  By: Mona Woods/Bonnie Bourgeois .........................$32,437.13
Father Clarence Waguespack Jr.
In Memory of:
- Gerald L. Simon ................................................$300.00
  By: Clarence J. Waguespack Jr.
  Estate ...............................................................$14,970.00

Reformed churches sign doctrine agreement

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Signaling a turning point in ecumenical relations with the Catholic Church, the World Communion of Reformed Churches signed an agreement on a key issue that divided Catholics and Protestants for centuries.

In an ecumenical ceremony July 5 in Wittenberg, Germany, the city where Martin Luther nailed his “95 Theses” that marked the beginning of the Reformation, the Reformed churches adopted the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.

The agreement, which explains how people are justified in God’s eyes and saved by Jesus Christ, was first signed in 1999 by Catholics and Lutherans. The World Methodist Council adopted the doctrine in 2006.

The Reformed Churches represent an estimated 80 million Christians in Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, and Waldensian churches around the world.

In a statement published July 4, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity referred to the event “as another important milestone on the journey toward the full visible unity of Christians; not yet the end of the road, but a significant stage on the way.”

Bishop Brian Farrell, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, attended the event along with Father Aviello Gonzalez, a council official from Washington, D.C. “One of the crucial issues of dissent between the Reformers and the authorities of the Catholic Church in the 16th century is thus being diffused and overcome, making further growth in spiritual and ecclesial communion between the Protestant and Catholic churches possible,” the council said.

By signing the declaration, the statement said, Reformed churches will join with other Christian churches to “find wider and more intensive ways of working together in the service of suffering humanity.”
Single Seniors two-stepping through the Golden Years

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

In the hours after flood waters dumped nearly five feet of water in her house, Anita Scineaux found herself at a convenience store on Sherwood Forest Boulevard in Baton Rouge, happy to be on dry land but with nowhere to go.

The answer, however, was soon coming in the person Scineaux calls her own personal angel. Gail Miller, a member of the St. Thomas More Single Seniors group, heard a report that the Monticello subdivision, where Scineaux lives, was flooding and contacted her to see if she needed assistance.

Scineaux, also a member of the seniors group, told Miller that she was rescued but had no place to go. No problem, Miller said, telling Scineaux she would be there in five minutes to pick her up and give her a place to stay.

Thus began a four-month odyssey of Miller providing a haven for Scineaux while her house was being rebuilt.

“The beauty of this is I had had dinner with Gail one time at the single seniors,” Scineaux said. “We were really just introducing ourselves and for her to even remember where I lived. Every time I think about it I’m just amazed.”

“I call her ‘angel girl,’ and she likes it. I don’t know what I would have done if Gail had not taken me in.”

For members of the St. Thomas More Single Seniors, more than 70 members strong, assisting others in need is the underlying mission of the group, whether it’s providing housing to flood victims, transporting fellow members to medical appointments or staying with each other after a procedure or surgery.

Additionally, they will often provide meals to those who are unable to prepare their own food because of illness.

“We are there for each other,” Miller said. “When our spouse dies, we need somebody other than our children. It’s amazing the fellowship with the group. We help each other so much.”

Miller said that more than one-third of the organization’s sustained flood damage, but many were taken in by fellow members. At one point Miller had four evacuees, including Scineaux, living in her Sherwood Forest home.

Single seniors calendar chairman Anne Stentiford moved in with another member so that she could loan her home to other evacuees. Stentiford also organized a group who has put shelf paper in the homes of those in the rebuilding process, including Scineaux.

But don’t think this group is solely focused on flood issues or transporting fellow members to a doctor’s appointment. Quite the contrary. As Stentiford said, “The purpose of this Single Seniors ministry is to have fun together so that we get to know each other and then we can be there for each other.”

“The Single Seniors provide the opportunity for individuals to put on their dancing shoes and knock the dust off of their two-step through a number of social activities that include special holiday events and even an annual football party. Members meet monthly for dinner, twice a month for lunch, have regular meetings that feature a speaker and sponsor special events celebrating Mardi Gras and Fourth of July.

“Jubilee Celebration”
DAY OF RENEWAL
August 12, Saturday
9am-3pm
Our Lady of Mercy Parish Center
(445 Marquette Ave. at Government St.)

Guest Speakers
Bishop Sam Jacobs
Andi Oney
Lunch provided
No registration required. Info: 225-636-2464

Dancing is a popular activity at all of the Single Seniors events. Some of the members even take dance lessons or attend other dancing events during the week. “We need to socialize,” member Anita Scineaux said.

“And Gail was there. How many people come and take in a total stranger and then offers to take in anybody else?

“We need to socialize and that’s what they are there for and what they like to do. And I notice if you do nothing but attend monthly meetings everybody is just so happy to see each other.”

An annual Christmas party is also one of the organization’s events. Of course, dancing is a popular feature at these gatherings. Some of the seniors even attend dance classes together during the week around the Baton Rouge area.

Each October, the Single Seniors honor members who have passed away during the past year with a Mass, rosary and reception.

“Single seniors ministry is a blessing to all members,” chairman Jeannie Latil said. “I can’t believe the awesome fellowship I found with the club.”

For Scineaux, the emotional support was equally as important as the physical assistance, which included members helping her line shelves once her kitchen cabinets were installed.

“I am not very outgoing, and I probably would have been okay in a FEMA hotel room by myself but I truly realized at the end of the day I needed to come here where there was somebody that was concerned about my well being,” she said.
What is the current official response of the church to the reported apparitions at Medjugorje? (Palmyra, Virginia)

As I write this answer (in July 2017), the church still awaits a formal pronouncement from the Vatican on the authenticity of the alleged appearances of Our Lady at Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The most recent clue as to what that final decision might say comes from comments made by Pope Francis to journalists on the papal plane as he returned to Rome from Fatima in May 2017. The pontiff said that, while investigations into the original reported apparitions in 1981 should continue, he has personal doubts that Mary continues to appear to them each day, while the other three assert that Mary now appears to them once a year.

The church’s investigations have been long and comprehensive. From 1982 to 1990, a local diocesan commission and then a Yugoslavian bishops’ panel looked into the matter before deciding that they could not confirm that the supposed appearances were authentic. Beginning in 2010, another commission established by Pope Benedict XVI looked further into the claims; that commission has not yet issued a public report. Meanwhile, thousands of pilgrims continue to flock to Medjugorje each month with clear spiritual benefit – including, for some, the restoration of faith and return to the sacraments after many years away. Pope Francis acknowledged this in his recent remarks on the plane, saying, “The spiritual fact, the pastoral fact, that people go there and are converted, the people who meet God, who change their lives … cannot be denied.” For that reason, Pope Francis recently appointed the archbishop of Warsaw-Praga as his personal envoy to Medjugorje to study the pastoral needs of the townspeople and the pilgrims.

Pope Francis’ remarks while returning from Fatima would seem to match unofficial reports that the Vatican commission believes that the first seven appearances of Mary from June 24–July 3, 1981, were authentic but that the thousands of supposed visions since are dubious. Pope Francis told reporters, “I prefer Our Lady to be a mother, our mother, and not a telegraph operator who sends out a message every day at a certain time.”

One month from now, I will turn 90 years old. What determines when it is best for a person not to attend Sunday Mass? I have macular degeneration and cannot follow the scriptural passages in the missal or follow the words to the hymns. My legs are very weak from vascular problems, and I have fallen several times. Our church is consistently cold for me, even when I wear a jacket. (Last Sunday, it was 75 degrees outside, and the air conditioning was on.)

I still love going to Mass, and my wife can still do the driving, but for future reference, I would appreciate the church’s thinking. (Columbus, Ohio)

The church’s Code of Canon Law recognizes that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass can be lifted for “grave cause” (Canon 1248.2). Illness (or the need to care for the sick) have traditionally been seen as qualifying reasons – particularly when combined with the frailty of advanced age.

If anything, we tend to be too scrupulous in this regard. Regularly, I see people with communicable illnesses jeopardize themselves and others by following what they perceive to be their obligation to be in church on Sunday and similarly for the elderly in hazardous weather.

In your own situation, I don’t think the macular degeneration excuses you – since you can listen, with profit, to the scriptural readings and the hymns. But the vascular issue is a different story that could lead, and apparently has led, to dangerous falls.

So be generous to yourself in your judgment: You might be better off staying at home and praying right where you are – perhaps watching the Mass on television, although you would not be obliged to do that.

There is, though, no substitute for the spiritual strength which comes from holy Communion; so why not ask your pastor to designate an extraordinary minister of holy Communion (perhaps your wife) to bring Communion to you at home?

I am wondering how the common representation of Mary in art form but to name to be. Whether in Nativities scenes, statues or paintings, she is usually shown as being Caucasian (or at least European), with a pale complexion and hair that is almost blond. Shouldn’t she be depicted instead as dark-skinned, dark-haired and Jewish? (Corydon, Indiana)

For many centuries, the focal point of Christianity was Europe, and a heavy majority of the world’s Catholics lived on that continent. (In more recent years that has changed rapidly: according to the Pew Research Center, in the year 1910, 65 percent of all Catholics lived in Europe, but by 2010 only 24 percent did.)

Because most religious artists were European, it is not surprising that they portrayed Mary as looking like the people they knew; they were not trying to create a photographic replica of Mary of Nazareth but to appeal to the religious sensibilities of those most likely to view their work.

Had they wanted instead an exact likeness, they would have known even in the Middle Ages that Palestinian Jews at the time of Christ had darker skin, with darker eyes and a dark hair color. (What they might not have known then – but what nearly all biblical scholars believe today – is that, based on Jewish marriage customs of the time, Mary was most likely 14 or 15 years old when she gave birth to Jesus.)

There is, of course, a range of artistic works that do portray Mary with non-European features. Probably the best known of these is the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In 1531, Mary appeared to an indigenous named Juan Diego on a hill outside Mexico City. When the local bishop was skeptical and asked for a sign, Mary directed Juan Diego to collect roses in his cloak and bring them to the bishop. As he unfolded the cloak, dozens of roses fell to the floor and revealed the image of Mary imprinted on the inside – with the dark skin of the indigenous people.

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 askfatherdoy@gmail.com and 90 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, NY 12203.

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Grieving the loss of a child

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

The joy, hopes and dreams of a couple expecting a baby can be stripped away when the child dies before or shortly after birth.

According to statistics from the National Institute of Health, each year approximately 26,000 in the United States babies are stillborn. As much as 65 percent of all known and unknown conceptions in miscarriage, according to the National Vital Statistics Report.

“It’s much more common than people might think,” said Danielle Van Haute, respect life coordinator for the Office of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

The Office of Marriage and Family Life and Office of Worship are providing materials for parents who are looking for somewhere to turn to for information and solace after suffering such a loss.

According to Darryl Ducote, director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life, his office discovered the need for such resources after receiving calls from laity and priests asking for recommendations for materials to help parents who have experienced a miscarriage or early infant death.

“We did a review of the audience of our website. We discovered that the most sought after part of our website was information about miscarriage and early infant death,” Ducote said.

“All of that put together made us realize that there is a need that is not being addressed in regards to miscarriage and early infant death.”

The OMFL examined resources from several other dioceses across the United States.

“After reviewing those resources, we decided to combine several of them and create our own publications,” Ducote said.

“We developed three specific resources to address miscarriage and sudden infant death.”

One booklet focuses on mourning the loss of an unborn child or infant. The book covers topics such as the question of baptism, the deceased child’s remains, the liturgical rites, the process of grief and the role of faith.

The booklet notes that last year Louisiana passed a law that states when a delivery occurs at a healthcare facility, the facility is required to notify the parents that they have the right to request the baby’s remains for burial.

Additionally, there is a booklet concerning the order for naming and commendation for a deceased child. It contains rituals and prayer options when a child dies before birth. It contains a certificate that can be filled out to mark the occasion.

A third booklet is pastoral notes of the liturgical rites for mourning the loss of an unborn child or infant. It contains information concerning the types of rites that can be used with parents of deceased, stillborn or miscarried unbaptized infants.

It also talks about pastoral care of parents and family members who have lost a child, including those who have lost a child through abortion.

According to Father Tom Ranzino, vicar general of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and director of the diocese’s Office of Worship, the rites convey that when there is the death of an unborn or newborn child it is important to remember that they are dealing with a human being and not a concept.

He said the rites contain language that will console the parents about the things they will not get to see or experience with the child.

“These parents, in love, created a person who is now living with God,” said Father Ranzino.

“We priests have to go gently,” he added. “There could be anger or resentment at the child’s death – it could affect a marriage. There’s a lot of dynamics going on.”

Father Ranzino said the pastoral notes confirm that a priest, deacon or representative of the church shares the grief or pain the couple is experiencing and still spreads hope, even in that moment of grief.

“We want to spread the message that God is very faithful, to share what we, the church believe,” he said.

Van Haute and Ducote said the booklets confirm that the dignity of human life begins at conception and that grieving is natural for a child loss at any stage of life.

Ducote said, "I think the experience of miscarriage, particularly, is misunderstood by the general population in the sense that most people look at it as an unfortunate circumstance.

The parents are urged to ‘just get over it’ without realizing that for the parents this is a significant moment of grief because the moment they realized they were pregnant they already began to invest in that child, and in some cases physically – such setting up the nursery, naming the child.

Elements are starting to fall into place long before the child is born. So when there is a miscarriage there is significant grief on the part of the parents and the extended family and society and even the clergy in some cases."

Van Haute said, “We know much more about the grief process than we did 10, 20, 30 years or more ago. People were not even encouraged to see their baby who was stillborn. This is the experience of women I know who are in their 70s and 80s.”

Van Haute knows from her own personal experience of losing a son at three weeks old that the loss of a child is heartbreaking for parents.

“This is something near and dear to my heart,” said Van Haute. “You never forget that child. That child is always a part of you.”

During such a time, it may be hard for parents to absorb all the information being given to them, so the booklets can be helpful for the parents, as well as people wanting to help.

“It (grief) has its own time and its own process,” said Van Haute.

The booklets, which are free of charge, are being delivered to church parish offices in the diocese.

The churches can also contact the Office of Marriage and Family life for more copies.

“A MASS

Honoring The Father of All Mankind
Celebrant: Msgr. Robert Berggreen

Monday, August 7
Rosary & Confession 5:30 p.m.
Mass 6 p.m.

St. Agnes Church
749 East Blvd. | Baton Rouge, LA

A courtesy of the Diocese of Baton Rouge
Child Nutrition Program

Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for bookkeeping and general record keeping, contract tracking, and administrative support to the staff. As main administrative support, the Administrative Assistant will work as part of a team.

Responsibilities:

• Provide basic personal assistance, letter writing, maintain calendar, make travel arrangements, etc. for the Director.
• Provide administrative assistance to Child Nutrition Program staff, including bookkeeping and processing invoices and correspondences, maintain office supplies, record keeping and file management, data entry, photocopying, and answering phones.
• Manage the collection, distribution and recording of all incoming and outgoing correspondence including drafting basic responses.
• Assist in preparation for meetings ensuring that all arrangements are made, including the coordination and distribution of meeting materials, minute taking and set-up/clean-up of meeting rooms.
• Maintain contacts and relevant databases.
• Organize, collate and distribute reports such as the audited financial reports and any other reports as required.
• Assist with updating the office procedure manuals, website, and other operational reference materials including providing advice on any required changes to administrative procedures.
• Undertake other duties as directed by Director or Business Manager.

Educational and Experience Requirements:

• High School graduate with a minimum of three years’ position-related experience; business school or some college; bachelor’s degree preferred.
• Experience in business administration, bookkeeping or project management.

Other Requirements:

• Excellent communication skills: verbal, written and interpersonal.
• A courteous and polite telephone manner.
• Proficiency in MS Word, Excel and MS Outlook, and the use of office equipment a must.
• Strong grammatical skills, attention to detail and strong analytical and problem solving skills required.
• Must be able to work within established guidelines to comply with record keeping/administration requirements.
• Ability to exercise good judgment in handling difficult and/or sensitive situations, with ability to maintain confidentiality in all transactions.
• Ability to exercise good organizational and time management skills, ability to manage projects and multiple priorities.

Please submit an application, resume and references to

cnp@diobr.org.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.
ST. AGNES PASTOR INSTALLATION – Bishop Robert W. Muench, left, installs Father Charbel Jamhoury as pastor of St. Agnes Church in Baton Rouge on July 9. The congregation expressed its appreciation of Father Jamhoury, who has served as administrator at the church parish since 2015, with thunderous applause at the conclusion of the Mass. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

NEW CHRIST THE KING PASTOR – Bishop Robert W. Muench, left, installed Father Andrew Merrick as the pastor at Christ the King Church in Baton Rouge on July 16. Father Merrick’s appointment was effective July 1. He is also the associate director of vocations for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. In the background is parochial vicar Father Reuben Dykes, whose appointment to Christ the King was also effective July 1. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

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Author and Attorney Laura Poche’ cordially invites you to attend a free event and discover how to:

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IMPORTANT: This event is suited for people who intend to put an estate legal plan in place in the near future for their family. If married, both spouses should attend.

HAMMOND/NORTHSORE
Tuesday, July 25th
11:30am-1:00pm
Tope La Restaurant
Catering/Ruby Room
111 B East Thomas Street

PRAIRIEVILLE/GONZALES
Wednesday, July 26th
11:30am-1:00pm
Sammy’s Grill-Prairieville
16400 Airline Highway

BATON ROUGE
Wednesday, July 26th
6:00pm-7:30pm
Beausoleil Restaurant
7731 Jefferson Hwy.

BATON ROUGE
Thursday, July 27th
11:30am-1:00pm
Juban’s Restaurant
3739 Perkins Road

BATON ROUGE
Thursday, July 27th
6:30pm-8:00pm
Drusilla Seafood
3482 Drusilla Lane

About Your Speaker:

Laura Poche’ is the owner and managing attorney of the Poche’ Estate Planning Law Firm where she is certified in Estate Planning and Administration by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. Laura grew up on the West Bank of New Orleans in Gretna. While at LSU, Laura met her husband, Jay. After marrying in New Orleans, they moved back to Baton Rouge in 1990. Laura and Jay have three sons, Trey, Lewis, and Lane. In addition to keeping up with the busy lives of all her boys, Laura enjoys helping others through her involvement in several non-profit organizations focused on education initiatives, women empowerment, poverty prevention and attaining self-sufficiency in South Louisiana.

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Mission Krewe expands horizons for youth

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Carnival krewes traditionally feature a monarch of some type, but how many can call Christ their king? For the unique and cross-country Mission Krewe, not only is Christ their monarch, but their route has them parading from the Pacific Northwest to the swamps of south Louisiana, serving some of most needy of families in both of those areas.

“Our Rex (a popular New Orleans krewe that parades on Mardi Gras Day) is the crucified Christ, and we pick up his cross in the work that we do for the vulnerable in our communities,” said Father Jamin David, pastor at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland in Albany and St. Thomas the Apostle Chapel in Springfield and co-founder of the Mission Krewe along with Father Michael Vuky, a priest in the Diocese of Portland, Oregon.

Father David and Father Vuky, who studied canon law together at Catholic University of American in 2008, developed the idea for the Mission Krewe several years ago. Father Vuky previously had taken his youth group from the parishes where he served on an annual international field trip.

However, Portland diocesan officials eventually mixed that practice, so, as Father David said, “they decided to come to the next best place in the world, New Orleans, which has its own missionary work (needs).”

In 2013, St. Margaret parishioners hosted Father Vuky’s youth group, assisting with providing accommodations, food and enculturation. At the time, St. Margaret did not have an active youth group.

“Most of the (young people) had never been out of Oregon much less to the Deep South so it was a culture shock,” Father David recalled with a smile.

He said the experience was well received by all involved, so a decision was made to skip a year to develop and initiate a formal relationship among the church parishes. In 2015, the Oregon youth returned to Louisiana but by this time Father David had revived St. Margaret’s youth group.

The young people worked in homes that needed some type of mission assistance.

“It worked very well,” Father David said, adding that it was decided that in the odd years the Oregon youth would visit Louisiana, and a contingent from Albany would visit Portland in the even years. “Last year, we did the same thing in Portland and worked with Habitat for Humanity. The (young people) were able to experience the beauty of the Pacific Northwest.”

The Mission Krewe recently wrapped up its last venture in Louisiana, spending the mornings assisting flood victims rebuild their homes. The 56 young people and adults worked on one home in Denham Springs and several houses in north Baton Rouge, including gutting one that had not been touched since the flood.

The work included painting, making repairs and installing a new tile floor.

“The biggest thing when we first started doing it was to give the kids an understanding that the church isn’t just confined to the small buildings and places where we are comfortable and go to Mass,” Father David said.

“Church is a lot larger than that and that re- alizes the true missionary outreach you don’t have to be international. There is plenty of it in our own backyard so you don’t have to take an exotic trip around the world to help somebody.

“Of course, particularly for Louisiana, we seem to be stricken by every natural disaster known to man.”

But don’t think it’s all work and no play. The afternoons and evenings are dedicated to exploring the culture of a particular region, mixing in pleasure with education.

This year, the group visited the LSU Rural Museum, Rosedown Plantation in St. Francisville, spent a day exploring the French Quarter in New Orleans that included Father David celebrating Mass at St. Louis Cathedral, a swamp tour where some lucky individuals were able to hold a baby alligator and a tour of Avery Island and other sites in the Lafayette area.

Father Cary Bani, pastor at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in St. Francisville, celebrated Mass while the group was in St. Francisville, and on the last day St. Margaret hosted a closing lunch.

“The kids love it,” Father David said. “I think a lot of them are touched spiritual- ly. It gives them some motivation to take what they learn (in religion classes) and actually put it into practice.

“In some sense it’s related to their voca- tion discernment. I don’t know that it’s people thinking about priesthood or consecrated life but it makes them realize service ministry is part of your vocation as a person, to reach out to the poor and those people.”

The horizons may be even further expanded in 2018 as Father David and Father Vuky are exploring the possibility of taking the group to the Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska and possibly work on an Indian reservation, where shrimp boots would be traded in for beaver mukluks.

The Mission Krewe, which combines youth from the Albany area and the Diocese of Portland, Oregon, drew 56 young people and adults recently. The retreat, which was hosted by St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church this year, alternates between Albany and Portland. Photos provided by Father Jamin David | St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland

The young people spent the week assisting flood victims rebuild their homes, including painting, installing a tile floor and even gutting one house.

The young people

Health & Fitness

Special Section of The Catholic Commentator

August 18

There are so many choices today about exercise programs, weight loss programs, preventive care, nutrition plans and medical advice, but, how do we know what is the best one for us to live a fuller, happier, healthier life – physically and mentally? “Health & Fitness” will focus on these and other related topics.

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It was a week filled with sweat, paint, dust, aching muscles from hard work, heat and thunderstorms for youth on their 10th annual “Mission of Mercy” in the St. James and Vacherie area July 9-15. Outstanding that was laughing, singing, dancing, praying, venturing into places they never saw themselves going to before and deep conversations of faith. When the young missionaries heard the invitation “come back again” from the people they loved and served that week, their reply was “definitely.”

This was not the first time many of the youth had been on the mission, yet some were having a first time cross-cultural experience by working on two Baptist churches in the St. James area.

Before starting work for the day and after work, the youth prayed with members of the congregations, something which touched the heart of the youth. Ryan Aultman of St. Alexius Church in Baton Rouge who worked on the 113-year-old Mt. Triumph Church, said he discovered God shows himself everywhere.

“It’s so different from Baton Rouge. You can go to church and not know people. But here it’s so interesting because everyone knows each other,” said Aultman.

John Norta of St. Elizabeth Church in Baton said “They are really involved in the church here. They praise the Lord for three hours. In many other churches, people are there for an hour and are ready to go.”

Further down off Eiver Road, at St. Bethel Church, Kristina Bouquet said working on a church was similar, yet different, than working on a home.

“You work a little harder on a church because it’s Jesus’ home,” said Bouquet.

Kent Dempster of Our Lady of Peace Church in Vacherie said although he is from the area the kids were opened to new facets of it.

“It’s lived here all my life, but I’ve been to streets and homes I’ve never seen before,” said Dempster.

The youth working at both churches said they hoped they were making the week of the congregations happier, and to which the pastors enthusiastically affirmed they were.

“Look at them,” said a smiling Reverend Harry Joseph Sr. of Mt. Triumph. He noted that one of the youth would say “Thank you very, very, very much, Reverend,” and give him a high five.

“These kids have been an inspiration to us. They’ve even helped some of the church,” said Mike Davis.

“Thumbs up reverend,” and give him a high five.

“Very, very important to the community – you are the future of the church,” said Mike Davis.

Young entrepreneur John Patrick McCullen, from St. Aloysius Church, put his skills from his pressure washing business to work at several homes in the Vacherie area.

“I’ve been transformational for the youth, the community volunteers by their side and those they serve. It’s been a beautiful experience,” said Folse.

“We work a little harder on a church because it’s Jesus’ home.”

Kristina Bouquet
St. Bethel Church

Surprise when the youth invited him to attend a community dinner at Our Lady of Peace that was being hosted Friday for the people the young missionaries served.

“I’ll have been working here all week for you and you’re feeling me?” asked Reverend Geason, who said the youth were a “gift from God.”

Working on a house on Barra Street in St. James, Cecelia Campesi, from St. Alexius Church, put tape around a door prior to painting.

“I was turned around (motioning) before so I had to use it for myself,” said Campesi, who found the blessings out-welcomed the challenges she faced.

“The heat is definitely a challenge and it’s hard work. But it’s been so worth it getting to know the people of the community,” she said.

Young entrepreneur John Patrick McCullen, from St. Alexius and a student at Catholic High for part of this week, used his skills from his pressure washing business to work at several homes in the Vacherie area.

“You have to make sure that you have a lot of time and the mental capacity to get the job done,” said McCullen. “You have to be patient – you are getting dirt and grime out of the concrete. It’s a lot of labor!”

Some of the youth also worked in the Our Lady of Peace rectory, cleaning and painting halls and other jobs that needed to be done. They sang and danced as they worked and even painted a skype loco before getting to the more “serious coats of paint.”

Also included in the “works of mercy” was visiting the sick and the elderly. Teams of youth were sent “knocking on doors” and bringing the gifts of love they were trained.

“I enjoyed listening to their stories,” said Kristyn Ben- tender of St. George Church in Baton Rouge. “Even though some of them are old and not in the best of health, they still have faith. That’s inspiring to me.”

After a long day of work, boys and girls separately were welcomed into the homes of couples in order to take baths or showers before dinner, which was prepared by a different group of volunteers each night. While youth “steal their turn” they had in-depth conversations with the homemaker, as they shared details about their day and listened to the homemaker’s words of faith and encouragement.

Mike and Claudette Davis, one of the couples welcoming the youth to their Vacherie home, said they had recently retired and wanted a chance to meet the youth who were making such a difference in the area. They had heartful conversations that ran the gamut, including the youth’s future plans, life in the church parishes and history of the area. Learning one youth particularly liked chocolate, they made sure to have some on hand.

“We do many negative things about the youth that they try to do the wrong things and doing the wrong things,” said Mike Davis. “It’s nice to see some youth out together making a difference and that their parents have done a good job.”

The Devries gave the youth a heartfelt thanks for their work.

“I know you are having fun, but you are learning things that you take back to your parish. What you are doing is very, very important to the community – you are the future of the church,” said Mike Davis.

Pan Folse, a committee member of Our Lady of Peace working with the other participating churches all year to organize the mission, said the youth presence buoyed the local communities. As she went about picking up supplies and clothes and other tasks, she received many comments about how nice it was to see that the youth had enough to come to their community and help. She said the mission has been transformational for the young community volunteers by their side and those they serve.

“It’s been a beautiful experience,” said Folse.

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

By Crystal Elvis
The Catholic Commentator

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Catholic High earns first national title

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Catholic High School’s Bayou Hazard Ultimate Frisbee team crossed the goal line into the end zone of their dreams by winning the national championship in June.

The tone was set that this year would be successful at the team’s first meeting of the year. Pushing past the small talk, the coaches asked the team members what they wanted out of the season. The team had a lot of success in the past, having won the state championship for the third time in a row the previous season.

But there was one option they had not tried yet — winning the Ultiworld Competitive Ultimate Training (CUT) national championship.

The coaches laid out what the team would have to do and waited to see if they wanted to work that hard to claim it.

“(The coaches said) it’s cool to go straight to the national championship. But it wasn’t going to be easy,” said co-captain Dylan Reviere. “It was going to be a completely different program than the year before.”

“We were going to have to do more than be out on the field working on ultra mechanics. We were going to have to go to the weight room and do anything we could do to be bigger, stronger and faster than our opponents.”

Co-captain Matthew Freeburgh said, “When we first made the decision as a team to go for the national championship we put it out on Twitter. The response we were getting was, ‘Oh man I really hope you make it but it’s really going to be hard.’ I was kind of thinking that way — if we make it to the tournament I will be happy.”

But the players committed themselves to the grueling schedule of being in the weight room at 6 a.m. plus regular practice. This turned out to be the team’s advantage as they “pumped up their bodies” they formed a bond as they laughed, joked and talked about their lives.

The captains said the team members took it upon themselves to stay disciplined.

“I’ve never seen a team operate or co-operate at the level this ultimate team did,” said Freeburgh. “If somebody was acting up it wasn’t just me and Dylan yelling at them, it was other team members saying ‘C’mon get in the game.’”

The team realized their efforts were paying off when they won their first out of state tournament in Atlanta.

“That was the stepping stone that allowed us to believe they could compete in and win the national championship,” said Freeburgh.

“With every breakthrough we had we saw we were taking off and it wasn’t an average season,” he added.

While they faced some menacing opponents with intimidating records, CHS showed “they weren’t scared,” according to Freeburgh and Reviere.

The Bears finished the season 32-3. The three losses came to top 10 nationally ranked teams.

The team’s performances were strong enough to get them to the national championships in Rockford, Illinois.

CHS met Lake Side High School of Seattle, Washington for the championship game on June 4, a blazing hot day.

According to Reviere, the team had conditioned itself by practicing in the heat and the benefits paid off.

At the half, Reviere said he was sunburned and hot, and his brother, who has played the sport at LSU after playing at CHS and who brought him into the ultimate Frisbee sport, urged him on.

“I looked at my roommates (for the tournament) and said, ‘Let’s just play our game one more time and I’ll see you on the other side of the field as national champions,’” said Reviere.

The championship was won through some great plays and great sacrifices.

Freeburgh was given Friction Gloves Catch Of The Month, which can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=53XyPduLLmM. Player Nick Major played with a fracture in his throwing hand.

Bayou Hazard won the game 13-10. It is believed to be the first time a CHS team has won a national championship.

“People were running crazy. I was in total shock. I saw the whole season flash before my eyes. I saw every session in the weight room, every practice, every game,” said Reviere.

The team presented the championship trophy to CHS on June 15. They believe this was a great way to acknowledge that all their success came through the support of friends, family, CHS and the community.

Reviere and Freeburgh said they especially consider their parents and other family members as part of the team, because without their support they would not have been able to make it to the championships. They noted that at the out of state tournaments, Catholic High consistently had the most fans in the bleachers, even the local ones.

“Having your parents there every year every step of the way through the struggles, through the low points and high points is something I will never forget,” said Freeburgh.

Reviere noted that the community also stepped up in a big way. The team bought 3,000 pounds of crawfish to sell at a crawfish boil fundraiser.

“I remember sitting around the parking lot wondering if it was going to happen, are people going to come, or are we going to have thousands of rotting crawfish sitting around,” said Reviere.

But the team got a sign that things would be okay when (Coach) Glen Randow, associate director of the CHS alumni association, stopped by an hour early to ask if the crawfish was ready yet. All the tickets were sold.

Reviere and Freeburgh’s future plans include playing at LSU. Reviere plans to play for a young adult Ultimate Frisbee team and Freeburgh, whose brother will be leaving the LSU ultimate team, will pick up the tradition by trying out for the A team.

They said the coaching staff, Michael Aguilar and Thomas Echols and Taylor Messenger, taught them that Ultimate Frisbee will not only make them better athletes, but better people.

“This year we had some ups and downs and a few losses. But our coaches were there saying, ‘We’re not done yet, keep going,’” said Freeburgh.

“I learned not to be a player for myself but a player for the team, to be a servant leader for the team,” said Reviere.
Olivia Gulino, the new associate director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office of the Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Baton Rouge brings much work, leadership and volunteer experience to the diocese.

A Baton Rouge native, Gulino, the daughter of Glen and Staci Gulino, attended St. Jude the Apostle School in Baton Rouge before attending St. Joseph’s Academy, where she was a National Merit Scholarship finalist and received an honors diploma. She went on to the University of Dallas, where she graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy. While there, she served as an orientation leader coordinator and was a staff reporter for The University News. During her summer breaks, she worked for an industrial contractor in Baton Rouge where she expedited a major archiving project of more than 10,000 documents, migrating physical documents to digital formats. She also created a new online program for testing field skills and instructed department heads on its use and implementation.

She has also shared her faith and skills with Catholic Community Radio in Baton Rouge, writing and recording advertising spots, editing and uploading audio files into databases and maintaining audio archives for each of the station’s weekly programs. This past May, Gulino graduated summa cum laude from Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology in New Orleans with a masters of arts degree in theological studies, with a concentration in moral theology.

Gulino said it is good to be back in the Baton Rouge area. “I was excited to be using her skills to help develop the faith lives of young Catholics. “It’s great knowing the fruit, the possibilities, that come from youth ministry,” said Gulino. “It’s great knowing I have been given the chance to use my education and experience to help the ministry grow.”

Dina Dow, director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, expressed her enthusiasm about the gifts Gulino brings to youth and young adult ministry. “We joyfully welcome Olivia to our team. Her strengths include solid faith formation, compassion for youth and young adults and a zeal for evangelization,” Dow said. “She simply wants others to encounter Jesus Christ and become living disciples. We ask for your prayers as we strive to continue the work of evangelization and catechesis through youth and young adult ministry. May our efforts be filled with the joy of the Gospel, led by the Holy Spirit and centered on Christ for the glory of God.”

Gulino named youth director

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Olivia Gulino

[Image]

YOUTH BRIEFS

SJA students bring home the silver medal

St. Joseph’s Academy seniors Abby Shortess and Isabel Grandy brought home silver medals from the 2017 GENIUS Olympiad, held June 12 – 17 at the State University of New York at Oswego. This international high school project competition draws approximately 1,200 participants each year from all over the world. The competition focuses on environmental issues. GENIUS Olympiad promotes a global understanding of environmental challenges and the achievement of sustainability through research in five disciplines: science, visual and performing arts, business, writing and robotics. Shortess and Grandy won silver medals for their science projects.

SJA students bring home the silver medal

JULY 21, 2017

THE CATHOLIC COMMENTATOR
All Eyez on Me
Summit
Radical politics and the wayward values of hip-hop culture take this sometimes intense but overlong and rarely insightful biography of rapper Tupac Shakur (Demetrius Shipp Jr.) off course. Born into a family of Black Panther activists, Danai Gurira turns in a powerful performance as his mother, Afeni. The future singer and actor confronts the challenges of an inner-city childhood before gaining stardom. Structured around an interview with a fictional journalist (Hill Harper) during a real stint in prison, the retrospective takes in Shakur’s lifelong friendship with Jada Pinkett (Kat Graham), his partnership with r&b producer Suge Knight (Dominic Santana) and his romance with Quincy Jones’ daughter, Kidada (Annie Ilonzeh). An implicit acceptance of debauchery, rampant materialism, an ambivalent outlook on narcotics and a script laden with obscenities set director Benny Boom’s film at odds with faith-based values. Some violence and gore, strong sexual content, including aberrant behavior, cohabitation and rear and upper female nudity, drug use, about a dozen profanities, relentless rough and crude language. O; R

Transformers: The Last Knight
Paramount
Ponderous sci-fi action flick in which a small-time inventor (Mark Wahlberg) tries to save Earth from being destroyed in a collision with the home planet of a race of shape-shifting robots. Director Michael Bay’s film finds the evil sorceress (Gemma Chan) who created the automatons scheming to revive their dying orb by desecrating burials. The sinkhole of a plot drags in King Arthur (Liam Garrigan), the biblical apocalypse, an English professor (Laura Haddock) in a present-day Oxford and a loopy historian (Anthony Hopkins) who explains all the connections in detail but unconvincingly. A steady stream of swearing makes this long, loud and dumb production, the fifth franchise entry for a series based on a line of Hasbro toys, inappropriate for those under 17 (Kevin Spacey). As he works with a variety of lowlifes (most prominently Jon Hamm, Eiza Gonzalez and Jamie Foxx) to pull off the heists, the better part of his nature is expressed in the care he gives his deaf and ailing foster father (CJ Jones) and in his romance with a sprightly diner waitress (Lily James). Writer-director Edgar Wright earns his paycheck with a film carefully choreographed down to the last gesture, and the basic values in his script are sound. Yet, while the central relationship remains chaste, late plot developments involve a quantity of bloodletting that will seem excessive to many moviegoers. Momentary but intense gore violence along with much gunplay, several uses of profanity, frequent rough and crude language. I; R

Despicable Me 3
Universal
Strong values accompany a weak central plot in this animated comedy, the second direct follow-up to the 2010 original. As the once slightly wicked villain (voice of Steve Carell) who turned thoroughgoing good guy over the course of the first two films tries to thwart an ex-child actor (voice of Trey Parker) whose 1980s TV show was abruptly canceled from wreaking delayed vengeance by destroying Hollywood, he also discovers that he has a brother (also voiced by Carell) his mother (voice of Julie Andrews) never told him about. The siblings quickly bond, and family life is further celebrated through scenes of the protagonist’s interaction with his supportive wife and crime-fighting partner (voiced by Kristen Wiig) and their shared nurturing of their trio of adopted daughters (voices of Miranda Cosgrove, Dana Gaier and Naveen K batter). Though jokes riffing on Reagan-era fads and fashions generally fall flat, the pixilated minions (voiced by director Pierre Coffin) who once carried out the main character’s bidding – and who featured in their own 2015 film – are on hand to get things back on track. Characters in peril, brief partial nudity played for laughs, mild scatological and anatomical humor, a couple of vaguely crass slang terms. A-II; PG

Spider-Man: Homecoming
Columbia
Vibrant comic-book adaptation follows the double life of seemingly ordinary high school student Peter Parker (Tom Holland) as he struggles to keep his extra-curricular crime-fighting activities as Spider-Man concealed from his easy-to-read mind, Aunt May (Marisa Tomei). In this reboot for the franchise, industrialist Tony Stark, aka Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.), makes Peter his protege, and tries to keep him focused on thwarting petty misdemeanors. But Peter, who yearns to secure a place among the elite Avengers, finds an irresistible target when he stumbles across the dangerous schemes of a mechanically winged villain Adrian Toomes, aka the Vulture (Michael Keaton), Director and co-writer Jon Watts crafts a lively and satisfying action adventure, showcasing both loyal friendship (Jacob Batalon plays Peter’s best pal) and restrained romance (Laura Harrier portrays the schoolmate for whom he pines). Yet, while the combat is kept virtually off-limits for the many youngsters who would otherwise likely enjoy it, possibly acceptable for older adolescents. Much stylized violence, including gunplay and a beating, a single gruesome image, brief sexual humor, a couple of mild oaths, two implied but unspoken rough terms, a few crude and several crass expressions, an obscene gesture. A-III; PG-13

Baby Driver
TriStar
Stylish, high-octane crime drama in which an otherwise decent young man (Ansel Elgort) is forced to serve as the getaway driver in a series of bank robberies in order to pay off his debt to a callous mobster (Kevin Spacey). As he works with a variety of lowlifes (most prominently Jon Hamm, Eiza Gonzalez and Jamie Foxx) to pull off the heists, the better part of his nature is expressed in the care he gives his deaf and ailing foster father (CJ Jones) and in his romance with a brightly-dining waitress (Lily James). Writer-director Edgar Wright earns his paycheck with a film carefully choreographed down to the last gesture, and the basic values in his script are sound. Yet, while the central relationship remains chaste, late plot developments involve a quantity of bloodletting that will seem excessive to many moviegoers. Momentary but intense gore violence along with much gunplay, several uses of profanity, frequent rough and crude language. I; R

The House
Warner Bro.
Dim-witted, cash strapped parents (Will Ferrell, Amy Poehler) of a college-age daughter (Ryan Simpkins) team with a friend (Jason Mantzoukas) to start an illegal casino in his house so they can pay for her tuition. But their scheme spirals down into a series of bad decisions and gruesome events. Director Andrew Jay Cohen, who co-wrote the screenplay with Brendan O’Brien, has produced a sloppily, illogically, cringe-inducing time-waster. A lengthy gory sequence, frequent rough and crude language. O; R

New Series

TRUTH & LIES

TRUTH & LIES explores the lies promulgated by secular society and the Truth found in Jesus Christ. The series hits upon the pressing issues of today, including abortion, marriage, chastity, co-habitation, faith and science, and so much more! Join host John-Henry Westen as he speaks with guests and experts in exploring various topics relevant to your life and community.

Sun. 11p, Tue. 7:30a
Thur. 1:30p, Fri. 7p
Sat. 3p

MOVIE REVIEWS

USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classifications:
A-I – General patronage
A-II – Adults and adolescents
A-III – Adults
A-IV – Adults, with reservations
L – Limited adult audience
O – Morally offensive
Q-and-A on the Vatican’s recent instruction on bread, wine for Communion

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The Vatican recently published a circular letter, “On the bread and wine for the Eucharist,” sent to diocesan bishops at the request of Pope Francis. Dated June 15 – the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ – the letter was made public by the Vatican July 8.

Because bread and wine for the Eucharist are no longer supplied just by religious communities, but “are also sold in supermarkets and other stores and even over the internet,” bishops should set up guidelines, an oversight body and/or even a form of certification to help “remove any doubt about the validity of the matter for the Eucharist,” the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments said.

In response to the Vatican statement, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Secretariat of Divine Worship has answered some of these frequently asked questions.

Q: Why is the Vatican worried about what makes up a Communion host? Doesn’t it have more important things to focus on?

A: To say that the Eucharist is important to Catholics is an understatement; the bishops at the Second Vatican Council referred to it as the “source of and summit of the Christian life.” On the night before he died, Jesus considered it important enough to spend time with his apostles at the Last Supper, telling them to continue to celebrate the Eucharist, instructing them to “do this in memory of me.” So the Vatican is naturally interested in making sure that this instruction is carried out properly, and this requires not only a priest who says the correct words, but also the use of the correct material. Therefore, the Catholic Church has strict requirements for the bread and wine used at Mass.

Q: Has the validity of the materials used for the Eucharist been a problem in the United States?

A: Grape juice is not allowed for the Catholic Mass, but the use of “mustum” can be permitted. Mustum is a kind of wine that has an extremely low alcohol content. It’s made by beginning the fermentation process in grape juice, but then suspending the process such that the alcohol content generally remains below 1 percent, far lower than the levels found in most table wines.

Q: I understand other faiths have gluten-free requirements for Mass – would even fall into that category. The amount of gluten present in low-gluten hosts is considered safe for the vast majority of people with gluten-related health difficulties.

Q: For someone who does not want any exposure to gluten, the church says that Communion may be received under the species of wine alone. What happens if a diocese does not offer Communion under both species?

A: Parishes are more than willing to make special arrangements to assist people who need to receive the Precious Blood instead of the host for medical reasons, even if the parish doesn’t normally offer Communion under both kinds. It can take a little advanced planning to organize the procedures, but pastors are happy to do this. If for some reason a person in this situation runs into difficulties at the parish level, he or she should contact the bishop’s office for assistance.

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Q: Someone who suffers in this way should talk to his or her pastor. Naturally, if someone arrives with this kind of request at the last second before Mass is set to begin, the pastor might not be able to accommodate his or her needs. But if someone reaches out in a reasonable manner, pastors are happy to help. Again, if someone runs into difficulties in this regard, he or she should contact the bishop’s office for assistance. One of the greatest duties and privileges of bishops and priests is making the Eucharist available to the Catholic faithful, and they do their best to make this possible.

ACROSS
1 “He is seated at the right ___ of the Father”
2 Samson capital
9 “To do this is forbidden by the seventh commandment”
14 Neiman Nastase
15 Bugs
16 Madrid museum (with “el”)
17 Gone by
18 Car with removable panels
19 Relaxes
20 Author of Ecclesiastes (with “The”)
21 They fed Elijah (1 Kings 17:2–4)
23 15th letter of the Greek alphabet
24 “For our ___ he was crucified…”
25 Chicken Little, for one
26 “…sittin’ in a tree ___”
30 Dose amt.
33 Thorough view
36 Musical group
37 7 in front
39 NT epistle
40 Australian acacia
41 Congee
42 Spanish rice dish
44 Proof ending
45 Pew attachment
47 Maximum (abbr.)
49 Obscene
50 The feast day of St. Teresa of Avila is in this month
54 An epistle
57 Imaginative
58 Look for
59 Nas. officer
60 Summer drinks
61 Italian composer
62 Tied, as a score
64 Liturgical season
65 Ford flop
67 Land of Sts. Brendan and Brigid
68 Former JFK arrivals

DOWN
1 Augustine was bishop here
2 Fright
3 Japanese-American
4 Diogenes
5 Saint of Padua
6 Saucer for the Eucharist
7 Composer Stravinsky
8 Cleopatra’s demise
9 Talks
10 Grotesque likeness
11 Relation
12 Capital of Yemen
13 Setback cause
21 Statement of belief
22 Altar balustrade
24 Place of the ___ (Mt 27:33)
27 The Garden of Eden might have been in this modern-day state
28 Moses was floated down this river in a basket
29 A gift of the wise men
30 Short nail
31 Keep away from
32 Paris pop
33 americangreetings.com product
35 One of them?
38 This archdiocese is found in South Australia
40 Paul was shipwrecked here
42 They fill the church
43 Alfalfa
46 Legume
48 Sums
50 Group of religious
51 Waits
52 Incident
53 Reposes
54 Talk irrationally
55 Had bills to pay
56 Fourth of eight, now
57 906, in the Roman Empire
59 Gentleman’s grade

Solution on page 18

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Grandparents’ day on July 26?

I think that we should celebrate a Grandparent’s Day on July 26. In May we celebrate Mother’s Day, in June Father’s Day, but grandparents do not have a yearly day to celebrate. How many times have I been told by grandparents how wonderful it is to have grandchildren. You must have heard the same thing, even expressed the same way: “Shucks, I wish we could have grandchildren. You must have grandchildren. You must have grandchildren.” The first seems to be an awful lot of work and some heartache too. Children are adorable as infants, cute when they are young, but they do become teenagers. Then they tell their parents how much they hate them for holding them accountable for things like their behavior, schoolwork and grades, spending of money, breaking of curfews, etc.

But grandparenthood, ahhh, that’s a special pleasure. How would a Catholic priest know? Well, I am a great uncle. How would a Catholic priest know? Well, I am a great uncle. I couldn’t miss being one with 22 nieces and nephews, 11 of each. And every time one of them has a newborn, my cell phone goes berserk with text messages. Every one of my seven sisters and my sister-in-law can’t stop sending texts with congrats, oohs and ahhs about pictures, anecdotes about when they had babies, and of course, prayers and best wishes. While I am pleased and grateful for the new baby and the joy it brings to everyone in the family, my biggest prayer is that I will not forget to silence my cell phone while celebrating Mass when one of these texting eruptions occurs.

Christmas cards are another indication of the great joy and importance of grandchildren. As I type this, I only have to look to the right wall of my home office to see my bookcase completely covered by Christmas cards composed of photos of grandchildren and their grandchildren. Some have the grandparents, parents and grandchildren, others, just the grandparents and grandchildren, and some just the grandchildren with the grandparents’ names embossed as the senders. There is a lot of love and pride on that wall. So, we really should have a national Grandparent’s Day. Why on July 26? Well, that is the feast day of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the grandparents of Jesus. We know for certain that Jesus had grandparents. As to their real names, sacred Scripture doesn’t give us any clues. However, 2,000 years ago we can be sure that grandparents were important and greatly revered. There must have been stories about Mary’s parents because there are traditions about not only their names but even their whereabouts when Jesus was a boy.

The Gospels in the Bible only tell us of one episode in the boyhood of Jesus. That is when he was discovered lost by his parents when they were returning home to Nazareth from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. St. Luke’s Gospel (2:41-52) says that he was 12 years old when he stayed behind in Jerusalem as his parents began their journey home, thinking he was in the caravan with their relatives and acquaintances. They looked for him three days before finding him in the temple “sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.” Jesus may have been familiar with Jerusalem for another reason. There is a story, a tradition, not in the New Testament, that at some point, Jesus’ grandparents, given the names Joachim and Anne, had a house in Jerusalem. It was near the pool of Bethesda, where Jesus later in his public ministry would heal a man who had been ill for 38 years. Today on that site there is a religious house owned by a missionary order named Les Missionnaires d’Afrique (Missionaries of Africa), also called “The White Fathers” because of their white habits. One of them, Father Jacques Seynave, taught Scripture at LSU for a number of years and accompanied me and my parishioners from St. Thomas More Parish in Baton Rouge on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1993. The White Fathers treated us to wine and cheese and showed us the excavated columns that had formed the five porticoes around the Pool of Bethesda and told us the legend of the house of Joachim and Anne.

Raising children in today’s world is not easy. Families can experience many hardships and tragedies. Divorce is sadly prevalent. But grandchildren are proof that it is all worth it. Grandparents deserve their day of recognition and celebration.

Another Perspective
Father John Carville

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor should be typed and limited to 350 words and should contain the name and address of the writer, though the address will not be printed. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Send to: Letters to the Editor, The Catholic Commentator, P.O. Box 3216, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3316, or to tcc@diobr.org.

Mission Statement

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

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PRAY FOR US

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

July 24
Rev. Joel Kandulna
Dcn. Michael A. Agnello
Br. Harold Harris SC

July 25
Rev. Johnson Kuriappilly
Dcn. Frank E. Bains
Sr. Geraldine Riendeau CSJ
Rev. J. Joel Labauve
Dcn. Thomas D. Benoit
Br. Ronald Hingle SC
Dcn. Mark T. Berard
Sr. Brendan Mary Ronayne

FMOL
Dcn. Charles R. Landry
Dcn. Willie M. Berthelot Sr.
Br. Noel Lemmon SC
Rev. Keun-Soo Lee
Dcn. William B. Blair Jr.
Sr. Guadalupe Rosales HMSS
Rev. C. Todd Lloyd
Dcn. Daniel S. Borné

July 30
Br. Roger Lemoyne SC
Rev. Matthew P. Lorrain
Sr. Eileen Rowe FMOL
August 1
Rev. P. Brent Maher
Dcn. Eugene F. Brady
Br. Malcolm Melcher SC
Rev. August 2
Cayet N. Mangiaracina OP
Dcn. Jerry W. Braud
Sr. Cynthia Sabathier CSJ
Rev. August 3
Samuel C. Maranto CSsR
Dcn. Stephen G. Brunet
Br. Paul Montero SC
Rev. August 4
Robert G. Marcell
Dcn. Barry G. Campeaux
Sr. Anna Schellhass CSJ
Rev. August 5
Edwin J. Martin
Dcn. Michael T. Chiappetta
Br. Marcus Turcotte SC
Rev. August 6
Geraldine Harris SC
Dcn. Randall A. Clement

P.S. The evening before I left on vacation, a friend informed me that the all-knowing eye of Google had spied an error in the above column, a big one – America already has a Grandparents Day. In 1978 President Jimmy Carter established it on the Sunday after Labor Day. I had already submitted the column to my editor, and I considered pulling it, but then told myself no for the following reasons:
1) Hardly anyone seems to remember this presidential act. Even the greeting card people don’t seem to really promote it.
2) We Catholics, and some other Christians who agree with us on the theological question of praying to friends in heaven, also known as saints, enjoy doing so on specific feast days that celebrate their life and holiness.
3) I had far too much fun writing this column not to share it.
Understanding grace more deeply

The mark of genuine contrition is not a sense of guilt, but a sense of sorrow, of regret for having taken a wrong turn; just as the mark of living in grace is not a sense of our own worth but a sense of being accepted and loved despite our unworthiness. We are spiritually healthy when our lives are marked by honest confession and honest praise.

Jean-Luc Marion highlights this in a commentary on St. Augustine's famous “Confessions.” He sees St. Augustine's confession as a work of a true moral conscience because it is both a confession of praise and a confession of sin. Gil Bailie suggests that this comment underlines an important criterion by which to judge whether or not we are living in grace: “If the confession of praise is not accompanied by the confession of sin it is an empty and pompous gesture. If the confession of sins is not accompanied by a confession of praise, it is equally vacuous and barren, the stuff of trashy magazines and tabloid newspapers, a self-preening parody of repentance.”

Bailie is right, but doing both confessions at one and the same time is not an easy task. We generally find ourselves falling into either a confession of praise where there is no real confession of our own sin; or into the “self-preening parody of repentance” of a still self-absorbed convert, where our confession rings hollow because it shows itself more as a badge of sophisticated than as genuine sorrow for having strayed.

In neither case is there a true sense of grace. Piet Franzen, whose masterful book on grace served as a textbook in seminars and theology schools for a generation, submits that neither the self-confident believer (who still secretly envies the pleasures of the amoral that he's missing out on) nor the wayward person who converts but still feels grateful for his fling, has yet understood grace. We understand grace only when we grasp existentially what’s inside the father’s words to his older son in the parable of the prodigal son: “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”

The older brother would not be better off if he understood that everything his father owns is already his, just as he would not be envious of the pleasures his wayward brother tasted if he understood that, in real life, his brother had been dead. But it takes a deeper grasp of what grace is to intuit that, namely, to grasp that life inside God's house dwarfs all other pleasures. The same is true for the convert who has given up his wayward life but still secretly rejoices in the experience and sophistication it brought him and nurses a condescending pity for the less-experienced. He too has not yet really understood grace.

In his book, “The Idea of the Holy,” now considered a classic, Rudolf Otto submits that in the presence of the holy we will always have a double reaction: fear and attraction. Like St. Peter at the transfiguration, we will want to build a tent and stay there forever; but, like him too before the miraculous catch of fish, we will also want to say: “Depart from me for I am a sinful man.” In the presence of the holy, we want to burst forth in praise even as we want to confess our sins.

That insight can help us to understand grace. Piet Franzen begins his signature book on grace, “The New Life of Grace,” by asking us to imagine this scene: Picture a man who lives his life in mindless hedonism. He simply drinks in the sensual pleasures of this world without a thought for God, responsibility or morality. Then, after a long life of illicit pleasure, he has a genuine deathbed conversion, sincerely confesses his sins, receives the sacraments of the church and dies in that happy state. If our spontaneous reaction to this story is: “Well, the lucky fellow! He had fling and still made it in the end!” we have not yet understood grace but instead are still embittered moralizers standing like the older brother in need of a further conversation with our God.

And the same holds true too for the convert who still feels that what he's experienced in his waywardness, his fling, is a deeper joy than the one known by those who have not strayed. In this case, he's come back to his father's house not because he senses a deeper joy there but because he deems his return an unwanted duty, less exciting, less interesting and less joy-filled than a sinful life, but a necessary moral exit strategy. He too has yet to understand grace.

Only when we understand what the father of the prodigal son means when he says to the older brother: “Everything I have is yours,” will we offer both a confession of praise and a confession of sin.

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 through his website www. ronrolheiser.com; Facebook www. facebook.com/ronrolheiser

Caring for the elderly

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ather's Day has come and gone. Was it a pleasant experience? Have you ever tried to take a grandparent out to a nice restaurant, only to meet strong resistance? “I don’t want to go out!”

You may find yourself reacting inwardly: “How ungrateful can you be?”

It’s human for you to react that way. Brush off their abruptness as the new normal, and try to understand their way of thinking. Here’s the first rule: avoid dropping-in without calling first. Always ask what he or she wants before you present your idea for a fun day. Never press your plan. Accept their wishes peacefully.

Accepting the elderly as they are, is a good start. Stay calm. If you’re dealing with a severe case of second-childhood, be firm. You are now the parent, so insist on their good behavior. Everyone has the same obligation to be as charitable as possible. They must learn patience, and you must remain in charge.

This is all easier said than done, but it’s basically common sense. I learned a lot about caring for the elderly when I was 25. I got a job in a New York City hospital, Elmhurst General, and worked as a nurse’s aide. They didn’t know that I was a seminarian. I was on a summer break doing this as part of my preparation for the priesthood.

The office assigned me to the male geriatric unit, and there, I experienced elderly patients who were nice most of the time, but also demanding and mischievous. They all hated losing control, and could become obnoxious at times, creating problems for the staff.

Frustration is a part of the human condition. We all try to stay calm, but to err is human. I'm writing this column with the hope that I can be of some help in explaining why the elderly can become irascible for what you might think is a very petty reason.

People who once had authority in business, the military, education, home-making, who gradually begin losing their hearing, their memory, and their power to come and go as they please, often become contrary and irksome. The key to dealing with them is heroic patience. Put on the will to eat humble pie. They all want to be independent, but they know they can’t be.

I’m 86 years young at this writing, and I have observed my own changing moods and attitudes over the years. At this age, I can become needlessly impatient over insignificant things that never bothered me. I call this stage of life: the disintegration process. Others refer to it as “aging.” It can be both pleasant and difficult at the same time.

Pleasant because it’s God’s will, and it’s a normal part of life. And difficult because it’s not your will, and it doesn’t feel normal.

To all you super-senior citizens, whom I love dearly, I say: pray for the grace to be grateful in all circumstances. No one’s perfect so you’ll find there will be times when you’ll want to scream with indignation. Count to 10, and pray for the strength to be nice. Remember, with God, all things are possible.

May the Lord be your strength and your joy.
COMING EVENTS

Roaryville Retreat – Susan Rush will present a lectio divina and centering prayer retreat, “Embracing Oneness – Renewing Our Contemplative Life,” Friday, Aug. 4 – Wednesday, Aug. 9, at Rosaryville Spirit Life Center, 39003 Rosaryville Road, Ponchatoula. For information, call Vivien Michals at 904-944-4000 or email vivemi- chals@gmail.com.

Divorce Healing Program – The Divorce Healing Program of St. Alphonsus Church, 14040 Greenwell Springs Road, Greenwell Springs, will meet beginning Tuesday, Aug. 8, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., at St. Francis Room C of the church. There is a $20 one-time registration fee. For a complete schedule, visit alphonsus.org. For more information, call 225-261-4650.

Charismatic Jubilee Celebration – Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the Diocese of Baton Rouge will hold a “Jubilee Celebration” Saturday, Aug. 12, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., at the Our Lady of Mercy Parish Activity Center, 445 Marquette Ave., Baton Rouge. Bishop Sam Jacob and Andi Oney will be the guest speakers. Luncheon is provided and no registration is required. For more information, call 225-636-2464.

Summer Leisure Learning – A Summer Leisure Learning Program, “Relativism,” will be held Thursdays, July 27 and Aug. 3, in the Faith Formation Center at Immaculate Conception Church, 865 Hatchell Springs, Denham Springs. For more information, call 225-665-5359.

Supper and Substance – The second annual diocesan wide Supper and Substance, “The Ultimate Married Couples Date Night” will be held Saturday, July 29 at St. George Church, 7808 St. George Dr., Baton Rouge. Doors will open at 6 p.m. Jan and Lloyd Tate will speak on, “What I Wish I Knew Before I Got Married.” There will also be dinner and dancing. Cost is $75 per couple. Register at mfdidioh.org. For more information, email bfrroeba@gmail.com.

Mass honoring God the Father – Msgr. Robert Berggreen, pastor of St. Mary of False River Church in New Roads, will celebrate a Mass honoring “God the Father of All Time” Monday, Aug. 7 at St. Agnes Church, 749 East Blvd., Baton Rouge. Confessions will be held at 5:30 p.m. and Mass will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call 225-383-4127.

Retrouvaille – Married couples experiencing relational problems, difficulties or crises are invited to attend the next “Retrouvaille Weekend,” Friday, Sept. 8 – Sunday, Sept. 10 at the Bishop Robert E. Tracy Center, 1800 S. Acadian Thwy., Baton Rouge. For more information or registration, call Randall and Robin Bellard at 225-271-4092 or visit helpourmarriage.com.

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, Aug. 13, 1:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Mercy Parish Activity Center in St. Gabriel’s Room, 444 Marquette Ave., Baton Rouge. For more information, call 225-343-3181 or 225-803-3391, or email robertrwhite456@att.net.

STM Bible Study – St. Thomas More Church, 11441 Goodwood Blvd, Baton Rouge, will hold a Bible study focusing on the Book of James, “James: Pearls for Wise Living,” on Mondays, 6:30 p.m., and Tuesday, Aug. 22, 9:30 a.m., through Monday, Nov. 13 and Tuesday, Nov. 14. For more information, call Sarah Neau at 225-275-3940 or email sarah@stmchurch.org.
finding a substitute for weekend Masses when there is an emergency need to do so. If a priest has difficulty finding help on his own, he can now call Fr. Paul Yi, Chancellor, for assistance.

2. Parish-to-Parish Tithing

The category of "extraordinary income" (income to a parish that is taxable to the diocese) has been broadened to include "any income received by a parish from another parish." Toward the goal of greater financial collaboration, Bishop Muench immediately approved this recommendation in March of 2016.

3. Mentoring Programs for Priests

Programs to assist newly ordained priests and foreign-born priests have been reorganized and are being coordinated by Fathers Jason Palermo and Michael Allelo.

4. Formation of the Pastoral Support Team

During the summer of 2016 the diocese established what is known as the Parish Pastoral Support Committee. This Committee consists of 25 to 30 volunteers from throughout the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Trained by SSA Consultants of Baton Rouge, the purpose of the Committee is to assist parishes, priests, and parish leadership in discerning the best structural and pastoral ministry model for their particular community, given the fewer number of priests available and changing demographics in their area. The Committee is divided into smaller Parish Resource Teams, each consisting of 3 to 5 members. Each team is connected with a particular pastor and parish or group of parishes and guides them through a process of gathering input and seeking consensus regarding possible structural changes. Each Team enters into the process with a clearly stated goal and a process that is clearly outlined in the Parish Pastoral Support Committee Resource Guidebook.

5. Diocesan-Wide Reduction of Masses Where Appropriate

Based on the Task Force recommendation to reduce the number of Masses offered by a parish or group of parishes, due to the decreasing number of priests, the Pastoral Support Team (mentioned in #4 above) has completed work in 6 areas of the diocese. Clergy and parish leadership were led through a process toward the goal of developing a 1 priest Mass schedule in the following areas of our diocese:

- The Parishes of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in White Castle, St. Joan of Arc in Bayou Pigeon, and St. Catherine Chapel in Bayou Sorrel
- The Parishes of Our Lady of Prompt Succor and St. Thomas More in Baton Rouge

6. The Shared Pastorate of Sacred Heart Parish in Gramercy; St. Joseph Parish in Paulina, and St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Convent

There are 2 priests currently serving these 3 church parishes. In December of 2016, these 3 churches reduced their total number of weekend Masses from 8 to 6, thereby establishing a schedule that is reasonable for 2 priests. In light of this change, the Task Force has recommend-


There are 2 priests currently serving these 3 church parishes. It is probable that in the near future, only 1 priest will be available for service in this configuration. Therefore, effective July 1, 2017, these 3 church parishes will implement a collaborative schedule of Masses and ministry expectations reflective of a 1 priest model. The total number of weekend Masses will be reduced from 6 to 4. At present, these 3 churches will retain the service of 2 full time priests.

8. The Shared Pastorate of the Parishes of St. Joseph in Grosse Tete, Our Lady of Prompt Succor in White Castle, and St. Francis Xavier Cabrini in Livonia, and St. Catherine Chapel in Fordoche

There are 2 priests currently serving these 3 church parishes. It is probable that in the near future, only 1 priest will be available for service in this configuration. Therefore, effective July 1, 2017, these 3 church parishes will implement a collaborative schedule of Masses and ministry expectations reflective of a 1 priest model. The total number of weekend Masses will be reduced from 6 to 4. Masses will only be celebrated in these churches if that number of priests is available. Mass will no longer be celebrated at St. Catherine Chapel in Fordoche. At present, these 3 churches will retain the service of 2 full time priests.

9. The Shared Pastorate of St. Anne Parish in Napoleonville, St. Philomena Parish in Labadieville, and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Plattenville

These 3 church parishes are currently being served by 2 priests, namely 1 pastor and 1 parochial vicar (associate pastor). Toward the goal of further collaboration between the churches along Bayou Lafourche, and given the very real possibility that this will eventually become a 1 priest configuration, a new Mass schedule will be implemented effective July 1, 2017, reducing the total number of Masses between these 3 church parishes from 7 to 4. At present, these 3 churches will retain the service of 2 full time priests. Due to changing demographics in the area, and due to the lack of financial viability on the part of St. Louis King of France Parish effective July 1, 2017, the 2 church parishes will become a "shared pastor model." Simply put, this means that the 2 churches will be served by 1 pastor. A parochial vicar (associate pastor) has been appointed to serve as a "shared pastor." It is also recommended by the Task Force that St. Louis King of France Parish cease to function and exist as a parish of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and amalgamated with St. Thomas More Parish no later than June 30, 2018.

10. The Parishes of St. Louis King of France and St. Thomas More in Baton Rouge

These 2 church parishes have been served by 3 priests total with St. Louis King of France being served by 1 full time priest and St. Thomas More being served by 2 full time priests. Due to changing demographics in the area, and due to the lack of financial viability on the part of St. Louis King of France Parish effective July 1, 2017, the 2 church parishes will become a "shared pastor model." Simply put, this means that the 2 churches will be served by 1 pastor. A parochial vicar (associate pastor) has been appointed to serve as a "shared pastor." It is also recommended by the Task Force that St. Louis King of France Parish cease to function and exist as a parish of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and amalgamated with St. Thomas More Parish no later than June 30, 2018.

11. The Parishes of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in White Castle, St. Joan of Arc in Bayou Pigeon, and St. Catherine Chapel in Bayou Sorrel

In completing the remaining summer assignments of priests, our diocese is lacking the number of pastor and associate pastors to fill certain positions. One of these is the position of pastor of the shared pasture of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in White Castle, St. Joan of Arc in Bayou Pigeon, and St. Catherine Chapel in Bayou Sorrel. This reality, along with an extremely low number of parishioners attending Masses at these churches, has left us with the need to make some immediate adjust-ments to the Mass schedules. Effective on the weekend of July 29-30, 2017, the number of Masses celebrated at these 3 sites will be reduced to 2 – 1 Mass on the weekend at Our Lady of Prompt Succor and 1 per weekend at St. Joan of Arc. No weekend Masses will be celebrated at St. Catherine Chapel. Bishop Muench has also asked The Task Force to begin discussion of a long term plan for these sites.

12. Formation of the Auxiliary Pastoral Planning Committee

In order to ensure that all protocol is followed when there is a significant change in the status of a parish or parishes, Bishop Muench asked for the creation of the Auxiliary Pastoral Planning Committee (commonly now referred to as the “A.P.P.”). This committee is a subcommittee of the Pastoral Planning Task Force. The purpose of the committee is to ensure that all necessary canonical and civil protocols are followed and that personnel and property issues are properly addressed during such a change. The committee includes the Chair of the Pastoral Planning Task Force and representatives in the areas of canon law, civil law, diocesan finances, and diocesan human resources.

13. Suppression of St. Pius X Parish

In March of 2017, Bishop Muench, after consultation with the pastor and lay leadership of St. Pius X Parish, the Presbyteral Council, and the Auxiliary Pastoral Planning Committee, recommended to the Bishop that St. Pius X Parish be suppressed on July 1, 2017. Following the Bishop having completed all steps required by canon law, accepted the Task Force's recommendation to formally suppress the civilly-incorporated ecclesiastical parish of St. Pius X in Baton Rouge effective on 31 May 2017. In doing so, he also transferred its community, territory, archives, and any and all ecclesiastical property to the Diocese of St. Isidore the Farmer Roman Catholic Church in Baton Rouge (Baker).

14. The Chapels of St. Jude in Greensburg and St. Elizabeth in Kentwood

At the request of the local pastor of St. Helena Parish in Amite, and after consultation with the Task Force, Bishop Muench has accepted the formal request to “relegate the Churches of St. Jude in Greensburg and St. Elizabeth in Kentwood to Propane but not Sordid Use and to Alienate Said Churches.” No regularly scheduled Masses have been celebrated at these sites since 2014, and most parishioners who live near St. Jude and St. Elizabeth attend Sunday Mass at St. Helena in Amite. Financially, neither chapel can sustain its own existence. The upkeep, maintenance, and insurance required for the buildings is disproportionate to the use of the buildings to the detriment of St. Helena Parish. The Parish/Finance Council of St. Helena Parish has also endorsed this recommendation. On Tuesday June 20, in keeping with canonical protocol, this recommendation was brought before the Presbyteral Council, who in turn proposed it to the Bishop for his acceptance.
SHROUD ▼
From page 1

depiction of the crucifixion, you see the actual wounds.”

Based on that experience, Father Palermo developed a
vision of educating others, wanting people to under-
stand Christ “endured a great deal of pain and suffer-
ing and at times we have to deprive ourselves of certain
things” and the freedom that comes with the sacrifice.

Reinforcement of his vision came in 2016 when a
youth group from St. Joseph Church and St. Stephen
the Martyr Church stopped at the Shrine of the Blessed
Sacrament in Hanoverville, Alabama on a youth trip that
would ultimately take them to Gatlinburg, Tennessee.
Father Palermo said while exploring the shrine, he not-
ticed the Poor Clare nuns had ac-
quired a replica of the shroud.

He spent a few moments explain-
ing Jesus’ wounds to the youth, who
appeared to be engrossed and asked
many questions.

“You could tell that the Holy Spirit
was working today,” Father Palermo
said. “They kept starting at it and
gave it their undivided attention.

“I left there determined that we
would get our own copy.”

Through extensive research, Fa-
er Palermo learned the Shroud of
Turin Education and Research As-
sociation in Colorado offered digital
photographic copies of the original
shroud. The order was placed in Fe-
bruary, with the expectation of unveil-
ing the shroud at the beginning of
Lent.

Although that plan would be delayed because of on-
going flood recovery among parishioners, the unveiling
came, perhaps fittingly, on Palm Sunday.

“When the lights came on during the Gloria, people
didn’t really notice the shroud images at first, but I could
see some of them looking at them in the side alove of the
curch with puzzled and curious looks on their faces,”
Father Palermo said.

He incorporated the shroud into his Easter homily at
St. Joseph and St. Stephen and the replica traveled to St.
Stephen on the Second Sunday of Easter, when the Di-
vine Mercy was celebrated.

“I think they focused on the Jesus who was
resurrected, and while we focus on that as
well, the thing is we also realize that Christ
suffered for us.”

Father Jason Palermo
St. Joseph Church in French Settlement
and St. Stephen the Martyr in Maurepas

“I think they focused on the
Jesus who was
resurrected, and while we
focus on that as
well, the thing is we
also realize that Christ
suffered for us.”

Palermo said. “It is a tangible teaching tool to help me
in the time of the new evangelization we live, to try to
gauge people where they are of I’ll see it and than I’ll
believe it.’

“They can learn better if they have this tangible relic
from the past.”

Father Palermo has even taken the shroud on the
road, making its debut at a prayer breakfast of the Liv-
ingston Parish Sheriff’s Office. The meeting was the first
since the flood, and Father Palermo was asked to make a
presentation, his second in front of the group.

“When I brought the (shroud) in they had no idea
what this was,” he said, adding that the majority of the
group is non-Catholic but Chris-
tian.

“I think they focused on the
Jesus who was resurrected, and
while we focus on that as well, the thing is we also realize that Christ
suffered for us.”

“Some of us to get to the resurrection you have to under-
stand what Christ endured.

“We all have pain in our lives.

To think what the Romans en-
gineered and what God himself
endured when we go through our
pain helps us understand that
God knows more about it than we
do.”

He said he believes the mes-

"I think they focused on the
Jesus who was
resurrected, and while we
focus on that as
well, the thing is we
also realize that Christ
suffered for us.”

age he was able to get across was
that faith and reason are to be in

communion with each other, and

that scientific tests being performed today only prove
what “we already know from faith and what Scripture
tells us.”

His mission is to continue to use the shroud and edu-
cate people about Christ’s suffering because one can
never know the Savior enough. He said there is always
something about Jesus’ life that can be learned.

“The goal here is to also realize it wasn’t just two nail
marks, two feet marks and one in the side,” Father Paler-
mo said. “Jesus was covered top to bottom, front to back
with wounds. God loved me enough to go through that.”

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