Chef Folse experiences healing

By Bonny Van
The Catholic Commentator

When meeting Louisiana chef John Folse, one immediately learns he is a man who believes in his Catholic faith. Watching him walk, one also learns he's a man who believes in miracles. For 20 years, Folse walked with a limp on his left leg, the result of a debilitating injury to the calcaneus, or heel bone, in his left foot.

The incident happened on a Sunday afternoon after spending the day antiquing with his wife Laulie. Folse said she wanted to do a little redecorating, including removing a painting from a spot above a very tall cooking fireplace.

According to Folse, he was several feet high with one foot on the fireplace. Folse, seen in the basement kitchen of Sts. Francisco and Jacinto Marto's home, says he felt the presence of both his mother and the Blessed Mother during his visit to Fatima, especially after seeing the beam of light shining over him in this photo. Photo provided by John Folse

Death penalty lacks mercy

Recently during this legislative session, two leading legislators, one Democrat and one Republican, have sponsored bipartisan legislation to offer a Constitutional Amendment to repeal the death penalty in Louisiana. The Legislature should pass this measure and the governor should sign it.

For years the bishops of Louisiana have spoken and taught in favor of ending the death penalty, and I lend my voice to this clear and consistent position. But in this matter I want to reflect with you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, on this issue with a more personal and spiritual reflection on the death penalty something that has been on my mind arising in my prayer on this public debate about capital punishment. There are many reasons, and good reasons, why the death penalty IS NOT practical, just or fair.

From the Bishop
Bishop Michael G. Duca

Sewing threads to a brighter future

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

A joyful glee brightened the youthful face of “Mary,” her expression testament to her excitement.

For some, an embroidery machine is inconsequential. But for “Mary” (whose real identity is being protected) and two other teen-age girls at Metanoia Manor the machine represents a means of escape from a troublesome past where their innocence has been stripped by the vulgarities of human trafficking.

“My favorite thing is that I can make and save money while I am here,” said “Mary, who has already shown a penchant for making and designing clothes using one of the three sewing machines at Metanoia.

“Maybe in the future I can show others how to do this.”

“I could start a business,” the teenager added, expressing a buoyance and enthusiasm that perhaps a few months ago was entombed deep in the ugly scars of a difficult childhood.

Another girl, her maternal instinct on full display, simply said, “I want to make me and my daughter matching shirts.”

Jean Maughan, Metanoia’s program director whose passion for her job and love of the girls is evident in her every word and boundless energy, said being able to purchase the embroidery machine is “huge, it’s huge.”

She said it will provide the girls (currently there are three girls in the house, all in their late teens) a skill once they leave Metanoia and re-enter society, offering hope for a future where previously there was none.

“My hope is to give them a foundation, that they realize when they leave here there are opportunities,” Maughan added. “They’re such good girls and they are capable of so much but they don’t know it. They’ve never been shown (those opportunities) and they don’t know what is inside of them.

TROOP INSPECTION – Officers inspect cadets participating in the Louisiana Youth Challenge Program at the Gillis Long Center in Carville. The alternative military style education program is considered a “second chance” for youth. To read the story, see page 10. Photo provided by the Louisiana Youth Challenge Program

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As the calendar flips to May, the month of Mary, perhaps it’s appropriate to feature Our Lady of Peace Church in Vacherie, a fixture in the River Parishes since its founding in 1864 during the later stages of the Civil War and Federal occupation. The original church was nearly destroyed by a hurricane but parishioners donated materials for its repair. By 1890, as priests from Vacherie traveled by pirogue to spread the faith among neighboring communities, it was obvious a larger church was needed. The church was completed around 1900. The church is shown circa 1900. Catholic Commentator file photo

**DID YOU KNOW**

**Mystagogy**

In the same way as newlyweds enjoy their honeymoon as husband and wife, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults candidates who came into full communion with the church at the Easter Vigil Mass bask in their new relationship with the church and think and reflect on the meaning of it all.

The newest members of the church, referred to as neophytes from the Greek meaning “newly planted” or “newly converted,” are in a final period of catechesis from Easter Sunday through Pentecost called mystagogy.

The need for ongoing catechesis in the mysteries of Christ and of the Church, a catechesis traditionally known as mystagoga (“initiation into the mysteries”), has been noted in church circles for years.

In his “De Catechizandis Ruditibus” St. Augustine of Hippo developed a catechetical system in the early church to prepare and initiate converts into the church. The catechumenate fell into disrepair during the Middle Ages as the Edict of Milan legalized Christianity and future emperors made it the official religion of the empire, which prompted mass conversions and led to a decreased need for such a system. Also, the rise of infant baptism led to a fall in adult conversions, for which the catechumenate was established.

In response to modern needs and the rise of secularism, the church reintroduced catechumenate under the RCIA, the Second Vatican Council. Mystagogy was then brought to the forefront at that time.

According to the RCIA, “This (mystagogy) is a time for the community and the neophytes (newly baptized) together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the Eucharist and doing the works of charity.”

The neophytes are encouraged to share their Easter joy with and seek support and encouragement from their church family. The church faithful are urged to accompany the neophytes and serve as role models of the faith and the neophytes have a chance to inspire the faithful, leading them to a renewed faith.

The whole neophyte year, in fact, is dedicated to a period of transition in which they continue to learn and become more fully mature in their Catholic worldwide outlook. This is where they learn about Jesus’ call to be a disciple and discern what God is specifically calling them to do as Catholics.

According to Pope Benedict XVI in “Sacramentum Caritatis,” mystagogy is less about “doing” than it is a “transforming” life event.

“The mature fruit of mystagogy is an awareness that one’s life is being progressively transformed by the holy mysteries being celebrated,” wrote Pope Benedict.

The neophytes and rest of the faithful, therefore, should be learning about the deeper mysteries of their faith for the rest of their lives.

All things new

By Dina Dow

Happy Easter, still!

We continue celebrating the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, as the Sunday liturgy enters the Fourth and Fifth Weeks of Easter. The sprinkling of the waters of baptism are a reminder of new life in the resurrected Lord. The power of the Holy Spirit springs forth from the life-giving waters of baptism and thus the church to make all things new through Jesus Christ.

**Light to the Gentiles**

We hear explained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs 1262 and 1266, “Immersion in water symbolizes not only death and purification, but also regeneration and renewal. Thus, the two principal effects (of baptism) are purification from sins and new birth in the Holy Spirit … enabling belief, hope and love of God by faith hope and love; the power to live and act under the promptings of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and growth in goodness through the moral virtues.”

This is precisely the telling in the Acts of the Apostles. St. Paul and St. Barnabas travel north to modern day Turkey to proclaim the good news of Jesus. The leaders of the established synagogues, initially rejected them. Even as disciples facing hardship, they endure.

As a result the two proclaim the message of salvation to the Gentiles, all those who are of non-Jewish faith. The Holy Spirit strengthens St. Paul and St. Barnabus, as they proclaim the message of repentance, faith, hope and love in Jesus. By God’s grace the message was received, as churches were established, led by elders and filled with new followers of Jesus.

How am I a light to the Gentiles? How can I proclaim the reality of salvation in Jesus to unbelievers? Who in my life lacks belief? Am I proclaiming the reality of salvation in Jesus to unbelievers? Who in my life lacks belief? Am I relying on the gifts of the Holy Spirit to go beyond my home and into other places with the message of Easter?

The multitudes

St. John’s visions as written in the Book of Revelation are worth quiet contemplation and prayer. He sees a “great multitude” (Rev. 7:9) of all peoples. The term “multitude” appears 37 times in the Bible, each referring to a sizeable accounting. The diversity in St. John’s vision manifests the inclusion of all “nations” (Mt 28:17) called to the throne of the lamb. The eternal reality of worshipping the one “who makes us new” begins here on earth every time we go to Mass. The heavenly and earthly liturgies join in the celebration of the sacrifice of the lamb, Jesus, who is also the shepherd, guiding the multitude of the faithful to “life-giving waters” (Rev 7:17).

We take on new life, becoming a dwelling place for God as his people. We enter the new covenant with God through Jesus as he takes away sins, destroys death and “makes us new” (Rev 21:5). All will be comforted with the love of God so abundantly that pain, tears, grief, sorrow will pass.

How am I serving the multitudes? Am I aware of those who may be absent from Mass? How have I invited a suffering soul to enter into the community of believers in order to guide them toward the hope, joy and peace only found in Jesus?

**Jesus’ voice**

What is the most recognizable voice heard in a person’s life? A voice recognizable yet unseen? When we were young, we could hear our father calling us to come home from almost a block away. Voice recognition comes with the ability to hear sound and listen with comprehension. If Jesus is who he says he is (the Good Shepherd), then we as his followers (his sheep) ought to be able to hear and listen as he calls us. We must be attuned to hear the voice of God.

Think about a radio. If the station dial is just one point away from the exact frequency, one hears distortion and is unable to understand the words spoken or music playing. It is true as followers of Jesus. We are to maintain just the right frequency in order to follow his voice.

Where is this frequency located? Perhaps (using radio terms) “tune in” to the celebration of the Mass, and “adjust” our lives to root out sin and partake in the sacrament of reconciliation. Then we can “dance to the beat” of the Beatitudes, “turn up the volume” with works of mercy, increase our love of one another, and “plug in” to Catholic media: pod-

SEE GOSPEL PAGE 3

**GOSPEL**

**Light-Giving Faith**

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St. Thomas More launches rebranding campaign

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Tucked away in a popular hamlet in the eastern fringes of Baton Rouge, St. Thomas More Church is often regarded as a hidden gem.

Pastor Father Michael Alello is hoping to put a little polish on that gem, recently launching an ambitious rebranding campaign aimed at unifying the STM church and educational ministries as well as increasing participation in all areas of the parish.

The campaign, which was announced April 27-28 during the weekend Masses and is already visible through yard signs scattered throughout the residential neighborhoods of Broadmoor and Sherwood Forest and city wide via auto decals, comes approximately 18 months after St. Louis King of France Church was merged into STM.

“One of the goals the past two years was how to merge the two parishes,” Father Alello said. “And that really became a theme for us on campus. How do we create one STM and not just one parish?”

Several meetings were held with parishioners and representatives of all of the parish ministries, including the parish council, where the idea of rebranding STM as one entity was born. Working with a Baton Rouge marketing firm, a sleek, contemporary logo was unveiled featuring clean lines, a crucifix and three equal sized pyramids.

“The process was beautiful,” St. Thomas More principal Brian Moscona said. “The marketing people spent hours and hours listening to people talk about this place, history, tradition and aspirations, and what the community wants to be beyond who we are already. They listened to longtime parishioners, founding members of the parish and then they tried to capture the identity in a visual way.”

STM Director of Mission Advancement Greg Brandao explained the triangles are an abstract representation of the STM mission: to guide, to inspire and to serve. The cross represents Christ, who guides STM’s mission and is central to the Catholic faith.

“This direction helps to make the logo multi-purpose, meaning spirit t-shirts. Previously, the preschool, school and church each had individual logos and in some cases different colors.

“So now we are really unified,” Moscona said. “People in our community have really been excited about the positive changes in the past two years. There is an excitement and freshness in what’s happening here, and it’s being captured in a visual way.”

“People are fired up to put a sign in their yard to represent their parish pride,” he added. “To have a fresh, modern and still classy logo with a timeless look is very refreshing for people in this parish. We want people to know they are welcome here, and we want them to be a part of it.”

Father Alello admitted to early struggles after the merging of the parishes was announced but said he is gratified to see the unity coalescing of parishioners. He is most touched by the comments of parishioners who have told him, “I now feel a part of of this community.”

“That is a beautiful statement,” Father Alello said. “And it’s a statement of faith.

“Our community is stronger, more diverse and more energized because of the merger. No doubt. It’s been a beautiful testament that even through difficult times great things have come. It’s the paschal mystery.”

Father Alello called a “huge honor” and privilege and a wonderful opportunity to give them an outstanding education and faith formation.

The rebranding, however, is just the first step in an even more ambitious vision, that could include expansion of the current campus, although those plans are still in the development phase. Father Alello said he recognizes STM is the anchor of a long-established neighborhood and is hoping the positive changes will entice people to move into the area.

“STM is the biggest asset in this part of town, and we are happy about that,” he said. “We are ready to give neighbors the opportunity to grow again, and that is part of the work we are doing here.

“We believe it is the part of town Baton Rouge needs now more than ever.”

A gem with a shine.

Need a Spiritual Director?
Call Fr. Don
636-744-5499

Fr. Kirchner, CSsR has foreign ministry experience, studied in Rome, preached all over U.S., worked in seminaries, with married couples and is a writer.

GOSPEL ▼
from page 2

casts, television and other reliable resources, and which fill our ears with truth. Tune out static noise of the world and tune into the beat of the voice of Jesus. Then perhaps we are able to experience the newness of life in the resurrected Lord, who call us each by name. Happy Easter! Peace.

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

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. (CNS) – People gathered to pray at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Charlotte the day after a student opened fire April 30 in a classroom at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, which killed two people and wounded four others.

“Our hearts are broken, and our security shaken,” said Father Patrick Winslow, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Church during the May 1 daily Mass about the shooting that took place at the campus just across the street.

The Catholic parish of 2,300 families serves the university’s student population through the Catholic campus ministry office of the Charlotte Diocese.

“In moments such as these, we feel helpless,” Father Winslow said. “I encourage you to cling to your faith and to one another. In faith, we know that our blessed Lord, who was himself unjustly slain and whose security was often threatened, is close to us and that in the end, God will make right these wrongs.”

Trystan Andrew Terrell, 22, a University of North Carolina-Charlotte student, was arrested April 30 and charged with two counts of murder, four counts of assault with a deadly weapon and charges related to shooting a gun on a school campus.

The two North Carolina students killed in the shooting were Riley Howell, 21, of Waynesville, and Reed Parlier, 19, of Midland. Three of the four who were injured remained hospitalized in critical condition the day after the shooting.

“This is the saddest day in UNC-Charlotte’s history,” Philip Dubois, the university’s chancellor, said in an April 30 statement. “The entire UNC-Charlotte community shares the shock and grief of this senseless, devastating act.”

The day the shooting took place was the students’ last day of classes. The campus was on lockdown for 12 hours.

The pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas also addressed the shooting during a special prayer service the afternoon of May 1, telling those in attendance how after Christ’s resurrection, his first words to the frightened apostles were: “Peace be with you.”

“This afternoon we too are huddled together with some fear and confusion, and like the apostles, we listen to hear the same words spoken to us, echoing throughout history with the force of the Spirit: ‘Peace be with you.’”

He stressed that people are praying for peace for the souls of the students who were killed, for peace and healing for the four injured students and peace for their families and friends.

“We also pray that those in our community in the University City area and national leaders find some way to prevent these occurrences into the future,” he said.

“We want to live peaceful lives,” he added.

Father Winslow said that in the face of tragedies, “we realize quickly we have another feel and find consolation in this moment.”

Father Amasiorah planned to gather with students on campus May 1 to pray the rosary prior to the prayer service at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

He said since April 30 was the last day of classes, the next day “should be the first day of joy. Instead, it’s a day of anxiety and fear.” He hoped gathering in prayer and allowing the students to share their feelings would help ease the tension and allow for healing.

A candlelight vigil was also held on campus the evening of May 1. St. Thomas Aquinas Church donated more than 1,700 candles for the vigil in memory of the students injured and killed in the shooting.
Ordination scheduled

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Two seminarians are scheduled to be ordained priests to the Diocese of Baton Rouge on May 25, signaling what could be an uptick in the number of vocations.

For the next three years, two new priests are scheduled to be ordained per year, an encouraging sign for Director of Seminarians Father Matt Lorrain, who has also previously served as Director of Vocations.

Father Lorrain said there are currently 19 seminarians in varying stages of formation, with Deacon Tim Grimes and Deacon John Vu scheduled to be ordained this year at St. Joseph Cathedral, with Bishop Michael G. Duca presiding.

“You’re always worried that the (priest sexual abuse) scandal has turned people off,” Father Lorrain said. “We haven’t seen that in large numbers; it’s been modest if any.”

“People are able to distinguish between the holiness of the church and the humanness of priest and religious,” he added. “Of course they are accepting of normal mistakes but the ones that involve psychological illness and emotional illness are more difficult to make room for.

“Priests are not immune to any of the struggles people go through.”

Father Lorrain said he and Director of Vocations Father Andrew Merrick employ several approaches promoting vocations, including assigning seminarians to work in church parishes every summer.

He said having a seminarian live and work in a parish is particularly effective because it gives high school students and young adults who may be considering a vocational life the opportunity to speak with someone who is already in discernment.

“Sometimes a seminarian is more approachable and closer in age,” Father Lorrain said, adding that he attempts to assign at least one seminarian in each of the diocese’s six deaneries.

He explained that in addressing the priest shortage, retention of seminarians is just as important as recruitment.

“You want to be good in planting a lot of seeds so that young men can hear the call to consider serving God and the church,” he said. “Once you get them in the seminary, you want to offer encouragement and support so they don’t leave prematurely.

“You’re dealing with mystery, interpreting God’s will for your life, examining if you have all of the qualities to be happy, not only to make it to ordination but also if you’re going to be happy as a priest. If I can’t be joyful in this life, I’m not going to be a very good witness to others.”

Father Lorrain said it’s advantageous the seminarians are studying in close proximity to Baton Rouge, either at St. Joseph College in St. Benedict or Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. He said that proximity allows himself, Father Merrick and assistant director of vocations Lisette Borne to support the seminarians either through phone calls or personal visits.

“It’s very important to be able stay in touch with the seminarians,” Father Lorrain said. “It is a long road and the support is important.”

A World Day of Prayer for Vocations is scheduled May 12. Father Lorrain said each pastor has a packet of information that includes ideas for a homily, bulletin announcements and prayers for the faithful.

MAY CROWNING – Sarah Lambert, a parishioner at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church in Albany, places a crown on Mary during Mass on May 5 at St. Margaret. Lambert is in sixth-grade at Holden School in Holden. May crowning is being held throughout church parishes and schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge during what is generally regarded as “Mary’s Month.” Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator
Q
My understanding is that the church teaches that bishops and priests are the successors of the apostles. Can this line really be traced back to one of the original apostles? (Lancaster, Ohio)

A
The Twelve Apostles were the privileged eyewitnesses sent to proclaim the teachings of Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew (28:19-20) reflects the fact that Christ, following the resurrection, commissioned the apostles and guaranteed his help:

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

It is the further belief of the church, in what is known as the doctrine of apostolic succession, that bishops and priests today are linked in an unbroken line to those same original apostles.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, who died in the year 108 and is believed to have been a disciple of the apostle John, wrote in a letter to the Ephesians: “For we ought to receive every one whom the Master of the house sends to be over his household, as we would do him that sent him. It is manifest, therefore, that we should look upon the bishop even as we would upon the Lord himself.”

The visible sign of ordination, from the New Testament onward, has been the imposition of hands. Thus, the transmission of the apostolic ministry is achieved by that ritual, together with the prayer of the celebrant that the ordained be granted the gift of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the ministry for which he has been chosen.

Q
Can a divorced person serve as a eucharistic minister, or do you need to get your marriage annulled first? I have no intention of remarrying, nor am I living with a partner or having a sexual relationship with anyone. What is the Catholic Church’s rule on this? (Trinidad and Tobago)

A
Yes, you absolutely can serve as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion and no, you do not need to get your marriage annulled first. (You would only need to do that if you wanted to remarry.)

Your question reminds me that there is a fair amount of misunderstanding among Catholics about divorce. Sad to say, some Catholics who have been divorced – sometimes through little or no fault of their own feel that they have thereby separated themselves from the church and may even stop coming to Mass.

So it is helpful when a parish explains on their website, as does the parish of St. Vincent de Paul in Niagara Falls, New York, that “Catholics who are separated or divorced, and who have not remarried outside of the church, are in good standing in the church and can receive the sacraments, including holy Communion.

“They are encouraged to fulfill their Catholic commitment by attending church on a weekly basis ... (and) to fully participate in all aspects of parish life. (They) are invited to serve in any ministries – including lectors, eucharistic ministers and catechists. (They) may serve as godparents for baptism or sponsors for confirmation. Catholics who are separated or divorced are not excommunicated.”

Similarly, St. John Paul II said in his 1981 apostolic exhortation “Familiaris Consortio”: “I earnestly call upon pastors and the whole community of the faithful to help the divorced, and with solicitous care to make sure that they do not consider themselves as separated from the church, for as baptized persons they can, and indeed must, share in her life” (No. 84).

Q
My husband and I are both Catholic. We had separated for four years (he had borne a child outside of our marriage), but we reconciled earlier this year and have forgiven each other.

My question is this: What is required for us to begin again receiving the Eucharist? (We had both stopped receiving.) I have gone to confession myself, but I still don’t feel free to receive the body and blood of Christ. Please advise. (City of origin withheld)

A
I thank God for the reconciliation of your marriage and for your willingness to forgive. As for holy Communion, you yourself are able to receive right now especially since you have been to the sacrament of penance recently. Perhaps, though, you would feel more comfortable if you spoke to a priest personally; he could assure you that you are in God’s good graces and ready to take the Eucharist.

(And know that the Eucharist, as sublime a gift as it is, is not meant as a reward for perfect people. Instead, it is food for the journey, nourishment for those struggling every day to do what God wants.) Your husband – if he has not done so already should of course go to confession before receiving Communion.

FATHER DOYLE is a retired priest in the Diocese of Albany, New York. Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, NY 12203.

APPRENTICE AWARD WINNER - Bishop-Emeritus Robert. W. Muench received a St. Joseph’s Apprentice Award during The Cathedral Evening on May 4 at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge. Also receiving an Apprentice Award during the fundraiser, which included dinner and entertainment, were longterm and active parishioners Mr. and Mrs. Tom and Mary Acosta, former long-time St. Joseph Cathedral employee Sheila Juneau and active volunteer Lillie Dorothy Hall. Community activists Mr. and Mrs. Charles and Nancy Valluzzo, were honored with the Cathedral Community Award. Photo by Richard Meek
Grandparents raising grandchildren

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Isaac Jones and wife, Norma, displaced from New Orleans to Houston for a period following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, suffered numerous health and financial issues. The couple put aside their own struggles to raise their grandchildren. Eymine, a student at Woodlawn Middle School, and JC, 3. They are raising their grandchildren with a dream they will have a better life.

Their story was among many of sacrifice, hardship and joys of grandparents taking on the later-in-life role of parenting at a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Conference on April 12 at the Holiday Inn of Baton Rouge.

The conference, hosted by the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, provided resources and thanked its “grandangels.”

Louisiana ranks in the top five nationally in the number of grandparents raising grandchildren, with 10,000 children being raised by their grandparents in the Baton Rouge area alone, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Following a welcoming ceremony featuring bag pipes and the posting of the colors by the Baton Rouge Police Honor Guard, Governor John Bel Edwards, who was among several state and local dignitaries present at the conference, commended attendees for being active in their grandchildren’s lives.

“I know you love your grandchildren,” said Edwards. “There are very different reasons why parents can’t or won’t take on the responsibility of raising their children. But you have stepped up to the plate and it’s not easy. I know raising children is a challenging endeavor and you are to be recognized for the incredible job you do.”

He explained the various government resources available to grandparents and recognized Dot Thibodaux, founder of GRG and member of St. Alphonsus Church in Greenwell Springs, an organization offering information and support, including support groups, to grandparents and other kinship caregivers and their families.

The Jones said GRG’s support has been valuable to them. They and their two daughters and grandchildren lived in Houston before the Joneses moved to Baton Rouge in 2011. Eymine’s mother remained in Houston, but because of psychological trauma from the flood, was unable to care for Eymine. JC’s mother moved to New Orleans, where she substitute teaches, but has health and financial difficulties that prevent her from being able care take care of JC.

The Jones family believes “nothing will stop us.” Isaac, who lost his leg due to diabetes in 2016, is part of the Cajun Crushers, a group of athletes that competes each June in the Endeavor Games for disabled people in Edmond, Oklahoma. Last year Isaac won a silver medal in volleyball and gold medals in shotput and discus. This year he will compete in the same events as well as a running event.

Eymine has received therapy and help with his school work and plays basketball. His mother also received therapy and attends college. JC, who flitted around the couple at the conference, will enter pre-kindergarten later this year while her mother works through her health issues.

Norma, who deals with her own chronic health issues, said the family hopes to vacation together next year. She wants her grandchildren to have a happy, healthy home and said the best way to find calm in the midst life’s storms is to “give it to God.”

“That what gets me through this,” said Norma, wiping away tears.

Nora Davis, 65, said her great-grandson, Daryoatae, 9, whom her granddaughter gave birth to at the age of 15, has been in her care since he was born.

She is very involved in his school, Bains Upper Elementary in St. Francisville, and proudly showed a picture of him on her smartphone being recognized for making the third-grade honor roll. She also keeps games and educational apps on her phone for Daryoatae. She also volunteers at West Feliciania Civil Parish Head Start, doing one-on-one activities with the children and reading to them.

“When they see me coming they run down the hall and I love it,” said Nora with twinkling eyes.

She concedes that Daryoatae teaches her more than she teaches him, pointing out that she learned about “new math” through him.

“When my daughter started she was a heating presence for me. He keeps me occupied. I always say (at night) ‘Let’s lock the door’, and he says, Maw Maw, let’s say a prayer’,” said Lucille Williams, 56, who has also been taking care of her grandchildren Aniyla and Arez, 10, since birth.

“They parents work around the clock. I don’t mind helping them because they are making a living,” says Williams who keeps the children Monday through Friday.

“When my daughter started working I didn’t mind because my Mom helped raise my children because I was working nights,” said Williams. “I am giving back.”

Other opportunities for people who are at least 55-years-old to impact the lives of children include the Foster Grandparents Program of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Program participants are paired up with children and help them learn to read, provide one-on-one tutoring and guide the children through critical times in their lives. For more information about GRG, visit lagrg.org.
Pro-life legislation meets early approval

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

State lawmakers have granted early approval for a trio of pro-life bills that are now in varying stages of the legislative process.

Perhaps the bill with most impact, Rep. Katrina Jackson's proposed “Love Life Amendment” that would mandate there is no right in the Louisiana Constitution to secure or protect a right to abortion, was approved by the state House of Representatives 81-10 April 23. The bill will be heard before the Senate Committee on Judiciary A at a date to be determined.

If approved by lawmakers, the amendment would go before voters Nov. 16.

A Senate judiciary committee on April 30 approved a bill that would ban abortion if a fetal heartbeat is detected. The measure sailed through the committee by a 5-2 margin.

Danielle Van Haute, director of the Pro-Life Program for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, said a fetal heartbeat is typically detected in the first 21-22 days of pregnancy.

She added that bill may face some challenges regarding specific concerns of some lawmakers with the wording.

The Senate approved that bill May 6. It now moves on to the House.

The full Senate approved Sen. Beth Mizell's Women's Right to Know bill, which would require a doctor's name performing an abortion be listed in the same manner as on the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners' records. Additionally, that physician's residence and whether the residency has been completed and whether the physician is board certified must also be listed.

The bill will next be heard before the House Committee on Health and Welfare.

“I am encouraged,” Van Haute said of the early success of the pro-life legislation. “For some (of the bills) we are still early in the process but it’s definitely encouraging to see them moving along the path of being passed.”

ALL PEOPLE, NOT JUST WEALTHY ONES, NEED A LEGAL ESTATE PLAN!

Many people engage in estate planning to preserve their hard-earned assets and protect their estates for themselves, their children and grandchildren, and causes they are passionate about. The failure to properly plan your estate could result in any of the following:

• The wrong people raise your children if you die before your children reach the age of majority or you have special needs children;
• Your heirs blow their inheritance because they were not mature enough to handle it properly or your legacy to support charitable causes is not carried out as you wish;
• Your children have to split their inheritance with their ex-spouse when your children get divorced;
• You may unknowingly reveal your sensitive financial information to nosey neighbors and identity thieves;
• Your entire estate may be lost on long term care costs if you experience catastrophic illness;
• Your loved ones have to make difficult medical decisions for you – like the removal of life support systems – with no previous guidance from you;
• Your children have to go to court to fight others to get legal authority to manage your affairs when you become incapacitated during life;
• Your executor must pay considerable attorney fees, court costs and death taxes you’d prefer be directed to your loved ones;
• They have to post a bond to become the executor of your estate and they have to get a judge’s permission to sell your home, car, or other assets after you die.

Leaving assets to your loved ones can be complex. Whether your children are young or old, rich or poor, married or single, you need to be aware of some important legal concepts that could jeopardize your children’s inheritance. If you can relate to one or more of the results above, you need an estate plan. Proper estate planning can avoid most, if not all, of these problems for your children, grandchild, or anyone else you intend to benefit.

• Avoid Costs And Delays of a Louisiana Succession;
• Avoid losing your life savings to nursing home costs;
• Create a fast and simple estate plan for your family;
• Avoid the 40% estate tax;
• Determine whether you need a Will or Trust;
• Keep the government out of your estate settlement;
• Avoid Costs And Delays of a Louisiana Succession;
• Protect your hard-earned assets and protect their estates for themselves, their children and grandchildren, and causes they are passionate about.

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Call 225-224-8099 To Register! Poché Estate Planning Law Firm, 4960 Bluebonnet Blvd., Suite C Baton Rouge, LA 70809
2315 Florida Street, Building 200, Suite 202, Mandeville, LA 70448 - By Appt. Only

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR OUR WORKSHOPS: Because seating at these workshops is limited, and we want to be able to accommodate you comfortably, interested persons must register by calling our office or registering online as soon as possible. First come, first served! Our workshops are open to FIRST-TIME ATTENDEES ONLY and current Poche' Law Firm clients. The workshops are geared towards people who intend to put a legal estate plan in place in the near future. Please bring your calendar to your workshop should you decide to start your legal estate planning immediately. Finally, if married, both spouses must attend the workshop unless a spouse is homebound and cannot travel. Thank you for your attention to these important guidelines for our workshops.

ST. JAMES PASSION PRESENTATION – St. James Church in St. James presented a Living Way of the Cross on April 18. In this station Jesus, played by Anthony Cooper, is stripped of his garments by the Roman guards, played by Junis Julian, left, and Leon Walker. Photo provided by Cynthia Clifton
Committee makes history

By Bonny Van
The Catholic Commentator

On Tuesday, April 30, Louisiana Senate Judiciary Committee C made history by approving SB112, which creates a proposed constitutional amendment to abolish the death penalty.


“I believe the death penalty is morally wrong. Killing of a human being is morally wrong,” said Rep. Landry, a former military and law enforcement officer who admitted he once supported the death penalty. “I also believe our system is driven sometimes by overzealous police officers, overzealous prosecutors, political pressure and sometimes we get it wrong.

“And I ask you today to look deep into your hearts and into your soul and ask, ‘Is it worth putting an innocent person to death for a crime they did not commit?’ Our communities are no safer because of the death penalty. And all we have to do is look at the statistics.”

Sen. Morrell, a former public defender, testified that “the resources of the state to convict someone are infinite in comparison to the resources of individuals to defend themselves,” leading to successful convictions. He also noted that the intervention of other groups, providing additional resources, has helped exonerate innocent men on death row across the country as well as in Louisiana.

“Life in prison is a miserable awful existence. And it is not a punishment to be taken lightly because when you convict someone and put them in prison for life, that life for all practical purposes ceases to move. You kind of get trapped in a hellish amber at Angola where you are toiling and remembering the awful things you’ve done both personally and at the hands of your fellow inmates depending on the deed you did,” Sen. Morrell said before a crowded committee room. “That being said, if government makes a mistake, despite the years that are lost to that individual who is toiling away at Angola or wherever else and the horror that is prison, we can still correct it.”

After hearing from Sen. Morrell, committee member Sen. Troy Carter proposed amending the bill to 2020 during the presidential election cycle “to ensure maximum participation” from voters.

“Plus it’ll give both sides a lot of lead time for education for and against the position,” responded Sen. Morell.

Rob Tasman, executive director of the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, reminded committee members that “we have for the past two years (supported) a repeal of the death penalty.”

Presenting a case based on Catholic faith teaching of the “life and dignity of the human being,” Tasman quoted St. Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis.

“Pope Francis has stated clearly that the death penalty also supports the fallacy of justice,” he said. “The death penalty does not render justice to victims and obligates the state to kill in the name of justice, and justice can never be brought by killing a human being.”

Tasman noted the bishops in the Catholic Church “very sincerely recognize the pain of the family members of the victims associated with the many heinous crimes that lead to the sentencing of the death penalty to the perpetrators” and that their support is always with the family members of the victims through counsel, compassion and understanding.

“And in this way, the bishops support of the repeal does not diminish the pain of those family members of victims,” he testified. “Instead, it truly affirms the life of the family members because it in itself affirms life itself.”

Tasman was followed by additional testimony supporting SB112, including that from public defenders and a health official, all of whom presented statistics on racial bias and socioeconomic bias toward offenders sentenced to death.

“As the bishop walked away, that same inmate was in uncontrollable sobs and tears. Why? I don’t have the answer. What was said? I have no idea. That was a private exchange between Bishop Muench and the inmate. But it highlights at the very least there is the possibility of redemption,” he said.

Tasman followed by additional testimony supporting SB112, including that from public defenders and a health official, all of whom presented statistics on racial bias and socioeconomic bias toward offenders sentenced to death.

The move came just five days after religious leaders, community advocates and others gathered on the steps of the state capitol calling on state lawmakers to abolish the death penalty during the 2019 legislative session.

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“For this reason whoever attacks life in any ways attacks God himself,” said Tasman. “We must recognize the redemptive nature of the soul. When we execute an individual we strip that person out of the opportunity to repent and to be reconciled and to renew their relationship with their creator. We put ourselves, ourselves as flawed human beings in that place in which God alone stands. This should make us at the very least nothing less than uncomfortable.”

Tasman wrapped up his testimony with a story about his own visit to Angola’s death row with Bishop Emeritus Robert W. Muench and witnessing an exchange with the bishop talking to the youngest inmate there, whom at first seemed disengaged.

“The bishop walked away, that same inmate was in uncontrollable sobs and tears. Why? I don’t have the answer. What was said? I have no idea. That was a private exchange between Bishop Muench and the inmate. But it highlights at the very least there is the possibility of redemption,” he said.

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By Debbie Shelley  
The Catholic Commentator

Troubled teens receive a “second chance” by pushing themselves physically, academically and socially as part of the Louisiana National Guard Youth Challenge Program, which includes a 5½-month residential alternative military-like school at the Gillis W. Long Center on the old Indian Plantation grounds in Carville.

When YCP cadets bring their aching muscles, “brain fatigue,” frustrations and pride in their successes to a youth retreat led by Sacred Heart Chapel in Carville and St. Gabriel Church in St. Gabriel, grace awakens them to the God of second chances.

The most recent class of YCP graduates and retreat attendees received their diplomas at Bethany Church South Campus in Baton Rouge on March 23.

Rozalyn Duplantis and her husband, Deacon Kirk Duplantis, deacon assistant at St. Gabriel, and St. Gabriel pastor Father Charlie Landry developed the retreat to provide for youth’s spiritual growth.

The Duplantis’ first Mass at Sacred Heart, shortly after Deacon Duplantis was assigned to St Gabriel and Sacred Heart, which is located on the Indian Plantation grounds, Rozalyn noticed the first few pews were vacant.

“Minutes before Mass started, the sound of marching and drills being shouted, echoed and kept getting louder as the footsteps approached. In marched approximately 20 cadets in their khaki pants and green shirts. Boys on one side and girls on the other. The cadets never made eye contact with anyone except their commanders.”

During the next couple of weeks, Rozalyn helped cadets become more comfortable participating in Mass.

“The third week comes and I am waiting on the cadets, but there was no marching. No drills far off, said Rozalyn. “We were told that the cadets would not be joining us due to a riot that had just broken out and they were in the process of investigating and resolving the problem … After Mass, Father Charlie, Kirk and myself discussed our concern over the problem … After Mass, Father Charlie, Kirk and myself discussed our concern over the problem.”

The retreat opens with ice-breakers, Scripture and prayer. Throughout the day there are fun activities to help the youth “loosen up.”

“The most memorable moment at the retreat was when we sang and danced,” said Cadet Smith, who was a lector at the retreat. “I thought most were a bit unsure of what to do at first, but music gets into you so we became more relaxed.”

Then cadets “created something” from potter’s clay.

“After given ample time, one from each group is asked to share what they made and why … And it never fails, someone fusses that their clay is cracking or breaking as it dried,” said Rozalyn.

“We pass around the magnifying glass so that the cadets can see their prints on their creation. Then we talk about how decisions we make and decisions others in our lives make can cause cracks or wounds in our lives, but God’s not done with us yet.”

“We add more water and rework the clay. The more we work the clay, the more we leave our print on our creation. Just like, as broken as we are, God works on us and leaves his print in our hearts.”

“Working with clay was the most memorable part of the retreat for Cadet Hill. “From the retreat and life at YCP I’ve learned that no matter how I feel, I can always choose to have a positive attitude,” said Hill.

Deacon Duplantis asks if a retreat could be held to decrease tensions among the cadets, and Father Landry “got the ball rolling.”

The National Guard agreed and the retreat was held at the old leprosy hospital, also on the Indian Plantation grounds, Rozalyn said.

“It’s ironic that a place where the church used to heal those discarded for health issues, is now being used to heal those discarded for behavioral issues,” said Rozalyn.

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Forgive so that I Can Be Who God Needs Me To Be.” She relate the struggles she faced in overcoming mental, physical and emotional abuse.

“These cadets are hurt and acting on anger from their hurt. They are carrying years of scars, bad behaviors and resentments. I teach them to pray for those that hurt them,” said Rozalyn.

Cadets can write down their burdens and place them at the foot of the cross. The next day those burdens are brought up during the offertory at Mass.

The messages on forgiveness appealed to Cadet Nelson.

“A lesson I learned from the retreat was to always forgive someone for what they have done to you and do not hold a grudge against anyone. I also learned that no matter what I may have done in my life, I can still have a chance to change,” said Nelson, who plans to work and attend college in Tennessee.

Deacon Duplantis emphasized youth find their sense of purpose through the retreat.

“They want more of God and a deeper faith,” he said.

Deacon Duplantis stated the retreat and YCP program combine faith and discipline to help the graduates succeed.

When he recently had his car serviced and washed, he and an employee tried to place where they had previously met. Deacon Duplantis mentioned he was deacon at St. Gabriel and Sacred Heart and the young man’s eyes lit up as he was a graduate from YCP and attended the retreat.

“He said ‘Thank you and your wife and Father Charlie for all you did,’ said Deacon Duplantis. “They know that know matter what happens (after YCP graduation) God has a plan for them.”

Father Landry said the Carville Masses and retreats let the youth know “they’re welcome and it helps them with their own healing and their own confidence.”

They help serve at Mass as lector, usher, etc., which encourages them to become more involved in their own church parishes.

“There’s a sense of comfortableness they experience with us, and they’re very grateful for that,” said Father Landry.

Cadet Honoré realized during the retreat “with faith, I can face my own problems like a man and stand on my own two feet.”

“One thing I learned about myself during the retreat is the lesson Deacon Kirk drove home; when I think I can’t do something, I really can do it,” said Honoré.

Cadet Mecklenburg agreed.

“I was surprised to discover my faith wasn’t as strong as I thought,” Mecklenburg said.

Glenda Slayton, instructor at YCP and member of Sacred Heart/St. Gabriel, said the youth seek wholeness in their lives.

“They come from a variety of backgrounds,” said Slayton. “Some have been in foster care, some have being living on the streets, some have belonged to gangs, some come from divorced homes. They open up about things that happened in their lives. They express how they want to grow spiritually.

She had witnessed the Holy Spirit nudging the cadets to better themselves. Some apply themselves and receive their high school equivalency credentials.

“I never stop praying. As I’m walking I always have my rosary praying,” Slayton said.

She added, “My surprise about myself after the experiences at the retreat and YCP was really something I already knew about but needed to remember. I am very goofy, but more that that I was reminded that God is extremely forgiving and loves us no matter what.”

And youth were eager to grasp onto the chance to start over. Cadet Haase said, “A surprising thing I’ve learned about myself during the retreat and my overall experience at YCP is that I’ve grown into a better person than I have ever been before,” said Haase.

Cadet Waldrop, likewise, learned God accepts and forgives those who obey and give him praise.

“The retreat reminded me of how I’ve overcome some challenges in my life,” said Waldrop. “God put me on my path to help me get to where I am today. I’ve learned that if you want to get better, you have to make changes. It isn’t about being given, it’s about being earned. No one can change you but you, and you have to accept it if you want better.”
Our Lady of Mercy School in Baton Rouge. Photo provided by Darlene Aquillard

Most Blessed Sacrament School in Prairieville. Photo provided by Bonnie Acardo

St. John Primary School in Prairieville. Photo provided by Melissa Heroman

St. Jude School in Baton Rouge. Photo provided by Bonnie Van

St. Michael the Archangel School in Baton Rouge. Photo provided by Leighann King
SJV students gather to pray before class

By Bonny Van
The Catholic Commentator

One by one, sometimes three and four young students at St. Jean Vianney School in Baton Rouge bound into the classroom of third-grade teacher Frances Thompson. Dropping their backpacks and lunch sacks on the floor, the children, ranging from pre-K to fourth grade, found seats on the floor or at tables facing a Smart Board with lyrics of songs of worship and joined in the chorus. It’s a scene repeated every Wednesday and Thursday during the school year.

“In the mornings, before we start class we have about 30 minutes and a lot of teachers do morning work, but I just wanted a time for us to start the day with prayer and talking – camaraderie as a class,” said Thompson who is in her first year as a teacher.

Thompson, who also coaches volleyball at St. Michael the Archangel High School in Baton Rouge, said Wednesdays and Thursdays are the two days of the week she does not have morning duty, allowing her to open up her classroom for those wishing to start the day with the Lord.

“So we pray a decade of the rosary every day and do a praise and worship song, and they loved it so much they started saying, ‘Oh! I was listening to it in the car’ and ‘my parents love that song now.’ And, so for them at that age, it was something very tangible in their faith that they could hold onto,” explained Thompson on how the program evolved.

“We have walking club in the morning before school, and I thought, ‘If they can do that, we might as well have a faith outlet for them too,’ so I just offer it twice a week,” she said.

During Lent, Thompson said she wanted to “spice it up” so she invited her friend Michaelyn McGinnis, director of Christian Formation at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge, to play the guitar and lead the children in song on Wednesdays.

“The first time I came I played one chord of ‘Reckless Love’ and they were like, ‘Yes!’ And I started to sing the chorus and I just heard like 50 kids singing and I just stopped and let them sing because it brought me to tears,” recalled McGinnis. “It was just amazing to see the mystical body of Christ so apparently alive in these kids.”

McGinnis said there is quite a bit of thought and prayer that goes into her participation.

“I discern a couple of songs the night before, so I pray through how the Spirit wants to move and kind of based on what the kids know, too,” she said.

Thompson said she is grateful for the opportunity to have McGinnis participate in the praise and worship program, which attracted almost 40 students to the classroom on a recent morning.

“They come in here and they know every word and they’re singing,” said Thompson. “For them at that age, I feel like prayer and faith is so monotonous and saying the same thing, ‘Our Father’ and ‘Hail, Mary’ are just words to them. I think this is something they can actually participate in and expose them to the idea that faith doesn’t have to be this rigid, strict thing.”

HOPPY EASTER – The St. Vincent de Paul Society distributed 3,700 Easter baskets to children in need for Easter. Of that number, 1,473 were distributed to children in the East Baton Rouge Parish Head Start Program. The remainder were distributed at the giveaway at the SVDP Dining Room on April 13, on Easter Sunday in the Easter Store in the parking lot of St. Vincent de Paul and to children throughout the parish that otherwise would not have received a basket.
STATE CHAMPS – Members of the girls’ powerlifting team at Ascension Catholic High School in Donaldsonville won their fifth consecutive state championship at the Allstate Sugar Bowl/LHSAA Powerlifting meet at the Rapides Parish Coliseum in Alexandria. Nydia Cooper won the state title in the 181-pound weight division and Madison Tripode won in the 132-pound division. Pictured, front row from left, are Tripode, Marie Ceily Grisaffe, Cooper, Miranda Landry and Layne Melancon. Pictured second row from left, are head coach Janelle Leonard, Catherine Rome, Mckenzie Marroy, Julia Lemann, Charlee Griffin and Dakota Bonadona. Pictured in back is assistant head coach Robert Lemann. Photo provided by Nadine Nelson.

DONUTS WITH DAD – Catholic Elementary of Pointe Coupee was filled with hundreds of dads, grandfathers, uncles, and special guests earlier this year as they celebrated Donuts with Dad. The students were excited as they were able to spend quality time with their guests before beginning the day. Some students shared their school work, some played games and some even built with Legos as their guests helped. First-grader, Waylon Elliott, said “Donuts were a treat, but spending time at school with dad was the best!” Photo provided by Megan Girlinghouse| CESPC.

TEA TIME! – English 1 students at Holy Ghost School in Hammond participated in a traditional English tea after completing a drama unit on William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. Pictured clockwise are Ashlyn Sledge, Averi Galgliano, Kamryn Hecker, Olivia Brouillette, Claire Hidalgo, Kathryn Huggett, Brody Doan, Blayne Schilling, Sophie Geisler, Carli Anderson, Katy Potrament, Sophia Pray and Hailey Gauff. Photo provided by Cindy Wagner | Holy Ghost School.

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Russo’s grand finale deftly weaves together. Vast, intricate and impressive, his happy home life (shared with Gwyneth Paltrow) is the only person who can safely engineer such a cutting-edge feat. But he’s reluctant to endanger the living creatures in the universe, this time by harnessing time travel via Ant-Man’s (Paul Rudd) quantum realm to undo the catastrophe. To achieve this, they need to win the race between the world’s most advanced superpowers. "Avengers: Endgame" is a thrilling finale that will keep you on the edge of your seat.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN EFFECTIVE FILM INTERPRETATION OF A SOMEWHAT GROUNDED COLLEGE ROMANCE IN ANNA TODD’S BEST-SELLING “NEW ADULT” NOVEL

"The Kisses of Summer" tells the story of two literate protagonists, she and her friend (Dylan Arnold) happy or is will enduring this structure. But it will be up to her to decide whether she’s living just to make her mother (Selma Blair) and priggish high school boy (Dylan Sprayberry) happy or is will enduring this structure. But it will be up to her to decide whether she’s living just to make her mother (Selma Blair) and priggish high school boy (Dylan Sprayberry) happy or is willing to strike out on her own and make painful mistakes along the way. There’s at least a weak moral foundation underlying this structure. But it will be up to grown viewers to decide whether the story has been adapted with sufficient vigor. A scene of sensuality implying intercourse is truncated but misguided. Phoenix’s "Savior, Kingpin" (voiced by James McAvoy) is a conflicted marriage. St. Peter (Chiwetel Ejiofor) is his archrival back in Britain (voice of Stephen Fry) to thwart his quest. Once encountered, the fabled monster turns out to be a kind-hearted, lonely furball who longs to visit his Yeti cousins in the Himalayas. So, joined by an explorer (voice of Zoe Saldana), the duo sets forth. Unfortunately, many of the gags in this otherwise enjoyable jaunt, written and directed by Chris Butler, are aimed at grown-ups and, in some cases, teeter on bad taste. They include jokes about homosexuality and a routine in which Jackman’s character disguises himself as a nun. Though acceptable for grown-ups and older teens, this is not a cartoon for kids. Mature, sometimes rude humor, cartoon mayhem, some peril. A-II; PG-13

After

What might have been an effective film interpretation of a somewhat grounded college romance in Anna Todd’s best-selling “new adult” novel sadly turns into a parade of wooden archetypes. Two literate protagonists, she (Josephine Langford) mostly chaste, he (Hero Fiennes Tiffin) brooding and tattooed, with curious, somewhat troubled background, serve as stand-ins for the uneasy lovers of classic literature. Director and co-writer Jenny Gage and her trio of script collaborators wade into the old tropes of the earnest “good girl” navigating her way amid new surroundings as she starts her freshman year. She has to decide whether she’s living just to make her mother (Selma Blair) and priggish high school boyfriend (Dylan Sprayberry) happy or is willing to strike out on her own and make painful mistakes along the way. There’s at least a weak moral foundation underlying this structure. But it will be up to grown viewers to decide whether the story has been adapted with sufficient vigor. A scene of sensuality implying intercourse is truncated but misguided. Phoenix’s "Savior, Kingpin" (voiced by James McAvoy) is a conflicted marriage. St. Peter (Chiwetel Ejiofor) is his archrival back in Britain (voice of Stephen Fry) to thwart his quest. Once encountered, the fabled monster turns out to be a kind-hearted, lonely furball who longs to visit his Yeti cousins in the Himalayas. So, joined by an explorer (voice of Zoe Saldana), the duo sets forth. Unfortunately, many of the gags in this otherwise enjoyable jaunt, written and directed by Chris Butler, are aimed at grown-ups and, in some cases, teeter on bad taste. They include jokes about homosexuality and a routine in which Jackman’s character disguises himself as a nun. Though acceptable for grown-ups and older teens, this is not a cartoon for kids. Mature, sometimes rude humor, cartoon mayhem, some peril. A-II; PG-13

Breakthrough

For 2000

Faith-affirming drama, based on real events, in which a strong-willed mother (Chriissy Metz) refuses to accept that her adopted son (Marcel Ruiz) is doomed to die after falling through the ice on a frozen lake and her desperate prayers have a startling impact on his seemingly hopeless prognosis. As she keeps vigil at the boy’s bedside, she gradually reconciles with the pastor (Topher Grace) of her church with whom she had been feuding while her husband (Josh Lucas) struggles to share her unspeakable belief in a positive outcome. Director Roxann Dawson’s adaptation of Joyce Smith’s 2017 memoir “The Impossible” (written with Ginger Kolstoe) benefits from Metz’s driven performance and will have sympathetic viewers cheering her character on all the way. Tense but gratifying entertainment for all but the youngest moviegoers. A perilous situation, mature themes. A-II; PG-13

The Curse of La Llorona

Warner Bros.

Intense but problematic horror story in which a legendary Mexican witch (Marisol Ramirez), a weeping woman who killed her own children and now preys on those of others, stalks a widowed mother (Linda Cardellini) and her two small kids (Roman Christou and Jaynee-Lynne Kinchen) in 1973 California. Despite some obvious loopholes in its plot, director Michael Chaves’ addition to the universe of the “Conjuring” franchise elicits its fair share of starts. But, while the usual red-flag items are mostly absent, an attempt to blur the lines between Catholicism and superstition, embodied in the figure of the ex-priest-turned-shaman (Raymond Cruz) to whom the troubled trio turns for help, puts this beyond the reach of all but the best-bated-teens. Occult themes, bloodless terror, a single crude term. A-III; R

Missing Link

Annapurna

In this animated comedy-adventure, a spirited send-up of Victorian England, a world-famous investigator of myths and monsters (voice of Hugh Jackman), anxious to qualify for membership in a London club by making a major discovery, travels to America to find Bigfoot (voice of Zach Galifianakis), aka the missing link. He’s tracked by a bounty hunter (voice of Timothy Olyphant) who’s been dispatched by his archival back in Britain (voice of Stephen Fry) to thwart his quest. Once encountered, the fabled monster turns out to be a kind-hearted, lonely furball who longs to visit his Yeti cousins in the Himalayas. So, joined by an explorer (voice of Zoe Saldana), the duo sets forth. Unfortunately, many of the gags in this otherwise enjoyable jaunt, written and directed by Chris Butler, are aimed at grown-ups and, in some cases, teeter on bad taste. They include jokes about homosexuality and a routine in which Jackman’s character disguises himself as a nun. Though acceptable for grown-ups and older teens, this is not a cartoon for kids. Mature, sometimes rude humor, cartoon mayhem, some peril. A-II; PG-13

Penguins

Disneynature

At one time the profile of a plucky 5-year-old Adelie penguin the filmmakers dub “Steve” and an introduction to his species as a whole, this winning documentary tracks him as he finds a mate and starts a family in the challenging surroundings of Antarctica. From building a nest of rocks in which his duos offspring can be protected until they hatch to preparing them to live on their own, he meets every challenge of fatherhood with aplomb, or at least with determined perseverance. The spectacle of his adventures among hundreds of thousands of others of his kind, skillfully directed by Alastair Fothergill and Jeff Wilson and often humorously narrated by actor Ed Helms, will prove a delight for viewers of every generation. A-I; G
May 10, 2019

The Catholic Commentator

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Bishop Michael G. Duca presented checks to the recipients of Works of Mercy grants during a ceremony May 1 at the Catholic Life Center. From left are Michael Manning, Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank; Jena Maughan, Metanoia Manor; Bishop Duca; Gloria Messenger, St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church in Albany/St. Thomas Chapel in Springfield; Michael Aldalo, St. Vincent de Paul Society; and Tammy Abshire, stewardship director for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

MERCY ▼

From page 1

“It’s locked in there.”

The purchase of the machine, which should be completed by the middle of June, is being made possible through a $7,500 grant from the annual Diocese of Baton Rouge’s Works of Mercy program, which was created in 1991 as a fundraising effort to continue the many good works started by Bishop Stanley J. Ott.

Since 1991, Works of Mercy has awarded nearly $500,000 in grants, all earnings off of the $646,000 endowment, stewardship director Tammy Abshire said. She said a combined $27,000 was awarded to agencies in 2019.

Abshire said the donations are based strictly off the earnings of the endowment and varies annually, depending on the performance of the investments. She stressed the endowment is never touched.

“Every year we award grants to organizations that help improve the lives of others in very tangible ways, and we applaud all of them for their efforts,” Abshire said. “But this year we are especially excited to be able to award Metanoia Manor with a grant. “The work the (Hospitaller Sisters) are doing, helping victims of some of the most heinous crimes imaginable, is nothing short of miraculous. Through this grant, and with the sisters’ dedication, we are providing light where there has been darkness, hope where there was only despair.”

“There is no tangible way to measure that joy. This is truly God’s work,” Abshire said.

Maughan said the idea for an embroidery machine was borne out of the proclivity the girls have shown for the crafts, including paint by numbers or just free-hand painting on canvas. One of Metanoia’s volunteers helped the girls make crafts to sell at the St. John the Baptist Church in Zachary Christmas bazaar this past year so they could stow away some funds for the day they graduate from Metanoia and are on their own.

They not only made the crafts but also priced the items and manned the booth. The girls were as flabbergasted as appreciative by the enthusiastic response they received.

One teen, who had been reluctant to display a colorful painting of a lion she had finished, was stunned that it sold so quickly, and to a young girl who talked her mom into buying it.

“I think embroidery is a skill they can all learn,” Maughan said. “I don’t think (embroidery) would exclude one based on mental capacity or physical capacity.”

She envisions the girls embrodering logos on handbags and baseball caps, as well as shirts, pillowcases, jackets or even towels to be given away at a golf tournament. She said the machine will have the capability of performing all of those duties.

“They have a product, something to be proud of,” Maughan said.

Perhaps therein lies the real purpose of purchasing the embroidery machine, and more globally the mission of Metanoia. Maughan said the girls rescued from the streets arrive at Metanoia emotionally bruised, feeling unloved and feeling incapable of being loved.

“They have no self-confidence, they just don’t even see it in themselves as a possibility.”

Maughan, a mother of three, said, her self-confessed “mama bear” going into full protective mode. “So when you tell them ‘I’m really proud of you, you did well on that,’ they just look at you like ‘I don’t even understand what it is you’re saying.’”

She said teaching the girls such skills as embroidery, cooking, table etiquette and other life skills is critical because they will learn there are far healthier options available besides being a sex slave.

“Learning life skills gives them a sense of accomplishment, and a sense of worth, along with the opportunity to hopefully work one day in a professional environment,” Maughan said. “I am tremendously grateful to Works of Mercy for the grant. Without that, we would not have been able to purchase the machine.”

Also receiving grants were the Society of St. Vincent de Paul ($5,000) to be used for the construction of a new chapel, the Baton Rouge Food Bank ($7,500) and St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church in Albany ($7,000) for women’s prison ministry.

ACROSS

1 5 4 3 2 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

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12 34 1 5 4 1

Solution on page 18

50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64

ACROSS

1 “…through the valley of the shadow of death” (Ps 23:4)

5 The entire scale

10 Short letter

14 Space

15 Bitez word

16 Like much lore

17 Side

18 Old Testament hymn

19 Old TV movie players

20 Fortified

21 One of the magic words

24 Fester

25 Sins ___

26 Bernes’ river

27 Companion of Paul and Silas

31 Comic strip Kat

34 Number of biblical sorrows of Mary

35 Chemical suffix

36 Nazareth, to Jesus

37 Day on which Jesus rose

38 Obstacle

41 First word of a Latin trio

44 Large wading bird

45 What the flesh is sometimes

46 Burns forth

50 Institution for teaching

53 Textile fabric

55 Land in which Ruth was born

56 Larat

58 Gaze or tarse starter

59 Discontinued Dodge

60 Pending

61 Up and ___

62 Exploit

63 Bird homes

64 Lively, as in sailing

DOWN

1 Holy ___

2 Sports spot

3 Get to know

4 Succidal

5 Wood of Noah’s Ark (Gen 6:14)

6 Church section

7 Alcoholic drink of fermented honey

8 Web address for short

9 Interfered with

10 Series of nine

11 Killer whale

12 Sailors

13 It may follow something

21 Feet in the image beheld by Nebuchadnezzar

23 Waterfall

25 Catholic football great Brett

27 Supreme___

28 Catholic actor and crooner, Crosby

29 Father of Cain

30 Dreamcatcher

31 Asian prince

32 The pope is the Bishop of ___

33 Book after Joel

36 Lower limb

37 Preliminary test

38 Sabbath

40 “Pinocchio” goldfish

41 Lake or pond

43 Small-time

44 Flower parts

47 Representation of thirteenth station of the cross

48 More docile

49 Thin glutinous mud

50 LA problem

51 “…thy kingdom ___”

52 Holbein or Arp

53 Floor coverings

54 Arguing

57 Vane reading

Solution on page 18

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The Catholic Commentator
What to save of Notre Dame?

Out of great tragedies come great lessons. Six days before Easter the Cathedral of Notre Dame, “Our Lady” as the French think of it, almost completely burned to the ground. The roof and its steeple entirely burned to ash, along with almost the entire inside of the cathedral. However, the front towers and the exterior walls with their beautiful stained glass windows were saved by some very brave firefighters. In his Easter homily, Archbishop Michel Aupetit of Paris praised those firefighters and their priest chaplain, Father Jean-Marc Fournier, who rushed into the blazing cathedral to save its relics and the Eucharist.

In Crux Now, a daily newsletter published by John Allen, a long-time Catholic correspondent in Rome, Archbishop Aupetit recalled in his Easter homily how he was most worried about the Eucharist, would it be saved? The Scripture passage from Easter morning where Mary Magdalene reports to the apostles, “The Lord is taken from his tomb and we do not know where he was laid,” came to his mind.

His homily continued, “Where is the body of the Lord?” This is the question that arose on Monday evening at the height of the Notre-Dame de Paris fire: “Where is the body of the Lord?” It was necessary to save the cathedral, the treasure, made up of the pieces of silversmiths’ work accumulated over the centuries. It was also necessary to save, for the believers, this infinitely precious relic: the crown of thorns of Jesus brought back by King Saint-Louis.

However those treasures, and even the relic of the thorns, were not the reason the cathedral was built. It was built to house the body of Christ. “It is for this body, veiled under the appearance of a piece of bread (“une miette” a crumb or piece) that this cathedral was built,” the archbishop said. He asked what was more important, the cathedral or the treasure of the piece of bread? Certainly Notre Dame must be rebuilt, he said, but these efforts must not overshadow the reason for its existence.

The archbishop’s homily was a very insightful spiritual and theological meditation on the Eucharist and its connection to the Easter celebration of Jesus’ resurrection. He praised Father Fournier for the risks he took to save a piece of bread because it was “the risen body of our Lord that we celebrate today, as we celebrate every Sunday, which has become the central day of our week because it is the day of his resurrection.”

I think that many times we emphasize that during Mass the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine becomes the blood of Christ as if they remain separated as they were in the dead Christ on the cross after the Roman soldier punctured his side with a spear. The bread and wine are separate sacramental signs which Jesus used at the Last Supper to signify the death he would suffer for our salvation. But that wasn’t the end of the story.

Archbishop Aupetit beautifully explained the way Jesus used earthly elements to bestow sacramental powers. “This bread ... is the life of God that is communicated. ‘This bread ... gives those who receive it eternal life, it opens the gates of heaven to us. It makes us participate in the resurrection of Christ, that resurrection which we celebrate today and which we call our own resurrection in the flesh at the return of the Lord, which we expect at the end of time.’”

The archbishop concluded, “The apostles rushed to Christ’s tomb, they did not find his body, they believed. We found (and rescued) the resurrected body of the Lord. We too believe.”

FATHER CARVILLE is a retired priest in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and writes on current topics for The Catholic Commentator. He can be reached at johnnycarville@gmail.com.
and there is good evidence it is not a deterrent to crime. But like many arguments of presented facts there are others that will argue back with facts. But in this whole debate I keep asking myself, in all of this back and forth, where is MERCY?

The idea of mercy should be on our hearts as Catholics because just a few weeks ago we observed Divine Mercy Sunday, when we acknowledged and joyfully proclaimed the love God has for each of us. We also gave thanks for his merciful, forgiving love.

When we reflect on God's merciful love we believe that God will always forgive the repentant sinner, as many times as he or she asks for forgiveness. His mercy is everlasting and inexhaustible. There is no sin too big that he will not forgive as long as we repent. We come to know the merciful love of God through Jesus, who through his works and actions revealed the depth of God's love for us.

But what is God's merciful love? First, God's love is always more than we can imagine. In human terms God's love is scandalously generous and faithful. If we reasoned to what God's love is from our human perspective, we might say, "God loves everyone, God forgives anyone BUT MAYBE NOT THAT PERSON ..." Our love can get stuck and frustrating but we also, to our surprise and maybe even our shame, find that at times are not as loving or forgiving as Jesus asks us to be when he commanded that we "Love one another as I HAVE LOVED YOU."

This command of Jesus can seem impossible at times when we are the victims of betrayal, lies, violence, especially senseless violence that takes the life of a loved one or any sin against us that we believe is unforgivable. In these moments we seem locked into a WHY that demands an answer, some justice to make this right. In this moment, and I say this not wanting to trivialize or assume I understand the depth of a person's anger and loss, the words of Jesus still call us to forgiveness.

This may seem impossible and even unfeeling but I believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and Life so there is life and healing in his words. How is it possible to forgive when it is so unfair? Some do find a way after great harm is done to them but how someone learns to forgive will always be a grace from God in your life. The path to this grace may begin with this paradoxical prayer, "Oh God, I truly hate this person with all my heart for what they have done to me and my family, I want them to suffer as I have and wish them no joy in their life. Don’t ask me to forgive them because I can’t, I won’t, I can't, help me to forgive!" With this prayer you give God a crack in your pain to work a grace that will help you find peace. How will it happen? I do not know – for the grace you receive will be unique to you. What I do know is that our lives will have more hope if we are looking and waiting for God's grace and not seeking revenge or the suffering of others.

Even though we can sometimes see others as evil because of their actions, I believe that God can never see us as completely evil and beyond redemption because we have been made in God's image and likeness. God is JUST, so he will require accountability for our actions and some sins demand that a person pay with a penal judgment. But even as God judges us, I believe God always sees that eternal image and likeness of himself so constructed will you or if wanted or not to be saved. I believe no matter our sin, how big or small, God always sees us as prodigal sons and daughters and God is always the faithful father waiting and watching for our return. He never gives up on us.

How can we not strive to do the same? In order for each of us to allow (it is our lawmakers who vote on this issue) someone to be put to death we have to let go of merciful love which strives to see, and if we cannot see, then to believe that everyone is made in God's image and likeness. This doesn't mean that a person who has committed a heinous crime should not be sentenced to a life imprisonment. This doesn't mean that at times it may seem impossible to see any sign of compassion or regret in the criminal which makes it even harder to not call him or her evil. But to believe and act out of the belief, even if we cannot see it, that this person is God's creation, humanizes us and guides us to not forget God's hand is in this and that the person is a human being made in God's image and likeness.

To believe in the goodness of everyone is the foundation needed to build a caring, accepting and just community. In our discussions in the next few weeks don't get caught up in the rhetoric. Ask yourself as a good Catholic, a believer in Jesus Christ, where is the mercy? Mercy for one is not made in God's image and likeness.

All I ask is that you pray about this as a spiritual invitation to grow deeper in your faith as believers. May Jesus, source of Divine Mercy, be our guide. Jesus, son of God, savior, have mercy on me!

Ascending, descending and just keeping steady

Where should we be casting our eyes? Upward, downward, or just on the road that we're walking?

Well there are different kinds of spiritualities: Spiritualities of the Ascent, Spiritualities of the Descent and Spiritualities of Maintenance, and each is important.

Spiritualities of the Ascent are spiritualities that invite us to strive always for what’s higher, for what’s more noble, for what stretches us and takes us (figuratively) upward beyond the humdrum moral and spiritual ruts within which we habitually find ourselves. They tell us that we can be more, that we can transcend the ordinary and break through the old ceilings that have up to now constituted our horizon. They tell us that if we stretch ourselves enough we will be able to walk on water, be great saints, be enflamed with the Spirit and experience the deep joys of God's Kingdom. These spiritualities tell us that sanctity lies in the ascent and that we should be habitually stretching ourselves towards higher goals.

These spiritualities have a secular counterpart and that counterpart is what we often hear from academic commencement speakers who are forever challenging those graduating to dream big dreams, to reach for the stars.

There is a lot to be said for this kind of an invitation. Much of the Gospel is exactly that kind of a challenge. Keep your eyes trained upward: Think with your big mind and with your big heart; imagine yourself as God's child and mirror that greatness; let Jesus' teachings stretch you; let Jesus' spirit fill you; let high ideals enlarge you.

But the Gospels also invite us to a Spirituality of the Descent. They tell us to make friends with the desert, the cross, with ashes, with humiliation, renunciation, with humiliation, with our shadow, and with death itself. They tell us that we grow not just by moving upward but also by descending downward.

We grow too by letting the desert work us over, by renouncing cherished dreams to accept the cross, by letting the humiliations that befall us deepen our character, by having the courage to face our own deep chaos, and by making peace with our own mortality. These spiritualities tell us that sometimes our task, spiritual and psychological, is not to raise our eyes to the heavens, but to look down upon the earth, to sit in the ashes of loneliness and humiliation, to stare down the restless desert inside us, and to make peace with our human limits and our mortality.

There aren't a lot of secular counterparts to this spirituality (though you do see this in what's best in psychology and anthropology). The challenge of the descent is not one you will often hear from a commencement speaker.

But there is still another genre of spiritualities, a very important kind, namely, Spiritualities of Maintenance. These spiritualities invite us to promote self-care, to factor in that the journey of discipleship is a marathon, not a sprint, and so to take heed of our limits. We aren't all spiritual athletes and tiredness, depression, loneliness and fragile health, mental or physical, can, if we are not careful with ourselves, break us. These spiritualities tell us to be cautious about both an over-enthusiastic ascent and a naive descent. They tell us that dullness, boredom and ennui will meet us along the road and so we should have a glass of wine when needed and let our weariness dictate that on a given night it might be healthier for us spiritually to watch a mindless sitcom or sports event than to spend that time watching a religious program. They also tell us to respect the fact that, given our mental fragility at times, there are descents that we should stay away from. They don't deny that we need to push ourselves to new heights and that we need to have the courage, at times, to face the chaos and desert inside us; but they caution that we must also always take into account what we can handle at a given time in our lives and what we can't handle just then. Good spiritualities don’t put you on a universal conveyor-belt, the same road for everyone, but take into account what you need to do to maintain your energy and sanity on a marathon journey.

Spiritualities of Maintenance have a secular counterpart and we can learn things here from our culture’s stress on maintaining one's physical health through proper exercise, proper diet and proper health.
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**Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office**

**Interim Principal Opening**

**2019-20 School Year**

**Catholic High School of Pointe Coupee**

New Roads, LA

Catholic High School of Pointe Coupee School (CHSPC), founded in 1904 and currently serving 300 students in Grades 7 - 12, seeks an Interim Principal to serve from July 1 – June 30. The Interim Principal is welcome to apply during the administrative search process, which will begin in December. All administrators are expected to demonstrate a commitment to growth, collaborative spirit, and strategic vision. CHSPC has a strong community committed to providing a religious, academic, and disciplined Catholic education whereby students develop their talents in service to school, church, and society.

The Diocese of Baton Rouge has twenty-nine schools in eight civil parishes, with strong Catholic identity the focus in all schools. The district is nationally accredited through AdvancED, and standardized test scores for the district are above state and national averages.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

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

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Practicing Catholic able to fulfill the Requirements of the Contract
- Master’s Degree, able to meet State Requirements as a Non-Public Administrator
- Five Years Minimum Experience in Education, Catholic Schools Preferred
- Demonstrated Leadership Ability, Catholic Education Preferred
- Must be Available on or before July 1, 2019

Send letter of interest, resume, and unofficial copies of all college transcripts to:

Via Mail: Interim Principal Search for Catholic High of Pointe Coupee

DBR Catholic Schools Office, P.O. Box 2028, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

FAX: 225-336-8711

Email: secretary@csobr.org

**Applicant’s Required Information Must be Received by May 15, 2019**

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

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**For help placing your classified ad, call 225-387-0983. All classified ads are prepaid. Credit cards are now accepted.**

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**COMING EVENTS**

**Women In Spirit** – Tori Harris, author, musician and worship leader, will speak at the Women in Spirit meeting, an interfaith gathering of women, Thursday, May 23, noon, at the St. Joseph Cathedral Parish Hall, Fourth and Main streets, Baton Rouge. RSVP by emailing stj@gmail.com or by calling the Catholic office at 225-387-5928.
EVENTS ▼
From page 18

Domestic Church Marriage Weekend – Married couples are invited to attend a Domestic Church Retreat Friday, May 24 – Monday, May 27 at the Wesley Retreat and Conference Center, 2350 Methodist Pkwy., Woodworth. To register, visit domesticchurchfamilies.com. For more information, call Katie and Andrew Wil- lenborg at 404-421-5056 or email katie.willenborg@ woodworth. To register, visit domesticchurchfamilies.com. For more information, call Katie and Andrew Willenborg at 404-421-5056 or email katie.willenborg@gmail.com.

May Crowning – St. Agnes Confraternity, Third Or- der of Mary, will hold its annual May Crowning, Sun- day, May 26, 3 p.m., at St. Agnes Church, 749 East Blvd., Baton Rouge. For more information, call Karen Mollere at 225-272-5915.

New Orleans Retreat – Father Jim Sichko of the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky will present a preached silent retreat, “Finding God Now! Every Day Experience” Friday, May 31 – Sunday, June 2 at the Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center, 5900 St. Mary St., Metairie. To register, visit retreats.arch-no.org or call 1-866-937-9170.

Enter Canaan – Women suffering from abortion are invited to attend an Enter Canaan Women’s Day of Prayer and Healing Saturday, June 1, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. For more information, email Enter-IngCanaan@diobr.org or call 225-325-3459. All inquiries are confidential.

ROLHEISER ▼
from page 17

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge….  

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

Basic Requirements and Preferences:
• Practicing Catholic with Advanced Degree
• Minimum of Five Years of Relevant Experience
• Experience in Donor Relations and Cultivation, Alumni Outreach and Planned Giving
• Full Job Description and Requirements available at www.csobr.org

Send resume, copies of all college transcript(s) showing degrees, and three letters of recommendation to SMHS President Search Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office P. O. Box 2028 Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

Applications will be considered as received.

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Folse runs for the first time in decades after realizing his left foot is pain free.

Weeks before the excursion, Folse said he received a call from his close friend, Sister Dulce Maria CSMP of Batou Rouge, who told him that the Blessed Mother had a gift for him in Fatima but that he had to pick it up in person. Filled with doubt about his ability to both complete the walk in Spain and travel to Portugal, Folse said he quickly dismissed the idea.

Later, though, while studying the map of the places the pilgrims would visit, Folse said he realized that the final portion of the planned 118-kilometer walk, which ends at Santiago de Compostela, was only a three-hour drive from Fatima.

“I can’t even tell you the emotion that ran through my veins because I’m thinking to myself, ‘Wow, this is impossible that I’m going to be doing this walk and here’s Fatima right here and Sister (Dulce) doesn’t know anything about my walk,’ ” he recalled.

Arriving in Spain for the start of his spiritual journey, Folse said he had resigned himself to walking one mile a day. But setting out on day one, in silence and in prayer, he and his group completed 10 miles. According to Folse, an unprecedented snow day on the second day gave him the chance to rest his foot and his soul as he encountered others walking the El Camino.

“Why do we need a pilgrimage, Folse recalled. “Perhaps they were divorced; some of them had a loss of a child; some of them (had suffered) bankruptcy; some of them had loss of faith.”

Recounting his own reason for being there and not believing who could complete the walk because of his crushed foot, Folse said he will never forget the words of a fellow pilgrim from Sweden: “That’s the way it works. You always just think you can’t do it and he (God) will just push you and push you and push you.”

Folse said the faith of those around him was astounding. Though the men and women came from different countries, spoke different languages and lived different lifestyles, Folse said they were “all there for the same reason: they were in search of God.” He also said the scenic route, which included rest stops by streams, mountainous terrain and beautiful ancient churches, added to the aura of the spectacular hike.

“People you met on the walk would say only two words,” recalled Folse. “‘Buen Camino’ – ‘good walk.’”

Throughout the trek, Folse said he did not focus on the pain in his foot. His group reached the end of the Camino and joined hundreds of other pilgrims for Mass at the cathedral that evening. While at Mass, Folse said he received another gift from God – seeing the priests swing the cathedral’s massive incense ball known as the Botafumiero.

Folse said he considered the 10-day journey on the El Camino as “the door to Fatima.”

“And I can’t think of a better entrance because you have to days of silent prayer,” he said.

Once in Fatima, the group participated in the usual activities for the faithful including Mass at the Shrine of Fatima, a procession of the Blessed Mother, confession and a visit to “the apparition tree where the Blessed Mother had appeared” to the three children, Lucia Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco de Jesus Marto. Folse said during a visit to the home of the Marto children “the Blessed Mother gave me a special gift.”

“I saw a sign that said base- ment kitchen,” Folse recalled. “So, I walked down there and it’s kind of dark and there’s no windows there and I’m sitting on a little bench where (St. Francis’s) father scraped the pigs for the boucheries and in the picture, there is a light that looks like it’s from the sun and I know it’s the Blessed Mother.”

Folse said he also felt his own mother was the powerful force behind his trip to Fatima because of her devotion to the Blessed Mother. When the excursion to Fatima was complete, Folse and his travel companions stopped at a gas station on the way out of town, and it’s a moment he’ll never forget.

“I started walking across the cement to the store and I said, ‘My God! I have no pain in my foot at all!’” Folse stated.

Turning to his companions, he showed off the movement in his previously stiff left foot. Then, Folse said he did something he hadn’t done in decades – run.

“When I’m running around that service station with this foot, wide open and no problems with it anymore, I’m thinking to myself how many times you doubt (like), ‘Eh, Blessed Mother’s not calling me,’ ” he said.

“There are miracles in your life all the time, you just have to be faithful,” Folse said. “Most people don’t believe in miracles. Let me tell you what, you should because everything you’re fighting in your life, you’re a prayer away from solving that problem. You just have to keep that faith and know that that prayer is going to be answered. And sometimes it’s answered by not being answered. So you understand that part of it too.”