Author recalls fond memories at Carville

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Anne Harmon Brett’s favorite childhood memories include “stolen moments” when her parents crawled through a hole under a fence at the National Leprosarium in Carville, where they were patients, to meet Anne and her brother, J.C., for Sunday picnics by the Mississippi River levee.

Brett’s parents, Johnny and Anne Harmon, defied conventional boundaries and refused to let the leprosy rule their lives. Patients at Carville, where the Harmons had met and fell in love, were not allowed to marry.

The Harmons secretly married outside of the leprosarium with the assistance and blessings of the Daughters of Charity, who took care of the patients physically and spiritually when most everyone else abandoned them.

Johnny Harmon, who refused to call himself a leper, wrote about his journey from Texas to Carville, his romance with Anne and his determination to overcome adversities and live a full life while living at Carville in his memoir “King of the Microbes.” Brett included her own reflections in her book, “THE DISEASE: One Man’s Journey through a Life with Leprosy.”

Five members of Brett’s maternal side and two on her paternal side were patients at Carville. She was particularly touched by her father’s heartbreaking story concerning Anne’s arrival at Carville and how hysteria about leprosy, now known as Hansen’s disease, impacted her family. In 1932 Brett’s maternal grandmother, Louise Triche, who lived on a sugar plantation in Vacherie with her husband Jack and children, went to a local health unit for a checkup and was diagnosed with Hansen’s Disease. She was immediately taken to Carville.

When she didn’t return home that evening, Jack asked the local sheriff if he knew where she might be and was told she was taken to Carville. Because there was no public transportation to the hospital Jack hitchhiked 40 miles to Carville.

Brett’s mother was one of three siblings that were patients at Carville. When Anne and her brother Andre arrived at the hospital in 1934, they laughed as they held the mother superior’s hand and ran when they saw Triche, who was sitting in a wheelchair, and collapsed in her arms. Anne’s mother cried because she knew her children’s fate.

Learning that the Triche children were at Carville, Vacherie residents panicked and authorities burned down the Triche home because people feared

St. Margaret renovation unveiled during Mass

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

The grand lady looked fatigued, her beauty rankled by too much time in unrelenting heat and bone-chilling cold.

One could almost detect a slight frown, and more than a little work was going to be necessary to restore her to her original grandeur.

Today St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church in Albany stands proud after a 14-month renovation project its restored her original beauty.

“The church is brighter, cleaner,” pastor Father Jamin David said of the $3 million project. “She looks very proud.”

Perhaps most miraculous is the church has survived. Seemingly crumbling at its core, the 110-year-old structure was fading rapidly and nearly in a state of disrepair, a fact not lost on Father David and parish members. Father David said the bones of a master plan were developed beginning in 2014 with the obvious question being what to do with the old church.

Not only was the church losing its race to time, it had also become too small, especially for a parish that the Diocesan Planning Committee had deemed as having the highest growth rate per capita in the Diocese of Baton Rouge.
St. John the Baptist

By Barry Schoedel

St. John the Baptist was more than a prophet. Jesus tells us there has been none greater among those born of women. He was the messenger sent to prepare the way for the coming of the kingdom of God in the person of the Messiah, Jesus. He truly was a voice of one crying out in the desert: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths!

How did he do this? He went out to the desert of Judea and preached, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” The kingdom of heaven is synonymous with the kingdom of God; it means the same thing. What does it mean to repent, though?

To repent means more than to feel sorry for one’s sins. Repentance is more than a feeling. It is to embark upon a new way of life. It means to turn your mind anew to God, turning away from self-preoccupation and self-centeredness to God-centeredness. It means purifying the heart of sinful attachments by turning to God in humility.

Repentance involves the whole person, a re-orientation of priorities that places sanctity as the most important achievement in life. Pope Francis, in a letter on holiness, wrote, “A Christian cannot think of his or her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness, “for this is the will of God, your sanctification.” (1 Thes 4:3)

St. John the Baptist was a holy man who rejected superficial and self-aggrandizing ways of being religious to get at the heart of the matter: our need for a fundamental, interior conversion to God. This was signified by the baptism of repentance that went along with his preaching in the desert of Judea. This baptism called for concrete action: a rejection of sin, a break from one’s former life and a commitment to a new way of life.

It is when St. John the Baptist and his followers were renewed by the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan that Jesus appeared as the awaited Messiah. And as if to show us that we must come to him by way of St. John, that is, by way of repentance, Jesus, himself, was baptized by St. John.

Advent reminds us that we prepare to encounter Christ as Lord and Savior through the path of repentance, of conversion. It is a time to turn anew to the word of God as the bread our souls most need to have life. We remember that as Christians we are called to repent and believe, not just one or the other, but both. John the Baptist announces the coming of the Messiah through a communal preparation of repentance, i.e. conversion. As a church, may we also announce his coming in this way to the world.

Schoedel is associate director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.
Catholic Banquet special to Angola inmates

By Bonny Van
The Catholic Commentator

On a bright sunny day just outside of the stucco front of Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel on the grounds of the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola a small crowd of men gathered. They were lined up, waiting on family members to arrive for Mass and the annual Catholic Banquet held on Nov. 21. After going through the security checkpoint at the prison entrance, guests were shuttled to the chapel on buses, a procedure that pushed the start of the 11 a.m. Mass closer to noon. Finally, prisoners and family members entered the church and the atmosphere changed immediately, with an energy that was palpable. Many stopped to greet celebrant Father Todd Lloyd, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Lake-land, as they made their way to their seats. Inmates already seated, saving room for loved ones, were greeted with hugs, smiles and handshakes. Angst regarding the delayed start time was no match for such a happy reception.

“T"hink the first thing is, one of the most important things for human nature is seeing you’re not the only one doing something and so whenever we’re able to have a banquet, we’re able to fill up the church and all these guys are able to see guys from Camp C, the other camps, the out-camps, and see that they’re all, even though they’re separated, they’re all together and worshipping God, practicing their faith in being Catholic,” explained Father Lloyd of the importance of the event. “And number two, I would say having your family come and spending that time doing something really important, worshipping together and then afterwards having a meal together and being able to introduce your family to me and to the other ministers and to your other brother inmates here at Angola, that helps to kind of grow the family. It grows the idea of their family.”

Brother Ray Hebert SC, chaplain at Catholic High School in Baton Rouge, and Deacon Zeke Nola, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in St. Francisville, assisted with the Mass along with two prison-ers who were altar servers. The Angola Celestial Men’s Choir provided the music. The feeling of peace and love was apparent in the atmosphere, no different from a Mass outside of the prison walls.

“It’s really kind of encouraging to me (to watch the interactions) because you know I go (celebrate) Mass at all the different camps. It’s this divided by three and it’s really even less than that,” said Father Lloyd. “Whenever you see just one face after another, you know I kind of lose track of what you’re doing and then when you see them in a full church you realize there’s a lot going on. So it helps to kind of put in perspective what we’re doing.”

Following Mass, everyone gathered in a nearby dining hall where inmates served more than 400 plates of jambalu-sa.

Laura Poché
Author & Estate Planning & Administration Attorney

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New Americans
Thanksgiving Dinner

Above, from left: Andrea Rosas dances during a Hispanic dance at the New Americans Thanksgiving, which was sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and held Nov. 23 at St. George Church in Baton Rouge. Nearly 80 immigrant and refugee families gathered for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Rosas is part of the Herencia Mexican dance group. Photos by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

Mariama Sesay, a refugee from Sierra Leona, performed to open the event. Sesay is the daughter of Dauda Sesay, also a Sierra Leona refugee, and the two were reunited in 2017 after spending 16 years apart.

Much of the music was energizing, causing even the youngest of attendees to break out in dance and just enjoy the moment.

Left: Bishop Michael G. Duca looks on as a young man navigates his electronic device. Bishop Duca made a point to visit with families sitting at all of the tables.

Right: Gabriela Joya, also a member of the Herencia Mexicana dance group, flashes a smile during the performance. The group danced to two Hispanic songs.

ANGOLA ▼

From page 3

laya and white beans provided by the prison ministry of St. George Church in Baton Rouge. Gerry Chidester, a member of the prison ministry team, said he cooked 25 pounds of beans for the banquet. He said he joined the ministry to help out and ended up making quite a few friends at Angola.

“I got attached to some of them, a lot of them actually ... I have a lot of friends there,” he noted. “And I feel a responsibility to do the ministry work for them, especially this banquet. There’s not a whole lot we can physically give them but this is one thing that I can help give to them."

Food for the Catholic Banquet at Angola is rotated each year between the prison ministries at St. George and St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge.

Patricia Holden of Covington, along with a family friend, joined her son, Julius Holden, for the Mass and the banquet. Holden has visited her son twice a month for the past 25 years. She said she loves the stained glass and murals in the chapel.

“I love being with (my son) especially in church because I know God’s looking out for him for me,” said Holden.

Julius said the banquet is important for reconnecting.

“So it’s fellowship, it’s some time with family and that’s what we look forward to the most,” he explained. “It leaves us feeling good and you know, we go back to where we might see each other four or five months but we can always look forward to this because it brings us together as a community, as a whole Catholic community here at Angola.”

“This is a really special event for these guys,” said Linda Fjeldsjo, coordinator of Joseph Homes/Prison Ministry for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, who attended with Joseph Homes case manager Laverne Klier. “It gives the men a chance to not only be with their family members but with each other as well. And, for most of them, that is their family because they’ve spent 20, 30 sometimes 40 years together.”

Jay Jackson, chaplain at Angola, said involvement from the church parish prison ministries is very important in bringing a sense of God’s love to the inmates.

“I think it kind of brings us back to our humble beginnings. I think when you’re able to serve the less fortunate and be able to put a smile on their face, you see the goodness of God come through. And I think it’s all part of the foundation of our faith. And I think the only way you can witness it is if you participate and get involved with it,” said Jackson.
Bishop Duca blesses Cypress Springs Mercedarian chapel

By Bonny Van
The Catholic Commentator

At the Chapel of Divine Providence on the Cypress Springs Mercedarian Prayer Center in Baton Rouge, before an overflow crowd that included people sitting in chairs set up in the vestibule, Bishop Michael G. Duca welcomed the Mercedarian Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to the Diocese of Baton Rouge during a Mass on Nov. 26.

“Our prayer today is that we come here to this place to welcome the full power and strength and beauty of the Mercedarian Sisters into our diocese,” said Bishop Duca during his homily.

In April 2001, Sister Dulce Maria came to Baton Rouge to begin her ministry, which grew into Cypress Springs, a sprawling campus that includes a convent, chapel, ministry building, kitchen and dining hall, meditation trails and Dolphin Room, used for gatherings.

“It’s a promise that’s been kept by Papa,” said Sister Dulce, referring to a promise from God regarding the prayer center. “He said it would happen and here it is. He always keeps his word. And I’m excited and grateful.”

Bishop Duca was joined by 14 priests, along with several deacons and seminarians, the majority from the Diocese of Baton Rouge, for a ceremony that included a blessing of the altar.

The bishop said as he reflected on the day, “It (prayer center) took a long time to build, a long time to work with the people and get the right people in the ministry.”

He added that the sisters also bring youth in their order, which is continuing to grow.

“And some years ago, seeds were cast in our diocese,” said Bishop Duca. “They grew quietly. Things that grow quietly and slowly put down deep roots. The plant continued to grow and found a bigger pot to grow in, a really nice pot, and it was well fed and watered, and it continued to grow. Quietly it began to bring God’s mercy, love, forgiveness and healing to the people of our diocese ... And when the time came, to plant it in the full garden of the diocese, allowing it to put down its deepest roots.”

The bishop noted the Mercedarian Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament belong to an order that’s been around for 800 years. He acknowledged that history brought a “great source of wisdom and strength” to the diocese.

Following the Mass, Bishop Duca and the clergy, followed by the congregation, blessed the buildings and grounds of the campus. The event ended with a reception in the dining hall.
Chalice for gluten-intolerant/ Adultery and annulment

Q

More and more people are being diagnosed with celiac or wheat allergies. Because of the particle of the host that is dipped into the chalice right before Communion, someone who is gluten-intolerant cannot receive the precious blood from the chalice. What is your suggestion? (Missou-

A

The Catholic Church's view, adultery itself is not a valid reason for annulling a marriage. For an annulment, one must be able to go back to the start of the marriage and be able to show either that the couple was prohibited from marrying by the laws of the church or that the consent of one or both of the spouses was invalid. Some common grounds for that lack of consent are: “inability to assume the essential obligations of marriage for psychological reasons” or “willful exclusion of essential elements or properties of marriage, such as children, fidelity or permanence.”

Q

Why was my annulment denied when my spouse broke a commandment by committing adultery during our marriage (resulting in a divorce)? Though many people are leaving the church, I want to stay and get married in the church. Why am I being denied that right? (Dallas, Georgia)

A

In the Catholic Church's view, adultery itself is not a valid reason for annulling a marriage. For an annulment, one must be able to go back to the start of the marriage and be able to show either that the couple was prohibited from marrying by the laws of the church or that the consent of one or both of the spouses was invalid. Some common grounds for that lack of consent are: “inability to assume the essential obligations of marriage for psychological reasons” or “willful exclusion of essential elements or properties of marriage, such as children, fidelity or permanence.”

So, while the fact of adultery itself does not render a marriage invalid, it is possible that infidelity could offer evidence that one or both of the spouses had not entered the marriage with the proper commitment required for a valid marriage to come into existence. (Practically speaking, I would think that the sooner into the marriage the adultery took place, the easier it might be to show a lack of proper commitment at the outset.)

One of the church's canonical grounds for annulment is “error concerning the unity ... of marriage” (Canon 1099). As the Archdiocese of Atlanta explains on its website, some questions to be raised are these: “At the time of marriage, did either you or your former spouse believe that it was acceptable to have other sexual partners after marriage? Was there anything in the family background to explain the belief that marriage was not an exclusive (totally faithful) relationship?” And so, I would say to the writer of our question: If you simply offered the fact of your spouse's adultery in petitioning for an annulment, I understand why it was denied. But if you can go back to the very time of the marriage and show that your spouse lacked the requisite consent to exclusivity, you might want to re-submit the case to your diocesan tribunal.

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.
Church teaching offers colorful view of a life of virtue

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Many young Catholics lament that when it comes to faith and morality “the church is telling us what to do” and it sees issues in “black and white.”

But if young adults study church teachings and attempt to live by them, they are not “black and white” but a moving picture of living color, said Dr. Jennifer Miller in her presentation, “Living in Color: Virtue Ethics and the Beatitudes,” at a Theology on Tap meeting at the Tin Roof Brewery on Nov. 14.

Playing a video clip of the primarily black and white movie “Schindler’s List,” the color Schindler sees is a red coat of a young girl, which represents the innocence of the Jewish faith being slaughtered. When in a sea of what seems to be black and white Catholic faith teachings, the Beatitudes are those beacons of color that point out “this is the way to go,” according to Miller.

Developing virtues through the Beatitudes helps young Catholics colorfully stand out in a world that seeks happiness in essentially murky gray and unfulfilling ways.

“The church is calling us to happiness now, to flourish for the rest of eternity,” Miller said.

Focusing on Advent, Miller challenged the attendees to think about ways to grow spiritually in the light of the Beatitudes.

St. Augustine, who lived a life that ranged from debauchery to a life of spiritual poverty and humility, is an example of the saints who serve as good examples in walking in the footsteps of the Beatitudes.

Miller also noted that Adam and Eve’s sin was “that they decided they would become god without God.”

The Blessed Virgin Mary, however, reversed that through her humility and her “flat” to becoming the Mother of God. Yet, she was also not afraid to ask questions such as “how can this be?” because she wanted to understand how this would be accomplished. Then, rather than thinking of herself, she rushed to take care of her cousin Elizabeth, who was pregnant with St. John the Baptist.

When one allows God to enter their life more deeply one sees “how much bigger he is than I am.”

“This brings great joy,” said Miller who acknowledged it is also difficult and scary because the future is uncertain.

She further urged the young adults to reflect on where they are trying to play God in their lives.

For attendee Daniel Fox, 20, of St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church in Albany, the message was timely.

“I liked how she talked about the God complex, about how we try to plan our lives 20 years ahead instead of walking with God,” said Fox.

Miller said St. Augustine recommended people practice Lectio Divina, or meditating and praying with Scriptures, and “let the word of God challenge you.”

Additionally, young Catholics should embrace a eucharistic way of living and the “culture of love” as described by St. John Paul II.

This means respecting the dignity and presence of Christ in every human being, Miller said.

She pointed out some Catholics were angry when Lady Gaga, a fallen-away Catholic, took to Instagram in 2016 to thank Father John Duffell of New York’s Blessed Sacrament Church for delivering a “beautiful homily” at her family’s restaurant.

In the image’s caption, she wrote, “I was so moved today when you said, The Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect but the food that God gives us.”

Miller noted that sadly some expressed indignation rather than appreciation for how the Eucharist brought people closer to God.

“I thought, ‘That is the Eucharist,’ recognizing that everything is a gift of God,” Miller said.

This leads to the question, “How do we react to others who struggle in their faith and who have questions, and if you love someone, will you challenge them to grow?” said Miller.

She issued another Advent challenge to the attendees to think about their pursuit of pleasures by reflecting on the beatitude “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

“God created pleasure because people enjoy pleasure,” said Miller. “The problem is when we pursue pleasure for its own sake.”

She pointed out Jesus warns, “Woe to you who laugh, for you will weep and grieve.”

What Jesus is condemning is not the enjoyment of pleasures, but when people are indifferent to the suffering of others or seek pleasure to escape from suffering rather than walking through it with God, said Miller.

“There is a joy in accepting and living out our suffering,” she said.

This point resonated with Conner Graham, 28, a member of Holy Rosary Church in St. Amant.

“What challenges me most is screen time. I feel that (Miller) called me out on that,” said Coleman.

But she said she thinks the benefit of “losing out” on social media time will be finding God’s love, mercy and grace.

“Finding him is a great joy especially when you are praying and making an important decision in life,” Coleman.
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EWTN honors Catholic Community Radio

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

On an unusually balmy December day when the mercury topped out at 75 and the Saints were putting the finishing touches on a 13-3 regular season that would culminate in a Super Bowl championship, Advent and Christmas music debuted the humble beginnings of Catholic Community Radio in Baton Rouge.

Within a few weeks, Catholic Community Radio was able to connect a satellite uplink that brought the popular EWTN’s Catholic talk-radio format live to the station, an idea that was launched on a toasty December day has been warming the hearts of Catholic listeners throughout south Louisiana for the past 10 years.

Michael Warsaw, chairman and chief executive officer of EWTN, recently awarded president/general manager David Dawson an award for their 10 years of broadcasting. “The Blessed Mother’s intercession is credited with bringing this apostolate to birth in southeast Louisiana,” Dawson said. “Miraculously, volunteers with differing gifts and talents appeared right when there was a need. From studio space to on-air talent, production capabilities and financial assistance, the Holy Spirit continues to stir hearts into flame in this work of evangelization.”

The vision of Dawson, Johnny Hebert and the late Mike Norwood of a Catholic radio station has blossomed from the Capital City to now include the entire New Orleans metropolitan area as well as southward to Houma.

“The bishops of these three respective dioceses (dioceses of Baton Rouge and Houma-Thibodaux and the Archdiocese of New Orleans) have offered their continued spiritual support so that Jesus Christ and his Church might have a home on the radio dial in the Catholic culture of the Deep South,” Dawson said.

Catholic Community Radio produces live and local programming each week covering radio, but also time-shifted audio and streaming platforms like Spotify, Google Music and Apple Podcasts. Father Chris Decker, spiritual director for Catholic Community Radio, utilizes his expansive acumen in technology to bring several of the flagship programs like the popular “WakeUp!” and “The Catholic Underground” onto television and video platforms.

The station also began broadcasting “Overflow,” featuring nationally renowned recording artist Kara Klein Oubre and co-host Chris Price, formerly of WBRZ in Baton Rouge. The show, which uses social media to promote new programs and also has a website for podcasts and blogs, airs Fridays at 3 p.m.

Catholic Community Radio broadcasts on three radio stations, WPYR, 1380 AM, WQNO, 690 AM in New Orleans.

Catholic Community also has a new low-power station, 105.9 FM, that covers the eastern part of East Baton Rouge Parish from the Interstate 10/12 split to Juban Crossing in Denham Springs. A license has been granted for the other half of East Baton Rouge Parish, although donors are needed to purchase the equipment.

Like Sister de Lourdes and Sister Florence Kruczek (right), 91, some 30,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have spent their lives doing the Lord’s work. Most served for little or no pay, and now their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious offers vital support for necessities, such as medications and nursing care. Please be generous.

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REDEDICATION

That was fascinating,” Father David said.

“We knew something had to be done,” he added, “whether it be salvage and reusing the current building or creating a new building altogether.”

Archdiocese and Diocese of Baton Rouge presented three options to parishioners, including building a new church, adding onto the existing structure or renovating the existing structure.

By an overwhelming consensus that wanted to preserve the church, parishioners volunteered their desire to renovate the church, which was a decision that would have enormous downstream economic consequences.

“He gave me to the parishioners of the

congregation that we would not move the church, but that we would renovate the church, which was decided on by a vote,” added Bill Cusack, former parish treasurer.

“Even though there was a desire for the preservation of the old structure, we all have a lot from the past and what the original building was intended to look like.”

Post-Vinsky damage caused massive damage. Amazingly, the entire steeple had backwards extended itself and was being supported by the choir loft, which prevented it from falling over.

“That was an act of God,” Father Dav

id said.

Parishioners immediately noticed dramatic changes in the church’s exterior façade, with additions that had been built during the years ripped off. The result was the beautiful lady once again showing her original face, gussied up with a fresh coat of paint, new sidwalks, new metal roof, improved draperies and a piazza with a stunning statue of St. Margaret standing sentry.

“What we found was that a lot of the problems we had was caused by the additions that has been added on over the past 150 years,” said Father David. “A lot of what we did was throwing back a lot from the past and what the original structure was intended to look like.”

Most alarming was discovering the support beams of the steeple were compromised through the years and in danger of collapsing, which could have caused massive damage. Amazingly, the entire steeple had backwards extended itself and was being supported by the choir loft, which prevented it from falling over.

“Yet another act of God,” Father Dav

id said.

“Father David said. “An addition was added to the rear of the church, which included a new confessional, sacristy, bathroom, gathering area and covered drop-off area. Once the doors opened, the beauty was breathtaking. Upon entering, one immediately noticed a massive gothic frame beautifully finished that was placed behind the altar. Father David said the old gothic window frame was found early on during the construction process, and it was immediately determined the scenery would be built around the cherished discovery.

Interior work also included all new pews, lighting, as well as a stunning refurbishing of the original wood floors. Seating was also increased from 250 to 320.

Joseph artist Norman Fauchex was commissioned to design the Stations of the Cross, and each station features various vistas of Louisiana landscapes. One of the stations also includes a depiction of St. Margaret pastored Father James Delatour.

“Now we can focus on more ministry and advance the mission and mini

stries of St. Margaret.”

Bishop Duca pours oil on the altar during the Mass. The altar is new, along with the pews, ambo and tabernacle.

Photos by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

The exterior of St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church is reflected in the approaching dusk as rededication ceremonies come to a close on Nov. 17. The church underwent a major renovation, and exterior work included new paint, sidewalks, metal roof, a statue of St. Margaret in the new piazza and repairs on the steeple.

In a little thanksgiving for what they have done,” Father David said.

Of course, even Father David was portrayed, although there was a slight shortcoming.

Initially, Fauchex had portrayed Fa

ther David as Pontius Pilate, but after gently asking, he was changed to Jo

seph of Arimathea.

On the altar is a role of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, appropriate because of the devotion the Hungarian community has to her.

“I am satisfied with the way every
good thing turned out,” Father David said. “It was tearing off years and years of history. It was almost as if every layer you peeled off, you were able to go back to something else that was going to be a benefit.

“It’s accessible, comfortable and re

presentative of the people who attend services here.”

He noted parishioners expressed their delight that the integrity of the old church has been preserved but “we also cleaned it up and gave it the glory. Everything seems to fit so well in the church."

“Now we can focus on more ministry and advance the ministries and mini

stries of St. Margaret.”
‘Pray, Learn and Serve:’
Message of Veterans Mass

The following article was written by Ella Doyle, an eighth-grader at St. Alphonsus Liguori School in Greenwell Springs, from the Vocations Breakfast on Thursday, Nov. 7. The annual event is sponsored by the Vocations Team at St. Alphonsus Church.

When Father Tat Hoang CSsR, pastor of St. Gerard Majella Church in Baton Rouge, began his homily at the Veterans Mass at St. Alphonsus, I was curious about how he was going to tie the parable of the lost sheep to veterans, but I was amazed when he finished. Father Hoang started out by explaining the parable in a way I had never heard. He asked some of the kids in the congregation how they thought the sheep felt while lost. They said the sheep probably felt scared, lonely and vulnerable. Father Hoang continued by saying the shepherd was the protector of that sheep, and the shepherd tries his hardest to keep him safe after he found it; this is what veterans do for us. Veterans are the shepherds and we are the sheep. The military protects all those who are scared and vulnerable and that is what God calls those men and women to do. A soldier’s vocation is to protect the scared and lost.

After Mass I made my way over to the Vocations Breakfast. The food was great, and I was further amazed by Father Hoang. He started off by holding up a glass of water and drinking half of it rather dramatically. He started a discussion about how we can serve God by sharing our other half of water, instead of just throwing it away. God doesn’t care about our flaws; all he wants is for us to help make the world better and serve him in whatever he calls us to do. When we serve God, it reflects who we are as a person. Father Hoang then told us how learning can help us in our mission to serve the Lord. We should never stop learning because there is always more to learn. Learning new things can help us find our vocation and ways to live out our vocation. Father Hoang also said that the most important thing you can do is pray.

Deadline for this section is Jan. 7, 2020.

Call Wanda Koch at 225-387-0983
or email wkoch@diobr.org.
GET UP AND CHEER! – Students at St. George School in Baton Rouge work on their team spirit during a visit by cheer and dance team members of St. Michael the Archangel High School in Baton Rouge. Photo provided by Kaye Self | St. Michael High School

GIVING THANKS – St. Peter Chanel seventh and eighth graders wrote a list of what they are thankful for to kick off the Thanksgiving break in English and literature classes. Then, for an artistic turn, they turned the words into smoke rising from a turkey. Students started the year reading “Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad,” then took a field trip to see the movie “Harriet” to close out the unit. Next, students studied Edgar Allan Poe’s short story, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and created a tableau of the horror story. To move into the holiday season, students are reading and acting out the drama, “A Christmas Carol.” Students will celebrate the end of exams by watching the movie. Photo provided by Amy Lundy | St. Peter Chanel School

CAREER FAIR – Juniors and seniors from Catholic High School of Pointe Coupee in New Roads were able to meet with multiple colleges and institutes today during the College and Career Fair held in the gym. Students asked great questions to help guide themselves in their post high school journeys. Photo provided by Megan Gir inghouse | Catholic High School of Pointe Coupee

MASS

From page 12

because if you pray, you can’t lose. You will always gain something from prayer whether it be something big and obvious, or something small that you may not even realize. These are the three parts of a motto Father Hoang taught us: “Pray, Learn and Serve.” If we follow this motto, we will find and live out our vocation.

It wasn’t just Father Hoang that made the Veterans Mass at St. Alphonsus special. The school’s band played “God Bless America” and “America the Beautiful,” and St. Alphonsus student Matt Ashe played a trumpet solo during the Mass. Eighth-graders Gavin Landry, Makenzie Clark and Mary Kathryn Gravois sang during this Mass, and their voices were truly beautiful. A color guard procession featured Boy Scouts Chris Denicola, Alex Neal and John Paul Breaux carrying the American, Louisiana and Papal flags. They also lead the Pledge of Allegiance before Mass. Nine third-grade students did the readings and brought the gifts up with their veteran parents or grandparents, and the seventh-graders ushered. The altar was beautifully decorated in honor of our veterans, and there were many veterans in the congregation. This Mass couldn’t have been as beautiful as it was without everyone who helped put it together. If you would like to experience a St. Alphonsus School Mass for yourself, you can come most Friday mornings; a different grade level reads at every Mass, and the choir is made up of the smaller grade levels.
**Playing With Fire**

Paramount

Generally harmless but painfully unfunny comedy in which the superintendent (John Cena) of a group of smokejumpers (Keegan-Michael Key, John Leguizamo and Tyler Mane) gives temporary shelter at their rural headquarters to a teen girl (Brianna Hildebrand) and her two younger siblings (Christian Convery and Finley Rose Slater) after their family’s cabin, in which they’d been staying on their own, burns down. As he awaits pick-up by their parents, applies to replace his时限’s film is acceptable for a wide audience. But even the least demanding moviegoers will likely find these proceedings all wet. A veiled sexual reference, considerable scatological humor. A-II; PG-13

**Doctor Sleep**

 Warner Bros.

Disturbing horror sequel to 1980’s “The Shining” finds the psychic little boy of that film grown into a troubled hospice orderly (Ewan McGregor) who unites with a similarly gifted teen girl (Kyliegh Curran) to combat an occult band of wanderers (led by Rebecca Ferguson) who torture and murder children and use their life essence to keep themselves young. Working from the 2013 novel by Stephen King, writer-director Mike Flanagan takes his time and effectively builds up a macabre mood. But the unsettling premise and intermitting graphic mayhem make his polished, movie-appropriate for few. An occult theme, scenes of harsh, gory violence, including the torture of a child, some gruesome sights, drug use, full female nudity in a nonsexual context, off-screen casual sex, at least one profanity, a couple of milder oaths, several rough terms, occasional crude and crass language. L; R

**A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood**

Sony

Assigned, much against his will, to profile public television children’s show host Fred Rogers (Tom Hanks), a troubled, cynical reporter (Matthew Rhys) finds his life transformed by the friendship into which his gentle, wise and unflappable father figure public television children’s show host Fred Rogers (Tom Hanks), a troubled, cynical reporter (Matthew Rhys) finds his life transformed by the friendship into which his gentle, wise and unflappable minister) are consistently handled with skill. While the journalist’s struggles are too dark for little kids, teens and grown-ups will profit from this explicitly humane, implicitly religious movie. Mature themes, including adultery, a fistfight, one mild oath, a single crass term. A-II; PG-13

**Charlie’s Angels**

Queens

This third film iteration of the iconic 1976-81 television series turns out to be, overall, a charmer, an old-fashioned popcorn movie overstuffed with preposterous action sequences, exotic locales and good humor. A secret organization recruits women from around the world to serve as spies, or “Angels.” When the outfit’s leader (Patrick Stewart) retires, he is succeeded by a former agent (Elizabeth Banks, who also directed and wrote the screenplay). Two of her operatives (Kristen Stewart and Ella Balinska) join forces with an engineer (Naomi Scott) whose invention, a sustainable energy source, has been stolen by her wicked bosses (Nat Faxon and Sam Clafin) who plan to weaponize it. A globetrotting game of cat and mouse ensues, with enough twists and double-crosses to keep viewers guessing until the very end (though the message of female empowerment and equality is a bit heavy-handed). One of the Angels is coy about her sexual preference. While the matter is dealt with obliquely, at least some grown viewers may want to steer clear. Frequent but bloodless action sequences, some sexual innuendo and fleeting references to homosexuality, occasional profane and crude language, an obscene gesture. A-III; PG-13

**Frozen II**

Disney

When a queen endowed with the magical power to create ice and snow (voice of Idina Menzel) hears a voice calling her into the wilderness beyond her realm and holding out to her the prospect of discovering the origins of her supernatural gift, she responds by embarking on a quest. She’s accompanied by her strictly human younger sister (voice of Kristen Bell), the iceman (voice of Jonathan Groff) who would like to make the junior sibling his own and a merry sentient snowman (voice of Josh Gad). Screenwriter and co-director Jennifer Lee and her partner at the helm, Chris Buck, the creators of the 2013 original, deliver an exuberant animated musical adventure stressing teamwork, family solidarity and upright values. Too scary for the littlest patrons, the film’s somewhat unscriptural nature myths may also be confusing for impressionable moviegoers. As for adults, at least some may find the script’s exaltation of the life of indigenous people over industrialized societies heavy-handed. These flaws are ultimately outweighed, though, by sympathetic characters, visual flair and skillful, if sometimes overly complicated, storytelling. Stylized combat, considerable peril. A-II; PG

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**Ford v Ferrari**

Fox

A film that revels in its 1960s gender stereotypes, evoking a “Great Man” age of auto racers in which the men were men and the women glad of it. Director James Mangold, working from a screenplay by brothers Jez and John-Henry Butterworth and Jason Keller, keeps the story stripped down to the competition between automakers Ford (led by Tracy Letts and Jon Bernthal) and Ferrari (its namesake founder played by Remo Girone) to have their cars win the grueling 24-hour Le Mans road race in 1966. Car developer Carroll Shelby (Matt Damon) and dreadsdevil British driver Ken Miles (Christian Bale) fight off their personal troubles to form a successful partnership in which they also keep the corporate types at bay. Probably acceptable for mature teens, despite some salty dialogue. Intense action sequences, fleeting crude and crass language, a single racial slur. A-III; PG-13

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**The Catholic Commentator**

Next Issue Deadline ... DECEMBER 11
‘Come and See’
Weekend valuable tool for discernment

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

As a teenager and young adult, Nick Wylie spent five years discerning life as a priest.

Two years into seminary life, Wylie is at peace, secure in his decision. The Ponchatoula native recently spent three days mentoring young men who are facing the same decision-making process as Wylie.

Wylie was one of many seminarians who spent time discussing the life of a seminarian during a recent Come and See Weekend at St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict. The weekend, which runs Friday through Sunday, provides an opportunity for young men who are considering life as a priest.

Wylie admitted that the Come and See Weekend “was something I really didn’t know about” while he was considering the priesthood.

“No one told me exactly what it was,” he said. “I wish I had come sooner.”

Wylie, who earned a degree in kinesiology from Southeastern Louisiana University, originally had designs on post-graduate work studying physical therapy but scrapped those plans. Only months after graduating, he was walking through the doors of St. Joseph.

“My freshman year at Southeastern I applied to go to the seminary but it didn’t feel right,” he said. “So I stopped the application process but it was always in the back of my mind.”

Wylie admitted at the time he was experiencing a fear of not knowing if he was smart enough or holy enough for the seminary. Or even that he would fit in, which is why the Come and See Weekend is so important to dispel many of those some fears in the priesthood.

“May their hearts overflow with love and generosity, as they grow in wisdom and faith. May their example inspire others to hear and answer your call. Guide them as they prepare for a life of service to your people. Sanctify our seminarians and fill them with your peace and joy as they prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Orders. We ask this through Christ our Lord: Amen

Mary, Mother of Priests, pray for us. St. Jean Vianney, Patron of Priests, pray for us.

Consider the priesthood.
For more information, contact Director of Vocations Father Andrew Merrick at 225-336-8778 or vocations@diobr.org.

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Bishop Michael G. Duca, in consultation with and upon the recommendation of the Clergy Personnel Board, has appointed Father Eddie Martin parochial administrator of the cluster parishes of St. Anne Church in Napoleonville, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Church in Plattenville and St. Philomena Church in Labadieville.

Additionally, Father Babu Nalkara Vareeth IMS has been appointed sacramental minister at St. Anne, Assumption and St. Philomena.

Father Ryan Hallford has been appointed parochial vicar at St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge.

Father Martin, a native of Alexandria, was born April 12, 1957 and ordained a priest May 28, 2016 in St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Robert W. Muench. He was serving as parochial vicar at St. Aloysius and chaplain at Catholic High School in Baton Rouge.

Father Martin has previously served as parochial vicar at St. Thomas More Church in Baton Rouge.

He was ordained a permanent deacon in 2010 and entered the seminary four years later.

Father Hallford was born Aug. 29, 1983 and ordained May 27, 2017 at St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Muench. Father Hallford was serving as parochial vicar at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Baton Rouge and chaplain at St. Michael the Archangel Diocesan Regional High School, also in Baton Rouge.

He is also an elected member of the Presbytery Council.

Father Hallford has previously served as parochial vicar at Holy Family Church in Port Allen and chaplain at St. John Interparochial High School in Plaquemine. He is also a member of the Deacon Advisory Board.

Father Vareeth has been serving as sacramental minister at St. Ann Church in Morganza since August.

The appointments are effective Dec. 6.

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

1. “Come and See”
2. “Not, not that you be not…” (Mt 7:1)

Solution on page 18

Pastoral appointments announced

Bishop Michael G. Duca has appointed...

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A saint for our times

On Oct. 13, the first Sunday after the Synod on the Amazon had begun, Pope Francis made Cardinal John Henry Newman of England and four other holy persons saints of the church. There was in St. Newman’s case a connection both historical and pastoral with the synod, which I will explain later on. First, many may not know the story of St. Newman, so here is a brief summary.

In his own day in England, St. Newman was a celebrity. Born in London in 1801, he led the first half of his professional life as an Oxford don and Anglican priest (Protestant Church of England), the second half as a Catholic convert priest and in his last 11 years cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, dying in 1890.

Oxford meant everything to the young St. Newman. He was an acclaimed scholar and a much loved pastor of the Chapel of St. Mary the Virgin, the university church of Oxford. There, with some fellow professors, he began the Oxford Movement, an attempt to avoid the extremes that were splintering Protestantism. He and his friends sought to create a “middle way” by returning to Scripture and the early church fathers but avoiding what they considered accretions in Catholicism, such as multiple devotions to the Blessed Virgin and the saints.

However, St. Newman was a very good and thorough historian. The more he read, the more he became convinced that the event of the incarnation of Christ as true God and true man brought with it a sacramental vision. Christ was the sacrament of the unseen God in action as he told his disciples as they needed it, including forgiveness, God’s grace, his spirit, in Mary from the beginning, and we see the unseeable God in action as he told his disciples as they needed it, including forgiveness, God’s grace, his spirit, in Mary from the beginning, and St. Paul’s epistles found its dogmatic expression only in the 451 AD Council of Chalcedon. St. Newman wrote “An Essay on the Development of Doctrine” that would greatly influence The Second Vatican Council.

There were 39 Articles of Belief that Anglican professors and politicians had to swear to uphold in order to gain and maintain publicly paid positions. St. Newman ended by interpreting them in a Catholic way. He was pilloried and vilified all over England, called a heretic and a traitor. He knew this would happen, and asked Father Dominick Barberie, a Passionist priest, to receive him into the Catholic Church before he would lose courage and change his mind. He was compelled to leave Oxford and settled nearby in Littlemore.

St. Newman was very courageous, but in mid-life he felt that he was a failure. He had lost everything, even friends and family. A few of his friends and colleagues in Oxford followed him into the Catholic Church Gerard Manley Hopkins, who became a Jesuit priest, and one of our church’s most famous poets.

Before long, St. Newman decided to become a Catholic priest and began studies in Rome at the College of the Propagation of the Faith. While in Rome, he joined the Oratorians, a group of parish priests founded by St. Philip Neri, who lived together while serving churches in Rome. After two years, he was ordained a Catholic priest in 1859 and returned to England to start an oratory in Birmingham.

After a short time in Birmingham, St. Newman was invited to become the first president of a new Catholic university in Dublin, Ireland. He accepted and helped start their academic program. His lectures to the students became “The Idea of a University” emphasizing the place of religious thought in the curriculum. However, he found after only a year that administration was not his real talent and returned to Birmingham and to his writing. The university later evolved into University College Dublin. I think it was Chesterton who wrote of its main building, “Up those stairs walked three of the greatest stylists in the English language, John Henry Newman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and James Joyce.”

One of St. Newman’s first publications back in Birmingham was “On Consulting the Faithful on Matters of Doctrine.” The reigning pope at the time was an Italian, Pope Pius IX. Pio Nono did not like the idea of that. After all, he was a monarch as well as pope, ruler of the Papal States. But St. Newman wrote the truth as he saw it. He was attacked in England by many who wished the Anglican church to be more Protestant in its opposition to Rome. The leading protagonist who openly attacked St. Newman in print was named Charles Kingsley. He was an Anglican priest famous for writing historical novels. He challenged the honesty of St. Newman’s conversion. In response, St. Newman wrote his most famous work, his autobiography up to that point in 1864, “Apologia Pro Vita Sua” (A Defense of His Life).

Two later popes would also think of St. Newman as a prophet of the future and a theologian of modernity. Struggling to recreate the “Christendom” that Europe once was in an increasingly secular world, Pope Benedict XVI beatified Newman in 2010. And now Pope Francis, trying to evangelize that secular world by refocusing the church toward serving the poor and preserving the earth, our “common home,” has canonized St. Newman after writing his own encyclical, “Laudato Si,” and calling the Synod on the Amazon to implement it.

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.
What constitutes fidelity

In Exile
Father Ron Rolheiser

It’s becoming increasingly difficult in today’s world to trust anything or anybody, for good reason. There’s little that’s stable, safe to lean on, trustworthy. We live in a world where everything is in flux, in flux, where everywhere we see distrust, abandoned values, debunked creeds, people moving on from where they used to be, contradictory information, and dishonesty and lying as socially and morally acceptable. There is little left of trust in our world.

What does this call us to? We’re called to many things, but perhaps nothing more important than fidelity, to be honest and persevering in who we are and what we stand for. Here’s an illustration.

One of our Oblate missionaries shares this story. He was sent to minister to a cluster of small Indigenous communities in Northern Canada. The people were very nice to him but it didn’t take him long to notice something. Basically every time he scheduled an appointment the person wouldn’t show up. At first, he attributed this to miscommunication, but eventually he realized the pattern was too consistent for this to be an accident and so he approached an elder in the community for some counsel. “Every time I make an appointment with someone,” he told the elder, “they don’t show up.” The elder smiled, knowingly, and replied: “Of course, they won’t show up, the last thing they need is to have an outsider like you organizing their lives for them!” So the missionary asked: “What do I do?” The elder replied: “Well, don’t make an appointment, just show up and talk to them! They’ll be nice to you. More importantly though, this is what you need to do: Stay here for a long time and then they will trust you. They want to see whether you’re a missionary or a tourist. Why should they trust you? They’ve been betrayed and lied to by most everyone’s who’s come through here. Stay for a long time and then they’ll trust you.”

Stay for a long time and then they’ll trust you. What does it mean to stay for long time? We can hang around and not necessarily inspire trust, just as we can move on to other places and still inspire trust. In its essence, staying around for the duration, being faithful, has less to do with being faithful to the location than it has to do with staying faithful to who we are, to the creed we profess, to the commitments and promises we have made, and to what’s truest inside us so that our private lives do not belie our public persona.

The gift of fidelity is the gift of a life lived honestly. Our private honesty blesses the whole community, just as our private dishonesty hurts the whole community. “If you are here faithfully,” writes Parker Palmer, “you bring great blessing.” Conversely, writes Rumi, “If you are here unfaithfully, you bring great harm.” To the degree that we are true to the creed we profess, the family, friends and communities we’ve committed to, and to the deepest moral imperatives within our private soul, to that degree we are faithfully with others, and to that degree we are “staying with them for a long time.” The reverse is also true, to the degree that we are not true to the creed we profess, to the promises we’ve made to others, and to the honesty innate in our own soul, we are being unfaithful, moving away from others, being the tourist not the missionary.

In his Epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul tells us it means to be with each other, to live with each other, beyond geographical distance and other contingencies in life that separate us. We are with each, faithfully, as brothers and sisters, when we are living in charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, perseverance and chastity. When we are living inside these, then we are “staying with each other” and not moving away, no matter any geographical distance between us. Conversely, when we are living outside of these we are not “staying with each other,” even when there is no geographical distance between us. Home, as poets have always told us, is a place inside the heart, not a place on a map. And home, as St. Paul tells us, is living inside the Spirit.

And it is this, I believe, that ultimately defines fidelity and perseverance, separates a moral missionary from a moral tourist, and indicates who’s staying and who’s moving away.

For each of us to stay faithful, we need each other. It takes more than a village, it takes all of us. One person’s fidelity makes everyone’s fidelity easier, just as one person’s infidelity makes everyone’s fidelity more difficult. So, inside a world that’s so highly individualistic and bewilderingly transient, when it can feel as if everyone is forever moving away from you, perhaps the greatest gift we can give each other is the gift of our own fidelity, to stay for a long time.

OBLATE FATHER RON ROLHEISER, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website ronrolheiser.com and facebook.com/ronrolheiser.

Extend a hand to outsiders during Advent

scene from the play “A Man for All Seasons” contains a wonderful way to celebrate Advent. The play is about St. Thomas More’s duel with King Henry VIII that leads to More’s beheading.

In the play, Richard Rich, who is envious of More’s renown, pleads with More for a prominent court position.

“Why not be a teacher,” More implores him.

“And if I was, who would know it?” Rich responds.

“You, your pupils, your friends, God. Not a bad public, that ... oh and a quiet life,” More says.


“That’s a chain of office you are wearing. May I see it?” More requests and observes, “The red dragon. What’s this?”

He is told that Richard has been appointed attorney general for Wales.

More exclaims, “For Wales? Why Rich ard, it profits a man nothing to give his soul for the whole world... But for Wales!”
The dialogue between More and Richard portrays a lost soul selling out a friend for gain.

No matter where we look, we find lost souls. They may have lost faith in God, may be considered the black sheep of the family, may have cheated to achieve prominence or let chemical substances ruin their lives. The list is unending. And yet, many of them wish to be found, but most often no one is willing to take the chance to come to their aid.

Once I told a Franciscan friend I desired to dedicate my life to working with the destitute. “Eugene,” he warned, “that life is not for everyone.”

This is true. It is extremely difficult to forgive a family black sheep, to reach out to lost souls living in the gutters, to befriend a drunk or drug addict, to be kind to a cheat or to forgive an injustice.

It’s easy to feel justified in walking away from these situations.

Advent is an opportunity to examine our ultimate purpose in life – a time to focus on Christ returning a lost sheep to the fold; to experience the happiness of going out on the limb and walking him or her back on our shoulders and experiencing Advent joy at its best.

Letters to the Editor

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

Mission Statement

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

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**Special Education Program Administrator**

**Seeking educational leader for Blessed Margaret of Castello REACH Program**

Since 1962, the Diocese of Baton Rouge has served families through the Special Education Department, which has expanded programming across the diocese to provide specific classes for autism and intellectual/other exceptionalities as well as resource and dyslexia lab services.

The Special Education Administrator is responsible for the leadership of the program, working with families, teachers, staff, host school personnel, community stakeholders, and the Catholic Schools Office. Additional information at www.csobr.org.

**Applicants must meet the following criteria:**

- Practicing Catholic (Required)
- Master’s Degree, Preferably in Special Education (Required)
- Minimum of Five Years of Experience in Special Education (Preferred)
- Demonstrated Leadership Skills (Required)

**Availability on or before January 3, 2020.**

Submit letter of interest, résumé with references, and copies of transcripts to:

Special Education Department Administrator Search  
Catholic Schools Office  
P.O. Box 2028  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

**Applications considered upon receipt.**

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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**Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office**

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Applicants who meet the following criteria will be considered:

- Practicing Catholic
- Minimum of five years of experience in education, preferably in Catholic high schools
- Demonstrated Effective Leadership Ability
- Qualifications to meet the Non-Public certification requirements for State of Louisiana

**Available on or before July 1, 2020**

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

St. Thomas Aquinas Principal Search  
Catholic Schools Office  
P.O. Box 2028  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

**Deadline: February 1, 2020**

Applications considered upon receipt.

Additional information at www.csobr.org

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**LEGAL NOTICES**

Anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of Ann Saint is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8755.

Anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of Anna Georgianna Langdon is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8755.

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VOCATIONS ▼
From page 15

young men.

“It’s a chance for guys to experience what life will be like as a seminarian,” he said. “They see how we live, they are able to participate in liturgy, prayer and other activities, including playing sports and attending mock theology and philosophy classes.”

“They can hang out and see there are normal people here just like in a college. This is a regular college, just more oriented toward faith with a different objective.”

Wylie discussed his own experiences and how he was able to overcome his initial fears. He said upon meeting his new classmates, he learned they were just like him, just “regular, everyday people.”

Through one-on-one interaction that is the message he and the other seminarians attempted to convey to the 40 people in attendance, including two from the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

“Everybody has different ideas what (the seminary) will be like,” said Wylie, who is scheduled to graduate from St. Joseph in May and enter Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans in August. “This kind of shatters in a good way what they thought.

“It’s really evangelizing them in a way,” Wylie said his own vocations was re-energized by witnessing the vigor and zealousness of the young men during the weekend. He said it also reaffirmed why he was there and how far he has come during his two years at St. Joseph.

While his last few months wind down at the abbey, he has his eye on his future at Notre Dame and ultimately ordination.

“Sometimes I think why is (ordination) so far away?” said Wylie. “But it’s good that it takes a lot of time. We need the time to develop, to build on (our formation).”

Wylie’s first inkling to the vocational life was in his teens. Although a lifelong Catholic, he said his hunger to learn more about his faith grew through a family friend.

In doing so, he realized the priesthood is the “holiest way of life.”

“I would read Scripture and Jesus would say ‘Come and follow me,’” Wylie said. “That is what I wanted.

“We are just doing what God wants.”

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CARVILLE ▼
From page 1
they would contract the disease. Jack lost his job at the plantation and then went to work at his brother's plantation in Napoleonville. However, because his brother's wife was fearful of the disease, he was not allowed to enter into the home and ate his meals in a shed.

Before Brett's father's arrival Carville, he watched the progression of Hansen's on his brother Elmo, who was diagnosed with the disease in 1925 at the age of 16 when his father took him to a dermatologist in 1925. To spare his family from embarrassment, in 1934 Elmo took a train to the Carville leprosarium, where the disease ravaged him before he died.

Johnny Harmon, who had worked for the Texas Highway Department and was working toward a college degree in engineering, thought about Elmo daily, and he and his dad visited Elmo as often as possible.

When Johnny Harmon was diagnosed himself in 1935 at 24, because of his position with the highway department, it made the front page of the Beaumont newspaper.

Harmon left for the Carville leprosarium, determined to make the most of his life there. He had his own photography lab and was a cartoonist, a painter and taught in the one-room schoolhouse at Carville, which was "the first integrated school in Louisiana," according to Brett.

There was "the hole" about a quarter of a mile from the front gate, which people would crawl out to get "to the outside." Those who left AWOL and were caught spent time in a jail called "the white house."

The Carville community was a "world of its own" with a movie theater, ballroom, canteen, tennis courts and two golf courses – one for employees and one for patients – who came from around the world, including Josefa "Joey" Guerrero, a Filipino who spied for the United States in Japanese-occupied Philippines during World War II.

Celebrations also were common, and it was at a 1936 Mar di Gras Ball that Johnny met Anne, who "captured his heart."

In 1938 Johnny was cleared of Hansen's disease symptoms and released. Johnny attempted to resume his life in Texas, but the stigma followed him, thwarting career plans such as causing him to fail his draft notice exam for World War II.

The Hansen's symptoms returned, and Johnny returned to Carville. Eventually, Anne and Johnny rekindled their romance and after receiving a pass, were married at St. Roch's Catholic Church in New Orleans.

Patients at Carville were discouraged from having children. After Brett and her brother were born, they were placed with the Becnel family in Vacherie, who spoke only Cajun French. The Becnels brought the children for the secret picnic rendezvous.

Johnny Harmon was eventually symptom free of Hansen's but insisted on remaining at the Carville hospital because his wife was a patient there. Later he was "expelled" by doctors, but he remained in Vacherie to be near his wife. When she was released, the two made their home in Vacherie, where Johnny had a thriving photography business and the couple became members of Our Lady of Peace.

They would regularly visit Brett and her siblings.

Brett said she has fond memories of visiting Carville and noted the international community that was formed there.

"My godmother was from Spain and her brother's godmother was from China," said Brett.

She said while she saw people in various stages of the diseases, she never focused on their outward appearance because they had a "beauty within" who brought their life experiences with them.

The presence of the nuns also kept a vibrant faith alive.

And her parents never lost their faith either, as quoted from her father in the book.

"I feel like I have had a richer and fuller life than most people. At Carville, I met people from all over the world. It was a mini-United Nations. I created lifelong friendships," wrote Harmon. "God gives us all a cross to bear. Some are bigger than others, but we all experience some sorrow in our life. I never felt like a leper, not in the Biblical sense of the word."

To order Brett's book, email bayoubrett@gmail.com.

At St. Vincent de Paul, we have one Christmas wish above all others: that every heart will be filled with the true meaning of Christ's birth. As we celebrate this joyous occasion, we are reminded that His message of love and compassion lives on through us.

No one should remember Christmas as a time of hunger, homelessness, or hopeless wishes. On Christmas Day at our Bishop Ott Shelter, children like James will wake up in a warm bed, knowing that, on this special day, they have a home. And presents under the tree – well, that's something they've been dreaming about! We give homeless men and women the time they need to get their lives back together and start over, but we give homeless children the wonderful gifts of security and happiness as their parents work toward self-sufficiency. James and his mother represent thousands of needy individuals and families whose Christmas wishes have come true because of the kindness and generosity of our community.

We want every person we serve to remember this Christmas as a happy time when they felt Christ's love through the kindness of others. Our dining room will serve thousands of meals; our shelters will provide warm beds to homeless men, women, children and families; and our community pharmacy will fill life-sustaining prescriptions. Help us to give someone in need a special Christmas with memories of love and laughter, happiness and hope.

We hope you will add one more person to your Christmas list and ask you to consider making a gift using the envelope enclosed in this issue of the Catholic Commentator. If you can't afford to give at this time, please pray for the poor and hold onto this envelope until a time when you can afford to give.

At St. Vincent de Paul, $1 will provide a hot meal; $10 will provide a night of shelter for a homeless family; and $28 will fill a life-sustaining prescription; so you can imagine what a difference a larger gift can make. Any gift, no matter how small, will make a Christmas wish come true.

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