Virtual Fundraising

Raising money via the internet

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Fundraising in the traditional sense has been challenging for church parishes as well as other religious organizations during the coronavirus pandemic.

Parishes have been buffeted with the double whammy of smaller collections because of fewer people in the pews and the shelving of annual fundraisers such as festivals and extravaganzas featuring live and silent auctions.

Forced to improvise, several parishes and schools, including Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge, have found innovative ways to engage modern technology to bridge the financial shortfall.


“I think it worked out great,” said Father Michael Alello, pastor at St. Thomas More Church in Baton Rouge, which held a virtual auction Aug. 22.

“I think those people that tuned in from their homes (estimated about 100 but likely much more since some groups of friends staged fundraising ‘parties’ in their homes) enjoyed it,” he added. “It was definitely different as everything else has been.

“We had a good time, a great response and able to raise some money.”

STM traditionally has a May festival and in August a silent and live auction. But pandemic restrictions would not allow those to be held in person so the virtual auction was staged with Father Alello and his brother, Baton Rouge businessman David Alello, serving as co-emcees.

Taking advantage of the new technology the church has purchased for its live streaming of Masses enabled the auction to come off with barely a hitch.

People were able to bid on silent and live auctions in real time, with Father Alello and David serving as auctioneers and providing the entertainment, which has drawn rave reviews.

“Basically we created a show out of it,” Father Alello said. “They chose my brother to be my co-emcee so the two of us could have our normal banter back and forth. It gave people a chance to see that other side of me and my family life and that was fun for me and for the folks.”

Similar results were reported from Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs as well as FranU. Immaculate Conception pastor Father Matthew Graham said the online auction raised $43,000, noting the funds “stay with the parish and goes towards...”

COVID-19 patient finds much to be thankful for

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

In the same way people pull out their recipe cards to make that pumpkin pie or other favorite family dish for Thanksgiving, Jody Landry has a written list of things to be thankful for.

And they are related to her own battle with COVID-19. Her story shows that even trials and sufferings can point people to things they can be grateful for in their lives.

On Aug. 7, only a few weeks after Landry had celebrated her 80th birthday, she went to the emergency room at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital in Baton Rouge, was diagnosed with COVID-19 and admitted to the hospital.

“It was very lonesome there by myself,” said Landry, who could not receive visitors and was on oxygen the entire time she was in the hospital.

She said, in fact, “I know that I was close to death because I remember speaking with my Bible study friend who had passed away. It was like she was sitting in class.”

The friend expressed her concern, according to Landry, and was a soothing presence.

But Landry is grateful that as she battled the virus, prayers for her increased.

“One evening I was told if my oxygen level did not go up, I would be sent to ICU. One of my friends, Jennifer (her late husband’s caregiver), prayed all night for me, and the next morning my oxygen level was up,” she said.

Landry noted the illness highlighted how many people are praying for her – 100 that are known.

“Times of crisis can also bring about gratitude for...”
Clergy and science

From hikers lying on their backs in a field looking up at a star-studded sky to scientists with PhDs in astrophysics looking through sophisticated telescopes, people seek to answer the burning question, “How did this all begin?” The “Big Bang Theory” is popular, because most everyone loves something that begins with an “explosive moment.”

But there is indeed science behind this theory, and it was introduced by a Belgian Catholic priest Father Georges Lemaître was also an astronomer and cosmologist who studied Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity and observed some of the conditions of the early cosmos in the 1920s to 30s. He theorized that the redshift of galaxies could be caused by the expansion of the universe and there must have been an initial moment of creation at the beginning.

Through decades it was known as either the “primeval atom” or the “cosmic egg.” According to Father Lemaître, around 13.7 billion years ago, all matter in the universe was concentrated into a single, infinitesimally tiny point. He theorized the universe began to expand rapidly through a hot and huge explosion and is still expanding today. The Big Bang Theory was also believed as the reason why space and time were created.

Although the idea was guided by Einstein’s theory of relativity, he dismissed Father Lemaître’s work in 1927. He was impressed with Father Lemaître’s findings but was not swayed, saying “Vos calculs sont corrects, mais votre physique est abominable,” which in English means, “your calculations are correct, but your physics is abominable!”

Father Lemaître’s initial discovery has become what was eventually known as Hubble’s law. Many scientists before Einstein theorized the cosmos was made up entirely of the Milky Way galaxy. But in the 1920s Edwin Hubble refuted it as he observed nebulae that were too distant to be part of our galaxy and were in fact, galaxies of their own.

Hubble further proved that other galaxies are moving away from our galaxy at a speed directly proportionate to their distance from us – making the “Hubble’s Law.” This was consistent with the idea of the “Big Bang Theory” that if the universe is currently expanding, then it was smaller, denser and more uniform in the past. After meeting at several conferences, Father Lemaître and Einstein talked about their points of agreement in their theories and eventually became friends.

Another piece of evidence that supports “The Big Bang Theory” is the existence of cosmic background radiation – the oldest radiation in our universe. This is not only contained in all matter but also in the energy in the universe. And when the universe expanded, the high energy electromagnetic radiation cooled down and stabilized over time. This cosmic background radiation gives a peek into the early universe when electrons and protons were combining to form hydrogen atoms.

But Father Lemaître argued that his theory was not meant to explain the beginnings of the universe in a theological sense but from a physical one. “But (the Christian researcher) knows that not one thing in all creation has been done without God, but he knows also that God nowhere takes the place of his creatures. Omnipresent divine activity is everywhere, essentially hidden. It never had to be a question of reducing the supreme being to the rank of a scientific hypothesis,” Father Lemaître said.

The Catholic Church embraced Father Lemaître’s theory as proof that the birth of the universe was the work of God, the creator and mover of all. In the early 1950s, when the Big Bang Theory gained prominence in the scientific community, Pope Pius XII publicly favored the theory and stated: “It would seem that present-day science, with one sweep back across the centuries, has succeeded in bearing witness to the August instant of the primordial Fiat Lux (Let there be light), when along with matter, there burst forth from nothing a sea of light and radiation, and the elements split and churned and formed into millions of galaxies. Thus, this is the perfection which is characteristic of physical proofs, science has confirmed the contingency of the universe and also the well-founded deduction as to the epoch when the world came forth from the hands of the creator. Hence, creation took place. We say ‘Therefore, there is a creator. Therefore, God exists!’”

FOREVER A CHILD OF THE LIGHT

By Dina Dow

A few weeks ago, my home church parish remembered the men and women of our faith community who passed away this year. As I perused the list of names in our bulletin, four were elderly people who had consistently attended weekly Bible studies I served for six years.

The “Big Bang Theory” is that his theory was not meant to explain the beginnings of the universe in a theological sense but from a physical one. “But (the Christian researcher) knows that not one thing in all creation has been done without God, but he knows also that God nowhere takes the place of his creatures. Omnipresent divine activity is everywhere, essentially hidden. It never had to be a question of reducing the supreme being to the rank of a scientific hypothesis,” Father Lemaître said.

The Catholic Church embraced Father Lemaître’s theory as proof that the birth of the universe was the work of God, the creator and mover of all. In the early 1950s, when the Big Bang Theory gained prominence in the scientific community, Pope Pius XII publicly favored the theory and stated: “It would seem that present-day science, with one sweep back across the centuries, has succeeded in bearing witness to the August instant of the primordial Fiat Lux (Let there be light), when along with matter, there burst forth from nothing a sea of light and radiation, and the elements split and churned and formed into millions of galaxies. Thus, with that concreteness which is characteristic of physical proofs, science has confirmed the contingency of the universe and also the well-founded deduction as to the epoch when the world came forth from the hands of the creator. Hence, creation took place. We say ‘Therefore, there is a creator. Therefore, God exists!’”

A sense of loss moved me to think, “When did we last talk? What did we say? Did they know how much inspiration they shared? Did they know how much they were loved?”

But then the Lord reminded me how passionate they were about learning the word of God through Scripture study and how we always said, “The more we grow in wisdom of Scripture, the more we come to know Jesus. Hence, the more we will come to know God.”

My sadness was filled with hope as I recalled their radiant joy after each lesson, as well as the community impact of their experience. They are a witness of what it means to be, forever, a “child of the light of God.”

The month of November is dedicated to the souls in purgatory, as the liturgical calendar approaches the end. We celebrate the 32nd and 33rd Sundays in Ordinary Time during the next two weeks, focusing on the importance of being prepared for eternal life, for what we do today will ready us for tomorrow.

Wisdom

The Book of Wisdom summons us to seek her with great desire. Wisdom, manifested in the feminine is, in turn, ready to provide all that is patiently sought, hence, “wisdom is the perfection of prudence” (Wis 6:15). We are called to keep watch for the wisdom of God. It is sort of a vigil, a waiting in anticipation of what is to come. Wisdom provides hope, enlightened awareness.

Upon baptism, we are permeated with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom is a spiritual gift which enables one to know the purpose and plan of God. What is the purpose and plan of God? Is this the wisdom we seek?

Wisdom in Christ’s death and resurrection

As I write, a staff member just walked in my office saying her grandmother just passed away. The family has kept vigil at his side for weeks, witnessed the last rites and were present as he took his last breath on earth. Life is changed.

Chapter Four of St. Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians gives insightful hope in our life with Christ after we die. He explains that we who grieve do so in anticipation of the day when Jesus, who died and rose, will come again in glory. We will miss those who die yet have hope in life that is to come. “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep” (1 Thes 4:14).

We also read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended. When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven. We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the risen Christ and he will raise them up on the last day. Our resurrection, like his own, will be the work of the most Holy Trinity: If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you” (Catechism 989).

Be ready for Christ

We are to be ready for when this day arrives. To prepare for this moment we live not in fear but as a child of the light. We become a child of light the moment the waters of baptism wash over our heads, an immersion of water and Spirit, grace upon grace. Here our journey to heaven begins.

Equipped

Equipped by our baptism, we walk as children of the light with the “talents” God provides to each individual for the good of others. These gifts are not to be buried, but rather multiplied for the glory of God. Along the path to heaven, Jesus fortifies our body and soul with his own. The real presence of Christ in the holy Eucharist nourishes and strengthens us for the journey to eternity. Without his body we are malnourished. With his body we thrive in God’s glory and at the

DID YOU KNOW

Clergy and science
Traveling silver rose shines on the Blessed Mother

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

When roses fell to the ground from Juan Diego’s tilma (cloak) imprinted with the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in front of Bishop Juan de Zumarraga in 1531, the Blessed Mother declared herself to be the mother of all. The Knights of Columbus in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and brother knights in North America are honoring the history of Our Lady of Guadalupe by presenting with gloved hands a traveling sparkling silver rose during prayer services and Masses through the Silver Rose Program.

In 1960, a group of young squires of the Knights of Columbus in Monterrey, Mexico, came up with the idea of giving back to Our Lady of Guadalupe for what she had done for the people of their country by running a rose to Our Lady of Guadalupe Basilica in Monterrey. They invited squires from North America to participate. The idea then developed to run the rose from Canada through the United States to Mexico.

Later that year, the first rose, a live one, was blessed by a bishop in Ontario. It then traveled to New York and then to Texas where it was taken across the border into Mexico. The rose ended its pilgrimage at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico. The idea then developed to run the rose from Canada through the United States to Mexico.

Today, because of the popularity of the program, eight silver roses travel unique routes.

The journey of the silver rose begins each year in March and ends on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Every stop the silver rose makes throughout the pilgrimage is a rosary-centered occasion for knights, parishioners and community members to pray for respect for life.

During Oct. 19-Oct. 26, the silver rose stopped at the following host church sites in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, in order: Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs, St. Alphonsus Church in Greenwell Springs, St. Elizabeth Church in Paucourtville, St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge, St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville, St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge and St. Margaret Church in Albany before going to the Diocese of Lafayette.

Sam Mistretta, a trustee of the Knights of Columbus Council 3743 of St. Aloysius and Louisiana State Family Director for the KCs, said the knights and his wife, Arline, encouraged his love of the rosary. He said that love has been cultivated by the silver rose and the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

“The apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Juan Diego touches my heart, and I often tear up upon hearing the story again,” Mistretta said. “I am particularly struck by the skepticism of the bishop (of that time) to Our Lady’s message.

“It is just like our unbelieving world that is skeptical of the Gospel and how God can sometimes act in such a way that it transforms us in ways we could not anticipate.”

“The story reminds me of my own conversion story and how much I value my gift of faith,” he added. “I am a lifelong Catholic, yet I was slowly drifting away from the church as a young adult. It reminds me of the joy of rediscovering and following Jesus Christ.”

The Silver Rose Program encourages good relations between the Knights of Columbus councils throughout North America as they work together during the rose’s pilgrimage, according to Mike Moss, grand knight of Council 13632 of St. Joseph Cathedral.

“It’s great to have councils across the countries united in prayer for respect for life,” said Moss.

Olin Hall, grand knight of the Knights of Columbus Council 6326, said as the faithful, including a woman from a local Methodist Church, gathered at Immaculate Conception, many commented on how special the service was. He believes the journey of the silver rose is especially moving at a time when the 40 Days for Life movement is occurring worldwide to peacefully call for the end of abortion.

“The Holy Spirit touched the hearts of our (attendees),” said Hall.

He and Glenn Young, grand knight of Knights of Columbus Council 10178 of St. Margaret, found the Silver Rose Program important to the history of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Americas.

“What we have in our country, and how
Barrett’s confirmation ‘a gain for the entire country’

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Amy Coney Barrett’s confirmation to the Supreme Court received enthusiastic responses from throughout the Catholic community, including at the diocesan and state levels.

Barrett, a native of New Orleans who was raised in Metairie and graduated from St. Mary’s Dominican High School in New Orleans, was confirmed Oct. 26 in a Senate vote that mostly divided along party lines.

Barrett is the sixth practicing Catholic justice at the Supreme Court, joining Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Thomas, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor and Brett Kavanaugh. In addition, Barrett will join Sotomayor as the only two Catholic female Supreme Court Justices in U.S. history.

“The confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett is a gain for the entire country,” said Danielle Van Haute, Respect Life Coordinator for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. “Her qualifications and commitment to the fair application of the law have been recognized by those on both ends of the political and judiciary spectrums.”

Benjamin Clapper, executive director of Louisiana Right to Life, offered his congratulations said he is “looking forward to (Barrett) serving as a justice committed to defending the text and history of the Constitution and the principles of judicial restraint.”

Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans hailed Barrett as “one of our own.” “We pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to lead her and guide her in her service to our country,” Archbishop Aymond said.

Barrett’s arrival at the Supreme Court was also welcomed by her former colleagues at the University of Notre Dame, where she was both a law student and professor for several years.

“On behalf of the University of Notre Dame, I congratulate Amy Coney Barrett on her confirmation today by the United States Senate as a justice of the United States Supreme Court,” Notre Dame President Father John Jenkins CSC said in a statement.

“Recognized by experts from across the spectrum of judicial philosophies as a superb legal scholar and judge, she is an esteemed colleague and a teacher revered by her students. Justice Barrett becomes the first alumna of Notre Dame Law School and the first Notre Dame faculty member to be so honored,” Father Jenkins said.

Father Jenkins’ sentiment was echoed by G. Marcus Cole, the Joseph A. Matson Dean of Notre Dame Law School. Cole said he was “immensely proud of our alumnus, colleague and friend on this momentous occasion.”

“For more than two decades, we have been blessed by her brilliant scholarship, her devoted teaching and her thoughtful, open-minded approach to legal questions,” said Cole. He referred to Barrett as not only a “brilliant” scholar, but also as someone who is “exemplary” kind and generous.

“As we welcome her presence on our campus and in our community, we look forward to witnessing these qualities as she serves on our nation’s highest court,” said Cole.

Justice Barrett clearly demonstrated she has the qualities, knowledge and skill needed to be a fair and independent Justice for every American. Senators that voted to confirm Justice Barrett are to be commended for focusing on her eminent qualifications and commitment to fairness and the rule of law, rather than the ugly anti-Catholic attacks that threatened to tarnish this process,” he said.

Dr. Grazie Christie, a policy advisor for The Catholic Association, called Barrett’s confirmation “great news for all Americans who prefer a fair and independent judiciary to an activist one.”

“Judge Barrett has demonstrated that she will equally apply the law to everyone who comes before her and faithfully interpret the Constitution as written. Her profound knowledge of the law is only matched by her exemplary character,” she said.

Christie called Barrett a “role model for women and girls who aspire to reach the highest levels of accomplishment.”

(Catholic News Agency contributed to this report.)
Bishop Duca celebrates prayer service at Formosa plant site

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Gleaming by a brilliant sun seemingly proclaiming its approval, Bishop Michael G. Duca, standing on hallowed ground where slaves once toiled and are now buried, led an inspiring All Saints Day prayer service Oct. 31 at the site of the controversial proposed Formosa Plastics plant site in St. James Civil Parish.

RISE St. James, a faith-based organization working to protect the people of St. James from the petrochemical industry, organized the service where Bishop Duca blessed the fenced area where the graves are buried.

“We honor those who have died and gone before us,” Bishop Duca said. “We give them honor.”

The bishop said it is impossible to know if the slaves buried at the site died without recognition, anonymously or simply died quietly and alone.

“Today we give them the dignity they deserve,” he said, “and to give them a proper blessing.”

“We need to honor life,” Bishop Duca said. “Every life is important.”

Father Joshua Johnson, pastor of Holy Rosary Church in St. Amant and the lone African American priest in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, energized the gathering of more than 50 people with his remarks. He said while praying earlier that day, the Lord told him the lives of the slaves were written in the Book of Life.

“The Lord told me ‘I know their name,’” he said. “We are the body of Christ. We must speak up for justice and peace for our ancestors.

“We want this land to be treated as a sacred space.”

RISE St. James founder Sharon Lavigne passionately repeated her public calls for the St. James Parish Council to revoke Formosa’s permit. She called Formosa the parish’s enemy and said the proposed plant is a “death sentence” for St. James residents.

She said Formosa is sending its profits overseas to its Taiwan headquarters, leaving behind illness and death.

“Council members must protect our parish,” she said. “St. James is our home.

“The message is clear: no more death; no more Formosa Plastic.”

Formosa has proposed building a $9.4 billion petrochemical complex on a nearly 2,400-acre site sitting in the shadows of the Sunshine Bridge. When announced in April 2018, Gov. John Edwards, along with state and parish officials, heralded the project as an economic boon for the entire River Parishes.

When completed, the facility would produce the foundational chemicals used in a number of plastic products.

From its beginning, however, the plant has faced vehement opposition from nearby residents as well as national and local environmental groups.

Also, earlier this year Lavigne revealed to the parish council the discovery of slave grave sites on the property. Lavigne claims the company purposely failed to notify the council of the discovery before members approved Formosa’s permit.

“We want to honor (the slaves buried at the site) and the best way to honor them is to protect their descendants,” Sister Adelia Williamson CSJ said.

She added that plastics produced by Formosa are a worldwide problem but individuals can make a difference by cutting the use of single use plastics.

Father Matthew McGaughy, pastor at St. James Church in St. James and St. Philip and Our Lady of Peace churches in Vacherie, said “we came here with hope.”

He remembered the slaves who were welcomed to the same site in chains.

“I welcome you for the glory of God,” he said.

GOSPEL ▼
From page 2

end of our life on earth we are redeemed. “The Eucharist, as Christ’s saving presence in the community of the faithful and its spiritual food, is the most precious possession which the church can have in her journey through history” (Pope St. John Paul II, Ecclesia de Eucharistia, #9).

Eucharist is also a sacrifice. The eucharistic sacrifice makes present not only the mystery of Jesus’ passion and death, but also the mystery of the resurrection which crowned his sacrifice. It is as the living and risen one that Christ can become in the Eucharist the “bread of life” (Jn 6:35, 48), the “living bread.”

It is this living bread that “whoever eats this bread will live forever” (Jn 6:56-58). Here are our hopes in eternal life.

Highway to heaven

Blessed Carlos Acutis, beatified on Oct. 10, wrote “The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven. The Eucharist is the highway to heaven.”

Simply stated by a 15-year old, computer-savvy youth who entered eternal life in 2006 and is on the path to canonization, Eucharist is a perfect path to holiness. Hence, participating in the Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven. The Eucharist is the highway to heaven.

From the first flicker of our baptismal candle our “lamps” are lit and filled with oil. We are clothed in white, as we put on Christ. Water cleanses away the stain of original sin and seals us with the blessed Trinity. Upon our death the same will happen: the paschal candle will pour forth the light of Christ, a white pall is placed over the casket and the waters of baptism are sprinkled over our remains, as our families and community of believers witness to our life as a child of the light. Will we be ready for this transformation? Are we doing today what will prepare us for eternity? How is God inviting us to grow as a child of his light? Am I ready to walk with the bridegroom to the heavenly banquet and, for eternity, be a child of his light?

Soul of Christ, sanctify me; Body of Christ, save me; Blood of Christ, inebriate me; Water from Christ’s side, wash me; Passion of Christ, strengthen me; O good Jesus, hear me; Within Thy wounds hide me; Suffer me not to be separated from Thee; From the malicious enemy defend me; In the hour of my death call me and bid me come unto Thee that I may praise Thee with Thy saints and with Thy angels Forever and ever Amen (Anima Christi Prayer, 14th Century).

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

We make it personal.
11817 Jefferson Highway
225-753-1440
WWW.RESTHAVENBATONROUGE.COM

130% more estimates
10% less time
90% less cradling

We make it personal.

Free Estimates
225-383-7316

Fully Insured

2920 Myrtle Ave. • Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Tree Care By... LeBlanc's
TREE & STUMP REMOVAL, INC.
LICENSED ARBORIST
Q
What is the proper way of receiving holy Communion?
A
Any Catholic who is free from mortal sin and has fasted from food or drink for more than one hour is eligible to receive holy Communion. Water, medicine and food or drink necessary for the health of the individual is exempt from the one hour fast. Additionally, the one hour is before receiving holy Communion, not one hour before Mass starts.

Holy Communion is received by consuming either the body of Christ (the consecrated host) or the blood of Christ (the consecrated wine) or both. The Catholic Church believes that both the body and blood of Christ are contained in the consecrated host and the consecrated wine.

Before receiving the consecrated host, one should reverently approach the eucharistic minister, bow and say “amen.” The body of Christ can be received either in the hand or on the tongue. If received in the hand, the host should be consumed immediately and not brought back to the pew.

Q
Why do we have to fast before Communion?
A
We need to fast before Communion so that we will appreciate who we are receiving Jesus Christ. Fasting prepares us spiritually and mentally to receive our Lord in the Eucharist; it creates a spiritual hunger and thirst that we ought to have. We should not want to spoil our appetite for God but to increase it so that we will receive all of the graces possible when we receive the body and blood of Christ. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: “Blest are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied” (Mt 5:6).

Basically, fasting is an exercise in humility, hope and love essential virtues in preparing ourselves to receive holy Communion. The fast enhances our spiritual disposition that we need to receive Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is a special food, nourishing not only our bodies for a day, but our souls for all eternity. To remind us how special it is, the church requires the one-hour fast, so as not to mix sacred food with unholy food.

Q
How many times can I go to Communion each day?
A
Catholic is allowed to receive holy Communion twice a day. Canon 947 states “A person who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist can receive it a second time on the same day only within the eucharistic celebration (the Mass) in which the person participates.” Church authorities have interpreted “a second time” to NOT mean “again and again.” So, “a second time” means exactly that; you can receive Communion only twice in one day. The purpose of this is twofold: to promote active participation in the Mass and to avoid receiving multiple Communions out of superstition, ignorance or misguided religious zeal. This rule is waived for clergy celebrating multiple Masses and for those in danger of death.

DEACON HOOPER is a deacon assistant at Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs. He can be reached at ghooper@diobr.org.
Celebrating Advent with a twist in unusual year

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

The coronavirus pandemic will likely impact the way people observe the Advent season as they turn more to online resources and virtual events.

Technology tends to have a reputation of creating “busyness” and “distractions” but priests and lay leaders in the Diocese of Baton Rouge say technology can be an asset in preparing meaningfully for the Christmas season.

“Technology really is a great helper when it comes to aiding our spiritual life. As we’ve seen with our parishes scrambling to become tech savvy in a very short time with the onset of the coronavirus, there are opportunities for the faithful to connect with one another and journey towards God together,” said Father Chris Decker, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Maringouin, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Church in Livonia and St. Joseph Church in Grosse Tete.

Because there are set periods on the liturgical calendar with a beginning and arrival at a major feast of the church year, seasons like Advent are perfect for an individual’s built-in desires to ‘count down’ to significant events, according to Father Decker.

“Since Advent means ‘to come towards’ we really are able to count down to Christmas Day by ‘praying towards’ the birth of Jesus while he comes toward us in the prayers of the liturgy. Having an application that we can use every day of Advent helps us also to look forward to a daily encounter in prayer,” said Father Decker, who is also host of the web television show and podcast “The Catholic Underground.”

He noted that even though Lent is regarded as the great season of penance in preparing for Easter, Advent carries a more subdued penitential character since turning back toward the Lord is also a part of preparing for Christmas.

While some may have the opinion that it’s “tradition vs. technology” when thinking about celebrating Advent, Father Decker emphasized that neither is mutually exclusive and they can be combined into family prayer.

“A tradition like lighting the Advent wreath together with the prayers accompanying each candle is something kids especially like to do,” said Father Decker. “Perhaps pairing it with viewing a devotional video on a service like formed.org which many parishes offer to their parishioners free of charge, would be a good way to join tradition to a contemporary means of praying together.”

Scott Smith, a parishioner of St. Mary of False River Church in New Roads and chairman of the Men of the Immaculata, agreed.

“Though social media can often be a huge spiritual distraction, it’s also a great way to get people in the Advent spirit,” said Smith, who is an attorney and author of “Pray the Rosary with Saint John Paul II,” “St. Louis de Montfort’s Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary: New, Day-by-Day, Easier-to-Read Translation,” “The Catholic ManBook” and others.

Father Decker encouraged visitors and church parishes to also consider a weekly streamed prayer event centered around the lighting of the Advent wreath and a time of reflection. Parishioners might be able to rotate hosting the event and develop their own brief reflections to share with their parish.

Added Smith, “There are a
On a cold and rainy winter day, St. Gerard stepped off on its annual Mardi Gras parade route to be able to attend Redemptorist High School. Enrollment has been on an upswing, with nearly 180 students enrolled for the 2020-21 school year.

St. Gerard Majella Elementary School gym in Baton Rouge. Little did she know a life-changing moment awaited on the other side of those doors. Cockrahman spotted a boy she considered attractive sitting among the cheerleaders across the gym and asked her friend about possibly being introduced to him.

Shortly after, she and Tony Cockrahman went on their first date. Forty years and four children later, Redemptorist St. Gerard School and the shuttered Redemptorist High School continue to hold a memorable place in their hearts, a place where their family and our family was born.

“It’s a special place for us,” said Jeannine, who had to get a job at a nearby fast food restaurant to be able to attend Redemptorist High School her final two years since she was previously enrolled in public school and her father would not pay the tuition.

She admitted she wanted to attend Redemptorist to keep Tony away from “another girl.” “He grew up in this parish and was an altar boy (at St. Gerard Majella Church),” said Tony, who is considered a “lifer” because he graduated from St. Gerol and Redemptorist High School, which closed June 30, 2013.

“I know (Jeannine) was working at McDonald’s (so he be able to attend Redemptorist),” he added with a smile. “This place has formed our life.”

“Every time I come back it’s like coming back to see family.

The Cockrahams joined an estimated 350 alumni of St. Gerard and Redemptorist to celebrate the 75th anniversary of St. Gerard on Oct. 18. Bishop Michael G. Duca celebrated the anniversary Mass before former classmates and teachers gathered in front of the church for an afternoon of memory sharing, catching up and enjoying a jambalaya lunch prepared by the recently formed Knights of Columbus of the Ray M. Lorio Council #15154.

“The school means quite a bit to me,” said Mary Ann Burton, who has been attending St. Gerard since the age of 10. “I grew up here and all my four children graduated from here. My husband also graduated (from Redemptorist).”

Burton and her husband briefly moved away but when returning to Baton Rouge, attending St. Gerard was their only decision, as she said, the parish “is a home and family.”

“The school is like a family,” acknowledged St. Gerard pastor Father Ted Hoang, ChkR, who recently completed his first year in the parish. “I can see that the people who graduated from here have a very dear memory and connection with St. Gerard and Redemptorist. Not just the sports but also education. I can see that the people who graduated and alumni here.”

Father Hoang said he was overjoyed with the turnout and found it personally rewarding.

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

“Who am I if I am just an Asian, Vietnamese refugee priest but I am a Moselle,” he said. “I am proud of this school. I believe the reputation of this school still exists and that gives me even more hope.”

In his homily Bishop Duca noted how much the country has changed and endured in the past 75 years of the school, including the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the Vietnam Crisis.

“How can you even begin to imagine how God works,” the bishop said, reminding parishioners that the church has lived 2,000 years and the message is the same.

“The Holy Spirit is our greatest strength, especially as Catholics,” he said.

Also during the day the gym was open, and it was where former St. Gerard and Redemptorist player Ted Lyles attempted to revive his once deadly jumper. A 1974 RHS grad, Lyles recalled how he and his Redemptorist teammates had keys to the gym and would spend all day during the summer honing their skills.

“I was a Redemptorist graduate and anything that has to do with Redemptorist I try to come and be a part of it,” he said. “This place brings back great memories.”

St. Gerard School was founded in September 1946 by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. At that time the office building of the Continental Gas Pipe Line Company served as a temporary school until the new combined church and school building was completed in 1948.

The school began with grades one through eight, and each class could house 70-75 students. Enrollment for the 1946-47 school year was 295.

At the time St. Gerol was the only Catholic school within a 10-mile radius.

During those early years, many of the children were from blue-collar workers and local business families.

The cafeteria was constructed in 1953, the permanent current was completed in 1955, and new classrooms were added above the cafeteria in 1956.

Upon completion of the new church in 1957, the parish began to convert the first floor of the school building into classrooms, finishing in 1959.

Enrollment reached its zenith in the 1960-61 school year with 716 students attending.

The Sisters of Notre Dame left after the 1984-85 school year.

The Redemptorist order of priests support the education and religious education of students still today.

When Redemptorist High School closed its doors, the incoming seventh grades joined the school for the 2003-2004 school year and the name was changed to Redemptorist High School. This new chapter in the school’s storied history.

As evidenced by the large turnout, a strong love for St. Gerard and Redemptorist traditions, which they established in Baton Rouge Remigio says also.

Enrollment of St. Gerard is also back again a few years after the下げcurrent school year.

“St. Gerard still brings back great memories of this place,” Lyles said. “So many good stories.”

St. Gerard School celebrates 75 years

Long-time St. Gerard Majella Knights of Columbus Ray M. Lorio Council #15154 prepared a jambalaya lunch, which those in attendance ate while catching up with former classmates and tables placed in front of the church. Photo by Richard Meek/ The Catholic Commentator

An estimated 352 people attended the Mass, which brought together alumni of St. Gerard School and Redemptorist High School. Photo by Richard Meek/ The Catholic Commentator

Former St. Gerard and Redemptorist High School basketball Ted Lyles took to the court where he once tried to revitalize his sweet jumper from years ago. “This place brings back great memories,” he said. Photo by Richard Meek/ The Catholic Commentator

St. Gerard School celebrates 75 years

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and jau

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

More than four decades ago, on a summer afternoon búsqueda by her mother and junior years in high school, Jeannine Cockrahman joined a friend as they walked into the St. Ge-
‘The life I wanted’

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Petite in stature but gargantuan in heart, Sister Edna Oraca SOM seemed lost in the stately structure of St. John the Baptist Church in Zachary.

Flanked by her fellow Hospitaller Sisters of Mercy and standing before Bishop Michael G. Duca and St. John pastor Father Jeff Bayhi, Sister Edna humbly renewed her vows Oct. 28, another milestone in a 25-year journey rooted in the Philippines with stops in Rome and New Jersey before landing in southeast Louisiana at Metanoia House, where she mentors and lives with young female trafficking victims.

“It’s hard to believe it’s been 25 years,” Sister Edna said the day before her jubilee Mass, her bubbly personality offering a glimpse of a heart devoted in faith and focused on serving others.

“I feel blessed and satisfied of what my life is. I don’t yearn for anything else. I found my vocation,” she said.

With her infectious laugh, Sister Edna recalled her own vocational journey, one that began with a secret she kept from her parents. Only this secret was far more significant than not fessing up to snagging that last piece of candy.

When questioned about her college plans while sitting around the family table in Inabanga, Bohol in the Philippines, Sister Edna stunned her devoutly Catholic parents by saying she was joining the convent.

“They asked, ‘What are you talking about?’ and I said I was going to join the convent and by the way (a woman religious from the Hospitaller Sisters of Mercy) wants to talk to you on Sunday.’

“And that was a problem,” said Sister Edna, who was 16 at the time. “I always thought they would support me.”

Sister Edna’s future seemed predestined, joining her father in the family business that includes owning a convenience store as well as livestock.

During high school, however, Sister Edna began to formulate her own plans, absent of the family business. During a Vocations Day visit at St. Paul’s Catholic School in Inabanga, she became intrigued with the Hospitaller Sisters of Mercy, a Rome-based congregation predominantly serving in hospitals and nursing homes around the world.

“I thought they were different,” she said. “They were more into charity and so involved with

Sister Edna Oraca SOM prays during her 25th anniversary Mass Oct. 28 at St. John the Baptist Church in Zachary. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

charitable works.

“And we had already been brought up to serve others.” Concerned, a family meeting was convened and one of her seven siblings (she is the fifth of eight children) even asked her, “Did you get dumped?”

Undaunted, she was resolute in her commitment, to the point she found sleep difficult as she focused on religious life.

After obtaining her parents’ approval, required because she was still a minor, Sister Edna entered formation at the order’s house in Manila in 1991, leaving home for the first time in her life. There were times of loneliness, and she remembered her father’s parting words that the door was always open to return home.

Initially exacerbating her loneliness was that her parents did not write to her for the first six months, learning later that her father was testing her.

“That was the most difficult time in formation, being separated from my parents,” she said.

Four years later in Rome, on Feb. 12, 1995, she professed her first vows.

Later that year she began what would be nearly 10 years at a hospital in Vineland, New Jersey, where she would spend the next 10 years.

She then spent three years at a nursing home in Pleasantville before joining four other Hospital sister sisters in 2010 staffing Metanoia House. The house, a vision of Father Bayhi, offers a safe haven for young teenage girls who have been victims of human trafficking.

“Coming here, it can drain you spiritually if you don’t have a strong personal prayer life and relationship with our Lord,” she said. “It’s heartbreaking. With this experience at a very young age, some of the girls are already broken, and sometimes it was the family, who (sold the girls to traffickers).

“I can’t imagine how they endure it. That is why their reaction is ‘you don’t love really because people say they really love me take advantage of me.’

“I can’t relate,” Sister Edna said, adding that she has been exposed to cursing for the first time in her life. “Some kids are very challenging but I’m trying to help them the best I can.”

Success is measured in baby steps, such as one of the girls asking to pray with the sisters.

“That is Jesus touching them,” she said.

Sister Edna admitted it takes a special person, one with an inner strength, to work at Metanoia.

“It is a challenging ministry but a blessed one too if you are open to God’s ways,” she said.

“This is part of my formation the Lord wants me to have.”

Sister Edna also offered advice to young women who might be considering religious life, advising them to ask for the Lord’s guidance as well as that of the Holy Spirit.

“Be open to the Lord,” she said.

“If you pray the Lord will reveal the life you need to be. If it’s not for you, you will not be satisfied and you will see every corner of your life is not going in the right direction.”

“You can’t force it.”

Sister Edna made her own choice a quarter of a century ago, saying yes to God’s call when others advised otherwise. Today, the peace found in her heart shines through the smile on her face.

“This is the life I wanted,” she said.
Aft er describing in his first three chapters the present challenges facing our world today and the necessary response of fraternal charity and social friendship between individuals, civic communities and nations, Pope Francis spends the final five chapters of his encyclical letter, “Fratelli Tutti,” describing practical means of responding with these spiritual virtues to present problems of cruelty to immigrants, politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.

In Chapter Four Pope Francis talks about the huge immigration problem affecting not only the southern border of our country but almost all of the countries of the European Union. He says that until countries from which these immigrants come have conditions for safety, dignified life and integral personal development, we have to respect the rights of others to migrate. And we owe migrants welcome, protection and help to integrate into our society with a path to citizenship. Of course, this handout means accepting the common poor, not just the scientists and wealthy investors who will immediately help us.

Chapter Five is titled “A Better Kind of Politics.” Don’t we all hope for this, even if painful experience leaves us jaded in our hope to see it happen? Pope Francis writes that we can’t develop a global community which practices “social friendship of peoples and nations” without a better kind of politics that divide citizens and nations from one another, economic systems that exploit the poor and the weakening of democracy itself.
ne size doesn’t fit everyone.

This isn’t just true for clothing, it’s also true for spirituality. Our challenges in life change as we age. Spirituality hasn’t always been fully sensitive to this. True, we’ve always had tailored instruction and activities for children, young people and for people who are raising children, carrying a job and paying a mortgage, but we’ve never developed a spirituality for what happens when those years are over.

Why is one needed? Jesus seemingly didn’t have one. He didn’t have one set of teachings for the young, another for those in mid-life and still another for the elderly. He just taught. The Sermon on the Mount, the parables and his invitation to take up his cross are intended in the same way for everyone, irrespective of age. But we hear those teachings at very different times in our lives; and it’s one thing to hear the Sermon on the Mount when you’re seven years old, another when you’re 27 and quite another when you’re 87. Jesus’ teachings don’t change, but we do, and they offer very specific challenges at different times of our lives.

Christian spirituality has generally kept this in mind, with one exception. Except for Jesus and an occasional mystic, it has failed to develop an explicit spirituality for our later years, for how we are meant to be generative in our senior years and how we are to die in a life-giving way. But there’s a good reason for this lacuna. Simply put, it wasn’t needed because up until this last century most people never lived into old age. For example, in Palestine, in Jesus’ time, the average life expectancy was 30 to 35 years. A century ago in the United States, it was still less than 50 years. When most people in the world died before they reached the age of 50, there was no real need for a spirituality of aging.

There is such a spirituality inside the Gospels. Even though he died at 33, Jesus left us a paradigm of how to age and die. But that paradigm, while healthily infusing and undergirding Christian spirituality in general, was never developed more specifically into a spirituality of aging (with the exception of some of the great Christian mystics).

After Jesus, the desert fathers and mothers folded the question of how to age and die into the overall framework of their spirituality. For them, spirituality was a quest to “see the face of God” and that, as Jesus makes clear, requires one thing, purity of heart. So for them, no matter your age, the challenge was the same, trying to achieve purity of heart. Then in the age of the persecutions and the early Christian martyrs, the idea developed that the ideal way to age and die was through martyrdom. Later, when Christians were no longer physically martyred, the idea held that you could take on a voluntary type of martyrdom by living the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. They believed that living these, like the quest for purity of heart, taught you all you needed to know, no matter your age. Eventually this was expanded to mean that anyone who faithfully responded to the duties in his or her life, irrespective of age, would learn everything necessary to come to sanctity through that fidelity. As a famous aphorism put it: “Stay inside your cell and it will teach you all you need to know.” Understood properly, there’s a spirituality of aging and dying inside these notions, but until recently there was little need to draw that out more explicitly.

Happily, today the situation is changing and we’re developing, more and more, some explicit spiritualities of aging and dying. Perhaps this reflects an aging population, but there’s now a burgeoning body of literature, both religious and secular, that’s taking up the question of aging and dying. These authors, too numerous to mention, include many names already familiar to us: Father Henri Nouwen, Father Richard Rohr, Kathleen Dowling Singh, David Brooks, Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin, Michael Paul Gallagher, Joan Chittister, Parker Palmer, Marilyn Chandler McIntyre, Paul Kalanithi, Erica Jong, Kathie Roiphe, among others. Coming from a variety of perspectives, each of these offer insights into what God and nature intend for us in our later years.

In essence, here’s the issue: today, we’re living longer and healthier late into life. It’s common today to retire sometime in our early 60s after having raised our children, superannuated from our jobs and paid our mortgages. So what’s next, given that we probably have 20 or 30 more years of health and energy left? What are these years for? What are we called to now, beyond loving our grandkids? Abraham and Sarah, in their old age, were invited to set out for a new land and conceive a child long after this was biologically impossible for them. That’s our call too. What “Isaac” are we called to give birth to in our later years? We need guidance.

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.
**St. Agnes Masses** – St. Agnes Church, 749 East Blvd., Baton Rouge, will host a pro-life Mass Tuesday, Nov. 10, 5:30 p.m. and a St. Charles Healing Mass on Sunday, Nov. 22 at 6 p.m. For more information, call the St. Agnes office at 225-383-4127.

**String Quartet Concert** – The Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra will present a string quartet concert Thursday, Nov. 12, 7:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Mercy Church, 445 Marquette St., Baton Rouge. For more information, visit brsso.org or call 225-383-0500.

**Surviving the Holidays** – Those who have suffered the loss of a family or friend are invited to attend a seminar, “Surviving the Holidays,” Sunday, Nov. 15, 1 – 3 p.m., at the main hall of Immaculate Conception Church, 865 Hatchell Lane, Denham Springs. RSVP by Monday, Nov. 9 by calling the ICC office at 225-665-5339.

**Discernment Retreat** – The Carmelites of the Sacred Heart will present a virtual discernment retreat for women ages 18 – 30, “Chosen,” Friday, Nov. 13 – Sunday, Nov. 15. For more information and to RSVP, email Sister Maria Goretti at joyofcarmel@outlook.com.

**Men of the Immaculata Conference** – Registration is open for the fifth-annual Men of the Immaculata Conference, Saturday, Feb. 20, 7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., at St. George Church, 7808 St. George Dr., Baton Rouge. The theme is “St. Joseph: pillar of families, protector of the church, terror of demons.” Those unable to attend will be offered a virtual ticket option, which will include a link to watch to the conference. Tickets can be purchased online at catholicimenbr.com. For more information, call Eddie Samson at 225-571-6898.

---

**COMING EVENTS**

**November 6, 2020**

---

**Help Wanted**

**HeLp WaNted**

**Positions Wanted**

**BUSINESS SERVICE**

**CALL TYRONE**

“WHEN IT NEEDS FIXING”

LEAKING SINKS, FAUCETS, UN dungeons, TOILET REPAIRS OR REPLACE GAS DISPOSALS

PLUS OTHER REPAIRS

SUCH AS SMALL ENGINES AND HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES, ETC.

CALL 225-802-4522 OR 225-346-6246

**HousEKeePER**

MATURE DEPENDABLE

20 + YEARS EXPERIENCE

HAs REFERENCES

CAll DEBBIE

225-369-1976

**Allan’s Tree Service**


---

**LEGAL NOTICES**

Anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of the late Alexandra Kelii Ketterer is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8755.

Anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of Willy Walter Engel is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8755.

Anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of Eric Woenns Meadows is asked to contact the Diocesan Tribunal at 225-336-8755.

---

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**HeLP WaNted**

**St. George Catholic School**

invites applicants for an 8th Grade- Earth Science Teacher

**Job Summary**

The 8th grade Earth Science teacher fulfills the mission of St. George Catholic School by planning, guiding, and evaluating the learning process of Earth Science in accordance with the learning standards. This is a full-time position.

**Ministerial Character**

Positions employed at St. George Catholic School help extend the ministry of the school leaders as outlined in the job description. The employee in this position is closely connected to and assists the school leaders in the performance of their ministry and, therefore, engages in ministry for the Church.

**Essential Duties**

- Support and uphold the philosophy of the Catholic education and the mission of the school.
- Act as a witness to Gospel truths by modeling the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
- Plan for instruction with logically sequenced objectives based on adopted curriculum and submit plans according to the school policies.
- Utilize appropriate material and resources for students to engage in learning.
- Use effective instructional methods and models according to professional standards of practice.
- Use varied assessment tools to perform both formative and summative assessments.
- Provide instruction and assessment for understanding.
- Maintain current and accurate records according to school policies.
- Practice positive, consistent discipline in the management of the classroom.
- Communicate with parents regarding academic, behavioral, and safety concerns.

**Minimum Qualifications**

**Education:**
- Bachelor's degree in the subject taught or related field from an accredited university with successful completion of state certification exam.

Please send cover letter and resume to:
Mrs. Angele Fontenot at angele.fontenot@sgschoolbr.org

---

**FOR SALE**

**Hillcrest Cemetery.** 6 plots. Will sell in pairs. $1700 each. Price is firm. Call 225-504-393-6443.

**ROSELAWN Cemetery.** Three adjacent plots. Including monument space. Sec - retary. 2 crypts. St. Anne Mother of Mary Hill. Call 225-504-393-6443.

---

**HELP WANTED**

**For Sale**

**Call 225-296-0404.**

Prompt service–Free estimates

Specialized in tile, brick and travertine. Pressure washing and mold remediation. Senior and military discounts.

**THOMAS LUNDIN, CPA**

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

Call 225-296-0404.

Mr. D’s Tree Service

3 Licensed Arborists

Free Estimates

Fully Insured

Don Decell owner

225-292-6756

---

**For Sale**

**Brousseau’s Painting**

**Free Estimates**

**Call Debby 225-369-1976**

---

**BusiNess serVice**

**J Flooring & More Maintenance**

Specializing in tile, brick floors, mosaic tile and travertine. Pressure washing and carpet cleaning. Also, cleaning churches.

Call 225-577-2447. 24-hour service.


**BrouSSeu’S PAinting**

family, which was certainly the case for Landry, who is thankful for her biological and stepchildren, grandchildren, great grandchildren, 25 living first cousins and nine deceased first cousins. She enjoyed watching a video of her six-year-old great granddaughter praying for her.

Landry was also grateful for the care she received, saying, “The doctors and nurses were a family for those weeks.”

“I am so thankful for them,” she said. “It is hard to believe that these people put their lives and the lives of their family at risk every day. I wrote a letter to the hospital naming and commending them.”

The priests and religious who were part of her life also came to mind for Landry, such as the School Sisters of Notre Dame whom she met as a student at St. Mary of the Pines School in Chatawa, as well as the associates of those sisters and her Bible study friends.

Landry is also grateful for her family at St. Patrick Church in Baton Rouge, who were constantly checking on her and sending her cards and messages of encouragement. Even during struggles with loneliness and the coronavirus, Landry realized that her health has always been generally good and found “a mission” to pray for others who are not in good health.

“When I would feel sorry for myself, I only had to look outside of my hospital window to see the sign for Mary Bird Perkins (Cancer Center),” said Landry. “I was thankful for only having COVID and would pray for all the cancer patients.”

Landry advises people to follow all the health safety guidelines to avoid catching the virus. For those who have the virus, or for those who have a loved one with the virus, she encourages them to keep praying and to make their own list of things they have to be grateful for.

And as Thanksgiving rolls into the Advent season, they can quietly reflect on those blessings and use them to bless others.

Landry, who will gather with family for Thanksgiving said, “I thank God for restoring my health. I know he must have more in store for me since he saved me. One thing I will do is to be a good example for all the grandchildren and great grandchildren.”

lot of Zoom prayer groups popping up. Don’t have one at your parish? Start one. Don’t have a Zoom subscription? You can use Google Hangouts and other Zoom alternatives.”

“We still need Christian fellowship even in times of quarantine and social distancing. I plan to host a series of Zoom talks on the Blessed Mother for Advent, too. Maybe your parish could do some kind of adult catechesis through Zoom, too,” Smith said.

In addition to formed.org and Zoom, Father Decker and Smith recommended other Advent apps.

“I always like to mention iBreviary, which is the free application containing the Liturgy of the Hours. The Second Vatican Council hoped that all people and not just priests and religious would discover the value of praying the Psalms as a kind of daily spiritual rhythm,” Father Decker said. “During seasons like Advent, the Office of Readings which contain longer bits of Scripture and excerpts from the writings of saints of the church, really help me to enter into the season with anticipation.”

“Reflecting on the prophets’ longing for a messiah and how the church has prepared for Jesus these thousands of years give a beautiful sense of our Christian family that spans centuries and continents preparing for our Lord,” he added.

Smith further recommended the apps Hallow and Laudate.

“You can listen to the daily readings. They help you with your daily rosary. They will even send you reminders to keep up your prayer habits,” Smith said.

No matter what tools one uses to celebrate the Advent season, Father Decker and Smith said one should always keep in mind the purpose is for reflection so one will be ready to celebrate the gift of God coming to the world to redeem man.

“My wife and I have a lot of young kids. We sing ‘O Come, O Come, Emmanuel’ as we light our Advent candles every night before dinner. With Zoom, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, Facebook Messenger Video Calls, etc., now we can do this with the grandparents,” too,” said Smith.

“Post, for example, when you visit the sacrament of reconciliation during Advent,” he added. “Post pictures of your Advent decorations, especially Advent yard decorations. Everybody else has Santa yard ornaments, we have big Advent candles in our yard that we light up week by week. The kids love it.”

Father Decker said, “To enter into this spirit of preparation, I often adopt a small type of penance like deleting the social media application I’m tempted to spend the most time scrolling through. That helps to create a space into which I can invite deeper uninterrupted time in prayer.”

“Because Advent occurs parallel to the bustle of preparing for the cultural celebration of the holiday season, digging these little ‘wells of waiting’ are important so that when Jesus comes to us in prayer, we are ready to receive him,” he said. “This purposeful act of a small penance or even setting a daily 20-minute period to read Scripture or a devotional aid can help to dig that well the Lord wants to fill with his presence.”
maintaining and improving our facilities so that we can continue the mission to serve the needs of our area and spread the Gospel message.”

FramU hosted Fête des Fidèles Goes Virtual on Oct. 1 and raised $37,722 in support of student scholarships while also honoring two Healthcare Heroes who made an impact during the pandemic.

Proceeds support student scholarships.

During the event, a raffle was drawn to win one of three prizes: $5,000 cash, a four-day, three-night trip to a resort on Portofino Island Resort in Pensacola, Florida or a wine cache valued at $1,200.

Sara Landreneau Kleinpeter, co-chair for the STM auction.

“It was really humbling and very exciting to know people were willing to give to a parish that they love.”

Sarah Landreneau Kleinpeter, co-chair for the STM auction.

“Beyond the success in terms of the amount of funds raised, the virtual event was crucial in terms of maintaining philanthropic momentum, engaging the community, and most importantly, recognizing two remarkable healthcare heroes who represent the values and traditions of our parish.”

Father Allelo did not minimize the fundraising component but shared Holland’s sentiments regarding connecting parishioners who have missed out on so many communal events, such as the festivals, or even donuts following Sunday Mass.

“It was important to do it even virtually so that we could have that time together,” he said. The event did present daunting and unfamiliar challenges, including communicating to the general public that the event was going to be livestreamed and negotiating the unique machinations associated with producing a live virtual event, said Kleinpeter.

“We focused our effort on business who we knew had direct or indirect ties to St. Thomas More and who would have an interest in our mission of raising money for the church,” Kleinpeter said.

Perhaps with a sprinkle of apprehension and a pinch of anxiety, emails were sent, phone calls placed.

“We thought it would be difficult but I was really pleased with the amount of donations we received,” Kleinpeter said, adding that ultimately there were more than 150 silent auction items. “It was really humbling and very exciting to know people were willing to give to a parish that they love!”

As expected, proceeds were down but certainly far exceeded the committee’s expectations, as the auction netted nearly $60,000, decreases from $75,000 in 2018 and $90,000 a year ago.

“When we talked to Father Michael his idea of doing this auction was to be respectful of people’s situations and a way to bring our parish together virtually even if it was for just one night,” Kleinpeter said. “He said even if we only had a profit of $15,000 that would be a success.”

One of the more successful of the six live auction items was a dinner with Father Michael, where he cooked a full course meal for couples.

“Contrary to popular belief I am a decent cook,” he laughed. “They think the priest has no other talents outside of churchy.”

Although a hit, Kleinpeter and Father Allelo, along with so many others, hope 2021 will find the music playing and the food flowing.

Don’t Forget About The Homeless Children We Help!

A child dreams of many things, from monsters to Mickey Mouse. But when they reach a certain age, they begin to dream of their future. We don’t know what the future holds for Libby and Amy or any of the homeless children we serve, but the mission of our Bishop Ott Sweet Dreams Shelter is to give them hope and a chance to be all they can be.

Their mothers want more for their children than a life of poverty. Like all parents, they have dreams of a brighter future. Over the next year, St. Vincent de Paul will serve many homeless parents and children. We are helping these homeless parents to regain their self-sufficiency so they can make dreams come true, for themselves and their children.

Every year, through our Sweet Dreams effort, we ask people to pray for the parents and children we serve. In the Capital Area, we are the only provider of shelter for mothers with male children over the age of 5, couples with children, and fathers with children. Help us keep hope alive for homeless families!

Join Us in Keeping Hope Alive in Our Community

We are asking for your prayers; we can’t do this work without them. Also, please consider making a gift that will help homeless parents and children.

Yes, I want to provide hope!

☐ I promise to remember the homeless in my prayers.

☐ Also, my check for $_________ is enclosed.

Name: __________________________________________
Address: ________________ City: __________ State: ___ Zip: _______
Mail your gift to: St. Vincent de Paul, P.O. Box 127, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.
You can also give online at www.svdpbr.org.

Preparation is Under Way for Thanksgiving

St. Vincent de Paul & Holiday Helpers

As most of us are planning our Thanksgiving menus, there are people who are wondering where their next meal is coming from. In our community, there are thousands of households where people are skipping meals just to make ends meet.

Sometimes, we are overwhelmed by the number of people who turn to St. Vincent de Paul for the nourishment they need. But these people are not numbers – they are real people in desperate situations. Many of them were struggling before the pandemic, and the impact of COVID-19 has been a devastating financial blow.

St. Vincent de Paul is the only community kitchen that is open every day of the year, providing a hot lunch and a brown bag supper daily. Before the end of this year, we will serve over 200,000 meals. The lines at our dining room are long, and we can only meet the need with the help of generous people like you.

Share Your Blessings This Thanksgiving!

Yes, I want to feed the hungry and homeless this Thanksgiving. My check for $_________ is enclosed.

Name: __________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________
City: ____________________________________________ State: ___ Zip: _______
Mail your gift to: St. Vincent de Paul, P.O. Box 127, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.
You can also give online at www.svdpbr.org.