

CHURCH TODAY

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ON THE INSIDE

Pray for the victims of on-going Syrian Civil War

The sheer enormity of the humanitarian crisis created by Syria's brutal civil war is brutal -- 100,000 are dead, 6.5 million people are displaced inside Syria and nearly 2.5 million have fled the country. Find out how you can help, pg. 2.

Alexandria seminarian Brian Seiler serves at Mass with Pope Francis

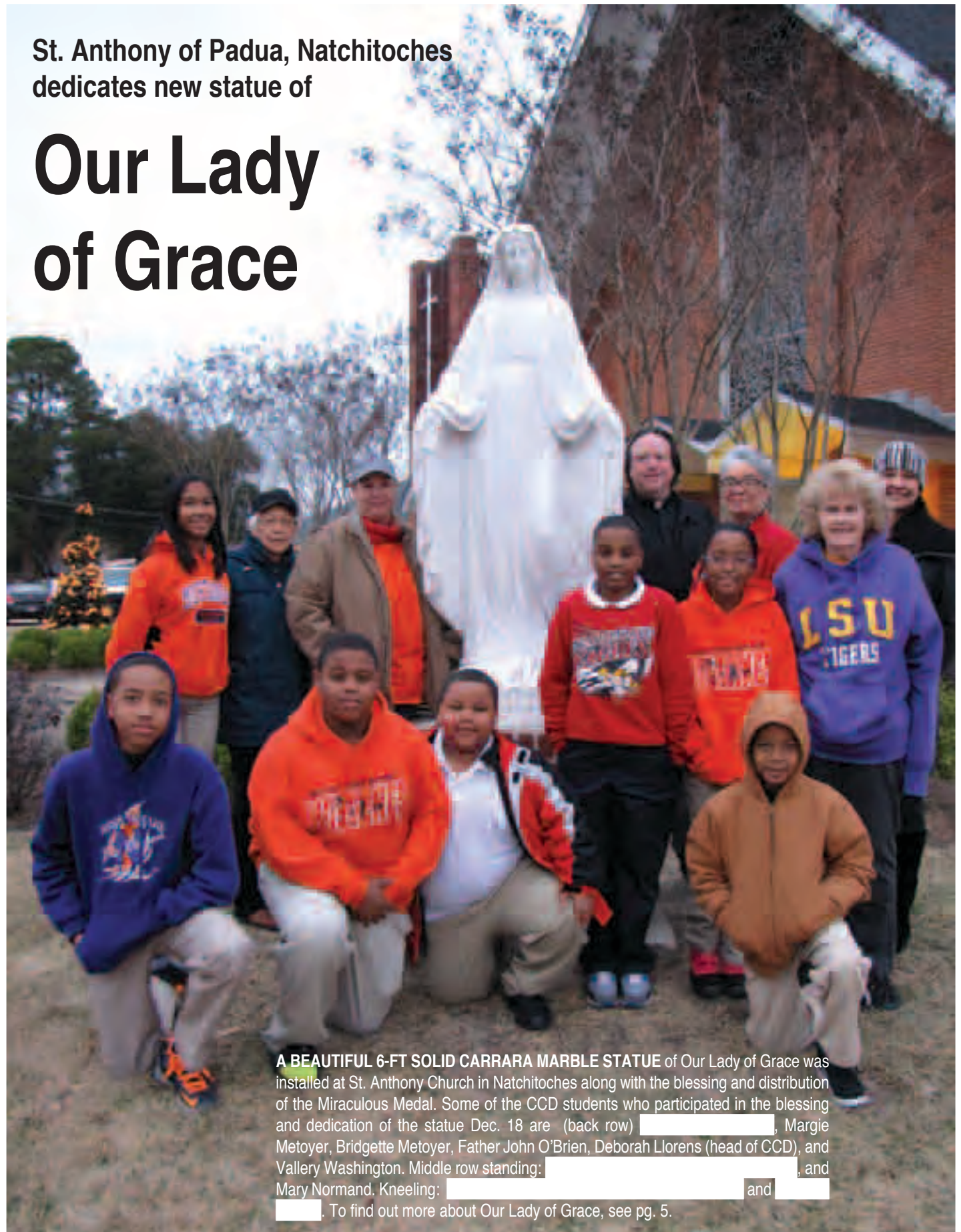
Call it luck -- call it a tremendous blessing -- either way, Brian Seiler was given the opportunity of a lifetime to serve at Mass on the altar with Pope Francis for the New Year's Day Mass in Rome. Find out more about Brian's exciting story and about other seminarians who are doing well in their vocations as well, pg. 6.

Catholic Schools Week to be celebrated Jan. 26-Feb. 1

The Diocese of Alexandria's eight Catholic schools have been busy with plans to show off the value of a Catholic school education during Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 26- Feb. 1. See pgs. 14-15.

St. Anthony of Padua, Natchitoches dedicates new statue of

Our Lady of Grace



A BEAUTIFUL 6-FT SOLID CARRARA MARBLE STATUE of Our Lady of Grace was installed at St. Anthony Church in Natchitoches along with the blessing and distribution of the Miraculous Medal. Some of the CCD students who participated in the blessing and dedication of the statue Dec. 18 are (back row) [redacted], Margie Metoyer, Bridgette Metoyer, Father John O'Brien, Deborah Llorens (head of CCD), and Vallery Washington. Middle row standing: [redacted], and Mary Normand. Kneeling: [redacted] and [redacted]. To find out more about Our Lady of Grace, see pg. 5.

Pope Francis limits 'monsignor' honor to priests age 65+

(CNS) Pope Francis has decided to limit the honor of "monsignor" among diocesan priests and grant it from now on only to those at least 65 years of age.

The change, which is not retroactive and does not affect Vatican officials or members of religious orders, was announced in a letter from the Vatican Secretariat of State to nunciatures around the world, along with instructions to inform local bishops.

Of the three grades of monsignor -- apostolic protonotary, honorary prelate of His Holiness and chaplain of His Holiness -- only the last will be available to diocesan priests who meet the new age requirement.

Bishops must resubmit any pending requests for papal honors in accordance with the new rules.

The letter did not give a reason for the change, but Pope Francis has often warned clergy against the temptations of careerism and personal ambition.

The archbishop noted that there had been no change regarding the granting of ecclesiastical honors to laypeople.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, noted Jan. 6 that Pope Paul VI had reformed the system of ecclesiastical honors in 1968, reducing the number of titles to three.

"Pope Francis' decision thus follows in the same line, with further simplification," Father Lombardi said.



Youngest: 55
Bishop Langlois, Haiti



Only one from N. America:
Archbishop Lacroix, Quebec



Average age: 70
Archbishop Soo-Yum, Korea



Oldest: 98
Archbishop Capovilla, Italy

Pope names 19 new cardinals; induction be to held Feb. 22

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Pope Francis named 19 new cardinals, including the archbishops of Westminster and Quebec and six men from his home region of Latin America, and announced a consistory for their formal induction into the College of Cardinals Feb. 22.

The pope announced the nominations to the faithful in St. Peter's Square shortly after noon Jan. 12, after praying the Angelus.

The consistory will bring the total number of cardinals to 218 and the number of cardinals under age 80 to 122. Until they reach their 80th birthdays, cardinals are eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

Two current cardinal electors will turn 80 in March, bringing the number of electors back to the limit of 120 set by Pope Paul VI. (Other popes have occasionally exceeded that limit for short pe-

riods of time.)

Five of the new electors are from Latin America, an increase by one-third of the current number from the region. Latin America, home to about 40 percent of the world's Catholics, will account for 16 percent of the group eligible to choose the next pope.

Four of the new cardinal electors are from Italy, leaving that nation's share practically unchanged at nearly a quarter.

Four new cardinal electors are Vatican officials, three of them in offices that traditionally entail membership in the college.

Another three of the new cardinals are already over the age of 80 and, therefore, ineligible to vote in a conclave. The pope uses such nominations to honor churchmen for their scholarship or other service to the church.

Among the new so-called honorary cardinals is Cardinal-designate Loris Capovilla, who served as personal secretary to Blessed John XXIII.

19 New Cardinals

- 55 Haitian Bishop Chibly Langlois of Les Cayes
- 56 Canadian Archbishop Gerald Lacroix of Quebec
- 59 Italian Archbishop Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state
- 63 Brazilian Archbishop Orani Tempesta of Rio de Janeiro
- 64 Nicaraguan Archbishop Leopoldo Brenes Solorzano of Managua
- 66 German Archbishop Gerhard Muller, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
- 66 Argentine Archbishop Mario Poli of Buenos Aires
- 68 English Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster
- 68 Ivorian Archbishop Jean-Pierre Kutwa of Abidjan, Ivory Coast
- 68 Burkina Faso Archbishop Philippe Ouedraogo of Ouagadougou
- 70 Korean Archbishop Andrew Yeom Soo-jung of Seoul
- 71 Italian Archbishop Gualtiero Bassetti of Perugia-Citta della Pieve
- 72 Italian Archbishop Beniamino Stella, prefect of the Congregation for Clergy
- 72 Chilean Archbishop Ricardo Ezzati Andrello of Santiago
- 73 Italian Archbishop Lorenzo Baldisseri, general secretary of the Synod of Bishops
- 74 Philippine Archbishop Orlando Quevedo of Cotabato
- 80 Saint Lucian Archbishop Kelvin Felix, retired, of Castries
- 84 Spanish Archbishop Fernando Sebastian Aguilar, retired, of Pamplona
- 98 Italian Archbishop Capovilla

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Richard J. Arsenault, Alexandria

Ongoing crisis in Syria creating huge humanitarian challenges

Pray for victims of Syria's Civil War -- 100,000 dead; 6.5 million are displaced

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Much has been said about the sheer enormity of the humanitarian crisis created by Syria's brutal civil war -- 100,000 are dead, 6.5 million people are displaced inside Syria and nearly 2.5 million have fled the country -- but in other ways as well, the situation presents atypical challenges.

Sophie Delaunay, executive director of Doctors Without Borders USA, said Syria presents the medical aid organization with the unusual situation of having had a modern medical system that now lies in ruins.

"This is a country where the health system was quite sophisticated," Delaunay said. With the medical care system in tatters, aid organizations have had to step in to provide a different type of care than usual.

Add to that the thousands of people suffering from the effects of chemical weapons used in an attack last year and the medical



SYRIAN RESIDENTS FLEE HOMES. Syrian residents sit along a road near Damascus after fleeing their homes following clashes between opposition fighters and forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar Assad Dec. 30. The U.N.

and other international humanitarian aid agencies estimate that 2.5 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries, including Turkey, which shares a 560-mile border with Syria. (CNS photo/SANA via Reuters)

organization has had to rework its usual strategy of aiding victims of a civil war, she said.

Nancy Lindborg, assistant administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance explained some of the challenges in trying to reach all those displaced Syrians. Lack of security, blocked access and insufficient resources mean that "despite a massive mobilization of assistance and funding, international aid has not reached 2.5 million people inside Syria," Lindborg said.

Fighting, security checkpoints and access routes deliberately cut off to humanitarian aid create what she called, "an unconscionable campaign of starvation."

Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., chairman of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights, said that in a visit last year to Kilis, a refugee camp for Syrians in Turkey, he was especially struck by the plight of children, adding that "a generation of Syrian children is at risk."

He said more than 11,000 children have been killed, including hundreds who have been shot by snipers or summarily executed.

"There are 1.1 million Syrian refugee children, 70 percent under the age of 12. Sixty percent of these children are not attending school. One in 10 Syrian refugee children are working to support their families, including

some as young as 7 years old," he explained.

"Thousands of children are unaccompanied or separated from their parents. And we have heard troubling reports of boy refugees being recruited as combatants and girl refugees being forced into early marriages."

Durbin quoted one medical expert who had been examining underweight refugee children: "We have a middle income country that is transforming itself into something a lot more like Somalia," Durbin said. "Aid workers report that signs are posted at regime checkpoints that say, 'kneel or starve.' This is a deplorable war crime and it must be stopped."

Lindborg said the U.S. has

contributed \$1.3 billion in humanitarian aid to Syria since the conflict began in March, 2011.

In addition to medical needs and food, displaced people inside Syria and Syrian refugees in adjacent countries need basic infrastructure including water and sewer services, housing, schools and jobs.

As to how to keep the world's attention focused on long-running conflicts and the needs they generate, Levine repeated a story he'd been told by a friend.

The friend, an expert on Rwanda who was immersed in 1994 in trying to get the world to respond to the genocide underway there, had a meeting with Anthony Lake, then-national security adviser to President Bill Clinton. After failing to persuade him to support sending U.S. troops into Rwanda, the friend asked him, "How do I convince you?" His reply, said Levine, was "make my phone ring off the hook."

"There are 500,000 videos on YouTube documenting the crisis in Syria," he said. "We have an amazing capacity these days ... to tell stories, shape the narrative and influence policymakers."

What you can do

- Pray -- for peace in Syria.
- Urge Congress to work towards a political solution to end the violence in Syria and support vital humanitarian assistance.
- Help innocent families affected by the violence in Syria by supporting Catholic Relief Services.

Go to
www.crs.org/united-states/syria-crisis-assistance-for-refugees/

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A Blessed New Year of 2014 to all of you!

I remember an expression from years ago: "Time flies when you're having fun." I suspect I am not alone in realizing how quickly the days and years seem to pass. I guess that must mean that I (or we) are having a great time!

I do hope and pray that the Christmas Season, just completed, brought you and your family great peace, joy and many blessings. Without question, it is a great blessing for those of us who share faith in Jesus Christ.

I know that we all have been focused on the Christmas activities and other things fade into the background. The deadline is fast approaching for anyone who wishes to join me for the week-long diocesan pilgrimage to Rome for the canonization of



ONE IN THE LORD

Most Rev. Ronald P. Herzog
Bishop of the Diocese of Alexandria

both Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II. The actual canonization will take place on the Sunday after Easter (April 27, 2014).

Space is limited because of the shortage of hotels in Rome and so this will be on a first-come-first-served basis. You can find the details on our web site (link is below). (<http://www.diocesealex.org/articles/2013/12/bishop-herzog-host-pilgrimage-jpii-canonization>)

The deadline for reservations is January 20. The tour coordinators will release hotels and airline holds after that date. So, if you are interested or have questions, please call Catholic Tours (number is on the site) as soon as possible. I hope you will be able to join me. This may be the only time in history when two popes, whom many of us remember, will be canonized.

February 6, 2014 will be a

very special day for our neighboring Diocese of Jackson, Miss. as their new bishop, Most Reverend Joseph Kopacz, will be ordained and installed. Since I was ordained for the Diocese of Natchez-Jackson (now the Diocese of Jackson), I will be able to join the new bishop on behalf of all of the Diocese of Alexandria. Please pray for Bishop Kopacz as well as retiring Bishop Joseph Latino during this time of transition.

I know some of the people of the diocese will travel to Washington or Baton Rouge for the annual Right to Life observation. This battle to safeguard all human life, made in the image of God whose birth into our human family we just celebrated, is on-going but there are a few signs that our efforts are having positive results.

However, the climate we live

in (and I am not referring to the weather) means that many of our values continue to be under attack. In addition to the threats to innocent life itself, religious freedom and the sacredness of marriage and family life continue to be in jeopardy.

Please continue your prayers and other efforts on behalf of those who need our help. I am certain that Pope Francis would include all these as he constantly urges us to look to the more vulnerable and the forgotten.

Let us begin this new year with a renewed commitment to our faith and the values of the Gospel!

Suffering of Christians around the world goes unnoticed

Catholic New York Guest Commentary

America's Catholics have been rightly focused on protecting their right to religious freedom in the face of mounting threats -- most notably the Department of Health and Human Services mandate requiring contraceptive coverage in employer-provided health insurance even if doing so violates the employer's religious beliefs.

But that struggle to protect a cherished freedom here at home should not keep us from joining our brothers and sisters in faith around the world, where Christian practice, or even Christian identity, can result in persecution that's almost unbelievable in its force and scope.

As New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan noted in a November speech to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "If our common membership in the mystical body of Christ is to mean anything, then their suffering must be ours as well."

In mid-December, more than a dozen Orthodox Christian nuns and three orphanage workers, kidnapped by extremists in Syria, were still in captivity, and two archbishops and a priest kidnapped previously remained missing.

Zanzibar

In other examples: In Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous part of

Tanzania where Christians and Muslims have co-existed peacefully for years, violence against Christians escalated dramatically in 2013, with Catholic churches being burned and priests being shot.

Nigeria

In multiethnic Nigeria, anti-Christian violence is on the upswing, including church bombings on our holiest days, and in the predominantly Christian Central African Republic, armed Muslim rebels have forced tens of thousands of Christian farmers to flee their homes.

India

In India, the 2008 Orissa massacre left hundreds of Christians murdered, thousands displaced and more than 400 churches set afire; in China, Catholic bishops and religious leaders are subject to state supervision and imprisonment; and in Pakistan, a suicide bomber attacked a Christian church in September.

Middle East

Pope Francis is among those who have called for attention, and prayers, for religious freedom throughout the Middle East. In places like Iraq, Syria and Egypt and other areas of the Holy Land, where Christian communities have flourished for centuries, violence and persecution in recent years, like the kidnapping of the

nuns, has driven away thousands of families who will likely not return.

After meeting in November with bishops from the region who pleaded for support, the pope said, "We cannot resign ourselves to thinking of a Middle East without Christians, who for 2,000 years have professed the name of Jesus."

At his general audience Sept. 25, the pope appealed to all of us to examine our consciences: Are we indifferent when we hear that so many Christians in the world are suffering, he asked, or do we feel as if it's a member of our own family? "It's important," the pope said, "to look beyond one's own fence, to feel oneself part of the church, of one family of God."

What we can do

Cardinal Dolan, in his talk to his fellow bishops, offered some ideas about what the bishops, and all Catholics, can do to help.

First, he said, bishops can encourage intercession for the persecuted, in private and in liturgical celebrations, to develop a "culture of prayer" and to help shape a sense of what's going on in places where Christians are persecuted. Bishops can also help raise awareness among the faithful, using their columns, blogs, speeches and pastoral letters, and by encouraging pastors to preach on the subject and to facilitate study sessions and activist groups in their parishes.

He also encouraged support

for organizations such as Aid to the Church in Need, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, Catholic Relief Services and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Finally, the cardinal said, the bishops can insist that our country's leaders make the protection of at-risk Christians abroad a foreign policy priority for the United States.

Blessed Pope John Paul II and the new Archbishop of Canterbury have both spoken of modern-day victims of Christian persecution as "martyrs."

That such a word is still a present-day reality, with regard to Christians or to any believer, is shameful. Whatever we can do to erase it, we must do.

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Our Lady of Grace and the story of the Miraculous Medal

Our Lady of Grace is one of the most well known titles given to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The origin of the title goes back to the appearance of Mary to St. Catherine Laboure in France in 1830. Mary appeared with rays coming from her fingertips, which she told Saint Catherine were a symbol for her graces that she would give to any of her children who asked for them. Mary promised her grace to those who wore a medal with her image on it. They would need to pray to the rosary, attend Mass, and attend confession on a regular basis.

St. Catherine

Catherine, was born May 2, 1806. When Catherine was just 9-years-old, her mother died. It is said that after her mother's funeral, Catherine picked up a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and kissed it saying, "Now you will be my mother."

At an early age she entered the community of the Daughters of Charity, in Paris, France. Three times in 1830 the Virgin Mary appeared to Sister Catherine, then a 24-year-old novice.

On July 18, the first apparition occurred in the community's motherhouse. She was awakened

in the middle of the night by a child angel and told to go to the chapel where St. Catherine saw a lady seated on the right side of the sanctuary.

When St. Catherine approached her, the heavenly visitor told her how to act in time of trial and pointed to the altar as the source of all consolation. Promising to entrust St. Catherine with a mission which would cause her great suffering, the lady also predicted the anticlerical revolt which occurred at Paris in 1870.

The Miraculous Medal

On Nov. 27, 1830, Catherine reported that the Blessed Mother returned during evening meditations. She displayed herself inside an oval frame, standing upon a globe, wearing many rings of different colors, most of which shone rays of light over the globe. Around the margin of the frame appeared the words "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

As Catherine watched, the frame seemed to rotate, showing a circle of twelve stars, a large letter M surmounted by a cross, and the stylized Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary underneath. Asked why some of

her rings did not shed light, Mary reportedly replied "Those are the graces for which people forget to ask." Catherine then heard Mary ask her to take these images to her father confessor, telling him that they should be put on medallions. "All who wear them will receive great graces."

Catherine did so, and after two years' worth of investigation and observation of Catherine's normal daily behavior, the priest took the information to his archbishop without revealing Catherine's identity.

The request was approved and the design of the medallions was commissioned through French goldsmith Adrien Vachet and quickly became popular.

For the next 46 years, Catherine lived her remaining years as an ordinary nursing sister. On her death on Dec. 31, 1876, Catherine received permission from her superiors to reveal her visions and as the one who brought the Miraculous Medal to the world.

When her body was exhumed for beatification 57 years after her death in 1933, it was found as fresh as the day it was buried. Her incorrupt body can still be seen today at the Mother House in Paris.

THE IMAGE OF OUR LADY OF GRACE can be found on the front of the Miraculous Medal.



Louisiana keeps title as 'most pro-life' state

For the fifth year in a row, Louisiana has been ranked number one in the nation as the "most pro-life state" in the nation.

Americans United for Life released its 2014 Life List ranking the 50 states based on how well they protect life in law. Louisiana was ranked first, followed by Oklahoma, Arkansas, Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

The year's most improved states include Texas, Illinois, North Carolina and Kansas.

For the fifth year in a row, Washington ranks as the worst state for life for failing to protect women from an unmonitored and under-regulated abortion industry, followed by California, Vermont, New York, and Connecticut.

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Alexandria seminarian serves at Mass with Pope Francis

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

It was the luck of the draw.

That's how Alexandria seminarian Brian Seiler, a third year theology student from the Pontifical College Josephinum, was selected to serve at the New Year's Day Mass at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome with Pope Francis.

It all started a few months ago when the Josephinum made a request to the Vatican to have some of its seminarians assist the Pope at Mass.

The response came quickly with a "yes" and with further instructions that they could send as many as 16.

The Josephinum thought that the only fair way was to draw names, so the names of all third-year seminarians were put in a hat. Brian Seiler's name was one of the lucky 16 chosen to serve on the altar with Pope Francis.

Even though Brian was selected to serve on the altar, the two other 3rd-year seminarians -- Dale Meade and Joseph Desmoine -- also went on the trip to Rome.

(An anonymous donor at the PCJ pays for a trip to Rome, for all seminarians about to be ordained as deacons. Dale Meade, Brian Seiler, and Joseph Desmoine are scheduled to be ordained as transitional deacons on May 24, 2014.)

Once in Rome, Seiler spent a day "practicing" his role in the world-televised event.



BRIAN SEILER, a seminarian from Alexandria, had the honor of serving as an Acolyte with Pope Francis at the New Year's Day Mass at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Seiler, a third year student at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio said he was deeply honored and humbled to be chosen "by lot" to participate in the once-in-a-lifetime event. Seiler is seen here holding the microphone for Pope Francis (left) and at the blessing of the nativity (right). Joseph Desmoine, also of the PCJ, was also honored to serve Mass in one of the chapels of St. Peter's Basilica.



"I was selected to hold the microphone for Pope Francis," he said. "I was given this role because . . . well, because . . . I am short . . . and they wanted someone short so that person would not block being able to see the Pope."

On the day of the Mass, Seiler was told to report to the Pieta area, a glass-enclosed area in St. Peter's Basilica, where Michelangelo's famous Pieta (Blessed Mother holding the crucified Christ in her arms) is located.

"We joined the others in the Basilica praying the rosary while we waited for the Pope's arrival," he said. "It was a very moving experience to be praying the rosary in St. Peter's Basilica, while touching the base of the Pieta."

When Pope Francis arrived, he greeted each seminarian in the

Pieta Chapel with a handshake and a warm "Happy New Year" greeting in Italian.

"I responded quickly with the same greeting in my best Italian," he said. "I hope I said 'Happy New Year' (bon anna in Italian) and not *bonanna*, which means 'Happy Banana.'"

After the acolytes (ordained altar servers) helped the pontiff into his vestments, the group processed in grand procession down the aisle of the Great St. Peter's Basilica -- one of the holiest of Catholic Churches in the world.

"I was one of the four servers who walked directly behind Pope Francis," said Brian.

For the remainder of the Mass, Seiler stood under the *baldacchino* -- the pavillion-like structure that stands below the dome and above the altar. It is

claimed to be the largest bronze structure in the world and is ornately designed to create a sort of holy space in and around the altar where the Holy Eucharist is laid.

"I was little nervous about getting it all right," he said. "In practice, I was warned to be careful with the microphone and to make sure I didn't accidentally hit the Pope with the microphone. So I waited for my cues and prayed that I wouldn't mess it up."

"In practice they told me that if all went well, everything would be gone and forgotten tomorrow; However, if I DID accidentally hit the Pope with the microphone, I would go down in history as the 'dumb seminarian who gave the Pope a black eye! Thankfully, all went well.'"

Throughout the Mass, Seiler found himself immensely touched

by the most exciting experience of his life -- serving the Pope at Mass.

"On several occasions, my eyes swelled up with tears as I soaked in the awesomeness of the experience," he said. "From walking down the aisle of the great Basilica and being directly behind the Pope to watching the Pope raise the Eucharist at the moment of consecration on the holiest of altars in the world -- the altar where so many popes before have celebrated Mass; -- the whole experience was indescribable."

At the end of the Mass, the Pope processed down the aisle, with Brian and the other three servers following directly behind.

As the Pope exited the church, a down-syndrome child from the front of the crowd reached for the Pope and cheered loudly, "I love you!"

"There was so much cheering I don't think anyone heard the child, but I did and it was very touching. I choked up again," he said.

"My friends took pictures of me with the Pope, when they could, -- and of course they had to point out that my eyes were red (from tears) in most of the pictures," he said. . . and they probably were. I have been extremely blessed and humbled by this entire experience. I was in awe the whole time I was on the altar and I continue to be in awe today. It is a wonderful memory that I will hold in my heart for the rest of my life."



Joseph Desmoine admitted to Candidacy for Holy Orders

ALEXANDRIA SEMINARIAN Joseph Desmoine was admitted to Candidacy for Holy Orders Dec. 9 in the St. Turibius Chapel at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. Bishop Eduardo A. Nevares, auxiliary bishop of Phoenix, admitted Desmoine and 15 other seminarians during a Mass held on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

The Rite of Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders is celebrated when a seminarian has reached a maturity of purpose in his formation and has demonstrated the necessary qualifications for ordination. In the presence of the bishop, he publicly expresses his intention to complete his preparation for Holy Orders and his resolve to fully invest himself to that end, so that he will serve Christ and the Church faithfully. Pictured is Desmoine with Bishop Nevares and Msgr. Christopher Schreck, rector of the Josephinum. Photo by seminarian Joshua Altonji (Birmingham).



ALEXANDRIA SEMINARIANS MEET UP IN ROME. While Joseph Desmoine, Brian Seiler and Dale Meade, all seminarians from Alexandria currently attending the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio were in Rome recently to attend (and Seiler’s participation in) the New Year’s Day Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, they met up with two other seminarians from Alexandria. Daniel Hartt and Taylor Reynolds currently attend the North American Pontifical College in Rome. The five got together on the last day of the Josephinum group’s trip and spent the day together getting the grand tour of a few of the tourist sites. Standing together on the rooftop of Taylor and Daniel’s apartment are (from left) Joseph Desmoine, Brian Seiler, Daniel Hartt, Taylor Reynolds, and Dale Meade.

Catholic Extension will feature seminarian in its year-long marketing campaign

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

Catholic Extension has selected the Diocese of Alexandria as one of only 12 dioceses in the U.S., to feature one of their seminarians in a year-long marketing campaign.

According to Father Kenneth Michiels, director of Vocations, Dale Meade, a third year theology student at the Pontifical College Josephinum, was selected.

As a third-year theology student at the Pontifical College Josephinum, Dale is expected to be ordained a transitional deacon in May, 2014 and receive the sacrament of Holy Orders in 2015.

He received a BS degree from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, La.; an MS degree from Louisiana Tech in Ruston, La.; and an MD



Dale Meade

from Louisiana State University-Shreveport Medical School in Shreveport, La.

As a physician, Dr. Meade spent three and one-half years teaching Family Medicine at the

LSU Health Sciences Center – Shreveport Family Medicine residency in Alexandria and four and one-half years practicing Family Medicine at the Sicily Island Medical Center in Sicily Island, La.

Before converting to Catholicism in 2005, he had begun pursuing a master’s degree in Theology from Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Conn. while teaching at the residency program. After completing his Master of Arts degree in Dogmatic Theology in 2008, he entered the seminary at the Pontifical College Josephinum in 2009 through the Diocese of Alexandria.

He is a member of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral and is the son of the late Hershel Oliver Meade and Mrs. Charlene Roshto Meade of Pollock. He has one sister, Melonee Meade Constance.

When Dale is not in the seminary studying, you can always find him in the kitchen cooking “good things” or experimenting with new ways to bake something different in the oven.

He also serves as the “infirmarian physician” for the Josephinum.

Seminarian Burses

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Deacon and Mrs. L. G. Deloach.....	\$2,000.00
Fr. Rickey Gremillion Burse	
Total.....	\$6,645.00

Contributions to any of the burses or to establish a new burse should be sent to the Chancery Office, Post Office Box 7417, Alexandria, Louisiana 71306-0417

For a full list of contributions to all established seminarian burses, please see page 15



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Fr. Thompson honored as one of Louisiana's Role Models

The Baton Rouge Chapter of The Links, Incorporated honored Father August Thompson as one of nine Louisiana Role Models at the Eighth Annual New Orleans Style Jazz Brunch.

The event was held at the Renaissance Hotel in Baton Rouge Dec. 14. The theme for the event, *Celebrating the Successes of Louisiana Role Models*, highlights the accomplishments of Louisiana natives who have had a positive and insightful impact on communities at the local, state and national level.

Father August Thompson is a retired Catholic priest of more than 50 years, previously serving as pastor of St. Juliana and St. James Catholic Churches, where he was the first African-American pastor.

Father Thompson's story as a black priest was featured in the National Catholic Reporter. While in the Diocese of Alexandria, Father Thompson was passionate about his work with the Arna Bontemps Foundation, for which he served from 1988 to present in various offices including chaplain, founding member and charter member. He has been actively involved with the St. Mary's Training School Board of Directors.

In 1957, when he was ordained at St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans. At that time, Father Thompson was one of only 50 black priests in the country.

After an interview by John Howard Griffin for Ramparts in 1963, Father Thompson gained a national voice in the civil rights movement. The White House invited him in 1966 for the grassroots organizing conference "To



Fr. August Thompson

Fulfill These Rights".

Father Thompson received the Outstanding Citizen Award from the Black Student's Union at Lewis University in Romeoville, Ill. He was the first African-American to serve on the Board of National Federation of Priests' Councils.

In 1966, he was the recipient of the Louisiana Black Achiever Award from Louisiana State University - Alexandria. In 1991-1992, he was named Clergyman of the Year and in 2000, he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Alumni Association of Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans and the Excellence in Religion Award from the Boston College Alumni Association.

The Links Incorporated, Baton Rouge Chapter is honored to recognize the achievements of the nine 2013 Louisiana Role Models. In the words of Brenda Birkett, president of the chapter, "these are outstanding individuals who has excelled in their respective areas and contributed unselfishly to a society that benefits us all."

\$650,000 renovation project

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

After nine months of construction and \$650,000 later, renovations to St. Francis Xavier Cathedral's Xavier Hall are finally complete.

"I couldn't be happier with the final renovations," said Father Jim Ferguson, rector of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. "We now have a beautiful reception hall to complement our beautiful Cathedral."

Renovations to the 127-year-old building and recent addition were extensive. The major repairs included updating the men's and women's restrooms, creating a whole new handicap restroom carved from the backside of the

kitchen pantry, enlarging and updating the commercial kitchen, adding two handicap ramps to each of the side entrances, and restoring the deteriorating banister on the second floor balcony.

The main room of the hall was doubled in size by tearing down walls and including the old choir room (now located in the old convent building) and then renovating its interior.

Interior changes to the main room included lowering the ceiling, replacing some of the windows, new wiring and replacing some of the central AC/heating units, asbestos abatement, new fire sprinkler system, new floors, roof repair, and painting.

"It's amazing how large this space is now," said Father Ferguson.

son. "It's cleaner-looking, much brighter, and much nicer."

Despite the many changes, the historic integrity of the building was not compromised.

"We still kept all of the original doors (and doorknobs) of the old school, as well as the original windows on the old part of the building," he said. "A statue of St. Joseph stands at the entrance to welcome visitors."

Xavier Hall includes the entire first floor of the old St. Francis Xavier Academy (originally built in 1887) and a one-story addition that was added in the 1950s.

The second floor of the old school building was originally expected to be in the renovation project, according to Father Ferguson. "In the end, there was not enough money to renovate the second floor, . . . maybe another day," he added with a smile.

Xavier Hall is now available for rent for receptions or other gatherings. It can accommodate up to 145 (seated) or approximately 250 (buffet). Interested persons should contact the church office for details.

HANDICAPP ACCESS was added to both sides of the addition. On this side entrance, a new handicap restroom was constructed from the backside of the kitchen pantry, immediately to your right when you walk in.



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completed on Xavier Hall in Alexandria

SIDE ENTRANCE. The exterior of the addition received a face-lift with new vinyl siding and upgraded outdoor lighting. The side entrance provides an entrance more convenient to the parking lot.



THE MAIN RECEPTION AREA (top and left) doubled in size when walls between the old choir room and the foyer were removed. The room is now “L-shaped” and offers additional room for larger gatherings. New furnishings (tables and chairs) and window treatments (wooden blinds and sheer curtains) were also added to allow maximum natural light.

(below) **RENOVATED KITCHEN AREA.**



Women's Restroom



Men's Restroom



Foyer



Front Entrance



Stairwell



Confirmation Rally attracts 165 students

It's not always easy to ignite a young person's desire to love and follow Jesus, but that's exactly what the first Ignite Confirmation Rally did at the Alexander Fulton Hotel Jan. 11.

More than 165 Confirma-

tion candidates and Confirmation catechists attended the first Ignite rally, sponsored by the Office of Religious Formation and Training. Presenters included Father Byce Sibley, Bishop Ronald Herzog, and Chris Padgett. Host Dale dePerrodil and worship leader

Kelly Pease Lombardi kept the students entertained and inspired.

Bishop Herzog talked to the candidates about the Confirmation process, followed by Q&A. According to rally coordinator Luc Noel, the event was well received by those who attended.

"The feedback we've received from the students and the catechists has all been very positive," said Noel. "It was an excit-

ing event that seems to have accomplished what we set out to do. We hope to offer another one next year."



(Clockwise -- from top right)

- Students play a game which involves making host Dale dePerrodil respond in song.
- An icebreaker game at the beginning sets the tone for the rally.
- More than 165 students attended the rally and Mass with Fr. Sibley.
- A student asks Bishop Herzog a question during the Q & A session.

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Blessings and dedications around the diocese



ST. FRANCIS CABRINI SCHOOL DEDICATES SHRINE TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE. Students at St. Francis Cabrini School gathered in the courtyard Dec. 13 for the dedication of the new shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe in honor of Father Jose Robes-Sanchez, the former pastor. Father Chad Partain, celebrated a school Mass at 8 a.m., followed by the dedication. God bless you Father Jose, for your 12 years of dedicated love and service to Cabrini school and parish. Ad Multos Annos!



BISHOP HERZOG celebrated Mass Jan. 7 in the chapel in the Chancery on the Feast of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, the patroness of Louisiana. During the Mass, he blessed a new statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor that will stand permanently in the back of the chapel. Father Chad Partain concelebrated the Mass with the Bishop and gave an interesting homily on the history of the devotion to Our Lady of Prompt Succor.



CHURCH OF THE LITTLE FLOWER, Evergreen - ST. THERESA'S GARDEN was formerly dedicated Oct. 20 with a Mass of Thanksgiving by Father Bartholomew Ibe, pastor of Church of the Little Flower. The beautifully landscaped garden, decorated with a statue of St. Theresa, was made possible through the benevolence of two parishioners. The pastor thanked the parishioners for their generous deed and spirit.

CHURCH OF THE LITTLE FLOWER, Evergreen - NEWLY RENOVATED CHAPEL. The newly renovated chapel in the rectory at the Church of the Little Flower in Evergreen was dedicated Dec. 12 with a Mass of Thanksgiving by Father Bartholomew Ibe, pastor. The chapel was recently renovated and furnished through the kindness of one parishioner. The pastor thanked the parishioners for their spirit of sacrifice and generosity.



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Away in a Manger

From plays to concerts, our youth find ways to participate in the True Spirit of Christmas

ST. PETER MISSION - (Elmer) - CHRISTMAS PLAY. Eleven young people at St. Peter Mission in Elmer got together to put on the best Christmas play ever! Pictured are (left to right)

and and
and .



OUR LADY OF LOURDES - Fifth Ward - CHRISTMAS PLAY. Leslie Bordelon, youth director at OLL- Fifth Ward, said the young students of the parish did a beautiful job of acting out the story of Jesus' birth during the annual Christmas Play held Dec. 21. Pictured are (front row)

row: , and . Middle

. Back row:

and



OUR LADY OF LOURDES -Fifth Ward) ALTAR SERVERS. When the new altar server robes came in Dec. 15 (Youth Celebration Day), the servers could not wait to try them on to see how they fit. Pictured in their new robes are (front row)

Back row:

, and Father Silverino Kwebuza, pastor.





(above) **OLPS CHRISTMAS ANGELS.** All the little girls in the Pre-K classes at Our Lady of Prompt Succor School in Alexandria performed as angels during a special Christmas program held Dec. 17 at the church. Also starring the program were members of the Holy Family -- and the Wise Men --

(center) **OLPS CHRISTMAS CONCERT.** The 6th grade students at Our Lady of Prompt Succor perform in concert Dec. 17 at the Divine Providence Center.

(below) **OLPS 2nd GRADERS** perform traditional Christmas Carols during the Christmas program. Parents and grandparents enjoyed the festive program.



SACRED HEART (Pineville) CHRISTMAS PAGEANT. Children in the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Pineville) CCD classes put on a Christmas Pageant Dec. 24 before the 4 p.m. Christmas Vigil Mass. More than 30 students participated in the pageant that portrayed the story of the birth of Jesus. Thanks to Mrs. Katherine Marino and several other parents, who organized and worked with all of the children to put on the play.

Outstanding students

Schools submit *Students of the Year* for contest

One of the hardest things for the schools to do each year is to choose a "Student of the Year."

Sponsored locally by the Diocese of Alexandria's Office of Catholic Schools, the Students of the Year competition awards one 5th grader, one 8th grader and one 12th grader from any parochial or private school within the diocese.

"There are so many outstanding students not just in our Catholic Schools, but in the area private schools, as well," said Superintendent of Catholic Schools Thomas Roque. "When the judges see the accomplishments of these young people, it is almost impossible to choose just one."

Outstanding students are first nominated from each school. Then from those nominations, each school must choose one person from the 5th grade, 8th grade and 12th grade, to represent their school for the competition.

These selected students are then required to submit an extensive portfolio (large binder) about themselves.

The portfolio includes a sec-

tion on academic accomplishment -- which includes a transcript of their grades, and any academic honors (spelling bee or science fair winner, literary rally participant, or member of the Beta Club or National Honor Society, etc)

One of the most impressive sections of the portfolio is the essay. Each student is asked to write a 300-word essay about themselves, their family, their interests, hobbies -- or really anything they want to write about. It is through this essay that judges discover the most about the student -- his/her values, dreams, -- and most importantly, how well the student can communicate.

The final section of the portfolio includes anything the student wants to share visually -- pictures of family or family vacations, involvement in sports, a piece of artwork created, or a favorite hunting picture or dance picture.

In the end, a panel of judges read each portfolio and make the difficult decision of choosing just one from each grade (5th, 8th and 12th)

Those nominated from schools in our diocese are:

Sacred Heart Moreauville

5th grader: Camille Coco

8th grader: Hannah Peavy

Holy Savior Menard

8th grader: Alyssa Rabie

12th grader: Gabby Lessen

St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie

5th grade - Grace Roy

8th grade - Julia McCoy

St. Mary School, Natchitoches

5th Grade - Madeline Godfrey

8th Grade - Theresea Anne Sklar

12th Grade - Hunter Hendrix

St. Mary School, Cottonport

5th grade -Emily Grace Provence

8th grade - Christian Merrick

St. Joseph School, Plaquemine

5th Grade - Sara Link

8th Grade - Tanya Simmons

12th Grade - Ashley Knight

Prompt Succor, Alexandria

5th Grade - Halle Goudeau



Tuesday, Jan. 28

Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria

6 p.m. -- Divine Providence Center

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the OLPS "Showcase" Night, a Community Open House, on Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. at the Divine Providence Center, located behind the OLPS Church. The night will be filled with exciting information about all the exciting programs and curriculum enhancers we offer here at OLPS School. All OLPS parents are encouraged to attend along with friends and family with school age children (gr. K-6th). For more information, please contact OLPS School at (318) 487-1862.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

Sacred Heart School, Moreauville

All day during school hours

Thursday, Jan. 30

Holy Savior Menard, Alexandria

6 p.m. -- School Gym

If you have a student headed to junior high or high school next year, and are interested in what Holy Savior Menard has to offer, don't miss our Open House for Prospection Students on Thursday, Jan. 30 at 6 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Meet first in the gym and learn how we integrate faith, academics, and service into a well-rounded package for your student. Visit the classrooms and meet the teachers. Student tour guides will help you find your way around and refreshments will be available in the Mall Area. Hope to see you there! For more information, please contact Menard at 318-445-8233.

March 10-14

Registration Week for St. Anthony of Padua School, Bunkie

8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Registration for the 2014-215 school year at St. Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie will be held March 10-14, from 8 .am. - 2 p.m. Come by the office today and register your child for next year.



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Area schools celebrate Catholic Schools Week Jan. 26 - Feb. 1 with lots of special events



“WE LOVE OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOL!” READS THE SIGN AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL (Bunkie). Students in grades Pre-K 3 through 4th at St. Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie pose for a picture with several colorful signs that show off their pride and love for their Catholic school. Catholic schools throughout the diocese will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week Jan. 26- Feb. 1 with lots of special Masses, dinners of appreciation, guest speakers, and many other fun activities for the Catholic school students.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL and the SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS. Sister Kalen Sarmiento, a pre-K teacher at Sacred Heart School in Moreauville is one of only a few sisters teaching in our Catholic schools. Other sisters in the schools are:
Sister Sandra Norsworthy (principal)
Sister Delnise Silva, OLS, (Sacred Heart, Moreauville);
Sister Nina Vincent, OLS, (Menard);
Sister Jeannette Daniel, SLW and Sister Judiann Derhake, SLW (St. Anthony, Bunkie);
Sister Pat Kimble, CDP, OLPS; and Sister Elizabeth Ann Holmes, SSF, (Alma Redwine Elementary)

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ST. FRANCIS CABRINI SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY BEE WINNERS, held Dec. 18 are 1st Place, in the 6th grade; 2nd Place, in 4th grade; and 3rd Place, in 5th grade. The 1st place winner will take a test in January to qualify for the next step in this contest. We wish to thank all the participants of this contest, as well as Mrs. Waits, the Geography Bee sponsor.

LSU-A students join 28,000 college kids at Catholic conference

Feeding the homeless on streets of Indiana 'most profound' experience

Four students from the LSU-A Catholic Student Organization attended the National Catholic Collegiate Conference Nov. 21-24 in Indianapolis, Ind.

Lynn Ray, campus minister at the LSU-A CSO, accompanied the students -- Kiel Brouillette, Hannah Rice, Naomi Funderburk, and Amelia Bertrand -- and one parent, Kara Bertrand.

For three days, the group participated in engaging workshops, inspiring keynotes, dynamic prayer and worship services, praise and music, entertainment and networking with other peers. They exchanged ideas on ways to help their organization grow and prosper on campus.

"For some of the students it was their very first time to fly and leave the state," said Lynn Ray. "We were able to sign up and participate in 'Operation Leftovers' where we hit the streets in 17 degree weather to feed the homeless. This was a rewarding lesson for us on corporal works of mercy. It was an amazing trip that the college students will be talking about for the rest of their lives."

(Editor's Note: The following is an essay from one of the students who attended the conference expressing her gratitude for the experience, and the impact it had on her life.)



LSU-A CATHOLIC STUDENTS ATTEND NATIONAL CATHOLIC COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE. Joining more than 28,000 other college kids from across the United States, were four students from LSU-A and their campus minister, Lynn Ray. Pictured are Hannah Rice, , Kiel Brouillette, Lynn Ray, Naomi Funderburk, and Amelia Bertrand.

**By Hannah Rice
Member of LSU-A CSO**

Ever since junior high, I have always gone to a yearly retreat. So, I was especially excited when

Mrs. Lynn (Ray), campus minister for the LSU-A Catholic Student Organization, asked me to go to National Catholic Collegiate Conference (NCCC) with her and a couple of other people. After

major fundraising, two flights to Indianapolis and many blessings later, we made it to the NCCC and were amazed at the amount of people there.

We started the retreat with

praise and worship with more than 28,000 youth and young adults! On the second day, we had many workshops to choose from and a couple that everyone attended. I chose Evangelization: What about Mary? and a workshop that you went to if you wanted to feed the homeless that night.

The first talk was about evangelization and how to evaluate yourself to see where you struggle and ways to help. I really enjoyed this talk because I felt God wanted me to see how to use these tools to help our own CSO here at LSU-A. Reaching out to more students on campus and more service projects is what I want to work on most at the CSO.

The second talk was my favorite by far. It was about Mary and explained many aspects of her and how she is intertwined with the Faith. I have always loved Mary and never questioned whether she helps me or if it's okay to pray to her, but many of my close friends are Protestant and I know the Lord wants me to have more knowledge about the Blessed Mother so I can share the truth and she can begin to lead more people to her Son.

The last workshop was more-so an introduction to an organization that helps the homeless in Indianapolis. The man

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who spoke to us was the one who started "Operation Leftover" to help the people he saw everyday who desperately needed help. I feel that, out of all the experiences throughout the trip, that feeding the homeless that night was the most profound.

I bundled up as good as a

FEEDING THE HOMELESS. Members of the LSU-A group who attended the National Collegiate Catholic Conference gather around the supply table to fill bags with food and supplies for distribution to the homeless.

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS. The LSU-A students talk to a homeless guy on the streets and offer words of encouragement after handing him a bag of food and supplies. One of the students said it was 'the most profound' experience.

Southern girl knows how, but the cold still went right through me. After complaining about how it hurt, a thought came to me . . . after this I can leave and go home and get warm, take a hot shower and bundle up . . . they can't.

Of course people know this and I did too, but until I experienced the pain of the cold and what they went through, I really couldn't gasp it. I knew God put me here to show me how blessed I am and how I need to be a vessel of His blessings to others.

When I came home and people asked me how my conference was, I told them it was amazing and a real eye-opener. I learned so much more than I could ever put on paper and I feel so immensely blessed that I was able to go. I thank everyone so much for supporting us and helping us all get to the NCCC.

La College Catholic students head to DC for Life March Jan. 22

Please keep in your prayers a group of Catholic students from the Jacob's Society at Louisiana College who will be participating in the Jan. 22 national Life March in Washington, D.C.

Lynn Ray, director of campus ministry; Chris Riche, LC campus minister volunteer, and five students will be travelling by bus to Washington DC to join hundreds of thousands of pro-lifers expected to attend the peaceful rally and march.

"Please pray for the safety of our students, for a good experience for them, and for the tens of thousands of babies who are killed every year through abortion," said Ray.



CSO STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM LSU-A. Two students from the Catholic Student Organization on the campus of LSU-A graduated Dec. 9. Pictured are Father John Pardue, Cat Mealer, Matt Walker, and Lynn Ray, director of campus ministry.

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Very Reverend Stephen Scott Chemino
Chairman

Completed burses at \$15,000.00 each:

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- Monsignor B. A. Scallan
- Father H. Gerald Bordelon
- Father Michael P. Kammer
- Father Bruce Miller
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- John Dominick Driscoll
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- John Gregory Simms

The following is a list of established burses and amounts each:

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Bishop Sam G. Jacobs	1,100.00
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Monsignor Charles M. Jekeler	325.00
Monsignor Joseph F. Kidd	1,500.00
Monsignor William Kwaaitaal	850.00
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Monsignor Patrick Murphy	2,104.00
Monsignor William C. O’Hanlon	5,000.00
Monsignor Aloysius O. Olinger	865.00
Monsignor Mozart Pelletier	100.00
Monsignor John V. Plauche	400.00
Monsignor F. Joseph Rateau	570.00
Monsignor Russell J. Richie	591.14
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Monsignor Matthew J. Scanlon	310.00
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July 2013 - December 2013

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Monsignor Henry Van der Putten	1,291.89
Monsignor John C. Vandegaer	1,350.00
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Mrs. Anne Barry Gallagher	2,025.00
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In Honor of Providence Central High School	
Class of 1959	1,170.00
General Fund	2,000.00
Total	\$452,373.83



MANNA HOUSE DISTRIBUTES BLANKETS. Manna House volunteers Becky Singleton and Jane Roth give a warm blanket to a young girl who was eating lunch at Manna House Jan. 7. More than 100 blankets were collected and distributed by Manna House volunteers to anyone who needed a little extra warmth during the cold weather experienced recently.



ST. JOSEPH/ ST. PATRICK DONATES TO ST. MARY'S TRAINING SCHOOL. Father Blake Deshautelle, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Colfax and St. Patrick Mission in Montgomery presents a \$2,000 check to Sr. Mavis Champagne, administrator at St. Mary's Residential Training School, on behalf of his parishioners. Prior to Christmas, an Angel Tree was put up in each church for the children at St. Mary's.



FLEUR DE LIS DONATION. Gus Agosto (far left) and Pat Moore (far right) both members of the Order of Fleur de Lis and Bishop Ronald Herzog, who serves as Grand Prelate of the Order of Fleur de Lis, presents a check to Col. Mike Edmondson, director of the Louisiana State Police Trooper's Assistance Program and its chaplain services, to be used for chaplain training and program supplies.

Order of Fleur de Lis makes donation to Louisiana State Police chaplain program

Since part of the creed of the Order of Fleur de Lis is to *promote patriotism and to advance service to God*, the organization chose to support the Louisiana State Police Trooper's Assistance Program and its Chaplain services.

The Trooper's Assistant Program, under the direction of Col. Mike Edmondson, was established in 2008 after a need was realized to assist troopers and their families through a variety of counseling and chaplain services.

"State Troopers see an overwhelming amount of trauma through the investigation of fatality crashes, trooper involved shootings, investigations involving murder and rape, and

sexual abuse involving children," said Col. Edmondson. "As a result, the troopers suffer emotional trauma, and if not addressed, may result in long-term psychological damage, as well as stress to their relations with others, particularly their families. Furthermore, this emotional trauma affects the trooper's job performance and personal health."

Most of the funds will be used to train more chaplains to serve the troop areas, but the money will also be used for necessary supplies for the chaplains. Currently, each troop area is allotted two chaplains, with the exception of Troop G, (Shreveport) which has four.



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Response to *On Eagle's Wings* is humbling to composer

By Darlene J.M. Dela Cruz
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Father Jan Michael Joncas has composed more than 300 liturgical songs, but his name is widely known for the one that tops a list of favorites: "On Eagle's Wings."

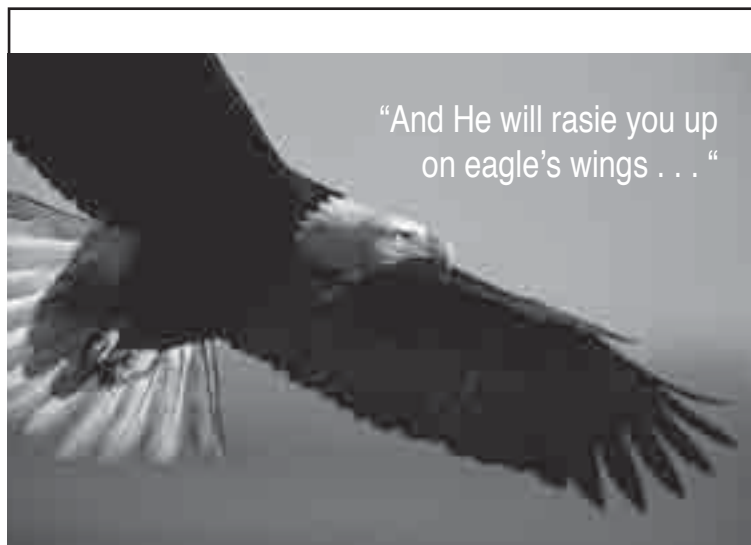
The hymn by Father Joncas, 62, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, was named by hundreds of voters as their No. 1 liturgical hymn in a 2006 poll sponsored by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians.

Since "On Eagle's Wings" was written in 1979, it has become a staple at Sunday Masses, funerals and memorial events as a reminder of God's uplifting presence in times of sorrow.

"Most people associate me with this single piece," Father Joncas said.

Father Joncas said the song came about when he was visiting a friend at the major seminary in Washington. One evening, Father Joncas' friend got word that his father had suffered a fatal heart attack. Father Joncas wrote "On Eagle's Wings" in the days that followed and it was sung for the first time publicly at the friend's father's wake service.

The song is based on Psalm 91, its lyrics drawing from the Scripture's descriptions of God's protection and providence. Lyrics include the lines "You need not



On Eagle's Wings

by Father Michael Joncas

1. You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life, say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"

REFRAIN:

And he will raise you up
on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand.

2. The snare of the fowler will never capture you, and famine will bring you no fear: under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield. (REFRAIN)

3. For to his angels he's given a command to guard you in all of your ways; upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. (REFRAIN)

fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day," and "For to his angels he has given a command to guard you in all of your ways."

Although there is no mentions of eagles in Psalm 91, the song's chorus uses the metaphor to depict God's high, secure places the verse describes. "And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand."

"I have been humbled by the number of times people have spoken or written to me about how God has used the song to bring them comfort and peace," Father Joncas said.

The song's colorful imagery is woven together by a melody with airy highs and a crescendo refrain. Father Joncas said the verses were meant to be sung by a cantor capable of handling the wide range of notes. Congregants would join in singing the simpler chorus.

"I have been amazed to find congregations singing the entire thing, because I think the verses are somewhat difficult," said Father Joncas, who, with fellow composer Marty Haugen, participated in a liturgical arts conference in Honolulu in the fall.

The priest has been composing new material recently, after his recovery from Guillain-Barre syndrome. The illness paralyzed



Father Michael Joncas

him in 2003, but he has recuperated well.

Haugen, 63, wrote "Shepherd Me, O God" in the mid-1980s. It is cherished by many Catholics for its treatment of Psalm 23, which begins, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

"I have never met a shepherd," Haugen said. "My wife was finally the one who suggested ... make it a verb. That sort of was a breakthrough."

Haugen, who is not Catholic but has worked in Catholic parishes, was living at an ecumenical retreat center in Washington state with his family when he was commissioned to do a version of Psalm 23. Haugen said he knew it would be a challenge.

"It's hard to write something that everybody knows the text to," he said.

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Tom Hanks plays Walt Disney in *Saving Mr. Banks*

Little known drama in the making of *Mary Poppins* comes to the big screen

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Fifty years after the premiere of the Walt Disney musical "Mary Poppins" comes "Saving Mr. Banks" (Disney), a film about the making of that 1964 classic.

Who would have guessed that behind the scenes of such a widely beloved movie lay a battle of wills worthy of a grand Shakespearean drama, with swords crossed over details as simple as ... "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious"?

Director John Lee Hancock ("The Blind Side") serves up a delightful mix of nostalgia and sentimentality as he recreates the Hollywood dream factory of the early 1960s.

The witty script by Kelly Marcel and Sue Smith is based on a true story. Walt Disney (Tom Hanks) promised his daughters he would make a movie from the children's books they loved -- tales of the magical nanny Mary Poppins, written by Pamela Travers (Emma Thompson) under the pen name P.L. Travers.

For two decades, Disney lobbied for the film rights, to no avail. But when Travers' fortune eventually dried up, she was forced to reconsider.

Against her better judgment,



SAVING MR. BANKS. When the P.L. Travers, the author of Mary Poppins, finally agrees to consider making her beloved book into a movie, Disney lobbied for the film rights. Travers (Emma Thompson) launches a vicious attack with Walt Disney (Tom Hanks) to protect her prized creation from being "Disney-fied." Also starring Rachel Griffiths (Aunt Ellie) and Colin Farrell (Travers Goff), *Saving Mr. Banks* veers from comedy to tears and back again. Rated PG 13.

she packs her bags and heads to California, determined to protect her prized creation from being "Disney-fied."

"I won't have her turned into one of your silly cartoons!" she warns Disney. "You don't know what Mary Poppins means to me."

Disney and Travers are polar opposites. Disney, gregarious and ever sunny, is countered at every suggestion by the prickly, buttoned-up author, who is no fan of Hollywood. He launches an all-out charm offensive, including a guided tour of Disneyland, but without result.

Faring no better are the songwriters, the famous Sherman brothers, Richard (Jason Schwartzman) and Robert (B.J. Novak). Travers is opposed to turning her book into a musical, and repelled by the chirpy songs that have become iconic, including "A Spoonful of Sugar" and

"Chim Chim Cher-ee."

Things look pretty bleak until Disney senses an opportunity. Delving into Travers' background, he discovers there is an intensely personal side to Mary Poppins.

In flashbacks to Travers' impoverished childhood in rural Australia, we learn that her Aunt Ellie (Rachel Griffiths) was the model for the nanny, and her adored but flawed father, Travers Goff (Colin Farrell), the inspiration for the fictional George Banks of the title.

Although the ending of this story is well-known, "Saving Mr. Banks" has many surprises in store as it veers from comedy to tearjerker and back again. Parents should be aware of emotional moments which may be too intense for pre-teens. Overall, though, the sincerity and wholesomeness of the picture make for a welcome change at the multiplex.

The film contains mature themes, one use of profanity and a mild oath.

Rated PG-13.

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Dr. Loryn Frey come to Sacred Heart

Dr. Loryn Frey, an accomplished music professor, is coming to Sacred Heart Church in Pineville to teach in the Studium Musicorum. Retiring as the Edith Kirkpatrick Professor of Music at Louisiana College, she brings her considerable talent in teaching to us as a private teacher. She will offer training to students in:

- Beginning to Advanced Vocal (students should be at least 8 years of age and older -- even those who have reached the age of wisdom; she will teach almost any style)
- Beginning to Intermediate Piano
- Music Theory (for any reason, but primarily to prepare them for college placement tests with a goal of eliminating the need for a remedial theory course once enrolled).

Please contact her directly at 640-8230; 289-3071; 445-2496 (at Sacred Heart during office hours).

Holy Spirit Women's Retreat

The annual Holy Spirit Women's Retreat will be held Jan. 24-26 at the Lafayette Hilton. Leading the retreat will be Deacon Larry Oney, Johnnette Benkovic, and Fr. Bill Henry. Register online at www.ccrno.org or call 504-828-1368. This retreat is sponsored by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of New Orleans.

Pro-Life town meeting in Marksville

Join the Avoyelles Right to Life and the Louisiana Right to Life on Monday, Jan. 27 from noon - 1 p.m. for lunch at St. Joseph (Catholic Church) Hall in Marksville. Learn about what is happening in the pro-life movement around the nation, in Louisiana and in your community. Learn how you can get involved and help to lead the nation in our efforts to end abortion. Lunch is free, but RSVPs are appreciated. For more information or to RSVP, call 318-253-7810.

Diocesan Catechetical Conference

The Office of Religious Formation and Training will host a Diocesan Catechetical Conference on Saturday, Feb. 1 from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the OLPS Divine Providence Center in Alexandria. Deacon Ralph Poyo will lead

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

the day of spiritual enrichment. All catechists, as well as all priests, deacons and their wives, and anyone else interested, are invited. Cost is \$15, which includes lunch. To register, email emmccullough@diocesealex.org or call 318-445-6424, ext. 221.

Try It! Prayer Works! contest

Sponsored by Family Rosary, the "Try Prayer! It Works!" Contest is a national competition encouraging children to express their faith through art, poetry and prose. Children in grades K-12 enrolled in a Catholic school, religious education program, parish or other organization are eligible to participate in the contest. For more information or to download an application, go to www.FamilyRosary.org/TryPrayer. All entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1. Questions? Call Holy Cross Family Ministries at 800-299-PRAY (7729).

Healing Through Dreams retreat

Jim and Christy Gootee and the Two Hearts Team will be offering a Healing Through Our Dreams retreat Feb. 1-2 from 9 a.m. Saturday to 5:30 p.m. Sunday at Maryhill Renewal Center. The retreat will look at dreams in Scripture as well as study God's symbolic language found in our dreams, in order to translate His private letter of love to us sent through our subconscious. You will learn a variety of approaches to help you understand your own dreams and to heal and grow spiritually through this special gift from God. Bring a Bible and Dream Notebook. The \$120 cost includes Reference Book and Retreat Manual. For more information go to www.jimandchristy-gootee.com or call 318-641-6745 and leave a message.

S.A.L.T. Retreats

Registration is now open for the 2014 S.A.L.T. (Ser-

vants Actively Leading Teens) Retreats. All retreats will be held at Maryhill Renewal Center, in Pineville for students in grades 9-12. The cost is \$87 per student. Please include payment (check to Sacred Heart Church) with your application. The two remaining retreats are:

- Feb. 8-9
- March 8-9

Forms are available online at http://www.diocesealex.org/sites/default/files/docs/salt_registration_form_0.pdf, or call Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville at 318-445-2497.

Beginning Experience

Widowed, separated or divorced? Don't know where to turn? Struggling with grief or loss? Beginning Experience, to be held March 21-23 at Maryhill Retreat Center, helps grieving single-again persons emerge from the darkness of grief into the light of a new beginning, and move into the future with renewed hope. Cost is \$185, which includes two nights' lodging and meals. For more info, call Anna at (318) 452-2678.

Pilgrimage to Rome with Bishop Herzog

Join Bishop Ronald Herzog for an 8-day pilgrimage to Rome, April 25-May 2 which will also include the canonization of John Paul II and John XXIII and a general audience with Pope Francis. The cost of the trip is \$3,870 per person and includes roundtrip air transportation from Alexandria, four star hotel, some meals (6 breakfasts & 4 dinners), and daily Mass. For more information, call 1-888-465-9868 or email: info@thecatholictour.com

Sign up for Catholic Heart Work Camp

If you're an 8th grader and want to DO something special with your summer, sign up now for Catholic Heart Work Camp June 28 - July 5 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Campers from all over the U.S., travel to Cincinnati to work by day, and grow spiritually by night through a variety of dynamic experiences including games, testimonies, praise and worship, dancing, silliness, and sharing. For more information, call OLPS Youth Ministry, Renee Aldridge 448-3693 ext 229 or Kristine Antoon 792-4709.

VIRTUS

• Feb. 6 (Thursday) -- St. Joseph Church Hall, Marksville, 6 p.m.

• Feb. 18 (Tuesday) -- St. Joseph Catholic Center, 6 p.m.

To pre-register, go to virtus.org, and click on Registration (on left side of screen) to begin the registration process. For more information, call 318-445-6424 x 213.

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<div>20</div> <div>Diocesan Offices Closed</div> <div>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA</div>	<div>21</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. OWUAMANAM</div>	<div>22</div> <div>Life March Washington, DC</div> <div>Day of Protection for the Legal Protection of the Unborn</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPPARAMBIL</div>	<div>23</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH</div>	<div>24</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE</div>	<div>25</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN</div>	<div>26</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL</div>
				Holy Spirit Women's Retreat -- Lafayette		
<div>27</div> <div>Pro-Life Town Meeting 12 noon-1:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church Hall, Marksville</div>	<div>28</div> <div>Open House 6:00 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor School, Alexandria</div>	<div>29</div> <div>Open House 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Sacred Heart School, Moreauville</div>	<div>30</div> <div>Open House 6:00 p.m. Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria</div>	<div>31</div> <div></div>	<div>FEBRUARY 1</div> <div>Diocesan Catechetical Conference 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. OLPS Divine Providence Center, Alexandria</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div>
Healing through Dreams Retreat -- Maryhill						
Catholic Schools Week						
PRAY FOR FR. G. POOKKATTU	PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY	PRAY FOR FR. J. RETNAZHAMONI	FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES-SANCHEZ	FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR BISHOP HERZOG	PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ
<div>3</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROY</div>	<div>4</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN</div>	<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</div>	<div>6</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR</div>	<div>9</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. SOARES</div>
				S.A.L.T. Retreat -- Maryhill		
<div>10</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN</div>	<div>11</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR MSGR. S. TESTA</div>	<div>12</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. TEXADA</div>	<div>13</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS</div>	<div>14</div> <div>VALENTINES DAY PRAY FOR FR. A. THOMPSON</div>	<div>15</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR MSGR. J. TIMMERMANS</div>	<div>16</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. TRAVIS</div>
<div>17</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE</div>	<div>18</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD</div>	<div>19</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. VELEZ</div>	<div>20</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. N. VIVIANO</div>	<div>21</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. XAVIER</div>	<div>22</div> <div>FEAST of the CHAIR of ST. PETER the APOSTLE PRAY FOR FR. R. YOUNG</div>	<div>23</div> <div></div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. ZACHARIAH</div>



Pro/Am TOURNAMENT

TUESDAY, **March 18**

Pro-Am Entry Fee — \$1000

(3 man team plus a professional golfer and a hole sponsorship)

Other entry fees are available through the Cabrini Foundation and OakWing Golf Club.

For more info, call OakWing Golf Club at 561-0260, or CHRISTUS Cabrini Foundation at 448-4952

A Fundraiser for

**Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals**



WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY,

March 19-22



Children's Miracle Network **Open Bass Tournament**

Presented by:

**Despino Tire Service &
Jim South Tire & Propane**

**SATURDAY
APRIL 5**

**Grand Ecore
Natchitoches Landing
Daylight – 3 PM**

15 PLACES PAID BACK
(Based on 100 boat entries)

1st \$5000 GUARANTEED

**For more information:
318-447-1384**



Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals

