

# CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVIII, No. 2

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February 13, 2017

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Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Ronald P. Herzog from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Alexandria. Bishop David P. Talley, who, up until now was the coadjutor bishop, will succeed him as the 12th bishop of Alexandria. See page 3 for details.

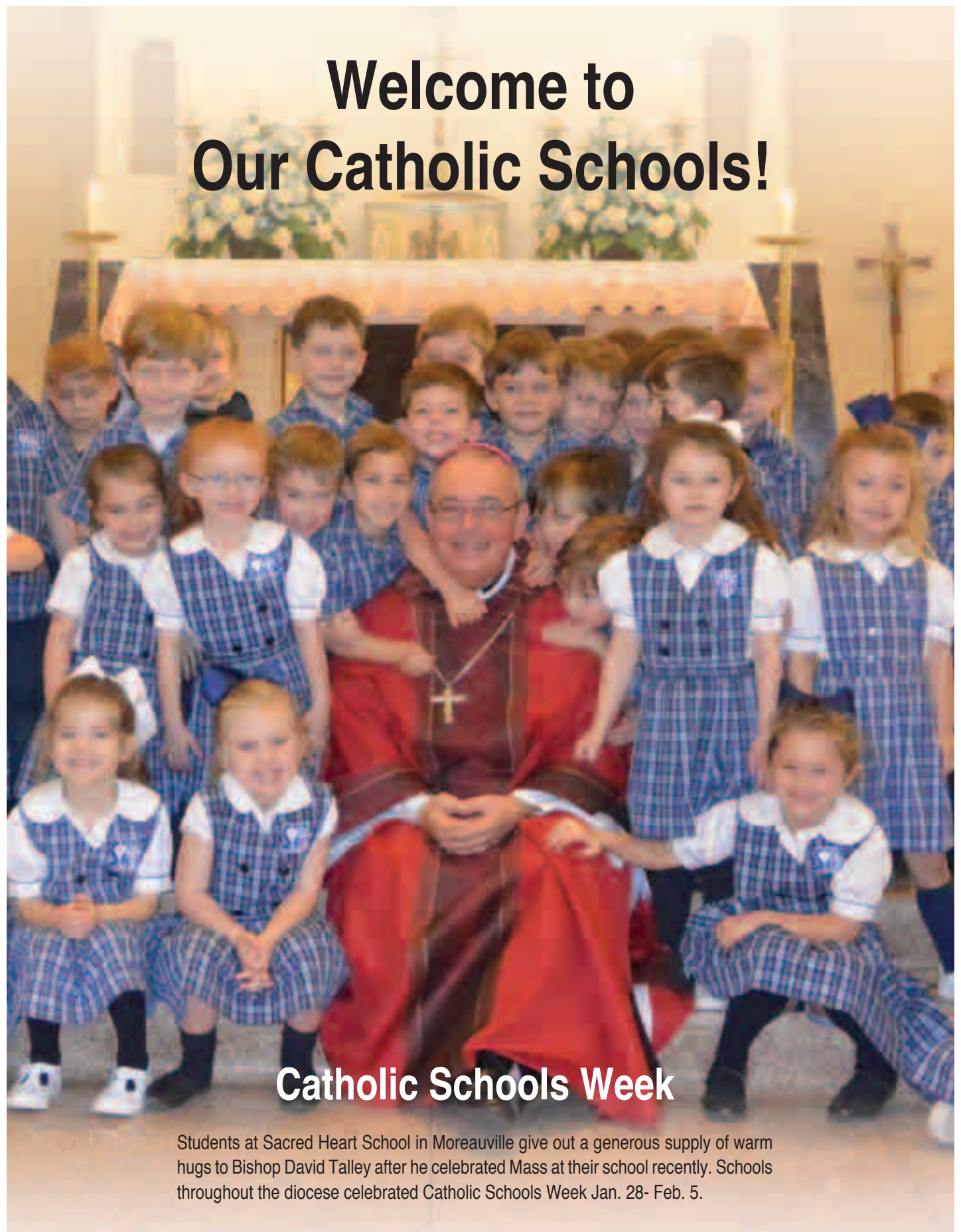
### **Join U.S. bishops in letter campaign urging Trump to protect religious freedom**

The U.S. Catholic bishops have posted an online letter for Catholics to send to President Donald Trump urging him to sign an executive order promoting religious freedom. See page 3.

### **Record crowds participate in Washington Life March**

A group of 284 students from Central Louisiana participated in the 44th annual March for Life in Washington D.C. Jan. 27. Read all about their experiences on pages 10-13.

## Welcome to Our Catholic Schools!



### **Catholic Schools Week**

Students at Sacred Heart School in Moreauville give out a generous supply of warm hugs to Bishop David Talley after he celebrated Mass at their school recently. Schools throughout the diocese celebrated Catholic Schools Week Jan. 28- Feb. 5.



# Clergy differ on bill to repeal the Johnson Amendment

By Mark Pattison  
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- People of goodwill can disagree on matters of public policy -- even if they're ordained clergy, and the public policy under debate has the potential to affect the way they conduct their ministry.

The issue is the Johnson Amendment, a 1954 rider inserted by then-Sen. Lyndon Johnson into that year's version of the tax code banning all federally recognized nonprofit organizations -- including religious organizations -- from endorsing candidates and otherwise participating in partisan political activity at the risk of losing their tax-exempt status.

The Republican Party made repeal of the amendment a plank in its 2016 convention platform, and President Donald Trump vowed Feb. 2 at the National Prayer Breakfast to "get rid of and totally destroy" the Johnson Amendment.

Rep. Jody Hice, R-Georgia, a second-term congressman and a co-sponsor of the Free Speech Fairness Act, as the Johnson Amendment repeal bill has been named, is a former Southern Baptist minister who thinks repeal is a good idea.

Rabbi Jack Moline, president of the Interfaith Alliance, believes repeal would create more problems than it tries to solve.

Until about a decade ago, "I would receive threatening letters" from the IRS that said "we would lose our tax-exempt status if we reviewed political issues," Hice said. Those letters, he added, were "very threatening, very chilling."



**GUESTS LISTEN** as U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during the National Prayer Breakfast Feb. 2 in Washington. Trump told guests he wants to "get rid of and totally destroy" the Johnson Amendment. A bill to repeal it the Free Speech Fairness Act has just been introduced in the U.S. House. (CNS photo/Carlos Barria, Reuters)

Then, in 2008, Hice said, he and 32 other clergy issued endorsements from their pulpits, recorded those endorsements, sent them to the IRS and challenged them to do something about it. The IRS never responded, so Hice was part of a group -- this time numbering 160 -- that did the same thing the next year. Again, no response. Now, every year, the Alliance Defending Freedom coordinates a similar event.

"Churches have censored themselves right out of participation, right out of keeping their congregations informed," Hice said. With the Johnson Amendment repealed, "you could address the issues, in my case, from

a biblical perspective, and actually endorse a candidate (whose views) that we as a congregation share without fear of losing tax-exempt status or being threatened in any way."

Hice added the bill would not permit churches to conduct political activities outside of "the normal course of your ministry." "No-full-page ads" in newspapers would be allowed, although putting something in the church bulletin is OK, he said.

Rabbi Moline, though, believes the opposite to be true.

The bill "would make religious institutions destinations for dark money for political purposes. Since they are 501(c)(3) (short-

hand for a federal rule governing nonprofits), they are not only tax-exempt but tax-deductible," he told CNS Feb. 3. "People who give money to PACs, which have come under attack, will now be able to give money to a 501(c)(3) with less accountability, and the ability to compromise the mission of a house of God," if the bill became law.

Repealing the Johnson Amendment, Moline said, would "create a campaign political atmosphere in houses of worship all over the country. It's important for people of faith to understand their tradition, but to be sheltered from having to express those values in a political way."

## Johnson Amendment

*Established 1954  
by Sen. Lyndon Johnson*

Bans all federally recognized nonprofit organizations -- including religious organizations -- from endorsing candidates and otherwise participating in a partisan political activity at the risk of losing their tax-exempt status.

Rabbi Moline added that under the bill, "the government would essentially be funding campaign activities through the tax base, actually reducing -- twice -- the amount of money that would otherwise be collected in taxes. They would be exempt from taxes by the institution and also by the contributor."

Priests for Life founder and its national director, Father Frank Pavone, said the Johnson Amendment "has muzzled clergy for too long. It's time for priests, pastors and other clergy to be able, as the president said, 'to speak freely without fear of retribution.'"

Tim Delaney, National Council of Nonprofits president, voiced "strong opposition" to the repeal bill. "Nonprofits are already free to exercise their First Amendment rights to advocate for their missions," he said. "Allowing political operatives to push for endorsements would put nonprofits in a position where they become known as Democratic charities or Republican charities and put missions at risk."

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# Pope Francis accepts letter of resignation from Bishop Herzog

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Ronald P. Herzog from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Alexandria.

Bishop David P. Talley, who, up until now was the coadjutor bishop, will succeed him as the 12th bishop of Alexandria.

The appointment was made Feb. 2 in Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

A Mass of Thanksgiving will be held Monday, Feb. 27 at 12:05 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral to give thanks to God for the episcopal ministry of Bishop Herzog.

Under Canon law, a bishop



**Bishop Ronald Herzog**

is required to retire by the age of 75. Bishop Herzog will be 75 on April 22, 2017. However due to



**Bishop David Talley**

Bishop Herzog's health issues, he submitted his letter of resignation a few months before his manda-

tory retirement.

Bishop Talley was born in Columbus, Georgia on Sept. 11, 1950. He pursued seminary studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Indiana and was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in 1989.

He holds a doctorate in canon law from the Gregorian University in Rome. In 2001, Pope John Paul II named him a prelate of honor with the title of monsignor. He was appointed auxiliary bishop of Atlanta, on Jan. 3, 2013. Pope Francis appointed him as coadjutor bishop of Alexandria on Sept. 21, 2016.

Bishop Talley currently

serves as chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and as a member of USCCB's Committee on National Collections and Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

Bishop Ronald P. Herzog was born April 22, 1942 in Akron, Ohio. He was ordained a priest on June 1, 1968; he was appointed bishop of Alexandria on Nov. 4, 2004, and ordained a bishop on Jan. 5, 2005. Bishop Herzog most recently served as a consultant on the USCCB's Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

# Bishops launch campaign urging Trump to protect religious freedom

(CNS) -- Saying "religious freedom in America has suffered years of unprecedented erosion," the U.S. Catholic bishops have posted an online letter for Catholics to send to President Donald Trump urging him to sign an executive order promoting religious freedom.

The letter, found at [www.votervoice.net/USCCB/Campaigns](http://www.votervoice.net/USCCB/Campaigns), says the president can "restore the federal government's respect for the religious freedom of individuals & organizations" with an executive order that establishes a "government-wide initiative to respect religious freedom." Individuals can sign the letter and hit a link to submit it to Trump.

A leaked draft version of a potential religious freedom order was circulating in the media and among federal staff and advocacy groups at the end of January. White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said he would not get "ahead of the executive orders that we may or may not issue." He noted that there have been a

lot of executive actions and "a lot of things that the president has talked about and will continue to fulfill, but we have nothing on that front now."

A White House official told ABC News that the leaked draft on religious freedom is one of hundreds of circulating orders that were either written by the transition team or White House.

Although Spicer did not elaborate on the leaked document, he told reporters that freedom of religion in the U.S. should mean "people should be able to practice their religion, express their religion, express areas of their faith without reprisal."

"And I think that pendulum

sometimes swings the other way in the name of political correctness," he added.

The four-page draft has raised concerns among those who said it would legalize discrimination and was too far-reaching, but University of Notre Dame law professor Richard Garnett said in an email to CNS that the "critics are dramatically overstating" what the order can do.

The draft states that "Americans and their religious organizations will not be coerced by the federal government into participating in activities that violate their consciences." It also notes that people and organizations do not "forfeit their religious free-

dom when providing social services, education or health care." It cites the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which states that government "shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion" unless that burden "is the least restrictive means to further a compelling governmental interest."

The U.S. bishops, who have made religious liberty a priority, have not released a statement on potential executive action on religious freedom by Trump but in the online letter available for Catholics to sign stressed such an order should include some of the following measures:

- Relief from the Affordable

Care Act's contraceptive mandate. Currently, the mandate -- issued by the federal Department of Health & Human Services as part of the implementation of the health care law -- requires most religious employers to provide coverage of artificial birth control for their employees even if the employer is morally opposed to such coverage. There is a very narrow exemption for churches.

- Preservation of tax-exempt status for nonprofit groups that hold beliefs based on marriage and human sexuality.

- The ability of religious organizations that partner with the federal government to act according to their beliefs regarding marriage, human sexuality & the protection of human life at all stages.

- The ability of religiously affiliated child welfare providers to provide adoption, foster or family support services for children that coincide with their religious beliefs.

- Conscience protections about abortion in the individual health insurance market.

The bishops' letter said any executive order on religious freedom should make it clear that this freedom should not just be about a person's ability to freely worship but should include "the ability to act on one's beliefs."

"It should also protect individuals and families who run closely held businesses in accordance with their faith to the greatest extent possible," the letter said.

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## A reflection on Lenten fasting

by **Rev. Daniel Merz**  
Former Associate Director of  
USCCB Divine Worship office

Christian tradition can name at least seven reasons for fasting:

- From the beginning, God commanded some fasting, and sin entered into the world because Adam and Eve broke the fast.
- For the Christian, fasting is ultimately about fasting from sin.
- Fasting reveals our dependence on God and not the resources of this world.
- Fasting is an ancient way of preparing for the Eucharist—the truest of foods.
- Fasting is preparation

for baptism (and all the sacraments)—for the reception of grace.

- Fasting is a means of saving resources to give to the poor.
- Fasting is a means of self-discipline, chastity, and the restraining of the appetites.

In the early Church and, to a lesser extent still today, there are two fasts.

There was the “total fast” that preceded all major feasts or sacramental events.

The total fast is still kept today prior to reception of Holy Communion. Following Holy Communion, the total fast ceases because Jesus had explicitly

stated that we don’t fast when the bridegroom is here, in other words, what we’re keeping vigil for has arrived, the wait is over.

The second fast was a fast of abstinence from certain foods, e.g., meats or fats. This was more an act of self-discipline and self-control.

The fast of abstinence was allowed on Sundays because the continuity of abstinence can be important for it to be effective.

These initial observations, then, teach us that the Eucharist is always the end of a preparation. It is always the fulfillment of an expectation. In the Orthodox Church during Lent, they have

Eucharist only on Saturday and Sunday.

But because Wednesdays and Fridays are total fast days, those two days are also days for the Communion service (Liturgy of the PreSanctified) which are held in the evening, i.e., after the day of preparation. Fasting is always preparatory.

How did fasting become such an important means of preparing for the Eucharist and of learning virtue through self-discipline?

Christian fasting is revealed in an interdependence between two events in the Bible: the “breaking of the fast” by Adam and Eve; and the “keeping of the

fast” by Christ at the beginning of his ministry.

Christ, however, is the new Adam. At the beginning of his ministry in the Gospel of Matthew, we read, “When He had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, He became hungry.”

Satan tempted both Adam and Christ, saying: Eat, for your hunger is proof that you depend entirely on food, that your life is in food. Adam believed and ate. Christ said, “Man does NOT live by bread alone.” (Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4)

In order for fasting to be effective, then, the spirit must be a part of it. It is a matter of prayer and the spirit.

## Rest in Peace Father Mulcahy

William Christopher passed away on December 31, 2016, but he became a weekly presence in people’s living rooms during the 1970s and 80s playing Army chaplain Father Francis John Patrick Mulcahy on the TV series “M\*A\*S\*H,” which followed the comedic and tragic goings-on amongst doctors and nurses during the Korean War.

Father Mulcahy’s moral and spiritual grounding made an already-great show that much better, and Christopher’s gentle, down-to-earth performance deserves credit for that.

Father Mulcahy can be seen as a wonderful role model for priests. While he may not have imparted heavy theology lessons, he embodied the big two commandments of loving God and loving your neighbor. The soldiers around him weren’t all Catholic, but they respected his wisdom and beliefs.

In the episode “Dear Sis,” Radar asks Father Mulcahy to give a blessing over the phone to his mother in Iowa. Actually, the blessing is for the family cow, who is about to give birth. Radar asks if the priest can do the blessing “in Methodist.” Father Mulcahy humbly and humorously responds, “I’m a piano player, Radar. I’ll transpose.”

The impact of Father Mulcahy’s humor can’t be underestimated. Priests perform an important job wherever they are, and they need to take their work seriously. But in terms of getting parishioners to like and trust



### Guest Editorial

by Toni Rossi, Director of Communications  
The Christophers

them, it’s also important that they don’t take themselves too seriously. Father Mulcahy had that quality down pat. When Colonel Potter asks him if the nuns at the nearby orphanage have room for a young pregnant woman, the priest responds, “The first rule of orphanages and Irish families is, ‘There’s always room for one more.’”

In that episode, the more serious side of Father Mulcahy is also revealed. When he discovers that the unborn child is the product of an American father and a Korean mother, he explains that mixed race children in Korea become “outcasts. Little boys have been emasculated...and little girls, killed outright...Her only

hope would be sanctuary in one of the old Catholic missions... The monks will keep her cloistered, educate her, and in 15 or 20 years...perhaps they can get her out of Korea.”

Col. Potter points out that it “doesn’t sound like much of a life.” Father Mulcahy agrees, but adds, “It’s the best we can do.” Like real-life priests, Father Mulcahy realized that not all problems have happy resolutions. Sometimes the best you can do is the best you can do.

The “M\*A\*S\*H” series finale, entitled “Goodbye, Farewell, and Amen,” was filled with poignant moments. One of the finest is when Col. Potter tells Father Mulcahy, “Francis, you’ve

been a godsend.” The priest responds, “When they tell us to serve our time in Purgatory, we can say, ‘No thanks, I’ve done mine.’”

I don’t think “M\*A\*S\*H” has ever been off the air since it wrapped up in 1983, so Father Mulcahy’s example – and William Christopher’s performance – can still entertain and enlighten us today because they are timeless. A kind and humble man of God living in a diverse society where hardship runs rampant is

always relatable.

Seeing that on TV every week or every day can have an unconscious effect on viewers. It can make us respect the career (or vocation, in this case) the character represents. And maybe, we might even find ourselves reflecting that character’s best qualities in our own lives. That’s the kind of acting legacy that William Christopher leaves behind.

For that, his fans – and the God he represented on television – can be eternally grateful.

## CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVIII, No. 2 • February 13, 2017

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Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209; starver@diocesealex.org

THE CHURCH TODAY (USPS 393-240) is published by the Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, once a month, free of charge to members of the parishes in the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana. Out of diocese subscriptions are \$20 a year.

The office is located at 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria, LA 71303. Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, LA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The CHURCH TODAY, P. O. Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306

The CHURCH TODAY is a member of the Catholic Press Association.  
Website: [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org)

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# Pope calls on Catholics to focus on Luke 16:19-31 during Lent

During Lent 2017, Pope Francis asks us to ponder more deeply the Word of God, and in particular, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31). Lent begins March 1 for Latin-rite Catholics.

"Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ's victory over death," Pope Francis said in his message for Lent 2017.

"Without making room for God's word in their heart, people will never be able to welcome and love all human life. Each life that we encounter is a gift deserving acceptance, respect and love."

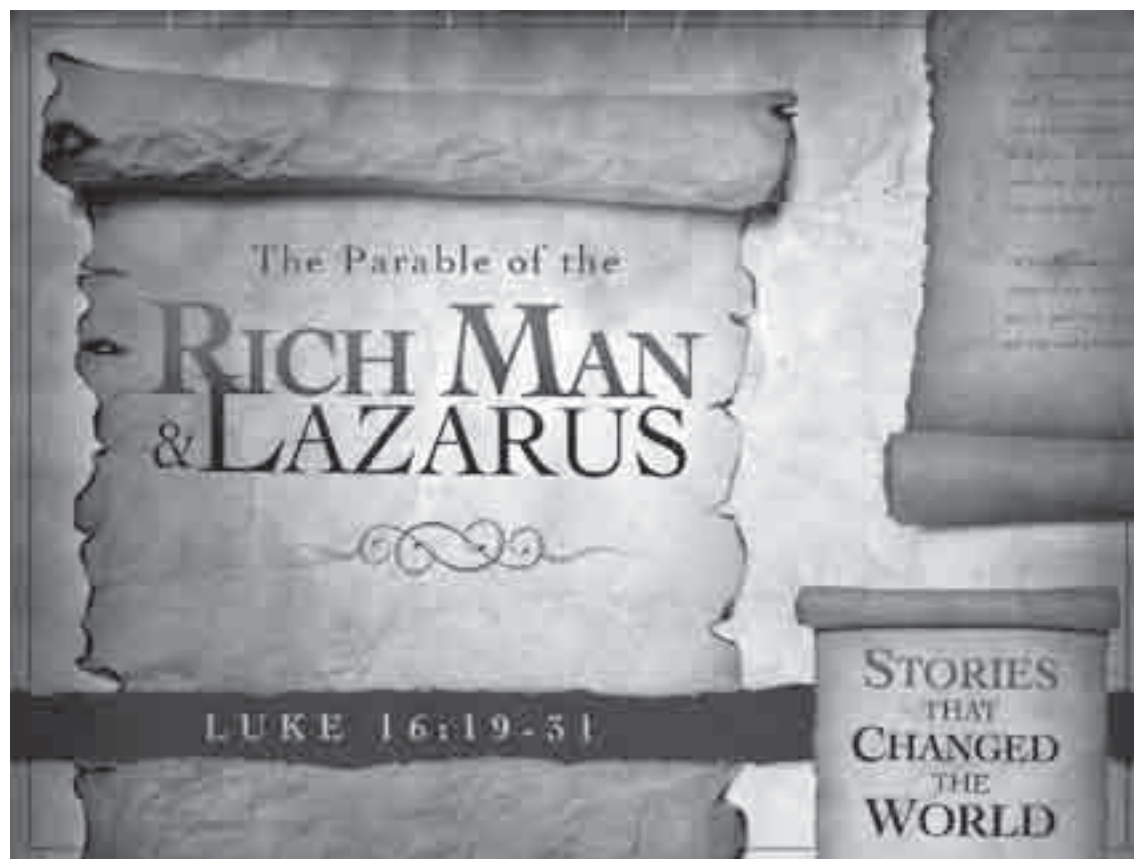
"The word of God helps us to open our eyes to welcome and love life, especially when it is weak and vulnerable," he wrote.

Released by the Vatican Feb. 7, the text of the pope's Lenten message -- titled "*The Word is a gift -- other persons are gifts*" -- focused on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in the Gospel of St. Luke (16:19-31).

The parable calls for sincere conversion, the pope said, and it "provides a key to understanding what we need to do in order to attain true happiness and eternal life."

In the Gospel account, Lazarus and his suffering are described in great detail. While he is "practically invisible to the rich man," the Gospel gives him a name and a face, upholding him as worthy, as "a gift, a priceless treasure, a human being whom God loves and cares for, despite his concrete condition as an outcast," the pope wrote.

The parable shows that "a



right relationship with people consists in gratefully recognizing their value," he said. "A poor person at the door of the rich is not a nuisance, but a summons to conversion and to change."

But in order to understand how to open one's heart and see the other as gift, a person must see how the word of God operates.

One way to do that, he said, is to be aware of the temptations and traps the rich man fell victim to, derailing his search for true happiness.

"The rich man dresses like a king and acts like a god, forgetting that he is merely mortal," he

said. "For those corrupted by love of riches, nothing exists beyond their own ego. Those around them do not come into their line of sight. The result of attachment to money is a sort of blindness. The rich man does not see the poor man who is starving, hurting, lying at his door."

Love of money, St. Paul warned, "is the root of all evils," and the pope said, it is also "the main cause of corruption and a source of envy, strife and suspicion."

During Lent, the Church asks us to surrender ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving alms.

selves to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that "remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit."

In Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

Catholics are also encouraged to make going to confession a significant part of their spiritual lives during Lent.

The U.S. Bishops' statement, "*God's Gift of Forgiveness: The Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*" can be distributed and shared in parishes.

Dioceses are encouraged to make the sacrament available often during Lent and to use these resources to promote participation. The USCCB website also has resources to help individuals who have not been to confession in a while "rediscover" the sacrament.

For more information, go to [www.usccb.org/lent](http://www.usccb.org/lent)

The fasting that all do together on Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities.

Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share this world equally—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents.

Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this reflection.

In a particular way during Lent, we are asked to devote our-



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**ST. MARY'S WORK READINESS PROGRAM.** Some of the newest volunteers at the Central Louisiana Food Bank are a few of the residents at St. Mary's Residential Training School enrolled in the Work Readiness Program. As part of the program, adult residents recently started volunteering at the Food Bank, working to restock shelves and fill food boxes. "We are very grateful for the Food Bank allowing us to come in and help," said program director Bo Vets. "Our clients just want a chance to be part of their community and make a meaningful impact, just like you and I. But for our residents who are working to overcome intellectual disabilities, there aren't many opportunities for them to be involved. This experience gives them a chance to be included in our society while exploring their skills and reaching new levels of independence." For more information about the St. Mary's Work Readiness Program, call 318-445-6443.

## Lenten Mission to be held March 4-9 at St. Anthony in Bunkie

Plans have been announced for a major Lenten Mission to be preached at Saint Anthony Church in Bunkie March 4-9.

The mission will be conducted by Father Thomas Sullivan of the Fathers of Mercy from Auburn, Kentucky. This society of priests was originally known as the "Missionaries of France" and they remain famous for conducting outstanding missions since 1808.

Father Sullivan will preach all Masses on the weekend of March 4-5. The mission will continue each evening in the church from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M. Confession will be available from 5:00 to 5:45 each evening. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the main altar at six o'clock and the mission will be preached in the presence of the Holy Eucharist throughout the week. Each night, the service will end with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The event will conclude on Thursday night, March 9, with

Holy Mass. The final mission message will be contained in the Mass homily that evening.

All Catholics in Bunkie and from throughout the surrounding communities are urged to attend

this exceptional mission. Families are especially encouraged to attend.

For more information, please contact Saint Anthony Rectory Office at 346-7274.



## Newest American Citizen--Father Bino Jacob

Congratulations to Father Bino Pallippambil Jacob who became an American citizen on Jan. 27. Originally from Kerela, India, Father Bino has been working in the Diocese of Alexandria since 2008 and incardinated in this diocese since 2011. "After working here for so long, I feel like this is my home," he said. "It just felt like it was the right thing to do to have a full sense of community with the people here." Since he is no longer a citizen of Kerela, he has to secure a visa when he goes home once a year to see his family. Congratulations Father Bino. We are happy to have you as an American citizen!



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**SACRED HEART SCHOOL, Moreauville.** Bishop David Talley celebrated Mass at Sacred Heart School during Catholic Schools Week.



**OUR LADY OF LOURDES, Vidalia.** Pictured are Pat Stein, Father Joseph Xavier, pastor; Corinne Randazzo, and Bishop David Talley.

## Bishop Talley around Town

He'll pop up unexpected just to say "Hi" or he'll schedule a celebration of Mass at your parish a few days in advance. In an effort to get to know his flock, Bishop David Talley has been seen all around the diocese making impromptu visits or celebrating Mass.

To see other pictures of his visits around the diocese, go to [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org) or "like" us on Facebook.



**PARISHIONERS OF ST. CHARLES CHURCH** in Goudeau welcomed Bishop David Talley Jan. 15 in the Eucharist celebration. His warm smile and joyful spirit gave us a sense of peace in his presence. A gathering in the church hall with a King Cake to celebrate his newly appointed role as Shepherd of the flock. Welcome Bishop David Talley.



**THE PARISHIONERS AT ST. JOSEPH CHURCH** in St. Joseph, La. welcome Bishop David Talley to their parish after the Mass he celebrated there Jan. 29 with Father Peter Kuligowski, pastor.



# Golf tournament to benefit Manna House

## Hixson Ford Pro Am Golf Tournament and Coca Cola, Dr. Pepper, Wal-Mart Adams Golf Pro Tour

Although this is not the first time the Adam's Golf Pro Tour and the Hixson Ford Pro Am Golf Tournament has been hosted at Oakwing Golf Club in Alexandria, it's the first time the golf tournament will benefit Manna House.

The Hixson Ford Pro Am Tournament -- will be held March

14. Each team of three will be paired with a professional golfer.

The entry fee of \$1,000 per team includes green fees, golf cart, hole sponsorship, six invitations to the Pro Am Party, the Pro Am Awards Party (food and drinks included) and the opportunity to play with a professional golfer.

The Coca-Cola, Dr. Pepper, Wal-Mart Adams Golf Pro Tournament -- will be held March 15-18 at Oakwing and Links on the Bayou.

Professional golfers like Harrison Frazar, Tag Riding, and Ron Whittaker, many who, in the past, have graduated to the PGA Tour, will be competing for a \$30,000

purse.

Entry forms may be picked up at the Oak Wing Golf Course.

"We are so excited to be the beneficiary of this world-class golf tournament," said Jessica Viator, executive director of Manna House. Viator said a number of sponsorship packages are available including the Shoot-Out, Pro-

Am Party, Pro-Am Awards Party, Leader Group, Cart Sign, Driving Range, Putting Green, Pro-Am Team Sponsorship, and Hole Sponsorship.

For more information contact Theresa Slater, tournament chairperson at 318-664-3603 or Jessica Viator at 318-445-9053.



### Tournament Schedule -- March 13-18

M March 13	Robbie Rosenmoser Shootout, 4 p.m. Professional Practice Day, Pro Am Party, 6:30 p.m. OakWing Golf Course, England Airpark
T March 14	Hixson Ford Pro-Am Tournament
W March 15	Coca Cola/Dr. Pepper/Wal-Mart Open Round 1
T March 16	Coca Cola/Dr. Pepper/Wal-Mart Open Round 2 Pro-Am Award Party, 7 p.m.
F March 17	Coca Cola/Dr. Pepper/Wal-Mart Open Round 3
S March 18	Coca Cola/Dr. Pepper/Wal-Mart Open Final Round Champion's Presentation, 1:30 p.m.



**17th ANNUAL SPIRITS 5K RUN BENEFITS MANNA HOUSE.** The Spirits 17th annual 5K run/walk held Jan. 28 attracted families and runners not only to come out and participate in a community run/walk, but to also come out and enjoy free food, beer and live music -- all while benefitting Manna House. According to Jessica Viator, executive director of Manna House, this year's Spirits 5K was the largest one they've ever had. This was the first year Manna House was chosen to benefit from the proceeds, but it won't be their last. Spirits decided that from this year forward, proceeds from this race will always go to Manna House.

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# Lenten project: buy a lunch box -- feed a child!

## Lunchbox of Love project to benefit children who eat at Manna House

By Jeannie Petrus  
CT editor

Fasting on Fridays during Lent is super hard for most of us. After all, who wants to be hungry for a day!

But for many children in our own diocese, getting enough to eat is an everyday challenge. To many children in our area, hunger is not a choice, but just the reality of the situation they're in.

This Lent, from Valentine's Day (Feb. 14) to St. Patrick's Day (March 17), Heidi Peavy, a consultant of Initial Outfitters from Plaquemine, is spearheading a Lenten project for all -- the Lunchbox of Love Project.

For each \$20 donation, Initial Outfitters will send a colorful lunchbox to Manna House, where each will be filled with food and an Easter egg filled with candy. On Good Friday, April 14, the lunchboxes will be distributed to children at Manna House.

"I have been so blessed with my family, our health, and my at home business with Initial Outfitters," said Heidi. "I wanted to give back to others, in gratitude for the many ways that God has blessed me."

Six years ago, Heidi left her career as a registered nurse to stay home with her children. She started working at home as an Initial Outfitters consultant, an Alabama based Christian company that sells monogrammed items like



**BEAUTIFUL MONOGRAMMED LUNCHBOXES.** This Lent, from Valentine's Day (Feb. 14) to St. Patrick's Day (March 17), Heidi Peavy, a consultant of Initial Outfitters from Plaquemine, is spearheading a Lenten project for all -- the

Lunchbox of Love Project. For each \$20 donation, Initial Outfitters will send a colorful lunchbox to Manna House, where each will be filled with food and an Easter egg filled with candy.



jewelry, handbags, and personalized gifts.

"Business has been good for me, so I decided to choose a ministry each year to benefit from the Lunchbox of Love project, offered through her company Initial Outfitters. This year she chose Manna House.

In keeping with Initial Outfitters' mission of "making a living that makes a difference," the company initiated a program called "10 Loves" designed to

feed and educate impoverished and at-risk kids here in the U.S. as well as Central America and India. The families and their children are considered the poorest of the poor.

10 Loves is funded by 100 percent of the profits from the sale of embroidered lunchboxes as well as personalized backpacks. Lunchbox profits are currently being donated to two charities -- Charlie's Lunch Ministries and their international feeding pro-

grams and a ministry of choice by each consultant.

"So with one sponsorship of \$20, two organizations (Manna House and Charlie's Lunch Ministries) benefit!" she said.

The lunchboxes are actually \$13 each. The remaining \$7 is used by Manna House to purchase food and snacks to fill the lunchbox for a child.

"What a wonderful surprise for each child who eats at Manna House on Good Friday," said

Jessica Viator, executive director of Manna House. "I can't wait to see the smiles on their faces when they receive these beautiful lunchboxes filled with food, snacks, and an Easter egg!"

To donate a sponsorship of \$20 or more, email [heidipeavy@yahoo.com](mailto:heidipeavy@yahoo.com). Donations can be accepted through PayPal or through a credit card.

For more information, go to [www.initialoutfitters.com](http://www.initialoutfitters.com) or [www.charlieslunch.com](http://www.charlieslunch.com)



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## More than 5,000 March for Life in Central Louisiana

**KC JOHN PAUL II COUNCIL and PARISHIONERS** of Sacred Heart Church came to the March with banners, signs, and matching t-shirts. The second annual Louisiana Life March was held Feb. 4 and started at Louisiana College and ended at the Alexandria Riverfront Amphitheatre.



**THE ST. RITA YOUTH GROUP** was joined by priests and some parishioners from Our Lady of Prompt Succor in a joint effort of Marching for Life.

**MORE THAN 5,000 PEOPLE**, -- almost twice as many as last year -- participated in the second annual Louisiana Life March in Central Louisiana.



Parishioners from **STS. FRANCIS AND ANNE** and **ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST** in Deville brought signs and lots of spirit to the March.





# Louisiana takes its voice to Life March in Washington DC

## Local students receive attention, coverage by national media

By Jeannie Petrus  
CT editor

It was different this year.

The 44th annual Life March held in Washington D.C. Jan. 27 was filled with a new spirit of hope and enthusiasm, unlike previous years.

Even the front page of the Washington Post ran a front page picture of the march, with a blazing headline from Vice President Mike Pence; "Life is winning

again in America!

Magnificat Travel coordinated a "Louisiana Catholic High School Pilgrimage" for the march, which included a total of 284 participants.

Included in the group were 33 (students and adults) from Holy Savior Menard High School, 49 from St. Mary's School in Natchitoches, 77 from St. Thomas More in Lafayette, 65 from Hanson Memorial High School in Franklin, 55 from Sacred Heart School

in Ville Platte, and five ladies from Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria.

Other groups from Alexandria who attended included Lynn Ray, campus minister for the LSUA Catholic Student Organization, and Father Edwin Rodriguez, chaplain, also brought a group of five students.

The Josh Blakesley Band, from Alexandria also performed at the Pro-Life Rally after the morning Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.



**QUOTED IN THE WASHINGTON POST.** Lynn Ray, LSUA campus minister and Maddie Runyan were interviewed at the Life Rally and were quoted in the Washington Post.

### A record crowd

This year's peaceful protest of the infamous SCOTUS decision in 1973 making abortion on demand legal in the U.S. was the largest ever on record.

An estimated 700,000 people participated according to various news outlets.

"Maybe it was because we have a pro-life president and vice president; maybe it was because pro-lifers were a little annoyed that so much attention was given to a women's march a week earlier," said Tara Whitehead, St. Mary's religion teacher and coordinator of the St. Mary's group. "Or maybe it is because people are finally waking up and realizing that taking the life of an innocent baby inside the mother's womb is not right and should not be protected by law."



**LIVE FEED FROM NATIONAL NETWORKS** -- like C-Span, CNN, EWTN, and FOX often focused on the group of 284 pilgrims from Louisiana who attended the National Life March in Washington, D.C., Jan. 27. In this picture you can easily spot the students from St. Mary's School in Natchitoches because they are wearing the striped knitted caps.

Jessica Sanders and Father John Wiltse, who chaperoned the group of 24 students from Menard agrees.

"We arrived at the Pro-Life rally early so we were able to be at front and center of the stage," said Fr. John. "One minute we were some of the first ones there, and the next minute there were 200,00 people lined up behind us. It was getting very crowded!"

Lynn Ray agreed. But that's where the news media was and that's where she and one of her students Maddie Runyan were interviewed by the Washington Post.

"They asked us a lot of leading questions, hoping we would respond negatively, but we kept it positive and focused on the value of life.

When asked what she thought about President Donald Trump, Lynn said, "He's pro-life. So that's good for us!"

Then she added:

"Being that we're Catholics, we're very pro-life. Every step we take, we take for an unborn baby. We're not persecuting anyone, of course, just marching for the babies."

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**ST. MARY'S STUDENTS**

met Father Frank Pavone, founder and director of Priests for Life. Fr. Pavone told sponsor Tara Whitehead how impressed he was with the Louisiana group.

## Life March 2017

Continued from pg. 11

Maddie Runyan, also an LSUA student said, "I'm very confident in what he's doing to help this cause. I'm really excited and optimistic."

While the national networks were scanning the crowd and including the Louisiana group in their live feed, the students were able to see Vice President Mike Pence come on the stage.

"Our students were just feet away from where Vice President Mike Pence was speaking. His speech was very inspiring," said Fr. John.

"I felt so proud to be an American hearing Pence talk about the value of life and that I was a part of this historic pro-life movement," said St. Mary's stu-

dent Brittany Turner.

In addition to Pence, Mia Love, born of Haitian parents, and the first black woman to ever be elected to Congress, was also an inspirational speaker.

Love's seven-minute speech called for the end of funding abortion and the organization Planned Parenthood. Love said that there were other options for women facing unplanned pregnancies, including adoption.

"Forty-one years ago that couple from Haiti could have made the choice to abort, but they didn't," Love said. "They chose life. They didn't choose what might have been; they chose what is to come. They went and followed and fostered that life, and the future and the dreams that baby would bring."

"I'm certain that this couple would never have thought that that child would become the first black female Republican ever to be elected to Congress."

**The march begins**

When the march began later that morning, the five Louisiana Catholic School groups marched together as best they could. Each student wore knitted caps with "Menard" or "SM" (St. Mary's) written across the top, to make them easily identifiable in such a large crowd.

After the march, the group continued some sight-seeing in the Capitol, but at the end of the day, the students retreated to their hotel room where they reflected

Continued on next page



ST. MARY'S STUDENTS wore blue striped knitted caps while they marched for life.



FATHER BRIAN SEILER leads a reflection of the day with St. Mary students.



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL in Natchitoches brought a group of 41 students and eight adults to the Life March in Washington, D.C.





HOLY SAVIOR MENARD HIGH SCHOOL brought a group of 33 students and adults to the Life March in Washington, D.C.



HOLY SAVIOR MENARD STUDENTS wore green knitted caps with the words "Menard" across the top while they marched in the rally.



THE JOSH BLAKESLEY BAND (from Alexandria), featuring Josh Blakesley, lead vocals, guitar, and piano; Grae McCullough, guitar; Christian Gaudet, bass; and Blake Powell, drums; performed at the 2017 Youth Rally and Mass4Life in Washington.



#### Continued from pg. 11

on the day's events.

Father Brian Seiler, chaplain for the St. Mary's group and Father John Wiltse, chaplain for the Menard group said the students were deeply moved by the events of the day.

Fr. John said the students were most impressed by two particular signs they saw people holding:

*"I am a survivor of an abortion" -- and*

*"Since 1993, 3,000 Americans have been killed by terrorists. Since yesterday, 4,000 babies have been killed by abortion."*

"It's hard to believe that a baby could ever survive an abortion," he said. "It was also shocking to see signs that put into perspective just how many babies die each DAY from abortion. It's just very hard to comprehend that."

#### Other sightseeing

In addition to their time at the Life March, the groups also toured many of the Washington DC sites including the Holocaust Museum, Arlington Cemetery, the Washington and Lincoln Monuments, and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of Catholic University.

On the final day, the students took a side trip to New York where they visited the Statue of Liberty, Ground Zero and the 9/11 Memorial.

"The entire trip was lesson on the value of life," said Tara. "I was so proud of my students and the way that they conducted themselves throughout the trip. The whole experience showed them just how precious life is."

THE LSUA CSO STUDENTS were accompanied by Lynn Ray, campus minister; Father Edwin Rodriguez, chaplain; and assistants Terri Blaisdell and Chris Riche.



**ST. FRANCES CABRINI CELEBRATES CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK** by recognizing religious vocations with a gift. Pictured are Deacon William Travis, Nicole Orzech, Sister Cristina Angelini, OLS; and Father Louis Sklar, director of Vocations for the diocese. The Pre-Kers also celebrated the 100th school day by dressing up as the 101 Dalmations.



**SAYING THANK YOU WITH BROWNIES.** With a perfect ending to Catholic Schools Week, a group of 20 seniors from Holy Savior Menard High School delivered homemade brownies to first responders, hospitals, and school principals in the area in appreciation for their service to the community.



**THIS IS FOR YOU BISHOP DAVID TALLEY!** After morning Mass, Bishop David Talley visited all the classrooms of St. Joseph's School in Plaquemine. The students were excited to meet the bishop and made this cross as a gift to him. Pictured with the students is the pastor of Mater Dolorosa, Father Martin Laird.



**32 STUDENTS FROM OLPS RECOGNIZED AS DUKE TIP SCHOLARS.** The Duke University 4th-6th grade talent search for 2016 has identified 32 students from Our Lady of Prompt Succor School for their academic talent. The students scored in the 95th percentile on the ACT Aspire standardized test this past spring when they were 3rd, 4th, or 5th graders. Duke TIP is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving academically gifted and talented youth. As a world leader in gifted and talented education, Duke TIP works with students, their families, and educators to identify, recognize, challenge, engage, and help students reach their highest potential.



# Celebrating Catholic Schools Week



Sacred Heart, Moreauville



St. Anthony School, Bunkie



Holy Savior Menard, Alexandria

## Catholic school students named Students of the Year

Three Catholic school students from the Diocese of Alexandria have been selected "Students of the Year" in the non-public school division.

from Sacred Heart, Moreauville is the winner in the 5th grade division; from St. Anthony of Bunkie is the winner in the 8th grade division; and from Holy Savior Menard Central High School, is the winner in the 12th

grade division.

These three students were selected among a pool of other applicants in their own grade level who submitted portfolios of themselves and their accomplishments. Each portfolio was reviewed by a panel of judges who choose a winner in each grade level.

were perintendent of Catholic schools Thomas Roque during a ceremony

and reception at the St. Joseph Catholic Center attended by their parents and family, and their principal and friends.

"Every year, it gets more and more difficult to choose just one 'student of the year' from each grade," said Roque. "The students who submitted portfolios are all very impressive. We are proud of all of our students."

will competition in Baton Rouge on

Feb. 15. Winners of each grade in the school division are:

- 5th grade -- Noah Newton, St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie; Justice Sensebe, St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport; Rider Kimball, Old Bethel Christian Academy, Clarks; Steven Henton, St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria; Peyton DeSoto, St. Joseph, Plaquemine; and Katelyn Bush, Alexandria Country Day, Alexandria.

- 8th Grade -- Conard Linton,

Old Bethel Christian Academy, Clarks; Graham Rebouche, St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport; Makenzie Scroggs, Sacred Heart, Moreauville; Sumer Jeansonne, St. Joseph, Plaquemine; Michael Redmond, Alexandria Country Day, Alexandria; and Sadie Gormanous, Holy Savior Menard Central High, Alexandria.

- 12th grade -- Brooklyn Hatten, Old Bethel Christian Academy, Clarks; and Ty Leonards, St. Joseph, Plaquemine.



**ST MARY'S MOCK PROM BENEFITS ARC.** As part of Catholic Schools Week, the students at St. Mary's High School in Natchitoches held a Mock Prom for the clients of ARC -- the Natchitoches Association of Retarded Citizens. The gym was decorated with a Valentine's Day theme and the ARC clients were invited to dress up and attend. The St. Mary's students dressed up too for the affair, but the focus was all on the ARC students. One student said, "We had almost more fun at this prom than we did at our own prom because the focus was not on us and what everyone was wearing or who had a date with who -- it was all about the ARC students. Most of them never went to a prom, so the ARC students were all super excited to experience a prom."

**THE LHSAA ALL-ACADEMIC COMPOSITE TEAM AWARD PROGRAM** presented by ISC recognizes the academic excellence of senior student-athletes who have attained a 4.0 grade point average. St. Mary's is proud to announce three seniors who meet those qualifications

These ladies will be recognized at the state playoffs later in March.



A Seminary Burse is an invested sum of money, the interest of which is used in perpetuity to help fund the education of men to the priesthood.

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

Very Reverend Stephen Scott Chemino, Chairman

Completed burses at \$15,000.00 each:

- Bishop Charles P. Greco
- Monsignor Thomas F. Early (3 completed)
- Monsignor B. A. Scallan
- Father H. Gerald Bordelon
- Father Michael P. Kammer
- Father Bruce Miller (2 completed)
- Father William B. Provosty (2 completed)
- Angelo R. and Ena F. D'Angelo
- John Dominick Driscoll
- Miss Mary F. Early
- Irvin and Elma Moreau, Harrison P. Moreau, Michael N. Moreau, Deborah S. Moreau Bouche, Emily A. Moreau, Tom and Mary Candiotta, Ruby Moreau
- John Gregory Simms

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

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Bishop William Friend.	.100.00
Bishop Lawrence P. Graves.	5,805.00
Bishop Charles P. Greco.	1,300.00
Bishop Sam G. Jacobs.	1,100.00
Monsignor Marcel J. Anderson.	.100.00
Monsignor Leon R. Aycock.	1,535.00
Monsignor Henry F. Beckers.	13,057.50
Monsignor Milburn J. Broussard.	7,550.00
Monsignor Norman C. Buvens.	.100.00
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Monsignor S. J. Dekeuwer.	.550.00
Monsignor Gerald J. Ducote.	.560.00
Monsignor Robert C. Friend.	.50.00
Monsignor Ronald C. Hoppe.	.750.00
Monsignor James E. Howard.	.50.00
Monsignor Charles M. Jekeler.	.325.00
Monsignor Joseph F. Kidd.	1,500.00
Monsignor William Kwaitaal.	.850.00
Monsignor Warren T. Larroque.	.800.00
Monsignor Terrence J. Lennon.	.125.00
Monsignor George W. Martinez.	.500.00
Monsignor Patrick Murphy.	2,304.00
Monsignor William C. O'Hanlon.	5,000.00
Monsignor Aloysius O. Olinger.	.865.00
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Deceased Members of Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Regina Pacis #1372, Natchitoches	775.00
In Honor of Providence Central High School Class of 1959	1,450.00
General Fund.	2,000.00

**TOTAL** .....**528,253.83**  
(As of December 31, 2016)





Chris Gatlin

## Chris Gatlin named new head football coach at Menard

Former Buckeye and Alexandria Senior High coach Chris Gatlin has been named head football coach at Menard.

Gatlin last coached in Central Louisiana at ASH from 2008 to 2011 -- leading the Trojans to a 29-16 record and four playoff appearances as the successor of his former coach, Butch Stoker. His best season with the Trojans came in 2009 as they went 9-2 and won district 4-4A, but his 2011 team was just as special -- overcoming an 0-3 start to win District 3-4A and reach the Class 4A quarterfinals.

"Menard's always been a very interesting place to me, because of the fact that you have access to junior high kids," Gatlin said. "I look forward to building the program from the ground up."

## Sister Pearl Ceasar elected Superior General of CDPs

Another graduate of Providence Central Academy in Alexandria has been named the Superior General of the Sisters of Divine Providence.

Sister Pearl Ceasar, a 1961 graduate of Providence of Academy, will take over as Superior General in June when the six-year term of Sister Ann Petrus will expire. Sister Ann, who has served as Superior General from 2011-2017, is also a graduate of Providence Academy (1960).

Also elected to serve on the 2017-2023 General Council is Sister Anita Breneck (First Assistant-Elect), Sister Mary Bordelon, and Sister Lourdes Leal.

Sister Mary Bordelon is from Bunkie, La. and served as director of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Alexandria.

Sister Pearl has most recently served as executive director for Project Quest, a workforce development agency. Her recent ministries also include community organizer for COPS/Metro Alliance.

She earned a Bachelor of Art degree in Sociology and a Masters of Social Work from Our Lady of the Lake University, a sponsored institution of the Congregation. She entered the congregation in 1961, making her First Profession



**NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR CDPs.** Sister Pearl Ceasar, a 1961 graduate of Providence Academy has been elected to serve as Superior General for the next six-year term (2017-2023). She will replace Sister Ann Petrus (standing at microphone) who is also a graduate of Providence Academy. Also elected to serve on the General Council are (from left) Sister Pearl Ceasar, Sister Mary Bordelon (from Bunkie) Sister Anita Breneck, and Sister Lourdes Leal.

of Vows in 1963.

Sister Anita Brenek, CDP is currently the associate director of the Vocations Office in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Prior to this, she served as the director of Formation for the Congregation.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Our Lady of the Lake College, a Masters in Religious Studies from Incarnate Word College and a Masters in Spirituality from Loyola University in Chicago. She professed

first vows in 1970.

Sister Mary Bordelon, CDP has served most recently as the congregation's director of Mobile Ministry. Prior to this, she served as the pastoral coordinator of Holy Family Church in Metter, Georgia.

She holds a Bachelor of Art degree in Religious Studies from Our Lady of the Lake University, a Master in Religious Education from the University of Loyola in New Orleans. She professed first vows in 1985.

Sister Lourdes Leal, CDP, current First Assistant to the General Council was re-elected to the congregation's leadership team. She previously served as the northwest deanery coordinator of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. She holds a Doctoral degree in Communication Disorders from the University of Oklahoma and a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Speech Pathology from Our Lady of the Lake College. She professed first vows in 1961.

## Seminarian Burses

### January Donations

<b>Knights of Columbus Council 9217</b> .....	<b>\$25.00</b>
Father Adrian L. Molenschot Burse	
<b>Father Peter Kuligowski</b> .....	<b>\$50.00</b>
Father Peter Kuligowski Burse	
<b>Mrs. Joy Broussard</b> .....	<b>\$50.00</b>
Monsignor Milburn Broussard Burse	
<b>Mrs. Joy Broussard</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Deacon Rodrick "Benny" Broussard Burse	
<b>Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Schupbach</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Monsignor Steve Testa Burse	
<b>Tri-Community Nursing Center</b> .....	<b>\$100.00</b>
Floyd LaCour Sr. Burse	
<b>Mr. Lud McNeely</b> .....	<b>\$250.00</b>
Father John Cunningham Burse	
<b>Mrs. Marjorie V. Johnson</b> .....	<b>\$500.00</b>
Leonard Johnson Burse	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$1,175.00</b>



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# New gender policy won't affect Catholic Scouting units

IRVING, Texas (CNS) -- The Boy Scouts of America's new policy to accept members based on their gender identity will have no impact on Scouting units sponsored by the Catholic Church, said the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

The Boy Scouts announced Jan. 30 that effective immediately, the Texas-based organization will determine membership eligibility for Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts on a youth's gender identity as indicated on the membership application. Previously, the policy based eligibility on the gender indicated on a youth's birth certificate.

The change in policy "has no impact on the operation and program delivery of Scouting program(s) in Catholic-chartered units," said a Feb. 4 statement issued by the Catholic Scouting committee.

"Scouting serves the Catholic Church through the charter concept, which is similar to a franchise," it said. "The units chartered to a Catholic institution are owned by that organization. The BSA has stipulated that religious partners will continue to have the right to make decisions for their units based on their religious beliefs."

The statement was signed by George S. Sparks, national chairman of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, and Father Kevin M. Smith, a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, who is national chaplain of Catholic Scouting. The statement was approved by Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone of Charleston, South Carolina, who is the episcopal liaison between Catholic Scouting and the U.S.



**CUB SCOUTS** prepare to participate in the presentation of the gifts during a Mass marking Scout Sunday at St. Joseph Church in Kings Park, N.Y., Feb. 5. Scout Sunday is celebrated annually by the Boy Scouts of America to recognize the contributions of young people and adults to Scouting. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In announcing the membership change, Michael Surbaugh, chief Scout executive, said the organization has been "challenged

by a very complex topic -- the issue of gender identity." "After weeks of significant conversations" at all levels of the Scouting organization, he said, officials

decided a birth certificate is no longer sufficient for determining eligibility for participating in Cub Scouts or Boy Scouts.

"We've taken the opportunity to evaluate and update our approach," he said in a video message posted online. "I hope you'll join with me in embracing the opportunity to bring Scouting to more families and children who can benefit from what our organization has to offer."

"This is an area that we will continue to thoughtfully evaluate to bring the benefits of Scouting to the greatest number of youth possible all while remaining true to our core beliefs," Surbaugh said.

Those beliefs, he said, are based on the Scout Oath, which begins "with duty to God," and the Scout Law, which ends "with a Scout's obligation to be reverent."

In a separate statement emailed Feb. 7 to Catholic News

Service, Effie Delimarkos, the Boy Scouts' director of communications, reiterated that "we will accept and register youth in the Cub and Boy Scout programs based on the gender identity indicated on the application. Our organization's local councils will help find units that can provide for the best interest of the child."

The organization did not say if a specific case had prompted the policy change, but another spokesperson told CNS that Boy Scouts' "approach to gender identity was no longer sufficient as communities are now interpreting gender identity differently."

Sparks and Father Smith said in their statement: "Scouting's chartered organizations have the right to uphold their own moral standards within the units they charter. The teachings of the Catholic Church are upheld."

About 70 percent of Boy Scout troops are run by faith-based groups.

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Confidence: The Inadequacies of Vocational Evidence Presented at  
Social Security Disability Hearings."

**318-876-3174**

## Mass of Thanksgiving

for Bishop Ronald Herzog's  
Episcopal Ministry in  
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**Monday, Feb. 27  
12:05 p.m.**

**St. Francis Xavier Cathedral  
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**KC COUNCIL 3088 DONATES \$15,000 TO ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH.** Grand Knight Bradley Bordelon presents a \$15,000 check to Father Edwin Rodriguez Hernandez to assist with construction costs to repair the roof of St. Alphonsus Catholic Church in Hessmer. The church roof has continued to leak for many years, to the point that now something had to be done. The



Council went to work on the task and decided to earmark all proceeds from their upcoming fundraisers to the roof repair project. The Council worked hard in recent months to raise the money through fundraisers like the annual Fall Dinner, which generated \$4,865 and the Spring 5K Run, which generated \$3,000. The Council also agreed to make up the difference by using money in the General Fund. This is the largest donation the council has ever made. Father Edwin and the parishioners of St. Alphonsus are deeply grateful to the KC Council.



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS in Natchitoches** donated \$1,000 to the St. Mary's High School Pro-life Club to assist the students with their participation in the 2017 March for Life held Jan. 27 in Washington, DC.



**THE ST. MARTIN KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #12103** of Lecompte put up their newest pro-life sign on Highway 71 South. The men pictured are Pat Dunn, Gary Dunn, John Dunn, Jacob Andries, Brian Johnson, Tim Hart, Stephen Hart, Bobby Thiels, and Paul Dunstane.

## The Little One

by Marcus Descant



I hear a voice, a voice from above. I wonder who, and if there will be love.  
As I sleep here in my mother's womb, I wonder if it will be my tomb.

My heart aches, and sometimes I cry; just from not knowing if I live or die!  
I plead with my mom to have mercy on me, and I pray to God that she may see.

For I have a soul - I am full of life, and I don't wish to die via a blade of a knife.

I wish to be born and give glory to God. And woe the man struck by the rod.  
For when all is said and all is done, he must pay - pay for the death of the little one!

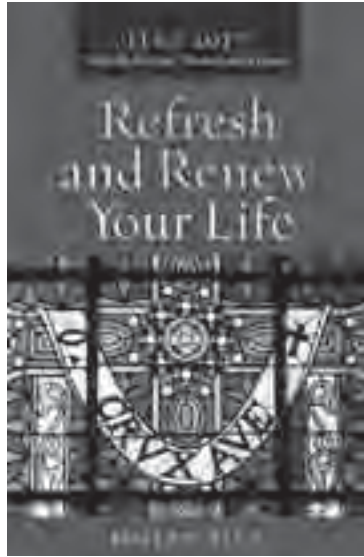
Advertisement paid for by Marcus Descant



**SACRED HEART SCHOOL PRO-LIFE RALLY.** The Columbian Squires and the Congregation of the Children of Mary at Sacred Heart School held a Pro Life Rally Jan. 30 at the grotto at Sacred Heart Church. Students made pro life rally signs and they prayed the rosary in honor of the unborn children. Sponsors Amanda Lacombe and Dan Soldani explained to the students the importance of being pro life.



# Twenty-Third Publications offers affordable Lent booklets

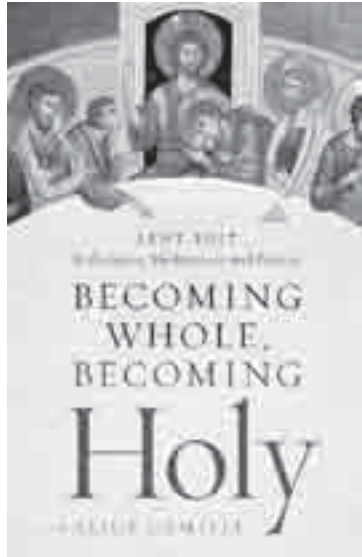


## LENT FOR INDIVIDUALS 2017 **Refresh and Renew Your Life**

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When life's inevitable problems and pitfalls beset us, Fr. Joe encourages us to look within and find our strength in Jesus. There we will find rest, refreshment, and rejuvenation.

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## LENT FOR INDIVIDUALS 2017 **Becoming Whole, Becoming Holy**

Reflections, Meditations and Prayers

By: ALICE CAMILLE  
Thank God for Lent, says Alice Camille. It's the season that assists us in reassembling the pieces of our lives -- work, family,, worship, and community -- in the proper order.

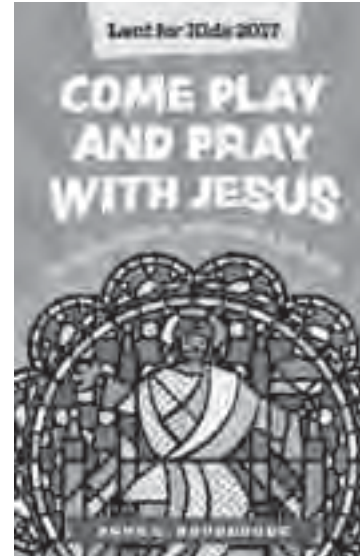
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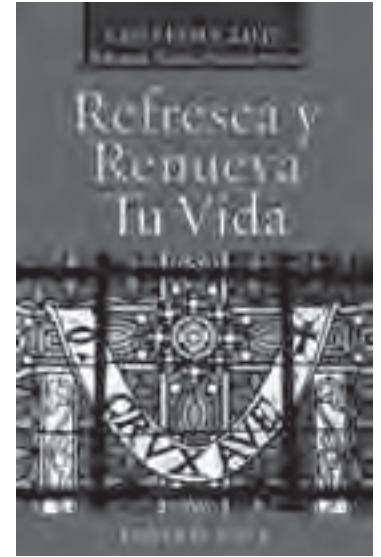
By: CLAIRE NOONAN  
Claire Noonan helps parents see that the Lenten disciples of prayer, fasting and almsgiving show us what we really are -- beloved children of God. And when we practice them as families, we become who we are meant to be -- joyful friends to all of our neighbors.  
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## LENT FOR KIDS 2017 **Come Play and Pray with Jesus**

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## LENT EN ESPANOL 2017 **Refresca y Renueva Tu vida**

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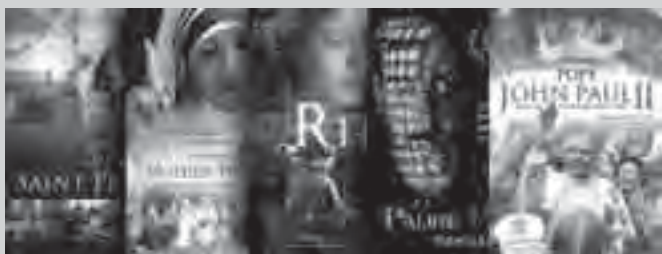
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## Bible Study

Sacred Heart Church in Pineville is offering "Letters From Prison, a 13-session Bible study. The weekly sessions are held each Wednesday from 6-7 p.m. through April 19 except for Ash Wednesday, March 1. These sessions are a study of Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and Thessalonians. If interested, contact Roger Danzy at 318-613-7586, email: [rdanzy@suddenlink.net](mailto:rdanzy@suddenlink.net). All sessions will be held in the Community Center Chapel, next door to the church.

## Adult Faith Formation

The Adult Faith Formation Series is held the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the OLPS Divine Providence Center in Alexandria. The next session will be the Parish Lenten Mission (March 7-9) featuring Father Mark Thibodeaux as the presenter.

## Catholic Charismatic Day of Renewal

Join us Feb. 18 at St. Anthony's Church Hall in Natchitoches (911 5th St.) as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal: "Open the Floodgates" with Dr. Deregale "Dr. D" Burbank as our speaker. Registration fee of \$30 includes continental breakfast and lunch. No registration at the door. Continental breakfast served starting at 8:30 a.m., Day of Renewal begins at 9 and ends in time for 4 p.m. Vigil Mass at St. Anthony's. To register or for more information contact Diane at 318-419-1547 or by email at [dianeardoin@yahoo.com](mailto:dianeardoin@yahoo.com) or Mary at 318-359-7735. The Day of Renewal is open to men and women.

## Beginning Experience for Young People

The loss of a parent through death, or a changed parental relationship through divorce or separation can be a traumatic experience for children, or for those in their teens or twenties. In dealing with these losses, they may become withdrawn, fearful, insecure, act out for no apparent reason, become confused or depressed, and often blame themselves. Beginning Experience is offering a weekend for young people ages 12-18 on March 10-12 at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville. It is presented by a team of youth and adults who have experienced this loss themselves and are willing to share their experience to help others. Cost is \$125 which includes two nights' lodging and meals. To register or for more information call Rose at (504) 920-0770 or [figladybrocato@gmail.com](mailto:figladybrocato@gmail.com)

## Rite of Election

This year's Rite of Election will be held Saturday, March 4 at 11 a.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. A reception in Xavier Hall will follow immediately.

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS



**CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS (COURT PADRE PIO)** of Cottonport prepared and served a meal of chicken spaghetti alfredo, salad, parmesan bread and homemade cookies for the students at LSUA on Jan. 18. Rev. Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez from Hesperia celebrated Mass before the meal was served. The ladies who helped serve were Kinta Moreau, Carol Tassin, Kathy McDonald, Charlene Riche, Nancy Jeansonne, Sue White, Sylvia Armand and Judy Galland.

## Natural Family Planning Classes

You are invited to attend a Natural Family Planning class series teaching the 99% effective Sympto-Thermal Method on the Saturdays of March 4, April 1, and May 6 from 10 a.m. - noon. Attendance of all 3 classes completes the course. There is a one-time fee of \$130, which includes Student Guide book, fertility tracking charts, digital thermometer, 1-year membership CycleProGo app, and Family Foundations magazine. You can register at [www.ccli.org](http://www.ccli.org). For more information, contact Michael and Leah Pelto at (318) 640-8678 or [michaelandleah@suddenlink.net](mailto:michaelandleah@suddenlink.net).

## Beginning Experience

Widowed, separated or divorced? Don't know where to turn? Struggling with grief or loss? Beginning Experience is registering now for a weekend away toward a lifetime of change March 10-12 at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville. Program 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. To register or for more information call: Michelle at (318) 443-8629 or Anna at (318) 448-1990 or (318) 452-2678. If financial assistance is needed please ask about availability.

## Pre-Canal Day of Reflection

A Pre-Canal Day of Reflection for Engaged Couples

will be held on Saturday, March 11 from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Alexandria. Cost is \$50 per couple or \$25 per person. Lunch is provided. For more information or to register please call Emily Ann McCulloch at 448-3333.

## Avoyelles Magnificat Breakfast

Jennifer Stevens is the speaker for the March 18 Magnificat breakfast to be held from 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Hall in Cottonport. Advance registration of \$18 is required. To register or for more information, contact Mary Wilson at [cenlamagnificat@gmail.com](mailto:cenlamagnificat@gmail.com).

## Discernment Retreat

"Listening with Our Lady" - For single women 17-35. Led by Fr. Pat Arensberg and the Little Sisters of the Poor. March 24 (6 p.m.) to 26 (1 p.m.) at Sacred Heart Residence in Mobile, AL. No charge. Guest accommodations are provided, as well as transportation between Mobile Regional Airport and the retreat location. For more info or to register: [vocmobile@littlesistersofthepoor.org](mailto:vocmobile@littlesistersofthepoor.org) or (251) 591-3700. Registration deadline March 21.

## Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend

The next Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held March 24-26 at the Bishop Tracy Retreat Center in Baton Rouge. This program is designed to make a good marriage better -- a weekend, overnight experience with reflection and sharing with your partner. Registration fee is \$75. For more information, contact Roger and Annie Borrello at 678-439-9633 or email at [rogerandann@mydoll.org](mailto:rogerandann@mydoll.org). Additional dates for 2017 are July 14-16 and Oct. 20-22.

## Diocesan Catechetical Quiz

The annual Diocesan Catechetical Quiz Bowl will be held on Saturday, March 25. Study guides are now available. For more information and study guides please call Emily Ann McCulloch at 448-3333.



**KC COUNCIL 9294 OF ECHO AND KC COUNCIL 9418 OF FIFTH WARD** cooked and served grilled hamburgers Feb. 8 for the LSUA Wednesday noon meal. The meal was served immediately following the 11 a.m. Mass at the Catholic Student Center.

## VIRTUS

• Thursday, Feb. 16 -- 6 p.m.,  
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# February - March

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<div>13</div> <div>Men's Catholic Scripture Study Series 6:00-7:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. G. POOKKATTU</div>	<div>14</div> <div>VALENTINE'S DAY PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS</div>	<div>15</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY</div>	<div>16</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS</div>	<div>17</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES SANCHEZ</div>	<div>18</div> <div>Charismatic Day of Renewal 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ</div>	<div>19</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROY</div>
<div>20</div> <div>Women of Grace 10-week Series 6:00-8:00 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN</div>	<div>21</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</div>	<div>22</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER</div>	<div>23</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY</div>	<div>24</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA</div>	<div>25</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR</div>	<div>26</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. SOARES</div>
<div>27</div> <div>Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop Emeritus Ronald Herzog 12:05 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral</div> <div>Men's Catholic Scripture Study Series 6:00-7:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN</div>	<div>28</div> <div>MARDI GRAS PRAY FOR BISHOP D. TALLEY</div>	<div>MARCH 1</div> <div>ASH WEDNESDAY PRAY FOR MSGR. S. TESTA</div>	<div>2</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. TEXADA</div>	<div>3</div> <div>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Natural Family Planning 10:00 a.m.  Rita of Election 11:00 a.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Lenten Mission -- St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. A. THOMPSON</div>	<div>5</div> <div>PRAY FOR MSGR. J. TIMMERMANS</div>
<div>6</div> <div>Women of Grace 10-week Series 6:00-8:00 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div>	<div>7</div> <div>Lenten Mission -- Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria</div>	<div>8</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville</div>	<div>9</div> <div>Lenten Mission -- St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie</div>	<div>10</div> <div>Beginning Experience -- Maryhill Renewal Center</div>	<div>11</div> <div>Pre-Cana 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div>	<div>12</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. XAVIER</div>
<div>PRAY FOR FR. A. TRAVIS</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. G. UZONDU</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. A. VARGHESE</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. V. VEAD</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. N. VIVIANO</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. J. WILTSE</div>	
<div>13</div> <div>Men's Catholic Scripture Study Series 6:00-7:30 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div>	<div>14</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. AELAVANTHARA</div>	<div>15</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pineville</div>	<div>16</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. ALLEN</div>	<div>17</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY</div>	<div>18</div> <div>Avoyelles Magnificat Breakfast 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. St. Mary's Assumption, Cottonport</div>	<div>19</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. BRAQUET</div>
Hixson Ford Pro Am/Coca Cola/Dr. Pepper/WalMart Golf Tournament benefiting Manna House -- Oakwing Golf Course						
<div>PRAY FOR FR. K. ZACHARIAH</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. A. AELAVANTHARA</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. W. AJAERO</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. T. ALLEN</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY</div>	<div>PRAY FOR FR. S. BRANDOW</div>	



FEBRUARY  
**18**

8:00AM-11:30AM

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- DR. HARRY HAWTHORNE  
CARDIAC ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY SPECIALIST
- DR. REYMOND MEADAA  
CARDIOLOGIST
- DR. JOHN SMITH, JR.  
CARDIOLOGIST

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