

CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVII, No. 2

www.diocesealex.org

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February 15, 2016

ON THE INSIDE

Vatican says foot-washing on Holy Thursday not limited to just men

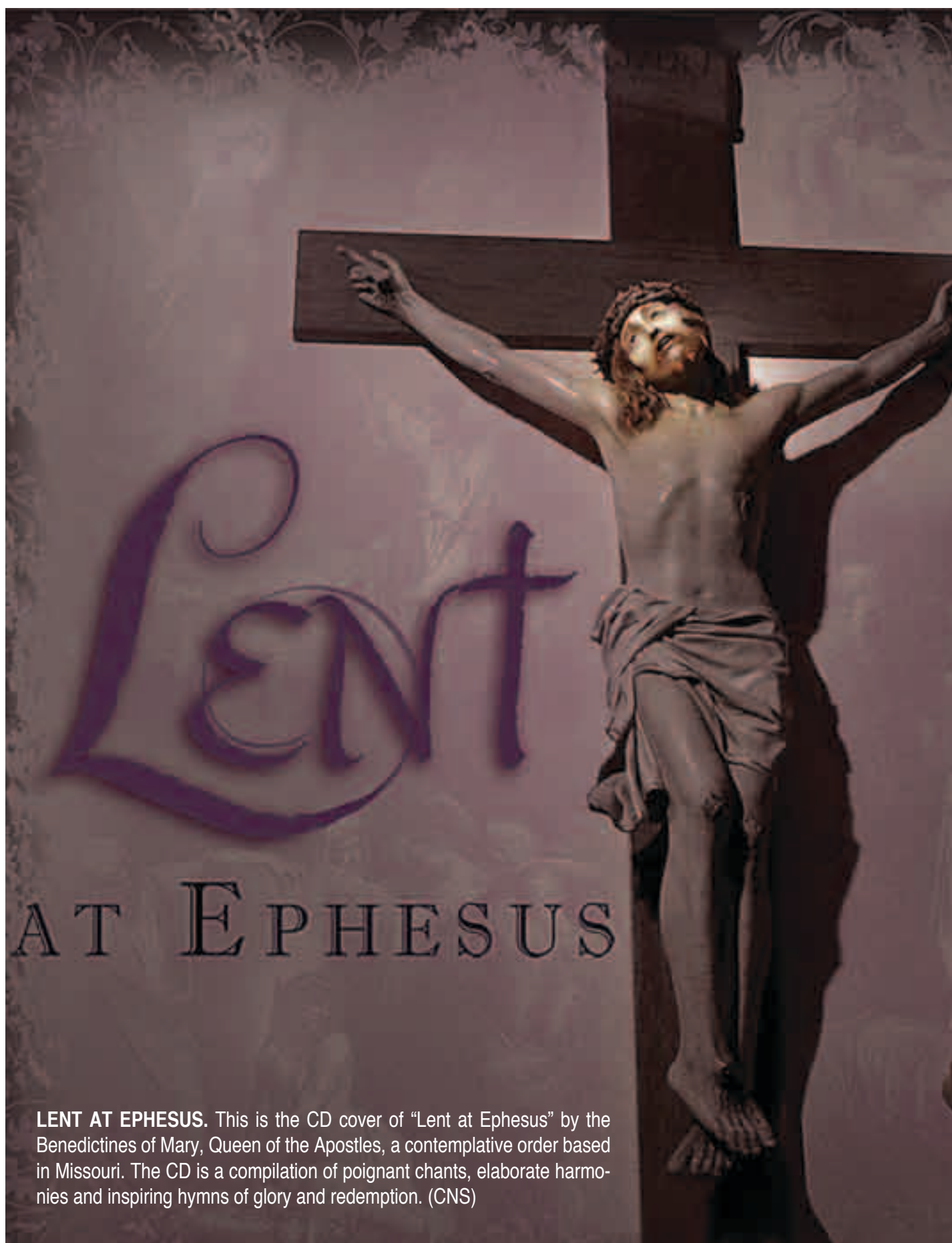
Following a request by Pope Francis, the Vatican issued a decree specifying that the Holy Thursday foot-washing ritual can include “all members of the people of God,” including women -- a practice already observed by the pope and many priests around the world. Read more on pg. 3.

Local high school students brave winter storm in D.C to March for Life

Despite predictions of the ‘worst winter storm in Washington, D.C. history,’ almost 100 students from Central Louisiana braved the frigid temperatures to participate in the 43rd Annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. Read about their inspiring story on pgs. 15-17.

Use these 40 days of Lent to draw closer to Jesus

Whether it's attending a Lenten mission, a Lenten conference sponsored by the Diocese of Alexandria, or going to confession, the season of Lent is an opportunity to draw closer to Jesus. View the schedule of Lenten events, pg. 18



LENT AT EPHESUS. This is the CD cover of “Lent at Ephesus” by the Benedictines of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, a contemplative order based in Missouri. The CD is a compilation of poignant chants, elaborate harmonies and inspiring hymns of glory and redemption. (CNS)

Pope Francis: God wants to save you; will you let him?

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- God doesn't want to condemn anyone; he wants to save every person in the entire world, Pope Francis said.

"The problem is letting him enter one's heart" to transform one's life, the pope said during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square Feb. 3.

"This is the heart of God, the heart of a father who loves his children and wants them to live rightly and justly and, therefore, to live in fullness and be happy," he said.

The pope continued a series of talks dedicated to divine mercy, looking specifically at how divine mercy and divine justice go hand in hand.

"It might seem that they are two things that contradict each other," he said, but they don't because "it is precisely God's mercy that brings true justice to fruition."



God's justice is different from the human administration of legal justice, which is "retributive, that imposes a penalty on the guilty," the pope said.

"This path still does not lead to true justice because it doesn't actually conquer evil but simply contains it," the pope said. "Rather, it is only by responding to (evil) with the good that evil truly can be overcome."

The Bible shows that true

justice bypasses a court system, he said. The one who is wronged goes directly to the one who is guilty "in order to invite him to conversion, to help him to understand that he is doing wrong, to appeal to his conscience."

Through this act of persuasion, the one guilty of wrongdoing "can open himself to the forgiveness that the injured party is offering him. And this is beautiful," the pope said.

This is the way that families try to work out their conflicts, he said. The one who has been offended "loves the culprit and wants to salvage the relationship that binds them, not cut off this relationship," he said.

But it is not an easy path to take, he added. "It requires that the person who was wronged be ready to forgive and desire the salvation of and what's best for the one who has wronged him."

These reciprocal acts of forgiveness and conversion are the only way true justice can triumph, the pope said, because "if the guilty one recognizes the evil committed and stops doing it, then the evil is no more and the one who was unjust becomes just."

"This is how God acts with us sinners," he said. God constantly offers forgiveness and helps people recognize their sin in order to set them free.

That is because "God doesn't seek our condemnation, but our salvation. God doesn't want to

condemn anybody," not even those whom many think deserve it like Pontius Pilate or Judas, he said. "The Lord of mercy wants to save everybody."

God's immense heart "goes beyond our small concept of justice" and opens up people's horizons to his limitless mercy, he said.

This is the kind of paternal heart people want to encounter in the confessional, the pope said.

While the priest may seek to help the penitent understand the evil committed, "we all go to the confessional to find a father, a father who helps us change our life, a father who gives us the strength to go on, a father who forgives us in the name of God."

That is why the sacrament of penance or reconciliation is such a big responsibility for the priest, the pope said, because the people "who come to you are just looking for a father" and the priest in the confessional is there "in the place of the father who brings justice with his mercy."

U.S. priest, in England, says church's ministry to gays expands rapidly

By Simon Caldwell
Catholic News Service

WARRINGTON, England (CNS) -- The Catholic Church's pastoral ministry to gays is rapidly developing and expanding as Western societies become more secular, said a U.S. priest at the forefront of working with gay people.

Father Philip Bochanski, a Philadelphia priest who serves as associate director of Courage International, said increasing num-



Father Philip Bochanski
Assoc. Dir. Courage International

bers of people who "experience same-sex attraction" but who wished to live chaste lives were turning to the church for help.

The demand has resulted in Courage, a Catholic organization dedicated to the pastoral care of homosexuals, spreading from a single chapter founded in New York in 1980 to more than 150 chapters worldwide, with increasing interest from dioceses around the world seeking to set up their own chapters.

Each year, the group works

with more than 2,000 people who experience same-sex attraction to conform their lives to the demands of the Gospel.

"As the culture becomes more secular, we find individuals in the culture making decisions for themselves to come and seek help," Father Bochanski told Catholic News Service Feb. 2. "We are not trying to fix or cure anybody. We are just trying to walk with them."

Father Bochanski said many people who felt unhappy with

their lifestyle often felt isolated by a "gay-affirming" culture and were "looking for a home."

He said that as a result, "our Courage groups are growing."

"Since last summer, between 12 and 15 new chapters have been set up in (the United) States," he said. "Also, the number of dioceses requesting programs for their priests is growing."

"Our primary work and concern is just to provide a welcome

See GAY MINISTRY, pg. 9

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Foot-washing ritual not limited to men, Vatican says in new decree

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Following a request by Pope Francis, the Vatican issued a decree specifying that the Holy Thursday foot-washing ritual can include "all members of the people of God," including women -- a practice already observed by the pope and many priests around the world.

In a letter dated December 2014 and addressed to Cardinal Robert Sarah, the head of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, the pope said the rubric of the Roman Missal, which mentions only men as participants in the foot-washing rite, should be changed so that priests can choose from all members of the church.

The pope said the change would help express the full meaning of Jesus' gesture at the Last Supper, his "giving himself 'to the end' for the salvation of the world" and his endless charity. However, the pope insisted those chosen be given "an adequate explanation of the meaning of the rite itself."

The pope's letter and the

congregation's decree were released by the Vatican Jan. 21.

The decree, issued by Cardinal Sarah and dated Jan. 6, states that pastors can choose "a small group of the faithful to represent the variety and the unity of each part of the people of God. Such small groups can be made up of men and women, and it is appropriate that they consist of people young and old, healthy and sick, clerics, consecrated men and women and laity."

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told journalists that although traditionally 12 men were selected to represent the 12 apostles, the meaning of the rite signifies Jesus' unconditional love. With the pope's decree, he said, the pope wished "this dimension of the gesture of Christ's love for all" be the focus rather than just a portrayal of the biblical scene during the Last Supper.

Archbishop Arthur Roche, secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, explained the history of the foot-washing rite in an article published in the Vatican newspaper Jan. 21.

He said the rite has endured



NEW DECREE -- WASHING FEET OF WOMEN. Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez kisses the foot of a woman during Holy Thursday Mass in 2014 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. Following a request by Pope Francis, the Vatican issued a decree Jan. 21 specifying that the Holy Thursday foot-washing ritual can include women. (CNS photo/Victor Aleman, Vida Nueva)

various changes and modifications throughout the church's history. For example, the "mandatum" from 1600 said the custom was for bishops to wash, dry and kiss "the feet of 'thirteen' poor people after having dressed them, fed them and given them a chari-

table donation."

Changes made by Pope Pius XII were reformed again in 1970, further simplifying the rite and omitting the requirement that the number participating be 12. The significance of the current modifications, the archbishop added,

"does not now relate so much to the exterior imitation of what Jesus did, but rather the meaning of what he accomplished, which has a universal importance."

"The washing of feet is not obligatory" during the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper, Archbishop Roche said. "It is for pastors to evaluate its desirability, according to the pastoral considerations and circumstances which exist, in such a way that it does not become something automatic or artificial, deprived of meaning and reduced to a staged event."

In 1987, the then-Committee on the Liturgy of the U.S. bishops' conference explained, "The element of humble service has accentuated the celebration of the foot washing rite in the United States over the last decade or more. In this regard, it has become customary in many places to invite both men and women to be participants in this rite in recognition of the service that should be given by all the faithful to the church and to the world. Thus, in the United States, a variation in the rite developed in which not only charity is signified but also humble service."

Pope Francis hopes to bring hope, peace during visit to Mexico Feb. 12-17

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, and Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, New Mexico, will officially represent the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops during Pope Francis' visit to Mexico Feb. 12-17.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, who is USCCB president, appointed them as representatives. Both of their dioceses border Mexico.

Bishop Flores, 54, has headed the Brownsville diocese since 2009. Catholics number more than 1.2 million, making up 85 percent of the total population.

Bishop Cantu, 49, has been bishop of Las Cruces since 2013. The diocese has a Catholic population of close to 235,000, or 42 percent of the total population.

A Feb. 2 news release from the USCCB said Archbishop Kurtz was invited to appoint representatives by Cardinal Jose Francisco Robles Ortega of Gua-

dalajara, president of the Mexican bishops' conference, and Bishop Eugenio Andres Lira Rugarcia, the conference's gen. secretary.

During his trip to Mexico, Pope Francis will visit some of the most marginalized communities in that country and seek to bring hope to a country deeply suffering from crime, corruption and inequality, according to the Vatican.

He will stop in six cities, including two in the state of Chihuahua and -- across from El Paso,

Texas -- Ciudad Juarez, which just five years ago was considered the "murder capital of the world" as drug cartels disputed a trafficking corridor.

The pope said in November that he wanted to visit cities where St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI never went. But he said he will stop at the capital of Mexico City to pray at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. "But if it wasn't for Our Lady I wouldn't" go there, he had told reporters.

In a video message one week before his apostolic visit, Pope Francis asked the people of Mexico for some time alone during his visit to pray before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"I would like to ask -- as a favor from you -- that this time, which will be the third time I will step on Mexican soil, to leave me alone a few minutes in front of the image. That is the favor I ask. Can you do that for me?" he said in the video released Jan. 3 by the Mexican news agency NotiMex.

The pope will fly out of and return to Mexico City each day after celebrating Mass at the basilica on the second day of his trip.



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After three months into the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, we continue to explore ways of extending God's loving mercy as widely as possible. Now add to that, the season of Lent beginning, and we can also explore ways to link these two opportunities.

May I suggest a slightly different approach this year. Ordinarily people focus a lot of energy trying to adopt different acts of penance and sacrifice. Of course, this is a very important aspect of our lenten journey, but could it be even more beneficial to spend these 40 days heeding our call to be disciples and exploring how we could more effectively carry



ONE IN THE LORD

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

out the mission of evangelization?

At the heart of our Christian life is the understanding that each of us is called by God. We recall the words of Christ who said "You did not choose me, I chose you." Not only does Christ choose, he

calls us and knows us by name. Both of these are encapsulated in the Rite of Election which is celebrated in Catholic cathedrals throughout our countries at the beginning of Lent each year.

Last Sunday, we celebrated the Rite of Election at St. Francis

Xavier Cathedral. What a beautiful example of embracing the mission of Jesus for those preparing to receive the sacraments of initiation at Easter.

February is traditionally Catholic Press Month. For many years our diocesan newspaper, the Church Today, has been mailed free to every Catholic household in the diocese, for whom we have a mailing address. I hope you consider the Church Today to be a good benefit in your spiritual growth. If you know of anyone who is not receiving the paper, please use the form included in this issue to add them.

I am fairly certain that you have already received my letter

and/or heard the message through your pastor inviting participation in the 2016 Annual Diocesan Appeal. The generosity of our people over the years has been uplifting. Thank you in advance for participating in these works of evangelization and discipleship.

May these days of Lent, in this special Jubilee Year of Mercy, lead you to once again rejoice in the Lord's Resurrection.

May the mercy of our loving God be with you.

March for Life in Washington gets "snowed" by national media

I think when thousands of folks go to Washington and demonstrate as a blizzard moves in and then try to make it home, it's news. Major media seem to disagree.

I followed the news all weekend. I saw no real coverage of the 43rd Jan. 22 March for Life, before, during, or after the march or the blizzard.

I did see early news bulletins with New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio, talking about snowplows and street parking. I saw mid-storm reports of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo hitching a stranded car near the Cross Island Parkway. For an entire weekend and then some, I saw officials in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and DC talk about salt spreaders and dangerous road conditions, about closed schools and offices.

But I saw no coverage of the thousands (not, as the New York Times reported, "hundreds") of people who challenged both permissive abortion laws and the storm as they showed up noon that Friday near the Washington Monument. I saw no coverage of Republican presidential hopeful Carly Fiorina, nor of any of the other speakers. I saw no photography of the protesters near the Supreme Court.

I did catch a glimpse of post-march hundreds at a Mass celebrated on an impromptu snow altar -- they were stranded on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The television commentator called it a "religious service," but made



GUEST EDITORIAL

Phyllis Zagano
Hofstra University, NY

no mention of why busloads of young people and a priest from Iowa were out there during the blizzard in the first place.

Yes, here and there a local paper or station mentioned the events. But the March for Life itself and some very interesting sidebars got snowed under by blizzard coverage.

Why? What, exactly, is news?

Is news about what people are interested in? The fact is, the latest Marist poll shows 84% of U.S. citizens oppose unrestricted abortion, including two-thirds of the folks who call themselves pro-choice. That's a lot of people with significant opinions about the ways the Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade has wormed its way into American minds and mores.

But a recent New York Times front-page story focuses on a Texas indictment of the folks who exposed the Planned Parenthood baby-part scandal, not on baby parts. Whether the couple broke the law or not they did get some very scary video.

Of course Texas has been an abortion battleground for years.

Roe v. Wade grew from the 1969 denial--under Texas criminal law--of an abortion to Norma L. McCorvey. The U.S. Supreme Court decided the case in 1973, well after McCorvey gave birth. (She is now a pro-life Catholic.)

The newest Texas case, Whole Women's Health v. Cole, concerns state medical restrictions placed on the 19 or so remaining abortion facilities (there were forty not long ago), requiring they be outfitted as ambulatory surgical centers whose physicians have hospital admitting privileges not more than 30 miles away.

In fact, federal involvement in abortion law is very recent. The earliest abortion law, in Connecticut in 1821, prohibited abortion after "quickening." After 1840, more and more states legislated against it as abortionists, such as New York's Madame Restell, became both rich and famous. Restell became so well known that "Restellism" became a euphemism for abortion. But in the mid-nineteenth century, the topic was so inflammatory it was declared an obscene subject and newspapers rarely, if ever, dis-

cussed it.

Like today? The changing rhetoric over the years (pro-life is now anti-choice) and the increasing stridency of demands that women have the right to kill their own in federally-funded centers shouts down reasoned discussion of the real issues at hand. Further, the question is pigeon-holed as a woman's issue, as if the 60 million U.S. abortions since Roe v. Wade had nothing to do with men. Even Obamacare birth control discussion routinely omits one of the least expensive and

most permanent methods of limiting births: vasectomies.

Snow melts and disappears. But discussion about abortion and the worldwide desire of millions of people to protect defenseless unborn children continue. That's news.

[Phyllis Zagano is senior research associate-in-residence at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y. Her latest book includes *Sacred Silence: Daily Meditations for Lent* (www.amazon.com).

CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVII, No. 2 • February 15, 2016

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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
To receive a free subscription, call 318-445-6424, ext 255 or e-mail jpetrus@diocesealex.org

1,200+ walk in the first March for Life in Central Louisiana

The first March for Life in Central Louisiana held Jan. 30, drew a crowd of more than 1,200. The 1.6 mile march started at 10 a.m. on the campus of Louisiana College, down main street in Pineville, across the Jackson Street bridge, and ended at the

Alexandria Ampitheatre. Speakers from different churches, including Father Chad Partain from St. Frances Cabrini Church, addressed the crowd about the value of life and efforts of the pro-life movement. The 2017 march is tentatively set for Feb. 4.



ST. JOSEPH STUDENTS from Plaquemine who participated in the March



KC JOHN PAUL II COUNCIL and SACRED HEART OF JESUS (Pineville) parishioners cross the Jackson Street Bridge carrying signs during the march.



CAMPUS MINISTRIES from LSU- Alexandria, Louisiana College, and Northwestern State University joined efforts to walk in the march as a group.



OLPS STUDENTS meet up with their 4th grade teacher Mary Nassif during the march.



FATHER CHAD PARTAIN, chancellor for the diocese and president of Holy Savior Menard, participated in the march and spoke at the rally.



MENARD APOSTLES FOR CHRIST (MAC Team) wait for the March for Life rally at the Alexandria Ampitheatre.

Congregation of Divine Providence celebrates 150 years of ministry

By Sister Charlotte Kitowski
and Mary Ann Votion

The Sisters of Divine Providence are celebrating the 150th Jubilee of their ministry (1866-2016) in the United States this year.

The congregation was founded in 1866, when Bishop Claude Dubuis invited Sisters St. Andrew Feltn and Alphonse Boegler to become missionaries in his Texas diocese.

With the mandate “to found everywhere rural schools for girls,” they left their motherhouse in eastern France for a new mission.

Within 20 years, they opened or staffed more than 20 schools not only in Texas rural areas but also in Austin, San Antonio, and Galveston. In 1896 the Sisters opened Our Lady of the Lake Academy that developed into Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio.

Missionary Catechists

Later in 1930, Sister Benetia Vermeersch, CDP, founded the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence in Houston to respond to the needs of refugees escaping the Mexican revolution (1910-36) and to provide religious instruction for Mexican children. The MCDPs gained autonomy as a Pontifical Congregation in 1989 and today minister primarily in



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS. The Sisters of Divine Providence of Texas will celebrate their landing in Galveston Oct. 23 with a solemn liturgy in Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel in San Antonio. (Sister Barbara Fry, Photographer)

Texas, California, Nebraska, New Mexico and Kansas.

CDP & MCDP Ministries

Over the last century-and-a-half, the Sisters of Divine Providence and the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence have served and studied in more than 1,000 places in Texas, 38 other states, and 14 countries. During that time they have enlarged their works to include education at all levels, health and social services, peace and justice initiatives, and religious instruction in parishes and dioceses.

Diocese of Alexandria

The Sisters of Divine Providence have ministered in more than 19 cities or towns and 45 communities in the Alexandria Diocese.

The CDPs opened their first schools in Louisiana in response to a request of Bishop Anthony Durier. He asked for Sisters who would teach both Black and Caucasian children in his diocese.

In Alexandria, for instance, the Sisters operated St. Francis Xavier Academy and Sacred Heart Institute for the Black students. Later that institute evolved into St. James Memorial School.

From 1887-1890, the Sisters

staffed schools not only in Alexandria but also in Natchitoches, Pineville, Cloutierville, Isle Brevelle, and Many.

Over the 150 year period, they also ministered in Bunkie, Cheneyville, Deville, Dupont, Echo, Elmer, Forest Hill, Glenmora, Kolin, Mansura, Marks-ville, Natchez, Norma, and Plaquemine.

Their primary ministry was education with their biggest schools in Alexandria—Providence Central High School (that merged into Holy Savior Menard High School) and Our Lady of Prompt Succor.

The Sisters have also ministered in hospitals, public schools, religious education, retreat work, diocesan offices, and Catholic Charities.

2016 Jubilee Activities

The 2016 celebrations began with a retreat for CDPs, MCDPs and Associates and an opening Eucharistic liturgy.

During the year the Sisters and Associates will prayerfully remember the communities and dioceses where they served and studied in special Masses.

In February the Congregation will especially remember the Alexandria Diocese.

Among the other activities planned are a jubilee luncheon Gala Honoring the Sisters on March 29 in San Antonio and two



Anniversary Events

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Feb. 6 | Moye de Gras |
| Mar. 29 | Jubilee Luncheon Gala |
| Oct. 9 | Heritage Day |
| Oct. 23 | Anniversary Mass |

celebrations in Castroville: Moye de Gras in Feb. 6 and Heritage Day in Oct. 9. A festive Mass commemorating the anniversary of the Sisters' landing in Galveston will take place at Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel, Our Lady of the Lake Convent in San Antonio on Oct. 23.

Other events include an exhibit featuring the Sisters' artwork and artifacts and service projects throughout the year in honor of the Church's Year of Mercy and the ministry of the Sisters and Associates. Individual schools and groups are also arranging additional activities.

For more information or reservations to any of the 150th Anniversary events see the Congregation's website: cdptexas.org.

Our Lady of Holy Cross College becomes the University of Holy Cross

NEW ORLEANS - Our Lady of Holy Cross College (OLHCC) has been renamed the University of Holy Cross. The action took place during a most recent meeting of the Board of Regents of OLHCC.

This announcement comes as the University of Holy Cross begins its celebration of its Centennial. The Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross opened what would become Our Lady of Holy Cross College in 1916 to prepare teachers for the many schools the Marianites opened in South Louisiana. This year also marks the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Marianites of Holy Cross in Le Mans, France.

Creation of Board of Trustees of University of Holy Cross

At the same time as the name change, the two-tier board system that governed the institution was ceased to create the new Board of Trustees of the University of Holy Cross Corporation.

A governing board of lay trustees was organized for OLHCC in the late 1960s according to the requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Two tiers of governance were created with the OLHCC Corporation, which consisted of member of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross, and the OLHCC Board of Regents, which consisted of both lay mem-

bers and Marianite members. The Corporation owned/managed the land and buildings which housed the institution and the Board of Regents was the governing board for the institution.

Ownership of Land & Buildings

The Board of Trustees of the University of Holy Cross Corporation have also assumed the ownership and control of the land and the building that house the institution that once was managed by the OLHCC Corporation.

Changing the Name to University of Holy Cross

The Board of Trustees of the University of Holy Cross Corporation renamed the institu-

tion through changes that were made to the institution's Articles of Incorporation. Reflecting the growth of advanced degree programs, including graduate and doctoral programs, the Board voted unanimously to change the name of the college effective immediately.

“By virtue of its historical commitment to comprehensive education and a mission which focuses on the education of the minds and hearts of its students, it is appropriate and timely for Our Lady of Holy Cross College to adopt university status,” stated Kyle France, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Holy Cross Corporation. “The Board felt the name change

was appropriate recognizing the fact that the College has been offering programs beyond the baccalaureate degree for a number of years, including awarding its first doctorate degree at its most recent commencement.”

The changes are effective immediately with the full support of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross. The university status puts the institution in line with other Ph.D.-granting institutions. The University of Holy Cross currently has more than 250 students in graduate programs with some 65 pursuing doctorate degrees. The undergraduate programs have grown by 10 percent and graduate programs by 35 percent in just the past year.

Retired Archbishop Schulte dies at 89; recalled as prayerful, pastoral

By Peter Finney Jr.
Catholic News Service

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) -- Retired Archbishop Francis B. Schulte, who served as the 12th archbishop of New Orleans from 1988 to 2002, died Jan. 17 after several weeks in hospice care at Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital in Darby, Penn. He was 89.

A funeral Mass celebrated by New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond was held Jan. 28 at St. Louis Cathedral. Archbishop Schulte was buried in a crypt near the main altar of the cathedral.

"I think he brought a real fidelity to church teaching," Archbishop Aymond said of Archbishop Schulte, who was leading the New Orleans Archdiocese when Pope John Paul II named then-Msgr. Aymond as auxiliary bishop of New Orleans in 1996.

"He also brought a sense of pastoral care," Archbishop Aymond added. "He was very committed to Catholic education since he had been a superintendent in Philadelphia and knew a lot about it. He also helped to stabilize the finances in our archdiocese. He redid the structure of our administrative offices. That was something that was needed, and I thought he did it very well."

Francis Bible Schulte was born Dec. 23, 1926, in Philadelphia. He was ordained to the priesthood May 10, 1952, and from 1960 to 1970 was assistant superintendent of Catholic schools in Philadelphia and then as superintendent 1970 to 1980.

He was ordained auxiliary bishop of Philadelphia in 1981 and was appointed bishop of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia, in 1985. He was named to succeed New Orleans Archbishop Philip M. Hannan Dec. 13, 1988, and was installed Feb. 14, 1989.

A year after Archbishop Alfred Hughes was appointed coadjutor archbishop of New Orleans in 2001, Archbishop Schulte officially retired Jan. 3, 2002. Archbishop Hughes succeeded him.

"I don't think there was a time in my life before ordination that I was not thinking of the priesthood," Archbishop Schulte said in a 2002 interview with the Clarion Herald upon his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood and retirement as archbishop. "From a young age, it was always there," he said.

Archbishop Schulte grew up in Philadelphia as an only child. His father, who ran the family pharmacy, died when Frank was only 11. His mother, Katharine



**Archbishop
Francis B. Schulte
1926-2016**

Bible Schulte -- named for Philadelphia heiress St. Katharine Drexel, who founded Xavier University of Louisiana -- imbued in him a love for the church.

His great uncle and uncle, both named Augustine, were diocesan priests in Philadelphia.

"They used to call them Old Gus and Young Gus," Archbishop Schulte said. "My great uncle was rector of the North American College in Rome for two years and then came back to teach at St.

Charles Seminary, my alma mater, for 53 years.

"My uncle, Young Gus, was a great parish priest and an avid hunter. In the 1920s when the KKK was strong in that area, they burned a cross on church property. As the story goes, he took out his gun and shot it out the window of the rectory. That was the end of the cross burning."

Archbishop Schulte often used an analogy of "the four pillars" to describe the influence of the New Orleans Catholic Church on the wider community. The pillars he cited were Catholic schools, Catholic Charities, the Social Apostolate and Christopher Homes, the archdiocesan affordable housing program.

"I wanted to make all of us aware of the great contribution the church has made through these four pillars of social infrastructure," Archbishop Schulte said. "The greatest contribution of the archdiocese is to the religious and moral fiber of our community. These efforts of the church go all the way back to 1727 (when the Ursuline Sisters arrived from France to open the first Catholic school in the United States), and each one has developed over the years."

Archbishop Hughes said

Archbishop Schulte's biggest contribution to the Archdiocese of New Orleans was "to bring an organizational structure to the archdiocese. He was very consultative, and he introduced consultative bodies as genuine consultative bodies. He developed the cabinet structure. That basic structure I inherited and did very little tweaking of it.

In his retirement, Archbishop Schulte remained in New Orleans until Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005. He had been diagnosed with prostate cancer, and doctors encouraged him to return to Philadelphia for successful radiation treatment.

However, in 2006, Archbishop Schulte grew increasingly frail and had three falls within a short time frame. Doctors insisted that he be sent to an assisted living facility, Villa St. Joseph, which was home to retired priests.

His last visit to New Orleans was for the 2009 installation of Archbishop Aymond, at which time a historic photo was taken of the four living archbishops of New Orleans: Archbishops Hannan, Schulte, Hughes and Aymond. Church historians could not recall another archdiocese in the U.S. having four living archbishops.

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CELEBRATION OF ANNIVERSARIES. Father Dwight de Jesus receives an anniversary gift from Gabby Ccco from the youth group to commemorate the 30th anniversary of his ordination. A large crowd of current and past members of the parish gathered in the church hall Nov. 22 to celebrate 115 years of history in the parish.

Christ the King celebrates 60th anniversary of parish; 30th anniversary of pastor's ordination

Christ the King Catholic Church in Simmesport celebrated its 60th anniversary as a parish Nov. 22 with a celebration of the Mass and a reception in the church hall.

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Ronald Herzog and concelebrated by Rev. Dwight de Jesus, pastor, and several former pastors including Rev. James Nellikunnel and Rev. George Krosfield.

Special recognition was also given to the 50th anniversary of the completion of the current church building in 1965. From December 1964 through December of 1965, there were 45 baptisms, 41 First Communions, 92 Confirmations, and 23 marriages.

Invitations to all of these people were sent out and many returned to Simmesport to participate in the celebration.

Music for the Mass was provided by the joint adult choirs of Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville and the Christ the King Church Choir.

The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus led the procession into the church and the local council carried a statue and cross of Christ the King.

Participants in the Mass included Ruth Burns Reed, reader and a member of the 1965 Confirmation class; Joan and Sammy Cashio, gift bearers and one of the couples married in 1965; and Kenneth March, gift bearer and a

member of the 1965 Confirmation class.

After Mass, the congregation celebrated a meal in the church hall, which was filled with historic pictures of the parish from the past.

During the reception, Father Dwight was presented a commemorative plaque and gifts from the parishioners in recognition of the 30th anniversary of his ordination.

A bronze plaque commemorating the milestones and events of the day was also presented to Father Dwight. The plaque will be mounted in the church lobby.

Finally, the plans for a new rectory to be built next year were unveiled.

Christ the King Church, Simmesport 115 years of history

115th Anniversary -- Establishment of a Catholic church in Simmesport area in early 1900s as a mission of Sacred Heart Church in Moreauville. It moved to Odenburg from 1923-1935.

80th Anniversary -- Establishment of Christ the King Church when the church was permanently moved to Simmesport and consecrated as "Christ the King Catholic Church. (1935)

60th Anniversary -- Christ the King becomes an independent parish. (1955)

50th Anniversary -- Completion of the current church building. (1965)

30th Anniversary -- Ordination of our pastor, Rev. Dwight de Jesus, (on the Feast of Christ the King) in 1985.

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70th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY. Audrie and Loretta Dubriel Metoyer celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary Jan. 16, 2016 at St. Juliana Catholic Church in Alexandria. Mass and renewal of their vows was followed by a reception in the church Activity Building. Approximately 200 family and friends showered them with love at the celebration. The couple had eight children (two deceased); 24 grandchildren, 44 great-grandchildren, and two great, great grandchildren. Loretta worked at St. Rita's rectory for Msgr. Joseph Susi as a housekeeper for more than 40 years. Audrie retired from the City of Alexandria and also worked at Maryhill for several years. They are members of St. James Catholic Church. The couple currently reside in Colonial Nursing Home in Marksville.



CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL OF NEW ORLEANS (CCRNO) ATTENDEES. "All Beautiful Is The King's Daughter" was the theme and message of the CCRNO sponsored women's retreat held in Lafayette Jan. 29-31. Dr. Mary Healey and Fr. Richard McAlear, OMI were the principal speakers. Those who attended from the Diocese of Alexandria are (from left) Eve James, Mary Wilson and Joan Gahagan. The Divine Mercy painting in the background, done by a Polish artist, was a gift to CCRNO from Sr. Briege McKenna.

Gay ministry

Continued from pg 2

in a pastoral context," Father Bochanski said. "For a person experiencing same-sex attraction who comes to the realization that they need to live a chaste life, to do that in the world can be very lonely and overwhelming at times, and we try to accompany them through that and try to support them by listening, by sharing experiences and by giving spiritual direction and offering the sacraments."

Father Bochanski suggested the appeal of Courage might correspond with possible rising numbers of people experiencing same-sex attraction in "highly sexualized" cultures also marked by high rates of family breakdown.

"I think it is clear that this is a bigger part of the conversation in the culture these days, so the question is, 'Are people just talking about it more or are more people experiencing a same-sex attraction?'" he said.

"Those figures are hard to come by in terms of percentage of the population, but it's not surprising that -- as we live in a culture that's marked more and more by broken families, by absent fathers, by parents who have children without being married, and so there is little stability in some homes these days -- that these family dynamics have a deep impact on a child's sense of being safe, being loved, of having a permanent connection of belonging and being affirmed," he said.

"In my experience, all these things factor in when someone is disposed to develop a same-sex attraction," he continued. "The breakdown of the family generally can certainly be connected to a higher prevalence of people experiencing those attractions."

Many of those who approached the church were "hurting" or were wary that they would be accepted by parishes, said Father Bochanski.

"It is the part of my ministry where I feel most fatherly," he said. "To be asked to walk this path with them is a great privilege for me."



**Diocese of Baton Rouge
Catholic Schools Office
Principal Opening
2016-17 School Year**

Redemptorist/St. Gerard Catholic School
Baton Rouge, LA

The Diocese of Baton Rouge has thirty schools in eight civil parishes, with strong Catholic identity the focus in all schools. The district is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and standardized test scores are above state and national averages.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge
*Evangelize Hearts, Educate Minds, Encourage Talent
and Embrace the Future*

Redemptorist/St. Gerard School provides Catholic formation to students in Grades PK4 - 8 and strives to enhance spirituality, pursue academic excellence, and create caring community. With a student population of approximately 200, of which 85% are enrolled through the Louisiana State Scholarship Program, the school community focuses on creating an educational atmosphere which encourages and challenges students to develop their fullest potential.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Practicing Catholic Required
2. Minimum of 5 years of Experience in Catholic Schools Preferred
3. Demonstrated Leadership Ability, Preferably in Catholic Education
4. Must meet LA State Dept. of Education Requirements as Non-Public Administrator
5. Must be Available on or before July 1, 2016

Mail resume, copies of all college transcript(s) showing degrees, and three letters of recommendation to: Redemptorist/St. Gerard School Principal Search
Catholic Schools Office
P.O. Box 2028
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

Deadline for application: March 15, 2016

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



**Diocese of Baton Rouge
Catholic Schools Office
Principal Opening
2016-17 School Year**

Ascension Catholic School
Donaldsonville, LA

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Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge
*Evangelize Hearts, Educate Minds, Encourage Talent
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Ascension Catholic was founded in 1842 and currently serves 516 students in Grades PK - 12. With 40 professional staff members, the school has a mission of teaching the Catholic faith and being responsive to the needs of the day. The school recently completed the self-study process for re-accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (AdvancED).

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Practicing Catholic Required
2. Minimum of 5 years of Experience in Catholic Schools Preferred
3. Demonstrated Leadership Ability, Preferably in Catholic Education
4. Must meet LA State Dept. of Education Requirements as Non-Public Administrator
5. Must be Available on or before July 1, 2016

Mail resume, copies of all college transcript(s) showing degrees, and three letters of recommendation to: Ascension Catholic Principal Search
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Deadline for application: February 29, 2016

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Menard's new science lab dedicated to Sister C.C. Vanderlick

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

Even though Sister Cecile Claire Vanderlick, CDP could not attend the dedication of the new Menard science lab named in her honor, she could see and talk to everyone there through Skype.

A room full of about 75 family members, friends, teachers, and former students, filled the newly renovated science lab Jan. 31 and watched as Father Chad Partain, Menard's president, blessed and dedicated the new lab to Sister "C.C." as she was affectionally called.

Sister C.C. taught chemistry at Menard for more than 40 years

and was admired and respected by her students, many of whom went on to become doctors, nurses, and other medical professions.

More than 450 miles away at the CDP Convent's McCullough Hall, where Sister C.C. and her real-life sister, Sister Virginia Lee Vanderlick currently live, another crowd of almost 30 Divine Providence Sisters gathered in the dining room to watch Sister C.C. interact with the dedication ceremony and reception.

"It was wonderful to see everything happening right there on the TV screen in front of me," said Sister C.C. "I felt like I was there."

One by one, family members

and friends approached the TV monitor to greet Sister C.C. and offer her congratulations.

She visited with her nieces and nephews, (now married and with small children) that she has not seen in several years. Mayor Jaques Roy, one of her former students, had a long chat with his favorite science teacher. Many of the financial backers of the renovation project were also there to see the fruit of their efforts.

The new lab was a collaborative project of the Menard PTC (Parent Teacher Club) and Menard supporters.

Major donors gave \$2,000 for each lab station and others gave \$250 to purchase a spot on

a large permanent Elements Chart located in the hallway. A plaque with the donor's name on it is placed on each lab station.

"Zoom, zoom, baby," a favorite phrase of Sister C.C.'s that she used often in the classroom, was printed on some of the lab station plaques. The phrase indicated her intense approach to teaching which basically meant

-- "Pay attention and let's learn this quick! We've got a lot of information to cover today!"

The new science lab is used by all students in grades 7-12, and includes 26 new desk stations, all new science equipment, and new chemicals for experiments. It was the first time the science lab had been updated in 48 years (since the school was built in 1967.)



SISTERS CC AND V. LEE VANDERLICK watch the entire Science Lab dedication from the dining room at McCullough Hall at the convent of the Sisters of Divine Providence in San Antonio, Texas.

They were thrilled to visit with friends and family member via Skype. (at right) The sisters visit with their niece Julie Vanderlick Harrison, her husband Josh and their son, Flynn.



SCIENCE LAB DEDICATION. Father Chad Partain, president of the Holy Savior Menard, blesses and dedicates the new Sister C.C. Vanderlick Science lab.



SKYPING WITH SISTER C.C. Family members, friends, alumni, teachers, and former students watch the TV screen that connected them with Sister Cecile Claire Vanderlick through Skype. Even though Sister C.C. could not attend the dedication of the science lab dedicated in her honor, she "felt like she was there" through the technology of Skype.

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St. Joseph offers new Certified Nurse Assistant program

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

Three seniors at St. Joseph Catholic School Plaquemine will receive more than just a diploma when they graduate from high school this spring.

Seniors

a CNA certificate (Certified Nurse Assistant) which will qualify them to work as a CNA in most medical facilities.

The three seniors will be the first graduates of the new CNA program, which they participated in concurrently with their regular high school courses. The CNA courses are offered during the last two hours of each school day.

Under the direction of Lisa Lutz, a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and Bonnie Mayeaux (RN), the program offers students 80 hours of classroom instruction and 80 hours of clinicals.

"The students just completed



CNA STUDENTS AT ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL. Seniors

are the first students to participate in the new CNA program (Certified Nurse Assistant) at St. Joseph School in Plaquemine. The new program offers 80 hours of classroom instruction and 80 hours of clinicals in order to earn a CNA certificate.

the 80 hours of classroom instruction last semester," said Lutz.

"This semester they are starting clinicals at Avoyelles Nursing

Manor."

According to Lutz, the students learned basic nursing training like how to take vital signs (blood pressure, temperature, and pulse), how to make a bed, transport a patient, and many other skills.

After the classroom instruction, clinicals will give the students the opportunity to practice the skills in a real nursing home environment under supervision.

"The three students we had in the program this year were awesome," said Lutz. "They have done a great job and are so excited to begin clinicals."

One of the biggest advantages of this type of program is to give students a "foot in the door" of what the nursing profession is like.

"All three students have expressed interest in pursuing a career in some level of the nursing profession," she said.

The program was the brainchild of Lutz who said she always

dreamed of having this type of program available to students at St. Joseph School.

"Mr. (Brian) Runyan, St. Joseph principal, called me last year and said that funding for the program had come through and that we could start the program this fall," she said.

Lutz said that the students are responsible for purchasing their own uniform, stethoscope, thermometer, and other basic supplies, but the course fees and books are paid for by generous local supporters.

"We were very excited to finally get this program off the ground this fall and to offer it to the students at St. Joseph," said Runyan. "I am grateful to Mrs. Lutz and Mrs. Mayeaux and all of the supporters who made this all possible. It's a great program for our students."

Next year's program already has five students enrolled and is expected to have a few more before school starts next year.

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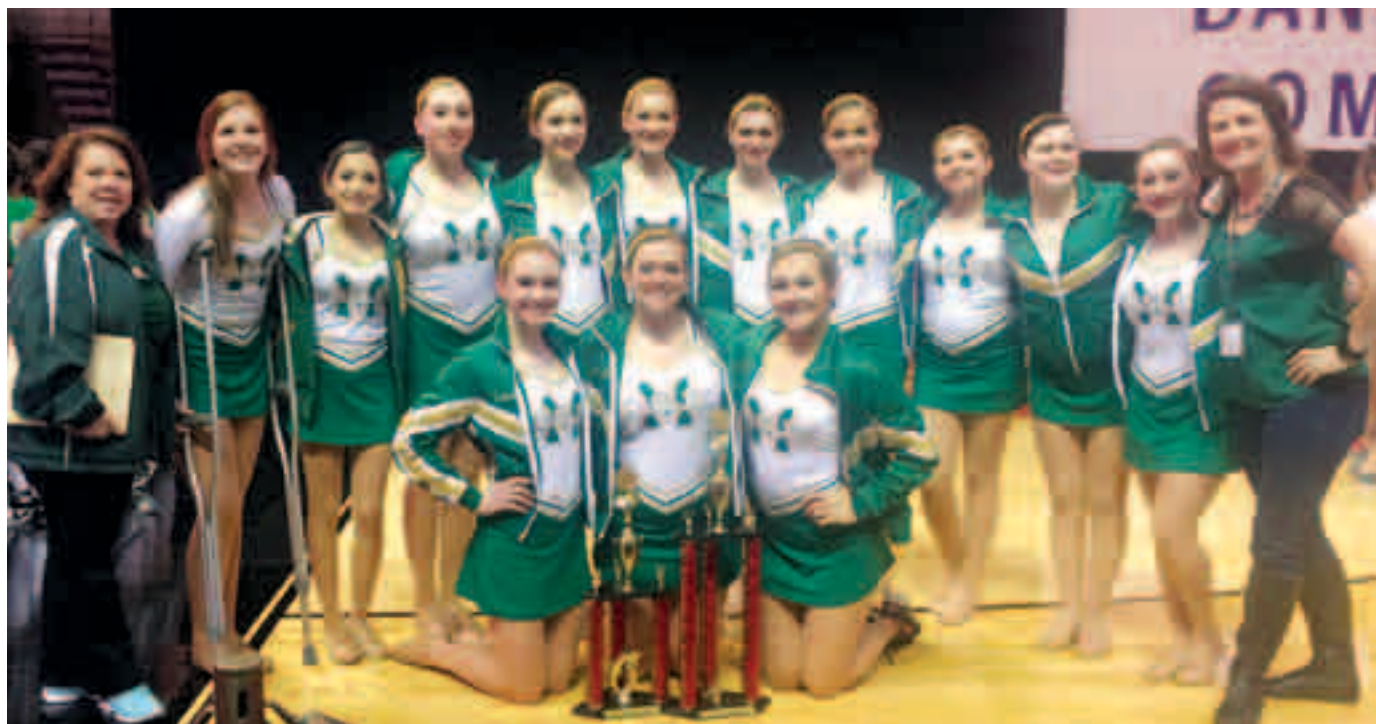
UNDEFEATED: ST. MARY'S (COTTONPORT) GIRLS-A BASKETBALL TEAM. The A-Girls basketball team from St. Mary's Assumption School in Cottonport were undefeated for the 2015-16 basketball season, earning them the title "Catholic League Champions" (out of all of the Catholic schools in the parish).



UNDEFEATED: ST. MARY'S (COTTONPORT) BOYS-B BASKETBALL TEAM. The B-Boys basketball team from St. Mary's Assumption School in Cottonport were undefeated for the 2015-16 basketball season, earning them the title "Catholic League Champions" (out of all of the Catholic schools in the parish).

HOLY SAVIOR MENARD GOLDEN EAGLETES.

The Holy Savior Menard Golden Eaglettes competed at the 2016 Louisiana Dance and Drill team Competition in Division 1 (for teams dancing less than 13) in Jazz, Pom, and Kick. The girls placed 2nd Overall in Division 1 and placed 5th Overall in all of the divisions. The Golden Eaglettes also performed at halftime at the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans on New Year's Day. An invitation to perform at the Sugar Bowl is an honor reserved only for the most talented student performers from across the nation. After travelling to New Orleans Dec. 29, they rehearsed with nationally acclaimed choreographer, Cris Judd.



ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL 8TH GRADE BASKETBALL PLAYERS. St. Anthony School (Bunkie) 8th graders played their last basketball game for the season on Dec. 14, 2015. After the game they received gifts.



ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL 8TH GRADE CHEERLEADERS received flowers after cheering at their last basketball game on Dec. 14, 2015.



NEW FITNESS CIRCUIT FOR SACRED HEART SCHOOL. Sister Sandra (principal of Sacred Heart School in Moreauville) Norrworthy’s vision of students getting fit at school became a reality Jan. 16 when new playground equipment arrived and was assembled on the playground. The new structure, called Fitness Circuit, is equipped with all sorts of fitness workout stations including a chain ladder, swing rings, a wiggle walk, and a climbing wall. Under the direction of assistant principal Darcy Bordelon and her husband Tim, fundraising for the playground project began before Christmas with the selling of wrapping paper, selling gifts at Santa’s Shop, and most recently, hosting a chicken dinner with the help of Sacred Heart’s Knights of Columbus. Cakes were also sold by SHS’s Jr. Beta Club, Columbian Squires Club, and Children of Mary Club. Special thanks to all of our students, parents, faculty, staff, and supporters of SHS for helping with this special project.

Three students named District Students of the Year for non-public schools

The Diocese of Alexandria’s Catholic Schools Office has announced the names of the three students who were chosen by a panel of judges as “District Students of the Year” for non-public schools.

The winners are:
5th grade winner from Our Lady of Prompt Succor School;
8th grade winner from Holy Savior Menard;
and
12th grade winner from Old Bethel Christian Academy.

The three students will now advance to the regional level, which will be held Feb. 22 in Baton Rouge.



Our Lady of Prompt Succor

Thomas Roque, superintendent of Catholic Schools said he was



Holy Savior Menard

impressed by the caliber of students who entered the contest.



Old Bethel Christian Academy

“The grade point averages, the involvement in school, sports,

civic and church organizations, and the overall accomplishments of all of the students who entered this competition is very, very impressive,” he said.

5th Grade Winners

Tate Benjamin Deshotels, Sacred Heart School in Moreauville, Molly Marie Roy, St. Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie, Lawson Marchand, St. Mary’s Assumption, Daisy Nicole Duke, Old Bethel Christian Academy, Noah Nabil Gad, Alex hool, and Our Lady of Prompt Succor School.

8th Grade Winners

Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Jade Mariah Ritchie of Old Bethel Christian Academy, Macie Renee Bernard, Sacred Heart School in Moreauville, Camryn Nicole Brown, St. Anthony of Padua School in Bunkie, Hailey Alyssa Tigner of St. Mary’s Assumption School in Cottonport, and Anderson Riddick DeWitt of Alexandria Country Day School.

12th Grade Winners

Sarah Catherine LaBorde, Holy Savior Menard Central High School, of Old Bethel Christian Academy, Tiona A. Harris of Family Community Christian School, and Alexis Renee Barker of St. Joseph Elementary and High School in Plaquemine.

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ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL CELEBRATES MARDI GRAS. The students at St. Frances Cabrini School in Alexandria celebrated Mardi Gras Feb. 5 with a Pre-K and Kindergarten parade, followed by a Courir de Mardi Gras (running of the chicken), a Mardi Gras tradition from South Louisiana.

Stranded March for Life pilgrims celebrate Mass on snow altar

By Sean Gallagher
Catholic News Service

(CNS)--When Ann Collins saw how the youths and other adult chaperones from the Indianapolis Archdiocese lived out their Catholic faith and pro-life beliefs while stranded on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, she was filled with hope.

"It was beautiful," she said. "It made me very hopeful for the future. We have great Catholic teens. There is hope for the Catholic Church to grow. We have young adults right here who are going to carry on the mission."

Like dozens of other groups from several U.S. dioceses, pilgrims from across central and southern Indiana were returning home by bus from the annual March for Life in Washington when a massive blizzard struck the mid-Atlantic region.

Two groups from the Indianapolis Archdiocese made the trip and the organizers had been following weather forecasts earlier in the day and cut short their stay in Washington by a few hours, thinking they would still get on the road ahead of the blizzard.

Instead, they were stopped on the turnpike when traffic accidents happened ahead of them around 9 p.m. Jan. 22. Snowfall increased after the accidents, with up to three feet accumulating around the buses and other stranded vehicles.

They ended up spending nearly 24 hours on the turnpike.

"Our students were looking out the windows, and when they would see a car's headlights go out in the middle of the night, they would walk to the front of the bus and say, 'We have heat and they keep turning their car off. Can we go out and give them our blankets?'" recalled Collins, administrator of youth ministry at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. "They were kind. They knew that they were marching for life."

"It was all life -- whether you were an unborn baby or a stranded motorist," she said. "Their purpose was to protect life. And they did. They were concerned about everyone around them."

On their buses, they had what they needed to stay safe -- enough fuel to stay warm, bathrooms and



OUTDOOR MASS FOR STRANDED PILGRIMS. Busloads of pro-life activists from the Midwest who participated in the March for Life in Washington, D.C. were stranded for nearly a full day on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. During the difficult time, pilgrims joined together to build an altar made of snow and several Catholic priests celebrated Mass outside with the pilgrims.

plenty of food and water.

Their faith soon moved them to share what they had with people in cars around them who didn't have those resources.

Hannah Cooke, a junior at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis and a member of Christ the King Parish, described how the 38 other teens and 10 adult chaperones traveling

with her kept a positive attitude through the nearly 24 hours they spent on the turnpike.

"It brought us a lot closer together," Cooke said. "None of us expected this to happen. It showed us that you have to have a positive outlook. If you don't, you're going to get depressed."

One key factor that kept the group optimistic was their faith.

"We said a lot of prayers," Cooke said. "In the end, all you have left is to rely on God. So that's what we did, and it brought our faith together, too."

Father Shaun Whittington, pastor of St. Nicholas and St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, was impressed by the March for Life participants.

"We were all frustrated," he

said. "But nobody got beyond the normal sense of 'Why aren't we going?' People patiently accepted it. They prayed and just waited it out. They got into the spirit that it was beyond their control."

Adult men among the chaperones also helped get their buses and others moving again by shoveling away snow with anything they could find, including some of the pro-life signs the group had used in the march.

"The men in our group freed about eight buses," said Father Whittington. "Then we were able to start going, and other buses came in behind us."

The two groups from the Indianapolis Archdiocese did not get underway again until the night of Jan. 23. They both arrived home on the morning of Jan. 24.

Colleen Dietz, a St. Nicholas parishioner and a junior at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg, said her faith helped her cope with the stress of being stuck on the turnpike.

"It was important for us to remember that we're standing up for life," she said. "We're trying to get an end to abortion. And that comes with a consequence sometimes. This time, we were willing to sit through (being stranded), and we all made it out all right. We trusted in God, and everything was OK."

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March for Life 2016: one for the history books

Hundreds of local students brave winter storm Jonas to show support for life

By Jeannie Petrus
CT editor

Phone calls and texts from worried parents back home began to flood the phones of two groups of students from the diocese who travelled to Washington D.C. Jan. 26-30 for the 43rd annual March for Life.

The concern was understandable.

A group of 50 (44 students and six adults) from St. Mary's School in Natchitoches and another group of 40 (36 students and four adults) from Holy Savior Menard High School in Alexandria had been in D.C. a few days before the march, visiting the usual Washington landmarks, when weather reports suddenly warned of a dangerous winter storm approaching the East Coast.

Winter Storm Jonas, a historic blizzard storm threatening to dump 2-3 feet of snow on the Capitol city, was destined to reach the D.C. area about the same time as the March for Life. For the first time in history, Washington D.C. was ordered to "shut down."

But while family and friends back home were concerned if the students were going to come home early, if they were dressed warmly enough, if they were going to have a safe place to eat and sleep. . . .



ARMED WITH PRO-LIFE SIGNS, the St. Mary's School (Natchitoches) student group and chaperones are bundled up and prepared to brave the approaching winter storm predicted to hit Washington, D. C. during the same time the annual National March for Life was scheduled to begin. (Photo courtesy of St. Mary's School)

The two student groups put their trust in God.

"Mr. Fryer (John Fryer, religion teacher at Menard) and I talked about coming home early like some of the other student groups from Louisiana did," said

Father Taylor Reynolds, chaplain at Menard. "But we decided to put our trust in God and pray that He protect us. The students came here on a mission to participate in the National March for Life, and that's what we were going to do."

Earlier that week

The week started out like any other tourist trip to Washington D.C. -- visits to Arlington Cemetery, Lincoln Memorial, Holocaust Museum, Smithsonian, etc.

But for the Catholic students

on a pro-life pilgrimage, other sites to visit were added including the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Franciscan Monastery, the Lourdes Grotto at Mt. St. Mary's, and the Dominican House of Studies, where the Menard group visited with Brother Louis Bertrand, (also known as Adam Lemoine, a former seminarian originally from our diocese. He is expected to be ordained a priest in May 2016.)

"I never realized how many religious sites were located in Washington, D.C.," said one Menard student.

Day of the March

On the day of the march, the students gathered in the hotel lobby early in the morning to review safety and emergency protocol in the event of a disaster or crisis.

Students were bundled from head to toe with layers of clothing. St. Mary's blue knitted caps with SM initials and Menard's green caps with *Menard* on them, easily identified the groups of students.

Armed with hand-warmers generously distributed by chaperones, the students were finally ready to board the bus that would lead them to the steps of the nation's Capitol.

Continued on pg. 16

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A GROUP OF MENARD STUDENTS gathered on the steps of the Jefferson Memorial after 36 inches of snow fell in Washington D.C.

March for Life

Continued from pg. 15

Weather reports

"We were aware of the weather reports and the possible severity of the storm, but that didn't seem to dampen the spirits of the students," said Tara Whitehead, a St. Mary's religion teacher and one of the chaperones.

At noon, the groups began getting in line behind the March for Life banners. At 1 p.m. the March started . . . and so did the snow.

"It was light at first, and added to the excitement of the rally," said Whitehead. "The more it snowed and the colder it got, the louder our students chanted 'We Are... Pro-Life! I was so proud of them!'"

enthusiastic crowd.

By 2:30 it was over and the crowd was ordered to get home or to safety as quickly as possible.

Without hesitation, the student groups boarded the buses and prayed for a safe trip back to the hotel.

Both the Menard and St. Mary's groups arrived at the hotel safely at the hotel at 3 p.m..

As soon as the bus left the hotel and drove away, the storm began to pick up intensity.

Like a hurricane

"I lived in Ohio for four years while I was in seminary," said Father Taylor. "So I know a little bit about winter storms, but this was different. It was a lot like a hurricane or a bad thunderstorm except that it was snow, not rain. It was snowing and blowing so hard, you couldn't see a thing outside."

The students watched from their hotel windows as they saw the visibility of the Washington skyline drop to a total "whiteout."

Winter storm Jonas swept through the Washington D.C. area for the next 24 hours dumping 2-3 feet of snow. Everyone was warned to stay inside and not to go out for any reason for fear that they could get lost in the blinding blizzard or freeze in the frigid temperatures.

Eerie feeling

"I've never known Washington to 'shut down,'" said Mrs. Jessica Sanders, a Menard religion teacher and chaperone. "But immediately after the March for Life, everything (including the Supreme Court) in Washington shut down."

"There was no one on the streets, no lights in the buildings,

nothing. It was kind of eerie, but also very ironic -- The Supreme Court was shut down after the National March for Life."

The experience begins

It wasn't until after the march, that the total experience of the March for Life began said Whitehead.

As it turned out, most of the student groups there for the march, were all from Louisiana. In addition to St. Mary's and Holy Savior Menard, there were also students from Lafayette (St. Thomas More and Teurlings Catholic), New Orleans and Baton Rouge (who left early before the storm) and two girls from Loyola.

Since they knew everyone would be snow-bound for a few days, the chaperones from both schools (St. Mary's and Menard)

agreed to work together and began planning joint events for all of the student groups.

The hotel provided them with a large conference room where they played games, had a talent show and visited with each other.

They also had daily Mass, Praise and Worship, Adoration, and reflection time.

"I would say the best part of the whole experience was the reflection time," said Whitehead. "Because we had nowhere to go and nothing but time on our hands, we used the time to let the students talk about the experience."

president of the Pro-Life Club and the FCA at St. Mary's, led the student reflection time and shared his view of the experience. It wasn't long before each of the students were ea-



ST. MARY'S WINS SNOW MASCOT CONTEST. A group of St. Mary's students gather around their winning snow creation. Most of the student groups staying in the hotel with St. Mary's were all from Louisiana, including the Holy Savior Menard student group. The Louisiana groups enjoyed doing things together like this snow mascot contest.



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THE HOLY SAVIOR MENARD STUDENT GROUP on the steps of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

ger to ask questions and to share their experience and impressions.

"It was the perfect opportunity for the students to digest what they had seen, heard and witnessed at the march while it was still fresh in their minds," said Whitehead.

What the students did see at the march were explicit videos of actual abortions showing on large jumbotrons along the march. They saw few pro-choice people except for the signs that read: "Keep your rosaries off my ovaries."

But mostly they saw hundreds of thousands of young pro-choice students carrying signs and determined to end abortion in America during their lifetime.

Playing in the snow

When the storm passed and people were allowed to go outside again, the students went out to play in the snow. There were snowball fights, a snow mascot contest, and lots of snow angels made on the ground.

In the snow mascot contest, each of groups finished their cre-

ation with a cross somewhere in the design. Unfortunately, someone from the apartment complex, across the street from the hotel came by and said the crosses "offended" them and knocked down all of the crosses.

"We told the students to ignore their actions, but to pray for the conversion of their soul," said Sanders. "But I could tell it bothered some of the students that people could be so strong in their opinions against Christians."

Returning home

Even though news reports of local students being "stranded" in Washington D.C. because of the storm, the students from Central Louisiana were having a blast. Whitehead said the hotel staff and accommodations were great.

"We had a warm hotel, lots of restaurants in the hotel, a Starbucks in the hotel mall, a heated pool and a weight room," said Whitehead. "We all felt very safe and comfortable throughout the experience."

As reports of flights resuming at the airport began, the stu-

dents began packing and preparing for the trip home.

Throughout their extended time in the hotel, they noticed an elderly couple (maybe in their late 80s or 90s) who smiled at them often and even attended Mass with them. The devoted husband

lovingly pushed his wife around in her wheelchair wherever they went.

On one of the last nights in D.C., the students celebrated Mass in the conference room. Once again the elderly couple attended the Mass and received

Communion. At the end of the Mass, the husband turned to the group of young people gathered in the room and said,

"YOU ARE the Pro-Life Generation. Keep up the fight."

It's a good guess that these pro-life students will.



LSU-A DUO IN WASHINGTON. Lynn Ray (left), coordinator of Campus Ministries for the Diocese of Alexandria, and Amelia Bertran, a student at Louisiana State University at Alexandria, attended the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering for Restorative Justice in Washington, D.C. with plans to attend the National March for Life that weekend. It was just the two of them, but they too, braved the cold and threatening winter storm to march in the pro-life rally. "We would not have missed it for anything," said Lynn.



a student at St. Mary's School, leads the reflection time with other Louisiana students groups at the hotel where they stayed. Unable to go outside for a few days, the reflection time was a great opportunity to reflect on their experiences with the March.

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Lenten Holy Hour of Mercy

In honor of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral will celebrate a Holy Hour of Mercy, beginning Wednesday, February 17, and every Wednesday through March 9 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The Holy Hour will begin with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Scripture readings, a time for silent prayer, the Litany of Divine Mercy, the Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction.

We hope that you can take some time out to join us in thanking God for his mercy towards us and praying that His mercy be poured out upon us and on the whole world.

-- Fr. James Ferguson, Rector
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral

Lenten Fish Fries

• **St. Francis Xavier Cathedral:** KC Council 3200 will serve fish dinners at SFX Cathedral from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. on each Friday during Lent through Friday, March 19. Price is \$6 a plate, dine-in or take-out. Menu includes fish, french fries, hush puppies, and coleslaw. (No fish fry on Good Friday.)

• **St. Rita Church:** KC Council #1134 will serve fish dinners on Feb. 19, 26, and March 4, 11, and 18, from 5 - 7 p.m. in the St. Rita Catholic Church Holy Family Center in Alexandria. \$7 a plate.

Penance Services

• Wednesday, **March 2** -- 7:00 p.m., St. Rita Church, Alexandria (during the scheduled Lenten Mission)

• Thursday, **March 10** -- 6:30 p.m., Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria (last night of the three-day Lenten Mission)

• Wednesday, **March 16** -- 5:30 p.m., St. Francis Xavier Cathedral

• Monday, **March 21** -- 6:00 p.m., Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth

"The Confessional Light is On"

• **Every Monday** in Lent -- 5:30 p.m. until, St. Anthony of Padua in Bunkie

• **Every Tuesday** in Lent -- 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches

• **Every Tuesday in Lent** -- 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Marksville

Lenten Missions

• **Every Thursday in Lent** -- Father Chad Partain will offer a Lenten Reflection Series every Thursday in Lent beginning Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. in the Cabrini School Library.

• **Feb. 23-25** -- A Lenten Mission will be presented by Father Bruce Cibley, from the Diocese of Lafayette at 6 p.m. nightly at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Natchitoches. Fr. Cibley will speak on Blessed Mother Teresa of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) and St. Therese of Lisieux (The Little Flower).

• **Feb. 29- March 3** -- A Lenten Mission will be presented on Monday, Feb. 29; Tuesday, March 1; Wednesday, March 2; and Thursday, March 3 from 7 - 8 p.m. at St.

Rita Catholic Church in Alexandria. The Wednesday night mission will include the parish Penance Service.

• **March 8-10** -- OLPS - Alexandria will present a Lenten Mission March 8-10 at 6:30 p.m. nightly. Jimmy Seghers, a Catholic apologist from Covington, will be the presenter. Topics are Tuesday, March 8: *"The Mass: Understanding and Living It"* Wednesday, March 9: *"The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ"* The last night of the mission will be the parish Penance Service.

• **March 19** -- Men's Lenten Retreat, titled *The Passion of Christ*, will be held Saturday, March 19 from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the St. Rita Holy Family Center in Alexandria.

Stations of the Cross

Tuesdays

6:00 p.m. -- St. Patrick Church, Montgomery

Wednesdays

4:00 p.m. -- Immaculate Conception Church, Dupont

6:30 p.m. -- St. Peter Church, Elmer

Thursdays

1:05 p.m. -- Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria

Fridays

8:00 a.m. -- St. Francis de Sales Church, Echo

9:00 a.m. -- Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville

10:00 a.m. -- St. Alphonsus Church, Hessmer

12:05 p.m. -- St. Joseph Church, Marksville

2:00 p.m. -- St. Rita Church, Alexandria

5:00 p.m. -- St. Genevieve Church, Brouillette

5:00 p.m. -- St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie

5:15 p.m. -- MB of Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches

5:30 p.m. -- St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria

5:30 p.m. -- St. Rita Church, Alexandria

5:30 p.m. -- St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria

5:30 p.m. -- St. Louis Church, Glenmora

5:30 p.m. -- St. Joseph Church, Colfax

5:30 p.m. -- St. Joseph Church, Cheneyville; Mass at 6 p.m.

5:30 p.m. -- St. Mary's Assumption Church, Cottonport (with Adoration)

5:30 p.m. -- St. Alphonsus, Hessmer

5:30 p.m. -- St. Patrick Church, Ferriday

5:30 p.m. -- St. Michael the Archangel Church, Leesville

5:30 p.m. -- St. Joseph Church, Marksville (in the Prayer Garden, weather permitting)

6:00 p.m. -- Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria

6:00 p.m. -- St. Juliana, Alexandria (Mass is at 5:30 p.m.)

6:00 p.m. -- Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth

6:00 p.m. -- St. Augustine Church, Isle Brevelle

6:00 p.m. -- Immaculate Conception Church, Dupont

6:00 p.m. -- Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville

6:30 p.m. -- Sts. Francis and Anne Church, Kolin

* Times are subject to change.

** For an updated list of all Lenten schedules and services, go to the diocesan website: www.diocesealex.org

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Throughout the three-day conference, keynote speaker Nic Frank will talk about the "darkness" in our lives and how experiencing the "light" of Christ can bring hope and peace into our lives.

Workshop speakers on Saturday are Father John O'Brien (*Divine Mercy and its Incredible Story*); Deacon John Whitehead (*How to Integrate the Spiritual*

and Corporal Works of Mercy into your Every Day Life); and Holly Carbo, (*How to Raise Your Kids Catholic*).

The Ministry Team includes Bishop Ronald Herzog and Fr. Marc Noel, liturgy; Paul Hood, host; and Nick Ducote, worship leader.

The cost for the entire weekend is \$55 per person up to Feb. 22; \$65 after Feb. 22 or \$30 for attending Saturday only.

For more information or to receive a conference brochure, go to www.diocesealex.org/crossroadsconference, or email lnoe1@diocesealex.org, or call 318-445-6424, ext 207.

Timeless: Bible Conference March 19 • St. Francis Xavier Cathedral

If you are hungry to learn more about your Catholic faith and the Bible, the annual Bible Conference is for you.

Timeless: Annual Bible Conference will be held Saturday, March 19, at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

This 1-day conference will consist of engaging presentations by Dr. Andrew Swafford on the first five books of the Old Testament (Pentateuch) and the Gospel of Matthew.

The St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology, where Dr. Swafford is a Senior Fellow, is the center founded by Dr. Scott Hahn.

Dr. Swafford is an assis-

tant professor of Theology at Benedictine College where he regularly teaches courses on the Pentateuch, Wisdom Literature, Prophets, Synoptic Gospels, and Christian Moral Life. He is the author of numerous publications and a frequent speaker on Spirit Catholic Radio and EWTN.

The cost for the 1-day conference is \$25 per person. Lunch is included and the day will end at 3 p.m., with the option to attend the 4 p.m. Vigil Mass at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Space is limited, so please register by March 11. For more information call 318-445-6424 ext. 251 or emccullough@diocesealex.org



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Risen: the Resurrection from a skeptic's point of view

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) -- Hollywood is no stranger to movies depicting the life and death of Christ, trying to present Jesus from the perspective of the Gospels, which are the written accounts of Jesus' life and ministry from those closest to him.

Joseph Fiennes, the actor starring in "Risen," said his new project seeks to illustrate the story of Christ's death and resurrection from a unique perspective.

"We're seeing this narrative play out, which is dear to millions of us and means so much, through the eyes of a skeptic, through the eyes of a nonbeliever," Fiennes told Catholic News Service Feb. 4. The film will be released Feb. 19.

Fiennes plays Clavius, a Roman tribune charged by Pontius Pilate to investigate the events following Christ's death. His character, he said, begins as an enemy "who is there to put down any zealot insurrections; so from his point of view, Yeshua (Jesus) is just another terrorist."

The film, Fiennes said, departs from other depictions by picking up where most movies leave off: the crucifixion. Additionally, Clavius sees Jesus' execution as acceptable punishment for threatening the established order. "For (Clavius), the crucifixion is just another day at the office, so he's deeply conditioned to think in one way," he said.

The 45-year-old British ac-



POPE FRANCIS GREETES ACTOR JOSEPH FIENNES, his wife Maria Dolores Dieguez, and their two daughters at the general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Feb. 3. Fiennes stars in the new movie, "Risen," which looks at the story of Jesus' resurrection "through the eyes of a nonbeliever." (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

tor told CNS that a pivotal scene, one in which Clavius meets Jesus, was akin to his brief encounter with Pope Francis at the general audience Feb. 3.

"To tell you the truth, I had so many questions and when he looked me in the eye, the conversation seemed pointless," Fiennes recalled. "It was a connection beyond conversation, he's deeply connected as a spiritual being and so talking seems like a waste of time, it seemed shallow. And it's the same with the character meeting Christ, as if to say, 'This is enough.'"

Clavius' initial doubts, Fiennes said, speaks to the nature of faith "whether you are an absolute, ardent believer or an atheist." The main character's knowledge and intellect can't grasp what he has witnessed.

"He can't reduce the noise and tune into the greater consciousness, and a lot of us suffer from that," Fiennes said. "I think if there is any takeaway from this movie, that might be a big one."

To prepare for the scene in which Jesus, played by actor Cliff Curtis, and Clavius meet, Curtis took a 30-day vow of silence, Fi-

Coming to theatres Feb. 19

ennes said. Saving their first moment of speaking to each other for that scene, he said, allowed them to imbue it "with a sense of respect toward what that moment would mean for those two characters."

"That's our little way of trying to prepare for that moment. We'll never get it right, we'll never get the huge monumental essence of it, but we try to get a thread of it," he said.

The story of "Risen," he added, is not meant to preach or to divide those who believe and those who don't but rather unite them "in the experience."

"I hope that a believer and a nonbeliever, an agnostic and an atheist can all sit in the auditorium together in a wonderful, positive environment and enjoy the narrative," Fiennes said.



JOSEPH FIENNES stars in a scene from the movie "Risen." Fiennes said his new project seeks to illustrate the story of Christ's death and resurrection from a unique perspective. (CNS photo/Columbia)



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Two great movies about true stories of true heroes

The Finest Hours

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- The remarkable true story of the most daring small boat rescue mission in Coast Guard history comes to the big screen in "The Finest Hours" (Disney).

In February 1952, a powerful Nor'easter struck the Massachusetts coast, pummeling shoreline towns and wreaking havoc on ships caught in its deadly path. Among these were two oil tankers bound for Boston, the S.S. Mercer and the S.S. Pendleton.

Beset by 60-foot waves and hurricane-force winds, both vessels broke apart. The Mercer, its bow intact, radioed for assistance and was the focus of a major rescue operation.

The Pendleton was not so lucky. The bow and its radio sunk, stranding 36 sailors in the stern, bobbing like a cork in the mighty sea. With no SOS, who would come to their aid?

By chance, the Pendleton pops up on radar at the Coast Guard station in Chatham, headed by Warrant Officer Daniel Cluff (Eric Bana). Despite extreme conditions, he orders Boatswains Mate 1st Class Bernie Webber (Chris Pine) to muster three men and set out in a wooden 36-foot lifeboat, certainly no match for the storm conditions.

Duty and honor prevail, as Seamen Richard Livesey (Ben Foster), Andrew Fitzgerald (Kyle Gallner), and Ervin Maske (John Magaro) volunteer for duty.

Fellow officers try to dissuade Webber, calling the rescue a suicide mission. Webber's newly minted fiancée, Miriam (Holliday Grainger), is frantic with worry, compounded by the fact that she is terrified of the water (then why marry a sailor, one wonders?).

"In the Coast Guard they say, 'You gotta go out,'" Webber reminds his crew. "They don't say, 'You gotta come back in.'"

As the lifeboat sets out, a



THE FINEST HOUR. Casey Affleck and Michael Raymond-James star in "The Finest Hours," the remarkable true story of the most daring small boat rescue mission in Coast Guard history. (CNS photo/Disney)

David in search of a Goliath, disaster strikes with the first wave.

The craft nearly capsizes, and the onboard compass is lost.

With no navigation aid, Webber must pilot in the blind, relying on faith, instinct and a whole lotta luck to find the wreck.

Meanwhile, aboard the Pendleton, engineer Ray Sybert (Casey Affleck) takes command of the crisis situation. The stern section is slowly sinking, so the survivors must improvise a way to buy precious time while they steer the stern toward land.

"The Finest Hours" is old-fashioned moviemaking on a grand scale. Director Craig Gillespie ("Million Dollar Arm"), working from the 2009 novel by Michael J. Tougias and Casey Sherman, strikes the right balance between striking renderings of Mother Nature's fury (even more impressive than 2000's "The Perfect Storm"), and quieter moments, conveying fear and dread among the rescuers and the rescued.

Happily, Gillespie makes time to show the close-knit community joining in prayer, and an individual fingering a rosary.

Rated PG-13.

13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

(CNS) -- Some might fear, simply from reading its title, that "13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi" (Paramount) would turn out to be little more than a rehash of the congressional hearings on the 2012 terrorist attack in Libya.

In reality, the film is a gripping, fact-based account of what happened on the ground when the U.S. consulate in the titular city was overrun, and four American lives -- most prominently that of Ambassador Chris Stevens -- were lost.

Michael Bay, who knows a thing or two about action thrillers ("The Rock," "Armageddon" and the "Transformers" franchise), directs at a furious pace. His task is to dramatize the eyewitness accounts of six security operatives documented in the 2014 book by Mitchell Zuckoff.

Partisan political views and conspiracy theories are deliberately set aside, in favor of highlighting the courage and selfless-

ness of unsung heroes who put themselves in harm's way to save lives.

Jack Da Silva (John Krasinski), a former Navy SEAL, arrives in Benghazi as part of a band of security consultants hired to defend a top-secret CIA base. They're a gruff, buff bunch of apparently hard-bitten-military vets who go by such nicknames as "Rone" (James Badge Dale), "Oz" (Max Martini), "Tanto" (Pablo Schreiber), "Boon" (David Denman), and "Tig" (Dominic Fumusa).

Predictably, however, they're all softies at heart -- family men who call their loved ones often with reassuring pledges that they'll return home safely.

A visit to the area by Tripoli-based Stevens (Matt Letscher) presents the group with a serious challenge. The local diplomatic compound, just one mile from their CIA base, has minimum security. Stevens, though, is upbeat and optimistic, preferring to build bridges instead of fences.

Jack and his colleagues express concern, but are rebuffed by

their boss, an official identified only as "Bob" (David Costabile).

"The truth is, there is no real threat here," Bob says.

Such thinking is so disastrously wrongheaded, Tanto is driven to observe: "You can't tell the good guys from the bad guys."

And so we come to the fateful 11th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The day unfolds quietly, but as soon as night falls the consulate is besieged by gunmen and set ablaze.

From their nearby vantage point, Jack and the others watch in horror. Yet they're prevented from staging a rescue by Bob. Repeated calls to the Pentagon and the State Dept. requesting air support go unanswered.

As the full extent of the carnage is revealed, including the death of Stevens, Rone rallies his team to defy Bob and enter the fray. Over the long hours that follow, these six men are the first and only line of defense against a growing mob on a murderous rampage.

As it chronicles a modern-day Battle of the Alamo, "13



13 HOURS: THE SECRET SOLDIERS OF BENGHAZI. John Krasinski stars "13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi." The film is a gripping, fact-based account of what happened on the ground when the U.S. consulate in the titular city was overrun, and four American lives -- most prominently that of Ambassador Chris Stevens -- were lost. (CNS photo/Paramount)

Hours" is awash in sometimes bloody mayhem. But the violence is never gratuitous. Instead it registers as an integral part of the events his movie is recounting,

a tragedy that apparently could have been avoided, had someone -- anyone -- in authority responded in a timely and adequate manner.

Feb. 19-21: NSU Awakening Retreat

An Awakening retreat for NSU students or any college-aged student will be held Feb. 19-21 at St. Anthony's Church in Natchitoches. An Awakening Experience is a three-day retreat designed to strengthen the bonds between us and the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. Cost \$20 per person. For more information email nsuawakening@gmail.com or call Bethany Baudoin (337) 523-5615 or Danyelle Coco (318) 201-7780.

Feb. 20: Junior High Rally

The Office of Religious Formation and Training will offer a Junior High Rally on Saturday, Feb. 20 from 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. at Maryhill Renwal Center in Pineville.

Feb. 21: Marriage Prep Workshop

A one-day marriage prep workshop, Strong Foundations Marriage Preparation, will be held Sunday, Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Madonna Room at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria. Couples may register at www.comprehensivetherapygroup.com. For more information, call 318-792-9940.

Feb. 21: John de Chiaro Concert

Classical guitarist John de Chiaro will perform in concert on Sunday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m. at First United Methodist Church (2727 Jackson St.) in Alexandria. Concert is free; donations are graciously accepted. All proceeds from the concert will benefit Lily of the Valley Ministries, Inc., a local pro-life ministry that supports Alice's Home, a home for unwed mothers. For more information, call 318-442-4504.

Feb. 24: Anointing of the Sick Mass

Mass with the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick will be offered for all our sick and shut-ins at St. Frances Cabrini Church on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 12:15 p.m. Lunch will follow in the Activities Building.

Feb. 26-27: Marriage Workshop

The next Rekindle the Fire marriage workshop, titled Restoring Trust: Moving from Resentment to Compassion (Healing the wounds of betrayal, deceit and hurt), will be held Feb. 26-27 at the Courtyard Marriott in Lafayette. Dan Jurek, of the Pax Renewal Center will be the speaker. Cost is \$375 per couple. For more information, go to www.paxrenewalcenter.com or call 337-232-5005.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

March 5-6: S.A.L.T Retreat

The last S.A.L.T. retreat for Spring 2016 will be held March 5-6 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Pineville. Registration forms are available on-line at www.sacred-heartpineville.com

March 8-10: OLPS Adult Faith Formation

The Spirituality and Education Commission at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria will offer an Adult Faith Formation series once a month, throughout 2016.

- The March presentation will feature a special three-day talk (March 8-10) by Jimmy Seghers, author and nationally-known speaker of Sacred Scripture and Apologetics. The three-day topics include:

Mar. 8 -- The Mass Comes Alive

March 9 -- Living the Passion of Christ

March 10 -- Adoration and Penance Service

Join us each night from 6:30 -7:30 p.m. at the Divine Providence Center. The series is free and open to the public. Childcare is provided for newborns through 8 years old in the church nursery.

March 12: Charismatic Day of Renewal

A Day of Renewal (titled *Have Mercy On Me*) sponsored by Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Louisiana (CCRC) and CENLA Magnificat will be held March 12 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at St. Anthony's Church Hall in Natchitoches. Denise Beyer will be the speaker. Registration is \$20 made payable to "CENLA Magnificat" and mailed to either: Diane Ardoin, 1415 Creed St, Pineville, La. 71360 or Mary Wilson, 4569 Parhams Road, Jonesville, La. 71343. Open to men and women. Register online at cenlamagnificat@gmail.com

April 9: Catechetical Quiz Bowl

The Catechetical Quiz Bowl will be held Saturday, April 9 at 10 a.m. at the St. Joseph Catholic Center. Registration is \$10 per team. The Bible Quiz Bowl, (for students in grades 6-8), is sponsored by the Office of Religious Formation and Training. For more information, email emcullough@diocesealex.org or call 318-445-6424, ext 251.



VALENTINES FOR NURSING HOMES. Les Amies representative Shelley Pleasant and past representative Joy Campbell visited the Pre-K-4 class at St. Mary's School in Natchitoches with materials for the children to make Valentines. The Valentines will be given to the residents of Natchitoches Community Care and Natchitoches Assisted Living.

Job opportunity

- Technology Coordinator. St Mary's Assumption School in Cottonport is seeking applicants for the 2016-17 school year for a Technology Coordinator. Applicants must have a degree in education or a computer area, be able to teach technology to students, maintain school's computers, assist teachers with technology, and be proficient in the use of Google chrome boxes, Apple iPads and Smart boards in an educational environment. Experience and being Catholic are preferred, but not required. Interested applicants need to email resume to: principal@stmaryscottonport.com



4TH DEGREE KNIGHT John Morovich presents a check for the seminarian education fund to Bishop Ronald Herzog.

**From the Diary of St. Faustina:**

Souls that make an appeal to My mercy delight Me. To such souls I grant even more graces than they ask. I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion, but on the contrary, I justify him in My unfathomable and inscrutable mercy (Diary, 1146).



Call your local
branch for
information.
(318) 256-7000

February - March

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| <div>15</div> <div>Diocesan Offices CLOSED</div> <div>Confession 5:30 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</div> <div>PRESIDENTS' DAY PRAY FOR FR. B. MILLER</div> | <div>16</div> <div>Confession 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Confession 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</div> | <div>17</div> <div>Holy Hour of Mercy 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</div> | <div>18</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center Alexandria</div> <div>Lenten Series with Fr. Chad Partain 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. NELLIKUNNEL</div> | <div>19</div> <div>Fish Fry 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Fish Fry 5:00 -7:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria</div> <div>NSU Awakening Retreat, St. Anthony of Padua, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</div> | <div>20</div> <div>Jr. High Rally 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Maryhill Renewal Center</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE</div> | <div>21</div> <div>Marriage Prep Workshop 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria</div> <div>John de Chiaro Concert 2:00 p.m. 1st United Methodist Church, Alexandria</div> <div>2ND SUNDAY of LENT PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</div> |
| <div>22</div> <div>Confession 5:30 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</div> | <div>23</div> <div>Confession 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Confession 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>Lenten Mission, MB of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA</div> | <div>24</div> <div>Anointing of the Sick 12:15 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>Holy Hour of Mercy 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. OWUAMANAM</div> | <div>25</div> <div>Lenten Series with Fr. Chad Partain 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. PALLAKATTUCHIRA</div> | <div>26</div> <div>Fish Fry 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Fish Fry 5:00 -7:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPPARAMBIL</div> | <div>27</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH</div> | <div>28</div> <div>3RD SUNDAY of LENT PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE</div> |
| <div>29</div> <div>Confession 5:30 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN</div> | <div>MARCH 1</div> <div>Confession 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Confession 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>Lenten Series, St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR BISHOP R. HERZOG</div> | <div>2</div> <div>Holy Hour of Mercy 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PENANCE SERVICE 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. St. Rita Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL</div> | <div>3</div> <div>Lenten Series with Fr. Chad Partain 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. G. POOKATTU</div> | <div>4</div> <div>Fish Fry 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Fish Fry 5:00 -7:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria</div> <div>Crossroads Catholic Conference -- Lent 2016, Maryhill Renewal Center</div> <div>FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS</div> | <div>5</div> <div>S.A.L.T. Retreat, Maryhill Renewal Center</div> <div>FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY</div> | <div>6</div> <div>4TH SUNDAY of LENT PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS</div> |
| <div>7</div> <div>Confession 5:30 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES-SANCHEZ</div> | <div>8</div> <div>Confession 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Confession 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>Lenten Mission, Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ</div> | <div>9</div> <div>Holy Hour of Mercy 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. ROY</div> | <div>10</div> <div>Lenten Series with Fr. Chad Partain 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PENANCE SERVICE 6:30 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN</div> | <div>11</div> <div>Fish Fry 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Fish Fry 5:00 -7:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</div> | <div>12</div> <div>Charismatic Day of Renewal 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua, Natchitoches</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. SEILER</div> | <div>13</div> <div>5TH SUNDAY of LENT PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY</div> |
| <div>14</div> <div>Confession 5:30 p.m. St. Anthony of Padua Church, Bunkie</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA</div> | <div>15</div> <div>Confession 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Natchitoches</div> <div>Confession 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph Church, Marksville</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR</div> | <div>16</div> <div>PENANCE SERVICE 5:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. SOARES</div> | <div>17</div> <div>Lenten Series with Fr. Chad Partain 6:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN</div> | <div>18</div> <div>Fish Fry 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>Fish Fry 5:00 -7:00 p.m. St. Rita, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR MSGR. S. TESTA</div> | <div>19</div> <div>Men's Lenten Retreat 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. St. Rita Holy Family Center, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. TEXADA</div> | <div>20</div> <div>6TH SUNDAY of LENT PRAY FOR FR. J. THOMAS</div> |

Don't miss the fun and excitement!

ADAMS GOLF PRO TOUR RETURNS TO ALEXANDRIA

with the Hixson Pro Am Golf Tournament & Coca-Cola Dr Pepper / Wal-Mart Open

Schedule of Events

Monday, March 7

6:30 p.m. – UTLX, Leeco Steel, and the HIXSON Ford Pro-Am Party for tournament participants, spouses, guests and sponsors at OakWing Golf Club. Complimentary food and drinks, compliments of The Alexandria Pineville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alexandria Coca-Cola and Venture Marketing, will be served.

Tuesday, March 8

HIXSON Ford Pro-Am Golf Tournament
8 a.m. – 2 p.m. – Tee times every 10 minutes, located at OakWing Golf Club. Teams consist of three amateur golfers and a professional golfer. For entry forms, call OakWing Golf Club at 561-0260. Deadline for entry forms is Friday, March 4.

Special lunch provided by Tony Chachere's and each golf participant receives a special gift

Wednesday, March 9

Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper / Wal-Mart Open – spectators invited to watch free of charge.

8 a.m. – First round at OakWing Golf Club

Thursday, March 10

Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper / Wal-Mart Open – spectators invited to watch free of charge.

8 a.m. – Second round at OakWing Golf Club

7 p.m. – The Town Talk Awards Party for the HIXSON Ford Pro-Am participants, sponsors and guests at Million Air Alexandria.

Complimentary food and beverages will be served, courtesy of Turk's, Venture Marketing, and Coca-Cola.

Friday, March 11

Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper / Wal-Mart Open – spectators invited to watch free of charge.

8 a.m. – Third round at OakWing Golf Club.

Saturday, March 12

Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper / Wal-Mart Open – spectators invited to watch free of charge.

1:30 p.m. – Champion's Presentation



Additional Sponsors:

KLAX-TV
Cena Broadcasting/Q90
OakWing Golf Club
Telephone Pioneers
Richard Ducote, Tax Assessor

Rodin Hosen, Clerk of Court
Phillip Terrell, District Attorney
Sheriff William E. Hilton
Zimmer Investment Group
Judge Richard Starling

Senator Neil Riser
Marron Keynote
Farm & Family Attys
The Athlon Spa
Best Western

Comfort Inn
Country Inn and Suites
Prito Lay
Flowers Bakery / Buny Bread
Community Coffee

Louisiana Athletic Club
Southern Heritage Bank
Holiday Inn Express
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Roly Poy

Lunnas Law Office

To become a sponsor,
please call 448-6580.