

# CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVI, No. 5

[www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org)

Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970

May 18, 2015

## ON THE INSIDE

### **Four deacons to be ordained May 23**

Four deacons -- Brian Seiler, Dale Meade, Joseph Desimone, and Walter Ajaero -- will be ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, May 23 at 10 a.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral.

### **Sacred Heart dedicates new Junior High/Media Center to Sr. Ricci**

A large crowd of OLS Sisters, parents, students, and supporters came out for the outdoor dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new Junior High and Media Center at Sacred Heart School in Moreauville. See pgs. 14-15.

### **All three Catholic high school softball teams make it to state playoffs**

It was a blockbuster weekend May 1-2 for the three Catholic high schools from the Diocese of Alexandria -- Menard, St. Joseph, and St. Mary's -- who participated in the 2015 LHSAA Fast Pitch State Softball Tournament in Sulphur, La. See pgs. 12-13.

## State Champions!

### **Lady Eagles Menard Softball Team captures state championship**



**2015 LHSAA CLASS 2A SOFTBALL STATE CHAMPIONS.**

# Logistical issues hamper getting relief supplies to Nepal

By Anto Akkara  
Catholic News Service

KATHMANDU, Nepal (CNS) -- Anam Tamang was excited: A truck of earthquake relief supplies had finally arrived at Caritas Nepal headquarters in Kathmandu.

That was late May 6. By May 8, she was frustrated: 16 tons of relief material flown in by Caritas Poland had already been dispatched in small trucks to distant centers where local Caritas coordinators eagerly awaited supplies to reach to people in remote areas of the Himalayan nation.

"The stores are virtually again empty," Tamang told Catholic News Service.

Manindra Malla, program manager of Caritas Nepal, conceded there were logistical issues in getting aid to victims of the April 25 earthquake.

"We are running short of (relief) material and it is not easy to get things here as quickly as we want," Malla told CNS.

On May 7, the Nepal Red Cross put the death toll at more than 8,400; the government said nearly 400,000 houses have been fully or partially damaged in the magnitude-7.8 quake.

Media have been abuzz with reports that relief supplies were yet to reach hundreds of thou-



**EARTHQUAKE AFTERMATH IN NEPALESE COUNTRYSIDE.** Earthquake survivors select clothes from a relief material delivery near Gorkha, Nepal, May 1. (CNS photo/Narendra Shrestha, EPA)

sands of victims.

"We were excited to come here with the relief items. But, things are not moving fast," Marta Titaniec, projects coordinator of Caritas Poland, told CNS May 7 while carrying relief supplies to Sankhu, 13 miles outside of Kathmandu, where more than 100 perished.

"Our problems started even before we reached here," said Titaniec, who arrived in Kathmandu in a Polish air force plane with 16 tons of relief material worth \$150,000. Caritas Poland purchased supplies like blankets and tent kits for the quake victims.

Like many other relief supply planes, the Polish plane had to

stop in New Delhi for more than a day as the congested Kathmandu airport -- 80 minutes of flying time from the Indian capital -- was unable to handle the heavy rush of relief planes.

"We got the relief material only on the third day after the flight landed," Edyta Stepczak, a Polish journalist assisting the

two-member Caritas Poland staff, told CNS.

"This is nothing new. We have been reading about it for days. It is not going to change soon," said Stepczak, who has been living in Nepal for four years to research the resilience of Nepalese women.

Caritas Singapore wanted to send relief supplies worth \$50,000 and was asked to pay \$32,000 as flight courier charges.

Malla said Caritas had ordered temporary shelter materials but was not expecting the supplies to arrive until the following week -- nearly three weeks after the quake. Supplies in Indian cities around landlocked Nepal had been exhausted.

"Now consignments have to come from cities like Mumbai and Delhi by road. We have to be patient," Malla added.

"Obviously, there is still a great deal of need, and getting supplies in is difficult," Jennifer Hardy, Catholic Relief Services' regional information officer for Asia, told CNS from Gorkha, where CRS was coordinating relief distribution. CRS had sent 20 large truckloads of supplies to the area.

"We are distributing items as fast as Kathmandu or Delhi can send them," Hardy added.

## Supplies halted again after second quake hits Nepal on May 12

NAMJUNG, Nepal (CNS) -- As the magnitude-7.3 quake hit, screaming and shouting filled the mountain village of Namjung, where approximately 600 people had gathered to collect relief material being distributed by Catholic Relief Services.

When the quake ended May 12, the people were anxiously looking at dust rising from the nearby villages, with the collapse of houses and other buildings.

"We don't know what is happening. It has become too frequent," said Bishnu Kapri, a schoolteacher whose cracked house was being used by CRS as a storehouse.

Jennifer Hardy, CRS communications officer who was in

Namjung when the quake struck, said she was at a relief distribution site in a mango grove.

"Looked like it was snowing mango tree leaves. Surreal," she said in a tweet.

She also tweeted: "Heart-breaking to see ppl frantically call loved ones after today's #earthquake, but have no connection for hours. Emergency comms

critical."

Relief officials said more than 57 people died in the May 12 quake, one of the many tremors that followed a magnitude 7.8-quake that hit April 25 and left more than 8,000 people dead.

Namjung is more than 70 miles from Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, and on the six-hour drive back to the city, people could be

seen putting up tents on the road-sides to sleep during the night in the open.

"We are worried," said Yamen Kayastha, a Catholic with his wife and three children who has taken shelter in the Assumption Catholic Church compound in Kathmandu.

Kayastha, a musician and member of Focolare movement

from Nepal, told CNS that he fractured his finger and had to rush to the hospital after he fell down the steps while running out of his flat during the May 12 quake.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church in Nepal announced that the May 14-16 visit of apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, had been postponed.

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# Castro says pope is so impressive he might start praying again

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- After spending close to an hour with Pope Francis, Cuban President Raul Castro told reporters he is so impressed by what the pope does and says that he might start praying and could even return to the church.

"I had a very agreeable meeting this morning with Pope Francis. He is a Jesuit, as you well know. I am, too, in a certain sense because I was always in Jesuit schools," Castro told reporters May 10.

"When the pope comes to Cuba in September, I promise to go to all his Masses and will do so happily," the president told reporters at a news conference he held later in the day with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi.

Castro said he left his meeting with the pope "very much struck by his wisdom, his humility and all the virtues that we all know he has."

"I read all the speeches of the pope," Castro said, and he told reporters that he already had told Renzi, "if the pope continues to speak this way, sooner or later I



**POPE FRANCIS EXCHANGES GIFTS WITH CUBAN PRESIDENT RAUL CASTRO** during a private audience at the Vatican May 10. The painting shows a cross made up of migrants' boats with a migrant kneeling before it in prayer. Castro gave the painting to the pope. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano, pool)

could start praying again and return to the Catholic Church. I'm not kidding. I'm a communist, (a member) of the Cuban Communist Party. The party has never admitted believers."

Today, he said, the country allows people to hold important positions even if they are not members of the party. "It's a step forward," he said, although many

of the reforms he would like to make are still being implemented.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, said that during their private meeting in a studio of the Vatican audience hall, Castro thanked Pope Francis for "the active role he played in improving relations between Cuba and the United States of America."

In December, Castro and U.S. President Barack Obama announced that their nations were working toward re-establishing official diplomatic relations. Both leaders credited Pope Francis with helping to secure the deal through his letter-writing and by hosting a secret meeting at the Vatican between Cuban and U.S. representatives last fall.

Castro also relayed to the pope the expectations of the Cuban people for his upcoming trip to the nation and outlined how the preparations were going, Father Lombardi said.

During the traditional exchange of gifts, Castro gave Pope Francis a commemorative medal featuring Havana's cathedral and, in honor of Pope Francis' concern for migrants, a contemporary painting of a cross made up of migrants' boats with a migrant kneeling before it in prayer.

The Cuban artist known as Kcho, who made the painting, was present at the audience and told Pope Francis he was inspired by the pope's expressions of concern for the thousands of migrants who risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea seeking security and a better life in Europe.

Pope Francis gave Castro a copy of his apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," and a large medallion featuring St. Martin of Tours covering a poor man with his cloak. Father Lombardi said Pope Francis told Castro the medallion is a reminder not only of the obligation "to assist and protect the poor, but also to actively promote their dignity."

## Mass for Protection from Hurricane Season to be held June 5

Bishop Herzog has announced that Friday, June 5 has been designated by the bishops of the state as a Day of Prayer and Fasting for deliverance from storms and violent weather during the coming hurricane season. Prayers and Masses are being encouraged in all parishes for this intention. On June 5, Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral will begin Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 11 a.m. with Benediction at 11:50. Bishop Herzog will celebrate Mass at 12:05 p.m.

### Prayer for Hurricane Season

Fr. Al Volpe, Cameron Parish, LA

O God, Master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of your children. The Sea of Galilee obeyed your order and returned to its former quietude; you are still the Master of land and sea. We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control. The Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land and spread chaos and disaster. During this hurricane season, we turn to You, O loving Father. Spare us from past tragedies whose memo-

ries are still so vivid and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with the passing of time. O Virgin, Star of the Sea, Our Beloved Mother, we ask you to plead with your Son in our behalf, so that spared from the calamities common to this area and animated with a true spirit of gratitude, we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son to reach the heavenly Jerusalem where a storm-less eternity awaits us. Amen.

*Originally dedicated to the victims of Hurricane Audrey in 1957.*

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Diocese of Alexandria

# Supreme Court expected to decide on same-sex marriage in June

By Patricia Zapor  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- While it takes up same-sex marriage cases from four states during May, the Supreme Court will officially be considering just two constitutional questions.

But judging from the outpouring of friend-of-the-court or "amicus" briefs, the court is expected to affect the very definition of marriage in American society.

Around 120 "amicus" briefs filed with the court prior to the hearings, each offer the views of everyone from people who have sought same-sex marriages and states that support them to scholars and religious institutions that come down on both sides of the question, plus business leaders, sociologists and others who weigh in on the effects of different types of marriage. Among those are groups and individuals with views about the potential effect of a ruling on First Amendment rights and those with opinions about issues such as the use of sexual orientation change therapy.

The court has bundled appeals of lower court rulings about the laws of Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee under the title of the Ohio case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*. That case arose after the October 2013 death of John Arthur of Cincinnati. He and his longtime partner, James Obergefell, had married earlier that year in Maryland. When the local Ohio registrar agreed to list Obergefell as the surviving spouse on Arthur's death certificate -- which



is key to a range of survivor's benefits -- the state attorney general challenged the status because Ohio law bars same-sex marriages.

*Tanco v. Haslam*, the Tennessee case, and *Bourke v. Beshear*, the Kentucky case, similarly challenge those states' refusal to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions. *DeBoer v. Snyder*, the Michigan case, does so based on a lesbian couple's efforts to jointly adopt their children. Michigan law limits adoption by a second parent to married couples and the state does not allow or recognize same-sex marriages.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2013 that the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage as between one man and one woman, is unconstitutional. The same day it sent back to

lower courts a case that resulted in California's law barring same-sex marriage being overturned. Since then, four federal Circuit Courts have ruled that state bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional, while a fifth Circuit Court upheld such restrictions. Between state laws and judicial rulings, same-sex marriage is now legal in 38 states and the District of Columbia.

In agreeing in January to take the cases, the Supreme Court said it would consider two constitutional questions:

-- Does the 14th Amendment require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?

-- Does the 14th Amendment require a state to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and per-

formed out of state?

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops filed a brief arguing that the state laws limiting marriage of heterosexual couples should be upheld. The first reason the USCCB cites is that "as a matter of simple biology, the sexual union of one man and one woman is the only union capable of creating new life," and that homes with a father and a mother are the optimal environment for children.

It said it is "reasonable and just" for states to treat heterosexual marriages as having more value than other kinds of relationships.

"Government support for a marital bond between mothers and fathers serves the interest of reducing, or preventing further increases in, the incidence of single parenthood and the consequent burdens it places upon the custodial parent (usually the mother) and the public," it said.

## USCCB Prayer in Defense of Marriage

God our Father, we give you thanks for the gift of marriage: the bond of life and love, and the font of the family.

The love of husband and wife enriches your Church with children, fills the world with a multitude of spiritual fruitfulness and service, and is the sign of the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, for his Church.

The grace of Jesus flowed forth at Cana at the request of the Blessed Mother. May your Son, through the intercession of Mary, pour out upon us a new measure of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as we join with all people of good will to promote and protect the unique beauty of marriage.

May your Holy Spirit enlighten our society to treasure the heroic love of husband and wife, and guide our leaders to sustain and protect the singular place of mothers and fathers in the lives of their children.

Father, we ask that our prayers be joined to those of the Virgin Mary, that your Word may transform our service so as to safeguard the incomparable splendor of marriage. We ask all these things through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us.

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# Fatima 'lifts veil' on evil, Christian persecution, says cardinal

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The so-called "secrets" of Our Lady of Fatima tell of today's Christian persecution, in addition to the martyrdom of the past century, said Cardinal Angelo Amato.

The prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes opened a conference May 7 on "The Message of Fatima between Charism and Prophecy."

Cardinal Amato said he had "the privilege" of reading the original manuscripts of the secrets of Fatima when he served as secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith from 2002 to 2008.

"I meditated on them at length because they cast a light of faith and hope on the very sad events of the past century, but not only," he said.

Despite popular hopes that the 20th century would be a time of reason and brotherhood, "it was in fact a tragic period for Christianity," he said.

Besides the two world wars, he said, "most tragic" incidents of Christian persecution occurred, including "the Armenian genocide, the Mexican repression, the Spanish persecution, the Nazi massacres, the communist extermination and, in this first part of the third millennium, Islamist persecution."

"There are millions of victims of evil ideologies, which generated conflicts and continue to generate conflicts, hatred and division," he added.

"As Pope Francis often repeats, the church today is a church of martyrs, of those Christians who, defenseless, are killed daily out of hatred for their un-



**ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II** touches a statue of Our Lady of Fatima while bowing in prayer. Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes opened a conference May 7 on "The Message of Fatima between Charism and Prophecy."

shakeable faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ," he continued.

"The message of Fatima, in a visionary way, evokes this tragedy, lifting the veil on concrete historical events," where the devil "opposes God's benevolence" and "continues to tempt" the church, just as he tempted Jesus, "instilling in men's hearts feelings of enmity and death," he said.

Cardinal Amato described the Fatima message, with its concrete allusions to war, division and tragedies, as "without a doubt the most prophetic of modern apparitions."

However, he dismissed claims that there is more to the secrets of Fatima than what has been made public.

"There is no fourth secret and there are no other hidden secrets," said Cardinal Amato.

Mary appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917, and confided in them three secrets. Years later, Carmelite Sister Lucia dos Santos, one of the visionaries, wrote them down. The first two secrets included a vision of hell, along with prophecies concerning the outbreak of World War II, the rise of communism and the ultimate triumph

*May 13 is the anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady to three shepherd children in the small village of Fatima in Portugal in 1917. She appeared six times to Lucia, 9, and her cousins Francisco, 8, and his sister Jacinta, 6, between May 13, 1917 and October 13, 1917.*

of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, especially in Russia if the country was consecrated to her Immaculate Heart. They were made public in the 1930s.

Sister Lucia wrote down the third secret, and gave it to her local bishop in a sealed envelope. It was sent to the Vatican in 1957, where successive popes read it but decided not to reveal its contents. It was finally made public in 2000. It told of a "bishop in white" who falls dead after being shot by soldiers on a hill. Behind him are many martyred priests, bishops and faithful.

Cardinal Amato said the interpretation of the third secret was entrusted to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who was prefect at the time, suggested in his interpretation that it referred to the 1981 assassination attempt on St. John Paul II and he "affirmed that Fatima helps us 'to understand the signs of the times and to find the correct responses for them in the faith,'" said Cardinal Amato.

"The maternal hand that diverted the bullet without killing the pope indicates that an immutable destiny does not exist and that the power of faith and prayer can influence history: prayer is more powerful than bullets," ex-

plained Cardinal Amato.

Cardinal Amato said Fatima also reveals the opposition between Mary and the devil.

"There is the need to recognize the presence and action of evil on people and populations in history," he said. "Humanity is constantly seduced by the opponent of good, which is always ready to make (humanity) fall into the abyss of perdition."

"But the Son of God came precisely to destroy the works of evil," he continued. "And in this fight, Mary, fully involved in the saving work of Christ, cooperates effectively with her divine Son against Satan."

Mary "accompanies the church and humanity" through history and arouses in the hearts of the faithful "forces for good" that win against the "assaults of men and perverse ideologies."

"In this resides the charisma of Fatima," he said, which he described as "a gift of the Trinity" that allows people and the church "to become increasingly aware of the struggle of good versus evil and of the inevitable victory of grace over sin."

"The vision of Fatima lifts the veil on the hell that exists on earth, but it also offers the consoling prophecy of our heavenly home," he concluded.

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For decades, the month of May has been specially focused on Mary, the Mother Jesus and Our Mother in faith. Many churches have already celebrated Marian traditions or devotions.

As the end of the school year approaches, we prepare for the many end-of-year activities, most notable, graduations, Confirmations, First Communions, and ordinations. I offer my personal congratulations to all of the graduates from our three Catholic high schools -- Holy Savior Menard, St. Joseph, and St. Mary's. And, congratulations to the many students in our diocese who re-



## ONE IN THE LORD

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

ceived the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. Special thanks to Father Chemino for filling in for me at many of our Confirmations. I plan to take part in the remaining two.

It is with great joy and grati-

tude to Almighty God that I look forward to ordaining four priests -- Deacons Brian Seiler, Dale Meade, Walter Ajaero, and Joseph Desmoine, -- on Saturday, May 23; and one deacon -- John Wiltse -- on Saturday, June 6.

We would need to look back many decades to find the last time four priests were ordained at one celebration. The diocese is richly blessed through the generosity of these men and the families who fostered their vocations.

Our 2015 Annual Diocesan Appeal is progressing well and we are close to reaching our goal. Your generosity enables many ministries to flourish. Thanks so much for your participation.

I want to thank Ann Masden, who has retired after serving more than two decades as director of Development and Public Affairs. I also formally welcome

her successor, Tim Cahill to our diocesan family.

The 50-day Easter Season is nearing completion. The Risen Lord continues to shower his blessings upon us all.

As summer approaches, may the Lord protect all as they engage in various activities and we continue to be spared the ravages potential during the 2015 hurricane season.

Thank you for your continued prayers and encouragement during my recovery.

## Take it or Leave it? -- What to do with your purse at Communion

By Dan Gonzalez  
[www.massexplained.com](http://www.massexplained.com)

Let's face it, no one has the The Logan Sapphire or the Hope Diamond in their purse or backpack. Nonetheless, some people do carry pricey objects in them.

What should you do with your purse then, when it's time for Communion? Appear to be an untrusting soul and take the purse with you? or Leave it behind and open yourself up to the possibility that is may be gone when you come back?

There are several things to consider:

**What's in your wallet?:** In addition to costly items, some people tote plenty of cash. A stolen phone or jewelry necessitates a trip to a pawn shop, but cash is immediate, untraceable spoils for a thief. And what about plastic? As a victim of credit card theft myself, I know first-hand how quickly a perpetrator can run up charges. No one enjoys calling credit card companies to cancel and replace stolen cards or applying for a new driver's license. And if a spare house key was in your wallet, it's time to change the locks on the house.

**Beyond Benjamins:** But more important than money, some people carry emergency medications they need at a moment's notice—nitroglycerin tablets, EpiPen, insulin injections and inhalers for example. Not just a few hundred dollars, a stolen purse could cost them their lives.

For these reasons and more, many of our fellow parishioners make an excellent case for taking their purses up to Commu-



nion...but still, some choose not to. Why?

I conducted a few informal interviews for this article and here's why some people would never be caught holding the bag.

**Trust Issues:** The overwhelming reason I was given for not taking a pocketbook up to Communion is a perceived lack of trust. Objections were phrased something like this:

"These people are my brothers and sisters. I know them all. We just heard the Word of the Lord and are about to receive his Body and Blood. How could I not trust them with my purse? Taking it up to communion is telling them 'I don't trust you.'"

**A Balancing Act:** Another common objection is the sheer weight of the purse. Handbags may contain all sorts of items. If a heavy purse doesn't have a long enough strap to place it over the

shoulder, taking Communion in the hand could be challenging. The purse could be a tripping hazard if placed on the floor.

**I'm outta here:** A less common objection to taking a purse is that some people may think you're leaving right after Communion. Not wanting to be mistaken for going AWOL, these people choose to leave it behind.

**A landmark decision:** Some large churches have scores of identical pews—one after the other—making it challenging at times to find your way back to your seat. A purse can serve as a marker.

My mother always left her pocketbook behind and there never was an incident. But it does happen, and it shouldn't be a surprise. Thieves look for soft targets. They go to places where people feel safe and drop their guard; coffee shops, hair salons,

supermarkets, parking lots, funeral homes and yes, churches.

So what are we to do? Unfortunately, there's no right or wrong answer—it's a mixed bag. Based on my observations, interviews and a FaceBook post, most parishioners choose to leave their handbags in the pew at a typical Sunday Mass. Others lock their

purses in the trunk of their cars and put their offering envelopes and keys in their pocket.

We can't live distrusting others. But desperation, at times, causes people to choose to do wrong. So long as there is free will, there's always a chance that your purse may be a target—no matter how slim.



### Reader Feedback

Let us know what you think. What do you do with your purse at Communion?  
email: [churchtoday@diocesealex.org](mailto:churchtoday@diocesealex.org)



## CHURCH TODAY

Volume XLVI, No. 5 • May 18, 2015

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Circulation: Sandi Tarver, ext. 209; [starver@diocesealex.org](mailto:starver@diocesealex.org)

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

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

The CHURCH TODAY is a member of the Catholic Press Association.  
Website: [www.diocesealex.org](http://www.diocesealex.org)  
To receive a free subscription, call 318-445-6424, ext 255 or e-mail [jpetrus@diocesealex.org](mailto:jpetrus@diocesealex.org)



# The Duncan family of six joins Catholic Church at Easter

By Jeannie Petrus  
CT editor

Not everyone's conversion story is as strong and swift as St. Paul's conversion on the way to Damascus.

For Veronica and Jeremy Duncan and their four children, the spiritual journey to join the Catholic Church took 12 years -- to the date.

"I know this because our twins were in NICU 12 years ago on April 4, and it was the first time I ever prayed the Hail Mary," said Veronica.

It was 2003 and the twins were in NICU shortly after birth, struggling with respiratory problems. Veronica was very upset about the health of her twins when she happened to notice EWTN on the TV. They were praying the Rosary.

"Although I didn't know anything about the Rosary, or Mary, or even the Hail Mary, I started praying with the nuns on TV," she said. "I felt the Lord's presence and a very strong sense of peace and comfort."

Soon after that, the twins were released from the hospital and life returned to normal at the Duncan household.

Originally from Leesville, both Veronica and Jeremy were born and raised as Southern Baptists. They dated in high school, married, and started raising a family. Each of the children were



**THE DUNCAN FAMILY.** Veronica and Jeremy Duncan (on right), along with their four children were all received into full Communion of the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil on April 4. Their story of conversion took 12 years, to the exact date.

baptized in the Baptist church.

In 1997, they moved to Alexandria. One of their daughters wanted to go to Menard. It was during her time at Menard, that she often talked about "wanting to become Catholic."

"We said, 'that's good' but didn't really give it much thought," said Veronica. "We were all very involved in the Baptist church and we dearly love our pastor and our former faith community."

It wasn't until a few years ago, when the family received a call from a student exchange or-

ganization. The agency asked if an exchange student could finish out the year in their home. The Duncans agreed.

At first, the exchange student joined the family every Sunday at their church, until Veronica finally asked her if she wanted to go to her own church.

"Yes, I would like that," said the exchange student. It turns out the exchange student was Catholic.

Being a family that "prays and stays together," the Duncans decided to all go to Mass with the

exchange student as a sign of support. They went to morning service at the Baptist Church and the evening Mass at St. Rita Church.

After Mass, Veronica again felt that familiar strong sense of peace and comfort that she felt many years ago when she first prayed the Hail Mary.

"I've always admired the 'holiness' and reverence at the Mass," said Veronica. "I also love the idea on getting on your knees to pray."

But it was Jeremy who announced to his family after Mass,

"I felt the presence of Jesus in that Church. I want to find out more about Catholicism."

And that he did. He returned from Mass and went straight to his home library, where he began reading a history of the Catholic Church as well as the Bible.

"I guess I have always been the one in the family to suggest that we pray or do a devotion -- but Jeremy surprised me with his sudden 'thirst' for answers," she said. "He wanted to know everything about the Catholic Church."

They contacted St. Rita Church in Alexandria and met with Sister Nell Murray, MSC, director of Religious Education. She suggested that they try RCIA to learn more about the Catholic Church and that the kids enroll in CCD classes. While attending RCIA, Jeremy signed up for an A.C.T.S. Retreat at Maryhill.

At the Rite of Election in February, it was announced that the date of full Communion into the Church would be at the Easter Vigil Mass on April 4!

"Exactly 12 years to the exact date!" said Veronica. "I couldn't believe it!"

"We are all on different spiritual journeys," said Veronica. "What works for one person may not work for another. Joining the Catholic Church as a family at this point in our lives is just what worked for us. We are very happy with our decision and look forward to learning more about Jesus and his Church, every day."

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## Fr. Luke Melcher appointed to position in ICEL

Father Luke Melcher, who has been studying in Rome for the past two years, has been appointed to the position of director of Textual Resources for the Internal Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) in Washington, D.C.

Archbishop Arthur Roche, secretary of the Holy See's Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, made a request *nihil obstat* in a letter to Bishop Ronald Herzog in April. Bishop Herzog eagerly ap-

proved the request.

Father Melcher will finish the work for a masters in Liturgical Music this semester and will continue writing his dissertation for a doctorate in Sacred Liturgy.

Since the annual reports of ICEL to the Sacred Congregations take place at the end of May, Father Melcher will remain in Rome until the report is complete. He is expected to take up his post in Washington, D.C. beginning in June.

Congratulations, Fr. Luke!



Rev. Luke Melcher

## Fr. Remi appointed Regional Superior of SMMM

Father Remigius Owuamanam, S.M.M.M., pastor of St. Juliana Church in Alexandria, has been named Regional Superior of the Congregation of Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy.

Father Remi was appointed to the position in April by the SMMM Superior General and his Council. Bishop Ronald Herzog has agreed to allow Father Remi to serve in his new position, while

simultaneously serving as pastor of St. Juliana in the Diocese of Alexandria.

As Regional Superior, Father Remi will be responsible for overseeing all SMMM priests currently serving in the United States. The appointment is for three years.

Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy is a mens religious order founded in Nigeria.



Rev. Remi Owuamanam

## 110 graduate from Women of Grace at St. Rita

St. Rita Catholic Church in Alexandria, under the mentorship of Father Craig Scott, pastor, graduated 110 women from the Women of Grace® study program May 4.

Friends and family attended the Mass, graduation ceremony, and dinner to witness the women as they rejoiced in the Lord, who had called them to complete their Lenten journey for 2015.

Brenda Dooley, regional coordinator for Women of Grace, delivered a special message of congratulations on behalf of Johnnette Benkovic.

St. Rita is already planning the next study that they will offer in the coming Fall as women in the parish anxiously await their opportunity to be the next group to answer God's call to be women of grace.

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



**ST. RITA WOMEN OF GRACE GRADUATES.** Ona Wilson and Penny McGinty pick up their Women of Grace pins during a graduation ceremony from the 12-week program. St. Rita parish is the first in the diocese to bring the successful program, started by Johnnette Benkovic of EWTN, to this area.

## Seminarian Burses

### April Donations

**Knights of Columbus, Council 9217** ..... \$25.00  
Father Adrian Molenschot Burse

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Monsignor Steve Testa Burse

**Bayou Chateau Nursing Center** ..... \$100.00  
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**Mr. and Mrs. Dan Vanderlick** ..... \$100.00  
Mrs. Kitty Treadway Nassif Burse

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Miller** ..... \$300.00  
Father Daniel Corkery Burse

**Total** ..... \$675.00

Contributions to any of the burses or to establish a new burse should be sent to:

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### Diocese of Alexandria • Catholic Schools Office Assistant Principal Opening

2015-2016 School Year  
Holy Savior Menard Central High School, Alexandria, LA

Holy Savior Menard Central High School seeks an enthusiastic, dedicated and qualified assistant principal in curriculum and instruction to minister in leadership for a school community of more than 500 students in Grades 7 – 12. The successful candidate must be committed to balancing the strong traditions of Menard as a diocesan school with embracing new and creative opportunities to lead the faculty, students, and parent community to deeper spiritual, academic and social excellence. Ability to collaborate with superintendent, school president, principal, faculty, staff, and parent body is essential.

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- Availability on or before July 1, 2015

Call Vanessa Pichon for an application packet at (318) 445-6424, ext. 227

#### Deadline for Application Packet: June 1, 2015

*The schools of the Diocese of Alexandria 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.*





**FR. PETER FAULK**, who is currently pursuing a canon law degree in Rome, will be spending several weeks this summer in the Holy Land serving as a hospitality guide and confessor for pilgrims. At the invitation of Fra Sergio Galdi, Fr. Peter will be staying at Church of the Visitation in Ain Karem, a site frequented by many pilgrims daily. Above, Father Peter attended the ordination of a fellow classmate in Italy.



**DIVINE MERCY AT HOLY GHOST CHURCH IN MARKSVILLE.** Holy Ghost Catholic Church in Marksville held a Divine Mercy service on April 12 at 3 p.m.

## Ordination Class of 2015 shows increase in numbers ordained

WASHINGTON—The 2015 class of men ordained to the priesthood report that they were, on average, about 17 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood and encouraged to consider a vocation by an average of four people.

Seven in 10 (71 percent) say they were encouraged by a parish priest, as well as friends (46 percent), parishioners (45 percent), and mothers (40 percent).

On average, they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 15 years before entering seminary.

Religious ordinands knew the members of their religious

institute an average of six years before entering.

The total number of potential ordinands for the class of 2015, 595, is up from 477 in 2014 and 497 in 2013.

The Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) gathered the data for "The Class of 2015: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood." CARA collects the data annually for the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

Approximately 69 percent of the 595 potential ordinands reported to CARA. These 411 respondents include 317 ordinands

### 4 to be ordained May 23 at Cathedral

Four deacons -- Dale Meade, Brian Seiler, Joseph Desimone, and Walter Ajaero -- will be ordained this Saturday, May 23 at 10 a.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. The public is invited.

to the diocesan priesthood, from 120 different dioceses and archdioceses, and 94 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Raleigh, North Carolina, chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, found that the data

gave reason for hope but also provide areas for further growth.

"It is encouraging to see the slight increase in the number of ordinations this year in the United States," Bishop Burbidge said. "When asked about the positive influences they encountered while discerning the call, those

to be ordained responded that the support from their family, parish priest, and Catholic schools ranked very high."

Father W. Shawn McKnight, executive director of the Secretariat, cited educational debt as a growing concern. "Over 26 percent of those ordained carried educational debt at the time they entered the seminary, averaging a little over \$22,500 in educational debt at entrance to the seminary. Considering the high percentage of the men ordained already having earned an undergraduate degree, it will be important to find ways to assist in debt reduction in the future."

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PUBLISHED ARTICLES: "The Worn-Out Worker Rule Revisited," "Significant Work-Related Limitations of Function Under §12.05C," "Questionable Retirement and the Small Business Owner," "Crisis of Confidence: The Inadequacies of Vocational Evidence Presented at Social Security Disability Hearings."

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# Tekakwitha Conference to be held July 22-26 in Alexandria

For the first time ever in Alexandria, the 76th Annual National Tekakwitha Conference will be held July 22-26 at the Alexandria Riverfront Center. More than 900 participants from all across North America are expected to attend the Native American conference themed, "Saint Kateri Embraces the Wetlands."

"We are very excited to be bringing this event to Alexandria for the first time," said Sister Kateri Mitchell, executive director of the Tekakwitha Conference. "We want everyone to know that anyone can attend all or part of this conference. It is open to the public."

Keynote speakers include Bishop Sam Jacobs, retired bishop of Houma-Thibodaux; Bishop Shelton Fabre, bishop of Houma-Thibodaux; and Sister Judith Gomila, MSC, of New Orleans.

Bishop Charles Chaput, O.F.M., Tekakwitha Conference Episcopal Moderator, will be the main celebrant at the Eucharistic Celebration on Thursday. Bishop Ronlad Herzog, bishop of Alexandria, will be the main celebrant



**SISTER KATERI MITCHELL**, executive director of the Tekakwitha Conference, will be welcoming more than 900 participants to the annual national Tekakwitha Conference, July 22-26, to be held in Alexandria for the first time.

at the closing Eucharistic Celebration on Saturday.

Workshop leaders include Donald Dardar, Richard May, Mark Thiel, Rev. Glenn LeCompte, M.Div., S.T.L.; Janie Verret Luster, and Sister Judith Gomila.

In addition to the speakers and workshops, some of the highlights of the conference in-

clude the All Nations Grand Entry Thursday morning, a Reconciliation and Healing Service on Thursday, a Pow Wow on Friday, and entertainment by the Fay Doe-Doe Treater Band on Saturday.

A separate agenda of Youth Activities will be held simultaneously at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral parish hall for children

## 2015 Conference Highlights

### Wednesday, July 22

5:30 p.m. Dinner  
7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer

1:30-4:15 Workshops  
4:30 p.m. Regional Gatherings  
7 p.m. Entertainment:  
Pow Wow

### Thursday, July 23

9:30 a.m. Grand Entry  
11 a.m. Bishop Sam Jacobs  
1:30-2:45 Workshops  
4:30 p.m. Bishop Charles Chaput  
Eucharistic Liturgy  
7 p.m. Reconciliation Service

### Saturday, July 25

9 a.m. Sister Judith Gomila  
Workshops  
10:05 Bishop Ronald Herzog  
Eucharistic Liturgy  
7 p.m. Entertainment:  
Fay Doe-Doe Treater  
Band

### Friday, July 24

9 a.m. Bishop Shelton Fabre  
10:30 a.m. Bishop Shelton Fabre  
Eucharistic Liturgy

### Sunday, July 26

Departure Day

ages 3-17. Story-telling, arts and crafts, zoo workshops, picnics and pizza parties, and Praise and Worship will be available to entertain different age groups.

All participants must register either by visiting the website: [www.tekconf.org](http://www.tekconf.org) or by visiting the Conference office, located at 2225 North Bolton Avenue. Participants may register for the entire

conference or for just a day.

"Come and join the 'First Peoples' of this land, our missionaries and friends, as each gives praise, honor and thanksgiving to our Creator God for the gifts of life, faith, culture and talent," said Sister Kateri.

For more information, call 318-483-3908 or go to [www.tekconf.org](http://www.tekconf.org).

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• **June 20 (Saturday)** -  
10 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Church, Echo

• **June 23 (Tuesday)** --  
6 p.m., St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria

To pre-register, go to [virtus.org](http://virtus.org), and click on Registration (on left side of screen).

For more information, call 318-445-6424 x 213.

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## Menard athletes sign with LSU, ULM



### Mallory Robichaux signs with LSU

Menard senior Mallory Robichaux signs a letter of intent to Louisiana State University April 24 to join the LSU track team. In 2014, Mallory was the State Champion in the LHSAA Division II, 1600 meter; a member of the All-State Cross Country team all four years of high school, a member of the Menard Gils Cross Country team that were State Champions in 2011, 2013, and 2014.

### Austin Vaughn signs with ULM

Menard senior Austin Vaughn signs a letter of intent to the University of Louisiana - Monroe May 6 to join the ULM football team. In 2014, Vaughn was named the offensive Most Valuable Player for District 3 2A and was an All-District player on defense. He also rushed for more than 1400 yards and scored 20 touch downs.



## Menard senior selected to join travelling NET Team Ministries

Lilly Hidalgo, a recent graduate from Holy Savior Menard High School, has been selected to join the National Evangelization Team (NET) for domestic mission work during the upcoming year.

Lilly will join approximately 150 other young adults, ages 18-28, who will all volunteer nine months of their lives to serve with NET Ministries.

These young adults are placed on teams of 8-14 people who will travel the country sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Each team travels to specific dioceses and spends time serving the individual parishes there.

In an average 9 month NET season, each traveling team will:

- Travel 20,000 miles
- Serve 7 to 8 dioceses
- Facilitate nearly 150 retreats
- Stay in 125 host homes and
- Reach 8,500 young people one-on-one with the Gospel

"I am so honored to have been selected to minister with NET Ministries," said Lilly. "I can't wait to get started!"



Lilly Hidalgo

Training for the NET Missionaries will be held for 5 weeks, beginning in August. Afterwards, Lilly and the other NET Missionaries will begin traveling and hosting retreats for young people across the country.

In order to cover a portion of the cost of training and traveling, the missionaries must raise money before their training.

Lilly's home parish, OLPS in Alexandria, recently held an appeal to help defray her goal of \$6,000 for the ministry program. Anyone interested in making a donation to support Lilly can contact her at [lilly.elizabethhidalgo@gmail.com](mailto:lilly.elizabethhidalgo@gmail.com).

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Sunday:  
11 a.m.-9 p.m.



## June 1 is deadline to register for National Catholic Youth Conference

The Religious Formation and Training office is organizing a trip to the biennial National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) Nov. 18-22 in Indianapolis, IN.

It is the largest single gathering of Catholic teens across the United States.

The approximate cost is \$650/person. Group registration and deposit of \$50/person is due June 1. Scholarship application form was due May 1.

For more information and details about the trip, visit [www.diocesealex.org/youthministry](http://www.diocesealex.org/youthministry) or call Luc Noel at 318-445-6424 Ext.207



# Menard wins Class 2A championship; St. Joe is Class C Runner-up

## All three Catholic high school softball teams make it to state playoffs

By Jeannie Petrus, CT editor  
and from combined reports  
from The Town Talk

It was a blockbuster weekend May 1-2 for the three Catholic high schools from the Diocese of Alexandria -- Menard, St. Joseph, and St. Mary's -- who participated in the 2015 LHSAA Fast Pitch State Softball Tournament in Sulphur, La.

### Menard Lady Eagles

The Menard Lady Eagles battled three shutout games over the weekend, to clinch the 2A state championship title.

Over the weekend, the Lady Eagles defeated Archbishop Hannan from Covington, 10-0 on Friday; No. 1 seed Calvary Baptist from Shreveport, 10-0 early Saturday; and Winnfield 1-0 late Saturday to win the title.

"I've had these kids for a long time," said first-year coach Allison Frye, who was an assistant to Erica Harwell before being promoted when Harwell took the LSU-A job. "The seniors mean a lot to me. They worked so hard. It's overwhelming, it's extremely exciting. I couldn't be happier for the girls."

Menard sophomore  
, struck out 10 batters



**THE HOLY SAVIOR MENARD LADY EAGLES** rush the field after defeating Winnfield to win the Class 2A State Championship in the LHSAA Fast Pitch 56 State Softball Championship tournament at Frasch Park in Sulphur, LA, Saturday, May 2, 2015. (Paul Kieu, The Advertiser)

and allowed only three hits for her fourth consecutive shutout in the postseason. She pitched no-hitters in the quarterfinal win Friday night and the semifinal victory over Calvary early Saturday. was awarded the

Most Valuable Player Award for her pitching efforts.

The Friday night game against Archbishop Hannan was electrified by two back-to-back homeruns by senior Kayla Busby and sophomore

. It was Busby's 15th homerun of the season and her 41st career homerun at Menard.

It was Menard's third softball championship and the first since 2001. In addition to the 2001 title, the Lady Eagles won in 1993

against Redemptorist -- also a tight 1-0 win.

This year's win was extra special after the Lady Eagles came up one run shy last year in the 2A state championship game, losing to Oak Grove.

### St. Joseph Lady Eagles

Making their first state championship game appearance since 2007, St. Joseph Lady Eagles fought to the bitter end, but lost 16-6 in the final game against Hackberry, earning them the Class C State Runner-up title.

"They were No. 1 for a reason," St. Joseph's coach Ken Knight said of the Hackberry team. "They came in here with four straight titles while looking for a fifth. I am so proud of our girls. We were not supposed to be here. We were not supposed to make the playoffs, but this team came together in the end."

Junior infielder  
led St. Joseph at t  
g 2-for-3 with a triple and two RBI.

Hackberry opened the scoring with one run in the first and added five more in the second to take a commanding lead.

"I think that the nerves and jitters got to us a little there,"



### MENARD PITCHER

(20) pitches to a Calvary Baptist batter during a semifinal game in the LHSAA Fast Pitch 56 State Softball Championship tournament at Frasch Park in Sulphur, LA, Saturday, May 2, 2015. (Paul Kieu, The Advertiser)



**MENARD SENIOR KAYLA BUSBY** gets a hit during the LHSAA Fast Pitch State Softball Championship. Kayla hit her 15th homerun for the season and her 41st career homerun at Menard during the tournament. (Photo: Kim Stalsby)

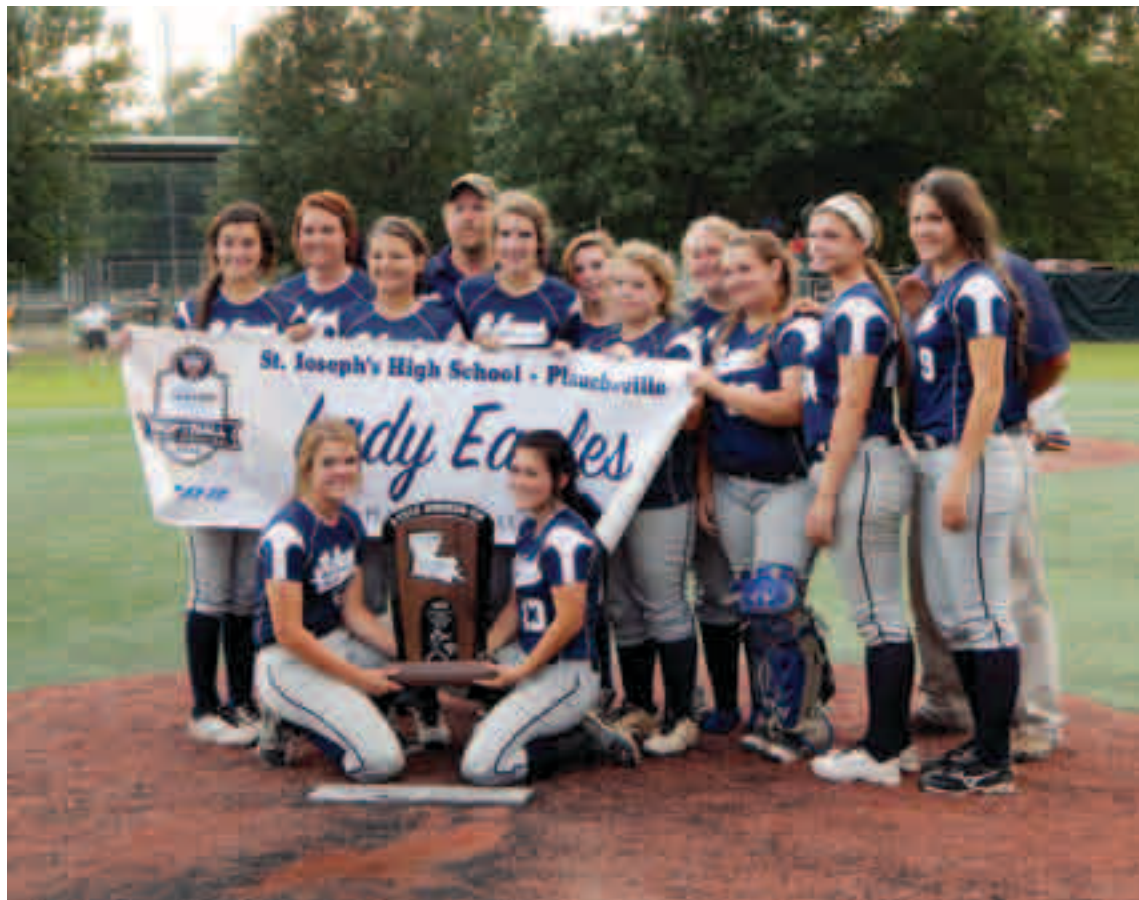


**SENIOR NATALIE SEESER** looks to the dugout for the pitch signal. Natalie has been the catcher for the varsity team since the 8th grade. (Photo: Kim Stalsby)





**ST. JOSEPH INFIELDER** (24) throws to first base for a Northside Christian during a semifinal game in the LHSAA Fast Pitch 56 State Softball Championship tournament at Frasch Park in Sulphur, LA, Saturday, May 2, 2015. (Paul Kieu, The Advertiser)



**ST. JOSEPH LADY EAGLES ARE CLASS C STATE RUNNER-UPS.**

. (Joan Ferguson, Church Today)

Knight said. "We made a few errors which gave them a few runs. They are just a well-coached, good ball team."

In Friday night's game against Georgetown, St. Joseph scored six runs in the first inning and led 8-1 after two innings before Georgetown started its run.

St. Joseph defeated Georgetown Friday night with a final

score of 8-5.

Students, parents, and supporters wore St. Joseph t-shirts that read "Small in numbers, but big in heart."

### St. Mary's Lady Tigers

The young, but talented St. Mary's Lady Tigers fell to Catholic of Pointe Coupee 7-0 in the

quarterfinals of the LHSAA Fast Pitch Softball Tournament May 1 in Sulphur, La.

Catholic held St. Mary's without a hit until the fourth inning when 7th grader Ragan Hale hit a single, but was left stranded.

The Lady Hornets broke through with three runs in the fourth to prevent the St. Mary Tigers with any shot of winning.



**THE LADY TIGERS OF ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, Natchitoches.** (Names unavailable.)



**THE ST. MARY'S LADY TIGERS** line up on the baseline before the start of the quarterfinal game against Pointe Coupee May 1. The Lady Tigers lost in the first game, 7-0. (Joan Ferguson, Church Today)



# Sister Marisa Ricci Junior High & Media Center

## Sacred Heart School holds dedication ceremony for new library/classroom facility

By Jeannie Petrus  
CT editor

It was perfect spring day May 1 for the outdoor dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new Junior High and Media Center at Sacred Heart School in Moreauville.

Father Marc Noel, pastor, blessed the new facility, followed by the ribbon-cutting by Sister Sandra Norsworthy, principal of Sacred Heart School and Ms. Marta Ricci, real-life sister of Sr. Marisa Ricci, OLS, for whom the building is named after.

Sister Ricci was a beloved sister and teacher at Sacred Heart School for 25 years. She was born and raised in Latina, Italy, but became a Sister of Our Lady of Sorrows and was sent to Loui-

siana in 1962. Despite her broken English and strong Italian heritage, she always loved teaching her students, singing in the church choir, and visiting the elderly at St. John Village.

She was a humble lady, with a strong devotion to the Blessed Mother. She always wanted her students to love Mary, and was firmly convinced that Mary alone would lead them to Jesus.

"Sister Ricci left a legacy here at Sacred Heart School," said Sister Norsworthy, principal. "I know she continues to support Sacred Heart School from above. For this reason, we dedicate our new Junior High and Media Center to Sr. Maria Ricci, OLS. Thank you Sr. Marisa for all you have done for this school, for the students who had the gift of having

you as their teacher, for the teachers who had the opportunity to work side by side with you, and for all the parents who were able to benefit from having you teach their children."

Others in attendance were several OLS sisters and novices; Sr. Maria Iannetti, an OLS delegate representing the Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows; a few priests from the area, the entire Sacred Heart student body, and many parents and supporters.

The 4,194 sq. ft. junior high area includes four classrooms -- two for 7th-grade and two for 8th grade, three restrooms -- one for girls, boys, and teachers, and a hallway lined with lockers.

Each classroom is equipped with a SmartBoard, built-in cabinets for storage, and floor space



**Sr. Marisa Ricci, OLS**

to accommodate 25 student desks.

The 2,550 sq. ft. media center is designed for multiple functions with an area for traditional classroom learning arrangement for 28 students and another with

seating at tables. A computer kiosk for eight students is included for one-on-one teacher/student interaction.

The built-in circulation desk is centrally located to allow observation with all three teaching areas as well as the alternate arrangement of one large seating area for the assembly of several classes. The innovative use of pre-engineered wood trusses exposed in the library allow for sloped ceilings that soar to a height of 28 feet and provide for a very spacious feel in the library.

The entire building fits snugly between other buildings which will allow for an additional student drop-off area from an adjacent side street, while still preserving as much playground area as possible.



A LARGE CROWD attended the dedication and blessing. Among some of the guests were Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows, local priests, the Sacred Heart student body and school supporters.



**OLS DELEGATE.** Sister Anna Maria Iannetti, OLS delegate says a few words during the dedication ceremony.




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**RIBBON CUTTING.** Ms. Marta Ricci, real-life sister of Sister Marisa Ricci, assists Sister Sandra Norsworthy, principal to cut the ribbon. Also pictured is Aloysia Ducote and Cory Roy, both SHS council members, and Father Marc Noel, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville.



**LOTS OF BOOKS** and attractive displays for books line the walls and the circulation desk. The high ceilings give the center a very spacious feel.



**COMFORTABLE READING.** make themselves comfortable in the new reading area of the library.



**SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS.** Several sisters and novices from the order of Our Lady of Sorrows were present for the dedication.



**FOUR CLASSROOMS** -- two for 7th grade and two for 8th grade -- are included in the junior high section.



**ROWS OF LOCKERS** line the halls of the junior high wing.





**ST. MARTIN OF TOURS CHURCH (Belledeau) MAY CROWNING.** Abigail Pitre crowns the Blessed Mother in front of St. Martin of Tours Church and then again inside the Church, shortly before Mass on May 3 started.



**SACRED HEART SCHOOL (Moreauville) MAY CROWNING.** Eighth grader [name] was chosen to crown Mary, and the flower girl was second grader [name]

## May Crownings



**OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR MAY CROWNING** was held on Friday, May 1.



**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL MAY CROWNING.** Participating in the May Crowning at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral May 3

e with Father Jim Ferguson.





**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL (Natchitoches) MAY CROWNING.** St. Mary's seniors led the May Crowning procession through the streets of Natchitoches May 1. Members of the court are (front) 2nd graders



**OUR LADY OF LOURDES (Fifth Ward) MAY CROWNING.** Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Fifth Ward celebrated May Crowning on May 3. The First Communion



**HOLY SAVIOR MENARD MAY CROWNING.** Holy Savior Menard held its May Crowning May 6. Members of the Court are 9th Grade:

clergy pictured are Rev. Bill Gearheard (left), Rev. Chad Partain (center) and Rev. Taylor Reynolds (right).



**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA SCHOOL (Bunkie) MAY CROWNING.** Members of the 8th grade class participated in the May Crowning held at St. Anthony School in Bunkie. crowned Mary at the beginning of the Mass.

**ALTAR SERVERS LEAD THE WAY.** The Eighth boys carried Mary. As the procession began, the students of SAS followed, holding their flowers for Mary.

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## End of School Days

**OLPS LOUISIANA DAY.** The OLPS 3rd grade class celebrated the 8th annual Louisiana Day May 5th. The celebration began with a parade and continued with “yum-my” Louisiana treats prepared by 3rd grade parents. The festivities continued throughout the day with music and entertainment for the 3rd grade students and parents. Pictured are the 3rd grade students enjoying the Louisiana food



**WINNERS OF THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEST** sponsored by the Catholic Daughters Court Padre Pio #2141 of Cottonport were announced at St. Mary's School Mass. The theme was “Love Your Neighbor as Yourself”.



**ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

Row 4: Sr. Judiann Derhake, SLW, Mrs. Donna Newton, Mrs. Martha Coulon, Principal, Fr. Scott Chemino, Sr. Jeanette Daniel, SLW, Mrs. Kim Juneau and Mrs. Carmen Cook.



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## Vacation Bible Schools

- **June 1-5: OLPS, Alexandria**  
8 a.m. - noon, for kids entering K-5th.  
Must register by May 15. Cost is \$10 (includes a t-shirt)  
Register at [www.olpscurch.org](http://www.olpscurch.org)
- **June 8-12: St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie**  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., for kids entering Pre-K - 4th grade, free.
- **June 22-25: OL Lourdes, Fifth Ward**  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m., for kids ages 3-10.
- **June 29-July 1: Immaculate Conception, Dupont**  
9 a.m. - noon, Ages 4-12, \$5 per child.
- **July 6-10 and July 13-17: St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria**  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m., for children ages 3 to 6th grade;  
\$125 per child, \$100 for each additional child.  
Counselor applications are available for those in 7th - 12 grade.
- **July 13-17: St. Rita, Alexandria**  
8 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. (children can be dropped off at 7:30 a.m.),  
for children entering Grades PreK - 6th;  
\$25 non-parishioner, free for St. Rita parishioners
- **July 13-17: St. Joseph, Marksville**  
9 a.m. - noon, Ages 5-13, Free
- **July 13-17: Sacred Heart, Pineville**  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., for 4 year olds - 6th grade, free
- **July 19-23: St. Martin Catholic Church, Lecompte**  
5:30 - 8:30 p.m., for ages 4-12, free

## Schools' Out! -- Summer is Here!



**POPSICLES FOR EVERYONE!** All of the students at Our Lady of Prompt Succor enjoyed popsicles after their May Day celebration May 4. All of the Catholic Schools in the diocese will soon close in late May and a summer of fun will start the first week of June. Welcome Summer!

## Mater Dolorosa to host Teen ACTS Retreat July 30-Aug. 2

Mater Dolorosa Church in Plaquemine will host a Cenla Teen ACTS Retreat July 30-Aug. 2 for high school students entering grades 10-12.

A Teen ACTS retreat is a three-day and three-night Catholic lay retreat for parish high school students, based on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. The retreat is presented by a team of parishioners composed of high school students, young adults (college age) and adults.

The retreat begins on Thursday evening and ends Sunday with Mass celebrated with the parish community. Teen ACTS retreats are coed, consisting of male and female team members and retreatants.

Teen ACTS has been developed as a parish based teen retreat program. Like the Adult ACTS retreat program, it energizes participants in the Catholic Faith -- its practices, prayers and teachings. Teen ACTS is a way for a

parish to engage its teens in the Catholic faith, educate them in the teachings of the Church, assist them in having a personal experience with God, and support them in the faith as they develop their daily spiritual prayer life.

Registration is currently open until June 15. To register or for more information, contact Stacey Dixon 337-258-9650 or [stacdxdn@yahoo.com](mailto:stacdxdn@yahoo.com) or Rena Crooks-Saucier at 318-623-7175 or [Rcrookssaucier@yahoo.com](mailto:Rcrookssaucier@yahoo.com)

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## Catholic Words Board Game

\$6.99 each for Vol. 1 or Vol. II or \$10.99 for both Vol. 1 and II  
Purchase at [www.agnusgiftshop.com](http://www.agnusgiftshop.com)

Watch your little one's excitement at Mass when they recognize the vessels, objects and vestments used in the liturgy. Introducing these words will help prepare them to receive the Sacraments and inaugurate a lifelong journey of learning about the wonders of their Catholic faith.

Like the popular game Concentration, the object of Catholic Words Memory Match is to turn over matching pairs of cards. Each deck has 52 2.5" x 3.5" (64mm x 89mm) cards—that's 26 pairs of bright and colorful illustrations created just for this game. The images and text make it fun to practice reading and word recognition.

### Free download of definitions

Use these game cards as flash cards by downloading a FREE companion 12-page, full-color printable PDF with definitions and real-world pictures of all 66 Match Game objects.

Develop a lesson around the cards. Read the definitions and discuss where the objects are seen at your parish and in the home.

Take the cards with you to

church and point out the items before or after Mass. When you get back home, let the games begin! Catholic Words Memory Match is an addictive way to learn new Catholic vocabulary words!

### Built to last

Our cards are printed on 350GSM paper. What's that? GSM stands for "Grams per Square Meter" and indicates the paper's thickness—the higher the GSM, the heavier the paper. Playing cards used in casinos, for example, are made from 310 GSM paper. Ours is thicker.

In addition, our cards are finished off with a protective UV (Ultra Violet) coating that will stand up to spills and preserve the cards for years to come.



### Cards for Vol. I

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3. Altar Candles
4. Ambo
5. Baptismal Font
6. Baptismal Shell
7. Book of the Gospels
8. Chalice
9. Chasuble
10. Ciborium
11. Confessional
12. Crucifix
13. Cruets
14. Holy oils
15. Holy Water Font
16. Host
17. Miter
18. Monstrance
19. Paten
20. Pew
21. Sanctuary Lamp
22. Stations of the Cross
23. Stole
24. Surplice
25. Tabernacle
26. Thurible

### Cards for Vol. 2

1. Advent Wreath
2. Alb
3. Ambry
4. Aspergillum
5. Aspersorium
6. Biretta
7. Cassock
8. Cincture
9. Collection Basket
10. Corporal
11. Credence Table
12. Crosier
13. Dalmatic
14. Hymnal
15. Lavabo Set
16. Missal Stand
17. Mozzetta
18. Offering Box
19. Pallium
20. Palm Branches
21. Paschal Candle
22. Presider's Chair
23. Pyx
24. Rosary
25. Votive Candle
26. Zucchetto



## Catholic Words and Games App

\$4.99 for iPhone and iPad

Download at App Store or [www.catholicwords.com](http://www.catholicwords.com)

Colorful flash cards and exciting games to help teach Catholic vocabulary words at home, in the classroom, or on the go! All in one app! Visit [www.CatholicWords.com](http://www.CatholicWords.com) for a demo video.

"Catholic Words & Games" is a fun way to help parents, grandparents, teachers, home-schoolers, catechists and youth ministers teach Catholic vocabulary words to their little ones. The app is a collection of five fun and educational learning tools and games. It's 5 apps in 1!

- NO In-App purchases
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But more than just kids, the words may be new to adults too. Do you know when a "crotalus" is used? Or who sits on a "faldstool"? Or the proper color of a "mozzetta"? If not, this app can teach you and the classic games are fun for all ages.

### App Features

At the core of "Catholic Words & Games" are the fun flash cards. Over 65 colorful illustrations were created just for this app. No boring clip art or grainy internet photos.

Advance the flash cards by swiping or select the slideshow feature. Play the flash card deck in six different modes. Hear the name of the objects properly pronounced by a professional voiceover artist. Tap the dictionary icon for a glossary entry with a real-world picture of the item.

The flash card deck is highly customizable. Pick and choose which cards to include to customize for little ones. Other settings allow you to turn the voiceover, music, sound effects and looping on or off. Have the cards appear in random or alphabetical order. The names can be displayed in "ALL CAPS", "all lower case" or "Mixed Case".

In addition to the flash cards, enjoy 4 different learning games to further reinforce the vocabulary words.

- Memory Match
- Tap It
- Spell It
- Name Match

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# Little Boy is a family-friendly drama with religious values

## Little boy trusts that performing good works will bring his POW dad back home

By John Mulderig  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Religious values and a gentle sensibility pervade the family-friendly drama "Little Boy" (Open Road).

Yet, while suitable for a wide audience, director Alejandro Monteverde's good-hearted, nostalgic parable, set in 1940s coastal California, is not without its occasional aesthetic lapses.

At its best, this tale of an undersized, bullied lad named Pepper (Jakob Salvati) who sets out to prove his faith in God by performing a series of good works is reminiscent of the 1983 holiday-themed classic "A Christmas Story."

Whereas the protagonist of that film had no more exalted goal in mind than to receive a B.B. gun as a Christmas present, however, Pepper is angling for a far weightier objective. He's praying for the divinely guided release of his beloved father, James (Michael Rapaport), a GI taken prisoner by the Japanese.

Early scenes narrated by the adult Pepper (voice of Barry Ford) show us the touching bond between the youthful outcast and his sympathetic, resolutely supportive dad.

Under James' guidance and inspired by the example of his



**LITTLE BOY.** Pepper (Jakob Salvati) listens to Father Oliver (Eduardo Verastegui) try to explain the difference between mere wish-fulfillment and trust in God's providence in a scene from the movie "Little Boy." The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. (CNS photo/Open Road)

favorite comic-book and serial movie hero, Ben Eagle (Ben Chaplin), diminutive Pepper comes to believe in his own potential. Thus he's able to give a positive response to his father's repeated question: "Do you believe we can do this?"

In the wake of James' emotionally wrenching departure for the war, Pepper's kindly parish priest, Father Oliver (Eduardo Verastegui), tries to help the 7-year-old recognize the difference between mere wish-fulfillment and trust in God's providence. He

presents Pepper with a list of the corporal works of mercy, and encourages the boy to carry them out as a tangible demonstration of his pious devotion.

Along with the more familiar tasks of feeding the hungry and visiting the sick, Father Oliver

## MOVIE REVIEW

also requires Pepper to cleanse his mind of hatred by befriending a fellow outsider, Japanese-American widower Hashimoto (Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa). Since his discharge from a government-run detention camp, Hashimoto has been ostracized by the local community -- and threatened by some of its more hotheaded citizens.

Pepper's older brother London (David Henrie) has been among those targeting Hashimoto. Though Pepper himself gradually overcomes his antipathy toward the reclusive stranger, London shows little inclination to greater tolerance. Their compassionate mother Emma (Emily Watson), by contrast, proves more open-minded.

With its lessons about persistence in belief and the need to overcome prejudice, "Little Boy" will be particularly welcomed by viewers of faith. Even those who appreciate its numerous assets, however, may note moments of forced plotting.

James, for instance, is portrayed as having essentially no choice but to take London's place in the ranks after the latter, an eager volunteer, turns out to be flat-footed -- and therefore medically unfit to serve.

There are also interludes of undeniable sentimentality. Yet this plucky and positive tale, with its affirmative presentation of the priesthood -- and of Catholic life in general -- makes for winning entertainment that's well-suited to all but the youngest potential moviegoers.

The film contains scenes of combat with minimal gore and a couple of crass terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

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## May 24: Adult Confirmation

Bishop Herzog will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to adults from throughout the diocese on Pentecost Sunday, May 24 at 2:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. All candidates must register with the Cathedral by Monday May 18, accompanied by a recent copy of the candidate's baptismal certificate.

## May 29: Priest Jubilarian Mass

The Annual Jubilarian Mass will be celebrated at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on Friday, May 29 at 12:05. This year our senior jubilarian, Fr. Daniel Corkery, observing his 60th anniversary, will be the homilist. Bishop Herzog will be the celebrant. The public is invited.

## May 30: Seminars on Christian Healing

Jim and Dr. Christy Gootee and the Two Hearts Team will offer a Christos Encounter: Seminars on Christian Healing Prayer this summer. The course is progressive and will be taught over three weekends: May 30-31, July 18-19, and Aug. 8-9. The hours are from 9 a.m. Saturday to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Each weekend costs \$100, which includes course manual and teaching materials. Overnight stay is available for \$40 extra per night. You can e-mail name, address, and phone to [jcgootee@gmail.com](mailto:jcgootee@gmail.com) (List "Christos") or call 640-1572 and leave your name and phone # and interest in course.



**ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION SCHOOL** collected for St. Jude and Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in the Months of February and March. The students brought in change and dollar bills to school. We collected a total of \$3933.66. Our top collector of \$322.00, a 5th grader at St. Mary's School.

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS



**ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION HEAVEN'S CHEFS FOOD TASTING FAIR.** Great food and good company was shared by everyone at the annual Heaven's Chefs Food Tasting Fair at St. Mary's Assumption Church in Cottonport. The chefs prepared different cuisines such as: New Orleans Grillades & Grits, Crawfish Pies, Joel's Bar-B-Q Ribs, Fresh Okra Gumbo, Gar Fish Balls, Shrimp Crab Stew, Homemade Pralines, Tiramisu, Heavenly Hash Cake, Crawfish pies and many other spectacular dishes. Pictured are Monica Sprinkle, Kathy Joffrion, Wanda Clark and Nancy Barrier.

## May 31: St. Mary's Greco Bowl

Make plans now to attend the annual St. Mary Residential Training School's Greco Bowl featuring Chef John Folse on Sunday, May 31, from noon -2:30 p.m. at the Gem of Alexandria (1014 A Third Street, Alexandria). The event will include a cooking demonstration by Chef Folse, giveaways, a cash bar, and silent auction. Each person will also receive a special hand-crafted bowl made by one of the residents. Tickets are \$100 and can be purchased in groups of 8 per table. For tickets or sponsorship, call Megan Vets at 318-445-6443, ext 2313.

## June 5-7: Fishing with a Mission

St. Martin Catholic Church in Lecompte presents Event 2015, "Fishing with a Mission." The event will begin Friday, June 5 in the Church Hall with a dance featur-

ing "Ronnie Bryant and Friends" from 8 - 11 p.m. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. A cash bar will be available and free hors d'oeuvres. Admission is \$15/person or \$25/couple and may be purchased at the door.

Saturday, June 6 – Family night with bingo beginning at 6 p.m. with concessions available.

Sunday, June 7 there will be a Barbecue Chicken Dinner (\$8 per plate) from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. with a Live Auction beginning at approximately 12:30 p.m. Sweet Shop also available. For more information, please contact the Church Office at 776.9480. Please come join us for a weekend of food, fun, and fellowship.

## Adult Faith Formation Series -- OLPS

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria hosts a series called Adult Faith Formation on the 2nd Thursday of each month. The next meeting is May 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the Divine Providence Center (Child care is provided.) May's topic is a DVD showing of "The Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" by Dr. Brant Pitre. Please come with hearts hungry for nourishment in the teachings of our Church from a variety of presenters.

## Bible Study Series -- St. Martin

There is Bible Study every second and third Thursday of the month at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Fifth Ward and St. Martin of Tours in Belledeau respectively. The course is scheduled to last for more than 12 months. The sessions are for one hour (6 -7 p.m.) We are using the Model of Jeff Cavins and Sarah Christmyer, "The Great Adventure-A Journey Through the Bible."



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May - June

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<div>18</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. MESSINA</div>	<div>19</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK</div>	<div>20</div> <div>Louisiana Clergy Open Golf Tournament Squirrel Run Golf Course, New Iberia</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS</div>	<div>21</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 6:00 p.m. St. Joseph Catholic Center, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. B. MILLER</div>	<div>22</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN</div>	<div>23</div> <div>Ordination of Priests 10:00 a.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. NAYAK</div>	<div>24</div> <div>Adult Confirmation 2:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. NELLIKUNNEL</div>
<div>25</div> <div>Diocesan Offices Closed</div> <div>MEMORIAL DAY PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL</div>	<div>26</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIEKWE</div>	<div>27</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN</div>	<div>28</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR</div>	<div>29</div> <div>Priests Jubilarian Mass 12:05 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA</div>	<div>30</div> <div>Christos Encounter: Seminars on Christian Healing</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. OWUAMANAM</div>	<div>31</div> <div>St. Mary's Greco Bowl 12 noon-2:30 p.m. The Gem of Alexandria (1014A Third St. Alexandria)</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. A. PALLAKATTUCHIRA</div>
<div>JUNE 1</div> <div>Deadline to register for National Catholic Youth Conference</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div> <div>Fasting, Prayers, Mass to Avert Storms 11:00 a.m. - Adoration 12:05 p.m. - Mass St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria</div> <div>"Fishing with a Mission" -- St. Martin Church, Lecompte</div>	<div>6</div> <div>VBS Session #1-- St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria</div>	<div>7</div>
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- 8:00 a.m.-12 noon -- Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Alexandria					VBS Session #1-- St. Frances Cabrini, Alexandria	
PRAY FOR BISHOP R. HERZOG	PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPARAMBIL	PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE	FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN	FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL	PRAY FOR FR. G. POOKKATTU
<div>8</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Fifth Ward</div> <div>Adult Faith Formation 6:30 p.m. Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Alexandria</div>	<div>12</div>	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div>
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL -- 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. -- St. Anthony of Padua, Bunkie						
PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY	PRAY FOR FR. J. ANTONY	PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS	PRAY FOR FR. J. ROBLES-SANCHEZ	PRAY FOR FR. E. RODRIGUEZ-HERNANDEZ	PRAY FOR FR. J. ROY
<div>15</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. J. RYAN</div>	<div>16</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. C. SCOTT</div>	<div>17</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. R. SHOURY</div>	<div>18</div> <div>Bible Study 6:00-7:00 p.m. St. Martin of Tours Church, Belledeau</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. P. SIERRA-POSADA</div>	<div>19</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. L. SKLAR</div>	<div>20</div> <div>VIRTUS Training 10:00 a.m. St. Francis de Sales Church, Echo</div> <div>PRAY FOR FR. S. SOARES</div>	<div>21</div> <div>FATHERS DAY PRAY FOR FR. I. ST. ROMAIN</div>





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*Celebrating our  
**28th Year**  
as a Children's  
Miracle Network  
Hospital!*

## Children's Miracle Network

TELECAST

# May 30 & 31

SAT: 7pm - 10pm  
SUN: 8am - 5pm

Live on **KLAX-TV**

at **Cabrini's Women's & Children's Hospital**



TO CONTRIBUTE, GO ONLINE AT:

**ChristusCabriniFoundation.org**

Click "Support Us" and select category "CMN"  
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Children's  
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CHRISTUS  
ST. FRANCES CABRINI  
Hospital

THE  
**TOWN TALK**  
www.thetowntalk.com



CELLULAR**ONE**

# BBQ CHICKEN DINNER

**Sunday, May 31**

Cabrini Outpatient Center (Corner of Texas & Prescott)  
From 10:00am 'til the last tasty bite is sold

**\$5 each**