

CHURCH TODAY

Volume LVII, No. 9

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Serving the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana Since 1970 September 28, 2026



Respect Life

Every October the Catholic Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month, and the first Sunday of October is observed as Respect Life Sunday. As Catholics, we are called to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning to the end of their lives, and at every point in between. During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops provides resources to help parishes, schools, families, ministries, and individual Catholics share the Gospel of life during Respect Life Month and throughout the year.

INSIDE

Bishop Marshall appointed Apostolic Administrator of Shreveport

While remaining Bishop of Alexandria, Pope Leo XIV has appointed Bishop Robert Marshall as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Shreveport following the resignation of Bishop Francis Malone. Read more on page 2.

Restore Counseling expands to serve more families

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana is increasing access to affordable, professional, Catholic faith-based counseling for children, adolescents, adults, and families throughout Central Louisiana. Learn more about the expanded ministry on page 12.

Fall fun across our diocese

October brings plenty of opportunities to gather in faith, fellowship, and fun! From parish festivals and fall fairs to school celebrations, there's something for everyone. Find events happening across our diocese on page 16.

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Bishop Marshall appointed Apostolic
Administrator of Diocese of Shreveport

WASHINGTON - Pope Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of the Most Reverend Francis I. Malone, 76, from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Shreveport. At the same time, he has appointed Most Reverend Robert W. Marshall of Alexandria, as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Shreveport to serve until the appointment and installation of the new bishop.

The resignation and appointment were publicized in Washington, D.C. on September 15, 2026, by Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Brothers and sisters,

While remaining Bishop of Alexandria, today the Holy Father has also appointed me to serve as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Shreveport. I will serve in this capacity until the installation of the next Bishop of Shreveport.

In making this appointment, Pope Leo accepted the resignation of Bishop Francis I. Malone which he presented over a year ago on his 75th birthday. I join the priests and people of the Diocese of Shreveport in thanking Bishop Malone for his six and a half years of service as a bishop and his 49 years of service as a priest. I wish him every happiness in his well-deserved retirement.

I am in Shreveport this morning for the announcement. I will be serving both dioceses for the foreseeable future, and I expect to become very familiar with I-49.

Please keep the Diocese of Shreveport in your prayers during this extended time of transition, and please pray for me as I undertake this additional responsibility.

Most Rev. Robert W. Marshall, Jr.
Bishop of Alexandria
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Shreveport

September 15, 2026

Kathy Cole, long-time diocesan
employee, passes away

It is with both sorrow and heartfelt gratitude that we announce the passing of Kathleen Mary Cole, who departed this earth on September 17, 2026. Born in Long Island City, NY, Kathleen was a beacon of light to her family and friends, guiding them with her unwavering love and kindness.

Services were held on Sept. 25 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church with Fr. Dale Meade officiating. Interment was at Forest Lawn in

see COLE, page 6

Deacon Doug Moreau
passes away

Funeral Mass for Deacon Doug Mark Moreau of Cottonport took place at St. Mary's Assumption Church on Monday, September 21, 2026, with Fr. Charlie Ray and the clergy of the Diocese of Alexandria officiating.

Dcn. Doug Moreau, 69, passed away at his residence on Thursday, September 17, 2026.

Deacon Doug dedicated many years of his life to his career, his community, and, most

see MOREAU, page 6



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‘Remarkable Victory’: Life advocates welcome defeat of assisted suicide bill in England and Wales

by Simon Caldwell
Our Sunday Visitory

LIVERPOOL, England (OSV News) — The Catholic Church in England and Wales has welcomed the defeat of a bill to legalize assisted suicide.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill was rejected by members of Parliament by 286 votes to 270 after a Sept. 11 debate at second reading.

The bill would have allowed adults who are terminally ill, and deemed to have fewer than six months left to live, to procure lethal drugs for suicides overseen by medics.

Afterwards, Archbishop John Sherrington of Liverpool, the lead bishop for life issues for the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, thanked all who had fought against the legislation, brought in a private member’s bill by Member of Parliament Lauren Edwards, who is in the Labour Party of Central Louisiana, serving individuals and families throughout Central Louisiana.

“I would like to express my gratitude to those MPs who voted against the Bill and the many people from across society



DEFEAT OF ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL. A woman against assisted dying demonstrates in front of the Houses of Parliament in London Sept. 11, 2026, as U.K. lawmakers voted 286-270 to reject a bill that would allow terminally ill adults in England and Wales to choose to end their lives. (OSV News photo/Jack Taylor, Reuters)

who made their voices heard — doctors, legal professionals, disability groups, other faith communities and those of no faith who stood up for the dignity and sanctity of every life,” Archbishop Sherrington said in a Sept. 11 statement posted on the bishops’ conference website.

‘True measure of a compassionate society’

“Throughout this debate, we have argued that our response to those facing serious illness, disability or the challenges of old age should be rooted in solidarity, care and respect,” said Archbishop Sherrington, adding that the “true measure of a compassionate society is its willingness to support people through difficult circumstances rather than encouraging them to end their lives.”

“We remain convinced that the most effective way to address suffering at the end of life is through greater access to excellent palliative and end-of-life care,” the archbishop emphasized, saying that he hoped “all the sick and frail find comfort in the support of their loved ones, and the love of God, which transcends all suffering.”

The bill was the fifth attempt in 12 years to decriminalize assisted suicide, a practice which in the U.K. is punishable by a prison sentence of up to 14 years under the 1961 Suicide Act.

The draft legislation was identical to the first draft of a bill introduced into the House of Commons in 2024 by Kim Leadbeater — but which in 2025 ran out of parliamentary time in the House of Lords, Britain’s upper chamber, in the face of some 1,200 amendments tabled by peers gravely concerned about inadequate protections and other flaws.

Groups of physicians and nurses among opponents of measure.

Both bills were opposed by prominent organizations, including the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, and scores of disability rights and mental health groups.

Andy Burnham, the prime minister and Catholic, abstained from the vote but Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch voted against it. Among those MPs to speak in the debate was Ashley Dalton, a Catholic Labour MP with stage 4 incurable metastatic breast cancer, who pleaded with fellow legislators to either abstain or vote against the legislation.

She described her fear and anxiety in the face of terminal illness and said: “I do not know how long I will live. ... I live between scans, in nine to 12-week blocks of time. The last scan might have shown that the disease is stable, but the next scan might show that it is growing again.”

“At some point, we will either run out of drugs to try, or I will be too poorly to tolerate them — then I die. It could be months. It could be years,” she said.

‘Palliative care in the U.K. is excellent’

“In the campaign around this bill, though, it seems to me that it is being implied that a person

with a terminal illness will have a dreadful, painful death unless they have access to assisted dying. That is simply not true; palliative care in the U.K. is excellent,” she underlined.

Dalton emphasized that “far too many people” do not have access to the palliative care they need, “but the idea that it is not possible to alleviate pain and discomfort is false,” she said.

“People have been terrorized — I have been terrorized — with tales of people vomiting up their own feces, as though this is commonplace during death. It is vanishingly rare,” she said, rebuking some of the arguments presented in the public square by supporters of the bill.

“Bowel obstructions are more common, but they are treatable. I know — I have had one. It is nothing short of irresponsible to scaremonger people like me into believing our deaths will be horrific when all the evidence suggests that, with access to good palliative care, deaths are, on the whole, gentle.”

‘Remarkable victory’ for society’s most vulnerable

Alisdair Hungerford-Morgan of Right to Life UK, a pro-life group, afterward described the vote as “a remarkable victory for the most vulnerable in our society.”

“They deserve protection and care, not a pathway to suicide,” he said in a Sept. 11 statement sent by email to OSV and posted online.

He added that after “a two-year-long national debate, the country has decided to reject assisted suicide, settling the issue for a generation.”

The defeat of the bill follows the failure of a similar attempt to legalize assisted suicide in the Scottish Parliament in March.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION THIS HURRICANE SEASON

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 memories 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 of 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 stormless eternity awaits us.
Amen.

*Composed by Most Rev. Maurice Schexnayder (1985 - 1981)
Second Bishop of Lafayette (1956 - 1973),
following Hurricane Audrey in 1957*

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Grace Behind the Walls:

Diocese of Alexandria Hosts Inaugural Kolbe Prison Ministry Retreat at Raymond Laborde Correctional Center

by Kenneth McMullen
Deacon Candidate for the
Diocese of Alexandria

There is a passage in the Gospel of Matthew that cuts straight to the heart of every Catholic who has ever wondered what it truly means to love one's neighbor. "I was in prison and you came to visit me." (Matthew 25:36) For seventy men representing four dioceses and approximately twenty Catholic Church parishes across Louisiana, those words were not merely read — they were lived. In a landmark moment for the Diocese of Alexandria, the first ever Kolbe Prison Ministry (KPM) Retreat was conducted last month on August 13, 14, and 15 at Raymond Laborde Correctional Center in Cottonport, Louisiana — a facility that houses over 1,900 inmates. Sixty of those inmates were chosen as retreatants for the powerful three-day experience, and by all accounts, the Holy Spirit showed up in ways that words can barely contain.

The retreat takes its name and inspiration from St. Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish Franciscan priest who was imprisoned at Auschwitz during World War II. In July 1941, after a prisoner escaped, 10 men were selected to die by starvation. When one of the condemned men cried out for his wife and children, Father Kolbe



DIOCESE'S FIRST KOLBE PRISON MINISTRY RETREAT. The retreat was held Aug. 13-14. Pictured: group photo of retreatants and retreat facilitators at Raymond Laborde Correctional Center in Cottonport, LA.

volunteered to take his place. He ultimately gave his life for another prisoner and was canonized by Pope St. John Paul II in 1982 as a martyr of charity.

KPM's mission statement is "to share the agape love of Jesus Christ with the incarcerated and to teach the fullness of the truth of the Catholic Church to them." Kolbe Retreats offer a transformative, faith-based experience for incarcerated individuals, designed to bring the healing love of Christ into the lives of participants through prayer, Bible study,

personal reflection, and group discussions. Since 2009, Kolbe Prison Ministries has been working with those incarcerated to help them heal and grow in their faith. The retreats facilitate to enrich and reinvigorate the spiritual lives of thousands of inmates throughout Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi (2027).

A Historic First for the Diocese of Alexandria

With the blessing and approval of Bishop Robert

Marshall, Kolbe Prison Ministries was welcomed into the Diocese of Alexandria for the very first time. The Diocese of Lake Charles, already experienced in Kolbe retreats, graciously missioned the Diocese of Alexandria — passing the torch of this sacred work to a new diocese eager to serve. Leading the retreat was Director Kirk Quinn, joined by Co-Directors Dennis Fontenot, Lancey Silver, Robert Mathews, and Kenneth McMullen — men whose dedication to this mission reflects the very spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe himself. Serving as the Spiritual Director was Father Charlie Ray, pastor of St. Mary's Assumption Church in Cottonport — a shepherd who knows his community and carried that pastoral love directly into the walls of Raymond Laborde.

What Happens on a Kolbe Retreat?

The purpose of a Kolbe Catholic retreat is to educate those with no knowledge of the faith, as well as re-energize Catholic retreatants to help them become or recommit as Christ's disciples. The retreat is filled with the graces and mysteries of the faith, interspersed with time for meaningful discussions as members of the presenting team gave witness talks. Retreatants begin a transformation as they

recognize their status as children of a God who loves them no matter what they have done — something easy for prisoners to forget, since incarceration tends to prompt feelings of marginalization and insignificance. The Kolbe team strives to expose the retreatants to kindness, love, and acceptance. Volunteers play a crucial role in facilitating the retreats, helping inmates experience spiritual renewal, forgiveness, and a deeper connection to their faith — fostering an environment of personal growth and redemption, empowering inmates to turn their lives around through God's grace. Many of the inmates experience a transformation of heart inspired by the ministry they receive and begin to make a positive change in their lives.

Answering Christ's Call

In a world that is quick to write off those who have failed, the Church stands apart — proclaiming loudly and lovingly that no soul is beyond the reach of God's mercy. The sixty men who walked into Grace Chapel at Raymond Laborde did not encounter an institution. They encountered a Church — alive, present, and unashamed. And the seventy men who gave their time, treasure, and witness left as changed as those they came to serve. Volunteers often experience personal growth, spiritual enrichment, and a deeper understanding of their faith through their involvement in Kolbe Retreats — as serving others in this capacity fosters compassion, empathy, and a sense of fulfillment as they help incarcerated individuals experience Christ's healing. Below are comments received from two different team members illustrating how they were impacted on this retreat:

"Those three days at Grace Chapel at Raymond Laborde Correctional Center were absolutely astonishingly beautiful. So many beautiful acts of love. This retreat did so much for me. I will not forget that weekend."
— SKL#1 Team Member

Continued on next page.

*The vineyard
of the Lord
is the house
of Israel.*

Isaiah 5:7
Responsorial Psalm
for October 4
Twenty-seventh Sunday
in Ordinary Time



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Continued from page 4:

“Last weekend was one of the most humbling experiences of my life. I can honestly say that after sitting with these guys for three days, listening to their stories, laughing with them, crying with them, praying together – I walked away changed. What an amazing three days. I went there hoping to bring Christ into that prison, but I left realizing that Christ was already there – and I encountered Him in some of the people I least expected.”

– SKL#1 Team Member

What is next?

Those words are not simply a suggestion for a select few. They are part of Christ’s call to His Church to recognize His presence in every human person, including

those who are incarcerated. While imprisonment carries real consequences for actions committed, the dignity of the human person remains. No prison wall can place someone beyond the reach of the mercy of God.

Plans are already underway for the second Kolbe Prison Ministry Retreat at Raymond Laborde Correctional Center in February 2027. Men interested in serving on the next retreat team are encouraged to consider answering this unique call to ministry. Opportunities also exist for individuals, parish organizations, and others who would like to support the ministry through prayer and donations. Please send an email to Kolbepm.alex@gmail.com or call Kenneth McMullen at 318-613-8714.

May the seeds planted during these three days continue to bear

fruit in the lives of the retreatants, their families, the volunteers who served them, and throughout the Diocese of Alexandria.

**St. Maximilian Kolbe,
pray for us.**

*Kenneth McMullen is a
Deacon Candidate for the
Diocese of Alexandria. He is
a retired medical professional
and he and his family live in
Cottonport, LA.*



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COLE

cont. from pg. 2

Pineville.

A distinguished U.S. Navy veteran, Kathleen dedicated 21 years of her life to serving her country, achieving the rank of Petty Officer First Class Yeoman. Her commitment to service continued in her professional life as she spent 17 years as the dedicated Secretary at Sacred Heart Church, and subsequently 14 years as a legal transcriptionist and receptionist for the Diocese of Alexandria. Kathleen's passion for her work reflected her profound faith and dedication to the community.

Kathy was the eldest daughter of ten, born to Edward and Kathleen Babey (both deceased). She was also preceded in death by her eldest son, Richmond D. Cole II, and her brother, Edward A. Babey, Jr.

She leaves behind her husband, Charles E. Cole, Sr. (Chuck), with whom she shared over 50 beautiful years of love, laughter, and companionship; her sons, Charles E. Cole, Jr. of Kannapolis, NC, and Daniel M. Cole of Pineville, LA and her beloved grandson, Jack Cole; her cherished sisters: Patricia Wood of Mays, NC; Darlene Owens of Virginia Beach, VA; June Willoughby of King, NC; Rose Dibuono of Hampton, VA; Mary Gilly of Texarkana, TX; and Evelyn Lumbardo of Hampton,

VA. She is also survived by her aunt, Evelyn Babey of Atlanta, GA, along with a host of nieces, grand-nieces, nephews, and grand-nephews.

Kathleen will forever be remembered for her unwavering faith, deep compassion, and the warmth of her spirit. Though she has left this earthly realm, her love will continue to illuminate the hearts of all who knew her. May she rest in peace in the embrace of God, where she has been joyfully reunited with those who have gone before her.

Funeral arrangements were provided by Hixson Brothers, Pineville.

MOREAU

cont. from pg. 2

importantly, his faith. He began his career at Avoyelles Value, where he served as Shop Foreman from 1977 until 1984. He then joined Cooper Cameron, Inc., serving as an Industrial Engineering Supervisor from 1984 until 2001. He later worked in sales with DGI Supply, where he remained until his retirement in 2024.

A devoted man of faith and service, Deacon Doug was an active member of the Knights of Columbus and participated in A.C.T.S. Retreats throughout Central Louisiana and Avoyelles Parish. His commitment to his Catholic faith was evident through his involvement with That Man Is

You, the Steubenville Conference, and his assistance with CCD religious education classes. He also attended a Cursillo Retreat, further deepening his faith and dedication to serving others.

Answering a call to serve the Church, Doug was ordained as a Deacon in 2022. He faithfully embraced his ministry and found great purpose in sharing his faith, serving his church community, and helping others grow closer to God.

Those left to cherish his memory are his wife, Cynthia Moreau; daughters, Mitzi Breau (Randy) and Casey Armand (Jamie); son Dane Moreau; grandchildren, Felicity Breau, Bailey Armand, Beau Armand, Brynlee Armand, and Maci Moreau; his mother, Louella Juneau Moreau; sister, Nina Wagner (Chuck); brothers, Sam Moreau (Rene), and Robert Moreau.

Dcn. Doug Moreau was preceded in death by his father, Irven Moreau.

Pallbearers for the service were Ricky Ducote, Mark Normand, Ashton Johnson, Robert Moreau, Sam Moreau, and Peter John Lemoine. Honorary pallbearers were the Diocese of Alexandria Deacon Class of 2022.

Family requests donations to be made to St. Mary's Assumption School or St. Mary's Assumption Church, both in Cottonport, LA.

Funeral arrangements were provided by Escude Funeral Home.

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SEMINARIAN SEND OFF FOR FALL SEMESTER. The Seminarian Send Off with Fishers of Men Fish Fry that was held at St Mary’s Assumption in Cottonport on Sunday, Aug. 9. The Vocations Ministry Team of St Mary’s is extremely grateful for the community support shown to our seminarians and pray they have a blessed new semester. Pictured: Fr. Brian Seiler, Seminarians David Rubio, Graham Descant, Matthew Kramer, Ryan Richard, Ty Schexnayder, Sisters from St. Joseph School in Plaquemine, Seminarian Jacob Cass, Fr. Charlie Ray, Fr. Donnie Kuzma, and Fr. Wade DeCoste. Not pictured: Deacon Blaine Phillips, Deacon Gabe Dowden, and Seminarian Blake Bernard.



ANNUAL DEACONS BBQ. On Saturday, Aug. 22, the deacons, deacon candidates, and their wives gathered at Maryhill Renewal Center for their annual barbeque which included great fellowship and good food. Pictured: Mr. & Mrs. John Deville; Dcn. & Mrs. Bill Aldridge; in the back is Dcn. Luke White; Dcn. & Mrs. Paul Sunderhaus; Dcn. Roger Christopher in the back; Mr. & Mrs. John Bibaef; in the front is Mr. & Mrs. Ian Kho; in the back is Dcn. Kenny Sayes with wife Cindy, Mrs. Luke White; Dcn. Chad Thibodeaux; Bishop Marshall; Dcn. Jason Lavergne in the back; Mr. & Mrs. Brad Gadel; and Dcn. Richard Mitchell.



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--- Very Reverend M. Craig Scott, Chairman

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Grant them the wisdom, understanding,
and strength they need to follow
in the footsteps of Jesus.
Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom.
Give them the words they need to
spread the Gospel.
Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.
Help them to become instruments
of your divine grace.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives
and reigns as our Eternal Priest.
Amen.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI CHURCH. On Saturday, Sept. 12, Fr. Taylor Reynolds celebrated Mass for the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary followed by a brunch in the Activities Building. Happy birthday, Mary!



FIRST COMMUNION, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL, ALEXANDRIA. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] recently made their First Holy Communion with Msgr. James Ferguson.

**October is
Respect Life Month**



(above) 195TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY CHURCH IN CAMPTI. The 195th anniversary of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was celebrated with a well-attended commemorative Mass celebrated by pastor, Fr. Gus Voltz. Parishioners and guests gathered to honor the occasion. Additionally, we also celebrated a baptism during the mass.



OCIA OUTSIDE THE EASTER VIGIL. You have probably heard of “Christmas in July.” On, Sunday, Aug. 30, at the Cathedral, we celebrated “Easter in August” — the Easter Sacraments, that is. The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults permits the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist outside of the customary Lent-Easter timeframe. Because we had so many inquirers this spring, Deacon Jason Lavergne and the OCIA team at the Cathedral began new classes in April culminating in 11 baptisms, 8 professions of faith, and 22 confirmations today. Throughout our diocese, new OCIA sessions begin in September. Visit a Catholic Church near you for more information!

*I shall
live in the
house of the
Lord all the
days of
my life.*

Psalm 23: 6
Responsorial Psalm
for October 11
Twenty-eighth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

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Lost Louisiana: St. John's Chapel at Rochelle, LA

*by Father Chad Partain
Archivist for the Diocese of
Alexandria and pastor of St.
Martin Church, Lecompte*

The region of Louisiana where the Diocese of Alexandria is located has a long and rich history dating back to 1699. At one point, as many as 78 churches, 66 mission churches and 52 Catholic schools were in operation across central and north Louisiana within the Diocese of Alexandria* before the Diocese of Shreveport was created in 1988. St. John's Chapel in Rochelle, LA, was one of those communities now lost to time.

On November 28, 1926, Fr. Emeric Scallan drove out from Pineville past Pollock and Georgetown to a little lumber town called Rochelle in Grant Parish, about 35 miles north of Alexandria owned and operated by the Tremont Lumber Company.

The town was named for Mr. Henry Rochelle, an Arkansas native who established the first lumber mill on the site in 1895.

In 1906 the Tremont Lumber Company acquired the property. By 1926 the population had grown to around 620 people with a post office, ice plant, company store and drug store, a hotel, a school as well as Baptist and Methodist churches.

The lumber mill employed 275 to 300 men and operated at a



LOST TO TIME: ROCHELLE, LOUISIANA MISSION CHURCH. In this undated photo, a man stands outside the St. John Chapel in what was once Rochelle, a bustling lumber town in Grant Parish.

yearly capacity of a million board feet making it one of the largest in the state at that time.

Fr. Scallan arrived at the home of Mr. L.G. Negretto where a small altar had been arranged in the living room. There he offered mass for about 20 people. The little congregation was initially placed under the patronage of St. Therese, the Little Flower of Jesus. Fr. Scallan continued to offer Mass once a month and the congregation grew from 20 people

to 20 families.

In January, 1927, a meeting was held to discuss the building of a church and \$500 was pledged toward the project. While the 1927 Mississippi River Flood delayed construction, the Tremont and Gulf Lumber Company leased a plot to the Church and the Catholic Extension Society donated \$1500 with the proviso that the chapel be dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Construction was completed and the chapel was blessed by Bishop Van de Ven on November 20, 1927.

Priests from Alexandria and Pineville would continue to minister to this mission church though the 1930's and 40's. Despite the Depression and the Second World War, the Rochelle mill reached an annual peak production of 50 million board feet of hardwood and pine. But the virgin timber gave way to second growth and in 1949 the company voted to phase out the operation. The railroad was sold to the Illinois Central and the lumber manufacturing operations were moved to Joyce near

Winnfield. The last report filed with the Diocese in 1945 recorded a total Catholic population of 51 people. The community gradually disappeared until only the Baptist cemetery remains today to mark where a community once stood.

*Source: 1959 Official Catholic Directory



Upcoming Retreats:

October 15-18

SPANISH

Mens ACTS Retreat

hosted by Our Lady of
Guadalupe, Forest Hill

November 5-8

Womens ACTS Retreat

hosted by St. Augustine Church

November 12-15

Womens ACTS Retreat

hosted by St. Rita Church

November 19-22

Womens ACTS Retreat

hosted by
Sacred Heart of Jesus

All retreats are held at Maryhill
Renewal Center.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED:

If you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, and that the abuse is by a parent or caretaker, please first call the Louisiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) and/or your local law enforcement agency. If suspected abuse is related to a diocesan/church/school program, or if abuse occurred by anyone acting in Church services, a report should then also be made to the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Dcn. Jason Lavergne 318-6424, ext. 207 or dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org

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Hispanic heritage celebrated during month of September

The Hispanic Community of the Diocese of Alexandria gathered this month to celebrate Mexico's Independence Day and the Feast of St. Louis IX, King of France, in a beautiful expression of faith, culture,

and fellowship. Filled with authentic food, folkloric dancing, joyful music, and service, these celebrations brought together people of many nationalities to honor our Mexican brothers and sisters, as well as the legacy

of one of France's most beloved saints, sharing in the richness of their heritage.

One of the highlights of the festivities was the *cabalgata*, a traditional horseback procession that





brought together riders and families in a joyful display of culture, faith, and community. Deeply rooted in Hispanic tradition, the procession served as a visible reminder of the pride, history, and values that continue to be passed from one generation to the next.

At a time when our world can often seem divided, these gatherings served as a powerful reminder that we are united as one family in Christ. Families, parishioners,

clergy, and visitors came together not simply to celebrate culture, but to celebrate one another, recognizing the beauty that each person and community brings to the life of the Church.

The spirit of Our Lady of Guadalupe was present throughout these celebrations. Known as the Patroness of the Americas, she has long been regarded as a symbol of unity among

see **CELEBRATION**, pg. 15



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Restore Counseling: a service of Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana

Restore Counseling Expands Services

Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana is expanding its Restore Counseling ministry, increasing access to affordable, professional, Catholic faith-based counseling for individuals and families throughout Central Louisiana.

The expansion includes the addition of Lynn Roy, PLPC, who will provide counseling services to children, adolescents and adults of all ages.



Fr. John Brocato, LPC-S

“Many people in our community need someone to walk with them through difficult seasons of life,” said Fr. John K. Brocato, LPC-S, who leads Restore Counseling. “Our goal is to provide excellent professional counseling while always



respecting the dignity of the person and the important role of the Catholic faith in their lives.”

Restore Counseling serves individuals and families facing a variety of challenges, including marriage and family difficulties, grief, trauma, anxiety and other emotional and relational concerns.

The ministry uses proven therapeutic approaches such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), EMDR, Internal Family Systems (IFS), Positive Psychology and the Gottman Method for couples therapy. These approaches are used within a Catholic understanding of the human person as created in the

image and likeness of God and possessing inherent dignity.

Restore Counseling recognizes that psychological and spiritual care have distinct but complementary roles. Counseling does not replace the spiritual life or pastoral care provided by a priest. Instead, it can work alongside spiritual care to support the whole person.

A Familiar Face in the Diocese

For many families in the Diocese of Alexandria, Lynn Roy may already be a familiar face.

Lynn and her husband, Chris, are active members of St. Anthony of Padua Church

in Bunkie and have raised their three daughters in the Catholic school system. She is a former high school theology teacher and campus minister at Holy Savior Menard and currently serves as an administrator at the school.

She also brings more than 15 years of experience as a summer camp director, working closely with young people ranging in age from 8 to 25. Those years of ministry and education have given her extensive experience



Lynn Roy, P-LPC

with children, teenagers, young adults and families.

Lynn is VIRTUS trained and is continuing her formation through the John Paul II Healing Center.

Her addition to Restore

Counseling is especially important because it allows the ministry to broaden its reach to children and adolescents while continuing to serve adults and families.

Making Counseling More Accessible

One of the central goals of Restore Counseling is accessibility. Catholic Charities recognizes that cost, availability or concerns about whether one's faith will be understood can sometimes prevent people from seeking professional counseling.

Restore Counseling seeks to help remove those barriers by offering professional care in an environment where Catholic faith and the dignity of the whole person are respected.

For those struggling personally or concerned about a child, teenager, spouse or family member, asking for help can be an important first step toward healing.

To learn more about Restore Counseling or schedule an appointment, visit cccenla.org and click the “Restore Counseling Center” logo in the upper right corner of the page.

Restore Counseling is a ministry of Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana, serving individuals and families throughout the Central Louisiana.



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*Give the Lord
glory and honor.*

Psalm 96: 7
Responsorial Psalm for October 18
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Services Offered by Catholic Charities of Central LA

Visit cccenla.org to access a variety of services. Appointments are required and can be made online.

- **Mental Health Counseling**
- **Christian Life Coaching**
- **Christian Support Groups:**
Grief/Loss B.R.E.A.T.H.E.
Peace in the Midst of Crisis
Divorce Support
- **Vaping/Tobacco Cessation**
(Youth and Adult)

- **Disaster Preparedness Resources**
- **Financial Literacy Budget Class**
- in partnership with
Red River Bank and OFMS

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- **Volunteer** - cccenla.org/volunteer
- **Donate** - cccenla.org/her-of-hope

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<https://cccenla.org/second-blessings-thrift-store>

Questions? Email info@cccenla.org

- **Assist. Educate. Elevate.**
Emergency Basic Needs Assistance
(For those at risk of utility disconnect and eviction, victims of house fires, and information and referral)



CATHOLIC CHARITIES DONATION. On Wednesday, Sept. 16, the Central Louisiana Community Foundation presented two grants to Catholic Charities of Central Louisiana and Bishop Robert Marshall. Representing Central Louisiana Community Foundation: Emily McGruder and Meagan Beaudoin. Representing Catholic Charities are Blair Jeanise, Cindy Upton and Rebecca Bordelon.



CATECHIST ENRICHMENT DAY. On Saturday, Aug. 30, over 50 people attended the annual Catechist Enrichment day held at Maryhill Renewal Center. Guest speaker was Brantley Rutz who talked about “The Call to the New Evangelization: How to Meet and Engage.”



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The “Heart of Saint Kateri” Circle meets:

2nd Thursday of each month 6:00 p.m.

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An October reset: Less pressure, more presence

by Cari Terracina
Diocese of Alexandria

October has a way of sneaking up on us.

September begins with fresh notebooks and new routines and the optimistic belief that this will be the year we finally get our act together. Then suddenly it's October, someone needs a saint costume, three children have outgrown every pair of pants they own, the parish calendar is full, Halloween is coming, Thanksgiving plans need to be made, and Christmas is somehow close enough that people have started asking what our kids want.

And somewhere in the middle of all of that, we have the nagging feeling:

I know I'm forgetting something.

So, perhaps October doesn't need another perfectly color-coded plan.

Maybe it needs a reset.

Not the kind where we overhaul our lives, buy six new storage bins and establish a morning routine requiring us to wake up at 4:37 a.m.

A simple reset.

Get it out of our heads. Put it on paper. Look at what's coming. Decide what actually matters.

Start with what roots us.

October is traditionally dedicated to the Holy Rosary, and our Church calendar gives us beautiful opportunities to turn our attention toward Christ. Before filling every available square on the family calendar, we can begin there.

What might help our family remain rooted this month?



Maybe we pray a decade of the Rosary together. Maybe we choose one October feast day to celebrate. Maybe we check the parish calendar and actually attend the event we keep saying sounds wonderful.

And while we have the calendar open, we can look ahead to All Saints' and All Souls' Days—because discovering on October 30 that someone needs to dress like St. Francis by tomorrow morning is perhaps not the spiritual preparation the Church had in mind.

Look at the whole life.

There are the obvious October things: school deadlines, football games, fall festivals, Halloween costumes and changing weather.

But there are quieter things worth noticing, too.

When did we last schedule the dentist appointment we keep

postponing? Do the kids still have coats that fit? Is there an annual expense coming before Christmas? Have we looked at our November calendar? Do we know what we're doing for Thanksgiving?

How is our marriage doing in the middle of the family logistics? When did we last make room for a friend? Is there someone who has been on our mind whom we should call?

And here's one we're particularly good at forgetting: What do we need?

Not selfishly. Not extravagantly. Simply as human beings made by God who also require rest, friendship, nourishment, prayer and occasionally a haircut.

Steward the season we actually have.

This is where a reset

becomes something more than organization.

It becomes discernment.

When everything is written down, we can ask better questions:

What actually needs to happen this month?

What can wait?

What am I choosing not to do at all?

That last question might be the most freeing.

Because not every good thing belongs to us.

We can love the parish event and not attend it. We can admire someone else's elaborate Halloween traditions and buy costumes from Target. We can decide this isn't the year for family photos, homemade treats

or a perfectly decorated front porch.

Our lives have seasons, and faithful stewardship does not mean squeezing every possible good thing into every possible season. Sometimes it means recognizing what God has actually entrusted to us *right now*—and tending to it well.

And please, let October be fun.

Buy the mums. Get the pumpkins. Make the soup.

Take the kids outside when the Louisiana weather finally stops personally attacking us.

Sit on the porch. Light the candle. Go to the football game. Invite someone over without turning it into A Whole Thing. Take a picture of ordinary life—not because it's Instagram-worthy, but because someday we may realize these ordinary days were the ones we wanted to remember.

October does not have to become a race to prepare for November, which becomes a race to prepare for December.

We are allowed to actually live it.

So this month, get the swirling list out of your head and onto paper. Cross things off liberally. Choose intentionally. Leave margin for the people in front of you and room for God to interrupt your plans.

Less pressure. More presence.

Happy October, friends.

*I love you,
Lord, my
strength.*

Psalm 18: 2
Responsorial Psalm
for October 25
Thirtieth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Upcoming events at
St. Paul the Apostle Church
in Mansura

St. Paul's Church in Mansura is having a
Rosary Rally
on Saturday, October 10 at 12:00 noon in front of the church.

We are having our
Annual Fall Dinner
on Sunday, Nov. 1
Roast Pork with all the trimmings.
Tickets are \$13.00. Serving time is 10:30 to 1:00 p.m.
Cakes will be available for sale.



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CELEBRATION

cont. from page 11

God's people. Many have reflected upon the subtle difference in the shades of her hands, seeing in them a representation of the unity of cultures and peoples. Through her apparition to St. Juan Diego in 1531, Our Lady helped bring together Indigenous peoples and Spanish settlers under the banner of Christ, reminding us that God's grace transcends every human division.

Her message remains as relevant today as it was nearly five hundred years ago. Before any nationality, language, or cultural identity, we are first children of God. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, called to love one another and to recognize the dignity of every person as a member of God's family.

The opportunity to share and experience different cultures is truly a gift from God. While our traditions reflect the unique history of our ancestors, our purpose remains the same: to know, love, and serve God while loving our neighbor as ourselves. These celebrations allow us to encounter one another more deeply and to appreciate the many gifts that enrich our diocesan family.

It was especially fitting to celebrate this vibrant cultural heritage in Louisiana, a state renowned for its rich cultural traditions and deep Catholic roots. Often recognized as one

of the most culturally distinctive and historically Catholic states in America, Louisiana stands as a testament to the beauty that emerges when different peoples, languages, and traditions come together. Just as Louisiana's identity has been shaped by many cultures, so too is our Diocese strengthened and enriched by the diverse gifts of its faithful.

This joyful celebration would not have been possible without the collaboration of local law enforcement, community volunteers, clergy, and our Bishop. Special gratitude is extended to Father Marc Noel, who led the celebration of Mexico's Independence Day; Father Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez, who led the celebration honoring St. Louis IX; the dance groups from St. Louis Parish in Glenmora, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Forest Hill, and St. Rita Parish in Alexandria; and Mrs. Irma Rodriguez of Mi Tierra Mexican Restaurant for her continued support and gracious hospitality.

Finally, the community expresses heartfelt gratitude to Bishop Robert Marshall, whose dedication to serving and shepherding all the faithful of the Diocese continues to foster unity, faith, and a spirit of welcome among God's people.

As we continue our journey together, may we always walk hand in hand toward Christ, celebrating the gifts God has given each of us and sharing them with one another in love.

May the example of Our Lady of Guadalupe continue to inspire us to build bridges of understanding, embrace one another as family, and remember that in Christ, we are truly one.

La Comunidad Hispana de la Diócesis de Alexandria se reunió este mes para celebrar el Día de la Independencia de México y la Fiesta de San Luis IX, Rey de Francia, en una hermosa expresión de fe, cultura y fraternidad. Llenas de auténtica gastronomía, danzas folclóricas, música alegre y espíritu de servicio, estas celebraciones reunieron a personas de diversas nacionalidades para honrar a nuestros hermanos y hermanas mexicanos, así como el legado de uno de los santos más queridos de Francia, compartiendo la riqueza de su herencia cultural.

Uno de los momentos más destacados de las festividades fue la cabalgata, una tradicional procesión a caballo que reunió a jinetes y familias en una alegre manifestación de cultura, fe y comunidad. Profundamente arraigada en la tradición hispana, la procesión sirvió como un recordatorio visible del orgullo, la historia y los valores que continúan transmitiéndose de generación en generación.

En un momento en que nuestro mundo puede parecer a menudo dividido, estos encuentros sirvieron como un poderoso recordatorio de que estamos unidos como una sola familia en Cristo. Familias, feligreses,

clérigos y visitantes se reunieron no solo para celebrar la cultura, sino también para celebrarse mutuamente, reconociendo la belleza que cada persona y cada comunidad aporta a la vida de la Iglesia.

El espíritu de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe estuvo presente a lo largo de estas celebraciones. Conocida como la Patrona de las Américas, desde hace mucho tiempo ha sido considerada un símbolo de unidad entre el pueblo de Dios. Muchos han reflexionado sobre la sutil diferencia en los tonos de sus manos, viendo en ellas una representación de la unión entre culturas y pueblos. A través de su aparición a San Juan Diego en 1531, Nuestra Señora ayudó a reunir a los pueblos indígenas y a los colonos españoles bajo el estandarte de Cristo, recordándonos que la gracia de Dios trasciende toda división humana.

Su mensaje sigue siendo tan relevante hoy como lo fue hace casi quinientos años. Antes que cualquier nacionalidad, idioma o identidad cultural, somos ante todo hijos de Dios. Somos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo, llamados a amarnos unos a otros y a reconocer la dignidad de cada persona como miembro de la familia de Dios.

La oportunidad de compartir y experimentar diferentes culturas es verdaderamente un regalo de Dios. Aunque nuestras tradiciones reflejan la historia única de nuestros antepasados, nuestro propósito sigue siendo el

mismo: conocer, amar y servir a Dios, mientras amamos a nuestro prójimo como a nosotros mismos. Estas celebraciones nos permiten encontrarnos unos con otros más profundamente y apreciar los numerosos dones que enriquecen a nuestra familia diocesana.

Fue especialmente apropiado celebrar esta vibrante herencia cultural en Luisiana, un estado reconocido por sus ricas tradiciones culturales y sus profundas raíces católicas. Frecuentemente considerado como uno de los estados con mayor riqueza cultural y herencia católica de los Estados Unidos, Luisiana es un testimonio de la belleza que surge cuando diferentes pueblos, idiomas y tradiciones se unen. Así como la identidad de Luisiana ha sido moldeada por muchas culturas, también nuestra Diócesis se fortalece y enriquece gracias a los diversos dones de sus fieles.

Esta alegre celebración no habría sido posible sin la colaboración de las fuerzas del orden locales, los voluntarios de la comunidad, el clero y nuestro Obispo. Un agradecimiento especial se extiende al Padre Marco Noel, quien presidió la celebración del Día de la Independencia de México; al Padre Edwin Rodriguez-Hernandez, quien dirigió la celebración en honor a San Luis IX; a los grupos de danza de la Parroquia San Luis de Glenmora, la Parroquia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Forest Hill y la Parroquia Santa Rita de Alexandria; y a la Sra. Irma Rodríguez, del restaurante Mi Tierra Mexican Restaurant, por su continuo apoyo y su amable hospitalidad.

Finalmente, la comunidad expresa su más sincero agradecimiento al Obispo Robert Marshall, cuya dedicación al servicio y acompañamiento de todos los fieles de la Diócesis continúa fomentando la unidad, la fe y un espíritu de acogida entre el pueblo de Dios.

Mientras continuamos nuestro camino juntos, que siempre caminemos de la mano hacia Cristo, celebrando los dones que Dios ha concedido a cada uno de nosotros y compartiéndolos mutuamente con amor. Que el ejemplo de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe continúe inspirándonos a construir puentes de entendimiento, acogernos unos a otros como familia y recordar que, en Cristo, verdaderamente somos uno.

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(318)717-1995



Fall Events, Fairs and Festivals!

Creole and Family Festival - October 9-11

Join us for the annual Creole and Family Festival at **St. Augustine Church** in Isle Brevelle, LA! **Friday, Oct. 9** at 6:00 p.m. we start with a fish fry, Festival t-shirts will be available for \$20, music by DJ Joey until 10:00. p.m. **Saturday, Oct. 10** registration at 7:00 a.m. for the 3rd Annual Run for Rod 5K Run/Walk, \$35 entry fee. To reserve a t-shirt for the run, please pre-register by Sept. 18. For more information about the Run for Rod, contact 318-663-2506 or 318-332-6586 or run4rod@gmail.com. From 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. we'll have games, Bingo, raffles, gumbo, meat pies, tamales and dinner plates. Mass at 5:00 p.m. followed by more festival activities. From 6:30-10:30 p.m. live music will be provided by Gerard DeLaFose & the Zydeco Gators! Enjoy a 9:00 p.m. fireworks show! On Sunday, Oct. 11, Mass at 10:30 a.m. followed by more festival activities.

OLPS Fall Fest - October 10

Our Lady of Prompt Succor School in Alexandria will host its annual Fall Festival on the school grounds Saturday, Oct. 10. Join us for a day of activities including games and prizes, talent show and lots of food cooked up by the Knights of Columbus! All proceeds benefit Our Lady of Prompt Succor School! For more information, call 318-487-1862.

St. Joseph School Fair - October 10-11

Join us Saturday after Mass for food, fun and games at the **2026 St. Joseph School Fair in Plaquemine**. On **Saturday, Oct. 10**, enjoy a fried catfish dinner provided by the Knights of Columbus council #2142; entertainment begins with Philip Meche, Cajun Outlaw followed by the

band Semi-Charmed. On **Sunday, Oct. 11** Cochon de lait dinners will be available after Mass for \$13 per plate. Both days the Silent Auction and Grand Raffle will be ongoing with Bingo in the school gym. Tons of games for kids young and old! Tickets available at the school office and local businesses.

Sacred Heart School's 61st Annual Fall Festival - October 17-18

Join us at **Sacred Heart School in Moreauville**! All booths open after Mass on both days and include games, cakes, food, face painting, country store, inflatables, split the pot, \$2 raffle and more! **Saturday, Oct. 17**: 5K Run/1 Mile Fun Color Run starts at 7:00 a.m. \$25 entry fee includes a t-shirt. Sign up by Oct. 1. Contact Ashley Bernard 318-717-3311- or Morgan Murry 318-264-2000. Poker Run starts at 12:15 p.m. Registration is \$30 per bike. Contact Lacey Lemoine at 318-359-9572. Motorcycles, Antique Cars and Jeeps are all welcome! Vigil Mass is at 4:00 p.m. and Fried Fish Dinner starts at 5:00 p.m. for \$12. Saturday night entertainment provided by the band "Hot Sauce".

Sunday, Oct. 18: Mass at 9:30 a.m. Cochon de lait and BBQ chicken dinners start at 10:30 a.m. for \$15 a plate. Online Silent Auction closes at 1:00 p.m. Raffle drawing at 3:00 p.m. For more information contact Karen Moreau at 318-359-1953, karen.moreau@shsmoreauville.com or the school office at 318-985-2772.

2026 CabriniFest! - October 24

From 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Join us for this day of fun for the entire family at **St. Frances Cabrini School** in Alexandria! All proceeds benefit Cabrini School. More information to follow.

Fall Festival, St. Rita Church - October 24-25

It's time for the **St. Rita Church** annual Fall Festival in Alexandria! On **Saturday, Oct. 24**, our famous chicken and sausage gumbo will be served starting at 4:30 p.m. \$8 a bowl! Costume contest for kids ages 0-10 starts at 5:00 p.m. Trunk or Treat begins at 5:30 p.m. with Bingo starting at 5:45 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. We'll have a Sweet Shoppe and Silent Auction. Concessions include nachos, hot dogs and more. The fun continues on **Sunday, Oct. 25** and the Sweet Shoppe and Silent Auction wraps up. Everyone is welcome!

Trunk or Treat! Pineville - October 28

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Pineville will be having Trunk or Treat on Wednesday Oct. 28 from 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Trunk or Treat! Woodworth - October 28

Mary, Mother of Jesus Church in Woodworth will be having Trunk or Treat on Wednesday Oct. 28 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Church Fair, Cloutierville - Oct. 30-Nov. 1

St. John the Baptist Church in Cloutierville will host our annual Fall Fair Oct 30-Nov 1. On **Friday, Oct. 30**, we will have a Hayride and Trick or Trunk in the church parking lot. On **Saturday, Oct. 31**, we will hold our Poker Run. Registration is \$30.00 (\$5.00 for additional rider) and begins at 10:00 a.m. Kickstands up at 11:00 a.m. Mass at 4:00 p.m. followed by Bingo at 5:00 p.m. Dance starts at 9:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance and \$15.00 at the door. On **Sunday, Nov. 1**, we will have music and bingo and be serving turkey dinners. Everyone welcome!



BISHOP CELEBRATES MASS AT LSUA. On Wednesday, Sept. 9, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Mass on the campus of LSUA with students, faculty, administration and friends of campus ministry. Thank you to Amelia Bordelon, our campus minister who organized our celebration, to Bradley Wilson who provided the music, to Chancellor emeritus Paul Coreil and



Mrs. Ann Coreil, for their presence and support, to Deacon Jason Lavergne who assisted at the liturgy, and to Knights of Columbus Council 3200 (Cathedral parish) for preparing lunch. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the Memorial of St. Peter Claver.

Take heart: Beyond the Limits returns this December

by Cari Terracina
Diocese of Alexandria

Junior high is a strange little season of life.

One minute, a young person is still very much a child. The next, he or she is asking surprisingly big questions about friendship, identity, faith, belonging and who God created them to become. There is a lot happening beneath the surface during those middle school years — even when what we see on the surface is mostly hoodies, snacks and a strong commitment to pretending parents are embarrassing.

That is exactly why the Diocese of Alexandria is once again inviting sixth, seventh and eighth grade students to **Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference**, Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. at Holy Savior Menard Central High School in Alexandria.

This year's theme, **Take Heart**, comes from the words of Jesus in John 16:33: "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage; I have conquered the world."

Those words feel especially appropriate for our young people. Middle schoolers are



navigating changing friendships, increased academic and extracurricular pressures, social media, family life and all the ordinary awkwardness that comes with growing up. At the same time, they are beginning to wrestle more seriously with questions of faith: Is God really with me? Where do I belong? What does following Jesus actually look like in my everyday life?

Beyond the Limits exists to give them a place to explore those questions within the life of the

Church.

Throughout the day, students will experience dynamic talks, games, music, small-group conversations, prayer and plenty of opportunities to simply enjoy being together. But at the center of the conference will be something much bigger than an entertaining Saturday: an invitation to encounter Jesus Christ.

The day will include opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the celebration of Mass and Eucharistic Adoration. These moments are intentionally surrounded by time for students to listen, respond, ask questions and process what they are experiencing alongside trusted adults and their peers.

We want young people to know that the Catholic faith is not something waiting for them

when they are older.

They belong to the Church **right now**.

This year's conference will welcome Louisiana native **Katie McGrady** as a featured presenter. McGrady is a Catholic speaker and media personality whose work includes Catholic radio and national media commentary. She brings a gift for communicating the faith in a way that is faithful, joyful, relatable and grounded in the real questions facing Catholic families and young people today.

And while students are certainly at the heart of Beyond the Limits, the conference is also designed to support the adults who accompany them.

Youth ministers, catechists, teachers, parents and volunteers often spend much of their time creating opportunities for young people to encounter Christ.

Beyond the Limits gives parish and school leaders a shared experience they can carry home — something to talk about in the van ride back, revisit at the next youth night and build upon long after the conference ends.

Because one day can matter.

One conversation can matter.

One moment before the Blessed Sacrament can matter.

A sixth grader may not remember every talk. An eighth grader may forget who won a game or what song was playing during a particular moment. But they can remember what it felt like to discover that the Church is theirs, that there are hundreds of other young Catholics asking some of the same questions they are asking, and that Jesus Christ meets them in the middle of their actual lives.

That is our hope for Beyond the Limits.

Not simply to give junior high students a great Catholic event, but to help them take another step toward a faith that becomes their own.

Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference: Take Heart will be held Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. at Holy Savior Menard Central High School in Alexandria. The conference is open to students in grades 6–8. Registration is now open.

Because the world our young people are growing up in will certainly bring challenges.

But Jesus has already given them the words they need:

Take heart. I have conquered the world.

ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION CHURCH

TEEN & YOUNG ADULT LEADERSHIP

Retreat

Hosted by: John Listi

OCTOBER 3RD | 8:30 AM

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL GYM

WORSHIP - PRAYER - REFLECTION - RENEWAL

All High School Juniors, Seniors, and young adults (ages 18-25) are invited to join us for a **FREE** one day retreat on becoming a servant leader in your community!

Check in will begin at 8:30 am and the day will conclude with 4:30 pm Mass at St. Mary's Assumption Catholic Church!

Please prayerfully consider joining us for this wonderful opportunity! Scan the QR code or click the link to register!





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Northwestern State University:
NSU Catholic Student Organization
FOCUS Ministries.
Contact Holy Cross Church:
(318) 352-2615

Louisiana Christian University:
LCU Catholic Student Organization
"Wildcat Catholics"
318-447-2956.
Follow us on Instagram
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Retrouvaille Marriage Weekend - Oct. 2-4

Is your marriage going down the right road . . . or is it a little off track? Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. Retrouvaille is a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy, and heal. Retrouvaille is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, and welcomes couples of all faiths as well as non-religious couples. The Oct. 2-4 weekend will take place at Grand Coteau. For more information call 1-800-470-2230 or visit our website: <https://helpourmarriage.org/batonrouge>

Day of Reflection - October 10

The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites presents a Day of Reflection at Maryhill Renewal Center with speaker, Fr. Louis Sklar, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Winnfield. Fr. Sklar will give a talk about "Carmel in Our Lives Today." The day begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends with Vigil Mass at 4:15 p.m. Please bring your own brown bag lunch. Water, tea, coffee and snacks will be provided. Registration is \$10 to be paid at the door.

Annual Bishop's Invitational Golf Tournament - Oct. 12

Bishop's Annual Golf Tournament benefiting Seminarian Education, will be held Monday, Oct. 12 at Links on the Bayou, Alexandria. Lunch begins at 11:00 a.m., tee time is 12:00 noon. The 4-person scramble includes green fees, cart, mulligans, range balls, lunch, dinner and refreshments. 4-man team entry fee starts at \$550 with several other sponsorship opportunities. To sign up a team or to become a sponsor, contact Sandi Tarver at starver@diocesealex.org

White Coat Mass - October 18

The annual White Coat Mass in honor of all medical and health care professionals will be held 9:00 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria. All are invited.

Feast for Good - November 2

Feast for Good is back, Monday, Nov. 2 at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., dinner and program start at 7:00 p.m. Join us for "Strange Delight comes from New York to Cenla" featuring Anoop Pillarisetti and Chef Ham El-Waylly. This year's Feast for Good is shaping up to be a really special night! Join us for incredible food, our Appetizer Cookoff, live chef demonstrations, the auction and a celebration of the people who make St. Mary's such a special place. If

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

you've joined us before, you know Feast for Good isn't your typical fundraiser. And if you've never been, this is a great year to see what it's all about. Every dollar raised this year will be matched!

https://stmarysalexandria.networkforgood.com/events/97041-2026-feast-for-good?hid=NDIzODIxNzk=&utm_campaign=dms_email_blast_4819767

Seminary Come and See Weekend - November 6-8

St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College is scheduled to have its Fall Come and See weekend from November 6-8. This is a great opportunity for any male 16 years old or older to come and see the seminary campus and what seminary life is like. For more information, please contact the Director of Vocations, Fr. Luke LaFleur at frllafleur@diocesealex.org or the Associate Director of Vocations, Fr. Donnie Kuzma at frdkuzma@diocesealex.org.

Beyond the Limits Junior High Conference - December 5

Calling all 6th-8th graders! Beyond the Limits Jr. High Conference is back Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. at Holy Savior Menard High School in Alexandria. This high-energy day is created especially for junior high students and includes dynamic speakers, music, games, small groups, Mass, Reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration, and plenty of fun along the way. This year, we're excited to welcome Katie McGrady and more as we invite young people to Take Heart and discover what it means to follow Jesus right where they are.

Registration is now open at steubenvillesouth.com! Gather your parish or school group and join junior high students from across the Diocese of Alexandria for an unforgettable day of faith, friendship, and fun.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Workshop - January 12, 2027

The workshop lasts about three hours so please plan accordingly. For more information, contact Dcn. Jason Laverigne at (318) 445-6424 ext 207 or by email at dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org.

Tuesday, January 12, 2027, 6:00 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria

There is no need to register and no charge to attend. When the session is completed you will receive a certificate. We will be happy to have you!

Lector Workshop - January 19, 2027

The Diocese of Alexandria is offering Lector Formation workshops for those individuals who are interested in serving or who currently may serve as a Lector in their parish. To serve in this role, one must be of good standing with their Catholic faith and need the approval of their pastor. All training workshops will present the same material and will last no longer than two and a half hours. If you would like to sign up for the next workshop, please contact Dcn Jason Laverigne at (318) 445-6424 ext 207 or email dcnjlavergne@diocesealex.org.

Tuesday, January 19 - 6:00 p.m. - St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria

There is no need to register and no charge to attend. When the session is completed you will receive a certificate. We will be happy to have you!

SAVE THE DATE! Confirmation Retreat - January 23, 2027

Save the date for the upcoming Confirmation retreat to be held at St. Rita Church, Alexandria for youth receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation this coming Spring.

Our retreat leader will be Paul Hood, currently the Coordinator of Youth Disciple Formation for Holy Cross Catholic Church in Lafayette and former member of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church in Alexandria. More details to come!

Pre-Cana Marriage Prep Workshop - February 27, 2027

Will be held at the St. Joseph Catholic Center, 4400 Coliseum Blvd, Alexandria, from 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and includes presentations on various topics that are vital to a couple's lifelong marriage. Lunch included. Registration is open for the Feb. 27, 2027 workshop. **Cost is \$60 PER COUPLE.** To register, please visit: <https://www.diocesealex.org/pre-cana-marriage-prep-workshop/>

After submitting the registration form, you will see a link to pay online. You can also pay the day of the workshop via check, money order or cash. Or you can prepay by mailing your check or money order (payable to Diocese of Alexandria) and mail to: Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation, P.O. Box 7417, Alexandria, LA 71306-0417. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Jason Laverigne in the Office of Religious Education and Faith Formation at (318) 445-6424 ext. 207

Church Today News Deadlines

October 26
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Oct. 15

November 23
Deadline for news:
Thursday, Nov. 12



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October 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
SEPTEMBER 28 PRAY FOR DCN. J. LAVERGNE	29 PRAY FOR DCN. G. LEBLANC	30 PRAY FOR FR. V. MANUEL	OCTOBER 1 Menard at Buckeye (Squirrel Bowl) PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL	2 St. Mary's at Winnfield Retrouvaille Marriage Help Weekend -- Grand Coteau FIRST FRIDAY PRAY FOR FR. R. MATHEWS	3 Retrouvaille Marriage Help Weekend -- Grand Coteau FIRST SATURDAY PRAY FOR DCN. P. MCCUSKER	RESPECT LIFE SUNDAY 4 Healing Power of Christ Marriage Series 1:00-4:00 pm Maryhill Renewal Center PRAY FOR FR. D. MEADE
5 PRAY FOR FR. L. MELCHER	6 PRAY FOR FR. J. MICHALCHUK	7 MEMORIAL of OUR LADY of the ROSARY PRAY FOR FR. K. MICHIELS	8 PRAY FOR DCN. R. MITCHELL	9 Menard at Church Point St Mary's vs. Logansport (Homecoming) Creole and Family Festival -- St. Augustine Church, Isle Brevelle PRAY FOR FR. C. MORGAN	10 Day of Reflection 9:00 am Maryhill Renewal Center OLPS Fall Fest! Rosary Rally 10:00 am St. Paul the Apostle Church, Mansura Fall Fair -- St. Joseph School, Plaquemine PRAY FOR DCN. D. MOREAU	11 PRAY FOR DCN L. MOREAU
12 Bishop's Golf Tournament 12:00 noon Links on the Bayou COLUMBUS DAY PRAY FOR DCN. T. MOULARD	13 PRAY FOR FR. A. MULLOTH	14 PRAY FOR DCN. S. NEWBURY	15 St. Mary's vs. Jonesboro-Hodge SPANISH Men's ACTS Retreat hosted by Our Lady of Guadalupe -- Maryhill Renewal Center PRAY FOR FR. M. NOEL	16 Menard at Delta Charter PRAY FOR FR. K. OBIKWE	17 Fall Fair -- Sacred Heart School, Moreauville PRAY FOR FR. J. O'BRIEN	18 White Coat Mass 9:00 am St. Francis Xavier Cathedral PRAY FOR FR. D. O'CONNOR
19 PRAY FOR FR. C. OGBONNA	20 PRAY FOR FR. A. PALAKKATTUCHIRA	21 PRAY FOR FR. B. PALLIPPARAMBIL	22 PRAY FOR FR. J. PALLIPURATH	23 Menard vs. Port Barre (Homecoming) St. Mary's at Lakeview Holy Family Apostolic Sanctuary Conference -- Randolph Riverfront Center PRAY FOR FR. J. PARDUE	24 Cabrini Fest! 10:00 am-4:00 pm St. Frances Cabrini School, Alexandria Fall Festival -- St. Rita Church, Alexandria PRAY FOR FR. C. PARTAIN	25 PRAY FOR FR. T. PAUL
26 PRAY FOR DCN. C. PELTO	27 PRAY FOR DCN. K. PRIMEAUX	28 Trunk or Treat! 6:00-7:00 p.m. Mary, Mother of Jesus Church, Woodworth Trunk or Treat! 6:00-7:30 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Pineville PRAY FOR FR. R. RABALAIS	29 PRAY FOR FR. C. RAY	30 Menard at Oakdale St. Mary's at Ringgold Church Fair -- St. John the Baptist, Cloutierville PRAY FOR FR. T. REYNOLDS	31 HALLOWEEN PRAY FOR DCN. T. ROBICHAUX	NOVEMBER 1 Annual Fall Dinner 10:30 am-1:00 pm St. Paul the Apostle Church, Mansura ALL SAINTS DAY PRAY FOR BISHOP R. MARSHALL



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, MOREAUVILLE. On Wednesday, Aug. 19, Sacred Heart School commissioned several 6th and 7th grade students at its annual SHS Flag Ceremony and Flag Bearer Commissioning. After the commissioning of the students, the flag was raised and the school sang, "God Bless America." Pictured, front row: Isaiah Joffrion, Graham Wilkes, Isaiah Oglesby. Middle row: Alice Stewart, Sophia Ricaud, Addyson Michel. Third row: Landry Neal, Emily Ford, Micahel Dornier, Anthony Mayeux, Jaxston Courville, Sawyer Coco. Back Row: Principal, Amy Coco; Fr. Abraham Varghese; Director of Maintenance and Student Affairs John Soldani, and 4th grade teacher Trinity Christensen.



ST. FRANCES CABRINI SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. A Cabrini student-led and initiated Rosary club began this school year where students come together during recess and lunch break to pray the rosary together. Fr. Taylor Reynolds, pastor, visited and prayed with them.



BISHOPS BOWL FOOTBALL RIVALRY. It was Friday Night Lights in Natchitoches at Turpin Field for the 6th Annual Bishop's Bowl football game between the St. Mary's Tigers and the Holy Savior Menard Eagles. The Tigers prevailed this year, taking the coveted Bishop's Bowl Trophy home with them.



ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL, BUNKIE. Pictured: students and staff receiving Christian Leader of the month award for August.



HOLY SAVIOR MENARD HIGH SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA. On Wednesday, Sept. 16, Bishop Robert Marshall celebrated Grandparent's Day Mass at Menard.