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'LIVING STONES'

FranU builds to the future

By Richard Meek
The Catholic Commentator

Set against a crystal blue, albeit abnormally toasty October sky, with the sound of heavy machinery piercing the late morning air, Dr. Tina Holland's voice broke with emotion as she discussed what she called a "monumental step" in the history of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge.

Holland, in her seventh year as FranU president, was addressing a crowd of more than 100 supporters and friends who attended groundbreaking ceremonies for the new St. Francis Hall on Oct. 14.

"We are building a state of the art, incredible, beautiful building and I can't wait for y'all to start seeing it,"



Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge broke ground on St. Francis Hall during a ceremony Oct. 14. Participating in the ceremony were Bishop Michael G. Duca, second from left, and FranU president Dr. Tina Holland, standing next to Bishop Duca. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

Holland said. "But it's more than bricks and mortar, we are forming living stones to build a greater community, to

serve the community, to serve those in need." St. Francis Hall represents the

initial step in the development of the university's campus master plan. SEE FRANU PAGE 9



Emma Benoit speaks during a panel discussion following a documentary featuring her, "My Ascension." With her are fellow panelists, from left, Nathan Quinn, Dr. Molly Stadalis, principal of Lutcher High School; Alex Foret, who was on the Hope Squad at Lutcher High School and the national council; Yancy Benoit; Father Mathew Dunn, parochial vicar at St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville; and Sherrard Crespo; a Via Link clinical coach. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

Teen embraces second chance

By Debbie Shelley
The Catholic Commentator

Emma Benoit appeared to have a picture-perfect life. She was smart, a cheerleader at Dutchtown High School, model and had many friends.

That is the first glimpse of Benoit people saw when watching the documentary "My Ascension," which was shown at St. John the Evangelist Church in Prairieville on Oct. 11. But the reality of what Benoit was experiencing inside quickly comes into focus as viewers next see an aerial video of her family's home in Ascension Civil

Parish and hear the recording of the chilling 911 call her frantic mother, Chelsey, made after discovering that her daughter had attempted to commit suicide by shooting herself in the chest.

Benoit's social and academic pressures, along with wondering of "Why am I here?" left her feeling depressed and anxious, as if she were dying inside. Benoit had never told her parents about her internal pain that caused her to attempt suicide in June 2017, before her senior year in high school.

Her attempt resulted in a spinal cord injury that left her paralyzed. Benoit woke up in the hospital

after major surgery wondering why she was in so much pain and why she was in the hospital and why so many people were gathered around her. As her memories of the events eventually emerged, her mission became helping save others from taking their own lives.

"I realized I was not alone," said Benoit, who spoke at the screening. "I realized there are other youth out there who were experiencing the same thing I had.

"I was blessed to have a second chance at life," Benoit said. "I came to terms with what it meant SEE SCREENING PAGE 15

60 YEARS IN THE DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE



Archbishop Alfred M. Hughes records a television show in the studio of Catholic Life Television in 2001. Catholic Life TV broadcast its first show in 2001. Photo courtesy of the Archives Department | Diocese of Baton Rouge

Encountering the Heart of St. Joseph

THE SERVICE OF FATHERHOOD

How honorable, how thankful, how great it is to be at the service of others through the works of fatherhood. This is something I ponder daily as I wake up to start my morning prayer and cook breakfast for the entire family.

Sometimes it is taken for granted that fathers have the duty of protecting, providing and loving their family. But this intuition is embedded in our being as men who are called to be servants for their family. St. Joseph embodies the entire persona of what a man should be as a father and a husband. In St. John Paul II's "Redemptoris Custos," he emphasizes the servitude of St. Joseph as the protector of the Holy Family. His life was built on serving his wife and Jesus as the "overseer of the Lord's birth."

The family has so much to learn by looking at the life of St. Joseph and by understanding that his vocation was built around our savior and the Blessed Mother. The graces that were given to him were because of his righteousness as a man who knew God and was particularly sensitive to his voice. We are called to imitate St. Joseph as husbands, fathers and men so that we can in turn do what our Lord has entrusted us to do. St. Joseph, pray for us.

Deacon Michael Parker
Holy Rosary Church, St. Amant

Return to the center

By Dina Dow

The Mass readings of the 30th and 31st Sundays in Ordinary Time share a timeless wisdom of being centered on God. Some days we find ourselves on an unforeseen path. A sudden or perhaps gradual change causes a shift in what we had planned for, hoped for, longed for. Some changes are a result of natural occurrences, political unrest, an illness or accident. Other changes come about by our own sinfulness or the impact of another's choice. Within the diversion is a longing to return to the center, to return to that which we would identify as "normal," steady, consistent, focused, light, strength. We long to return to the one who offers the gift of love.

The promise (Jer 31:7-9)

Imagine after generations of living in exile you, your family and faith community are led by the Lord back home. The prophet Jeremiah describes this promise to the exiled Israelites who have long desired to return to Jerusalem, their center, their home, their place to worship God. Even though God never abandoned the exiled nation, he did forewarn them through the prophets of the looming path. During their exile God promised to gather them from the ends of the earth and open a way of return. Those who left weeping will one day return with joy, exclaiming, "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy" (Ps 126). For God is their father.

Our center (Heb 5:1-6; 7:23-28)

Personal exile is the result of a decision to turn away from the Lord in sin. It can either be a slow exile or a swift one. Either way we experience a turbulent journey of restlessness, brutal, seeped in despair, loss and blindness if it goes unrealized and unaccounted. At some point reality is met with darkness. Desert. Dryness. Hoping for change. A light of conversion awakens. Grace. We desire to return to the Lord, our center.

But how can that happen when unworthiness seems to blot out mercy? We cry out, "Have pity on me, Lord." We desire mercy. We need help. Only one can offer a perfect sacrifice and gift of self to not only lead us home but who also redeems, repairs, atones and satisfies the debt. Jesus, our high priest, offered himself as sacrifice in atonement for

our sins. He is our help, our path of love, our "high priest." Patient for the ignorant. Knowledgeable of human weakness. Perfectly free from sin and obedient to the will of God. "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God" (Jn 6:38). In Christ we have our center.

LIFE-GIVING
FAITH

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches in Paragraph 616, "it is 'love to the end' that confers on Christ's sacrifice its value as redemption and reparation, as atonement and satisfaction. He knew and loved us all when he offered his life. Now 'the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore, all have died.' No man, not even the holiest, was ever able to take on himself the sins of all men and offer himself as a sacrifice for all. The existence in Christ of the divine person of the son, who at once surpasses and embraces all human persons and constitutes himself as the head of all mankind, makes possible his redemptive sacrifice for all."

Take courage (Mk 10:46-52)

Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, called out from darkness as Jesus passed him on the roadside, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." Bystanders attempted to quiet him, but when Jesus calls for Bartimaeus they said to him, "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." Jesus asks "What do you want me to do for you?" He replies "Master, I want to see." Bartimaeus' confident faith leads him to directly state what he wants Jesus to do. "Jesus tells him, 'Go your way; your faith has saved you. Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.'

"I will gather them from the ends of the world, with the blind and the lame in their midst." (Jer 31:8) Take courage. Be strong. Jesus is calling you to come out of the darkness.

31st on the 31st

The liturgical 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time takes place this year on the 31st of October, All Hallows Eve, aka, Halloween. Sainly costumed trick or treaters receive rather large handfuls of goodies from our buckets each year. Nothing against the traditional princesses, Avengers, Turtles, spooks and ghosts. Yet, donning a costume representing one of the canonized saints is a great

SEE GOSPEL PAGE 14



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Centers guide women through crisis pregnancies

By Debbie Shelley

The Catholic Commentator

When a woman learns she has an unplanned pregnancy, one of the first things she seeks is answers.

Respect Life month is celebrated in October and highlights the mission of crisis pregnancy clinics and centers in letting a woman know that abortion is not the answer by walking with them through the pregnancy and beyond.

Among the issues that women in crisis pregnancies deal with are the loss of financial, relational and emotional support.

In the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, Woman's New Life Clinic in Baton Rouge experienced a surge in calls from women in crisis pregnancies, according to Allison Millet chief executive officer of NWLC. Especially with many losing their jobs, the women "didn't know how they were going to do it on their own," Millet said. "So many women are without hope."

Women coming through the doors of the Pregnancy Problem Center in Baton Rouge say the center's name resonates with them because they consider their pregnancy "a problem," according to CEO Frances Broussard.

"They want help," said Broussard.

"They're looking for an answer," added Kitty Thibodeaux, a PPC volunteer.

The crisis pregnancy centers provide the women with answers because they know "knowledge is power."

"We provide truth," said Millet. "We want her (the mother) to have a place to voice her opinion and to receive the care she needs."

Among the services provided by both centers are free pregnancy tests, counseling, ultrasounds and information on adoption or community resources if they choose to raise their baby.

And the focus of all services it provides is to open conversations, according to Broussard.

She said PPC volunteers help guide women from seeing their pregnancy as a problem to, as one who gave birth to her baby said, a "bundle of joy."

The women coming to PPC view a parenting video, "The First Years Last Forever."

PPC also offers parenting

workshops and classes and has a "Mom and Me" shop filled with baby clothes and items to help the women embrace motherhood.

If the woman is leaning toward wanting an abortion, the video, "Abortion: A Woman's Right to Know" provides a clearer understanding of what happens during the process and the risks and consequences.

Concerning the ultrasounds, Broussard said it's "wonderful to watch the patients seeing the ultrasound. The ultrasound is definitely the point when many decide to keep their baby."

Women who have taken an abortion pill and afterwards regret their decision may, possibly, be able to continue the pregnancy if they immediately contact a center because "time is of the essence."

By contacting the WNLC and PPC they can receive information on reversing the effects of the abortion pill. If after 4:30 p.m. or on a weekend, call 1-877-558-0333 for help.

And for women who have regretted a past abortion, WNLC and PPC provide post-abortion counseling and retreat referrals.

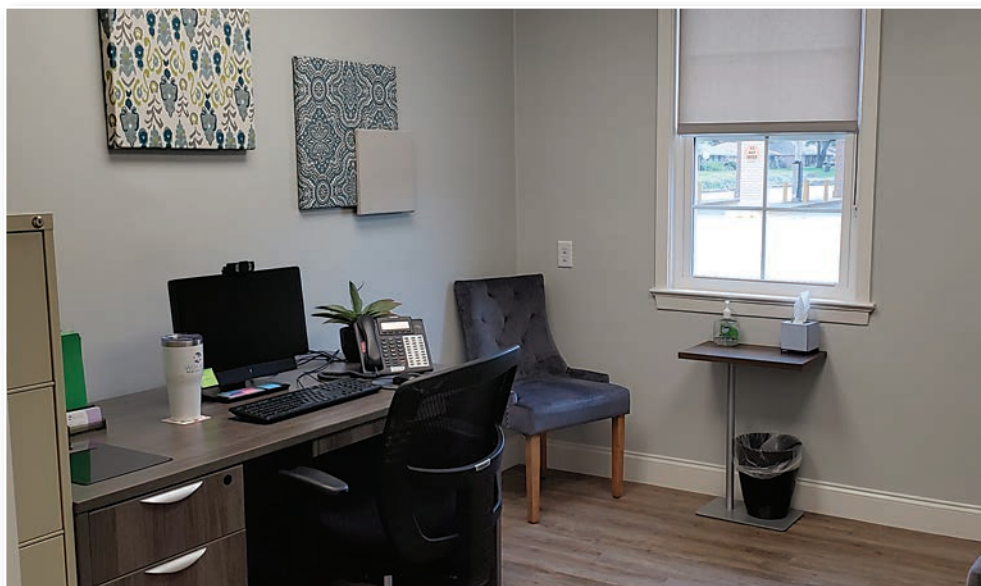
Some women who have already experienced a previous abortion and find themselves pregnant again will return because they want to give the baby life. They've experienced the cold, cruel, sterile environment of the abortion clinic and are touched by the atmosphere of light and hope at the WNLC and PPC.

"That is one of the most beautiful things," said Millet. "Some women who have chosen to have an abortion will come back and say, 'I don't want to go through that again, and I knew where to come.'"

For the women one of the most important needs in crisis pregnancies is someone to walk with them with prayers and support.

"When we see a client drive in the parking lot, we pray," said Patti Kelly, a PPC volunteer.

"God is with us all every step of the way. I think we are on holy



The counseling center at Woman's New Life Clinic in Baton Rouge. Photo provided by WNLC

ground," said Broussard.

Conversations are focused on helping the women to embrace the life within them. There are

also signs of the Catholic faith throughout the building.

"We love them right where they are, no matter where they

a framed quote from St. Edith Stein in the clinic's hallway: "The world doesn't need what women have. It needs what women are."



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The rosary: Prayer to meditation to contemplation

VATICAN CITY (CNA) – It is interesting that in her appearances at Lourdes, Fatima and other locations, the mother of God repeatedly recommends praying the rosary. She does not invite us to pray the Divine Office, or to do spiritual reading, or eucharistic adoration, or practice interior prayer or mental prayer. Why does Mary “only” place the rosary in our hearts?

We can find a possible answer by looking at the visionaries of Lourdes and Fatima. Mary revealed herself to children of little instruction, who could not even read or write correctly. The rosary was for them the appropriate school to learn how to pray well, since bead after bead, it leads us from vocal prayer, to meditation and eventually to contemplation. With the rosary, everyone who allows himself to be led by Mary can arrive at interior prayer without any kind of special technique or complicated practices.

All Christians are called to the kind of interior prayer that allows an experience of closeness with God and recognition of his action in our lives. We can compare the rosary to playing the guitar. The vocal prayers – the Our Father, the Hail Mary

and the Glory Be – are the central prayers of Christianity, rooted in Scripture. These are like the rhythm in a song.

When praying the rosary, it is the song of our heart, as we place our own life before God, to the tempo of the prayers and meditations.

With this understanding, the following tips can help those who pray the rosary move from vocal prayer to meditation to inner contemplation:

1) Schedule the time

Our schedule is full of appointments. More or less consciously, we also plan out the time we’re going to need for each task or appointment. Sometimes it is good to set aside 20 or 30 minutes to pray the rosary, and write it down in the schedule. This “appointment” with Jesus and Mary is then just as important as all the other ones planned.

2) Don’t rush

We can learn a lesson about prayer by observing people in love. During a romantic candlelit dinner, no one would be constantly looking at the clock, or choking down their food, or leaving the dessert to one side to finish as quickly as possible. Rather, a romantic meal is stretched

out. So it is with praying the rosary. It shouldn’t be treated as sets of Hail Mary’s to be performed as if one were lifting weights. I can spend time lingering on a thought. I can also break away from it. I can, principally at the beginning, simply be peaceful. If I keep this peaceful attitude and an awareness of how important this 20-minute “appointment” is, then I will have prayed well.

3) Savor the experience

St. Ignatius recommends what’s called the “third form of prayer,” which consists in adjusting the words to the rhythm of one’s own breathing. Often it is sufficient in praying the rosary to briefly pause between the mysteries, and to remember that Jesus and Mary are looking at me full of joy and love, recognizing with gratitude that I am like a little child babbling words every so often to in some way affirm that I love God. To do this, it can be useful to pause and take a few breaths before resuming vocal prayer.

4) A gaze of love

The vocal prayers of the rosary only provide the rhythm of the prayer. With my thoughts, I can and should go out from the rhythm to encounter the mystery which is being contemplated. It’s a time to look your beloved in the eyes and let him look back, with eyes full of love.

5) Allow yourself to be amazed





One of the first and most important steps for inner prayer is to go from thinking and speculation to looking upon and being amazed. Think of lovers who meet, not to plan out what they’re going to give each other or what they might do on the next vacation, but to enjoy the time together and to rejoice in each other. That’s how our gaze at Jesus and Mary ought to be in the rosary.

6) Allow your “inner cameraman” to notice details


Some people close their eyes while praying in order to concentrate. Others find it useful to focus their eyes on a certain point. Either way, what is important is for the eyes of the heart to be open. Praying the rosary is like going to the movies. It’s about seeing images. It’s useful to ask yourself: Who, what, where am I looking at when I contemplate the birth of Jesus, or his crucifixion, or his ascension into heaven?

7) Pray in words, mind and heart

The words accompany, the mind opens, but it is the heart that has the leading role in prayer. All the great spiritual authors agree that inner prayer is about dwelling in the affections, that is, the inner sentiments and movements. St. Teresa of Avila says very simply: “Don’t think a lot, love a lot!” That is exactly what praying the rosary ought to lead us to.








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SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH RESPOND TO HURRICANE IDA – Deeply touched by the plight of many in south Louisiana, Sister Chris Pologa CSJ, pastoral care minister at St. Joseph’s Academy in Baton Rouge, organized a fundraiser to help “our dear neighbors” whose homes were destroyed by Hurricane Ida. She invited the Sisters of St. Joseph and their lay associates from Baton Rouge and New York (her home diocese) to contribute gift cards and monetary donations to assist the people of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. On Oct. 3, Sister Chris, Sister Joan Laplace CSJ and CSJ Associate Linda Thompson drove to Theriot to celebrate Mass and discuss ways to offer ongoing support while delivering the donations. They met at St. Eloi Church with Bishop Shelton Fabre of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux and Father Dean Danos, pastor of St. Eloi. Like many homes in the area, the church suffered tremendous damage. The main sanctuary wall was blown in, and the parish center was destroyed in the storm. Pictured, from left, are Bishop Fabre, Sister Joan, Sister Chris and Father Danos. Photo provided by Sister Chris Pologa CSJ

PUBLIC SQUARE ROSARIES



People in the Diocese of Baton Rouge joined thousands of other public rosary rallies taking place across America on Oct. 16. The event was sponsored by America Needs Fatima. One of those locations was the prayer garden at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator



Parishioners from Mater Dolorosa Church in Independence and St. Dominic Church in Husser gathered in downtown Independence on Oct. 16 for the 14th year to pray a public rosary. The event was part of the nationwide America Needs Fatima. Tony Anzalone, music director at Mater Dolorosa, provided the music. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

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OLOL Medical Center

WHITE CASTLE

Daigle Supermarket

ZACHARY

Lane Regional & Nursing Home

Oak Wood Nursing Home

Rouse's

Zachary Manor

Guardian angels

Q When I was a child, my mother prayed the Guardian Angel prayer with me. Do we really have guardian angels?

A I think we do, and the Catholic Church does too because we annually celebrate the Memorial of The Holy Guardian Angels on Oct. 2. In the Gospel of that day, Jesus speaks about the little children when he says, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly father” (Mt 18:10). That certainly appears to me that Jesus was speaking about guardian angels, and Jesus cannot speak an untruth.

Guardian angels have been part of our thinking from the beginning. Origen, the great Scripture commentator of the 2nd century, writes, “For each of us in the church of God, no matter how small, there is a good angel of the Lord who stands daily before the face of God to rule and move and govern, to correct our actions and intercede for us in our sufferings.”

Christian tradition does not limit guardian angels to just those in the church as Origen stated but that all hu-

mans have a guardian angel. St. Jerome writes, “What a great dignity of souls that each person has, from birth, an angel assigned as a guardian!”

So, the question might arise: “Should we name our guardian angel?” The practice of assigning names to our guardian angel is discouraged. The “Directory of Popular Piety and the Liturgy” states, “The practice of assigning names to the holy angels should be discouraged, except in the cases of (Sts.) Gabriel, Raphael and Michael whose names are contained in holy Scripture.”

So, why does the church discourage this? Simplycatholic.com published an article by Msgr. Charles E. Pope entitled “Should We Name Our Guardian Angel?” Here are his thoughts:

“First, there is the understanding of what a name is. For most of us in the

modern, Western world, a name is simply a sound we go by. But in the ancient, biblical world, and even in many places today, a name has a far deeper meaning. A name describes something of the essence of the person. This helps explain

the ancient practice of the Jews to name the child on the eighth day. The delay gave the parents some time to observe something of the essence of the child, and then, noting it, they would name the child. Indeed, most biblical names are deeply meaningful and descriptive.

“But it is presumptuous to think that we can know enough of the essence of a particular angel in order to be able to assign a name. Hence, assigning a name seems inappropriate.

“The second reason is that assigning a name indicates some superiority over the one named. Thus, in the case of children,

parents, who are superior over their children, rightly name them. However, in the case of angels, they are superior to us. And, even though we often speak of them as serving us, they do this on account of their superior power and as guardians. Thus God commands us to heed their voice.

“You are surely encouraged to speak to your angel, and the usual practice is to say something like, ‘Dear guardian angel ...’ or simply ‘guardian angel, please help...’”

If you are like me, you probably don’t think much about your guardian angel. In fact, you may not have thought about him (or her or it) for years. But at least today, let us thank our guardian angel for always being with us, helping us, protecting us, even though we don’t always know it or recognize it.

Let us pray: Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God’s love entrusts me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen

DEACON HOOPER is a deacon assistant at Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs. He can be reached at ghooper@diobr.org.



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THE CATHOLIC COMMENTATOR

Catechists deepen their faith at convocation

By Richard Meek

The Catholic Commentator

Bryan Pedraza clearly remembers the moment, a snapshot of life that so often molds a young mind.

As a college freshman in only his first week on campus, Pedraza was attending Mass in a chapel with nine other students when he was startled by a request from the celebrant. Following Mass, the priest called Pedraza to the altar and said “Now I’m going to invite Bryan up, and he’s going to tell you about the Bible studies that we’re starting.”

Admittedly, Pedraza had “no idea” about Bible study but those next few minutes proved to be the stepping off point of a career in catechesis.

“(The priest) just threw me in,” said Pedraza, who is a professor at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge.

Pedraza shared his experiences during the 2021 Convo-



Dr. Bryan Pedraza, professor at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge, speaks to catechists during the 2021 Convocation Celebrating Catechists. Photo by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

ocation Celebrating Catechists recently held at the Tracy Center Ballroom on the campus of the Bishop Robert E. Tracy Center in Baton Rouge.

Sponsored by the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis

of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, the morning convocation led by Pedraza allowed catechists to deepen their own faith and learn how to accompany others on their spiritual journeys.

Pedraza introduced himself

as someone who “labors in the vineyard with you.”

“I’m so grateful for the efforts that you have already put in, whether you’ve been serving the church for less than a month as a catechist or have been serving for over 50 years,” he said. “How grateful I am that you are one of the people that God has called to carry the Gospel to the ends of

the earth.”

The theme of the talk, “Eucharistic Heart of Jesus as the Source and Summit Evangelization,” was divided into three “acts,” with Jesus as the “main actor.”

Pedraza related how he attended Mass on most Sundays with his family and strived to

SEE **CATECHESIS** PAGE 8

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CATECHESIS ▼

From page 7

be a “good kid” but it did not have hold on him. It was through a friend who was a Protestant that he developed a love of the Bible.

He said his friend, whose

name is Kirsten, noticed that Pedraza occasionally seemed sad and would be off to himself. She began dropping Bible verses in his locker and during the summer before their senior year of high school they would talk about Jesus while sitting on the

back of a truck.

“For the first time in my life, I heard someone talk about Jesus Christ like he was alive,” Pedraza said. “It stopped me in my tracks the way she talked about him, and it was like, well, wait, you sound like you know

him, like you talk to him now.”

“It stunned me,” he added. “Little did I know my life would be utterly changed because someone had finally spoken to me about Jesus like he was a person. And he was alive.”

Being introduced to the living Christ is not a new concept, Pedraza said. Rather, it dates to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, weaves its way through the early church, through the desert father of St. Augustine, the Middle Ages and “even finds its way right here to this ballroom in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.”

“The church is calling us to evangelize,” he said.

Evangelization, as defined by the Second Vatican Council, is the proclamation of Christ by a living testimony as well as by the spoken word.

“Evangelization will be incomplete without proclaiming the very name of Jesus, which our church tells us is the only name that bears its presence with it,” Pedraza said. “And when we say his name, the demons tremble.”

He stressed the goal of all catechists is to put people in intimate communion with Jesus because only he can lead them to the love of the father in the Spirit and make one share in the life of the Trinity. He drilled home the fact that no believer in Christ, no institution of the church, can void this supreme duty.

“All of the church’s energies, no matter what ministry takes place, even if you’re an usher at the door, even if you are the person taking the phone call in the parish center, all of the church’s energies must be committed to evangelization,” he said.

Pedraza said that his favorite theologian, Pope Benedict XVI, says being Christian is not the

result of a “lofty idea” but it’s the encounter with an event, a person who gives life a new horizon and decisive direction.

“When this event happens, when you meet this person, it changes everything,” he said. “It changes the way you get up in the morning. It changes the way you treat the barista at the coffee house. It changes the way you teach your students. It changes the way you pray, the way you go to Mass, the way you love your family.”

He said most important is a personal relationship with Christ for it is an encounter with the son of God that gives new energy to the whole of one’s existence.

Pedraza said Pope Francis called the first document he wrote as pope “The Joy of the Gospel” because, according to the pontiff, “We cannot have any more Christians who look like they’re leaving a funeral.”

“To teach the faith, if this is the precious pearl, if this is the thing worthy selling everything for, then it must bring a deep, deep joy,” Pedraza said. “I invite all Christians, even catechists in Baton Rouge, at this very moment to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

“Or at least an openness to letting him encounter them. I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.”

He said life will not always be easy but it must be one that is deeply rooted in joy because one knows and has experienced the love of Christ. He said the love of Jesus is what must be the driving force on one’s ministry.

“Be brave,” he said.

The morning also consisted of several breakout sessions where those in attendance were able to share reflections individually with each other.

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ST. JOHN HIGH
Plaquemine
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6 p.m.
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More than 100 supporters and friends of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge gathered Oct. 14 for a groundbreaking ceremony to launch construction of St. Francis Hall. Photos by Richard Meek | The Catholic Commentator

FRANU ▼

From page 1

plan. The 75,000 square foot, three-story building will be dedicated to better accommodate student learning and development at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The building will contain modular spaces that can support multiple educational activities and social events of varied sizes. Learning outside of the classroom will be facilitated by interactive student spaces adjacent to instructional spaces, promoting ongoing synergies between formal and informal

learning and enhancing the relationship-based education characteristic of a Franciscan university.

“While our eyes are always focused on the future, I think it’s really important to keep our feet firmly planted in our tradition, especially our historic Franciscan tradition, that which is given to us so generously by St. Francis of Assisi and of course our beloved Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady,” Holland said. “We have the responsibility and privilege to ensure their university thrives.

“We have the responsibility

to invest and continue to invest and to reinvest not only but certainly in the physical campus but also to invest in everything that it takes to educate and form the living stones we build in our community. It is a commitment to students who graduate, who are the living stones, that we are going to continue to shape within the physical space of this magnificent building.”

She called the university’s mission an extension of the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady order.

Dr. Michele Blackwell, a FranU graduate and Faculty Senate president, said she experienced first-hand how the university’s staff makes the students feel welcome and assure they have the necessary tools they need not only to survive but to thrive.

“This is a family atmosphere,” she said. “We persisted in building a culture of excellence and a reputation of faithfulness to our mission.”

East Baton Rouge Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome said the construction of St. Francis represents another great stride in the Baton Rouge education and medical communities.

“Creating a healthier city is no easy task,” she said. “Educational institutions like FranU play an essential role creating the foundation needed for the necessary work.”

For Holland, the symphony of heavy machinery was



Workers are on site using heavy equipment to take soil samples and other work.

sweet sounding as the former Marine has spent much of her tenure discerning how best to accommodate the burgeoning FranU student body. There was some talk of building a new campus in another part of the city but ultimately the decision was made to build on its current site, adjacent to Our lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center.

“Emotions are overwhelming, joyful and gratitude,” a beaming Holland said following the 30-minute ceremony. “It is something our students need and deserve and something our mission requires in order for us to continue to advance it.

“We put our hearts into fulfilling the mission of this organization.”

Bishop Michael G. Duca, who offered the blessing, said for the Diocese of Baton Rouge to have a Catholic university is a privilege and an honor.

“It’s something I’m very proud of,” Bishop Duca said. “The university is important and this building in particular because not only does it provide excellent medical care and people who are working in the medical field, that is a long tradition, but

they bring to our diocese a full Catholic university.

“They teach our deacons. They are a resource for us.”

St. Francis Hall will support FranU’s ongoing expertise in experiential learning with simulation suites that recreate patient-centered clinical environments, including high-fidelity rooms, standardized patients and multi-bed skills labs. Flexible and adaptable classrooms, team rooms and labs for project-based, interdisciplinary and interprofessional learning will help to prepare graduates for healthcare delivery methods that improve outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

The university began in 1923 as a school of nursing with the purpose of serving the workforce needs of Our Lady of the Lake, its affiliated hospital. The original school of nursing has grown to more than 1,400 students.

St. Francis Hall, scheduled to be completed by January 2023, is the initial step in the planned new campus that will feature more usable square footage on a significantly smaller footprint.



Bishop Michael G. Duca shared in the joy of the groundbreaking, as he gleefully holds the shovel he used to toss ceremonial dirt.

Blessed Acutis bringing young people back to God

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CNA) – Blessed Carlo Acutis was beatified on Oct. 10, 2020, and became the first member of the millennial generation to become officially known as a “blessed.”

Interest in the life of Carlo Acutis has been intense all over the world. And while research shows that a growing number of millennials and Gen Z Americans do not practice any religious faith, CNA spoke with some Catholic contemporaries of Acutis, who said the video-game playing Italian makes them want to grow closer

to God.

Born on May 3, 1991, Carlo Acutis died at the age of 15 on Oct. 12, 2006 after suffering from leukemia.

During his life, he created a website dedicated to eucharistic miracles and maintained a deep devotion to the Eucharist until his death. He also loved PlayStation, which is probably a first for anyone canonized or beatified.

Acutis serves as an example for how millennials and Gen Z should live their lives, Cecilia Cicone, a 25-year-old from



Blessed Carlo Acutis

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Delaware, told CNA.

“Carlo puts flesh on what a saint who plays video games and goes on the internet looks like. He challenges me to examine my conscience and say, ‘Ok, I’m called to be a saint who uses the internet too. Am I using it to make God’s love known?’”

Acutis, she said, is a concrete example of “what holiness looks like in the 21st century.”

“We see that holiness can involve awkward middle school phases with popped collars and video games,” she said. “With the beatification of Carlo Acutis, for the first time I experience the peace and joy of recognizing that I, too, can be a saint of the 21st century. It’s not a hypothetical anymore.”

Father John LoCoco, a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, is about six months younger than Acutis. And when he first heard about Acutis in 2014, he said he was “wholly unimpressed by his witness at first.”

“I never cared much for computers or video games, so it never made him ‘familiar.’ He was just a kid who blogged about the Eucharist,” Father LoCoco told CNA.

Gradually, however, Father LoCoco’s views on Acutis began to change, and now he thinks that Acutis “will be a stalwart saint in the modern age.”

“I think that what I have come to love is what seems to be the very gentle nature of Carlo,” Father LoCoco said. “His care for those who are picked on in school, his care for those whose parents were divorcing; Carlo seems so emotionally invested in the lives of people.”

Father LoCoco told CNA that he now finds the “profoundly quiet, honest sense that he had of God’s presence in all things” to be “remarkable.”

Maria Roberts, a 26-year-old computer programmer, is excited that her profession is about to gain its own patron saint, and she thinks that Acutis is a good example for how Catholics should be using the internet.

“It is important for us as Catholics to

”think about how technology can be used for good and for evangelization, and not as a way to take advantage of others or demoralize young people,” she said.

“There is so much good to be done and so much suffering nowadays – young people should know that their talents can be used for God’s glory in many ways through our technological advances.”

Acutis’ age has been a sort of a spiritual wake-up call for some Catholics.

“The fact that we were alive at the same time and are so close in age seems to highlight even more the gap between our ‘levels’ of holiness,” Taylor Hyatt, a 28-year-old from Canada, told CNA. She was born the same year as Acutis.

“That said, I really appreciate his deep love for the Eucharist and interest in the internet. We shared those interests, back when I was his age and up to now,” she said. Hyatt also admired Acutis’ interest in disability rights, a cause she is also involved with.

It is Acutis’ “normalcy” that makes him so interesting, some Catholics told CNA.

Acutis “is someone we can look at and quite literally picture ourselves,” Alex Trevino, a 30-year-old from Dallas, told CNA. “He’s buried in the clothes that I wore as a teenager.”

Trevino said that Acutis’ beatification shows young people “that you don’t need to be a priest, a bishop or even a pope to be holy.”

“We need to see as a church that sainthood, heaven and eternal life with God is real and attainable,” he added.

Ani, a 24-year-old from Texas, agreed. She described Acutis as “just a regular dude who grew up Catholic, as we all do, got sick like so many people do, and built a website to post about his specific interests like we do.”

“We talk about everyday sanctity a lot in Schoenstatt, the concept of doing things extraordinarily well,” Ani said to CNA. “I feel like Carlo maybe the first saint I’ve seen that’s had an actually normal, human, attainable way to do that.”

Rector named at ND seminary

By Richard Meek

The Catholic Commentator

Father Josh Johnson, vocations director for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, joyfully welcomed the appointment of Father Joshua Rodrigue as rector/president of Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of the Archdiocese of New Orleans announced the appointment Oct. 14. Father Rodrigue, 44, will succeed Father James Wehner, who has spent the past 10 years at Notre Dame, on Jul 1, 2022.

“(Father Rodrigue) is a great priest,” said Father Johnson, who was taught by Father Rodrigue at St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict.

“He was a great inspiration to all of the seminarians, and we all looked up to him,” Father Johnson added. “I consider him a friend.

“I am stoked, super excited to see (where God will lead him.)”

Father Rodrigue, currently the director of spiritual formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, was raised as a parishioner at St. Charles Borromeo Church and graduated from E.D. White Catholic High School, both in Thibodaux. He attended St. Joseph before attending North American College in Rome.

He was ordained Aug. 10, 2002.

Following his ordination, Father Rodrigue returned to Rome to complete his licentiate in sacred theology and then came back to Louisiana, where he served as parochial vicar at Holy Cross Church in Morgan City before being appointed pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Bayou Black and then rector of St. Francis de Sales Cathedral in Houma.

In addition to his parish duties, he served as an adjunct professor of theology at St. Ben's from 2006-17 and at Notre Dame Seminary from 2008-09. In 2017, he was asked by

the NAC to return to Rome to serve as director of pastoral formation and later as director of spiritual formation. It was the second time his alma mater had asked him to serve on the faculty; the first time, then-Bishop Sam Jacobs felt there were too many pastoral needs in the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese to release him for service in Rome.

Father Rodrigue said Bishop Shelton Fabre, a New Roads native, let him make the decision of whether or not to go in 2017.

“He told me, ‘They’re asking for you again,’” Father Rodrigue said, smiling. “So, I took it to prayer, and I talked things over with my dad. Dad’s got some good advice. He said, ‘They asked you once; they asked you twice; they’re not going to ask you a third time.’ I was thinking about my family and

their health. I had a grandmother who was in her upper 90s. She’s still living. She’s going to be 100 this year. She wasn’t too happy about me going overseas, but she’ll be happy now.”

In Rome, Father Rodrigue also taught for the past five years at the Pontifical Gregorian University (2017-18) and at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, beginning in 2018.

His Roman experience has given him a broader understanding of the universal church and also allowed him to be more intentional about relying on God’s grace in his life.

“It certainly gave me a lot more patience with people who were having to try to figure out my English,” Father Rodrigue said. “Before, I was the rector of the cathedral and I did all kinds of things. When I got there as a faculty member, I was no longer making my own schedule and I felt so incompetent. It was almost a desert experience in that all your support systems that you have are taken away, and you truly have to rely on the Lord and on God’s providence in everything.

“Sometimes you have to remind the Lord, ‘Look, I’m doing this for you!’ Usually, when I did that, he helped out. I think it was just me remembering that I need to turn to the Lord.”

Father Rodrigue brings a wealth of experience to his new assignment, including his time in Rome, Father Johnson said. He also knows he can turn to Father Rodrigue for advice as Father Johnson fosters vocations for the diocese.

He also had high praise for Father Wehner, who has spent the past 10 years at Notre Dame.

“(Father Wehner) was truly a gift,” Father Johnson said. “He transformed that seminary and made it what it is today.”

“I think (the philosophy of Father Wehner) will continue to remain the same,” he added. “They have the same mind, the same mission. And the community is blessed Father Josh will continue what Father Wehner started 10 years ago.”

Father Johnson said Father Wehner and Father Rodrigue are both good priests who want holy, mature priests to serve the community.

“I trust their leadership, I trust their vision, I trust their plan,” Father Johnson said.

Father Rodrigue addressed the seminarians as a group before Mass in the seminary chapel Oct. 15.

“I love the priesthood,” he told them. “I’ve loved it for the past 20 years. I hope that my ministry here at Notre Dame will help to form men to be compassionate, loving priests who have great zeal for the salvation of souls, who are willing to lay down their lives for the flock.

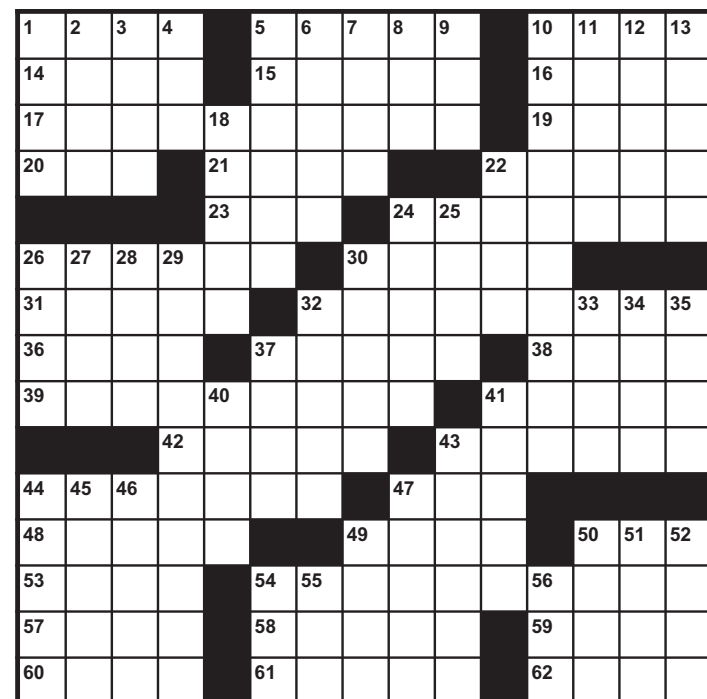
“Priesthood is an exciting adventure. Priesthood is like riding a tandem bicycle. The Lord gets in the front seat and he says, ‘Just hop on the back and trust me.’ He says, ‘Just keep pedaling. I’ll take you on a ride that you’ll never forget. And I think you might like where you end up at the end.’

“The Lord has been really good to me, and I don’t know what’s on the road ahead of us all, but I trust him and I trust in one thing: God will provide.”

Peter Finney Jr., editor of the Clarion Herald in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, contributed to this story.



Father Joshua Rodrigue. Photo by Frank Methe | Clarion Herald newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans



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ACROSS

- 1 Celestial being, to Jacques
- 5 Commerce
- 10 Small pond
- 14 "... and female he created them"
- 15 Division of the United Kingdom
- 16 Celestial topper
- 17 Matthew, for one
- 19 Egyptian goddess of fertility
- 20 Actor Beatty
- 21 Spanish pot
- 22 Existing
- 23 Climbing vine
- 24 Warship
- 26 Holy place
- 30 Liturgy of the ___
- 31 Fastening
- 32 Pugnacious
- 36 Mil. mail centers
- 37 Worries
- 38 Notion
- 39 Confinement
- 41 Bay
- 42 One of the sons of Simon of Cyrene
- 43 Nods
- 44 Shelters
- 47 Hint
- 48 Tests
- 49 Brand with "Old World Style"
- 50 Gimlet liquor
- 53 Unclothed
- 54 Diocese in California
- 57 First place
- 58 Willow
- 59 Genesis weather
- 60 Catholic Australian author of The Shoes of the Fisherman
- 61 Out of the sun
- 62 "Hey, don't look ___!"

DOWN

- 1 "So be it!"
- 2 Church section
- 3 Showy bloomer, briefly
- 4 Even (poet.)
- 5 Apostle number

- 6 Inspire anew
- 7 Inter ___
- 8 ___ Plains
- 9 Superlative finish
- 10 What Goliath was
- 11 Abraham was probably glad to see this in the desert
- 12 A dove brought back this branch back to Noah
- 13 Not a winner
- 18 "___ My Way," classic Catholic movie
- 22 Certain something
- 24 Celestial body
- 25 Applies friction to
- 26 Magi leader
- 27 Stimulate
- 28 Rivers in Spain
- 29 Agency
- 30 They blew these outside the walls of Jericho
- 32 Third century pope
- 33 These hands are the devil's workshop
- 34 Cheney or Gore, for example
- 35 "Whoever ___ this bread will live forever" (Jn 6:51)
- 37 Faith-sharing program used in the UK, Australia, and South Africa
- 40 Carpets
- 41 Lower portion of the small intestine
- 43 Sweet
- 44 Spiritual program
- 45 Ooze out
- 46 Loses color
- 47 Challenged
- 49 Religious instruction for converts (abbr.)
- 50 Exodus pest
- 51 NT epistle
- 52 3 PM prayer
- 54 Distress signal
- 55 ___ Wednesday
- 56 Period

Solution on page 14

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We are beginning a two year process to prepare for a worldwide synod of bishops on synodality

I write my own headlines. So I can assure you I am not trying to be critical of Pope Francis' latest call for a synod. However, when they heard the theme of the synod, "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission," some reporters on the Vatican beat complained, "A process about a process, what could be duller?"

Actually, this fourth synod, following synods on the family (in 2014 and 2015), on young people (in 2018) and on the Pan-Amazon region (in 2018) helps us to understand better how Pope Francis is trying to fulfill one of the reasons the cardinals elected him pope in 2013. They wanted him to practice more collegiality, bringing them more into the important decision making process of the church. In convening synods, his predecessors had usually consulted only the heads of the Vatican dicasteries (departments) and other career Vatican prelates. They then wrote out the agenda and the questions to be answered. Bishop representatives from countries around the world were invited to the Roman synod to discuss these topics and vote on actions to be taken. The pope then wrote his response to their conclusions. It was a rather controlled process.

Cardinal archbishops of the major dioceses throughout the world who elected Pope Francis believed they were closer to the people and should have more advice to contribute with regard to the people's spiritual and material welfare. Pope Francis answered by going further and having questionnaires sent to the dioceses of every country, soliciting questions from the people on the topic chosen for discussion.

Then he invited to the Vatican synods lay men and women who were leaders on the topics being considered. They were not given a vote but they could and did speak. This time, Pope Francis has given a vote to a woman, Sister Nathalie Becquart XMCJ, who has been serving as the undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops.

Pope Francis formally launched the process of the upcoming synod by celebrating a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Oct. 10. The bishops of the world, according to National Catholic Reporter and Catholic News Service, were scheduled to begin the process in their dioceses after Oct. 17. This diocesan phase is scheduled to go through April, featuring a consultation with local Catholics based on a preparatory document and questionnaire prepared by the synod office.

The next step will be for the national bishops' conferences to reflect on the results of the consultation with the laity

and send their conclusions back to the Roman Synod office. The final step will be the meeting of the bishops chosen to represent their countries at the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops for a Synodal Church in October 2023.

I would imagine the pope will invite many laity, representatives of religious orders of men and women, clergy and lay theologians who played major roles in the process and one nun who will vote on the final document along with the official voting bishops who represent the countries of the world to the synod. This would balance what Pope Francis did Oct. 9, the day before the inaugural Mass, when he invited to a day of reflection and prayer "representatives of the people of God, including delegates of the bishops' conferences and related bodies, members of the Roman Curia, fraternal delegates, delegates of consecrated life and ecclesial lay movements, the youth council, etc." (Catholic News Service).

For Pope Francis, synodality is an expression of all of us being the church, the people of God, as the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church defines us in the first and greatest of the four main documents of Vatican II. The church is a visible sacrament of Jesus acting in our world. He is acting through all of us, not just the hierarchy, not just the vowed religious, not just the ordained, but all of us, and especially the laity who create our society. Everyone must play his and her part. Everyone must have a voice in what our church does and becomes.

A new book by Cardinal Michael Czerny and Father Christian Barone was published in Italy about Pope Francis' vision of the social teaching of our church. Pope Francis himself wrote an essay for the preface. The English-language version, "Siblings All, Sign of the Times: The Social Teaching of Pope Francis," will be published in 2022. In it Pope Francis explains his vision of church simply and clearly: "The heart of the Gospel is the

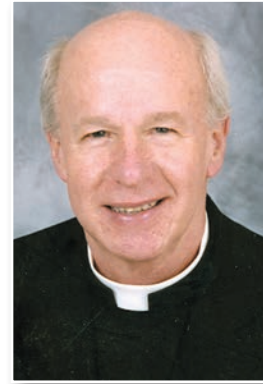
proclamation of the reign of God, in the person of Jesus himself, the Emmanuel, God-is-with-us. In him, God brings his project of love for humanity to fulfillment, establishing his lordship over creatures and sowing the seed of divine life in human history, transforming it from within. We must never neutralize this social dimension of the Christian faith. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (Lk 4:43); it is about (a) loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity. Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society."

The preparation for this synod offers great possibility for injecting new life into our Diocese of Baton Rouge. We became a diocese in 1961. The next year the Ecumenical Council of Vatican II began. Our founding bishop, Bishop Robert E. Tracy thought it was wonderful, a fresh start for our world-wide church and a great opportunity for our new diocese. The council lasted four years.

Bishop Tracy ordered a diocesan wide program of adult education on each of the documents of the council as they were published. And he made real the changes called for by each document.

The interior of St. Joseph Cathedral was remodeled to meet the liturgical updating of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The laity became readers, communion ministers, altar servers, women too. It was the first time women were allowed inside the altar rails, many of which eventually disappeared.

Parish councils were established to give the laity their rightful voice.



Another Perspective
Father John Carville

The Constitution on the Church and the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity became concrete. Bible studies began in many parishes. Catholics read and studied the Bible as well as the Council's Constitution of Divine Revelation. Catholics began inviting Protestant and Jewish friends to our parish churches and we went to theirs. The RCIA was established to catechize converts to Catholicism. We made real the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Our people were

excited and happy to be Catholic.

The same kind of rejuvenation of our diocesan church happened under our third bishop, Bishop Stanley J. Ott. He looked for something to bring our people together after a time of division. He found it in an adult education program called "RENEW." Almost every church parish in our diocese sported signs featuring an evergreen oak as parishioners met in neighborhood groups of a dozen or so to learn about their faith and share fellowship and often good food and drink. A lot of healing occurred, and a return to normalcy and fellowship.

Isn't this the blessing that Pope Francis is trying to lead us to in his own encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" ("Siblings All") and his wanting to unify us through the practice of synodality?

FATHER CARVILLE is a retired priest in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and writes on current topics for *The Catholic Commentator*. He can be reached at johnnycarville@gmail.com.

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PRAY FOR US Please pray for the priests, deacons and religious women and men in the Baton Rouge Diocese.

Oct. 29 Rev. Gerald H. Burns
Dcn. George Hooper
Br. Yuong Dinh Nguyen ICM
Oct. 30 Rev. Joseph M. Camilleri
Dcn. Micheal J. (Shelley) Joseph
Sr. Sandra Blanchard CSJ
Oct. 31 Rev. John Carville
Dcn. John A. Jung Jr.
Br. Marcus Turcotte SC
Nov. 1 Rev. Edward Chiffreller SSJ
Dcn. Robert J. Kusch
Sr. Judith Brun CSJ
Nov. 2 Rev. Thomas F. Clark SJ
Dcn. Chris Landry

Br. Edward Violet SM
Nov. 3 Rev. Paul D. Counce
Dcn. Albert Levy III
Sr. Lan Thuy Bui ICM
Nov. 4 Rev. Randy M. Cuevas
Dcn. James A. Little
Br. James Burns SC
Nov. 5 Rev. Gregory J. Daigle
Dcn. Robert McDonner
Sr. Helen Cahill FMOL
Nov. 6 Rev. Peter Ai Dang
Dcn. Larry J. Melancon
Br. William Cawley SC
Nov. 7 Rev. Jamin S. David

Dcn. Timothy Messenger Sr.
Sr. Demetria Castro HMSS
Nov. 8 Rev. Al M. Davidson
Dcn. William Messenger Sr.
Br. Roland Champagne SC
Nov. 9 Rev. Christopher J. Decker
Dcn. Francis M. Minor
Sr. Joseph Ellen Cavalier SSF
Nov. 10 Rev. Bradley A. Doyle
Dcn. Gary C. Mooney
Br. Robert Croteau SC
Nov. 11 Rev. Vincent J. Dufresne
Dcn. James J. Morrissey
Sr. Anima Christi MC

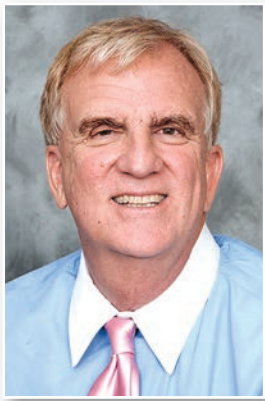
A legacy of giving continues in diocese

Perhaps the Diocese of Baton Rouge's greatest legacy is its generosity to reaching out to those in need, not only on a daily basis but especially during natural disasters or in a humanitarian crisis.

That spirit of giving, the collective altruism of the entire diocese, has perhaps never been more tested as well as more evident than during these past two months, first with a historic hurricane followed by the refugee crisis in Afghanistan that will ultimately have direct impact in our area.

In the days following Hurricane Ida's reign of terror that caused catastrophic damage, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, a stalwart of disaster relief throughout southeast Louisiana, traversed the diocese from Paulina to Independence and points in between handing out much needed supplies to those in need, including tarps, food and water. Their efforts continue today as more than two months later many families continue to struggle to rebuild their homes and their lives.

St. Margaret Queen of Scotland Church in Albany became a major distribution point for much of the eastern sector of the diocese, with lines of cars filling



Wandering Catholic
Richard Meek

the church's parking lot daily. Although St. Margaret was the distribution point, it was only operational because of the dazzling number of donations that poured in from churches and organizations throughout the diocese. Minus their magnanimity, minus the benevolence of so many parishioners, hundreds of families might have gone hungry, thirsty, or even unable to have slept in their homes.

St. Margaret pastor Father Jamin David and Father Paul McDuffie, pastor at St. Joseph Church in Ponchatoula, mobilized relief efforts in Dulac, one of the hardest areas from Ida.

Similar to 2016, St. Joseph Church in French Settlement pastor Father Jason Palermo once again fired up his stove, donned his apron and launched his massive feeding program. Volunteers at St. Joseph and St. Stephen the Martyr Church in Maurepas distributed more than 25,000 meals, an incredible feat considering many of those servers were also dealing with their own struggles.

Holy Rosary Church in St. Amant also launched a feeding program through its popular Full of Grace café.

Volunteers from Christ the King Church and Catholic Center in Baton Rouge even crossed diocesan

lines to assist in devastated Laplace.

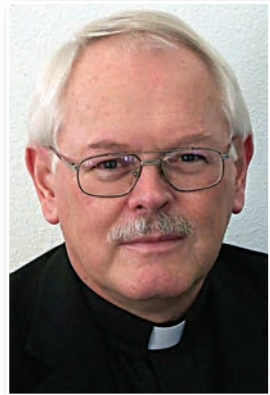
Even while the diocese was dealing with Ida's impact, CCDBR officials were preparing for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan, who were being relocated to Baton Rouge in the wake of the Afghan crisis. The first refugees are soon expected to arrive, falling into the welcoming arms of CCDBR employees.

Certainly God calls each of us in his own way to live out the Gospel message and what better way than providing assistance during a natural disaster or embracing refugees escaping horrors we can only imagine. Being Catholic is much more than attending Sunday Mass and then shelving our faith for the next seven days.

Rather, it's about us stepping out of our comfort zone and spending eight hours on a sultry summer day mucking out a flooded house, cutting down trees, digging into our pockets to help purchase needed supplies or being a friendly face to a shellshocked family who has traveled halfway across the globe to a strange land.

As Catholics our calling, our own legacy of faith, is to respond to those reaching out to us to offer a beacon of light in their own darkness.

Throughout its 60-year existence, the Diocese of Baton Rouge has historically been that oasis of hope and by volunteers exemplifying the Gospel message through their own lives it's a tradition that continues to live on.



In Exile

Father Ron Rolheiser

As a child, I was taught that I had a guardian angel, a real angel given me by God to accompany me everywhere and protect me from danger. I remember a pious holy card given to me by my mother, showing a young boy playing dangerously close to the edge of a cliff and an angel protecting him there. Most Roman Catholics of my generation, I suspect, remember a pious prayer we prayed each day asking for the guidance and protection of our guardian angel: "Angel of God, my guardian dear ..."

What's to be said about guardian angels? Do such personified spirits really exist or are guardian angels simply creatures of our imagination created

to be helpful in the religious development of children? Are we meant to outgrow our belief in them?

Whether or not we are meant to outgrow that belief, the fact is that today for the most part we have outgrown it. Most adults, within all Christian denominations, either see the existence of guardian angels as pious fantasy or are simply indifferent to the idea.

Are we still meant to believe in guardian angels? If yes, in what exactly are we meant to believe? Are angels real personified beings or simply another word for God's presence in our lives?

Scripture scholars don't give us a definitive answer but rather suggest the question can be answered either way. In Scripture, the word "angel" might be referring to a real personified spirit or it might be referring to a special presence of God in some situation. Church tradition affirms more strongly that angels are real. Here angels have a rich history and for the most part are taken to be real persons (albeit spirits).

Christian iconography and music abound with angels, and the Catholic Church has major feasts celebrating angels and guardian angels. The Fourth Lateran Council (taking place in 1215, long before the Protestant Reformation) stated that belief in guardian angels is "implicit" in Scripture. The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms that "from infancy to death human life is surrounded by their (guardian angels') watchful care and intercession. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life."

Where does that leave us? Divided. Conservative Christians generally assert the existence of angels as a dogmatic teaching. Angels are real. Liberal Christians tend to doubt that or at least are agnostic about it. For them, "angel" more likely refers to a special presence of God. For example, they take the statement in the Gospels where the evangelist tells us that while Jesus was praying "an angel came and strengthened him" to mean that God's grace came and strengthened him.

Who's right? Perhaps it doesn't matter since the reality is the same in either case. God gives us revelation, guidance, protection and strength and does so in ways that are "angelic," beyond our normal conceptualizations.

Those who believe angels are real have a strong case. Even if we just look at the origins and dimensions of physical creation (whatever scientific version of this you subscribe to) mystery immediately dwarfs our imaginative capacities. It is all too huge to grasp! We know now there are billions of universes (not just planets), and we know now that our planet earth, and we on this planet, are the tiniest of minute specks inside the unthinkable magnitude of God's creation. If this is true, and it is, then this is hardly the time to be skeptical about the extent of God's creation, believing that we, humans, are what is central and that there can be no personified realities beyond our own flesh and blood. Such thinking is narrow, both from the point of view of faith and from the perspective of science itself.

However, the agnosticism of those who doubt the existence of angels is ultimately benign. When Scripture tells us that the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce her pregnancy and when it tells us that after Jesus had exhausted himself with struggle in Gethsemane an angel came and strengthened him, it makes little difference whether this occurred via the modality of a personified spirit or via some other modality of God's presence. Either way, it was real. Either way, it was a particularized, real entry of God into someone's life.

So, do we have guardian angels? At birth or at baptism does God assign a particular angel to journey with us throughout our lives, giving us invisible, heavenly guidance and protection?

Yes, we do have a guardian angel, irrespective of how we might imagine or conceive of this. God is closer to us than we are to ourselves and God's solicitous love, guidance and protection are with us always. At the end of the day, it matters little whether this comes through a

SEE ROLHEISER PAGE 15

Do we have guardian angels?

SCREENING ▼

From page 1

and to not keep it to myself (and to help others).

“It came to me after I survived that there must be something greater.”

A few months after her suicide attempt, Benoit blogged about her experiences and recovery journey on her website liferejuvenated.org.

“It was unexpected that people would connect with my story,” said Benoit.

In early 2018, Benoit began working on “My Ascension,” a documentary that chronicles her recovery journey and advocacy work, while addressing the youth suicide epidemic.

Benoit has spoken to thousands of people in person and virtually.

After the screening Benoit, her father Yancy and film director Greg Dicharry were joined by a panel of educators, clergy, mental health specialists and friends of those in the Diocese of Baton Rouge who have lost friends to suicide or had thoughts of suicide. There was an

outpouring of questions and concerns from audience members who packed the parish hall looking to address a community issue. Highlighting the fact was a table filled with photographs of local young, bright smiling faces who took their lives.

Sherrard Crespo LMSW, a clinical coach for Via Link which provides crisis and suicide intervention, said suicide is like any other disease, such as diabetes or heart issues.

“It’s huge to really understand that suicide doesn’t just begin and end with these ‘moment’ of crisis as embedded with these tragic events. That the story is still much bigger than that,” Crespo said. “Everyday people are living here coping. They’re struggling with pain alone because we judged suicide.

“(But it’s) just the way that some people’s brains work the way that some people’s lives are, and this conversation needs to be not only talking about suicide but becoming comfortable with listening to it, reaching out to that person, asking if you’re okay. And then



Pictures of smiling young faces show the tragic impact of suicide on young people. Photo by Debbie Shelley | The Catholic Commentator

having the courage to listen and to really hear not to have someone have to justify why they feel a certain way or for us to just quickly try and fix it with words.”

Dr. Molly Stadalis, principal of Lutchter High School, spoke about the impact of suicide on fellow students, parents and community members. Karyn Poche, was a sophomore at Lutchter and took her life in November, 2018. Poche was on the volleyball team and made others smile.

Stadalis recalled how Poche could “light up the office when she entered in.”

“Her aunt is one of my secretaries, so she was in the office every day. We knew she was in the halls,” Stadalis said. “We knew when she was in class, whether she was happy or not. We just knew. She was that kind of kid that everybody could love. She was my daughter’s friend.”

But hope rose after Poche’s death with the introduction of Hope Squad, which aims to reduce youth suicide through education, training and peer intervention.

Alex Foret, who has served on Lutchter High School’s Hope Squad and is on the National Council, was Poche’s friend. Hope Squad was introduced by Benoit in 2019.

“Our whole squad is powered by caring because it’s because of her that we have it. Something so tragic happened, but something so wonderful came out of it, and so it’s because of her that we are able to help others,” said Foret.

More information about Hope Squad can be found at hopesquad.com.

Father Mathew Dunn, parochial vicar

at St. John, spoke about what it was like losing a fellow classmate, fellow priest and best friend. He has presided at funeral Masses for people from their teens to their 80s and “loved them where they were” even though he didn’t know them personally.

But that changed on the evening of August 30 when he learned of the suicide of Father Danny Roussel.

“It was a whole new ball game. I talked to him the day before. Right before (Hurricane Ida) hit. The storm cleared and Father Danny’s storm did not. There was numbness,” said Father Dunn, who gave the homily at Father Roussel’s funeral.

He said this shows that no one, not even priests “who are supposed to have it all together,” are exempt from the depression, anxiety and pressures that lead to suicide. He said this underscores the fact that while prayer is critical, people cannot “pray their way” out of mental illness. There needs to be ongoing resources, support and prayers from others to accompany that.

Yancy Benoit spoke about how he “dropped to his knees in prayer” and was surrounded by community in prayer as Emma passed though the trauma following her attempt “one miracle at a time.” Both have continued to be vital for his family as Emma continues her journey.

“God and faith are everything,” said Yancey.

For more about Benoit’s story, visit myascension.us/emma-speaks.

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED



St. George Catholic School

has an immediate opening for a full-time (12 month)

School Maintenance Technician



Job Summary

The School Maintenance Technician is responsible for:

- Performing general repair and maintenance on all school facilities and equipment
- Assessing mechanical, electrical, heating, and plumbing issues to determine proper avenue for repairs. Communicate effectively with outside vendors when needed for repairs.
- Maintaining a clean and orderly campus
- Planning and preparing a preventative maintenance plan

Minimum Education Qualifications/Skills Needed:

- Applicants must be a High School graduate with at least two years of building maintenance experience. Post-secondary education may be substituted for experience on a year-for-year basis.
- Possess skills in electric, plumbing, A-C maintenance, locks, carpentry, housekeeping and general preventive maintenance.
- Ability to multitask and prioritize maintenance requests
- Be proficient in the use computers for data entry and to handle routine correspondence via email. Able to efficiently use Microsoft Office, particularly Word, Outlook, and Excel.

Please send resume and cover letter by October 29, 2021 to:
Martin Hernandez, Director of Administration
martinh@st-george.org

ROLHEISER ▼

From page 13

solicitous love, guidance and protection are with us always. At the end of the day, it matters little whether this comes through a particular personified spirit (who has a name in heaven) or whether it comes simply through God’s loving omnipresence.

God’s presence is real – and we are never alone, without God’s love, guidance and protection.

OBLATE FATHER RON ROLHEISER, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website ronrolheiser.com and [facebook.com/ronrolheiser](https://www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser).

St. Michael students responded when need arose

By Bonny Van

The Catholic Commentator

One-by-one, or in groups of twos and threes, Hurricane Ida evacuees staying at the Raising Cane's River Center American Red Cross Shelter filtered out of the arena and into a small section of the lobby set up as a make-shift store.

Tables and hanging racks, overflowing with children's, women's and men's clothing and shoes, were manned by students and their parents from St. Michael the Archangel High School in Baton Rouge.

Father Ryan Hallford, coordinator of hurricane relief efforts for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, joined Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge to interview people to determine their needs.

"One of the common requests was clothing and our plan at that point was to get their requests, get their sizes and come back with clothes for that individual

client," said Father Hallford. "But the problem is everyone needed clothing, some of them only had the clothes on their back, and so my concern was if we can only process three or four people an hour and we're only here so many hours and there's over 300 to 400 people here, and we know everyone needs clothes, then we're not going to be able to meet that demand sufficiently. So I called Michael Acaldo (Society of St. Vincent de Paul executive director). I said, 'Look, is there any way we can do a clothing drop?'"

Acaldo agreed to make the arrangements for the clothes but could not provide undergarments. Father Hallford then called St. Michael, where he had been a teacher and chaplain. He said he spoke with principal Ellen Lee and campus minister Emily Froeba about an underwear and sock drive.

"The students responded really quickly because I sent out the notice Wednesday after-



Students from St. Michael the Archangel High School in Baton Rouge sort donated clothing to be distributed to Hurricane Ida evacuees staying at the American Red Cross shelter at the Raising Cane's River Center Sept. 11. Pictured, from left, are Miranda Martone, Rhet Dake, Avery Vavasseur and Lauren Crow. Photos by Bonny Van | The Catholic Commentator

noon, and they had Thursday and Friday to bring it in. I have a whole carload of new underwear and undershirts and socks," said Froeba. Two weeks after the storm, early Saturday, Sept. 11, students showed up to help others.

"It feels really good," said St. Michael junior Miranda Mar-

tone. "I like helping people so it makes me feel good."

"Our parents are very good at coming to the aid of people who might be in need," said Lee, who was helping sort T-shirts and find sizes for clients. "Our students are very good about realizing they have to serve others as a part of their

faith development."

Lee said she had been in touch with diocesan schools in Hammond to find out what they needed. She said she does see more hurricane recovery service projects in the future.

For now, though, students were helping make life a little bit better for those coping with losing everything.

"People that come to the shelter, it's because they have literally nowhere else to go," said Father Hallford. "They don't have any support network or they don't have anyone to stay with or they don't have any money for a hotel or transportation to go elsewhere, so I really wanted to make sure these people were able to get some of these basic necessities."

"I heard stories – one lady was rescued, when the water came, she had to get out and all of her possessions were gone and all she had was the clothes on her back, so when you hear that you respond."



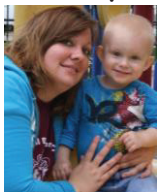
The streets are no place to call home!

Over the last two decades, we have helped thousands of mothers move from homelessness to self-sufficiency, from a loss of dignity and self-esteem to the pride of being able to take care of themselves and their families. What is especially troubling to us is the growing number of mothers and children who seek our help. Our Bishop Ott Sweet Dreams Shelter provides the safe haven and the time that homeless parents need to get back on their feet. We are working hard to meet the current demand, and we need your help in reaching out to the most vulnerable.



Homelessness is a Nightmare for a Child

For children who become homeless, life itself can feel like a nightmare. Their homes, their neighbors, even the beds they slept in, have disappeared overnight. Emotions like happiness and confidence have been replaced by anxiety and fear. The poorest families in our community have been hit hard by rising rents and everyday costs of living. This is the perfect storm. A layoff, a missed paycheck, or catching COVID can lead to a desperate situation. Our Sweet Dreams Shelter is the answer to the prayers of mothers and fathers in desperate need. We provide a helping hand-up and a safe place to stay. During these difficult and uncertain times, we need your support, so that we can offer these families shelter, security, and the time they need to get back on their feet.



A Prayer for Sweet Dreams

In 2001, a St. Vincent de Paul dream came true when we opened our Sweet Dreams Shelter for women and children. That dream has grown over the years. In addition to homeless mothers and children, we can now accept intact families and single-parent families headed by fathers. During these difficult times, we need your help more than ever. Every

year, through our Sweet Dreams effort, we ask people to pray for those we serve. Please save this Sweet Dreams Prayer and make it a regular part of your spiritual life. Pray for the those who are experiencing homelessness, especially women, children and families! We also ask you to consider making a financial gift at svdpbr.org. Your support will go directly toward helping the families and children that are sleeping at our shelter tonight, ensuring sweet dreams and a better future.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of our Sweet Dreams Shelter Program. Over the

Sweet Dreams Prayer

Lord God, Giver of Life,

Fill us with your Spirit.

Use our hands to shelter the homeless;

Use our hearts to enable sweet dreams;

Use our voices to end homelessness.

May our actions improve life for others

And reflect your abundant love.

Through Christ our Lord, AMEN.

Bishop Ott Sweet Dreams Shelter

www.svdpbr.org



LIVING

Supplement
of The Catholic
Commentator
October 22, 2021

with LOSS



Embracing faith can help ease the grieving process

By **Debbie Shelley**

The Catholic Commentator

Embracing an element of faith can transform the grieving process into a time of hope and healing, according to clergy and spiritual directors of the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

When a person dies, their loved ones may be filled with emotions such as anger and confusion, thinking “Why did you allow this to happen God?” and fear.

“Such a traumatic time in someone’s life may cause some people’s focus to turn inward on themselves,” said spiritual director Melinda LeBlanc. “(Spiritual directors) try and put the focus back on God.”

Deacon Mike Chiappetta, who serves as a chaplain in the nursing home ministry, noted the dying process is a sacred time. It is when someone is enduring their own Christ-like passion, when they are the most intimately linked to the suffering of the Lord on the cross.

“I had a patient who maintained a joyful spirit throughout, until the very end,” Deacon Chiappetta said. “He always smiled and would tell me that Jesus did so much for him, that he was willing to

suffer quietly for Jesus.”

By being open to God, people will see that God was part of what is a natural process of life, according to LeBlanc and Deacon Chiappetta. They see people who started “saying goodbye” to their loved ones before they passed away.

“Waiting for a loved one to pass is a sacred and unique time of all in one’s life,” Deacon Chiappetta “It is a time of gathering, sharing memories, praying and anticipation.

“Once, I was with a son, keeping vigil at his mom’s bedside. She was in a deep, restful sleep and the son was on one side, holding her hand and I, on the other. He talked about his mom, telling stories, reminiscing how good of a mom she was.”

“Then we’d pray and read scriptures,” he added. “I encouraged him to talk to his mom, because I truly believe that even if they do not often respond, they do listen and are comforted by the voices of their loved ones. As we talked and prayed, the transition came very peacefully. We noticed her breathing stopped, ever so gently and peacefully.”

After a loved one’s death people, with good intentions, may tell their family members and friends to “get over it”



Grief can be difficult but embracing one’s faith can actually offer a time of hope and healing.

or “move on.” They may even express shock or disappointment because they believed the loved one “did not grieve appropriately.”

LeBlanc said one man came to her concerned because his family members were upset because they thought he “wasn’t sad enough” over his wife’s death. He told LeBlanc he had been his wife’s caregiver for a long time. He had been with her through, and grieved through, the whole dying process.

“We’re all unique creatures of God and we all grieve in different ways, so you know. We have to be patient with each other, too, and give each other the time and space. To grieve in our own way,” said

LeBlanc.

Whether a person’s death has been a long process or sudden and tragic, family members can heal by knowing that God is compassionate and present in all things.

“God knows what it’s like to lose a loved one because we (have seen that) Jesus in Scripture wept over Lazarus. Jesus knows what it feels like,” said LeBlanc.

A couple of resources she recommended was “Praying Our Goodbyes: A Spiritual Companion Through Life’s Losses and Sorrows” by Joyce Rupp and “God I have Issues: 50 Ways to Pray No Matter How You Feel” by Father Mark Thibodeaux SJ.

Among LeBlanc’s favorite quotes are
SEE **GRIEF** PAGE 4B

ALL SAINTS DAY

Outdoor Mass

MONDAY
November 1st 2021
@ 10:00 AM

Where:
11817 Jefferson Hwy
Baton Rouge, LA
225-753-1440

*All CDC guidelines will be followed to ensure safety for all who come.

Join us for a **FREE** Jambalaya plate after the service.

A day for family and friends, a time to reflect on the lives of those we love, and a beautiful way to celebrate the memory of those most dear to us.

Guests will receive a complimentary carnation.
Silk Floral Arrangements will be available for purchase.

Celebrants will be:

Father Michael Miceli, *Pastor – St. Patrick Catholic Church*
Deacon Brent Duplessis, *St. Jean Vianney Catholic Church*
Deacon Don Musso, *Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church*



RESTHAVEN
GARDENS OF MEMORY & FUNERAL HOME
resthavenbatonrouge.com

Remember With Us

Every year, Roselawn hosts an outdoor Mass to observe All Saints Day at an open space, called Crucifix Island, weather permitting.

Join us Monday, Nov. 1st at 12 p.m. with Father Walsh along with families and friends for a day of remembrance, fellowship and flowers.

Silk flowers available at our cemetery office.



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MEMORIAL PARK

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RoselawnBatonRouge.com





Proudly Serving the Diocese of Baton Rouge Since 2002

Adult Grief Support Group

1st Monday of Every Month

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Patrick Mitchell Education Center

10545 Jefferson Hwy

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Services are offered at no cost and open to the community. Social Distancing & Mask Required.

***"Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted."***

Matthew 5:4

ST JOSEPH
HOSPICE



THE CARPENTER
HOUSE

Baton Rouge ♦ 225-769-4810

www.StJosephHospice.com



Handling major life changes

In the 1960s, researchers Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe studied the potential link between stressful life events and illness. After examining the medical records of thousands of patients, Holmes and Rahe discovered that there was a strong correlation between the two, ultimately developing the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale.

Holmes and Rahe found that the death of a spouse, divorce and imprisonment were among the most stressful life events. But a person need not be widowed, recently divorced or newly imprisoned to be dealing stress sparked by a major life change. In fact, Holmes and Rahe found that marriage and retirement, two things many people would consider positive changes, were among the 10 most stressful life events.

Change can be both exciting and frightening. Men and women facing major life changes like moving, switching

careers or retiring can take the following tips to heart to make such transitions go as smoothly as possible.

- Embrace the positive. Change has its advantages and disadvantages, but once men and women have decided to make changes, they should shift their focus toward the positive aspects of changing instead of worrying about the potential negatives. For example, if moving, focus on the adventure of living somewhere new and the opportunities to explore new places and make new friends.

- Accept your decision. Many people spend ample time mulling the pros and cons of major decisions before ultimately deciding to make major changes. People who decide to change careers may have spent years trying to decide if such a change was the right move. Once they have come to a decision and started the process of changing,



Change can be both frightening, including retiring. Certain tips can be followed to smooth those life changes.

whether it's giving a boss two weeks' notice or putting a house on the market, men and women should accept their decision and rest easier knowing they exercised their due diligence before making a final decision.

- Commit to your decision. Fully committing to change can increase your chances of making a successful transition. If moving to a new place, look for opportunities to connect with neighbors and other members of your new community. Parents can be active in parent organizations at their children's schools, while professionals can make a concerted effort to connect with coworkers in an effort to build strong relationships that can help their transition go smoothly.

- Maintain existing relationships. Professionals who are moving on to new companies and adults moving to new communities don't have to give up their relationships with current coworkers, neighbors and friends. Maintain contact with valued friends, neighbors and coworkers through channels such as social media, email or even the telephone. These people have likely been valuable resources and friends for years, and there's no reason you cannot continue to look to them for support and provide a source of support for them should they make a major change in the years ahead.

Change is rarely easy, but men and women can take several steps to make transitions go smoothly.

GRIEF ▼

From page 2B

by Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore: "Death is not extinguishing the light; it is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come."

Deacon Chiappetta and LeBlanc said faith reminds and comforts people that their deceased loved one has joined the community of saints.

"Grief and the pain of loss is real but our faith reminds us that death in and of itself is not final, but rather it is transformative for the person entering into eternal life. Our relationships change with our loved one, though we do not physically experience them, we continue to love them, pray for them and ask them to pray for us," said Deacon Chiappetta.

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All Saints' Day, Souls' Day EVENTS

ALBANY	St. Margaret Cemetery	Oct. 31	11:15 a.m. after 10 a.m. Mass
BATON ROUGE	OLOM Garden of Peace Columbarium	Oct. 31	3 p.m.
	Resthaven Garden of Memory	Nov. 1	10 a.m.
	Roselawn Memorial Park	Nov. 1	12 p.m.
BELLE ROSE	St. Martin Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 7 a.m. Mass
	St. Jules Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 8:30 a.m. Mass
BRUSLY	St. John the Baptist Cemetery	Oct. 30	12 p.m.
DENHAM SPRINGS	Denham Springs Memorial	Nov. 7	2 p.m.
	Beech Ridge	Nov. 7	3 p.m.
	Evergreen Memorial	Nov. 7	4 p.m.
DONALDSONVILLE	Ascension of our Lord Cemetery	Oct. 31	3 p.m.
	St. Francis of Assisi Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 10:30 a.m. Mass
GONZALES	Hope Haven Cemetery	Oct. 30	10 a.m.
	Sacred Heart/Cornerview Cemetery	Oct. 30	9 a.m.
	St. Theresa of Avila Cemetery	Oct. 31	12:30 p.m.
INNIS	St. Vincent Mausoleum	Oct. 31	9 a.m. Mass
JARREAU	Chenal Cemetery	Oct. 30	after 8 a.m. Mass
KLOTZVILLE	St. Augustine Cemetery	Nov. 7	9 a.m.
LABADIEVILLE	St. Philomena Church Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 11 a.m. Mass
LAKELAND	Lakeland Cemetery	Oct. 30	after Chenal blessing
	Old/New Red Oak	Nov. 7	10:15 a.m.
LIVINGSTON	Milton/Palmetto	Nov. 7	3:30 p.m.
	St. Ann Cemetery	Oct. 31	11 a.m. Mass
MORGANZA	Immaculate Conception Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 7 a.m. Mass
	St. Ann Cemetery	Oct. 30	after 4 p.m.. Mass
	St. Benedict Cemetery	Nov. 7	11:15 a.m.
NEW ROADS	False River Memorial Park	Oct. 31	2:30 p.m.
	St. Francis Cemetery	Oct. 31	8 a.m.
	St. Mary Cemetery	Oct. 31	1 p.m.
	St. Augustine Cemetery	Oct. 31	noon
PAINCOURTVILLE	St. Elizabeth Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 10:30 Mass
PIERRE PART	St. Joseph the Worker Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 10 a.m. Mass
	Sacred Heart Cemetery	Oct. 31	2 p.m.
PLATTENVILLE	Assumption Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 9 a.m. Mass
PRAIRIEVILLE	Prairieville	Oct. 31	2 p.m.
	Hope Have	Oct. 31	2 p.m.
	Senenity Oaks	Oct. 31	2 p.m.
ST. AMANT	Holy Rosary Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 10 a.m. Mass
	Lake Chapel Cemetery	Oct. 31	1 p.m.
ST. FRANCISVILLE	Mount Carmel Cemetery	Nov. 1	6 p.m.
TICKFAW	Pompeii Cemetery	Oct. 31	after 9 a.m. Mass

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Explaining wills and trusts

It's never too early for adults to think about estate planning. Estate planning is an important part of money management. While it's easy to think of estate planning as just a way to dictate how your assets are allocated after your death, estate planning also can protect people and their money should accidents or injury make them incapable of managing their finances on their own.

Some familiar terms may come up when people begin planning how they hope to transfer their assets. Two more common terms are wills and trusts. Understanding the distinctions between the two can help people as they begin estate planning.

What is a will?

The online financial resource Investopedia notes that wills are

legally enforceable documents that dictate how people want their affairs handled and assets allocated in the wake of their deaths.

Wills should include a host of information, including who a person wants to assume guardianship of their minor-aged children should they pass away. This is especially important information to include in a will, as surviving relatives may have to go to court to contest guardianship if parents do not dictate who they want to serve as guardians in their wills.

What is a trust?

A trust is a relationship in which another party is given authority to handle a person's assets for the benefit of that person's beneficiaries. When making a trust, a person will need to designate someone as a

trustee, who will be tasked with distributing assets in accordance to the terms dictated in the trust.

There are many types of trusts, and working with an attorney who specializes in estate planning can help men and women determine which type of trust, if any, is best for them.

Is it better to have a will or a trust?

Both wills and trusts can be useful when estate planning. In fact, wills are often used to establish trusts, and many people have both a will and a trust.

Estate planning is an important part of managing one's finances. A qualified attorney who specializes in estate planning can help people write their wills and, if necessary, establish trusts that can help surviving loved ones in the wake of their death.



Estate planning is an important of money management, and professionals should be consulted for financial advice.

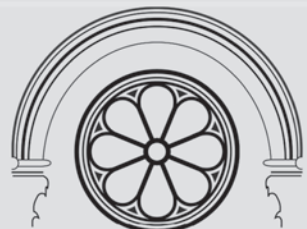
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Things people should know about creating wills

Drafting a last will and testament is an essential component of estate planning. Despite the importance of having a will, a recent survey from AARP found that two out of five Americans over the age of 45 do not have one.

Putting wishes down on paper helps avoid unnecessary work and sometimes heartache upon the death of a loved one. Wills allow heirs to act with the decedent's wishes in mind, and can ensure that assets and possessions will end up in the right hands.

Estate planning can be tricky, which is why many people turn to attorneys to get the job done right. Attorneys who specialize in estate planning will no doubt discuss the following topics with their clients.

- Assets owned: Make a list of known assets and figure out which assets are covered by the will and which will have to be passed on according to other estate laws, such as through

joint tenancy on a deed or a living trust. For example, life insurance policies or retirement plan proceeds will be distributed to your named beneficiaries. A will also can cover other assets, such as photographs, clothing, cars and jewelry.

- Guardianship: Parents' wills should include a declaration of who they want to become guardians their underage children or dependents.

- Pets: Some people prefer to use their will to also dictate guardianship for their pets and to leave money or property to help care for those pets. However, pets do not have the legal capacity to own property, so one shouldn't gift money directly to pets in a will.

- Funeral instructions: Settling probate will not happen until after the funeral. Therefore, funeral wishes in a will often go unnoticed, states the legal advisement resource

SEE WILLS PAGE 7B

Separating facts from fiction in regard to organ donation

Organ donation is overwhelmingly supported by the adult population of the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 95 percent of adults in the United States support organ donation. In spite of that, the DHHS notes that only 54 percent of U.S. adults are signed up as organ donors. That gap only highlights the need for education in regard to organ donation. Separating the facts and fiction surrounding organ donation might compel more people to sign up as donors, saving untold numbers of lives as a result.

- People with medical conditions can still be organ donors. Many people mistakenly assume that an existing medical condition precludes them from being

organ donors. However, the DHHS notes that very few medical conditions would prevent people from becoming organ donors. Such conditions include HIV and active cancer. Transplant teams determine at the time of death if a donation is possible, so even prospective donors who have doubts can still sign up.

- There is no age limit for organ donors. The health and condition of the organs, and not their age, is what matters. In fact, the DHHS notes that the oldest donor in the United States was 93 at the time of donation.
- Religions do not prohibit organ donation. The DHHS notes that most major religion support

organ donation, including the Catholic religion, considering it a final act of love and generosity. Prospective donors who are uncertain if their religion supports organ donation can visit organdonor.gov/about/donors/religion.html for more information.

- Celebrity status, race or financial well-being do not dictate who receives organs. In the United States, a nationwide computer system matches donated organs to recipients. Blood type, geographic location and time on the waiting list are just some of the factors used to match donated organs to recipients. Race, celebrity status or financial well-being are never considered.
- Medical personnel will try

to save organ donors' lives. Some people fear that signing up as a donor might compel medical personnel to abandon lifesaving methods if they become ill or injured. But that's not the case.



Donation is not possible until all lifesaving methods have failed. Organ donation is a selfless act that saves lives every day. Learn more at organdonor.gov.



WILLS ▼

From page 6B

Find Law.

- Executor: An executor is a trusted person who will carry out the terms of the will. This person should be willing to serve and be capable of executing the will.

People who die without a valid will become intestate. This means the estate will be settled based on the laws of where that person lived, and a court-appointed administrator will serve in the capacity to transfer property. This administrator will be bound by laws and may make decisions that go against the decedent's wishes. To avoid this outcome, a will and other estate planning documents are crucial.



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