

CATHOLIC CALENDAR.

A page devoted to local Catholic interests

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The damage done to St. Peter the Apostle Church in Hackberry is seen some two weeks following Hurricane Rita. The parish is still celebrating Mass in the damaged parish hall. Work has begun in earnest at St. Peter in its rebuilding efforts. Repairs to the religious education building and parish hall await completion of the church.



The Chapel of the Assumption in Johnson Bayou, the closest church building to the point of landfall of Hurricane Rita, and its rectory and religious education building have been repaired and Liturgy has been celebrated there since Sunday, April 16 - Easter Sunday.



Like most structures in Cameron Parish lying as close to the Gulf of Mexico as St. Eugene does, the storm surge pounded the church, hall and rectory leaving devastation in its wake.



Work has begun on the church at St. Eugene. Much work remains inside and outside before the church can safely be used to celebrate Liturgy.

Masses to be celebrated on first anniversary of Rita

The celebration of the Mass on the first anniversary of the passage of Hurricane Rita will be held on the sites of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Creole, at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in Cameron, and St. Eugene in Grand Chenier on Sunday, Sept. 24.

The Rev. Joseph McGrath, pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus in Creole, will be the celebrant at a 10 a.m. Liturgy at Our Lady Star of the Sea.

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ing to Father McGrath, a large tent will be erected at Sacred Heart for the Mass. Lunch will be served following Mass, according to Father McGrath.

Mass will begin at 9 a.m. at St. Eugene with Rev. Vincent Vadakkedath, pastor, as celebrant. A meal will follow the Liturgy.

Prayer for Safety in Hurricane Season

O God, master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of your children.

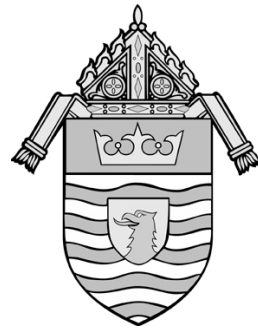
The sea of Galilee obeyed Your order and returned to its quietude.

Your are still the Master of land and sea. We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control: the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land and spread chaos and disaster.

During this hurricane season we turn to You, O loving Father. Spares us

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

The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder
Second Bishop of Lafayette



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Dear People of God,

What were you doing this time last year? For those of us in Southwest Louisiana, we were going about our daily routines with a close eye on the television screen or listening to the radio for update reports on the approaching hurricane named Rita. Little did we realize how our lives would be affected by the approaching storm.

365 days, a year - that is the period of time that has gone by since Southwest Louisiana was ravaged by the winds and rain of Hurricane Rita. The damage wrought by this storm has changed our lives forever. The "normal" that we knew is gone and a new "normal" is taking its place. We received "relief" for several months from many wonderful people, organizations and agencies and then the "recovery" stage began. We were told that it would take a year or longer to get homes, churches, and businesses either repaired or rebuilt - these words have proven to be true!

Work has begun; progress is slow in replacing what was! The media has and is recapping the past year. While patience continues to be the operative word, I believe we see signs of hope that I would like to reflect upon. Our love has been called upon in new ways. Recently in our Sunday readings at worship, we listened to the passage about "faith and works." We have been saved by Jesus Christ and we live as people who express that salvation in how we live our lives. We have been "recipients" of those who reached out to us in our need and we have been "givers" by extending help to those who lost everything. While material possessions have been destroyed, we have come to realize the strength we have in those "possessions" that come from within ourselves.

Our faith has been tested! In the Bible the Gospel writers remind us of the "testing" of Jesus. After Jesus was baptized and the words were heard from heaven - "this is my beloved Son, listen to Him" - Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan. We are familiar with the passage. What Jesus reminds the devil and us is that His strength is found in His oneness with His Father. Life will bring us moments of "testing" where our hearts are. While we cannot control what happens to us in our lives, we can control our response to what happens to us - that is what God cares about. I have observed through the disaster of Hurricane Rita, a storm out of our control that had an impact on all of our lives, faith-filled people strengthened in their relationship with God. Our lives were forever changed through the losses we have had. People have been "tested" to see where their hearts are and they have responded with a faith that witnesses their dependence on a loving God as their source of strength - a faith that is verbalized by saying that I lost material possessions, but I am "rich" in my life through my family, my friends, and the "possessions of the heart."

The recovery continues through renovations, repairs, and the re-building of our structures. The inner journey for each of us is one of FAITH as we place our trust in the providential care of God; HOPE as we encourage one another to embrace the many possibilities life has to offer us; and LOVE as we support one another for it is in the "giving" that we "receive" God's choicest blessings.

Peace be with you!

Devotedly yours in Christ,

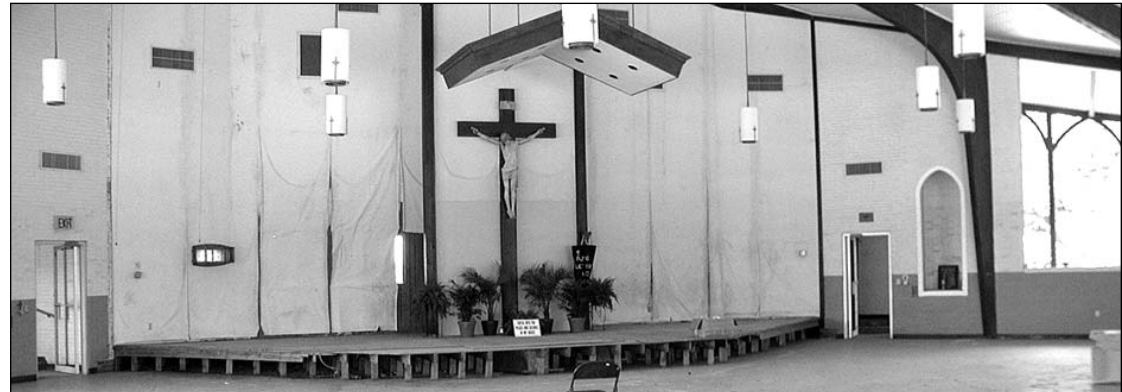
Rev. Msgr. Harry D. Greig
Diocesan Administrator



The remains of the kneelers at Sacred Heart of Jesus in Creole provided a solemn commentary on Hurricane Rita not long after people were allowed back into Cameron Parish.



The entire physical plant of Sacred Heart was damaged. Here the church, rectory, hall and religious education building can be seen. The sides of the church were blown out by the surge of the water, which also devastated the rectory, hall and religious education building. Plans continue to be made on the reconstruction of the church.



The debris in the interior of Our Lady Star of the Sea has been cleaned up and the space awaits reconstruction. The church has been given pews, lights and ceiling fans by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Penn., to replace the pews lost to Rita. Final plans are coming into focus for those repair efforts.



The outside of Our Lady Star of the Sea remains as it was following Hurricane Rita's passage. Debris from the remains of the church's rectory, religious education building and parish hall have long been cleared away.

(This page paid for by the Diocese of Lake Charles.)