



## Mass for Catholic Schools Week celebrated in Cathedral

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost celebrated the annual Catholic Schools Week Mass on Wednesday, Feb. 1, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Eighth grade students from Catholic schools in the Diocese joined the senior class of St. Louis Catholic High School for the liturgy.

Concelebrants for the Mass were Rev. Msgr. Daniel A. Torres, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church; Very Rev. Marcus Johnson, pastor of St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church; Very Rev. Aubrey Guilbeau, pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Maplewood; Rev. John Huckaby, pastor of St. Theodore Catholic Church in Moss Bluff; and Rev. Charles McMillin, pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Jennings. Deacon Christopher Fontenot, principal of St. Louis, assisted the bishop and Very Rev. Ruben Buller served as master of ceremonies.

In his homily, Bishop Provost spoke of the Gospel of the day's Mass (Mark 6:1-6) in which Jesus, returning to Nazareth, speaks and teaches in the synagogue where he 'astonished' the people, though "not in a good way," Bishop Provost said, "To them, he is merely a carpenter, Joseph's son. Jesus says, 'a prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house. He is amazed at their lack of faith.'

"As we celebrate the Catholic schools that we attend, let us not allow Jesus to be 'amazed' at our lack of faith," Bishop Provost said.

"Catholic schools exist to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ," the Bishop continued. "They

may look like any other school, offer the same courses and grant the same diplomas as other schools do, but there is a major difference. The mission of Catholic schools flows from that same 'wisdom' of Matthew 6:2, that Jesus exhibited, and that wisdom is rooted in the truth of Jesus Christ."

The Bishop posed the question of "where did Catholic schools begin?" He answered saying, "they began in the love of God the Father who willed to have His Word become flesh in Jesus Christ. When Jesus taught, He taught not merely for those who listened to Him 2,000 years ago but for us. The Father's Word is still alive. Jesus still lives and teaches through His Church, through its ministry and the work of Catholic education. May we never say that we know Jesus Christ too well. May we never pigeonhole Him in some category and just as easily dismiss Him. He always has more to teach us. Catholic schools are an invitation to know more of what He says and to have faith in what He teaches."

Catholic schools in the Diocese are St. Louis Catholic High School, Immaculate Conception Cathedral Catholic School, St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School, Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School, all in Lake Charles; Our Lady's Catholic School, Sulphur; Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School, Jennings; and St. Theodore Holy Family Catholic School in Moss Bluff. Holy Family Catholic School students and the St. Louis Catholic Concert Choir provided music for the liturgy.



Bishop Glen John Provost stands with representatives of the seven Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles on the steps of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception before the annual celebration of the Mass during Catholic Schools Week, held Feb. 1. Pictured from left, top row, are Julian Jones, eighth grade, St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church; Leah Ryder, twelfth grade, Our Lady's Catholic School, Sulphur; Bishop Provost; Lucy Richert, twelfth grade, St. Louis Catholic High School; and T-Beau Faul, twelfth grade, St. Louis. On the bottom row, from left, is Conner Cassidy, eighth grade, Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School, Jennings; Nicholas Lemelle, seventh grade, Our Lady Theodore Holy Family Catholic School, Moss Bluff; Madison Bebee, Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School, eighth grade; and Jack Spann, eighth grade, Immaculate Conception Cathedral Catholic School.



As has been his habit when meeting with Catholic school students, either at the annual Catholic School Week Mass or at his visits to each of the Catholic schools during the school term, Bishop Provost entertained questions of all types from the young people.

## Louisiana delegation against human trafficking meets with Pope Francis

ROME - Recently, a delegation from Louisiana, including Gov. John Bel Edwards along with Louisiana State Senator Ronnie Johns of Sulphur and Louisiana Senate President John Alario, visited Rome in a continuing effort to promote the fight against human trafficking and share what the state is doing to help victims of this human tragedy.

The trip, from January 15-20, included attendance at a Papal audience with Pope Francis. The Holy Father received the group personally and blessed a plaque that will hang at the doors of the first human trafficking shelter for minor females in Louisiana, under construction now in the Baton Rouge area. Being built by the Metanoia Foundation with 100 percent private funding it is scheduled to open in the summer.

Among others making up the delegation were Louisiana First Lady Donna Edwards, Mrs. Michelle Johns, Father Jeff Bayhi, pastor of St John the Baptist Catholic Church of Zachary, and Louisiana State Police Col. Mike Edmonson and his wife Suzanne.

Also, accompanying the delegation the day of the audience with the Holy Father were Sr. Eugenia Bonnetti who, according to Sen. Johns "is recognized worldwide as 'The Mother Teresa of Human Trafficking'" as well as nuns from her order - the Consolata Missionary Sisters - who will help run the Louisiana shelter.

Sr. Eugenia, who has worked diligently to rescue girls from being trafficked in Italy and help women leave the country's prostitution industry, holds a Masters of Counseling, and is a member of the Italian Union of Major Superiors.

In this capacity, she is in charge of 250 nuns around the world who work to help young girls and women exit prostitution. She appears in the documentary film *Not My Life*, in which she speaks about her work in Italy. In 2005, she participated in a conference sponsored by the Holy See in order to explore how the Church can provide better pastoral care for women forced into prostitution,

was included in the Top Ten People of 2007 list published by *Inside the Vatican*, won the International Women of Courage Award in 2007, and the European Citizens' Prize in 2013.

Fr. Bayhi is the founder of Metanoia and Sen. Johns serves on its Board of Directors. During the week in Rome, the group visited trafficking shelters and met with actual female victims that found safety in the shelters.

The group also spent time

## Lenten Regulations

Every Catholic, even children and older adults, should participate in some way in the spiritual disciplines and penitential practices of Lent in order to go up to Jerusalem with Jesus. These are the regulations for the Church in the United States.

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. This means that we do not eat meat and we have only one full meal. Concerning the Good Friday fast, the Second Vatican Council teaches: "let the Easter fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection may be attained with a clear and uplifted mind."

- The other Fridays of the season of Lent are also days of abstinence from meat. The obligation to abstain from meat binds Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to fast, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18 to 59. Those who are younger or older may freely embrace these disciplines. But Lenten disciplines should never endanger your health.

- The Fridays of the year outside of Lent are also days of penance. Abstaining from meat is the traditional way of observing these days of penance. However, each person is free to replace the traditional abstinence from meat with some other practice of voluntary self-denial or personal penance. It is obvious that abstaining from meat is meaningless for vegetarians, who must choose some other form of abstinence. It is equally obvious that abstaining from meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with the spirit of Lent. Abstaining from meat may be replaced on Fridays during the year with abstaining from some other food. It may also be replaced with time spent reading and studying the Scriptures, special prayers, such as the rosary or visits to the Blessed Sacrament, acts of thoughtfulness and charity to those in need, or acts of personal witness to ones faith, such as teaching a religion class or speaking out on the sinfulness of abortion, euthanasia, racism, and other social evils.

- While the season of lent is the primary period of Catholic penitential practices, these regulations are not intended to limit the occasions for Christian penance. The practice of spiritual discipline is always appropriate during periods of special need for the individual and the larger community. The Catholic faithful should be reminded of the teaching of Pope Paul VI concerning the seriousness of being faithful to Lenten disciplines. He said that the obligation to follow these disciplines in solidarity with the Church is a serious one. However, Catholics should not become scrupulous in this regard. Failure to observe individual days of penance is not considered a serious matter. However, the faithful should look for ways to do more rather than less. Fast and abstinence on the days prescribed, and works of religion and charity on the Fridays outside Lent, should be considered a minimal response to the call of Jesus to go up to Jerusalem with Him in order that we might experience true Christian conversion in our lives.

at the Pontifical North American College and did a comprehensive presentation on human trafficking and how it is affecting our country. Special time was spent with the Louisiana seminarians at-

tending the PNAC, including four from the Diocese of Lake Charles - Levi Thompson, Andrew Derouen, Joseph Caraway, and Michael Caraway.

## Catholic Charities food distribution

LAKE CHARLES – The distribution schedule for Second Harvest food baskets for eligible clients by Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana at its 1225 Second Street location occurs twice each month.

The first distribution for the month of March takes place on the second Friday – March 10 - for clients with last names ending in A through L, starting at 9 a.m. and concluding at 11 a.m.

The second food distribution day for the month is on the third Friday – March 17 – for those whose last names end in M through Z, also from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

All clients wishing to register or to recertify to receive food must provide:

- Picture ID for each adult in the household,
- Social Security card for each person in the household,
- Proof of one month's income for the household: Food Stamp letter, SSI, TANF, Social Security, Child Support Letter, retirement, unemployment, Veterans benefits, payroll checks,
- Proof of residency - a utility bill,
- Proof of the number of persons in the household.



Pope Francis blesses the Louisiana delegation recently during his weekly papal audience. Seen up front is Sister Eugenia Bonetti, a Consolata Missionary Sister from Rome, recognized by many worldwide as "The Mother Teresa of Human Trafficking." The group visited Rome and the Holy See to promote the fight against human trafficking and share what the state is doing to help victims of this human tragedy.

## Mardi Gras Office Hours

The Offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 27-28, for Mardi Gras. They reopen on Wednesday, March 1 – Ash Wednesday – for regular office hours the remainder of the week – 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.





## Saint Charles Center schedule of events

MOSS BLUFF – Events for the remainder of the spring at Saint Charles Center include “Communication with Care and Clarity,” a program presented by Sr. Diane Depwe Tuesday, February 21 from 6 to 9 p.m.

A Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat for Healing After Abortion is slated for Friday, Feb. 24 to Sunday, February 26. Fr. Nathan Long, Margie Long and the Diocesan Team will be on hand to help those suffering from an abortion experience. The weekend combines discussions, spiritual exercises, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a memorial service and a Mass of Entrustment. Participation is strictly confidential. The cost is \$210.00 for meals, private room with private bath and all retreat materials. Financial assistance is available. For more information or to register call Rachel’s Vineyard of Southwest Louisiana at 337-439-7400, Ext. 317 or e-mail rachel.vineyard@lcediocese.org.

March programs open on Wednesday, March 1, with “Our Call to Lenten Grace,” an Ash Wednesday Evening of Reflection presented by Fr. Whitney Miller from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

It will consist of Holy Mass and the Distribution of Ashes, a simple supper, and a presentation on Lenten spirituality. There will be no cost for the evening, but a free will offering will be accepted. Funds procured will benefit

the Maintenance Account for the Center.

“Knowing God’s Will: The Spiritual Practice of Discernment,” presented by Sr. Diane Depwe is Tuesday, March 14 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Lenten Private Directed Retreats with Fr. Miller, Fr. Marshall Boulet, Judy Savoie and Gloria Villegas can be scheduled Monday, March 20 to Sunday, March 26. A directed retreat is a form of silent retreat based on the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola focusing on the personal prayer of the individual. Retreats of three or five days are available. Information and registration can only be achieved by calling 337-855-1232. Registration online may not be used.

Fr. Miller, Fr. Boulet, Savoie and Villegas also offer “An Introduction to the Directed Retreat” on Thursday, March 23 to Sunday, March 26. Registration for this retreat is only available by calling the Center - 337-855-1232.

“An Evening of Mercy and Forgiveness” on Tuesday, March 28 is from 6 to 9 p.m. will take place in the Assumption Chapel beginning with the enthronement of the Blessed Sacrament for any who might want to spend a Holy Hour in this sacred space. Priests will be on hand for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) until 8 p.m. at which time Benediction will be celebrated to conclude this blessed opportunity of Lenten worship and

praise. Pre-registration is required for this event by calling 337-855-1232.

In April, events scheduled include “Walking the Way of the Passion with Jesus: A Journey toward Spiritual Growth, Happiness and Peace” Women’s Lenten Silent Retreat and presented by Father Miller on Friday, April 7 to Sunday, April 9. Contact Elaine Trahan at 337-474-0178 or the Center at (337) 855-1232 or visit stcharles-center.com. Father Miller will host Good Friday Meditations from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, April 14. There is no fee but pre-registration is appreciated.

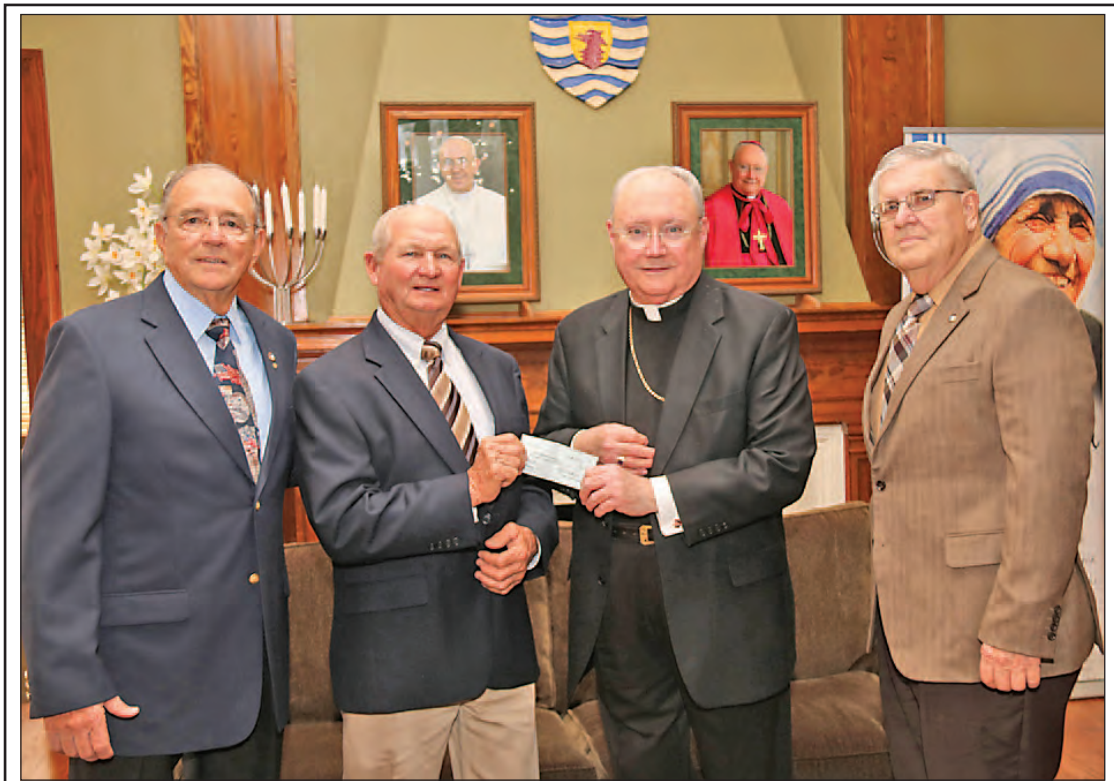
Sr. Diane Depwe will present “Letting Go of Resentment and Hurts and Replacing with Forgiveness and Mercy” on Tuesday, April 18 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Michael Sartori, M. Div., will offer “The Lord’s Prayer” on Tuesday, May 9, from 6 to 9 p.m.

On Tuesday, May 16 from 6 to 9 p.m., Sr. Diane Depwe offers “On Eagles’ Wings.”

A “Domestic Church” Married Couples Retreat is slated for Thursday, May 25 to Sunday, May 28. For information and/or to register, call Blaine or Denise Wyninger at (337) 764-1562 or call the Center’s office.

Information - suggested contribution, registration deadlines, etc. - about any of the Center’s programs is available at 337-855-1232.



The East Deanery Serra Club presented a \$2,000.00 contribution to Bishop Glen John Provost for the Seminary Fund of the Diocese of Lake Charles. The gift came from proceeds of the club’s annual golf tournament. The donation will assist in paying educational expenses of the 14 men studying for the priesthood for the diocese at three seminaries. Pictured are, from left, Bill Caraway, vice president; Philip Watkins, president; Bishop Provost; and Russell Touchet, treasurer.

## Black and Indian Mission Collection

LAKE CHARLES – The churches of the Diocese of Lake Charles will take part in the annual Black and Indian Mission Collection on the weekend of March 4-5.

Mandated by the III Plenary Council in 1884, the National Collection for Black and Indian people continues as the embodiment of the Church’s concern for evangelizing the Black and Indian peoples of the United States. The funds are distributed as grants to dioceses throughout the United States, supporting and strengthening evangelization programs which otherwise would cease. The Collection was

formerly known as The Black and Indian Home Mission Collection.

Churches here in the Diocese of Lake Charles along with various ministries are aided by grants from the Black and Indian Mission Office (BIMO). Those parishes receiving funding from a BIMO grant include St. Henry Catholic Church, St. Joseph Catholic Church (Elton); St. Joseph Catholic Church (Welsh); Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church (Jennings); Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church; Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church; and the Office of Black Catholics,

including providing for the Eleanor Figaro Scholarship Fund, which extends partial scholarships for a number of students at St. Louis Catholic High School.

In 2016, the faithful of the diocese contributed \$33,906.81 to support the Black and Indian Mission Collection.

“This Collection so clearly authenticates Pope Francis’ call to us as pastors to work as a family to help all of our brothers and sisters and share the Love, Faith and Hope of Jesus Christ,” said Father Maurice Henry Sands, Executive Director.



New Life Counseling’s 21st annual Candlelight Memorial Prayer Vigil and March for Life began at the Lake Charles Civic Center’s Veterans Memorial Park, traveling down Bord du Lac Drive, up Clarence Street and north on Ryan Street to the Calcasieu Parish Courthouse. In Photo 1, Father Rommel Tolentino, pastor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, along with nuns of the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan, serving in the diocese – from left, Sr. Mary Elizabeth Ann McCullough, Sr. Tracy Dolan, and Sr. Mary Elisha Glady – took part in the march. Photo 2 shows the nearly 300 individuals marching on the 44th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision legalizing abortion that, to date, has killed almost 60 million children in the country. In Photo 3, Bishop Glen John Provost prays with the large crowd at the close of the solemn event.

## Diocesan Briefs.....

### “An American Phenomenon” on Feb. 26

LAKE CHARLES -- On Sunday, February 26 at 6 p.m., the Lake Charles Kiwanis North will present “An American Phenomenon - Negro Spiritual and Gospel Music Sounds” at Reeves Temple C.M.E. Church, 1400 Winterhalter Street.

A combined choir of voices from local churches will present sacred songs and narrations about the origins and meanings of spirituals and gospel music.

The public is invited and admission is free.

### Divine Mercy DVD series at Cathedral

LAKE CHARLES -- The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception will host a 10-part DVD series and small group study on “Divine Mercy - The Second Greatest Story Ever Told.”, on the Thursdays of February, March and April

Sessions are set from 6 to 7 p.m. on February 23; March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; and April 6, 20.

The study is free of charge, but pre-registration by calling 337-436-7251 is appreciated.

### Vocation drawing contest entries sought

LAKE CHARLES – The call for entries to the annual vocation drawing contest for the Diocese of Lake Charles in preparation for World Day of Prayer for Vocations continues.

Students in grades 2nd through 12th are invited to make a drawing depicting awareness of vocation to the priesthood in Southwest Louisiana on letter size white poster board.

The drawings are to be turned in by noon on Friday, April 7, to Connie Perkins in the Office of Vocations, 414 Iris Street.

Each entry must include - printed on the back of the drawing - the artist’s name, age, grade, phone number, church, city, and name of school. It must be placed unfolded in an envelope marked ‘Vocation Drawing Contest.’

Monetary awards will be given for first, second and third place. The first place winner will have their art reproduced on prayer cards to be distributed on Sunday, May 7, at the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Henry Catholic Church, 1021 Eighth Avenue.

### Luncheon and breakfast dates

LAKE CHARLES -- The Men’s Prayer Breakfast and Women’s Luncheon with Bishop Glen John Provost are Friday, March 3, and, Wednesday March 8, respectively, in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Office Building.

Women should send a check for \$15, payable to the Dio-

cese of Lake Charles, to Women’s Luncheon Tickets, 411 Iris Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601 and include a stamped self-address envelope.

The breakfast starts at 7 a.m. and is preceded by Mass beginning at 6:30 a.m. in the Cathedral. Men should call 337-439-7400 to register.

### “The Catholic’s Divorce Survival Guide” at OLQH

LAKE CHARLES -- Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse and Sean Corcoran will facilitate “The Catholic’s Divorce Survival Guide” - Helping You Find Peace, Power, and Passion After Your Divorce at Our Lady Queen of Heaven’s Family Life Community Center beginning in March.

The program will be held on the Tuesdays of March 21 through June 6 each day from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Activity Room. Registration fee of \$40 covers all materials and registration is available at www.olqh.org. The deadline is March 10.

The program will help those who take part to discover how to work through the emotions of separation and divorce, experience personal healing and hope, gain wisdom and comfort from others who share your experiences, address questions of forgiveness and new family dynamics, and obtain an understanding of the annulment process.

Call 337-477-1236 for Felicia with any questions.

### St. Margaret of Scotland Lenten Mission

LAKE CHARLES -- Quick-Fixes for the Lenten Drop-out, Saving “Us” From “Ourselves” during Lent is a Lenten Mission series hosted by St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church, Monday to Wednesday, March 6-8, at 6:30 p.m. each day in the church.

The mission will be presented by Rev. Jamin Scott David, JCL, a priest of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. He is the pastor of St. Margaret Church in Albany and its chapel of ease — St. Thomas the Apostle in Springfield. Fr. David is a canon lawyer for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, the Director of Formation for the Permanent Diaconate, and a Judge in the Diocesan Tribunal of First Instance.

### “M omnipotent: A Book Club for Moms” in March

LAKE CHARLES -- “M omnipotent: A Book Club for Moms” Finding Peace, Balance, & Joy in Your Vocation as a Mother is set for the Monday afternoons of March 6, 13, 20, 27 in the Fireplace Room of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Family Life Center from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Registration fee of \$30 covers

journal and book.

Register and pay at www.olqh.org by the Feb. 20 deadline. Call 337-477-1236 for Felicia with any questions.

### Next Marriage Preparation class April 8

LAKE CHARLES – Openings for the next Marriage Preparation class, offered by the Office of Family Life of the Diocese, is Saturday, April 8.

The class is from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Chancery of the Diocese, 414 Iris Street. Registration is \$100, which includes the Prepare/Enrich online assessment, lunch, and materials. It can be accomplished online at live.lcediocese.org by clicking the Event Registration button, then the Marriage Preparation link.

A registration form can also be printed by going to Marriage Preparation under the forms link on the website.

### Lenten Mission at Our Lady Queen of Heaven

LAKE CHARLES -- Fr. Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, is the featured speaker at “Divine Mercy and the Blessed Virgin Mary”, the 2017 Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church Lenten Mission Monday, March 13 through Wednesday, March 15 at 6:30 p.m. each day.

Fr. Thaddaeus will preach at all weekend and celebrate weekday Masses and be available during confessions.

Call Felicia at 337-477-1236 with any questions or go to olqh.org for daily schedule and topics.

### Altar Society Spring trip set April 19

LAKE CHARLES – The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception’s Altar Society will sponsor a Spring trip to St. Francisville on Wednesday, April 19.

Mass will be celebrated at 6:30 a.m. in the Cathedral prior to departure of the bus from the Ave Maria Hall at 7 a.m. There will be a self-tour at the Historical Grace Episcopal Church and Graveyard, a visit to the C.C. Lockwood Museum and lunch at the Magnolia Café. A tour of Rosedown Plantation and Afton Villa Gardens is also planned with return to Lake Charles by 8 p.m.

The cost is \$125. A \$50 non-refundable deposit will hold a spot.

Call Karen Fills at 304-8424 to make your reservation. Checks should be made payable to “ICC Altar Society” and mailed to Fills, 1513 Anita Street, Sulphur, LA 70663.