



Bishop Provost's Pastoral Letter for Lent

My dear People of God,

You and I are God's handiwork. We are His creation. In the words of an old expression, "God doesn't make junk." Indeed! The Lord has fashioned us with a physical body and an immortal soul. And each of us carries the imprint of the Divine Artist in his or her own way. Each of us is unique, which I think is a marvelous testimony to God's artistry, which I think is different, yet all belong to the human family. We are all made for great things, not as the world defines greatness but as God sees it. This is one way of saying that human beings possess a God-given dignity.

As God's created handiwork, we respond to this dignity by living good and moral lives. "For God did not call us to impurity but to holiness." St. Paul writes, "This is the will of God, your holiness" (I Thessalonians 4:3). St. Paul continues, "Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not a human being but God, who also gives his holy Spirit to you" (I Thessalonians 4:7-8).

All too obvious in our modern world are the results of ignoring and setting aside this truth of the call to holiness. Instances of violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking only increase, as we watch our families fall apart and our young laid waste by addictions of every sort, including pornography. If we are to be known by our fruits (cf. Matthew 7:20), we can no longer be known as a Christian society. The call to holiness requires a response from us.

We either respond to the call to holiness and live that dignity, or we do not. Our happiness depends on our appreciation of this dignity. This is a truth that cannot be overstated: Without an appreciation of our dignity and without growth in our ability to live this dignity, we cannot be happy. Happiness would remain elusive, and we frustrated.

Purity is necessary. We cannot live productive, other-directed lives without it. As the sixth Beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount teaches us, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains this Gospel teaching by saying that "purity of heart is the precondition of the vision of God" (CCC, 2519). Why is this so? Because purity helps us to see as He sees, to accept others as our neighbors, and to respect our bodies and the bodies of others as temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. CCC, 2519).

Where must we begin? I would recommend these steps. First, we begin by examining our consciences. Have we accepted promiscuity as some sort of "new normal"? Have we complicated our lives and endangered our families and our immortal souls with the deceit that accompanies sexual license? From whom do we think we

are hiding when we secretly view pornography or engage in some concealed sexual escapade? God sees all. And for this reason, He speaks to us in our examination of conscience by showing us the truth and calling us to conversion. Remember always: Truth sets us free (cf. John 8:31-32).

Objective truth exists. It is a dangerous and pervasive error in our modern world to think that good and evil, right and wrong, are relative judgments or questions of taste. If the truth is one thing for one person and not another, then it is not truth. That is opinion. Remember too that there are actions and activities that are intrinsically evil and that no court or elected body, however noble in principle, can make right. Truth corresponds to reality, and it is reality that we need to grasp and reality that is in jeopardy when we relativize truth.

Second, we go to confession, and not just once. If we are embedded with a habit, especially one of the flesh, then we must not be discouraged. If we fall again, then we must return to the Lord, repent, and begin again. Only with firm resolution and God's Grace will we discipline our wills to act in accord with the Divine Will. We must, however, not give up. We must keep trying. Pray always. Never surrender.

Third, we must practice modesty. Purity requires it. Only with modesty is the true love between persons protected (CCC, 2519). Modesty may require us to cleanse our environment. How can modesty survive when we are surrounded by permissive behavior, inappropriate entertainment, and suggestive dress? In effect, modesty is only possible with self-control, which demands that we know ourselves as best we can and know and appreciate right from wrong.

Fourth, we should have a program of life. This program must include time for prayer, constructive recreation, attending to the duties of our state of life, providing for our families, nurturing wholesome friendships, and worshipping God. Without a program of this sort we are lost, like a boat at sea without a rudder. To sort a course, chart a journey, one needs not only a destination but also a good map. If we are to make progress toward our goal of purity of heart, a program of life is the map which ensures that every day we move closer to our destination.

Finally, we must entrust ourselves to God. He is a loving Father. His Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, showed only mercy to those who turned to Him in repentance. However, here emphasis is needed. He never left anyone the same who discovered Him and His powerful Love. A change took place. Think only of the Samaritan woman (John 4:4-42), the woman caught in adultery

(John 8:1-11), the father of the son possessed by a demon (Luke 9:37-43), the synagogue official's daughter and the woman with a hemorrhage (Mark 5:21-43)-to name only a few. We must call out to the Lord in prayer as did these helpless people: "I do believe, help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24); "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" (Matthew 8:25); "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David!" (Matthew 15:22); "Lord, please let me see" (Luke 18:41). Then, a startling thing will happen. The Lord will turn and look upon us and our need. Actually, He was looking upon us all along, but now we awake to His gaze. What happens next is His marvelous work, His not ours. He will do it in His own way, in His own good time. All we need do is persevere at entrusting ourselves to Him. The Gospels are filled with these accounts of healing. I have seen them myself. Every priest has. And with a crowd of witnesses, we were "all astonished by the majesty of God" (Luke 9:43).

To help us implement the steps outlined above and to make progress in our pursuit of purity of heart, I have asked that all parishes of the Diocese observe what we are calling **Safe Haven Sunday** on this first weekend of Lent. Inspired by the Bishops of the United States in their pastoral letter "Create in Me a Clean Heart," our parishes will provide resources to support individuals, marriages and families in making all homes a safe haven. One of these resources is a book entitled "Equipped-Smart Catholic Parenting in a Sexualized Culture" provided by Covenant Eyes. Prayer cards and information on support groups will also be available to you after all Masses. Because we live in a digital age, there is also information on practical tips for adults to create a safer digital environment. Information on and access to this important resource will be provided by your pastor at all Masses. Please consult your parish bulletins for additional help.

Asking our Blessed Mother's intercession so that we all grow in a deep appreciation of our dignity as God's creation, I remain with prayers for you and your families,

Devotedly yours in our Lord,

✠ Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Non-public school Students of the Year announced



Micah Wayne Dupree



Andrew Thrasher



Aidan Primeaux

LAKE CHARLES - Three students attending non-public schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles have been named district winners of the Student of the Year award - fifth grade, Micah Wayne Dupree, First Baptist Christian Academy, Moss Bluff; eighth grade, Andrew Thrasher, Our Lady's Catholic School, Sulphur; and 12th Grade, Aidan Primeaux, St. Louis Catholic

High School, Lake Charles.

These students move forward, competing at the regional level in Baton Rouge, the winners from which will be announced March 4.

Individual school winners from each school were for fifth grade: Lauren Claire Hebert, Bethel Christian School; Addison Rasberry, Immaculate Conception Catholic School; Sarah Madi-

son Crochet, Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School, Jennings; Kyle Patin, Our Lady's Catholic School, Sulphur; Sophia Dalovisio, St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School, Lake Charles; and Tatum Scottie-Grace Bridges, St. Theodore Holy Family School, Moss Bluff and eighth grade: Kelly Nicole Broussard, Bethel Christian School, Jennings; Joseph

Connor, First Baptist Christian Academy, Moss Bluff; Reese Darbonne, Immaculate Conception Cathedral School; Michael O'Brien, Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School, Jennings; Sarah Elizabeth Owen, St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School, Lake Charles; and Ella Boudreaux, St. Theodore Holy Family Catholic School.



Every Catholic, to enter more deeply into the life of Christ, is to participate in some way in the spiritual and penitential disciplines of Lent. The regulations for the Catholic Church in the United States are as follows: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. The other Fridays of Lent are 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 during the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18 to 59. Those younger or older are encouraged to voluntarily embrace these disciplines in so far as they are able.

Divine and Natural Law holds that all the faithful are morally bound to do penance.

The Fourth Precept of the Church obliges Catholics to observe the penance of fasting and abstinence for Lent.

Fridays outside of Lent are also days of penance and spiritual discipline. Abstaining from meat is the traditional way of observing these days of penance. The Bishops of the United States have granted permission for abstinence from meat on Fridays outside of Lent to be replaced with some other self-denial or personal penance. However, Friday remains a day of some penitential practice. As Bishop Provost stated in a recent pastoral letter: "The idea of sacrificing something is countercultural to the 'throwaway' mentality that plagues us today and of which Pope Francis has time and again warned us" (September 3, 2015).

Fasting should never endanger one's health. Avoiding some form of permissible entertainment or performing sacrificial acts of charity, for example, could replace the fasting when health is a consideration.

Finally, with any penitential discipline, both the letter and the spirit are to be maintained. For example, replacing meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with penitential practice. Also, the increasingly popular practice of hosting "crawfish boils" and entertainments on Good Friday is highly inappropriate. Good Friday remains an extraordinary and solemn day on which we recall the suffering and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Good Friday should remain a day of fasting, abstinence, prayer, penance, and interior and exterior quiet.

Safe Haven Sunday kicks off year-long initiative to combat pornography

Safe Haven Sunday, the beginning of a year-long initiative to help renew the identity of the human person, will be observed the first weekend of Lent, Feb. 29-March 1, in the Diocese of Lake Charles.

A free resource provided by the Diocese in collaboration with Covenant Eyes, the focus of the initiative is to combat the evil of pornography and to offer pathways for formation, hope and healing.

This comprehensive treatment of the topic of pornography addresses clergy, parents, educators, diocesan and parish leaders, mental health professionals, and those affected by pornography.

The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, has asked all parishes of the Diocese to observe Safe Haven Sunday by providing resources to support individuals, marriages and families in making all homes

a safe haven.

A book entitled "Equipped - Smart Catholic Parenting in a Sexualized Culture" provided by Covenant Eyes, in addition to prayer cards and information on support groups, will be available after all Masses.

In a letter to all clergy in announcing the initiative, Bishop Provost pointed out that "pornography is one of the leading causes of addictions, abuse, adultery, divorce, and even human trafficking. The use of pornography creates an unsafe environment for children and confuses others about attitudes towards sex and marriage."

Bishop Provost continued, "awareness will offer an opportunity to address the harmfulness of pornography in marriages, families, and culture as a whole." Bishop Provost addresses many of these issues in his Lenten

Pastoral Letter, printed above.

The book uses the image of the home - the domestic church - to guide those in how to teach children to say no to pornography while at the same time forming them in a broader understanding of their God-given identity; the importance of sexual integrity; the difference between sexual impulse and life-giving union; how to understand sexual shame; and how to engage media with discernment.

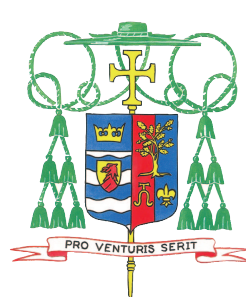
Additional resources include a website developed for the Diocese of Lake Charles: <https://cleanheartonline/diocese-lake-charles-0> providing Catholics with the necessary resources, education and training to encourage the appropriate use of technology. Clean Heart Online was developed by Covenant Eyes, a provider of faith-based re-

source materials in many dioceses of the Province of New Orleans.

Other efforts in the Diocese of Lake Charles that will be made available to all parishes include resources for a bible study on the Book of Genesis and a book study on "Made This Way: How to Prepare Kids to Face Today's Tough Moral Issues" by Leila Miller and Trent Horn. The book gives parents, guardians and teachers crucial tools and techniques to form children with the understanding they need - appropriate to their age and maturity level - to meet the worlds' challenges.

Later in the year, the annual Veritas Conference on Sept. 26 will highlight the theme: Identity and Dignity of the Human Person.

Calendar



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

February 28, 2020

Dedication and blessing of Camp Karol set for April 25

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

MOSS BLUFF — The youth ministry of the Diocese of Lake Charles will soon have a place to call home when Camp Karol Catholic Retreat Center opens on Saturday, April 25. The dedication and blessing for the youth camp is set for 10 a.m. with the Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, presiding.

There are several retreats for 2020 already on the Camp Karol calendar, including Teen ACTS retreats, according to Deacon Brian Soileau, associate director of Saint Charles Center and Camp Karol.

“One of the first retreats is the week of June 1 for the Diocesan Youth Core Team. I think it is awesome that the core team (made up of high school students throughout the diocese) is one of the first scheduled,” said Deacon Soileau. “When it comes to the youth ministry of the diocese, those kids put a lot into that ministry.”

After the needs of diocesan groups have been met, The Lodge at Camp Karol will be open to others including church parish groups, vocation groups, and serve as an overflow facility when Saint Charles Center is booked. It will also be available to groups outside the Diocese of Lake Charles.

“Camp Karol is going to be busy,” Deacon Soileau said with enthusiasm. “I have already been contacted by the Diocese of Beaumont, the Diocese of Alexandria, a Baptist church has already booked some dates, and there’s another Baptist church that has visited with me.”

Opening day for The Lodge at Camp Karol will offer the public an opportunity to see first-hand this jewel of the diocese on more than 100 acres situated along the Calcasieu River between Saint Charles Center and St. Theodore Catholic Church.

The dedication will coincide with the 40th anniversary of the installation of Bishop Jude Speyrer, the first bishop for the Diocese of Lake Charles in 1980. It was under Bishop Speyrer’s leadership that the completion of Saint Charles Center was accomplished in November of 1995. In its 25th year of ministry, Saint Charles Center’s extension through Camp Karol allows for a broadening of programs with the young people of the diocese in mind.

“Our goal is to become a full summer camp where kids can spend a full week or a couple of weeks,” Soileau said, but noting that Camp Karol hasn’t quite reached that goal. “What we are capable of doing once construction is complete will be some weekend events. It won’t be full summer camp status just yet; some other things still need to happen first.

“While our primary focus is to be a youth camp, we also want to serve as a place where families can be involved, a place for them to come and experience Christ with their children,” Deacon Soileau emphasized.

One example is a program started in 2019 at Saint Charles Center with the intention of moving it to Camp Karol. Family Adoration Night will be kid-friendly with activities for the children while parents spend quiet time in adoration. Towards the end of the evening, the whole family will gather in the chapel for benediction.

The idea for a Catholic youth camp in Southwest Louisiana was initiated in 2005. After 10 years of independent effort, 89 acres of property known as Bear Island, along with its assets and equipment was donated to the Diocese of Lake Charles in November of 2015.

Bishop Provost placed the project under the direction of Father Whitney Miller, director of Saint Charles Center, and the vision evolved into Camp Karol with an additional 12 acres purchased by the Diocese.

The project of Camp Karol became one of the goals of the *Return to the Lord* Capital Campaign conducted by the Diocese in 2016. Fundraising efforts continue for other projects at the camp including bungalows to house a total of 144 overnight guests.

“The first six bungalows are under construction with hopes that they will be finished by June, weather permitting” said Deacon Soileau. “Each set of six bungalows will be able to house 72 guests, complete with bathroom/shower facilities. Until the second set of six bungalows is complete, we will use Saint Katharine Drexel Conference Center dormitory at Saint Charles Center for any overflow of guests.”

Bear Island will serve as the activity center of Camp Karol, but in order to gain access to the island, a boardwalk will need to be built across the swamp. It will take a lot of people to contribute, said Deacon Soileau, not just monetarily, but their time, their talent, and their ideas.

“On opening day, when people can go out and see what Camp Karol is all about, what is out there and see the beauty of it for themselves, then whatever else is needed to complete the project, I am confident people will donate what is necessary,” Soileau said.

“We still have to build the boardwalk and set up Bear Island as the activity center for the camp. We want to have activities like a ropes course, a rock climb, a zip-line for kids, Stations of the Cross in the swamp that can be accessed by pirogues, and hopefully develop an area to have campouts with tents. All of this will take funding.

“We want to leave the island as much in its natural habitat without clearing more than necessary,” Soileau said when describing the backdrop for young people to grow in their relationship with God.

The mission for Camp Karol is to provide a serene environment for Catholic youth of the Diocese of Lake Charles to seek Christ, live Catholic, build community, and ignite the world.

The significance of the name is that Camp Karol honors Saint John Paul II whose baptismal name was Karol Wojtyla. “In Polish, his native language, Karol means Charles, underscoring the strong link Camp Karol has to Saint Charles Retreat Center,” said Deacon Soileau.

“We will be and have been putting a lot of thought into the papacy of John Paul II for the functioning of Camp Karol as well as the decor because it is his namesake,” he said. The camp also adopted the motto for Saint John Paul II’s papacy, *Totus Tuus: Totally Yours*.

“The world is pulling and tugging on the youth to give themselves over to the world,” Soileau said. “They have to learn to give themselves totally to Christ instead. That is where the truth is. That is where real life is. They can’t accomplish that, nor can Camp Karol accomplish its mission, unless we all give ourselves over totally to Christ.”

Bishop Provost requested from Rome and has obtained a first-class relic of Saint John Paul II’s hair to be permanently housed in the chapel.

Deacon Soileau still remembers the powerful impact of being in the presence of Pope John Paul II.

“I saw him as a youth at the (New Orleans) Superdome. That was a life-changing experience for me,” he said. “I am hoping his presence at Camp Karol will be strong. His physical presence to young people, it just can’t be explained, so we want to have a physical part with this relic on site for the kids to venerate.”

Another way to honor the memory of the revered saint is through a group of 20 men called the Fraternity of Saint John



The floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace is a focal point of the main lobby as it towers 30 feet to the top of The Lodge. To the left of the fireplace is the dining hall, and to the right is the meeting area.

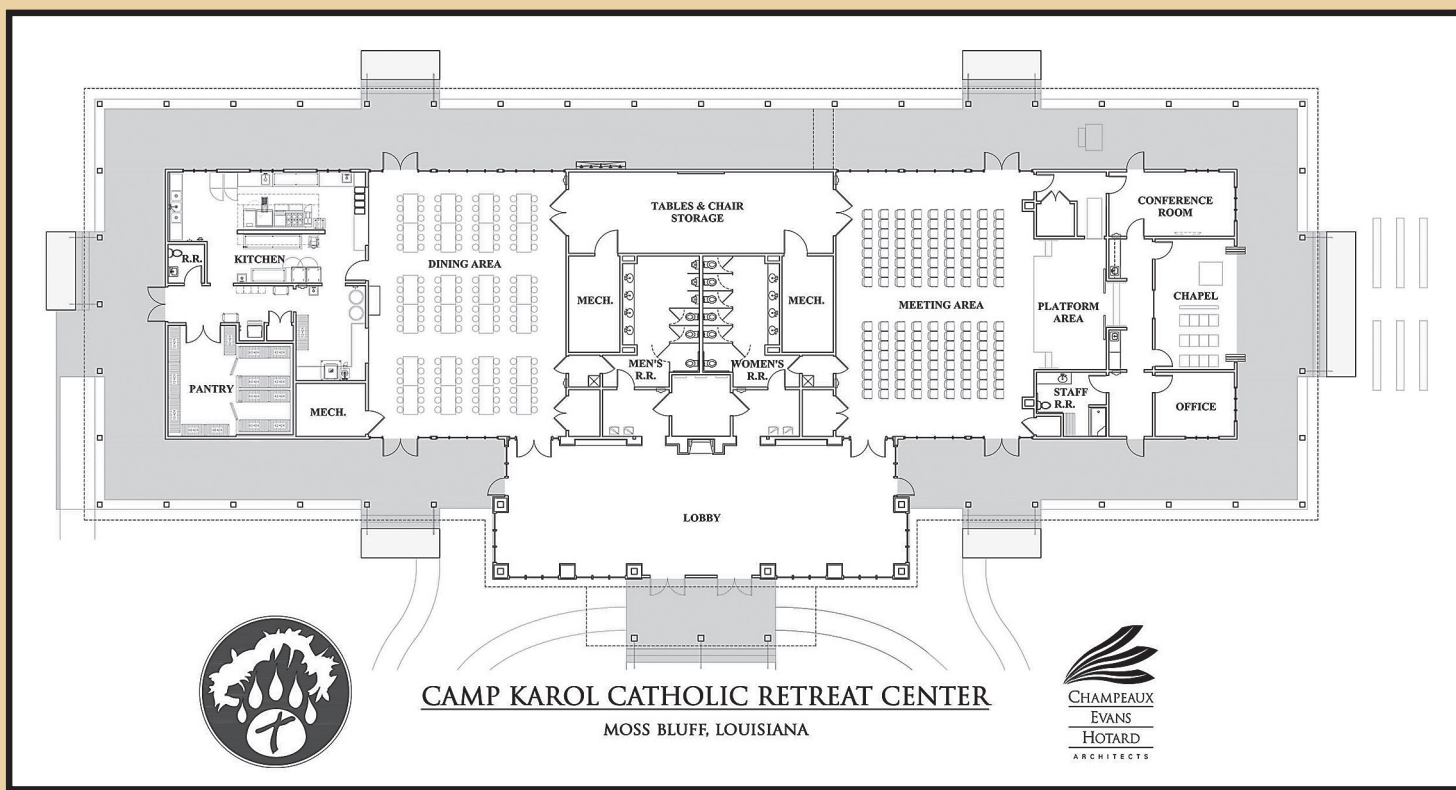


The Camp Karol logo is displayed prominently at the top of the front entry truss of The Lodge. The logo references the original association the camp has with Bear Island and will be one of the first things people see when visiting Camp Karol.



The Lodge at Camp Karol in Moss Bluff will serve as a Catholic youth camp and retreat center for the Diocese of Lake Charles. The much-anticipated dedication and blessing is set for 10 a.m. Saturday, April 25.

Photos by Deacon Brian Soileau/Saint Charles Center



Paul II. Their role will be like spiritual fathers of the young people attending Camp Karol to be in prayer for the youth, pray rosaries, the Divine Mercy chaplet, as well as spend time in adoration. They will also take on special projects at the camp.

In addition to men of the fraternity, Deacon Soileau said there are already more than 60 volunteers signed up to work at the camp. The Camp Karol Training and Staff Development Committee completed three training days for volunteers on Jan. 28, Feb. 4, and Feb. 11.

Volunteers are also being sought for a Camp Karol youth choir to perform at the dedication on April 25.

For more information on ways to contribute to the ongoing project of Camp Karol or to make reservations, please call Deacon Brian Soileau, associate director, at 337-855-1232, ext. 201. Also, visit www.stcharlescenter.com.

Spring programs at Saint Charles Center

MOSS BLUFF – Events at Saint Charles Center open in March with “Spiritual Warfare,” presented by Sr. Diane Depwe, from 6 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10.

Attendees will journey with Jesus and Saint Paul to gain an understanding of why we need to know the weapons of spiritual warfare and learn how to put on God’s whole armor to fight against evil as well as to put on Christ. Registration deadline is Friday, March 6, and the event carries a suggested donation of \$20 per person.

“Lenten Private Directed Retreats” will be led by Fr. Whitney Miller, Fr. Marshall Boulet, Deacon Brian Soileau, Judy Savoie and Gloria Villegas from Monday, March 16, to Sunday, March 22. 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. *This is not a program with registration available online.* Those interested in attending must call the Center at (337) 855-1232 to register. The suggested donation is \$350 for a three day retreat and \$475 for five days. Scholarship information is available upon request for those in need of assistance.

The same group of retreat masters will also provide a “Lenten Introduction to the Directed Retreat” Thursday, March 19, to Sunday March 22. The weekend introduction helps the retreatant learn the prayer technique and prepares them for a longer retreat. *Registration is not available online* and the suggested donation is \$350 per person. Scholarship information is available upon request for those in need of assistance.

A Women’s Discipleship, Eucharist, Evangelization and Prayer (D.E.E.P) Retreat will be available for women who

have attended an ACTS Retreat in the past and are looking for a renewal retreat experience. It will be led by Fr. Keith Pellerin, Fr. Miller, Deacon Soileau, Sr. Camille Martinez, SEC & Team from about 1 to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, through 3 p.m. Thursday, March 26. Cost of the retreat is \$195 with registration forms available at stcharlescenter.com or by contacting Linda Daigle at (337) 802-3496 or lindadaigle.deep@yahoo.com or calling the Center.

Sr. Camille Martinez, SEC, will lead the Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church Women’s Silent Lenten Retreat, “SPOT OF GRACE,” from Friday, April 3, to Sunday, April 5.

The inspiration for the Palm Sunday Weekend is drawn from Dr. Dawna Markova who faced the difficult task of living after her only sibling’s death to cancer. The suggested donation for the retreat is \$225 for a private room and \$205 for shared accommodations. Contact Andrea Blanchard at (337) 794-9679 for registration. Scholarship information is available upon request for those needing assistance.

Everyone is invited to “An Evening of Mercy and Forgiveness” on Tuesday, April 7, from 5 to 7 p.m. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) will be available for all who choose to come by the Center and spend some time in prayer and spiritual preparation during this holy season of Lent. At 5 p.m., the Blessed Sacrament will be enthroned on the altar of the Assumption Chapel, for those who might want to spend a Holy Hour. Priests will be on hand for Confession until 7 p.m., at which time Benediction will be celebrated to conclude this blessed opportunity of Lenten worship and praise. Pre-registration is not required.