



Beloved priest, Msgr. Ronald C. Groth dies

Reverend Monsignor Ronald C. Groth, 77, a retired priest of the Diocese of Lake Charles, died Sunday, May 10 - Mother's Day - in his residence in Hathaway. A native of Elton, Msgr. Groth was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Lafayette at St. Lawrence Parish in Hathaway on May 31, 1969 by The Most Reverend Warren Boudreaux, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette.

In accord with recent civil requirements for indoor services and adhering to limited seating, public viewing for Monsignor Ronald Groth was held in St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Raymond on Thursday, May 14, and concluded with a Scripture Service. Viewing will resume in St. Lawrence Church today, beginning at 9 a.m. and concluding with a Mass for Eternal Rest of Monsignor Groth at 10 a.m. A private funeral Mass and burial for family and clergy will be celebrated at a later time. Funeral services are under the direction of Miguez Funeral Home.

He celebrated his first Holy Mass on June 1, 1969, in St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Hathaway and his first pastoral assignment was as assistant pastor to St. Raphael Catholic Church in Iowa.

Msgr. Groth was named a Prelate of Honor to His Holiness Pope John Paul II, with the title Monsignor, on June 3, 1990 and was a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

He received his college/philosophy training at Immaculate Minor Seminary in Lafayette and at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston and his theological education at the University of St. Thomas in Houston

- graduating with a Master of Theology degree. He earned a Master of Spiritual Theology degree in 1994 from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.

Other pastoral assignments included assistant pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Iberia, St. Mary Magdalen in Abbeville, and pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians in Jennings. While still in the Diocese of Lafayette, before the formation of the Diocese of Lake Charles in 1980, Msgr. Groth served as Vocation Director and Diocesan Chairperson of Evangelization.

In 1981, he was named Chaplain for the McNeese Catholic Student Center at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church.

Other assignments in the Diocese of Lake Charles included stints as pastor at St. Philip Neri in Kinder, rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Lake Charles, administrator (then pastor) at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Lake Charles and pastor at Our Lady Queen of Heaven. In 2005, he was named pastor to St. Lawrence in Raymond, then became pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus in Lake Charles and pastor of Our Lady of the Lake in Lake Arthur.

In Lake Charles, he served as Director of Evangelization, director of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, and director of campus ministry, including a time as state chairman of campus ministers. He has also served as chaplain to the various Knights of Columbus Councils and Catholic Daughters of the Americas Courts in most of his assignments and was the secretary for the Jennings Ministerial Alliance.

In 1988, Msgr. Groth was



Reverend Monsignor
Ronald C. Groth

awarded the Clergyman of the Year Award by Msgr. Cramers Assembly Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus. He authored a high school religion textbook series used locally along with writing Evangelization training materials and pamphlets.

A member of the Companions of Honor of the Diocese of Lake Charles, Msgr. Groth was a columnist for the Catholic Calendar and The Southwest Catholic as well as serving on the Clergy Committee and the Campaign Cabinet for the successful diocesan capital campaign *Return to the Lord*.

A Knight of Columbus, he received numerous awards and honors in his more than 50 years of ordained ministry.

Survivors include his brother Bob Groth of Lake Charles, his sister Joan G. Minor of San Antonio and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles F. and Neva D. Groth and sister, Gayle G. Fontenot.

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Please note that the gathering capacity will be limited to 25% occupancy as per state compliance

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In lieu of flowers, contributions for Masses, Msgr. Groth's memory may be made to the Church Parish or to a Catholic Charity of your choice.

Catholic

Bishop Provost Comments on Church Re-Openings

12 May 2020

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"I rejoiced when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" (Psalm 122:1)

On May 1, 2020, I lifted the suspension on public liturgies in the Diocese of Lake Charles. Pastors are asked to use their discretion while respecting current guidelines regarding the number and manner of attendance to ensure that the faithful have access to the Eucharist. Our liturgical tradition has many options at our disposal.

As we all know, the COVID-19 virus remains a menace to the public's health. However, the State Government has indicated that, in the event of continued improvements, there will be a gradual loosening of restrictions on public gatherings. Effective May 15, 2020, State officials will allow gatherings of 25% of a building's maximum occupancy. The directives published on April 28, 2020 detail what steps pastors must take in their churches. In preparation for this gradual process of reopening, pastors were asked to determine, with the assistance of the local fire marshal, the accurate maximum occupancy of their respective churches. Your pastors are asked to implement these directives issued on April 28, and I request your kind cooperation. Please consult your local parish for more information.

The dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation remains in effect. Those experiencing symptoms should seek medical attention and remain at home.

We continue to pray for an end to this pandemic and for those infected with the virus. O Lord, grant the deceased rest and eternal peace. May Our Lady Star of the Sea continue to pray for our safety and health, as I remain always in prayer for you and

Devotedly yours in our Lord,

✦ Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESOURCES

- Bishop Glen John Provost's celebration of Sunday's Holy Mass will be televised on KPLC-TV at 9:30 a.m. May 17, in addition to the following platforms online: www.lcdioocese.org; www.facebook.com/lcdioocese; and www.youtube.com/lcdioocese.
- Daily reflections called "A Thought from the Bishop's Chapel" can be found at www.lcdioocese.org/the-diocese/our-bishop/bishop-s-chapel-daily or on www.facebook.com/lcdioocese.
- Coronavirus Updates can be found at www.lcdioocese.org/3-news/2790-coronavirus-updates.
- Faithful in the Diocese have the option of supporting their church parish online with #I Support My Parish at www.lcdioocese.org/3-news/2823-i-support-my-parish-option-available.

Institute for Black Catholic Studies online

NEW ORLEANS - The 41st session of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies (IBCS), a graduate theology program and school of pastoral ministry that meets each summer, will convene at Xavier University as scheduled and run from Friday, June 28 through Sunday, July 17, but due to the public health emergency

presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's session - classes and community life - will be conducted online, according to Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, the director of the Institute.

The theme for 2020 - "Hold Up the Light: Authentically Black and Truly Catholic" - is a call for the IBCS community to press on

in new ways to accomplish the mission for which it was created: to form theologically- and culturally-competent Christian disciples to evangelize the world through God's gift of black culture. New and returning students are encouraged to apply online and check the IBCS website frequently for program updates.

The IBCS staff has been working in collaboration with many others in preparation for that day. The staff consists of Program Specialist Dana Lockett and Bellow. Others include Associate Director for the Degree Program, Dr. Kirk Gaddy; Associate Director for the Continuing Education & Enrichment (C&E) Programs, Dr. Eva Lumas, S.S.S.; Associate Director for Community Life, Dr./Fr. Roy Lee, Ms. Gwendolyn Young, Ms. Angela Hollier and Fr. Manuel Williams.

The IBCS website <https://www.xula.edu/ibcs> continues to be updated with revised program details and course information. Work continues to promote the 2020 Degree, the C&E programs, as well as unique ways for the IBCS at-large to participate in Community Life. Fr. Lee and the team are busily planning how to incorporate the prayer, worship and celebration aspects that make the IBCS formation holistic.

Xavier's Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) is working with IBCS faculty via the ZOOM platform on alternative methods of delivering instruction that will allow programs to maintain the intimate and interactive learning environment that supports the rigorous instruction that takes place in the typical IBCS classroom setting. CAT staff will also provide a training module to help orient students to the Xavier University system of remote learning.

Read more at lcdioocese.org
Institute for Black Catholic
Studies Planned Online

Prayer for Safety in Hurricane Season

The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, has asked that during the hurricane season of 2020 the people of the Diocese of Lake Charles pray the following prayer, composed in 1957 by The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Second Bishop of Lafayette, following Hurricane Audrey:

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

The Sea of Galilee obeyed your order and returned to its former quietude.

You are still the Master of the 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, and overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land and spread chaos and disaster.

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

The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder
Second Bishop of Lafayette

The next Catholic Calendar will be published on Friday, June 26.

The offices of the Diocese will be closed on Monday May 25, for Memorial Day, honoring and mourning the military personnel that have died while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

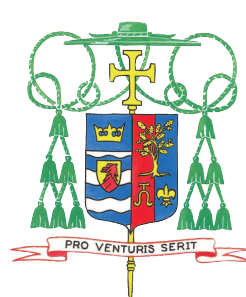
Regular office hours - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on
Monday through Friday - return Monday May 18.



Eight awarded by Msgr. Cramers Fourth Degree Assembly



Winners of this year's awards were recently announced by Msgr. Hubert Cramers Assembly #320 Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary. Pictured above, seated from left, is Lake Charles businessman Joe N. Stoma, the Diocese of Lake Charles Citizen of the Year; Deacon George Carr, the John W. O'Reilly Sr. Memorial Award winner, and Wylace Vincent, Jr., who received the newly-instituted Fred Fluit Memorial Award. Standing, from left, is Faithful Navigator Fray Zamora; Herman Verkruijsen, the winner of the Howard Jaubert Memorial Award; Gerard Thomas, winner of the Charles Jaubert Memorial Award; Sulphur mayor Mike Danahay, winner of the Lawrence Toups Memorial Award; Jay Madison, the Knight of the Year; Deacon Raymond and Betty Menard, the Assembly's Family of the Year; and Rev. Samuel Orsot, the Assembly's Faithful Friar.



Pastors celebrate Mass outdoors as churches gradually reopen

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

Many pastors throughout the Diocese of Lake Charles have been thinking “outside the church building” to allow as many parishioners as possible the opportunity to attend Mass — something many Catholics have longed for since March 17. It was noon that day when public liturgies ceased in the diocese because of the highly contagious COVID-19 virus.

Bishop Glen John Provost lifted the suspension of public Masses on May 1. However, given strict state guidelines of no more than 10 people for indoor gatherings through May 14, several priests turned to prayer gardens, parking lots, city streets, and FM transmitters to welcome back their flock.

The decision to celebrate Mass outdoors is up to each pastor, and while for some it might not be feasible, those pastors who have been opening their church doors to the outside are doing so with zeal.

The Rev. Charles McMillin, pastor of Our Lady

Help of Christians Catholic Church in Jennings, said outdoor Mass was the only obvious choice for him. The combined regular attendance at his weekend Masses ranges between 850-900 people.

“I am already familiar with celebrating Mass outdoors having done many for youth groups,” said Father McMillin. “I am holding weekday Mass in Our Lady’s prayer garden (next to the rectory) which is more than big enough for the 40-55 people who attend,” he said. “The two Sunday Masses at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. are held in the large grassy area across the street from the church.”

Until Gov. John Bel Edwards allows 100 percent capacity for indoor gatherings, Father McMillin said he will continue outdoor Masses daily except Saturday.

“People have loved it. After a weekday Mass one morning, a lady said to me, ‘Oh, Father, I just love having Mass out here in the prayer garden. The sky is so nice, there is a slight breeze, and there are birds

singing in the trees all through Mass.’

“Even the kids have been pleased with all of this,” McMillin said referring to the chalk drawings on the church driveway that said things like: Thank you so much for the outdoor Masses, Father.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception drew a combined attendance of more than 500 people for the five weekend Masses in front of the 150-year-old church May 9-10. The Very Rev. Rommel Tolentino, pastor, turned to the city of Lake Charles to request a portion of Bilbo Street be closed to accommodate the faithful. Several people even brought their own keepsake kneelers made by the Knights of Columbus from the old kneelers removed during the restoration of the Cathedral in 2019.

Father Tolentino addressed Saturday’s congregation saying, “I wish you could see the view from where I am standing. It is awesome to see so many people at Mass. It makes me emotional.”

He reminded everyone that God has allowed the suffering of this pandemic to happen to us for his own reasons, and that our sufferings have redemptive value when we bring them to the cross. “God is helping us become saints,” said Tolentino.

At the conclusion of the Cathedral’s Saturday vigil Mass, Dalia Matheus of Moss Bluff said she is so happy the community is returning to church. “It’s rewarding that we can receive the Eucharist again,” she said. “I love the Cathedral and come here every day during the week.”

Brenda and Barry Leger

of Lake Charles attended Saturday’s Mass with Brenda’s parents, Fred and Nena Rodriguez visiting from Querétaro, Mexico. “The Mass was surreal,” said Brenda. “What a blessing. You could see all the work that went into putting the Mass together.”

St. Theodore Catholic Church in Moss Bluff celebrated its 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass outdoors on May 3 and May 10. According to the Very Rev. Aubrey Guilbeau, pastor, there were close to 300 in attendance the first weekend it was offered.

“People were hungry for Mass and the Eucharist,” Father Guilbeau said. “Some reflected on how the outdoor Mass made them think of what it would have been like when Jesus preached to the outdoor crowds. Some commented that celebrating the True Presence of Christ in the Eucharist surrounded by the beauty of the outdoors reminded them of the glory of God’s creation.”

Father Guilbeau made special note of the attentiveness of children during the Mass saying, “Maybe because this was so out of the usual way we celebrate Mass, it caught their attention.”

A car with a working radio is all one needed to participate in Mass at St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church. The Very Rev. Ruben Villarreal, administrator, and Rev. Samuel Orsot, parochial vicar, had been offering “drive-in” Mass at 4 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. on Sunday. Parishioners who could not sign up for the 10-person indoor service, could attend Mass and receive Holy Communion at an altar in the parking lot, from their cars. The use of an FM transmitter al-



Faithful gather along Bilbo Street in front of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Sunday, May 10, for an outdoor Mass. All weekend Masses were held outdoors to allow more people access to the liturgy in lieu of the state-ordered 10-person limit for indoor gatherings because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

lowed people to tune in on their car radio to hear the liturgy of the Mass.

For parishioners of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Sulphur, the Rev. Timothy Goodly offered an outdoor Mass at 11 a.m. on May 10 under the porte cochere. For those watching the live-streamed indoor Mass from their cars in the church parking lot at 4 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. on Sunday, the reception of Holy Communion was offered following Mass.

“Streaming From The Parking Lot” is how the Very Rev. Anthony Fontenot, pastor of Christ the King Catholic Church, decided to reach his parishioners. He was already live-streaming daily Mass and 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass but added his full schedule of weekend Masses May 9-10.

With the 10-person limit of people inside the church, all others were welcome to park in the CTK parking lot to watch the live-stream on their own smart device. Following reception of the Holy Eucharist inside the church, Father Fontenot went out to each vehicle and distributed communion to individuals in parked cars.

The Rev. Jeffrey Starkovich, pastor of St. Pius X Catholic Church in Ragley,

took advantage of the outdoor Mass format for his parishioners on May 3 and May 10. From comments posted on the church’s Facebook page, St. Pius parishioners are grateful.

Rachel McBride said the Mass was the best gift ever! Many thanks to you (Starkovich) and everyone who made it possible. Bridget Sonnier said she could have sat out there all day! It felt great to be back at our Sunday church home! Douglas Hamer thanked Father Starkovich for his innovative approach to provide an opportunity to receive Holy Communion. Emily Reeves said it was one of her favorite services ever.

The Very Rev. Matthew Cormier, pastor of St. Henry Catholic Church, celebrated an outdoor bilingual (Spanish/English) Mass at 6 p.m. on May 9 with an excellent turnout. Father Cormier expressed how wonderful it was to see so many parishioners come out to worship and receive the Lord.

Bishop Provost’s Sunday Mass continues to be televised on KPLC at 9:30 a.m. for anyone who is unable to attend Mass. All faithful remain dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.



Altar servers at the Cathedral wear required face masks during the Sunday liturgy on May 10. An altar is set up just outside the doors of the church as the congregation gathers outside for Mass.

Former pastor of Sulphur’s Our Lady of LaSalette Church dies



Rev. James M. Winiarski, M.S.

Father James M. Winiarski, M.S., 80, a Missionary of Our Lady of LaSalette, died April 16, 2020 in Hartford, Connecticut. He was born April 9, 1940 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, son of the late John and Gertrude (Bogdanski) Winiarski.

He attended grammar school at St. Mary of Czestochowa in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and high school in Olivet, Illinois. He entered the LaSalette Seminary College in Olivet in 1958. Father Winiarski began his LaSalette Novitiate on June 20, 1960 and made his First Profession on June 21, 1961.

He pursued higher studies of philosophy and theology in Rome, earning a Ph.B. and S.T.B. degree and professing his Perpetual Vows on September 18, 1965. He was ordained on December 18, 1966.

Following ordination, he was Prefect at Olivet Seminary as well as a teacher at Schlarman Catholic High School. Other assignments included Assistant Vocation Director at the LaSalette residence in Twin Lakes, Wisc., the Director of the Milwaukee Archconfraternity, Vocation Director at the LaSalette Seminary in Olivet and part-time chaplain at the Danville Veterans’ Hospital.

During this time, he continued his education and received an M.A. in French. From 1976 to 1980, he began work as a chaplain and teacher of Religious Subjects and

French at Divine Savior-Holy Angels High School in Milwaukee.

In 1980 he was named Assistant Pastor at St. John Kanty Parish in Milwaukee, elected Second Provincial Assistant in June of 1985, and appointed Provincial Secretary.

Beginning in 2006 Father Winiarski ministered at Our Lady of LaSalette Parish in Sulphur, first as Administrator and then Pastor, before retiring in 2014 to the LaSalette community in St. Louis, Missouri and in 2019 moved to the LaSalette Hartford House in Connecticut.

In addition to his LaSalette confreres, Father Winiarski is survived by his brothers; Robert Wynn, Thomas (his wife Raette, deceased) Winiarski, Joseph (his wife Jeanne) Winiarski and Edward (his wife Ann) Winiarski, all of Wisconsin; and was loved by many nieces, nephews and friends.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Parade of families cheers up Villa Maria residents

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES — There’s nothing like a parade filled with family and friends to cure the COVID-19 quarantine blues.

Many residents at Villa Maria Retirement Center have been connecting with loved ones through FaceTime and other messaging apps ever since social distancing took top priority. With that in mind, the staff arranged some actual face-to-face time with a family parade on April 20.

Becky See, administrator at Villa Maria, said, “The parade was just what the doctor ordered to allow residents to see their loved ones in person — at a safe distance, of course.”

“We knew we needed to do something for them to see their families, so we decided to surprise all the residents with a parade,” she said, and from their reactions, it was a big hit. One resident was so touched by the show of love and support, she was still crying tears of joy the day after the parade.

Approximately 50 vehicles lined up at Our Lady Queen of Heaven School and traveled west on Claude Street before making the turn on Kingston to a block of residents wearing hats and holding handmade signs. Becky said they knew they were going to a parade; they just didn’t know it would be for them.

“We wanted it to be a surprise, so we told them we were having a parade and we asked them to all wear hats. When they asked where they were parading, I told them, ‘You will find out when you come downstairs

at 2 o’clock.’”

Leading the parade as Master of Ceremonies on his bicycle was Father Trey Ange, OLQH parochial vicar.

One vehicle after another, family members and friends passed by waving, blowing kisses and shouting hello’s and I love you’s along the way. Heartfelt messages were portrayed on signs that read: You are my sunshine. Our residents have heart. Who Dat resident. Thank you Villa Maria for taking care of our loved 1s. Hi, Mom! We miss you and love you! God cares.

On the flip side, residents were holding signs (made for them by staff members) that read: Throw me some toilet paper. My family tree is full of nuts. Are these people really my relatives? We are safe. Don’t worry.

Monsignor Daniel A. Torres, Vicar General and pastor of OLQH, saved the best for last as he walked by blessing everyone with holy water and asked them to sing “This Little Light of Mine,” a song familiar to the residents. He assured them of his prayers.

Olivia Scalisi, 101, Villa Maria’s oldest resident and the 2020 Mardi Gras Queen, was reluctant to go outside in the warmer temperatures that day. But after the parade, she pulled her mask down, looked at Becky with a smile and softly said, “Thank you.”

Becky said she is doing all she can to reassure the residents they are in a safe place and that many are praying for them. “We have several men and women throughout the Diocese, especially Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish, who volunteered to be prayer partners for not only the residents but also the staff,” she said.



A parade of vehicles made up of family and friends makes its way along Kingston Street on April 20 while showing signs of love and support to quarantined residents at Villa Maria Retirement Center.



Monsignor Daniel A. Torres, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, sprinkles the residents of Villa Maria with holy water at the conclusion of the parade.

Two residents who are retired priests, Father Don Piraro and Father John Poerio, are doing their part to minister to the spiritual needs of the residents.

Father Poerio has been writing Sunday homilies, while Father Piraro writes reflections on Thursdays since that is the usual time weekday Mass is celebrated at the retirement center. During

Lent, Father Piraro also wrote meditations during Holy Week.

On the day of the parade, large rented letters on the retirement center’s front lawn spelled out “Angels Work Here.” Although the parade has rounded the corner and the oversized message no longer visible, the spirit of that message remains at Villa Maria.