



Catholic Schools Week highlights faith in action

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

Schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles have a lot to celebrate during National Catholic Schools Week this year, even if those celebrations will be scaled back because of social distancing.

The annual observance highlighting Catholic education in the United States is January 31-February 6 with the theme "Catholic Schools: Faith, Excellence and Service."

Across the nation, schools have overcome many challenges brought about by COVID-19, but when combined with the devastation of back-to-back hurricanes, schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles have conquered overwhelming odds.

Two of the six schools — Immaculate Conception and Our Lady Queen of Heaven — are especially grateful for being able to reopen within a few weeks after Hurricane Laura.

"We have learned a lot about appreciation and gratitude for our Catholic schools this year, more so, given all the trials we have been through beginning with having to shut down in-person learning in March last year (because of COVID-19)," said Megan O'Quin, Director of Advancement at Our Lady Queen of Heaven School.

After the two hurricanes — Laura, a Category 4 on Aug. 27; and Delta, a Category 2 on Oct. 9 — O'Quin said the school year so far has been tough, but at the same time, all the reasons of why she believes in Catholic education has been visible.

"Catholic schools from across the state were calling us, sending us cards, donations and gift cards," O'Quin said. "Even in the hardest of times, to be reminded that we are here to support each other is very humbling. It is amazing to be part of this awesome network of Catholic schools."

Immaculate Conception Cathedral School has been putting its school theme, "Love is Kind," in action by sharing its third-floor annex with St. Margaret students in grades 5-8. St. Margaret's campus was seriously damaged by Laura, leaving only enough rooms for the lower grades to attend on site.

"It really has been an act of kindness on the part of our students and our teachers to sacrifice extra space on our campus," said Christi Jarreau, principal at ICCS. "Being able to put hospitality and kindness in action has been a grace for us."

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the students and faculty of each school are separated, but Jarreau said just knowing ICCS can offer a place for St. Margaret students to have face-to-face learning has been huge.

"A long tradition at both schools is to pray the 'Angelus' at noon," said Jarreau. "At the end of the prayer, we pray, 'Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, pray for us,' seeking Our Lady's intercession. Knowing that they're here and praying with us on our campus, we also ask for St. Margaret of Scotland's intercession as



well."

Jarreau said she has been inspired by the positive attitude from her staff under challenging circumstances following the hurricanes.

"It is all about working together as a community," she said. "The faculty are overcoming their own obstacles at home without missing a beat in overflowing with joy and love for their students."

Whether it is praying for their classes or for the protection of the community, Jarreau said she doesn't remember a time when the community had so many individual needs.

"One of the blessings of the pandemic and the limitations brought about by the hurricanes has been that the students and teachers have been able to focus on their Catholic faith in little ways every day," said Jarreau.

Echoing that statement, O'Quin said, "Faith and carrying on the ministry of Jesus is the model for a Catholic education. We are very mission focused. Our teachers are teachers, but this is their vocation, their passion," O'Quin continued. "They are here because they see the value of Catholic education. They see the love, the support, and the community we are building for these children."

Jarreau agrees saying, "When they are teaching to the whole child — spirit, mind and body — teachers are helping to form the child into a bigger purpose than just academics. They are helping children become the person God created them to be."

To highlight Catholic Schools Week, Bishop Glen John Provost will be the celebrant at two Masses in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. St. Louis High seniors will attend at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 3; and eighth graders in the diocese will attend at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 4. In prior years, one liturgy was held, but COVID-19 restrictions have altered the traditional format.

Other Catholic schools in the diocese include Our Lady Immaculate in Jennings and Our Lady's School in Sulphur.

Catholic

Bishop Provost Issues Decree on Coastal Parishes



Whereas prior to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Laura in August, 2020, and out of concern for the good of souls, pastoral planning for the parishes of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Sacred Heart of Jesus in Creole, and St. Eugene had begun. The ever-decreasing number of parishioners regularly participating in the life of the parishes as well as the parishes' long-term ability to sustain themselves financially occasioned this pastoral planning; the damages suffered by each of the three parishes during and after Hurricane Laura have further exacerbated both areas of concern, as some parishioners have decided not to return to the area and the financial situation has become ever more intractable;

Whereas on September 18, 2020, the Parish Priests of the three aforementioned parishes and the Dean of the South Deanery were heard, and two listening sessions were conducted to hear parishioners of the three parishes, the one on September 29, 2020, and the other on October 1, 2020; further, surveys were distributed to parishioners at parish Masses, via post, and online, 171 of which were completed and returned;

Whereas in so far as possible, all those whose rights could be injured have been heard; and the presumed intentions of founders and benefactors have been respected, and no acquired rights will be transgressed;

Whereas all relevant information having been sought was distributed to the members of the Presbyteral Council and subsequently considered during a meeting of the same, lawfully convened on December 22, 2020, at which time the respective advantages and disadvantages of various proposals were open for free discussion and advice, and the opinions of the members of that Council were heard;

Whereas it is necessary to make provisions for the spiritual and pastoral care of the parishioners of these parishes, in accordance with the provisions hereinafter appearing

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

DECREES

1. that the above-named existing parishes shall be modified by extinctive union (amalgamation) such that the parishes of St. Eugene and of Our Lady Star of the Sea shall be subsumed into the Parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus (c. 121), a proto-parish, the oldest of the coastal parishes, and the second oldest parish of the Diocese of Lake Charles;
2. that this amalgamation will take effect on February 2, 2021, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord;
3. that the Shrine of Our Lady Star of the Sea shall remain in its present location as a place of pilgrimage and prayer;
4. that the boundaries of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish shall henceforth include the territory of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, St. Eugene Parish, and the territory around St. Patrick mission, currently a mission of St. Mary of the Lake Parish, from the intersection of Ward Line Road and HWY 14 south to the Intercoastal Canal and from that same intersection east and south to Fruge Road and down in a vertical line to the Intercoastal Canal.
5. that the parish church of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish is to be called Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church and is to be erected on the property of St. Patrick mission in Sweetlake, Louisiana.
6. that pastoral ministry, including but not limited to the celebration of Sunday Mass, shall continue on the coast and will make use of the parish hall of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, a use for which the building was constructed in view of the possibility of storm damage to the parish church;
7. that in accordance with the norm of can. 121, all the goods and patrimonial rights proper to the merging parishes (and any obligations with which they may be burdened) together with all of their existing assets and liabilities, whether movable or immovable, shall upon this merger *ipso iure* become the property, rights, obligations, assets and liabilities of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish. Furthermore, possession and ownership of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to the merging parishes and each of them shall be transferred to the newly amalgamated parish and shall be administered in accordance with the prescriptions of Church law with due regard for the intention of benefactors (cf. canon 1284 §2,3^o) and without prejudice to any acquired rights;
8. that sacramental registers of each parish shall be communicated to the Administrator of newly amalgamated Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish at the earliest possible opportunity, and henceforth recordation will take place in the books of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, where the records of Our Lady Star of the Sea and St. Eugene parish will be preserved;
9. that this decree be delivered to the Parish Priests of the parishes of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Eugene, and St. Mary of the Lake and that notice of its contents be disseminated publicly during the weekend of January 9-10, 2021, and that said Parish Priest submit in writing and without delay a statement detailing the means by which the parishioners received notification of this decree.

All who claim to have been aggrieved by this decree may have recourse against it within ten canonical (useful) days from the notification of the decree.

Given in the Diocese of Lake Charles on day 8 of January in the year of our Lord 2021.

*Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Rev. (Rev.) Ruben Villarreal
Chancellor

Theresian communities guide women along spiritual journey

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

Becoming part of a Theresian community is just what several local women needed to help them along their spiritual journey.

Martha Deshotel, Eileen Eskew, and Sylvia Marcantel all belong to small communities of Theresians International, a Catholic-based women's organization with 2,000 members in nine countries. The communities vary in size from 15-25 members and are open to women of all Christian faiths.

Founded on the feast of St. Thérèse of Lisieux on October 1, 1961, by Monsignor Elwood C. Voss in Pueblo, Colo., a unique feature of the Theresian communities is the combination of the Five Dimensions: Spirituality, Education, Community, Vocation, and Ministry.

Deshotel and Marcantel, who belong to one of the first communities chartered in Lake Charles nearly 20 years ago — S.I.S.T.E.R.S. — said they both have grown in their faith as a Theresian.

"It's like Christ becomes more evident as I interact with good Christian women," said Marcantel. "I think most people find the meetings are just like a mini-retreat once a month and look forward to it."

Executive director search

Theresians International is seeking a new executive director effective August, 2021. To view entire job description, visit www.theresians.org. Email a cover letter and resumé to search@cover.com by March 31, 2021.

"Being part of Theresians spills over into my spirituality and has helped me grow closer to God," said Deshotel.

To belong to Theresians International, a woman commits herself to: attending and participating in monthly Theresian meetings; spending regular times in prayer each day; studying and deepening her understanding of the call to live by Gospel values; dedicating herself to ongoing educational and spiritual opportunities; encouraging and supporting the efforts of members to reach their full potential as Theresian women; and responding to the call to serve.

Presently, there are Theresian communities in the United States, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, Brazil, Ghana, Mexico, Argentina, and Thailand.

"I really like the international component of Theresians," said Eskew, a member of Petals of Faith Community in Jennings. "We have friends from all over the world who pray for each other."

Closer to home, Eskew said several Theresians

from other areas contacted the national office in Springfield, Ill., asking what they could do to help those impacted by Hurricane Laura.

"In one month, \$11,000 was collected and wired to the district leadership team. It was very inspirational to so many who had damage," said Eskew.

Theresians believe that when Christian women bond together for the support and growth of one another, they have tremendous influence for good at home, in church, and in society.

Deshotel said it is beautiful what can be done by the power of women connected spiritually.

Other communities in the Lake Charles area include: Journey Women; Sisters of Burning Faith; Sisters of Serenity; Spirits of Light; Women of Spirit; Sisters of Love, Peace, and Joy; and Petite Fleur du Lac.

For more information on joining a Theresian community or forming a new community, call (888) 545-7230, or visit www.theresians.org.



Bishop's Hurricanes Relief Tuition Fund established Bishop Provost will match up to \$500,000

By Pamela Seal

Diocese of Lake Charles

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles have served as an example of faith, hope and resilience in recent months after being struck by two major hurricanes in 2020 — Hurricane Laura on August 27 and Hurricane Delta on October 9.

A top priority for Bishop Glen John Provost was the re-opening of Catholic schools, and he recognized the Catholic community's obligation to help those greatly affected by the storms.

The Bishop's Hurricanes Relief Tuition Fund has been set up to assist families of current students who have experienced losses from Hurricanes Laura and Delta. Due to a generous donation,

Bishop Provost will match up to \$500,000 of donations collected.

Struck by the damages suffered by so many families to their homes, Bishop Provost said an essential concern is those with students currently enrolled in Catholic schools in the diocese.

"We, as a Catholic community, want to reach out to families who have been left homeless or with uninsured losses or with overwhelming expenses for repairing their homes," said Bishop Provost. "These circumstances are particularly burdensome when impacting families with children in our schools. We have an obligation to help."

While the concept of tuition aid in the Diocese of Lake Charles is not new, what

is new about the Bishop's Hurricanes Relief Tuition Fund is the concept of matching funds. The idea was suggested to the bishop by the donors.

When asked how he has been inspired by the challenges the Catholic schools have had to overcome, Bishop Provost shared details of a visit in November by a bishop friend whose diocese was devastated by Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

"Among the many destroyed and damaged properties, I took him to visit two of our schools, St. Louis Catholic High and St. Margaret. Both schools had already installed temporary buildings and had resumed classes by mid-October. He thought this was phenomenal. From his

own experiences, he knew the obstacles and was most impressed with the speed and determination with which the Diocese of Lake Charles and school communities were addressing the recovery against overwhelming odds. Our Catholic schools are courageous."

Bishop Provost emphasized that Catholic schools are "alive and well" in the diocese, noting that Our Lady Immaculate School in Jennings re-opened on the Monday following Hurricane Laura with relatively no damage.

"Schools that were seriously damaged — St. Margaret, Our Lady's School, and St. Louis Catholic High School — hit the ground running and re-opened in a few weeks," said the bishop. "The

schools with lesser damage — Immaculate Conception Cathedral School and Our Lady Queen of Heaven — re-opened very soon once they had stabilized their facilities. The principals are a positive group who have embraced the challenges with openness and creativity."

Kimberlee Gazzolo, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, said, "In the very first days after Hurricane Laura, I was heartened and grateful at entire communities that came out to help with mitigation and clean-up on the school campuses. I was acutely aware that those in the community had also suffered losses but set that aside to help their schools."

Mrs. Gazzolo encourages anyone who can to consider

making a donation to the tuition relief fund.

"No donation is too small and every donation can make a difference in a child being able to continue to receive a Catholic education," Gazzolo said. "The history of our schools and the success of our students have proven that Catholic education is a gift, not only to the students, but to our community and to our Church."

To make a one-time or recurring donation, visit <http://www.lcdiocese.org/resources/support-the-diocese>, and click on The Bishop's Hurricanes Relief Tuition Fund.

"True Presence: The Eucharist in Art" Grades 9-12

The winning artwork for grades 9-12 in the "True Presence: The Eucharist in Art" contest was submitted by Emma Findley of Vinton. Her artwork is titled "Peace In His Presence." The second-place entry by Amelia Thomas of Kinder is titled "True Presence." Bain Jones of Lake Charles placed third with his artwork titled "True Presence." The contest was presented by the Diocese of Lake Charles as a way for students in grades K-12 as well as adults to creatively portray their Catholic belief in the Eucharist. More winning entries from other age groups will be published in future issues of the Catholic Calendar.



"Peace In His Presence" by Emma Findley, first place



"True Presence" by Amelia Thomas, second place



"True Presence" by Bain Jones, third place



Decree of Announcement of Pastoral Assignments

The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, hereby announces the pastoral assignments for the year Two Thousand and Twenty-One for the Diocese of Lake Charles, Louisiana.

Effective February 2, 2021:

The Rev. Jerish George, M.O.C.	- Administrator, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish on the Coast
The Rev. Clyde Thomas	- Pastor, St. Joan of Arc Parish
The Rev. Whitney Miller	- Director of Diocesan Counseling Services
The Rev. Keith Pellerin	- Administrator, St. Philip Neri Parish, with Father Trey Angel providing for parish sacramental needs

Signed by our hand and that of our Vice-Chancellor, on day 9 of January in the Year of our Lord 2021.

Glen John Provost

✠Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Rubén Villarreal

(Very Reverend) Ruben Villarreal
Vice-Chancellor

Pro-life events today and Saturday

LAKE CHARLES — New Life Counseling will host its 25th annual candlelight memorial prayer vigil today, January 22, the 48th Anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to legalize abortion. The vigil will begin at 5:30 p.m. in front of the Calcasieu Parish Courthouse, 1000 Ryan Street in downtown Lake Charles.

New Life Counseling will also join efforts with Louisiana Right to Life, ABC Pregnancy Resource Center, and communities across the state in the form of socially distanced "life chains" on Saturday, January 23. The "Stand for Life, Louisiana!" statewide outreach will be held locally from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Lake Charles Civic

Center Boardwalk, 1100 Bord Du Lac Drive. Also, on January 23, from 9-10 a.m., Louisiana Right to Life will present a virtual program on the steps of the State Capitol in Baton Rouge. For more information, visit prolifelouisiana.org.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, life chains around the state will replace the annual Louisiana Life March events.

State and local officials are requiring that all events adhere strictly to social distancing and mask requirements to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through the events. Masks will be made available on site to participants.

Those attending "Stand for Life, Louisiana!" on Saturday are asked to bring a homemade sign, keeping the pro-life message simple, respectful, and apolitical.

For more information about the local events, call New Life Counseling at 337-474-7003 or ABC Pregnancy Center at 337-433-2797.

Franciscan Friars return to site of Christ's Baptism

QASR AL-YAHUD — For the first time in over 54 years, the Franciscan friars of the Custody of the Holy Land were able to offer Mass on

their property at the site of Christ's baptism, located in the West Bank.

The Mass for the feast of the Baptism of the Lord was

said in the Church of St. John the Baptist at Qasr Al-Yahud, a shrine built in 1956, and located by the banks of the Jordan River.

Upcoming Events Around the Diocese...

Forty Hours Devotion

LAKE CHARLES — Forty Hours Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, praying for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the Diocese of Lake Charles, concludes in the Central Deanery next week Jan. 27-29 at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church.

Adoration there is Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Thursday from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a Candlelight Mass from 8 to 9 p.m. and adoration from 9 p.m. to midnight; and on Friday from midnight to noon.

Bishop's Bible Study

LAKE CHARLES — Bible Study classes hosted by Bishop Glen John Provost resume in February. The 2020-2021 series is based on the Ignatius Catholic Study Bible: Genesis.

Remaining dates for the Men's Bible Study are February 5, March 5, April 9, and May 7, beginning with the Bishop's Mass at 6:30 a.m. in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The Ladies' Bible teachings continue February 3, March 3, April 7, and May 5 beginning at noon.

Both meetings take place in the Ave Maria Hall across from the Cathedral. Please note: no meals will be served. State protocols for the safety of participants will be followed.

Annual Scout Sunday Mass February 7

The Diocese of Lake Charles Catholic Committee on Scouting will host its annual Scout Sunday Mass at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, February 7, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception with Bishop Glen John Provost celebrating.

All scouts of Scouting USA and Girl Scouts of America, regardless of religious affiliation, are invited to attend in full Class A uniform. Please bring a face mask as all current COVID-19 guidelines will be followed.

Scouts in attendance will receive the Scout Sunday patch and can earn a Saint patch at the reception following Mass, in the cathedral's Ave Maria Hall. Pre-packaged bowls of jambalaya will be served.

"Rachel's Vineyard" retreat Feb. 12-14

MOSS BLUFF — "Rachel's Vineyard," a retreat for healing after abortion, will be held Friday-Sunday, Feb. 12-14, at Saint Charles Center. The weekend retreat is for anyone struggling with guilt, depression, regret or other difficult emotions from an abortion.

The three-day experience combines discussions, spiritual exercises, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a Memorial Service and Mass of Entrustment. Participation is strictly confidential and offers an opportunity to experience God's love, forgiveness and compassion.

The cost is \$225, which includes meals, private room, and all retreat materials. For more information or to register, contact: Rachel's Vineyard of Southwest Louisiana - rachels.vineyard@lcdiocese.org.

Women's Silent Retreat March 26-28

Sister Camille Martinez, SEC, will conduct the Our Lady Queen of Heaven Women's Lenten Silent Retreat over the Palm Sunday weekend, March 26-28, 2021, at Saint Charles Center. The theme of the retreat will be "Spot of Grace."

The observance of Lent

The observance of Lent, the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter, begins, Feb. 17 with Ash Wednesday. Bishop Glen John Provost will celebrate the 12:05 p.m. Mass in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception with ashes distributed. The offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 15 and 16 for Mardi Gras.

To register or for more information, contact Andrea Blanchard at 337-474-1788 or 337-794-9679. Private rooms only at \$225 for the weekend. Scholarships available upon request for those in need of assistance.

'Together for Life' 2021 schedule

"Together for Life," the marriage preparation day hosted by the Office of Family Life, announces remaining dates of classes for 2021: February 20, March 13, April 17, and May 15.

All marriage prep days are held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with an hour lunch beginning at 11:00 a.m. The courses will be held via Zoom until further notice. For more information, contact: Beth Buller, Office of Family Life, at 337-888-6026; or email: beth.buller@lcdiocese.org.

Cor ad Cor ministry meets monthly

Cor ad Cor, a ministry open to all unmarried women ages 18-39, meets the first Thursday from 5-8 p.m. at St. Hubert Convent, 1414 Martha Street in Lake Charles. The monthly gathering is led by the Religious Sisters of Mercy and is for women who want to deepen their capacity to hear and respond to God's voice as He leads them on their daily pilgrimage of faith, hope and charity.

The evening begins at 5:10 p.m. with a Holy Hour, followed by dinner and discussion at 6:15 p.m., then Scripture reading and discussion, ending at 7:45 p.m. with night prayer.

For more information or to RSVP call 337-564-0030 or email saint.huberts.convent@gmail.com. The next prayer and discussion group will meet on Thursday, February 4.