



Catholic Charities expands services with laundry/shower trailer

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

Taking a hot shower, brushing teeth, and having clean clothes are just a few things that many take for granted without even realizing it. Many others who consider it a luxury, can now turn to Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana. No questions asked.

Bishop Glen John Provost blessed a new mobile laundry/shower trailer on January 3 in the parking lot of the Chancery, along with a truck and van used in helping provide essential resources to many in the community.

Equipped with two showers and four washer/dryer units, Catholic Charities launched the 28-foot-long by 8-foot-wide trailer on November 21 during a Homeless and Hunger Awareness event by the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury.

Since then, Catholic Charities has branched out to communities in Creole, Vinton, and Jennings, and most recently at Abraham's Tent in Lake Charles, with plans to expand its presence in the region.

"The trailer meets the needs of people and gives us the flexibility go where people need our services — for both the housed and the homeless," said Sister Marie Josepha Kluczny, RSM, Director of Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana.

"I like the idea of a laundry/shower trailer because we do, at times, have disasters to respond to, so this will give us a way to provide to needs of the community during those times," Sister Marie Josepha noted. "However, it is also a way to help families use their money for essential items instead of having to go to a laundromat where it can cost at least \$10 per load of laundry."

Sister Marie Josepha said that any ministry of the Catholic Church exists to bring people to Christ. Her hope is for the trailer to be more than just a social service.

"I want people to connect with the God who loves them and sees all their needs," she said. "When the people receive the services of the trailer and the warm welcome of our staff and volunteers, I want that to be an experience of God seeing their needs, caring about their needs, and meeting those needs through his servants. It is an experience of God reaching out to them."

The new resource was a blessing to those who used it in December at the Jefferson Davis Parish Fairgrounds in Jennings. Alisa Stevens, Homeless Outreach Coordinator for Catholic Charities, said that everyone who used the trailer was very appreciative.

"There were people who had not washed their clothes in months," she said. "Some people have a house but do not have access to running water or electricity or cannot afford to use a laundromat.



Bishop Glen John Provost blesses a van used by Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana in the parking lot of the Chancery on January 3. The van, along with a truck and laundry/shower trailer that were also blessed, help provide essential resources to many in the community.

One couple whose plumbing was messed up could not afford to have it fixed."

People were walking up with bags of laundry to the trailer, while others were riding bikes with backpacks or pushing baskets of laundry. They were determined to take advantage of a service desperately needed.

Stevens recalls one client who lives in the woods and collects a small Social Security check. "She would wear her clothes for several days in a row and then buy clothes off the clearance rack," she said. "One client had four months of laundry to wash, so she went to the trailer every day."

After not being able to wash her hair in months, one lady remarked, "I feel like a new person."

Stevens agreed. "When you look better, you feel better. Clean clothes and freshly washed hair

make you feel great."

Volunteers are needed to help staff the trailer at the various sites. Donations of new or lightly used towels, wash cloths, laundry detergent, bleach, cleaning supplies, travel-sized toiletries, women's personal hygiene items, underwear, socks, and jackets are appreciated.

The trailer's schedule for the remainder of January is as follows:

• **January 23-24** — Vinton, next to police department, 1201 Horridge Street, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

• **January 29-30** — Water's Edge, 2760 Power Centre Parkway, Lake Charles, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

For more information or ways to help, call 337-439-7436 or email volunteer@catholiccharitiesswla.org.

Catholic Schools Week planned Jan. 28-Feb. 3

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

Helping students grow in spirit, mind and body is what Catholic education is all about. Schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles will have the opportunity to celebrate this during the 50th year of National Catholic Schools Week scheduled January 28 – February 3. The theme is "United in Faith and Community."

Catholic schools in the Diocese are St. Louis Catholic High School, Immaculate Conception Cathedral School, St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School, and Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School, all in Lake Charles; Our Lady's Catholic School in Sulphur; and Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School in Jennings.

The mission of Catholic education is to prepare the student to face challenges of the future as a Catholic Christian, firmly rooted in the faith filled with hope and living charity. Principals of each school shared their approach to this mission.

St. Louis Catholic High School
Principal: Mia Touchet

The educational approach of St. Louis Catholic High School is a holistic one — recognizing each member of the school community as a child of God. Meeting academic, spiritual, and social needs collectively means these are not taught in isolation. Our faculty loves the content they teach and are masters of it.

Immaculate Conception Cathedral School
Principal: Blair Tadlock

ICCS administers the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, where student experiences are shared to explore and prepare our students for a religious life. In addition, The Disciples of Christ: Education in Virtue is an application used throughout the school with the purpose of shaping student and staff behavior by incorporating the language of virtue within our daily lives.

St. Margaret Catholic School
Principal: Wendy Wicke

Our mission is "nurturing all children and achieving academic success in the spirit of Christ." We provide our students with practice in Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity and the Cardinal Virtues of Temperance, Justice, Prudence, and Fortitude.

Throughout the school year, we offer many opportunities for our students to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith with our Saints Parade, Eucharistic Procession, weekly confessions and Mass, Advent and Lent activities, special activities on Marian Feast days and more.

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School
Principal: Trevor Donnelly

The mission of OLQHS, "Learning and Living the Good News," is part of all we do. It can be seen in the lessons in our classrooms, in prayer services and Masses, but it can also be seen most earnestly in the day-to-day interactions on our campus — the small, yet significant "holy moments."

The love, care and encouragement our teachers extend to our students, and in turn, the love our students share with us each day is remarkable — and Christ is at the center of it all. There is no greater gift than to work in partnership with parents on this like-minded goal.

Our Lady's Catholic School
Principal: Nichole Tanner

This year's theme, "United in Faith and Community," is a simplified definition of Our Lady's School. Being the only PreK-8th grade school in the Diocese of Lake Charles that is West of the Calcasieu River and multi-parish owned, we are blessed with students, families, and priests from six church parishes who play a role in creating our OLS family.

The staff and faculty incorporate the teachings of our Lord and Catholic faith in all we do. We are committed to building the future of all students through the grace of God and academic excellence.

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School
Principal: Julie Cassidy

Faith formation is a prevalent part of the day — beginning and ending with prayer. Students participate in a variety of activities including bi-monthly Masses, Reconciliation, Adoration, rosaries, and paraliturgies for our PreK3-2nd grade students. OLI hosts Advents Prayer Services, May Crowning, and Eucharistic Processions in addition to public presentations

of the All Saints Program and Way of the Cross.

During this time of National Eucharistic Revival, principals shared what their schools will be doing to foster a deeper devotion to the Real Presence.

"There is nothing more humbling as a school principal than witnessing teenagers sit and adore our Lord, especially in this noisy world," said Mia Touchet, principal at St. Louis. The adoration chapel on campus has seen a growing number of students as part of the revival but will also be encouraged during Catholic Schools Week.

Since the beginning of the Eucharistic Revival, St. Margaret Catholic School has hosted Eucharistic processions throughout the neighborhood around the church and school.

"This year, our procession will be during Catholic Schools Week, and our plans are to do a special nighttime procession," said Wendy Wicke, principal. "Our junior high students have taken an active role in the processions, which are open to parents and parishioners of St. Margaret."

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School will be reciting the "Prayer for the Revival" throughout the week as well as attending Adoration, according to Julie Cassidy.

"Gathering together to share in the Eucharist is the absolute most important thing we do as a Catholic community," said Donnelly at Our Lady Queen of Heaven. "This year, we are emphasizing our relationship with Christ bringing to life the words contained in the Catholic Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed), helping students understand the true sacrifice in its living form."

Blair Tadlock at ICCS said the school's theme is focused on the Eucharist. "During our study, we focus more closely with these associated words — ask, receive, nourished, and give. We use these words to reflect on the meaning given to us in the Eucharist and in communion with one another and the Church."

To highlight Catholic Schools Week, Bishop Glen John Provost will be the celebrant for a school Mass for St. Louis Catholic High School seniors and eighth-graders at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 31, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF LAKE CHARLES

St. Louis Catholic High School

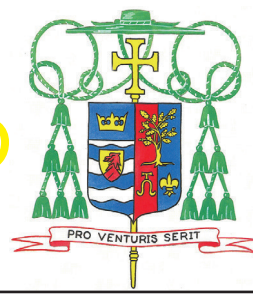
Our Lady's Catholic School

Immaculate Conception Cathedral School

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School

St. Margaret Catholic School

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School



St. Louis chapel encourages prayers for vocations

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES — There is something special about Room 27 at St. Louis Catholic High School that sets it apart from other high schools in Southwest Louisiana — the Real Presence of Jesus Christ.

“It is a space unlike any other space on campus,” said Father Andy DeRouen, chaplain at the only Catholic high school in the Diocese of Lake Charles. “The students are grateful that the chapel is an environment where their outside world can just melt away for a little while.”

Since Hurricane Laura destroyed the main campus of St. Louis in August 2020, setting aside dedicated space for a day chapel on the temporary campus has united the school community.

“Whether it is morning Mass on Tuesdays, Eucharistic Adoration on Fridays, or a quick visit during lunch, the chapel serves as a physical reminder that peace, tranquility, and comfort are near,” said Principal Mia Touchet.

“Seeing students, teachers, clergy, and families utilize the chapel throughout the week affirms the beauty of how Catholic education approaches school differently,” Touchet noted.

A unique feature of the chapel is its focus on the discernment of vocations. In designing the space, Father DeRouen created a wall with photographs from the vocations that have come from St. Louis Catholic High School graduates over the years. There are at least 18 students who have either entered priesthood, religious life, or they are currently in formation.

Another wall highlights the school’s small faith communities known as the House System made up of students from all grade levels. The “houses” represent Saints John Paul II, Joan of Arc, Elmo, Cecilia, Augustine, and Josephine Bahkita.

Father DeRouen has noticed an increase in participation at chapel Masses and adoration from faculty, which he said will lead to more student involvement.

“Teachers are the ones who distribute the graces that they ultimately receive here (chapel). This in turn helps with the goal of reaching students,” he noted.

One of those students is Morgan Churchman who said Eucharistic Adoration has become a more important part of her life by having access to a chapel on campus. She shared that it helps her feel more fulfilled and confident in who Christ is asking her to be.

“I notice a difference in overcoming peer pressure because I know that what others are asking of me is not as important as what God asks of me,” said Churchman, who sees adoration as talking to God as friend.

“I begin my time in adoration giving thanks for blessings I have been given, even if I don’t see it as a blessing at the time,” Churchman shared. “I like to spend my time sitting with God and telling Him about my day or sitting in silence with Him.”

Staff member Teresa Ernst said that nothing warms her heart more than seeing the students seek out the comfort of Jesus.

“When I turn the corner to head to the chapel and I see all those backpacks lined up outside the door, I smile,” said Ernst. “I hope when students see adults using the chapel, they realize that we all have things on our heart, and they are not alone.”

“Imagine being able to stop at any time during the day and spend time with the Real Presence! It is a blessing to have Christ available to us,” Ernst remarked.

Adoration is everything for teacher Hannah Guth.

“When I started going to Eucharistic Adoration, it brought me to another level of intimacy with God,” said Guth. “It is a privilege to look Him in the face and to have Him looking back at me.”

Guth does her best to nurture in her students a devotion for adoration.

“I love that Eucharistic Adoration adds to our Catholic identity. I love that I can promote and teach a practical way to live out the Faith. Instead of discussing a concept, I can say, ‘Go across the hall to Room 27, the chapel. He is there.’ This is mind-blowing,” said Guth.

Father DeRouen also sees the chapel as a catechetical moment with the introduction of a whiteboard.

“In an environment where there is a school, why not use this space for teaching the faith bit by bit, whether it is helping them prepare for Mass on Sunday or giving them quotes from the Catechism or from writings of the saints,” he noted.

The chapel is open to anyone who wants to come and pray — students, faculty, staff, parents, and grandparents.



Father Andy DeRouen, chaplain at St. Louis Catholic High School, celebrates Mass on Tuesday, October 24, in the school’s chapel. Apart from the schoolwide Mass held on Wednesdays in the pavilion, Mass is celebrated in Room 27 on Tuesdays at 7:00 a.m. for students and faculty. The chapel is open for private prayer every day during school hours.

“The more we avail ourselves to Jesus, there is grace at work,” said Father DeRouen. “The spiritual life is an investment. We are not here to immediately see the fruits of our prayers. We are here because it pleases the Lord.”

Father DeRouen said the end goal is to have students, faculty, and parents see the chapel as an opportunity to offer worship and praise to God.

“The Lord is not going to be outdone in generosity. The more generous we are with our time, He will be generous more abundantly with us in His time,” DeRouen said. “Jesus is here in the tabernacle, and He loves visitors.”

♦♦♦

The St. Louis Catholic High School chapel is open for private prayer every day during school hours. Mass is celebrated at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Benediction is offered on Fridays between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Call the school at 337-436-7275 for more information.

VOCATION WALL AT ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

- **Sister Geralyn Spaulding, O.S.B.**, Class of 1971 — Order of St. Benedict
- **Deacon Ray Menard**, Class of 1972 — Deacon at St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church
- **Father Patrick Carr**, Class of 1982 — Archdiocese of New Orleans
- **Rev. Canon A. Gerard Jordan, Sr.**, O. Praem, Class of 1985
- **Father Robert Boxie III**, Class of 1998 — Archdiocese of Washington
- **Father Ruben J. Buller**, Class of 2000 — Pastor of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
- **Father Trey Ange**, Class of 2002 — Pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Jennings
- **Father Jeffrey Starkovich**, Class of 2003 — Pastor of St. Pius X Catholic Church in Ragley
- **Father Alan Piper, O.P.**, Class of 2004 — Dominican Province of St. Joseph
- **Father Bernard Baca, O.S.B.**, Class of 2009 — Benedictine Monks of Norcia
- **Father Andy DeRouen**, Class of 2011 — Parochial Vicar at St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church and Chaplain at St. Louis Catholic High School
- **Laura Prejean**, Class of 2011 — Postulant for Sisters of Life
- **Father Michael Beverung**, Class of 2013 — Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church



A student spends time in prayer during Eucharistic Adoration on a Friday in the chapel at St. Louis Catholic High School. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is offered in Room 27 on Fridays between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. during the school year.

- **Father Josh Page**, Class of 2014 — Parochial Vicar at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church
- **Sister Bethany Marie Burnham, F.S.G.M.**, Class of 2015 — Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyrs of St. George
- **Cameron Fontenot**, Class of 2017 — Seminarian at Notre Dame Seminary
- **Michael DesOrmeaux**, Class of 2021 — Seminarian at St. Joseph Seminary College
- **Liam Leonard**, Class of 2012 — Seminarian at Theological College, Washington, DC.

The Nicene Creed: Pastors teaching why it matters

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

An invitation by Bishop Glen John Provost for Catholics in the Diocese of Lake Charles to renew their faith, as found in the Nicene Creed, is being embraced by many pastors.

Through his Pastoral Letter: A Time of Renewed Faith, Bishop Provost is encouraging a deeper understanding of the Creed that Catholics recite. This reaffirmation of faith will continue through the Easter Octave and conclude with Divine Mercy Sunday in 2024.

“We call the Creed a Profession of Faith because it expresses the fundamentals of Christian belief,” the bishop said in his letter at the beginning of Advent. “The Creed cannot be simply a matter of words or a formula we recite.”

Some might ask the question, “Why is it important to carve time out of their schedules to grow in knowledge and understanding of their Profession of Faith?”

For **Father Edward Richard**, Pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Sulphur, the answer is simple.

“True Faith is joy! When we study the Creed, we learn doctrine, yes, but we also learn history,” he said.

“Our forebears labored to produce the language of the Creed so that we would know the One

Triune God with clarity and certainty. They fought to protect this doctrine, and many of them died confessing this faith,” Father Richard continued.

“In God’s Providence, we have been given this opportunity to rekindle the Faith, to grow in knowledge and love of God, and to help others come to salvation,” he remarked, noting his gratitude to Bishop Provost for this initiative.

Father Richard said his approach to helping his parishioners renew their faith is based upon the foundation that there is nothing more essential than the Creed.

“I will be using the book by Bishop Athanasius Schneider, *‘Credo,’* along with the accompanying study guide in my Domestic Church group,” said Father Richard. “I am planning, as well, to offer special presentations in the parish both in-person and online.”

At St. Henry Catholic Church in Lake Charles, **Father Matthew Cormier** has planned an adult formation series beginning in January called, “What Do You *Really* Believe?” It will be offered in the St. Henry Community Center, 1021 Eighth Avenue, during January, February, and March.

The January and March sessions will be held on Tuesdays, January 23; and Tuesdays, March 5 and 12, all beginning at 6:15 p.m. (Note: The first session began on January 16). The February sessions will be

held on Saturdays, February 3 and 24, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Sign-up is required as a light meal will be served. Please call the church office at 337-436-7223 or email pkittling@sthenry.church.

Father Trey Ange, Pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Jennings, said it is important for all faithful to be “intentional in *living* the faith and not just showing up to Mass and saying words.”

“Understanding the words of the Creed means an understanding of why we do things as Catholics,” he remarked. “Christianity needs the BEST witnesses to the faith, and truly knowing what we believe is a crucial part of being this witness in the world.”

After his homilies during the weekend Masses, Father Ange is delving more deeply into the Creed and what each Article means by using the teachings from the Catechism and Scripture, as well as some practical examples and applications to life.

“In the following months (leading up to Divine Mercy Sunday), I will emphasize the Creed in the Mass, as well as give examples of how parishioners can make it a personal expression of faith,” he said.

Together with Father Shaji Jose, HGN, **Father Rommel Tolentino**, Pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Lake Charles is preaching

and teaching about the Creed, one Article at a time during their homilies while they have a captive audience at Mass.

“Our hope is that the parishioners will have a greater understanding and appreciation of the words we are saying during the Creed, and that this will lead to a deeper relationship with God and greater appreciation of our Catholic faith,” said Father Tolentino.

“During the introductory homily about Bishop Provost’s initiative on learning more about the Creed, I told the parishioners that the more we know someone (especially someone’s goodness and greatness), the more we fall in love with that person,” Tolentino continued. “This is also true regarding our relationship with God.”

It is the hope of Bishop Provost for all pastors to assist parishioners — through their preaching and teaching — to understand better the articles of faith contained in the Creed.

“The articles of faith in the Creed come from God Himself through Jesus Christ and are passed on to you and to me by His Church,” Bishop Provost expressed in his Pastoral Letter. “Hopefully, with each obedient profession of faith, we grow in love for the God to whom we respond and for our fellow believers whom we serve.”