CLARION HERALD

Official Newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans

Vol. 65 No. 21| May 2, 2026

www.clarionherald.org

O, Mary, we crown thee with blossoms today!
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May!

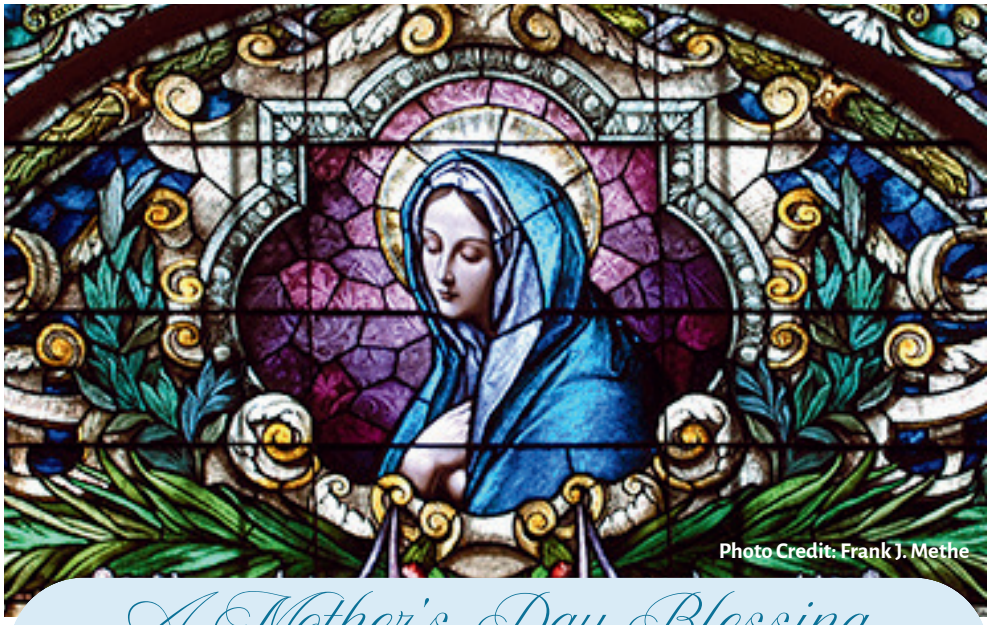


Photo Credit: Frank J. Methe

A Mother's Day Blessing

Loving God, as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children,
so you give life and care for your Church.

Bless these women, as we celebrate this day in their honor.
May they be strengthened as Christian mothers.

Let the example of their faith and love shine forth.
Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor and appreciate them
with a spirit of profound respect.

May the example of Mary, mother of Jesus, inspire them to live their
vocation as Christian mothers and call their children to faith.

Guide and protect them in challenging times and help them to continue
to trust in you all the days of their life.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Pray for Us!

A Shepherd's Heart: Archbishop Checchio Reflects on 10 Years as a Bishop



Most Reverend James F.
CHECCHIO, JCD, MBA
Archbishop of New Orleans

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Ten years ago, May 3, the Feast of Sts. Phillip and James, was a memorable day for me, as I was ordained a Bishop. When Pope Francis sent me to Metuchen as their bishop, I remember him saying, "you must know a lot of people and clergy in your new diocese since it is so close to your home."

While Metuchen was only an hour car drive from my family's home in New Jersey, there were millions of people and a whole diocese between us. Obviously, the Holy Father thought that my transition from Rector of the North American College in Rome to Bishop in Metuchen, New Jersey would be eased by my friends and acquaintances. However, I knew very few individuals there having met only a couple of priests from Metuchen and just a few lay people. Gratefully, the Metuchen Diocese became my home – filled with friends: laity, clergy and religious.

In sending me to be your Archbishop this past year, Pope Leo sent me to a new area of the country in which I had never lived and, again, where I knew very few people. However, after only a few months here, I am filled with gratitude for your warm welcome and have been overwhelmed by your love, encouragement, kind notes, generous gifts and especially your prayers.

I truly try to approach my role as Archbishop as

(see **SHEPHERD** p. 3)

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On April 15, Archbishop James Checchio toured several Catholic Charities ministry sites including the Head Start Center at Incarnate Word and Padua House. At the Head Start Center he met the students and participated in a few table centers as he learned about their mission to promote the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development of children from birth to age five. During his visit to Padua Community Services in Belle Chasse he met the clients and learned about their ministry to offer comprehensive and specialized care for children and adults with intellectual disabilities through Padua House Residential Program and Padua Community Homes.

SHEPHERD

being the pastor of this Archdiocese, but I often think, "how can I shepherd over a half million people?" Although I realize I cannot personally know every Catholic nor be present all the time at our 104 parishes, 64 schools and other ministries and institutions throughout our eight parishes, I truly try to carry each of you in my heart and prayers. I try to be as present as humanly possible to be a witness to the resurrection of Jesus and a minister of hope for you. That is the bishop's most basic responsibility. As a successor to the apostles, I am to witness to the resurrection of Jesus and hence offer hope in a world that sometimes might not seem so hopeful.

While there have been many blessings during my 10 years as a bishop, there have also been challenges. I am certainly aware of and learning about the challenges here as I begin my time as your new shepherd. The pandemic effects still linger, the financial and abuse scandals in our Church, and division and racism in our country have all been scourges that have affected us all in varying ways. While we wish these issues did not exist, we must try to view even these situations in light of God's providential love. With much help and encouragement, over these years I have always tried my best to face these issues in a prayerful, forthright and transparent way. Yes, our task as ministers of the Gospel is to proclaim the promise of new life even where the world might only see ruin and desolation.

As I begin my ministry amongst you and mark my tenth anniversary as a bishop, I promise you that I am striving to become a saint, as we all are. I pledge to use all my strength and whatever talents I have in ministering to you. I am grateful for your patience when it is called for, as I strive to learn about how to be the archbishop you need and deserve.

What helps me tremendously as I transition here are your prayers and your dedication, and, for those prayers and dedication you have my heartfelt thanks. I love being a priest and now serving here in New Orleans, this beautiful portion of God's vineyard. I am always encouraged by our visits as I make my way around the archdiocese. I am inspired by your dedication to the Word of God and the Eucharist even amidst the challenges we have had over these recent years. Likewise, I am so inspired by your great generosity to your parishes and so many other good causes where we join together to light a fire in the heart of our Church to educate our youth, assist those in need, promote life and spread the Gospel message. Your continued support of all these initiatives brings me, and so many others, great consolation! Thank you.

As I get to know them, I am so grateful for our faithful priests, deacons and religious who minister in the parishes and institutions throughout our beautiful archdiocese. Our lay ministers in our parishes, Catholic Charities and different ministries as well as our diocesan staff work tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to keep things moving along in our administration and pastoral outreach. In our many schools we have an army of teachers and catechists and many who serve in various religious education programs, all who sacrifice so much and show such great dedication.

Of course, our seminarians are one of our hopes for the future as they prepare to become our shepherds. We are blessed with 23 good men in formation for the priesthood at our own Notre Dame Seminary and at St. Joseph's Seminary College. It is a blessing. Please pray for even more vocations, shepherds for our Church, so we have enough priests for all of our parishes and our many needs.

Thank you for your warm welcome, your prayers and your collaboration in lighting a fire in the heart of our Church, and for your patience with me too. As I mentioned above, I love being a priest and am grateful for my 34 years of priesthood and now 10 years as a bishop. I am humbled that God uses you and me to accomplish His works in our world and that we are now in this mission together.

May Our Lord pour His abundant Easter blessings upon you and your loved ones. May our Blessed Mother give us her protection and bring us closer to the heart of her beloved Son. Please continue to pray for me so that I can make a contribution to God's beautiful work being done in this fertile portion of His vineyard called the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Know of my ongoing love, prayers and gratitude for all of you!

+ James F. Checchio

The Archbishop's Schedule

Tuesday, May 5 - 8 a.m. Finance Council Meeting. Private Event
Wednesday, May 6 - 5:30 p.m. Mass, Jefferson Parish Correctional Center
Monday, May 11 - 6 p.m. Regina Matrum Mass, St. Pius X, New Orleans
Thursday, May 14 - 1 p.m. Basilica Shrine in DC Meeting
Thursday, May 14 - 5 p.m. Mass, Notre Dame Seminary Graduation
Saturday, May 16 - 10 a.m. Transitional Diaconate Ordination, St. Louis Cathedral

Official Appointments

In order to provide pastoral care for the people of God in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Archbishop Checchio has made the following appointments effective June 16, 2026. In accordance with Canon 522 and the USCCB norms, all appointments for pastors are for a six-year term, which may be renewed.

Reverend Colin Braud as Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Folsom.

Reverend Clayton Charbonnet as Pastor of The Visitation of Our Lady Parish, Marrero.

Reverend Bartholomew Chukwuma as Pastor of St. Benedict Parish, Covington.

Reverend Joseph DiMaggio as Pastor of St. Christopher the Martyr Parish, Metairie.

Reverend David Frank as Pastor at St. Peter Parish, Reserve.

Reverend Raymond Igbogidi as Pastor at St. Angela Merici Parish, Metairie.

Reverend Luke Nguyen as Pastor at Assumption of Mary Parish, Avondale.

Reverend Rodney Ricard as Pastor at Blessed Trinity Parish, New Orleans.

Reverend Binh Ta, C.Ss.R., as Pastor at St. Joseph Church, Algiers.

St. John Vianney,
Patron Saint of Parish Priests,
pray for us!



2026 Regina Matrum: Love Unconditionally

by Kim Roberts

Joal Betz Kuebel, the 86-year-old mother of nine and grandmother of 14, learned at an early age the necessity of a family support system and how important it is to cherish time with family members. She, along with her late husband Omer Kuebel, Jr., passed this devotion to her own family, and it is that devotion that has lead to her being named the 2026 Regina Matrum award recipient.

The Regina Matrum award is presented annually by the Council of Catholic School Cooperative Clubs (CCSCC) to recognize women who shine as models of Catholic motherhood.

Kuebel will be honored as the 80th Regina Matrum recipient with a Mass on May 11 at 6 p.m. at St. Pius X in New Orleans where she has been a parishioner for 67 years. The Mass, traditionally held the Monday after Mother's Day in honor of the "Queen of All Mothers," will be celebrated by Archbishop James Checchio with a reception to follow for family and friends.

"Joal exemplifies the values of our Catholic faith through consistent spiritual commitment, selfless service and outstanding personal character," said Eileen Capritto, long-time friend and nominator. "She is so dear to me, always kind, cheerful, prayerful, sharing her Bible expertise and knowledge of Catholic parenting. Being a mother of quite a clan, she has a fantastic sense of humor. She leads by example - encouraging others to deepen their relationship with Christ through prayer, service and joyful witness."

Born and raised in the Catholic faith by her mother's Sicilian family, Kuebel said she didn't realize at the time how blessed she was to have so many faithful women caring for her as she grew up and credits that time for shaping her into the mother she became over the years.

"Being a mother is a gift," she said. "It's a grace and a big responsibility when you realize you have all of these little souls relying on you to get them to heaven. All you can do is ask God to help you and rely on his guidance."



Mrs. Joal Betz Kuebel, 2026 Regina Matrum

"It can be a daunting task to have a large family sometimes," she added. "I got involved with religious education because my children encountered children from other families that didn't always have the same religious background and I wanted them to have a consistent message."

From an early age, Kuebel has known the importance of prayer, and it has served as a guiding force throughout her life. She was raised in St. Francis Xavier parish in Metairie, attended Ursuline Academy and Holy Name of Jesus School and graduated from Loyola University with a degree in elementary education. She went on to teach religion at Holy Name of Jesus School and Mount Carmel Academy.

In addition to teaching religion, Kuebel is credited with being a part of many new beginnings and establishing new ministries in the local community. In 1971 she joined with others to establish Louisiana Right to Life and a Metairie Magnificat Chapter in 1980. In her home parish of St. Pius X, she is credited as a co-founder of the Thursday Morning Prayer Group in 1978 and founded the preschool of religion program in 1980. She also served as a member of St. Pius X St. Vincent DePaul Society from 1983-1992.

In 1980, Kuebel was invited by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to participate in the White House Conference on Families.

Kuebel served as a CCSCC board member from 1984 to 1994, is a recipient of the Order of St. Louis Award and has taught a few classes at The Cenacle over the years.

"The most important thing in my life beside family has been religious education," she said.

"In 1960 I started with the archdiocese catechesis education program and became certified to teach religion in both high school and preschool CCD. I thought it was important to become certified because kids in school weren't getting much of a religious education in the 70's and I wanted to help bridge that gap in their religious education the best I could."

Kuebel has always known the value of a Catholic education for herself and her children. All nine of her children were educated in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New Orleans leading her to refer to herself as the "Galloping Gourmet of Catholic schools" for her involvement with so many. In addition to the schools she attended, her children attended St. Pius X, St. Mary's Dominican High School, Jesuit High School, Academy of the Sacred Heart and Ursuline Academy.

"My mother still educates herself and goes to religion classes," said Caroline Fee, Kuebel's daughter. "Religious education is a passion of

(see REGINA MATRUM p. 8)

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2026 Marriage Preparation Program Calendar

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JULY 10 - 12 AUGUST 21 - 23 NOVEMBER 13 -15

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All 2026 Engaged Encounter Retreats are at the W.J. Kelley Retreat Center Bay St. Louis, MS.

Days for the Engaged

Saturdays 9 AM - 4 PM
Cost: $85/session

SESSION A	SESSION B
JANUARY 10, COVINGTON MOST HOLY TRINITY	JANUARY 24, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING
MARCH 7, HARAHAN ST. RITA	MARCH 21, MANDEVILLE MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE
MARCH 28, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING	APRIL 18, TBD LOCATION TBD
MAY 2, NEW ORLEANS CHANCERY CONFERENCE ROOM	MAY 16, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING
JUNE 6, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING	JUNE 13, NEW ORLEANS CHANCERY CONFERENCE ROOM
AUGUST 8, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING	AUGUST 22, HARAHAN ST. RITA
SEPTEMBER 12, NEW ORLEANS CHANCERY CONFERENCE ROOM	SEPTEMBER 19, COVINGTON MOST HOLY TRINITY
OCTOBER 10, METAIRIE WILLWOODS COMMUNITY BUILDING	OCTOBER 24, NEW ORLEANS CYO BUILDING

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MARCH 21, MANDEVILLE
MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE

MAY 16, NEW ORLEANS
CYO BUILDING

SEPTEMBER 19, COVINGTON
MOST HOLY TRINITY

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Local Catholic Students Recognized on the State Stage

by Kim Roberts

Outstanding students from dioceses across the state were honored at the Louisiana Catholic Student of the Year Awards Ceremony on March 27, hosted by the Diocese of Shreveport and Bishop Francis Malone with two students from the Archdiocese of New Orleans receiving top honors.

Kinleigh Jean Deogracias, fifth grader from Our Lady of Prompt Succor (OLPS) in Chalmette, and Layla LeBoeuf, eighth grader from Ursuline Academy, were recognized among a total of 21 students from all seven dioceses (seven finalists in each of the three categories) in the state of Louisiana for their academic excellence, leadership and commitment to their faith. The Louisiana Catholic Student of the Year program is a is a statewide competition (see **STUDENTS** p. 15)



Kinleigh Deogracias, 5th Grade State Student of the Year



Layla LeBoeuf, 8th Grade State Student of the Year

A Legacy Restored at Corpus Christi-Epiphany Parish

Staff Report

On April 11, the faith community at Corpus Christi-Epiphany Parish in New Orleans celebrated a historic moment as they returned to their church for Mass following an extensive restoration and their new pastor was officially installed.

New Orleans Archbishop James Checchio celebrated the Mass, blessed the church and installed Josephite Father Kingsly Ogbuji as pastor. Father Kingsly is not a stranger to the parish having been named administrator to assist his predecessor Josephite Father Henry Davis.

This special celebration, themed "A Celebration of Faith & Heritage," brought together parishioners, alumni, neighbors and friends from across the city for an afternoon of prayer, thanksgiving and fellowship.

Following the 4 p.m. Mass, the celebration continued with a community dinner and fellowship gathering at the parish Community Center. Guests, many dressed in traditional African attire to honor the parish's deep cultural heritage, enjoyed an evening of hospitality, food and joyful celebration as the parish reflected on its rich history and vibrant future.

To learn more about Corpus Christi-Epiphany Parish, visit https://www.ccecno.org/.





Scenes from the Homecoming Mass at Corpus Christi-Epiphany Parish in New Orleans. Above newly installed pastor Father Kingsly Ogbuji is pictured with Archbishop Checchio.

REGINA MATRUM

hers, and she shares it with family and friends all the time. This is nothing she strived to achieve (the award), she was just being her authentic self and I couldn't be prouder. It is a well-deserved honor."

Kuebel says that it has been an honor and a privilege to watch her own children grow up and now raise families of their own.

"You don't choose the family you are in – God does," she said. "My advice to new mothers is to love their families unconditionally from the beginning, warts and all, because failure to love is like a cancer that goes from one generation to the next. Love is so important in raising children, you must teach them to love themselves so they can love others."

"Also, it is important to remember the Holy Spirit is a gift for everyone who wants it," Kuebel said. "It keeps you going and moving, God has provided all this to us and our families, and we must tap into it."

"Love is so important in raising children, you must teach them to love themselves so they can love others."
- Joal Betz Kuebel
2026 Regina Matrum

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Outstanding Catholic Youth Honored During Ceremony



Archbishop Checchio, center front, stands with the 2026 St. Timothy Award honorees. Pictured left to right, front are Kathryn Barrilleaux, Macie Skrokov, Celine Bloe, Archbishop Checchio, Hannah Miller, Leah Cardinal, and Emily and Tyler Johnson who received the award on behalf of their brother Evan Michael Johnson. Back: Rayon Jones, Danielle Beard, Patrick Tallet, Katharine Urbina Cortez, Alex Hernandez, Aubrey Johnson, Breeanah Sigler and Aurora Knock.

Staff Report

On April 11, Archbishop Checchio celebrated the annual Catholic Youth Awards Mass to honor outstanding youth and young adults throughout the Archdiocese of New Orleans. This year's Mass was held at St. Dominic Church in New Orleans. During the Mass, several different awards were given to honor the faith and leadership of the young people in their parishes and parish CYO programming.

The **St. Timothy Award** is the highest award the Archdiocese of New Orleans can bestow upon a young person. This national award seeks to recognize, from the diocesan level, outstanding youth who exemplify Christian service, Catholic leadership and good moral standards. Awardees are nominated by their parish Pastor or parish Youth Leader.

2026 St. Timothy Award Honorees: Alex Hernandez, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Hannah Millet, Mary, Queen of Peace; Aubrey Johnson, Our Lady of Lourdes, Slidell; Evan Michael Johnson (honored posthumously) Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Belle Chasse; Celine Bioc, Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette; Spencer Mouledoux, St. Angela Merici; Elizabeth Stierwald, St. Angela Merici; Breeanah Sigler, St. Benilde; Estella Holland, St. Catherine of Siena; Kamryn Barrilleaux, St. Charles Borromeo; Macie Skrokov, St. Christopher the Martyr; Patrick Talbot, St. Dominic; Katherine Urbina Cortez, St. Jerome; Rayon Jones, St. Joseph the Worker; Aurora Knock, St. Margaret Mary; Danielle Beard, St. Maria Goretti; and Leah Cardinal, Visitation of Our Lady.

The **Outstanding Parish Youth Leadership Award** is given each year to outstanding high school students, selected by their parish youth leader, who have given of themselves tirelessly in their home parish. This year's honorees are: Noah Riley, All Saints; Naomi Aglipay Delio, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Aiden Frazier, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Jonas Whitney, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Jaylen Glapion, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Kyleigh Honora-Green, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Camryn Honora-Green, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Molly Dejean, Holy Family, Luling; Jared Sirmon, Holy Family, Luling; Devon DiBenedict, Mary, Queen of Peace; Molly Ober, Mary, Queen of Peace; Tyler Reeves, Mary, Queen of Peace; Elizabeth Tissue, Mary, Queen of Peace; Nicholas Ecuyer, Most Holy Trinity; Joshua LeBlanc, Most Holy Trinity; Drew Chilcote, Most Holy Trinity; Mackenzie Marks, Our Lady of Lourdes, Slidell; Isabella Miller, Our Lady of Lourdes, Slidell; Victoria Rice, Our Lady of Lourdes, Slidell; Kate Clapper, Our Lady of the Lake; Bateman Green, Our Lady of the Lake; Molly McKeogh, Our Lady of the Lake; Ian Arceneaux, Sacred Heart

(continued on p. 10)

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of Jesus; Eva Braud, Sacred Heart of Jesus; Reece Surmik, Sacred Heart of Jesus; Catherine Morel, St. Angela Merici; Cash Kelley, St. Angela Merici; Adele Collura, St. Angela Merici; Vivien Egan, St. Ann; Colin Guidry, St. Ann; Adele Stiegman, St. Ann; Ryan McDonald, St. Benilde; Ella West, St. Benilde; Madeline Quinette, St. Benilde; Isabelle Camenzuli, St. Catherine of Siena; Caleb Cook, St. Catherine of Siena; Aubrey Rapp, St. Catherine of Siena; Kamryn Barrilleaux, St. Charles Borromeo; Elizabeth Schexnayder, St. Charles Borromeo; Caden Schmidt, St. Charles Borromeo; Macie Palma, St. Clement of Rome; Jeferson Perez, St. Clement of Rome; Joshua Thwin Hpone Shwe, St. Clement of Rome; Gareth Berner, St. Dominic; Ellie Habetz, St. Dominic; Darian Joachim, St. Dominic; Eugenie Burghardt, St. Francis Xavier; Logan Freire, St. Francis Xavier; Carmen Verdin, St. Jane de Chantal; Jacy Nazareth Martinez Posadas, St. Jerome; Lenny Alessandro Muñoz, St. Jerome; YeLyna Ortiz, St. Jerome; Isabella Favaloro, St. Joachim; Kayla Seneck, St. John Paul II; Andrew Tran, St. John Paul II; Teresita Carter, St. Joseph the Worker; Srh Johnson, St. Joseph the Worker; Xen Williams, St. Joseph the Worker; Ya'Sheena Johnson, St. Josephine Bakhita; Savannah Tassain, St. Josephine Bakhita; Alexis Brocato, St. Louis King of France; Kaleigh Piper, St. Louis King of France; Madison Rauch, St. Louis King of France; Noah Hebert, St. Luke the Evangelist; Sam Naffa, St. Luke the Evangelist; River Sims, St. Luke the Evangelist; Isabella Hosch, St. Margaret Mary; Katie Strecker, St. Margaret Mary; Gregory Veazey, St. Margaret Mary; Noah Walters, St. Mark; Gus Galeziewski, St. Peter, Covington; Jacob Pailet, St. Peter, Covington; Edith Simpson, St. Peter, Covington; Cardell Ross, III, St. Peter Claver; Spencer Hackett, St. Pius X; Owen Truxillo, St. Pius X; Octavia Davis, St. Raymond-St. Leo; Quinton Detiege, St. Raymond-St. Leo; Brady Gill, St. Rita, Harahan; Dylan Napolitano, St. Rita, Harahan; Leah Cardinal, Visitation of Our Lady; Casey Celeste, Visitation of Our Lady; and Liam Doherty, Visitation of Our Lady.

The **Matt Hill Award** is given to select young people, nominated by their parish pastor or parish youth leader, who have exhibited excellence in leadership qualities and excelled in our Archdiocesan CYO Athletics Leagues. This year's honorees are Jacob Gusten, St. Catherine of Siena and Andrew Frey, St. Dominic.

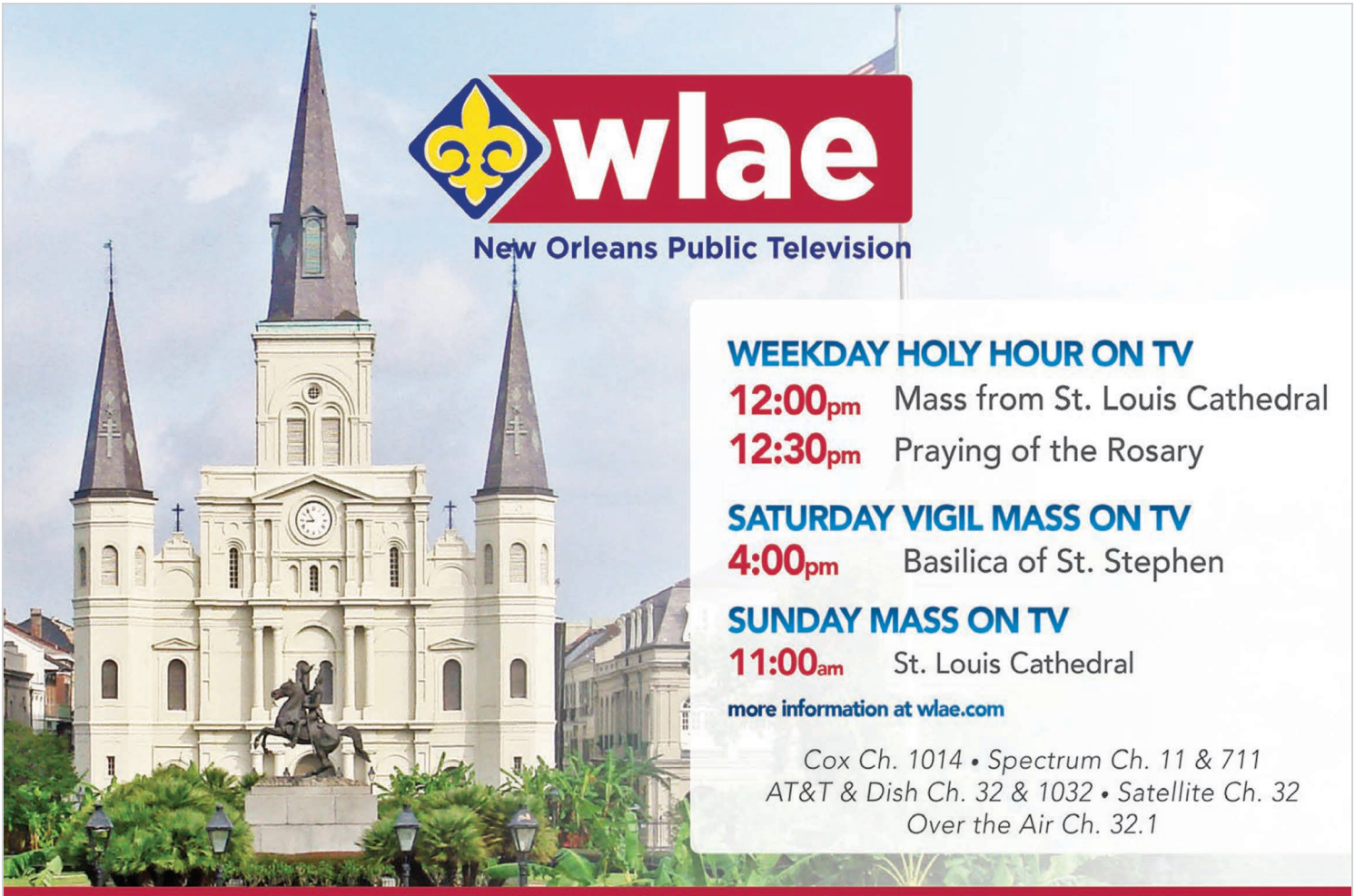
The **St. Pier Giorgio Frassati Award** recognizes a young adult who has been significantly active in ministry in their community, or a person who has made a significant contribution to Youth & Young Adult Ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. This year's honorees are Marinda Lee-Houston, St. Peter Claver and Daniel Laurent, Visitation of Our Lady.

The **Adult Service Award** is given to adults who have worked or volunteered in youth ministry for their parish for over five years. They are selected by their parish Pastor or parish Youth Leader. This year's honorees are: David Delio, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Carol Dotson, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Emile Pierre, Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc; Carla Bringier-Mason, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Gladys Lawrence-Stevenson, Corpus Christi-Epiphany; Victoria O'Rourke, Holy Family, Luling; Monica Garcia, Our Lady of Guadalupe; Cynthia Kooke, Our Lady of Lourdes; Becky Verdin, St. Jane de Chantal; Nydia Chacon, St. Jerome; Jennifer Haynes, St. Jerome; Ronald Reinhardt, St. Jerome; Lorraine Allen, St. John Paul II; Miranda Enclade, St. John Paul II; Elaine Turner, St. Joseph the Worker; Debra Theard, St. Josephine Bakhita; Boyce Damare, St. Peter, Covington; Michelle Wheeler, St. Peter Claver; Kia Davis, St. Raymond-St. Leo; Barbara Duncan, St. Raymond-St. Leo; and Debra Robertson, St. Raymond-St. Leo.

Check clarionherald.org for a photo gallery of pictures from the April 11 Mass.



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Nine Weeks of Prayer and Preparation for the Consecration of the Archdiocese of New Orleans to the Sacred Heart of Jesus



Prayer in Preparation

O, Sacred Heart of Jesus, fountain of Eternal Life,
Your heart is a glowing furnace of love.
You are my refuge and my sanctuary.

O my adorable and loving Savior,
consume my heart with the burning fire
with which yours is inflamed.

Pour down on my soul those graces those graces
which flow from your love.

Let my heart never rest until it finds You,
who are its center, its love and its happiness.

Let my heart be united with yours.
Let my will be conformed to yours in all things.

May Your will be the rule of all my desires and actions.

Amen.

Novena Intentions

May 3 – Defense of Human Life
We pray for the defense of all human life in our preparation for the Consecration of the Archdiocese of New Orleans: Lord of Life, help us to cherish and protect the dignity of every human person from conception to natural death.

May 10 – Addictions and Mental Health
We pray for those suffering from addictions and mental health challenges in our preparation for the Consecration of the Archdiocese of New Orleans: Merciful Heart of Jesus, bring healing, hope and freedom to all who are burdened in mind, body, or spirit.



Living Liturgically: May is Mary's Month

Staff Report

For centuries, the Catholic Church has set aside the entire month of May to honor Mary, Mother of God. The idea of a month dedicated specifically to the Blessed Virgin Mary can be traced back to baroque times. Although it was not always held during May, "Mary Month" included 30 daily spiritual exercises honoring Mary. The transition to the month of May being "Mary's Month" is rooted in customs that span both centuries and cultures, with roots going back as far as the Ancient Greeks.

In early Greece, May was dedicated to Artemis, the goddess of the hunt, the wilderness, wild animals, virginity and childbirth.
In Ancient Rome, May was dedicated to Flora, the goddess of blooms, or blossoms. They celebrated ludi florals, or floral games, at the end of April and asked the intercession of Flora for all that blooms.

As Christianity spread through Europe and beyond, the ancient customs and traditions gave way to those that honored Our Lady.

It was in the Middle Ages that the tradition of Tricesimum, or "Thirty-Day Devotion to Mary," came into being. Also called, "Lady Month," the event was held from August 15, the Feast of the Assumption, through September 14.

In the 17th and 18th centuries it was the Jesuits who first combined Mary's Month and May, making May the Month of Mary with special devotions organized on each day throughout the month. Through the 1700 and 1800s the practice spread throughout Italy, with archbishops recommending it and the Vatican establishing specific prayers in 1838.

In 1945 Pope Pius XII solidified May as a Marian month, establishing the Feast of the Queenship of Mary on May 31st.



"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word"
Luke 1:38

Ways to Celebrate "Mary's Month"

The ways to honor Mary in May are as diverse as the people who honor her. Some special ways Mary is honored during the month of May in both Catholic homes and parishes include:

- Praying the Rosary daily
- Learning and praying new Marian prayers
- Building a Mary Altar
- Creating a Mary garden
- May Crownings
- Wearing blue (clergy vestments on Marian feast days are blue)

The Traditional May Crowning

For many decades, the lovely words and melody of the hymn *Bring Flowers of the Rarest* have been sung during traditional May crowning ceremonies in parishes, schools and homes throughout the world.

During the ceremony, a statue of Mary is placed in a prominent place and crowned, often times with a crown made of flowers. The crowning honors Mary as the Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, and the mother of all. The U.S. Bishops gave direct instruction for May crownings in 1987 writing, "The month of May is dedicated to the Queen of Heaven, as are all flowers. Early this month, a statue of the Virgin at church is crowned with a wreath of flowers, and flowers are laid at her feet." (*Order of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary*)

Bring flow'rs of the fairest,
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,
From garden and woodland
And hillside and vale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
Our Glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
Rose of the vale.

O Mary! we crown thee
with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels,
Queen of the May,
O Mary! we crown thee
with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels,
Queen of the May.

Office of Black Catholics

Women's Retreat



Saturday, May 9, 2026 • 9:30am - 3:30pm

NDS-Schulte Auditorium

2901 S. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, LA. 70118

Women in Faith, Renewed in the Spirit: Called, Gifted & Sent!

4:00pm Mass in Notre Dame Seminary Chapel
w/ Celebrant Fr. R. Tony Ricard

Donation: $10 Includes Breakfast & Lunch

Register with QR Code or Call
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A Day Trip to the Northshore





On April 20, Archbishop Checchio spent the day on the Northshore celebrating Mass at St. Paul's School in Covington for the students of both St. Paul's and St. Scholastica Academy and then visited Archbishop Hannan High School in Goodbee to tour the school and speak to the student body. Following his visits to the high schools, the Archbishop stopped in to check on the seminarians studying at St. Joseph Seminary College and then visited the Discalced Carmelite Nuns at their monastery in Covington. Pictured left, Archbishop Checchio is photographed with the altar servers and liturgical mnisters from St. Paul's and SSA and pictured right, the students at Archbishop Hannan High School presented Archbishop Checchio with a customized Hannan Hawks football jersey.

STUDENTS

recognizing one fifth, eighth and twelfth grade student who demonstrates excellence in discipleship, leadership, service, citizenship and academic achievement.

"These two young women truly embody what we hope to form in our students," said Dr. RaeNell Houston, superintendent and executive director of the department of Catholic education and faith formation archdiocese of New Orleans. "What stood out most was not just their achievement, but their depth of character – the way they lead with humility, serve with intention and remain grounded in their faith. They are articulate, reflective and deeply aware that their gifts are meant to be used for others. The combination of excellence and purpose is what set them apart."

The competition features a rigorous process that evaluates candidates first at the school level, then at the archdiocese level with winners advancing to the state level. Students are judged based on a comprehensive portfolio of accomplishments, a writing sample and an interview with a panel of unbiased judges. Students are assessed not only for their academic achievements, but also for their leadership roles in school, co-curricular activities, church parish and the wider community. Additional criteria include service, discipleship, citizenship and other awards, honors and accolades.

Judges from the Archdiocese of New Orleans Office of Catholic School and Faith Formation and members of the archdiocese staff select one Student of the Year representing fifth, eighth and twelfth grade students from amongst the 22 archdiocese schools. Students advancing to the archdiocesan level submit materials that highlight their accomplishments, involvement and personal growth and have maintained a 3.2 cumulative grade point average during the past three years and first grading period of the current school year. A panel of judges reviews each submission using a common rubric, and top candidates are invited to participate in an interview with a second panel. Following the interviews, one Archdiocesan Student of the Year is selected at each grade level. These students then go on to represent the Archdiocese in the Louisiana Catholic School Student of the Year competition in March.

"This is a significant honor not only for these students, but for our entire Archdiocese. It reflects the strength of our schools and the mission that guides them," Dr. Houston said.

"To have two students recognized at the state level speaks to a culture where students are formed academically, spiritually and as leaders of service. It's a moment of pride for their schools, their families and our entire Catholic school community."

According to Our Lady of Prompt Succor, "Kinleigh continues to shine as a leader, a servant and a true example of what it means to live out our faith each and every day. We are beyond proud to celebrate this incredible accomplishment and the way she represents our OLPS family with grace and excellence."

"Kinleigh is the fifth OLPS student in just the last seven years to earn an Archdiocesan title. That speaks volumes about the exceptional students we are blessed to have at our school – students who rise to the challenge, lead with heart and make us proud every single day," they added.

Similarly, Ursuline Academy was also beaming with pride over LeBeouf's accomplishment and shared the following, "We are beyond thrilled to see Layla's hard work and dedication recognized at the state level. Thank you for representing Ursuline Academy."

LeBoeuf is in all honors classes at school, and her favorite subject is math. She is on the Student Council, eighth grade class president and enjoys performing in the school musical, the Academy choir and on the dance team. She is also part of the Quiz Bowl team, sustainability club, peer ministry, Queen's Player's theater group and Key Club.

"My advice to future applicants would be to be authentic in the opportunities you pursue and choose what truly matters to you," Dr. Houston said. "Invest in all aspects of your growth, including academics, leadership, citizenship and discipleship. When students are engaged, serve others with purpose and lead with integrity, that comes through clearly."

Students interested in participating in the 2027 Catholic Student of the Year Program must meet all of the required criteria and be nominated at the school level by a teacher or faculty member before January 2027.

Yo soy el Camino, la Verdad y la Vida



Fr. Manuel
SOLORZANO, O.P.

5to Domingo de Pascua
Juan 14: 1-12
Mayo 3, 2026

Queridos hermanos: Queridos hermanos: Seguimos viviendo el tiempo de Pascua, un tiempo de gracia en el que la Iglesia nos invita a contemplar la presencia viva de Cristo resucitado en medio de su pueblo. La Pascua no es solo el recuerdo de un acontecimiento pasado, sino la certeza de que Cristo vive y continúa guiando a su Iglesia hoy. Las lecturas de este domingo nos muestran a una Iglesia viva, que crece y aprende a responder con fe y esperanza a los desafíos de la vida.

En la primera lectura, de los Hechos de los Apóstoles, vemos cómo la comunidad cristiana, al crecer, enfrenta dificultades concretas: algunas viudas no estaban recibiendo la atención necesaria. Los apóstoles, guiados por el Espíritu Santo, buscan una solución llena de sabiduría y eligen a siete hombres para el servicio, mientras ellos continúan dedicados a la oración y a la predicación de la Palabra. Este pasaje nos recuerda que la fe se vive no solo en la oración, sino también en el servicio concreto y generoso, especialmente hacia los más necesitados.

El salmo proclama: "El Señor cuida de aquellos que lo temen." Estas palabras nos llenan de confianza y nos recuerdan que Dios no abandona a quienes ponen su esperanza en Él. Cristo resucitado cuida de su Iglesia y camina siempre a nuestro lado.
En la segunda lectura, san Pedro nos presenta a Cristo como la piedra viva, rechazada por los hombres, pero elegida y preciosa para Dios. Unidos a Él, también nosotros somos piedras vivas, llamados a formar parte del edificio espiritual que es la Iglesia. Cada uno tiene un lugar y una misión; no somos espectadores, sino miembros activos del pueblo de Dios.

Por su parte, en el Evangelio, Jesús dirige a sus discípulos palabras de consuelo: "No se inquieten. Crean en Dios y crean también en mí." En medio de la incertidumbre y el temor, Jesús los invita a confiar. Luego hace una afirmación central de nuestra fe: "Yo soy el camino, la verdad y la vida." Jesús no solo nos muestra el camino hacia el Padre, Él mismo es el Camino. Seguirlo significa vivir como Él vivió: con amor, con confianza en el Padre y con una entrega generosa al servicio de los demás.

Cuando Jesús dice: "Quien me ha visto a mí, ha visto al Padre," nos revela el verdadero rostro de Dios: un Dios cercano, misericordioso y fiel, que acompaña y sostiene a su pueblo.

Por eso, en este tiempo de Pascua, renovemos nuestra fe en Cristo resucitado. Él sigue siendo el camino que orienta nuestra vida, la verdad que ilumina nuestro corazón y la vida que da sentido pleno a nuestra existencia.

- Confío realmente en Cristo como el camino que guía mi vida?
- Cómo puedo servir mejor a los demás dentro de mi comunidad?
- Estoy construyendo mi vida sobre Cristo, la piedra firme?
- Vivo con la confianza de saber que el Señor cuida de mí?

Hermanos y hermanas, vivamos la Pascua con un corazón lleno de esperanza. Acerquémonos más a Cristo en la oración, en la Palabra de Dios y en la Eucaristía, para que nuestra vida sea testimonio de fe, confianza y servicio, para que otros puedan descubrir en nosotros la presencia viva de Cristo resucitado. Amén.



Flourishing Sisterhood: Discovering Another Blessing



Sr. Mary Martha
MOSS, F.S.P.

I've always thought God gave me two great blessings the day I was born: I was born on Christmas day, and, second, my Mama didn't let Daddy and Aunt Helen name me. They wanted to call me "Mary Chris" Moss (to sound like "Merry Christmas") but she said, "Absolutely not!" I got Mary Elizabeth instead.

Born on Christmas, I had a definite understanding of what that day signified: Christ coming in the flesh to save us. While I liked my connection with Him, I didn't consider myself really religious.

Growing up in South Louisiana, at age seven, I made First Communion in my favorite pink and purple dress. My mom was wise enough to know she'd never get me into a fancy white one. I knew I was receiving Jesus, and it was His chance to draw me closer.

When I was unable to get a BB gun like my younger brother, I asked for a horse instead. And after working on Dad for three years, I ended up getting two: Lady and Binka. I kept them at a stable I could reach in fifteen minutes on my bike. Little did I know how that stable would open up a whole new world to me not only because of my love for horses, but also because of its owner, Mr. Everett Talbot.

The father of my horse-buddy Lisa, Mr. Everett–who liked me because I was enthralled by horses–raised thoroughbreds for racing. And he taught me all about it: from how to read a racing form, speed ratings and high-class tracks, to how to place a bet. When he took Lisa and me to the track, my first time there I won $64.60 on a $2 bet on the Daily Double. Odds are an important thing to consider when betting, yet they never mentioned this in any of my math classes. This taught me how math could be an important and useful subject; and, because of it, I could say goodbye to baby-sitting forever.

My life took on a wonderful rhythm among home, horses, friends and school and, at age 14, religion class for high school students. The teacher, Mr. D, also a coach and marathon runner, made an indelible impression. For our first class after introductions, he shared his greatest goal in life: to become a saint. And he explained to us, in short, compelling words as to why that was everything to him. All I can say is his words affected me so deeply, and I was overwhelmed by the absolute beauty of them.

Confronted by such a lofty goal, I, too, wanted sainthood for myself. Over the next few months, we had a lot of fun as a class, and our teacher shared what it meant to face challenges, to live our Catholic faith as teenagers, and how to embrace and make room for holiness in who we are.

Life continued. My efforts to live in Christ and my love for horses grew. I determined that I would become a physical therapist and work my finances to buy a string of race horses. In my prayers, I would tell God my plans and add, "of course, I will give a lot of the money I make to the Church."

Yet God had other plans and kept working on me little by little, drawing me to Himself. Even after enrolling in college and loving university life at LSU, I, ultimately, could no longer resist.

In 1977, I joined the Daughters of St. Paul, entering the convent the week after I turned eighteen. I had met the Sisters three years prior and was impressed with their faith, the depth of their Eucharistic adoration, and the practical ways they helped others find God through media. Everyone, after all, is called to be holy. In short, the Sisters shared the light and love of God through books, music, and lives of joy. Today, these Sisters, my Sisters and I, are known worldwide as #MediaNuns.

Looking back, I realize that I actually received three great blessings the day I was born: the third being a call to love and let myself be loved. Beautiful love originates in God, and, by His mercy, those who love will live and love forever.

I've never found a better offer or a greater blessing. I rejoice in saying "YES" to this blessing, God's will for me. And with God's help, I can live it fully.

Pauline Sister Mary Martha Moss spent her childhood years in Houma, riding horses and reading books, her two great passions. Since joining the Daughters of St. Paul in 1977 she has continued her discovery of God's infinite mercy and how beautiful it is to serve him. She has shared life and faith with others through the Pauline mission of evangelization in New York, California, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Massachusetts; faith and media workshops; vocation retreats and presentations; faith formation for young adults; and writing for children.

Sister Martha, who has a master's degree in Religious Education from Boston College, served for several years as local superior for her community of Daughters of St. Paul in Metairie where she also managed the Pauline Books & Media Center on Veterans Memorial Blvd. Her hope is that the titles she wrote and prayed over: "My Bible God's Word for Me" (her newest!), "My First Communion Bible" and "My Baptism Remembrance Book" will give children and their parents an experience of how much God is part of their lives.






LORD,
LET YOUR
mercy
BE ON US.
WE PLACE
OUR
trust
IN YOU.
PSALM 33
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Moms, Mentors and Movements Who Shaped Us: Our Legacy



Ty
SALVANT
NOLACatholic Parenting

When I think about people and programs that have shaped my life, I don't just think about what they taught me. I think about how they helped shape who I am.

As parents, that's something worth pausing for.

A Mother's Love That Is Real, Not Perfect
Of course, I think of my mom first. Not because she is perfect, but because she is real.

She taught me lessons through what to do, and sometimes through what not to do. What I appreciate most now is that our relationship isn't built on pretending. She's not the "perfect mom," and I'm not the "perfect daughter." But we are consistent. We show up, support each other and love one another in ways that work for both of us.

It's a love with boundaries. A love that allows both of us to grow individually and together. And in that, I've experienced something powerful: being loved unconditionally, flaws and all. That's the kind of love many of us are trying to give our children.

After I turned 30, my mom mentioned that she thought I would have written a book. I was shocked and asked why, because I like to read but had never expressed any interest in writing one. She simply said, "Oh, I thought you would have."

Every few years, I would wonder if I ever wrote a book, what would it be about? Eventually, I found out. Thanks, mom!

The Power of Mentorship
I also think about mentors who have influenced my journey, like Monica Pierre.

I remember listening to her during our daily commute to school on Q93 throughout high school, watching her evolve into an Emmy Award-winning journalist, and later seeing her teach at Xavier, where one of my daughters took her class. I also had the opportunity to ask her to be my mentor during my year at Loyola's Women's Leadership Academy.

And yes, I still get a little giddy seeing her name in my contacts.

What I admire most is her ability to grow, reinvent herself, remain relevant, and gently help others improve. She reminds me that your story can evolve through every phase of life.

Before she became my mentor, I had the opportunity to moderate a panel with Monica Pierre and two other amazing women. During our prep, I was noticeably nervous, and Monica shared, almost in passing, that whenever she got nervous, a few deep cleansing breaths helped center her. That simple nugget helped me lead the panel calmly and confidently and become a better speaker.

The Movements That Sustain Us
Then there are the movements that shape not just moments, but entire seasons of life.

For me, that's Catholic Engaged Encounter.

What started as a simple choice for marriage preparation turned into a 26-year commitment that has strengthened my marriage in ways I never imagined. Just three months after we got married, my husband and I began volunteering, and we've been pouring into engaged couples ever since.

Being surrounded by couples living their sacrament and reminiscing twice a year of what brought us together is a priceless gift. And it all started with a seed planted years earlier: one small comment at my high school confirmation retreat that I never forgot. At the end of the retreat, the priest mentioned other retreat options offered by the church, including one for engaged couples. That was it.

Why This Matters for You and Your Children
Here's the truth:

Your life is being shaped right now by people, moments and movements, whether you realize it or not. Sometimes lessons take the shape of big boulders, but more often, they are pebbles, little seeds that take root and bear fruit weeks, months, or years later.

And one day, your children will look back and identify the same things in you.

That's why it's so important to reflect:
- Who poured into you?
- What experiences changed you?
- What values were passed down?

When you understand your story, you parent with more intention, lead with more clarity and live with more purpose. You begin to answer not just who you are, but why you are. Take the time to understand your story so you can shape theirs with purpose.

***Ty Salvant** is a woman guided by faith, committed to family and passionate about creating meaningful connections. She is a wife of 26 years a homeschooling mother of six and the creator of Time with Ty and publisher of Time Well Spent to help women reclaim their time, reconnect with what matters most and live with intention in every season of life.*

NOLA CATHOLIC parenting



2026 NACPA Convocation

From April 19-21, the Archdiocese of New Orleans welcomed the attendees at the NACPA (National Association of Church Personnel Administrators) Convocation to New Orleans. NACPA's mission is to promote leadership in human resources, finance and administration that models Gospel values, promoting justice in the workplace. The three-day conference offered a variety of educational workshops for attendees as well as plenary speakers and several opportunities to network and explore and experience New Orleans culture. Pictured at left is a photo from the welcome reception with Archbishop Checchio.

Around the Archdiocese

Mass Hosted by God's Special Children, May 3, 2 p.m., *St. Francis Xavier Church, 444 Metairie Road, Metairie.*

Office of Black Catholics Women's Retreat, May 9, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m., *Notre Dame Seminary Schulte Auditorium, 3901 S. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans.* Mass at 4 p.m. celebrated with Father Tony Ricard. $10 donation includes breakfast and lunch. Registration required, call (504) 861-6207.

Eucharistic Hour To Pray For Vocations, May 11, 6–7 p.m. at *Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, 1501 West Causeway Approach, Mandeville.*
For more information, contact Juliana Cloud at (504)236-7585.

RedBird Ministry for Grieving Parents, May 14, 6:30 p.m., *Our Lady of the Lake Parish cafeteria, 312 Lafitte St., Mandeville,* If you have lost a child from miscarriage, stillborn, infancy, young child or adult child please join us. Grandparents are also welcome. For more information contact Jewell Bayhi at (504)330-5975.

Joie de Vivre, Louisiana Arts & Culture Festival, May 15 (4 p.m.) and May 16 (8:30 p.m.), hosted by the St. Louis IX Art Society, *St. Joseph Abbey and Seminary College, St. Benedict, LA.* Keynote lecture, art exhibition, artist panel discussion, Liturgy of the Hours and Mass with the monks, bourbon stroll and socials. Register: www.jdvjournal.com.

Seelos Day of Prayer and May Crowning, May 15, 10:45 a.m. confession; 11 a.m. rosary and 11:30 Mass, *St. Mary's Assumption Church, 923 Josephine St., New Orleans.*

Transitional Diaconate Ordination, May 16, 10 a.m., *St. Louis Cathedral.* Hoang Pham and Seth Smith will be ordained.

Feast of the Ascension - May 17, 2026

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Lay Carmelite Community #1902, Community Meeting, May 17, noon–2:30 p.m., at *St. Francis Xavier Parish Center, 444 Metairie Road, Metairie.*
All Catholics in good standing, at least 18 years of age, interested in learning more about Lay Carmelites are invited. Call Dottie Watson, (504)339-4298 to attend.

Christ in the City, the monthly evening of Eucharistic Adoration for Young Adults in their late teens, 20s, and 30s, is set for May 19, beginning at 7 p.m. at *Notre Dame Seminary, 3901 Carrollton Ave., New Orleans.*

Pentecost Sunday - May 24, 2026

Adult Confirmation, May 24,
The celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation for adults will take place on the Solemnity of Pentecost, Sunday, May 24, 3 p.m., *St. Louis Cathedral.*For adults who were baptized and admitted to Holy Communion in the Roman Catholic Church at an early age, but not yet confirmed. All interested are asked to register through their home parish.

Priest Ordination, May 30, 10 a.m., St. Louis Cathedral. Deacons Brett Barrios, Joseph Ky Bui, William Sigl and James Vu will be ordained to the Priesthood.

Five Day St. Jude Novena of Hope, June 1 through June 5. Day novena, 12:15 p.m. and evening novena and Mass begin at 6:30 p.m. *St. Mary Magdalen Church, 6425 West Metairie Ave., Metairie.* Father Luis Duarte, pastor of St. Jerome Church will officiate.

Day of Refreshment for Women, CCRNO, Magnificat and Mary, Queen of Peace parish co-hosts, June 13, 10 a.m.–3 p.m., 1501 W. Causeway Approach, Mandeville. Cost is $35/person (before May 1st) $40 after and $25 for college students. Catered lunch. Register, ccrno.org.

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(504) 224-8733 x8733
mcahill@4lpi.com
LPi





On April 12, Archbishop James Checchio celebrated the annual Mass of Thanksgiving in honor of its jubilarians at St. Rita Church in New Orleans followed by a reception at St. Mary's Dominican High School. The Mass was concelebrated by Archbishops-emeritus Gregory Aymond and Alfred Hughes and priest honorees. Seventy jubilarians, which included priests, deacons, sisters and brothers celebrating 25, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75 and 80 years of service to the diocese were recognized. Find the complete listing of all the honorees in the April 21 edition of the Clarion and online at clarionherald.org.



On April 13, Archbishop Checchio was honored to be welcomed by the New Orleans Jewish Community at a lunch meeting with the Jewish Clergy Council and Father Buddy Noel. Special thanks go to Alan Franco, Jeffrey Goldring and Paul Fine and the Goldring Family Foundation who hosted the meeting.



On April 13, Archbishop-emeritus Gregory Aymond joined Interfaith clergy from around the area for a prayer service at St. Dominic Church in New Orleans to pray for an end to child abuse. April is Prevent Child Abuse Awareness Month.

Our newspaper wouldn't be the same **without you!**

JOIN US FOR *Rosary & Rosé*

5:30 - 7:00 pm

• Thursday, May 7, 2026



Join us as we pray the rosary and share rosé wine and light bites, with special guest, **Lorraine Hess.**

Register today at neworleansretreats.com or call (504)267-9604

THE CENACLE *on the lake*

STEP AWAY — ENCOUNTER JESUS — FIND PEACE


Photo Credit: Notre Dame Seminary

A sunny Saturday morning brought seminarians from Notre Dame Seminary and St. Joseph Seminary College (St. Ben's) together for faith, fellowship and futbol! The annual NDS vs. St. Ben's soccer match took place April 18 at Archbishop Rummel High School in Metairie with the seminarians from Notre Dame taking home a 2-0 victory.

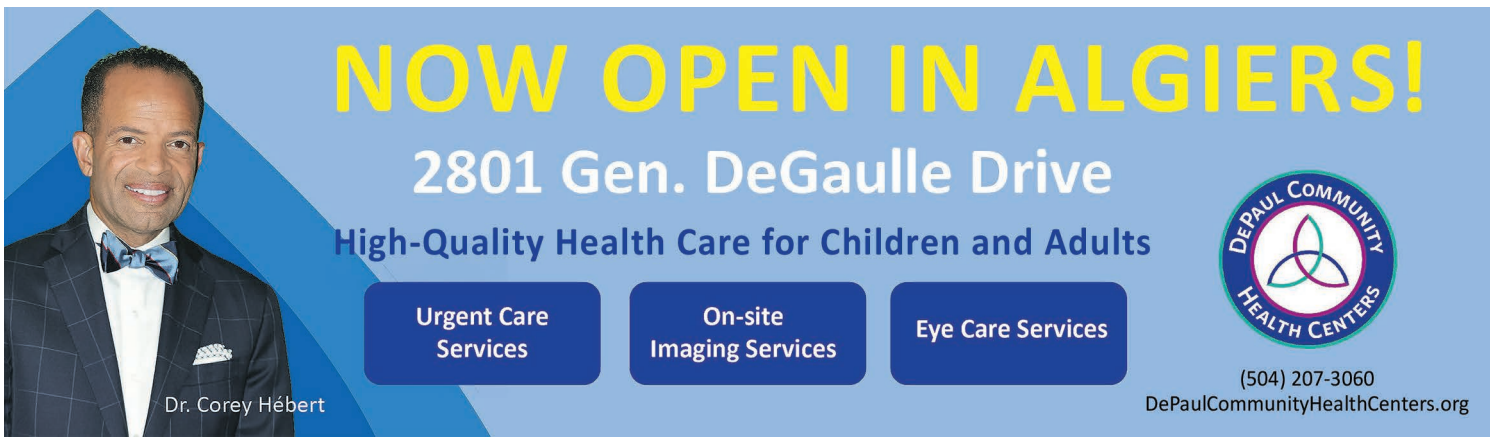

Photo Credits: French Quarter Festivals, Inc.

Another first for Archbishop Checchio as he spent time at French Quarter Fest on April 18 before celebrating the 4 p.m. Vigil Mass at Immaculate Conception on Baronne St. He is pictured with French Quarter Fest volunteer Janice Foulks and Reverend Msgr. Veceslav who was visiting the archdiocese from the Papal Nunciature.




Photo Credits: Father Kurt Young

On April 19, Archbishop Checchio celebrated Mass at St. Peter Claver Parish in New Orleans. Following the Mass, a traditional brass band played in the streets leading all gathered to the parish's annual Feast of the Tables where parishioners enjoyed time together, music, food and fun. It was a morning of community-building for the parish. Special thanks to St. Peter Claver pastor Father Ajani Gibson and all who coordinated this extraordinary event.



St. Mary's Academy Hosts Its 66th Annual Debutante Ball
"Maryites Applaud the Trailblazing Women of the Big Easy"



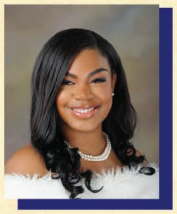
Danielle Renee' Beard
Queen



Samia Anisa Siddiq
First Maid



Tatum Michele Williams
Second Maid



Kacie Nicole Person
Third Maid



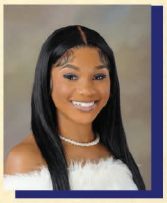
Kaiden Janee' Word
Fourth Maid



Leilani Trinity May
Fifth Maid



Destiny Ann Lang
Sixth Maid



Tamia Marie Harris
Seventh Maid



Santana Kai Trepagnier
EighthMaid



Cre'shaun Lynn Jones
Nineth Maid



Maelyn D'Nae Leonard
Tenth Maid

NEW ORLEANS, LA — St. Mary's Academy held its 66th Annual Debutante Ball on Saturday, April 18, 2026 to present the young ladies of the Class of 2026. In keeping with tradition at St. Mary's Academy, these young ladies were officially introduced to society. Reigning as the 67th queen for this year's ball was the stunning Miss Danielle Renee' Beard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Darius Beard, Sr. of New Orleans, LA. Danielle is a legacy Maryite and has served as a Student Ambassador, Pre-Alumnae, St. Mary's Academy Honor Society, MLK Chapter of the National Honor Society, Campus Ministry, Math Club, and Young Visionaries of Henriette Delille.

She also serves as Chapter President of Mu Alpha Theta, Captain of the Softball Team, Student Council Chaplain, and participates in Choir, Retreat Team, Peer Tutoring Program, and Cougar Media Production. Outside of school, Danielle has committed 15 years to dance at Art in Motion Dance Academy, where she has competed for 9 years. She is also involved in Teen Cross, is a member of St. Maria Goretti Church, and participates in W.I.S.E. Women NOLA and the Ochsner STEM Pathfinder Alumni Program.

Members of the 2026 Royal Court include First Maid Miss Samia Anisa Siddiq, daughter of Mr. Derricki Smith and Ms. MeShawn Siddiq; Second Maid Miss Tatum Michele Williams, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Matthews; Third Maid Miss Kacie Nicole Person, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Darryl Person; Fourth Maid Miss Kadien Janee' Word, daughter of Mr. Da'Shaun Word, Sr. and the late Ms. Christy Rush; Fifth Maid Miss Leilani Trinity May, daughter of Mr. Raymond May and Ms. Treschell Howard; Sixth Maid Miss Destiny Ann Lang, daughter of Mr. Edsel Lang and Mrs. Shonna McQuarter Lang, Sr.; and Seventh Maid Miss Tamia Marie Harris, daughter of Mr. Tony Harris and Mrs. Tasha Bursey; Eighth Maid Miss Santana Kai Trepagnier, daughter of Mr. Blaise Trepagnier and Ms. Mariko Barley; Nineth Maid Miss Cre'shaun Lynn Jones, daughter of Mr. Freddie Jones and Ms. Courtney Duplessis; and Tenth Maid Miss Maelyn D'Nae Leonard, Daughter of Mr. Micheal Leonard and Ms. Lakese Thomas.

Also making their debuts that evening were Misses Nave Batiste, daughter of Mr. Neville Batiste and Mrs. Niketa Batiste; Makayla Borne, daughter of Mr. Micheal Borne and Mrs. Melantha Bell; Maci Clementin, daughter of Mr. Wilbert Clementin and Ms. Keva DeJean; Keira Cloud, Mr. Denero Cloud and Ms. Angelle Green; Tai DeJean, daughter of Mr. Bruce Miles and Dr. Kimyata DeJean;Mercedes DuConge, daughter of Mr. Emmanuel DuConge and Mrs. Selket DuConge; Ehjia Ellsworth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Ellsworth; Ky'lah Farria, daughter of Mr. Ray Farria and the late Mrs. Dominique Marie Farria; Trinity Garry, daughter of Mr. Niall Cuiellette and Ms. Danielle Williams; Chloe Harris, daughter of Mr. Niall Cuiellette and Ms. Danielle Williams; Talia Joseph, daughter of Ms. Arteisha Rachelle Nicholas-Joseph; Za'Naia Journee, daughter of Ms. Naidja Lazard; Jaemonay Lundy, daughter of Craig Lundy and Kelly Lundy; Jessica Magee, daughter of Mr. Jessie Magge and Mrs. Shawan Magee; Re'Yana Mathieu, daughter of Ms. Anaya Offray; Ty'Lah Owney, daughter of Ms. Narkeshia Shields; Erin-Ray Pepp, daughter of Rayshonda Chancellor; Heaven Polk, daughter of Mr. Harry Polk and Ms. Latira Walker; Nylah Quinn, daughter of Mr. Nathan Quinn and Mrs. Domika Smith-Quinn; Chandler-Elizabeth Robinson, daughter of Mr. Kenneth Robinson Jr., and Ms. Dominique Martin Robinson; Ajayah Simmons, daughter of Mr. Thaddieus Simmons and Ms. Aja Turner; Kennedy Smith, daughter of Mr. Kenneth Smith and Ms. Nadia Williams; Meia Smith, daughter of the late Mr. Michael Smith and Ms. Kendra Butler; Rihana Smith, daughter of Mr. Reginald Smith and Ms. Latasha Daliet; Adreaira Sneed, daughter of Mr. Adam Sneed and Ms. Clara Johnson; Madison Stamps, daughter of Mr. Urick Stamps and Ms. Taishi Young; Lillian Stokes,daughter of Mr. Calvin Stokes Jr., and Ms. LaTrisha Baptiste; Jailah Sykes, daughter of Mr. Derrick Sykes and Mrs. Maurica Sykes; Diamond Venible, daughter of Mr. Durrel Venible and Mrs. LaShonda Venible; Beautiful Whitney, daughter of Mrs. Chandra Dilosa; J'Adore Wilhite, daughter of Ms. A'Dasha Vallery; and Khloe' Young, daughter of Mr. Anthony Young Sr., and Ms. Monique Richardson. The queen's royal pages for the evening were Master Darius Beard Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Darius Beard; and Little Miss Kali Michele Tameika Francois, daughter of Mr. Edward Francois, III and Ms. Tyra Rollins. The Queen's Keeper of the Jewels was Little Miss Winter Douglas, daughter of Mr. Jordan Rosemond and Ms. Whitney Douglas.

St. Mary's Academy is a private Catholic all-girls high school and co-educational elementary and middle school founded by the Sisters of the Holy Family in 1867. In a family-oriented environment, St. Mary's is committed to educating the whole person. Students are encouraged to think critically, be of service and act responsibly in a global society.

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