



Saint Joseph Refuge Shelter for Men in works by Catholic Charities

LAKE CHARLES — The Diocese of Lake Charles announces that Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana is working to open Saint Joseph Refuge Shelter for Men in Lake Charles. The property under consideration is located at 1017 Sixth Avenue.

A generous donation from Rick and Donna Guzman Richard and Empire of the Seed makes this project possible.

Catholic Charities has been committed to responding to the basic needs of the people of Southwest Louisiana since its foundation.

Sister Miriam MacLean, RSM, director of Catholic Charities, said, “Before Hurricane Laura struck in August 2020, Bishop (Glen John) Provost told me that he desired a shelter for the care of the most vulnerable. It is an essential part of the Diocese’s mission to care for those who are most vulnerable among us, and we are so humbled to be able to undertake this mission at Saint Joseph Refuge due to the generosity of local people in the spirit of the Gospel.”

The proposed development plan will rehabilitate

the existing former school building and expand the existing structures to provide for overnight lodging, meals, laundry, and other crucial services such as help accessing education, job placement, daycare, and medical treatment in order to help people better their lives. Operational plans are still being formulated for the Saint Joseph Refuge Shelter for Men.

“We believe that our Lord wants us to care for the poor in our area,” said Sister Miriam. “We want to work with the local community to give the men in our area a refuge where they know they are loved by our Lord.”

A community information and hearing session will be held at Saint Henry Catholic Church, 1021 Eighth Avenue, at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 4. Questions or comments may also be sent to saintjosephrefuge@lcdioocese.org. After hearing from the local community, Catholic Charities hopes to renovate the current property and provide a much-needed refuge in Lake Charles.

If zoning approval is given for the project, Catholic Charities will begin raising funds. There will be giving opportunities to help with the cost of renovations and contribute to an endowment fund which will ensure successful operations for decades to come.

If you wish to support Saint Joseph Refuge Shelter for Men, please contact Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana, 1225 Second Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601, or go to www.catholiccharitiesswla.com.

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[E]very poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is “the child” whom Joseph continues to protect. For this reason, Saint Joseph is invoked as protector of the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying. Consequently, the Church cannot fail to show a special love for the least of our brothers and sisters, for Jesus showed a particular concern for them and personally identified with them. From Saint Joseph, we must learn that same care and responsibility. We must learn to love the child and his mother, to love the sacraments and charity, to love the Church and the poor. — Pope Francis, Patris Corde

Catholic



Property located at 1017 Sixth Avenue (southeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Third Street) in Lake Charles is the proposed site for Saint Joseph Refuge Shelter for Men in the Diocese of Lake Charles. Operational plans are still in the works by Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana, the nonprofit agency that will oversee the shelter. (Photo credit: Morris LeBleu / Diocese of Lake Charles)

Religious Sisters of Mercy bring Holy Week tradition to Diocese

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES — Modeled after a Holy Week tradition begun in Rome in the 16th century, more than 70 people took to the streets of Lake Charles to participate in a Seven Church Walk on Good Friday.

Hosted by the Religious Sisters of Mercy, this was the first time for the pilgrimage in the Diocese of Lake Charles. Sister Mary Benedicta Maier, R.S.M., said the idea of participating in a walk locally came about as she shared her past experiences with the Sisters.

“I became very excited as it personally brought back memories of when I participated, pre-convent days, in organizing the Seven Church Walk in Washington, D.C. with a young adult group,” she said. “I was then privileged to make the Walk when I was assigned to Rome as a Sister in 2013.”

The origin of the walk is credited to St. Philip Neri, dating back to around 1553. The tradition is a way for friends and family to see churches they might not otherwise visit.

Included in the local walk were the Convent for



Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Lake Charles was one of seven sites visited during a Good Friday Pilgrimage that included meditations on the “Seven Last Words of Christ.” The nine-mile pilgrimage was modeled after a Holy Week tradition begun in Rome in the 16th century. (Photo credit: Morris LeBleu / Diocese of Lake Charles)

the Religious Sisters of Mercy, Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana (Chapel of St. Joseph), and the church parishes of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Henry, St. Margaret of Scotland, and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. At each stop, Father Ruben Buller led participants in prayer meditating on the “Seven Last Words of Christ.”

With the diocese still recovering from back-to-back hurricanes from more than seven months ago, the Good Friday pilgrimage — totaling nine miles — offered a chance for people to see progress as well as areas of the city still trying to pick up the pieces.

Melanie LeJeune and her husband Keagan were glad for the opportunity to add something to their Holy Week devotions.

“I thought that this walk would help us focus on what Good Friday is all about,” said Melanie. “I enjoyed getting outside and walking to see churches that we have never visited.”

Keagan commented on the amount of destruction still visible from the storms. “The walk served as a reminder of how hard our city was hit and how much people are struggling to get back to normal,” he said. “We are all recovering together.”

Marty Berry also liked the idea of seeing areas still in need of restoration.

“I think it was wonderful to walk with the community and trace through our city after the hurricanes and see the various stages of recovery and where help is needed,” said Berry.

Barbara Wyman, who participated in the walk with her husband Bruce, said she did not know what to expect, but the walk was a pleasant surprise all around and hopes it will be a tradition in the diocese.

“I didn’t realize it was going to be community building,” Wyman said. “It ended up being faith building. At each stop,

people became more excited to move on to the next church. I enjoyed seeing so many families participate.”

If not for Isabella Desormeaux’s younger brother Caleb, she said she might not have agreed to be a part of the Seven Church Walk.

“It really was my little brother who wanted to do this. I don’t like walking a lot, but I wanted to do it for him,” 11-year-old Bella said. “Since Christ died on the crucifix for us, I thought I should put in a little effort. It helped me put myself in Christ’s shoes since he had to walk everywhere.”

Bella was grateful for the beautiful weather God provided and was happy to see so many different chapels in the same day. “I liked being able to go at a slower pace and look through all the churches,” she said. “I was sad that the Eucharist was not exposed, but I understand why since it is Good Friday.”

As for Bella’s 8-year-old brother Caleb, he said he is glad he went on the walk. “I liked it. It was tiring but really fun,” he said. “Jesus died today. We should make a sacrifice, too.”

Sister Mary Benedicta said the Sisters were surprised at the high turnout.

“We had thought maybe 15 or so people would attend since the idea only unfolded a few weeks prior to the event,” she said. “We were pleased to see the response of the faithful. It was edifying to see people from all walks of life.”

“The pilgrimage brought hope to each of us Sisters and increased our faith,” Sister Mary Benedicta continued. “It was a beautiful way to enter into the mystery of Christ’s passion and death on Good Friday as we prepared for the Hour of Mercy.”

It is the hope of the Religious Sisters of Mercy to continue the Seven Church Walk annually in the Diocese.

Deacon H.E “Bud” Wagner dies; interred in New Bethany Cemetery

Deacon Harry “Bud” Edward Wagner Jr., 90, died on April 2, and was interred in New Bethany Cemetery, located at Saint Charles Center in Moss Bluff, following a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated Tuesday, April 6, at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Sulphur.

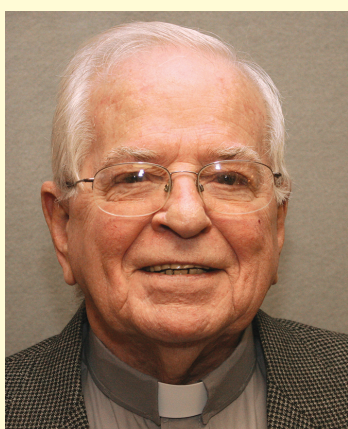
The Very Reverend Aubrey Guilbeau was the celebrant with Monsignor Vincent Sedita giving the homily. Rev. Timothy Goodly concelebrated. The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, attended in choir dress.

Deacon Wagner was born on July 8, 1930 to Harry and Marie Wagner in Haddonfield, NJ. He attended elementary

school in Haddonfield and graduated from Sulphur High School before attending the University of Southwest Louisiana and McNeese State University.

He was ordained a permanent deacon for the Diocese of Lafayette on June 24, 1977 by the Most Reverend Gerard L. Frey, Bishop of Lafayette, in Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Sulphur. Deacon Wagner served as the fiscal administrator of the Diocese of Lake Charles from its inception in 1980 until his retirement in June 1998.

Those left to cherish his memory are his caregiver, Rodney Gonzales; cousins, Connie Ellender, Rory Ellender and Jayme Ellender.



Deacon H.E. “Bud” Wagner

He is preceded in death by his loving wife, Patricia Wagner; one sister, Joan Wagner; and parents.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O LORD. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

Inaugural Mass for St. Francis de Sales Oratory

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

SULPHUR — History came full circle on Palm Sunday weekend as the inaugural Solemn High Mass was celebrated at St. Francis de Sales Oratory in the same building that once served as the first Catholic Church in Sulphur nearly 100 years ago. The apostolate — the only one in the South for the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest — is now home for the Inaugural Solemn Mass in the Diocese of Lake Charles.

The 9:30 a.m. ceremony on Saturday, March 27, began with the “Rite of the Blessing of a Church” by His Excellency, the Most

Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles. It was at the invitation of Bishop Provost that the Institute established the oratory, breathing new life into the original location for Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church. The structure recently served as the Sulphur Judicial Center.

“It is an anomaly to repurpose an old church which was once transformed into a courthouse and make it a church once again,” His Excellency remarked. “What was once the site of many a baptism, wedding, and funeral will resonate with the sounds of prayer and sacred song and the most solemn

of our rites, that of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.”

Joined by clergy, seminarians, and the faithful, Bishop Provost blessed the exterior and interior of the oratory. After the blessing, the votive Mass for St. Francis de Sales was celebrated in the traditional Latin Rite by the Very Reverend Canon Matthew Talarico, Provincial Superior of the Institute. The beauty of the Mass was enhanced by the Notre Dame Seminary Schola Cantorum.

The oratory’s opening, originally scheduled for the fall of 2020, was pushed back several months after Hurricane Laura interrupted major renovations already in progress. The church suffered extensive damage to its roof.

Canon Talarico said he was “deeply saddened” to see firsthand the hurricane destruction last September.

“Our Institute was new here to Louisiana and seeing the church damaged and how much work would need to be done, I was wondering how we could overcome such unknown challenges,” he said. “However, over these past months, I am very impressed and very edified to see the courageous resiliency and the hardworking neighborly spirit of Louisiana.”

Bishop Provost extended his expressions of gratitude to Reverend Canon Jean Marie Moreau, Rector of the Oratory. Canon Moreau has been overseeing the

renovations since early 2020.

Special guests included Princess Maria-Anna Galitzine and her husband Prince Piotr Galitzine. The princess is the granddaughter of Blessed Karl, the Emperor of Austria. Also in attendance were Sulphur Mayor Mike Danahay and his wife Daphne; and Marcus Trahan of Redmarque Construction in Sulphur. Trahan is the general contractor for the restoration project of the historic church.

The Very Rev. Rommel Tolentino and Rev. Sam Bond served as assistants to the Bishop, and Abbé Alex Barga, a clerical oblate for the Institute, was the Episcopal Master of Ceremonies.

Following the Mass, Bishop Provost blessed two palm trees and a plumeria tree that were planted on the property to mark the momentous occasion of the Oratory’s opening. “The trees serve as a sign of recovery for the church and symbolize new life,” said Canon Moreau. “Those trees will be remembered as being planted and blessed on the day of the inauguration.”

St. Francis de Sales Oratory is located at 802 South Huntington Street in Sulphur. For a complete Mass schedule, visit www.Institute-Christ-King.org/sulphur-home



The Inaugural Mass for St. Francis de Sales Oratory was celebrated on Saturday, March 27. The painting above the altar is on loan from Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Creole, one of several coastal churches destroyed by Hurricane Laura. A reredos is being designed for placement behind the oratory’s altar to include niches for several religious statues. (Photo credit: Morris LeBleu / Diocese of Lake Charles)

Holy Week in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception



On Palm Sunday, Bishop Glen John Provost blessed the palms to be given out to the faithful before the Mass in a ceremony that took place in the Cathedral courtyard.



Catholic school students were in attendance for the Chrism Mass celebrated in the Cathedral, where the oils used by the priests during the year, are blessed and consecrated. Here they have arrived by bus and prepare to enter the Cathedral.



Deacon Brian Soileau, left, Deacon Patrick LaPoint, center, and Deacon Anthony Pousson carry the oils to the altar in preparation for the consecration of the Oil of Chrism and blessing of the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens.



Deacon Michael Beverung proclaims the Gospel for the Mass on Holy Thursday, where the washing of the feet of Cathedral parishioners took place, in commemoration of the washing of the Apostles' feet by Jesus at the Last Supper. Seminarians Garrett Broussard, left, and Hunter LaRocca, right, flank the Ambo.



The Bishop breathes over the vessel of Sacred Chrism in a gesture symbolizing both the Holy Spirit coming down to consecrate this oil and the life-giving, sanctifying nature of the sacraments for which it is used.



Bishop Provost pours balsam into the container of olive oil, mixing the two by stirring them together. It is with the sacred Chrism consecrated by the Bishop that the newly baptized are anointed and those to be confirmed are signed.



Following the Mass of Holy Thursday, Bishop Provost processed with the Blessed Sacrament from the Cathedral across the street to the Ave Maria Hall where he, along with the people, took part in Adoration, which continued through the evening.



On Good Friday, the only day of the Church's year that the celebration of Mass does not take place, the Bishop and ministers enter the Cathedral silently. A large wooden cross, carried here by Deacon Beverung, is brought to the altar in the Cathedral.



During the entry of the cross, which stops three times to be incensed and for recited prayers (*Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the salvation of the world and the response, Come, let us adore*). Bishop Provost venerates the cross in an appropriate manner, followed by similar veneration by the people.



The Bishop blesses and prepares the candle that also represents the risen Christ, as a symbol of light (life) dispelling darkness (death). Here he lights the Paschal Candle, the first candle to be lit with a flame from the blessed fire.



The Easter Vigil must begin after sunset, the start of the new liturgical day, with the Service of Light and the faithful congregating silently outside the church with the Bishop and servers.



While there is no celebration of the Mass on Good Friday, the Eucharist is distributed to the faithful in the Service of the Passion of the Lord. The Eucharist is brought from its place of repose and placed on the altar. The Bishop and people pray concluding with Communion to the people.



The people will light their own candles from those lighted from the Pashcal Candle and follow the Bishop in darkness into the Cathedral for the Liturgy of the Word.



After his homily, Bishop Provost blesses the water that will be used to initiate those received into the Church and then performs the Rite of Baptism for the Elect, pronouncing the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."



Following the Baptism, the Bishop sprinkles water on the congregation. The newly baptized is also confirmed. Later in the liturgy, others being received into the Church are also confirmed.

(Photo credit: Morris LeBleu / Diocese of Lake Charles)

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

World Day of Prayer for Vocations will be observed on Sunday, April 25, also known as "Good Shepherd Sunday." The purpose of this day is to publicly fulfill the Lord's instruction to "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2). Please pray that young men and women hear and respond generously to the

Lord's call to the priesthood and religious life. Consider offering a decade of the rosary or praying before the Blessed Sacrament for vocations.

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