

Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish News

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Chapter 11 has two goals

Dear Parishioners of OLPS Church and School:

Last year, Bishop Marshall announced that after consultation with priest consultants, diocesan advisors, and after his own prayerful consideration, he was directing attorneys for the Diocese to file a petition for a Chapter 11 reorganization of its financial affairs under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

This was not an easy decision, for sure. However, Bishop recognized that there were financial claims pending against the Diocese, from the most unfortunate past abuse cases, which exceeded the Diocese's means. Several other dioceses in our nation have sought a legal reorganization in similar circumstances, such as the Archdiocese of New Orleans. It is one of the most challenging times our own local church has ever faced.

In the filing for Chapter 11 reorganization, there were two goals: to compensate, as much as possible, and fairly, those who were harmed; and to carry on the essential ministries of the Diocese. Our Diocesan Church is seeking to assist victims, while trying also to continue its mission of serving the people who rely upon the Church for sacramental ministry and assistance.

The legal reorganization will allow the Diocese to use available funds to compensate abuse survivors, with unresolved claims, in a single process overseen by a court. By serving as a "final call" for legal claims against the Diocese, the proceeding will allow the Church to move forward on more stable financial ground.

We may feel disheartened by this development. Brother clergy and I feel the very heavy weight of it. We are deeply sorry for the pain experienced by those who were abused, and we pray that the Lord's healing and peace may be with them.

While we are hearing of these matters today, it can give a sense that the cases of abuse are happening now. Important for us to remember is that most of the cases are from decades ago, up to 40 or 50 or more years ago.

Continued on page 2



Sponsors and candidates lined the front of the church during the February 15 Rite of Entrance and Welcoming ceremony at 9:00 am Mass.

Record number of people are entering the Catholic Church By Steve Gauthier

In France, more than ten thousand people were baptized in 2025—the highest number in 20 years. In London, a record number of adults are expected to be received into the Catholic Church this Easter. The Archdiocese of Detroit and the Diocese of Camden, New Jersey are also reporting their highest numbers in two decades. Saint Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M currently has more than 420 people in its OCIA program.

And here in the Diocese of Alexandria, we are setting records as well, with 131 people projected to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church this Easter.

As a reminder, OCIA stands for the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. There is also OCIC for children. It is the normal process through which the unbaptized and those baptized in other Christian traditions enter full communion with the Catholic Church. Our weekly OCIA classes begin in late August and conclude during the Easter season the following year.

At Our Lady of Prompt Succor, our OCIA class is also setting a parish record with 24 participants in various stages of coming home to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. That's an increase from 14 last year and 8 the year before.

So what's going on?

There are many people and organizations trying to understand why people all over the world are showing renewed interest in joining the Catholic Church. At OLPS, most participants in recent years have said that attending an ACTS retreat played a role in their decision to come to OCIA. While that helps explain what we're seeing locally, it doesn't fully explain the worldwide phenomenon.

Some suggest the increase is a reaction against the rotten fruit of modern culture. Others point to what many call a "Golden Age" of Catholic resources that are spreading the truth about the Church founded by Jesus. In the years ahead, much effort will be devoted to identifying the key causes and sustaining this trend. But whatever the reason, one thing is clear: people are opening their hearts, and the Holy Spirit is at work. We can rejoice in that!

Yet there is another side to the story that is less encouraging. In 2007, 24% of U.S. adults described themselves as Catholic. By 2025, that number had dropped to 20%. For every person joining the Catholic Church, 8.4 leave. Why mention this? Because we are not meant to be spectators in this story — we are meant to be participants.

St. John Henry Cardinal Newman, recently named a Doctor of the Church, once wrote: "God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have a mission." Each of us has a unique mission to help reverse this troubling trend by evangelizing our family, friends, and neighbors — the very people God has placed in our circle of influence. And it may be easier than you think.

Many of us hesitate because we feel we don't know our faith well enough to evangelize. But there is a group called St. Paul Street Evangelization (SPSE) that has been refining a simple and effective approach for more than two decades. Steve Dawson, president of SPSE, and Cy Kellett of Catholic Answers Live have written a book explaining their proven four-part method: Listen, Befriend, Proclaim, and Invite. The book is titled *How to Talk About Jesus with Anyone*.

And no, this isn't a paid advertisement. The practical, easy-to-apply approach is simply too helpful not to mention. The book is available at Catholic.com along with many other excellent resources. Pick up a copy — or bring your own method — and join the movement to help bring people home to the Catholic Church.

"God wants you to be in the world," said Mother Angelica, "but so different from the world that you will change it. Get cracking."

David and Dana Boudreaux ‘such a fine witness’ of service

By Bob Tompkins

David Boudreaux remembers when he was a “C & E” Catholic, attending Mass only at Christmas and Easter “or when I needed something or felt bad.”

This period started while he was in college and continued during an ill-advised first marriage and even into the early days of his second marriage to Dana Reynolds, a southwest Louisiana native and cradle Catholic who has been his wife since 2010. She coaxed him back into the church.

Both David and Dana work at the Central Louisiana Surgical Hospital, where they met in 2008. David is a nurse anesthetist, and Dana is a post-op nurse, and they have two children, Jack and Lily. Jack, 19, is by Dana’s first marriage.

They also joke that their home is a zoo since they have three dogs and three cats.

“After my divorce, I met Dana,” said David, “and I still resisted going to church, but I started (begrudgingly) going to church with her when she was pregnant with Lily in 2011.” The years went by, David said, and Dana was raising the kids and praying with them, “and I was watching the kids pray with her and it dawned on me: I’m not doing anything (to help).”

It was around that time (2016) that Dana suggested that David apply for a men’s ACTS retreat. He did and was accepted and made the retreat at Maryhill.

“It was the best thing I’ve ever done,” he said, noting he “jumped right back” into the Catholic faith in which he was raised. “I think Maryhill is magical. That’s when our marriage really started, in my opinion.”

A 1996 graduate of Pineville High School, David got his nursing degree from Louisiana Christian University (then Louisiana College) and his nurse anesthesia degree from Texas Wesleyan (’07). At the ACTS retreat, he met a guy who also worked at the Surgical Hospital, Travis Gardner, and they’ve become fast friends ever since.

So buoyed by his retreat, he found himself wanting to tell others about it and tell them about adoration, prayer and confession for starters.

“When he walked out of that return Mass (to conclude the retreat),” Dana recalled, “it was visible, the transformation in him. I could tell immediately (the positive impact).”

Dana made the women’s ACTS retreat the same year, and she has since directed one of the women’s retreats.

The late Msgr. Bruce Miller and former OLPS pastor Fr. Dan O’Connor helped Dana and David go through the steps to have their marriage blessed in 2016 by Father Dan.

“My family – especially my mother and grandmother -- has always been pretty strong in the (Catholic) faith,” said Dana, who said that, as a youth in heavily-Catholic southwest Louisiana, she didn’t know there was any other religion but Catholic.

David and Dana are in their second year serving as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church.

“It is such a fine witness,” said OLPS pastor Fr. Rusty Rabalais, “that as a married couple, they serve together within the liturgy.”

“Instead of just going to church, let’s give a commitment,” Dana said, explaining their initial impetus to serve in such a way.

“It helps keep me on point,” said David, such as regularly going to confession to be properly disposed to give the sacred host and wine to others at Mass. “OLPS has given us so much; we just want to give back.”

Dana taught CCD for a couple of years with Lauren Laborde and she served some time facilitating a grief and divorce recovery program through the church with Beth Ponthier.

David is tickled that he was instrumental in his parents’ making ACTS retreats.

Elsewhere in the Boudreaux family, Jack is a graduate of Menard, where he competed in soccer and track and field, and he is playing on a club soccer team in his first year at Louisiana Tech. Lily, a Menard freshman, has been dancing since age 3, and she has a generous heart.

“She can’t say no,” said Dana. “She has a servant’s heart. She volunteers at Just Dance and at bible school and at the zoo and Beta Club.”



The Boudreaux family (from left): David, Lily, Dana, Jacob

(Pastor’s Message from page 1)

In the past 20 years, the Catholic Church in the United States has made many dedicated and continuing efforts to foster safe settings for children, as best as possible in our church parishes, schools and ministries. The policies and practices of the Safe Environment program, and the Virtus Training with monthly training, have been concrete efforts the Church diligently makes. This has been a top priority in our ministries with young people.

The bankruptcy applies only to the Diocese itself (church parishes and other Catholic entities are separately incorporated under state law and should not be affected by the legal filing). Alexandria already is a “mission diocese,” meaning we have limited resources to begin with, and we ourselves depend upon some assistance from others in our nation to sustain the charitable works our diocesan church provides. Amid this reality, the reorganization will aid the diocese in focusing on its gospel mission given by the Lord.

As in each spring, the Annual Diocesan Appeal is being held at this time. To clarify any concerns, please know that contributions to the ADA are “restricted funds.” That is, these donations can only be used for the areas designated for the 2026 ADA (seminarian and faith formation, Maryhill, youth, campus & Hispanic ministries, and retired priests).

Contributions to the 2026 ADA, which are vital to the operations of our small diocese, will be deposited into a separate bank account to be kept separate and used only for the named ADA areas (not for any legal fee or lawsuit payout).

Again, we pray for healing, and may the Lord guide our local church into the future with the measure of hope that comes only from God.

Sincerely in Christ,
Fr. Rusty Rabalais



New St. Timothy flooring among improvements that continue on campus.



Decorative fencing like this completes security border around the campus.



New Flooring, fencing among improvements, changes on campus

By Janet Tompkins

Improvements are ongoing at the Prompt Succor Church and school grounds. The latest finished improvements include new flooring and a handicapped ramp for St. Timothy's Center, new altar rugs in the church, new fencing and lighting, and a Bride's Room/Spiritual Direction area in the Madonna complex.

"During the last four to five years we have conducted non-stop improvements to the church and school," said Fr. Rusty Rabalais, OLPS pastor. This paused only for the time when insurance premiums were pressing on the budget. "Our goal is to make it as beautiful as possible and as safe as it can be."

Fifteen different security upgrades have been made to the campus, which is now completely fenced so that school children are safe in a secure campus.

St. Timothy's Center is used for the church's Food Pantry for the poor and for the parish Outreach Committee lead by Myrt Rambin. Occasionally it is also an overflow room for youth activities. The badly worn and heavily soiled carpet was removed, and new vinyl plank flooring was installed in the four rooms. On the exterior the handicapped ramp was replaced and will be stained at later date.

The two altar rugs were also worn and needed replacing, so two more in a similar pattern and thickness were purchased. New mirrors were also installed in the church restrooms.

The landscaping project Phase 2 includes sealing off the playground area for Pre-K and adding bumper protection for the fencing.

"The fencing is decorative and we now have sealed off all the gaps in the school," Father Rusty said. "Once children check in at school they will be in an enclosed safe area."

The Bride's Room in the Madonna complex was formerly used for storage but now has sofa, chair, table lamps and drapery for our brides to use prior to the church wedding. It is also used as a spiritual direction room for the diocesan trained directors to meet with people.

"It is used quite regularly," Father Rusty said.

Maintenance director Billy Garrett retires after 50 years of service to OLPS

By Ashley Seeling

"Men of few words," said William Shakespeare, "are the best men."

Billy Garrett, a man of few words, gave his best for 50 years maintaining the grounds and facilities at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church and School, he recently retired, and the OLPS staff thanked him with a February luncheon also attended by his wife Sharon.

"Mr. Billy," as he has been known around the campus, can attest to the fact that "the Lord's work is never done." Between preschoolers and adult parishioners, he has been maintaining this campus for the young, the old, and everyone in between.

I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Billy when I was a teacher at Our Lady of Prompt Succor School. During those years, I remember his calm demeanor and his willingness to help any of us, no matter the predicament.

From overflowing toilets to retrieving flying tennis shoes from rooftop walkways, he was there to take care of the matter at hand. With a smile and an occasional chuckle, he would walk off to get the plunger or the ladder and his tools to ensure that teachers could teach and children could learn.

It was Mr. Billy who was behind the scenes at the school and the church allowing Catholic faith and education to happen. He was helping us build the kingdom of God one day at a time. Whether he was building cabinets, replacing ceiling tiles, or fixing a wall outlet, Billy Garrett was making miracles happen

"What I remember most about Billy," said former principal Jo Tassin, "is his willingness to help with any task at any moment and always with a positive attitude -- a kind and humble man always patient with the students."

After half a century, it may be hard for Mr. Billy to break some of his routines like being at school at 6 a.m. every day.

Asked about his retirement plans, he said, "I hope to do more fishing and maybe do some odd jobs on the side, like woodworking jobs."

Asked what he will miss most about Our Lady of Prompt Succor, he said, "The people. Everyone was there for me in my time of need. Everyone has always been real nice to me."

We thank you, Mr. Billy, for being so good to us.



Billy Garrett (second from right) was honored by the OLPS staff with a retirement luncheon after 50 years of service to OLPS Church and School. The others in photo are, from left, parish manager Julie Bayone, pastor Fr. Rusty and Billy's wife Sharon.

Deacon Young brings back weekday morning Lenten Adoration

By Betsy Lanclos

Adoration is back before 6:30 a.m. Mass this Lenten season.

Attendance at Mass has been higher than usual, with many Menard and OLPS students present. Deacon Mike Young was instrumental in bringing adoration and the added prayers for about 30 minutes before Mass.

"Adoration," Young said, "should be seen as a blessing, not a penance."

"Adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament is important," said parishioner and diaconate candidate Mike Lanclos, "because it is a time to be truly present with Jesus, who is truly present -- Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity."

"The return of this specific devotion invites us to come quietly before the living presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament," he continued. "This time gives me the ability to step away from the noise and busyness of life and simply sit with the Lord who loves me."

St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, "The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you will spend on earth."

"In Adoration," said Lanclos, "I am reminded that I am never alone -- Christ is truly here, waiting for me."

Menard sophomore Jolie Brewer, a frequent morning Mass altar server, appreciates the opportunity to go to Adoration.

"Going to Adoration before Mass," she said, "makes the morning feel quieter and more real, like I'm actually making space for God before the chaos of school starts. Everyone knows how stressful school can be, so being able to sit before Jesus and receive him at Mass eases me into the day and takes away so much of that stress. It's like I'm bringing Jesus with me to school and sharing him with everyone I see!"

**"Beginning the day
in the presence of Jesus
is absolute perfection."**

Lynn Brewer

Lynn Brewer, Jolie's mother also values the importance of adoration. "Beginning the day in the presence of Jesus is absolute perfection. I feel at peace and surrounded by overwhelming love. All day this experience is a reminder to look for the good in everyone and be a source of support and love. Watching my daughter sit with Jesus and form such a personal relationship with Him fills me with such gratitude."

The weekday Lenten devotion, with a 6 a.m. start, will continue through the Wednesday of Holy Week.



Parishioners take advantage of weekday morning Lenten Adoration.

Baker, Stutes among national Beta Club qualifiers at state convention

By Wendy Malone

Our Lady of Prompt Succor students Graham Baker and Vince Stutes qualified for nationals to highlight the OLPS Beta Club's competition at the February state convention at the Cajundome in Lafayette.

Baker is in 6th grade and Stutes is in 5th grade.

After many weeks of preparation, the OLPS Beta Club members proudly represented our school at the state convention. Students competed in a wide range of categories, including language arts, math, science, reading, engineering, music, and dance, showcasing their dedication and diverse talents.

Our 45 5th-graders were the first to compete on Monday and Tuesday, demonstrating excellence and determination. Several students qualified for the national convention this summer in Nashville, Tennessee. Stutes earned a national spot in Academic Language Arts, while our musicology, quiz bowl, and dance teams also advanced. We could not be prouder of these Bulldogs for exemplifying the BETA pillars in all they did. Later in the week, 17 OLPS 6th-graders competed at the Cajundome. Baker qualified for Nationals in science. This group collaborated well and showcased their abilities, making us proud of our BETA Big Dogs. Throughout the competition, our students embodied leadership by supporting one another and representing OLPS with confidence and respect. Their strong character was evident in their sportsmanship, integrity and positive attitudes. They demonstrated service by encouraging teammates and uplifting each other, understanding that success is shared.

Finally, their commitment to achievement was clear in the countless hours of practice and their outstanding performances.

OLPS Beta members and sponsors extend heartfelt thanks to our parish community for supporting our bake sale and BETA Bingo Night, which helped make this experience possible.



OLPS 5th graders are shown competing in Songfest at the Beta Club state convention.

OLPS Mission Statement
Our mission is to know Christ Jesus.
We are family, and this is my home