



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Let's follow pope's bidding

Dear Parishioners of OLPS Church and School:

Recently we witnessed an historic event that happens only every 10-15 years in the life of the Catholic Church. It is the papal conclave, with cardinal electors from around the world gathering in Rome, convening in the Sistine Chapel to elect a successor to a pope who has gone home to the Lord.

Pope Francis served as Pope from March 13, 2013, until the time of his earthly passing on April 21, 2025. He was the first Jesuit Pope, the first from Latin America and the first born or reared outside of Europe since the 8th Century. Pope Francis is remembered for his humility, his emphasis on the mercy of God and for his concern for the poor and less fortunate.

The papal office is not a construct of the Church but rather is an essential position of apostolic leadership established by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. St. Matthew relates in his gospel: "When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples ... 'Who do you say that I am?' " And, it was Simon Peter who replied, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God," to which Jesus said in reply: "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16: 13-18). Haven't these scriptures and promise of Our Lord stayed true? The Catholic Church founded by Christ has continued and preserved the faith and the sacraments with a visible body of ordained leadership and faithful members through the collapse of the Roman Empire, through the Dark Ages, through the skepticism of the Enlightenment period, through revolutions and the atheistic worldview of Marxist and secular governments, and through our current technological era. The Church has persevered through crises from within and persecutions from without. How could this be possible for some 2,000 years, unless the Divine Hand of God were guiding it, course correcting it at times, and ever bringing it to life with Saints in each succeeding age! Only by the grace of the Holy Spirit could the Church have persevered for so long amid so many challenges. While our Church is not perfect, as it is made up of human beings who are sinners in need of redemption, it nonetheless has a Divine founder, Christ Himself.

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Two music leaders leaving OLPS

by Janet Tompkins

With the departure of both Dr. Thomas Robichaux as choir director and organist for the traditional choir and Kelly Lombardi as leader of the contemporary choir, Father Rusty Rabalais now must plan for a continuing musical program for the parish.

"We will be working on this through the summer and probably into the fall," said Father Rusty. "We do want to continue the contemporary choir for the 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. masses and the traditional choir for the 4 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. Sunday masses."

Dr. Robichaux became choir director after the retirement of Linda Perot in 2023. He recruited new choir members and immediately manifested his skill at the Wicks pipe organ, keyboard and piano. He and his wife Carmen added their sixth child to his growing family during his time at Prompt Succor.

"I will miss the many friends we made, especially my choir members, and I pray for the success in the mission to hire a full-time music director for OLPS," said Dr. Robichaux. He has returned to his home parish of St. Rita's as music director.

"Thomas was so instrumental in resurrecting the choir and bringing in some new members, especially more men," said Sidonie McDaniel, choir member. "He brought a real sense of family into our community."

Kelly Lombardi's departure comes with a family move to Lafayette. Kelly has been the music minister for the adult contemporary choir since 2018, but she has really been singing in some way at church since she was a teenager. She sang with her parents, Mark and Sally Dubroc, and continued during college. Kelly and her husband, Joey Lombardi, were in Steubenville, Ohio for a few years but when they moved home, she was singing again even as her family grew to seven children.

"Prompt Succor was the perfect place for all these years," she said. "What I can say about Prompt Succor is the people really love praying in music here," she said. "People value that form of prayer and it's been a blessing to be able to use my gifts here."

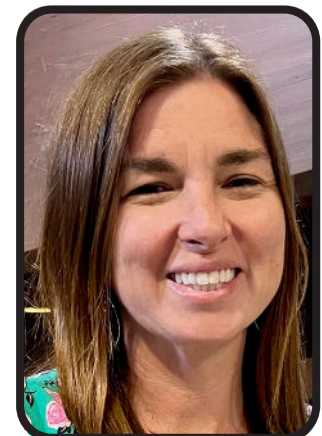
Her job was "so doable" here with the nursery available and the support of the staff and choir members, she added.

She will take a break from her work in her new home and looks forward to sitting with her family at Mass. Her children will be enrolled at St. Thomas More and St. Pius schools.

Kelly was also the music director at the school so that position is also open.

Father Rusty said that there few people who can use our pipe organ — a specialized talent.

During the summer there will be different musicians and singers filling in and sometimes there may be a Mass with no music, he said.



Music leaders Dr. Thomas Robichaux and Kelly Lombardi leaving

'Challenge to God' bears fruit for Bridget Joubert's faith journey

by Bob Tompkins

Bridget Joubert is the regent of the OLPS Catholic Daughters, but she went through a separation with the Church as a young adult before wholeheartedly embracing everything about the faith.

A 50-year-old native of Ville Platte, Bridget was raised in Alexandria from an early age by Warren and Deborah Joubert. Warren was a veterinarian, and they were members of Prompt Succor Church, where Bridget was baptized, got her first Holy Communion and was confirmed.

"I drifted away in college," she said of a time when she majored in biochemistry at LSUA and LSUS and then earned her PhD at Rice University in Houston. She has taught biochemistry at Northwestern State University since 2002.

She married a non-Catholic in a civil service ceremony in New Orleans, but during their relatively brief marriage – which was validated by Father Dan O'Connor about a month before her husband died in 2017 -- she "kept feeling a call." It was a call to return to the Catholic Church, and when she mentioned this at a family dinner, her father suggested she read Scott Hahn's book, *Rome Sweet Home*, which she did.

"It was an amazing eye-opener for me," she said.

"I sort of made a challenge to God," she said. "Lord, I don't know if this is the right way to go, but if it is, God, you're going to have to make your point.' And he did."

God's point, she said, began to "pour forth" through Catholic Answers and other resources, especially from Scott and Cindy Hahn. "He poured out the logic, truth and beauty (of Catholicism), and as a PhD, I had to be hit with the logic of it all."

After her husband Jim Marler died, she took a sabbatical and was invited seven years ago to join the Court of Notre Dame 1452. This is a local chapter of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, an organization at OLPS that focuses on spirituality and service. "And the next thing I knew, I was made the vice regent." And now she is the regent.

"Being in Catholic Daughters, I appreciate our motto of 'unity and charity'," she said. "I'd like to see us grow more in sisterhood and community, along with unity with other groups like the Knights of Columbus."

She pointed out that not every member of the local Catholic Daughters court is a member of Prompt Succor.

In her position as regent of the local Catholic Daughters chapter, Father Rusty Rabalais said, "Bridget readily seeks to foster the spiritual and intellectual development of Catholic womanhood."

She is also looking to progress from a fill-in lector to a full-time lector along with being an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist. She said she appreciates the universality of the Catholic Mass – it is the same around the world, even if said in native tongues.

"When we receive communion," she added, "we're all interconnected (globally), receiving the Body of Christ – not symbolically, but literally, along with being His body, the Church."

When not working, Bridget, the oldest of four siblings, said she and a sister who lives with her in Pineville help their mother "with doctor's appointments and such." Joining their household, too, is a 15-year-old Cornish Rex cat named Preshaus.

"I practice my faith as faithfully and intentionally as I can, and I try to keep growing in my faith," she said. "Life is a challenge."



Bridget Joubert



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Our Church has St. Peter and his successors serving in the papal office, one that has rock solid stability which Jesus Himself guarantees. Pope Leo XIV is the 267th pope of the Catholic Church. He is the Vicar of Christ on earth, Sovereign of Vatican City state, the Bishop of Rome and visible head of the worldwide Church. There are many aspects to the heritage of our Catholic faith that we might hope for a newly elected pope to highlight during his pontificate. Of course, it is essential that our Holy Father have an abiding faith in the person of Jesus Christ, giving witness to Him as the One who is the Word of the Father and the One by whom alone we may be saved. Based on the times in which we live, two other aspects come to mind: providing clarity in teaching amid the great moral and doctrinal confusion that is widespread in the West, and promoting the New Evangelization, as there is a huge population of unchurched, even though they may be baptized. This will take time; however, he has already indicated his desire to foster the basic Gospel values of unity and love. Isn't this simple Gospel message as relevant as ever? We need more unity in the U.S., where there is in such division, particularly along political lines. Also, there are wars in parts of the world, such as Eastern Europe and the Middle East, where hatred leads to endless fighting that only results in more division. Pope Leo XIV sees this, so he is initially calling for the Church to be a leaven of unity and love. Our Lord at the Last Supper prayed for our unity, and Jesus' whole life was a witness of sacrificial love.

Following our Holy Father's prompting, let's in this Jubilee Year of Hope promote these Gospel values. Our basic witness to unity and love, especially when lived with fellow members of our Church, is a transforming leaven much needed for our world today.

May God bless and be with us and with our "Papa" Leo XIV, who hails from our own country, as we journey through this Jubilee Year 2025.

Sincerely in Christ,
Fr. Rusty Rabalais

ACTS.....Past, Present and Future

By Steve Gauthier

There's no such thing as an "ACTS retreat person!"

Yes, there are people who've attended an ACTS retreat, but ACTS is not a clique. The goal at an ACTS retreat is for each retreatant to return to the community with a deeper love for God and each other and an increased desire to become part of a "Christ-filled" community. ACTS is much more than putting on retreats.

Take the Spring Family Day for instance. The ACTS apostolate sponsored the event on May 10 at Maryhill and the entire OLPS parish was invited. It's an annual springtime event intended to foster community (the 'C' in ACTS) within the parish. Forty-five families participated in the event featuring activities for kids, music, food, adoration, and an outdoor Mass.



The OLPS ACTS Community had a Spring Family Day in May at Maryhill

The Past

The first ACTS retreat was held in OLPS parish in 2008 when Fr. Dan O'Connor agreed to let Jesus the Good Shepherd parish from Monroe come down to do four mission retreats here. Since then, there have been 2,095 adults from over 200 Catholic and Protestant churches attending 57 OLPS retreats. There have also been retreats for teenagers since 2016. Past retreatants have had the opportunity to be on a retreat team for subsequent retreats.

In addition, we've conducted 23 "mission retreats" to teach other parishes how to facilitate an ACTS retreat.

One indication of the fruit produced by this ministry is the fact that our OCIA program participant numbers have broken records for people desiring to be initiated into the Catholic Church. Another is testimonies like when a retreatant told me that, in the past, he would walk into a church full of strangers, attend Mass, then leave. After his retreat he said he walks into a church full of friends! And lastly, we've noticed a dramatic benefit to marriages and families.

The Present

OLPS parish hosts one men's retreat (in the summer), one women's retreat (in the winter), and one teen retreat (in the summer) annually. We are assisting with mission retreats in Auburn, Alabama and are preparing to mission to Mary Queen of Peace in Mandeville.

There are over 600 parishes around the world with an ACTS apostolate. ACTS retreats are given by parishioners for parishioners, and in this way, serve to build Christian community at their parish. A typical retreat consists of 40 team members and 40 retreatants gathered at Maryhill from Thursday evening after the Send-Off ceremony to the 10:30 am Return Mass at OLPS and reception on Sunday morning. And you don't have to be Catholic to attend.

"The ACTS Apostolate, even some 18 years since it inception in OLPS Parish, continues to help build parish community," said Father Rusty Rabalais, pastor of OLPS. "ACTS draws upon and combines the talents of many parishioners in reaching out to others with the great treasure of our Catholic Faith. It continues to be one of our most effective means of evangelization."

In fact, most of the people who've been initiated into the Catholic Church in our parish over the last several years had previously attended and ACTS retreat.

The Future

As far as retreats go, we have reduced the number of retreats held annually from five to three due to a reduced number of registrations. For several years we might receive sometimes received over 100 applications for retreats. So, have we reached the saturation point for ACTS retreats in Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish? Have you thought about going on a retreat but haven't "pulled the trigger" for whatever reason? Would you like to make some new friends? Would you like to renew your marriage, family, and faith community? Well, the guys have a saying about that; an ACTS retreat "Dang sure ain't gonna hurt you!"

The ACTS community will continue to join with clergy, staff, and OLPS parish members to build a Christ-centered parish. We have a weekly men's group called "That Man Is You" that meets weekly for 13 weeks in the spring and fall and will start its fourth year on September 9th. We have a new weekly women's group called "She Shall Be Called Woman" starting this fall on September 2. These are ongoing opportunities to invite people to join us in learning about our Catholic faith and living it out. There's no need to wait for the next retreat! [Also, please note, the ACTS apostolate recently switched email communication providers from Flocknote to Mailchimp. If you are a previous ACTS retreat attendee but are no longer receiving communications, please email your contact information to cenacts@gmail.com. Also, if you are interested in serving on the CORE leadership team, send us an email.]

Lord's 'Stop Running' message drove Will Brittian to seminary

by Susan Harrison

Will Brittian, the Diocese of Alexandria's newest seminarian, first felt the call to the priesthood the summer of 2021 while attending Camp Covecrest.

"The Lord put it on my heart," he said, "during adoration."

He attended Avoyelles Charter School, graduating in May 2024. He played soccer and continued to feel the pull of the Lord on his heart but decided to attend University of Louisiana in Lafayette in the fall of 2024. He became involved with the Catholic Student Center on campus and attended an Encounter retreat. "I was in adoration for two hours and heard the Lord say, "Stop running."

He met with the Diocesan vocations director, Fr. Luke Lafluer, and decided to enter seminary in the spring semester of 2025.

He had more than 50 credit hours from high school dual enrollment and his semester at ULL and could have entered Notre Dame in New Orleans for a two-year pre-theology course, but he preferred to attend St. Ben's in Covington with seminarians closer to his age, including a friend.

When asked about major differences between ULL and St. Ben's, he said at ULL he slept in because his first class was at 10:30 a.m., while at St. Ben's he wakes at 5 a.m. for a holy hour, morning prayer and Mass before having breakfast and starting classes.

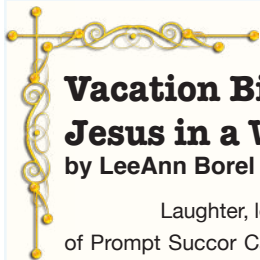
Will said if he could go back in time a year, he would have gone into seminary immediately out of high school instead of going to a state college for a year.

He hopes to increase vocational awareness this summer and stresses that "You must be open to Mary." His daily prayers include Knowing Your Vocation and three Hail Marys.

This summer he will assist at all OLPS Masses, he helped with Vacation Bible School and he plans to attend Covecrest with the Youth Group. He will attend Steubenville South along with all seminarians to assist Bishop Marshall.



Will Brittian



Vacation Bible School: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World!

by LeeAnn Borel

Laughter, learning and faith filled the campus of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church a few weeks ago. That's when 120 children in kindergarten-through-sixth grade embarked on an incredible adventure during Vacation Bible School. Our theme this year, "True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World," invited our children to discover how to navigate life's challenges with unwavering trust in Jesus as their guiding compass.

Our campers enjoyed a vibrant mix of activities that brought the lessons of faith to life. From engaging Bible stories and crafts to energetic games and catchy songs, the children found joy and meaning in every moment. Each day, they memorized inspirational Bible verses, creating a foundation of scripture in their hearts. They also explored Catholic identity through learning about the brown scapular, the Tabernacle, the Act of Hope, the Sacrament of Confirmation, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

We were especially moved by their curiosity and enthusiasm while learning about the lives of the saints. Their questions and insights reminded us of the simple, profound faith of children. The energy and excitement of the week were a testament to the Holy Spirit at work.

To the volunteers and families who made this camp possible, your dedication and love for these children helped sow seeds of faith that will last a lifetime.

We can't wait to do it all again. Mark your calendars for next summer's VBS, June 15-19, 2026. Join us as we continue to trust Jesus and share the Good News.



Some of the children at VBS pose for picture

Deacon Young takes new assignment at St. Augustine

Deacon Mike Young, a Vermont native who made Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church his home parish many years ago and who has served as a deacon at OLPS since 2022, has been given a new assignment.

He's going to St. Augustine Church in Isle Brevelle. Starting on July 1, he will be assisting Father Bill Gearheard, the pastor at St. Augustine, founded in 1829 near Melrose in Natchitoches Parish.

"Father Bill has some things that he wants to do there that I will be able to help implement," said Deacon Mike.

Father Rusty offers thanks to Deacon Mike for his "generous service" and for being "always willing to help" the parish.

"I have invited Deacon Mike to continue to be with us for the weekly Thursday school Mass," Fr. Rusty continued, "as he lives nearby, and he hopes to do so."



Father Rusty blesses new fence around school campus

by Wendy Malone

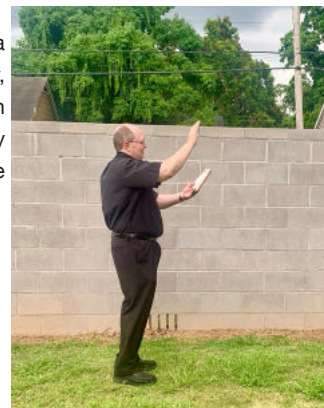
Over the past three years, our OLPS family has been working to raise funds to build a new and safer fence around our school campus. This past school year, this dream became a reality, and the structure was blessed in May.

As the school year progressed, students, teachers, staff, and families watched the wall grow and expand. As part of our overall safety plan, this 7-foot wall provides safety, privacy and peace of mind for everyone on our school campus.

Our OLPS students were thrilled about this new addition. Students would often stop at recess to watch the men and equipment working on this project. One student shared she felt like a princess in a castle. Another student said, "It feels like we are in our own little world."

Current and touring parents have said how pleased they are with this additional safety feature and the overall look of the completed fence. Along with a vigilant staff, secured doors, and key fob system, the new fence provides an extra layer of security for our children and peace of mind for parents.

On Friday, May 9, before a rainy Field Day began, Father Rusty, OLPS pastor, blessed our wall with a beautiful prayer, while Fr. Kennedy joined the prayer from the third-grade patio with our graduating 6th graders.



Blessing of the new fence surrounding school campus

Crucifix update

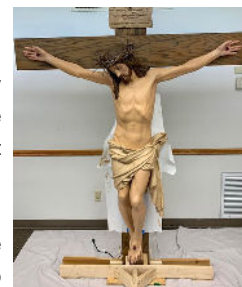
Heather Moylan, the OLPS Church parishioner who is the artist working on the restoration of the original church crucifix, is making progress on the project.

There is a new plaque with the inscription "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16)

She said she wasn't satisfied with Jesus' skin tone that was seen in Fr. Rusty's Facebook post in May and has repainted it all.

"Still working on the feet and a few other details," she texted. "The wounds will be last. And I may lighten the shroud although it probably won't be white."

As for when it might be finished and be ready for installation above the altar, she said she is on "God's timeline," but hopes to be done by the end of the summer.



Old crucifix being made new.

