



Saint Joseph Catholic Church

P. O. Box 365 117 South Main St.

Loreauville, Louisiana 70552

(337) 229-4254

FAX (337) 229-4255

Rev. Barry F. Crochet, Pastor

Rev. Godwin Nzeh CME, Associate Pastor

Deacon Christopher Doumit, Pastoral Assistant

pastor@stjosephparishonline.org

stjosephparishonline.org

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil Mass — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday — 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Monday — 6:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory

Tuesday — 5:30 p.m. at Saint Joseph

Wednesday — 6:45 a.m. at Saint Joseph

Thursday — 5:30 p.m. at Saint Joseph

Friday — 6:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory

First Saturday — 8:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

Every Saturday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. and one-half hour before all weekday Masses, or by appointment during office hours.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday — 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

If possible please conduct parish business by phone or email.

RECEPTIONIST/BOOKKEEPER/CEMETERIAN

Mrs. Gail Borel — gail.borel@stjosephparishonline.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mrs. Sherry Hebert — sherry.hebert@stjosephparishonline.org

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The Adoration Chapel has reopened. The Main Church is also accessible from this entrance for your convenience.

FUNERALS

Please contact the Church Office to make Funeral Service arrangements prior to your appointment with the Funeral Home.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please contact the Church Office to make arrangements for your child's Baptism.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Please contact the Church Office six months prior to the desired date of marriage. No dates for marriage are reserved until after the first marriage interview with clergy.

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please contact the Church Office to set up an appointment.



O God, Who in the abasement of Your Son have raised up a fallen world, fill Your faithful with holy joy, for on those You have rescued from slavery to sin You bestow eternal gladness.

Please pray for our parish family members who are sick:

We invite you to submit the names of people who are in need of our prayers.

Stuart Sandoz, Duffy Domingue, Eric Clements, David Louviere, Hayden Ransonet, Trevor Louviere, Austin Willett, Willey Poirrier, Inez Barras, Butch and Debbie White, Lydia May, Louis "CoCo" Landry Jr., Jerry Fruge, Jimmy Clifton, Rowena Borel, Megan Scully, Dawn Derouen, Falyon Sonnier, Rickey Sonnier, Caline Provost, Patricia Freyou, Lecia Broussard, Jason Walker, Michael Theriot, Roshondra Nora, Noah Abraham, Jimmy LeBlanc, Chad Borel, Ashley Hebert, Stephen Dugas, Jon-Luke Lancon, Jade Delcambre,

Pat Villermin, Ira Bourque, Hailey Thomassee, Lon Prioux, Francis Crochet, Brennan Wingfield, Lawrence Albert, Betty Suire, Joe Judice, Lisa Adcock, Nola Champagne, Kathleen Heitkamp, Lori Brasseaux, Jamie Brady, Lisa N. Dugas, Nona Bourque, Leroy Begnaud, Betty Champagne., Robin Wisdom, Keri Bonin Boutte, Leroy and Gloria Courville, Robert, Mary and Kelly Hicks, Anna Richard, Wayne LeBlanc, Melvin Broussard, Daniel Horton, III, Raymond Bergeron, Max Borres.

Please note that our office will purge the names on our sick list every quarter. We ask anyone who lists someone's name to please call the parish office to add or remove a name.



June 27, 2021

Mass Intentions — 7/3 — 7/9

Regular Sunday Offering Envelopes	\$ 4,866.00
Regular Sunday Offering Loose	\$ 3,513.00
Weekly Budget	\$ 7,385.00
Regular Collection Total	\$ 8,379.00
Difference	+\$ 994.00
Present Loan Balance	\$ 294,427.58
Donation Against Loan Balance	\$.00
Insurance Balance 2020-2021	\$ 24,322.00
Insurance Collection	\$ 483.00

The Sanctuary Lamp is burning for

Will Roberts, Claude and Nola Dugas, Bob Thibodeaux

The Vocation Chalice is in Church

Please pray for vocations. If you would like to have the vocation chalice in your home please call the rectory office at 229-4254

Flowers on the Altar

For the Community

The Bi-Monthly Statue is in the home of

Parishioners

The Weekly Statue is in the home of

Parishioners

Saint Joseph Altar Candles are burning for

Pliny Walet, Charles and Jackie Poirrier Family

Delcambre and Breaux Families

Jon-Luke Lancon, Deyna Champagne

Harold Champagne and Chad Romero

Landry and Champagne Families

Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory

Pope, Priests, Religious, Respect for Life

Protection from and end to Corona Virus

Bourque and Hebert Families

Jan Bourque, Justin Boudreaux, Katie Boutte

Mike and Liz Thibodeaux (Special Intention)

Glenn and Liz Delahoussaye

Mr. and Mrs. Collins Louviere and Kerney

Will and Lily Roberts Special Intention

Saturday 4:00 p.m. — Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ronald Albert, Aymar “Poon” and Beulah Dugas, Ide Dugas Family, Alexis Laviolette Family, Wayne LeBlanc, Lily Mae and Alvin LeBlanc, Otto Sr. and Laurence Girouard, Terradot Family, Theresa Girouard Allen, Chad Romero, Deyna Champagne, Harold Champagne, Audrey Crochet, Jordan Prince and Special Intention, Barry Eldridge and Ned Broussard Families, Melvin Dugas, Roy Sr. and Gladys Berard, Forbus and Myrtle Mestayer Sr., Granger and Mestayer Family, Ronald, Sr. and Mildred Gonsoulin, Leed and Mabel Gondron, Fred Laviolette, Louis and Grace Moran, Gloria and Sam Delcambre and Family, Virginia Frioux, Lennet and Marie Antoinette Crochet, Clenie and Eve Segura and Billie, Sally Domingue, Cabrol and Domingue Family, Martha Escagne Rodriguez, Lloyd Broussard, Claude and Felicie Granger, Nancy Broussard, Clarence and Hilda Landry, Billie and Armance Barrilleaux, Kay Dooley and William and Dolores Dooley, Earl Mestayer, Kim Decuir, Ossie Romero, Jr., Allen Borres, Dr. John Rellus Hebert, DDS., Dupoy and Lasseigne Family, Roy Thibodeaux, John and Barbara Perez, Eula Mae Champagne, Eugene Braquet, Louto Braquet, Jr., Richard Guillotte, Vance Breaux, Sr., Greg Bodin, Byrns Berard, Juliette B. Berard, Andrew Bonin, Jr., Brett and Clay Broussard, John Sonnier, Jr. and Marie and John Sonnier, Sr., Alma Jo Landry, Landry and Ryan Family, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Peltier, Sr.

Sunday 8:00 a.m. — John Michael Steiner, Jay Gonsoulin Family, Paul Sonnier Family and Clyde Warfel Family, Loto and Leah Louviere, Antoine “Boy” LeBlanc Family, Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Albert Sr., Champagne and Landry Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Maude Granger and Warren, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Granger, Dr. Raymond Schneider, Elaine Schneider, Skip Schneider, Lolly Harbin, Breaux and Delcambre Families, Lenwood Delcambre, Dugas, Borel and Chataignier Family, Joe and Rita Habetz, Mary Kay Habetz, Tom Voorhies, Oris Cormier, Jena Lasseigne, Maydell Peltier, Bernice Chataignier, Clifton and Shirley Maturin and Family, Lovell Romero, Joseph and Helen Bastian and Martin Dailey, Jan Bourque, Mark Tauzin, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Broussard, Lora Bloom, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Boudreaux, Noelle Seneca, Mike Judice, Suzette Judice, Antoine Judice Family, Emily Boudreaux.

10:00 a.m. — Alvin and Faye Tauzin, Edmonia Tauzin, Marcel and Nadage Broussard, Jimmy Eldridge, Elaine Plessala and Eldridge Family, Cheryl Segura, Pliny Walet Family, Agnes Breaux, Louis and Elbay Judice, Boots Thomas, Joe Boudreaux and Justin Boudreaux, Katie Boutte, Sandra Angelle and Glenn Angelle, Angelle Family, Ronald and Mildred Gonsoulin, Evan and Owen Allen, Jan Bourque, Louto and Anite Gondron and Family, Clayson and Lillian Dugas.

Monday 6:45 a.m. OLV — Chris Gondron, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus.

Tuesday 5:30 p.m. StJo — Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus.

Wednesday 6:45 a.m. StJo — Andrew “Toupee” Bonin, John Michael Steiner, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Roy Thibodeaux.

Thursday 5:30 p.m. StJo — Roy Thibodeaux, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus.

Friday 6:45 a.m. OLV — Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Judice and Walet Families.



MINISTERS FOR NEXT WEEK

	Readers	Eucharistic Ministers	Altar Servers
July 10 4:00 p.m.	Linda Dore	Deacon Chris	Volunteers
July 11 8:00 a.m.	Lori Barras	Deacon Chris	Volunteers
10:00 a.m.	Claire Breaux	Deacon Chris	Volunteers

**Please pray for our priests,
deacons and religious**

Eternal Father, we lift up to You these special sons and daughters. Sanctify them. Heal and guide them. Mold them into the likeness of Your Son, Jesus, the Eternal High Priest. May their lives be pleasing to You. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

July 4	Bishop Emeritus Michael Jarrell Dcn. Jim Davis/Sr. Diane Dornan, MHS
July 5	Rev. Hampton Davis Dcn. Alvin Dejean/Sr. Sophie Guidry, MHS
July 6	Rev. Msgr. Jefferson DeBlanc Dcn. Raymond Derouen/Sr. Hilda Mallet, MHS
July 7	Rev. Michael DeBlanc Dcn. Herd Guilbeau/Sr. Ira Lea Meyers, MHS
July 8	Rev. Edward Degeyter Dcn. Eugene Leboeuf/Sr. Margaret Ohlenforst, MHS
July 9	Rev. Michael Delcambre Dcn. Carlton Lee/Emily Byers
July 10	Rev. Mark Derise Dcn. Robert Leger/Alicia Pousson



**Please make
an appointment
for your home
Exorcism
and Blessing
Make it happen!
229-4254**

CALLING ALL CURSILISTAS

The day for the New-Iberia Ultreya has changed to the fourth Monday of the month. It is held at Nativity of Our Lady Parish Hall, 130 N. Richelieu Circle, New Iberia. 6:30 p.m. Rosary begins in the Church and then the meeting will move to the Parish Hall.



In observance of
**INDEPENDENCE
DAY** our offices will be closed
on Monday, July 5th



**DONATE BLOOD
SAVE
LIFE**



BLOOD DONATION CAMPAIGN

July 10, 2021 ~ 10AM - 2PM

**Loreauville Town Hall
103 S Main St, Loreauville, LA 70552**

**In Memory of Ms. Laura "Ticky" Antoine
Sponsored by: Our Lady of Lourdes**

Contact: Amanda ~337.277.3660

COVID Vaccine will be available by appointment.
Please register at: <https://forms.gle/o8ZfHss7KjsS1d1c8>

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**Attention All Parents
of School-Age Children**

The last week of registrations for our 2021-2022 religion year will be held the week of July 12, 2021 through July 15, 2021, for Kindergarten through Confirmation, including any NEW students to the program. This will be from., Monday - Thursday. From 2-6 pm. If you can not make these dates/times, please let me know so we can accommodate you. Books from last year's home schooling can be brought back when registering.

If your child is new to our program and was not baptized here, you MUST provide the child's Baptismal Certificate when registering.

There will be a mandatory *Parent Night* on August 16, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. for all parents who have students in our religion program.

Registration must end on July 15, 2021, so that textbooks and classroom accommodations can be made. We are unable to make any exceptions to this unless a family is new and just moving into the Village of Loreauville.

Please call the Parish Office at 229-4254, or email shebert@diolaf.org, with any questions. We are looking forward to assisting you in your child's Christian formation.

St. Joseph Catholic Church-653
 Stmt. of Financial Position (Bal. Sheet) for 06/2021

	06/2021	06/2020
--ASSETS--		
-CASH ACCOUNTS-		
CHECKING ACCOUNT-FIRST NATIONAL BAN	\$0.00	\$59,923.02
CHECKING ACCOUNT - RESTRICTED PPP	0.00	3,542.87
CHECKING ACCOUNT-COMMUNITY FIRST	53,326.51	0.00
CDLP-CEMETERY/MAUSOLEUM SAVINGS	284,268.65	271,330.19
CDLP-MAUSOLEUMS ENDOWMENT-PRINCII	161,063.93	161,268.21
CDLP-MAUSOLEUMS END-AVAIL INTEREST	1,600.91	1,290.27
CDLP-CEMETERY PERP CARE END-PRINCII	285,037.37	266,455.00
CDLP-CEMETERY PERP CARE END-AVAIL II	2,253.05	1,750.42
PREPAID EXPENSES	0.00	1,025.00
TOTAL CASH	\$787,550.42	\$766,584.98
-FIXED OR PLAN ASSETS-		
LAND & IMPROVEMENTS	\$91,366.95	\$91,366.95
BUILDINGS & CONTENTS	4,364,558.20	4,364,558.20
MAUSOLEUM CRYPT INVENTORY	23,022.07	23,022.07
MAUSOLEUM INVENTORY 2007	39,525.00	39,525.00
TOTAL FIXED OR PLAN ASSETS	<u>4,518,472.22</u>	<u>4,518,472.22</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$5,306,022.64</u>	<u>\$5,285,057.20</u>
--LIABILITIES & EQUITY--		
-GENERAL LIABILITIES-		
LOANS PAYABLE	\$275,553.99	\$302,335.78
LOANS PAYABLE - RESTRICTED PPP	32,237.00	32,237.00
DUE TO MAUSOLEUM TRUST	0.00	106.36
ASSESSMENT PAYABLE EOY	0.00	5,188.61
HEALTH INSURANCE WITHHELD	90.00	(40.00)
RETIREMENT WITHHELD	530.32	1,023.41
AFLAC ACCIDENT	26.52	0.00
AFLAC CANCER	80.34	55.64
AFLAC CRITICAL CARE - SPECIFIED EVENT	36.92	0.00
VISION WITHHELD	16.38	0.00
TOTAL GENERAL LIABILITIES	\$308,571.47	\$340,906.80
-MASS OFFERING FUNDS-		
MASS OFFERINGS RECEIVED	77,898.35	63,787.65
GROUP OFFERINGS TO DIOCESE/MISSION	(19,220.00)	(9,515.00)
TOTAL MASS OFFERING FUNDS	\$58,678.35	\$54,272.65
-ORGANIZATION FUNDS-		
-COLLECTIONS DUE-		
-COLLECTIONS DESIGNATED FUNDS-		
FUNDS FOR NEEDY	\$6,630.74	\$6,630.74
TOTAL COLLECTIONS DESIGNATED FUNDS	6,630.74	6,630.74
-CHURCH EQUITY-		
FUND BALANCE	\$4,883,247.01	\$4,810,715.88
INTERIM B/S ADJUSTMENTS	3,522.10	0.00
RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	45,372.97	72,531.13
TOTAL CHURCH EQUITY	<u>4,932,142.08</u>	<u>4,883,247.01</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>\$5,306,022.64</u>	<u>\$5,285,057.20</u>



As we return to our regular religion class program this Fall we are in need of teachers for grades: K, 1, & 2. Our students would greatly appreciate your help in this endeavor. Thank you for your consideration.

The DeLauro Democrats and the Bishops by George Weigel

At 1:00 p.m. EDT on June 18, it was announced that three-quarters of the U.S. bishops had voted to develop a statement on the eucharistic integrity of the Church and the eucharistic coherence of Catholics. Within an hour, a “Statement of Principles” was released by sixty Catholic members of Congress, all Democrats and led by Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut. Addressed to the bishops, the statement was respectful in tone. Shortly after its release, however, one of the signatories, Rep. Ted Lieu of California, tweeted that he was a Catholic who supported a “woman’s right to choose,” adding, “Next time I go to church, I dare you to deny me communion.” Congressman Lieu’s spluttering rather gave the game away: The purpose of the members’ “Statement of Principles” was to intimidate the bishops.

It isn’t going to work, any more than the bombast from the Catholic left before the bishops’ vote made a difference. And the abominable reporting after the bishops’ vote, which is certain to continue, won’t make a difference to the statement the bishops will consider in November. The days are past when the American hierarchy could be cowed by the political and journalistic principalities and powers and the “progressive” Catholic media.

The DeLauro “Statement of Principles” unfortunately contributed to the confusions that bedevil the public discussion of abortion. The members said that that debate “often fails to reflect and encompass the depth and complexity of these issues.” There’s a truth lurking within the complexity dodge here: Every unwanted pregnancy is unique and emotionally wrenching. But some things are *not* complex: a scientific fact, a basic moral principle, and a truly humane response to “these issues.” The scientific fact, which can be learned from a high school biology textbook, is that the product

of human conception is a human being. The moral principle is that, in a just society, innocent human life is protected in law. And a truly humane response to unwanted pregnancy would offer a woman compassionate care and assistance, not a “technological” fix that often leaves lifelong emotional scars.

The members who signed the DeLauro statement profess their belief in “the primacy of conscience” — another confusion avoiding the real issue. For a rightly-formed conscience recognizes the basic moral principle that innocent life is not to be willfully taken. If the members don’t understand that, then they are poorly catechized or indifferent to an elementary principle of justice. Why does the party of “social justice” and “equity” not recognize this?

Part of the answer reflects the fact that Big Abortion — Planned Parenthood and its allies — is a major funder of the Democratic party. Then there is the surreal claim that the “right” to terminate an unborn life — a “right” that’s been a great boon to predatory, irresponsible, and callous men — is essential to the equality of women. Yet another part of the answer involves the shameful congressional career of the late Father Robert Drinan, SJ (D-MA), whose consistent votes to support the abortion license decreed in *Roe v. Wade* provided cover for fellow Catholic legislators to conform themselves to the spirit of the age rather than the Truths of the Gospel. Decades of ineffective religious education and timid preaching are also involved.

And then there’s the lay responsibility for all this: How many Catholic laity have urged fellow Catholic members of Congress to stop surrendering to the mantra of “choice,” which always avoids the crucial question — choose *what*? The issue here, after all, is not something on which reasonable people can conscientiously differ, like tax policy, environmental policy, or immigration policy. It’s the sanctity of life

Catholic Charities Of Acadiana - Mobile Diner Program is coming to Our Lady Of Victory Food Pantry!

On July 8th, 12:00 p.m. noon, Catholic Charities of Acadiana’s new Mobile Diner Program will be giving out freshly made pre-packaged meals! These meals have been flash frozen and are microwavable. For more info please contact: Ms. Cindy Louis (337) 962-6704



and its protection in law. Lay leadership in confronting wayward politicians is every bit as important as episcopal spine.

The Second Vatican Council taught that various Christian communities are in different degrees of communion with the Catholic Church. The same truth would seem to apply analogously within the Church. Catholics who reject the ancient Christian teaching on the grave moral evil of abortion and facilitate its practice — a teaching affirmed and a practice condemned by every pope in Rep. DeLauro’s lifetime, including Pope Francis — are not in full communion with the Church. They are always welcome at Mass. But their own integrity demands that they refrain from receiving Holy Communion until they are no longer in a gravely defective state of communion with the Church.

And that is the sad condition of the signatories of the DeLauro “Statement of Principles” who were in Congress last year. For each of them “earned” a 100 percent 2020 NARAL-Pro Choice America voting record in the House of Representatives.

Each of them. 100 percent.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of Washington, D.C.’s Ethics and Public Policy Center, where he holds the William E. Simon Chair in Catholic Studies.



“Nature’s God” and the Threat to the West by Jack Gist

Western culture has been under attack since its inception. From the 300 Spartans at the Hot Gates, to Lenin, Marx, and the Cold War, this is nothing new. There are dark forces roaming the world that would usurp the sacred role of transcendence at the heart of the Western tradition.

Catholicism, a defining institution of Western culture, suffers the same threat. The faithful are required to protect and promote the fount of baptismal water that opens the way to salvation. It is our sacred duty. To carry out that duty, it is necessary to know what we are up against.

Many of the Church’s current troubles are self-inflicted. Take Vatican II’s *Gaudium Et Spes* as one example. The Pastoral Constitution opens with, “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” This is a poetic way to begin. It is also problematic. As Bishop Barron put it, “Who positions whom here? In a word, is ‘the world’ setting the agenda for the Church, or vice versa?”

Good question. A major complaint concerning *Gaudium Et Spes* is its length (the longest document in the history of the Church’s ecumenical councils) and verbosity (which provoked Joseph Ratzinger’s robust critique just after publication). In short, the text is seen by many as ambiguous. It has attracted both zealous supporters and equally fervent detractors.

America is also under attack.

Many of its troubles are self-inflicted. For example, similar ambiguity is found in the opening to **The Declaration of Independence**:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Though the document is brief when compared to *Gaudium Et Spes*, the opening sentence is just as problematic. Many misconceive that the Founders held a Judeo-Christian version of God in mind when positing “Nature’s God.” However, the “Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” are more closely associated with Enlightenment notions of a social contract. In this view, “Nature” serves as a neutral ground outside the influence of human culture. Never has a human witnessed such a “Nature.” It is purely abstract, a construct of the mind. In order for humans to witness nature and communicate it to others, they must *first* participate in its concrete reality. In this view, a social contract would necessarily emerge from nature, not invent it through abstraction.

D.C. Schindler, in his study **The Politics of the Real**, puts it this way:

The “state of nature” that lies at the foundation of the social contract refers to nature precisely in the abstract, univocal sense: it is nature understood

in a formal and generic way as that which lies outside any particular culture, a nature that tends to be interpreted as the preservation of its own existence, rather than to goodness . . .

This, at best, is deism. Deists, like Catholics, believe that God created the universe. From here they part ways. Deists, of which Thomas Jefferson was a type, claim that there is no revelation of divine purpose to mankind through the prophets. In their view, Jesus is something other than divine (a modern twist on the Arian heresy). Human reason, for deists, usurps divine revelation, and miracles become impossible. This is not Catholic.

Schindler further observes, “The only God that is finally permitted within this horizon is one that can conform to private judgment.” Nature’s God, no matter what the Founders ultimately had in mind, due to its ambiguity, strips God of sovereignty. He becomes relative to the individual and can mean anything to anybody. In this nightmarish scenario, man creates God rather than the other way around: the marriage of hubris and nihilism.

Returning to the question raised at the beginning of *Gaudium Et Spes*, “Is ‘the world’ setting the agenda for the Church, or vice versa?” Combined with the ambiguity in the **Declaration of Independence**, the question then becomes, “In America, is the individual setting the agenda for the Church, or vice versa?”

Enter Orestes Brownson, a Catholic American who bore witness to the Civil War. For Brownson, the social contract theories were idealistic rather than realistic in that they assumed a “State

of Nature” as a state of perfect liberty free of all cultural norms. For Rousseau this meant that so long as an individual could provide all their own needs, there was a state of innocence, almost a kind of Eden. For Locke, this perfect liberty was pre-political but not pre-moral, where the “State of Nature” becomes a state of liberty where persons are free to pursue their own interests.

Brownson called these utopian visions into question by granting primacy to natural law:

That there is, or ever was, a state of nature such as the theory assumes, may be questioned. Certainly nothing proves that it is, or ever was, a real state. That there is a law of nature is undeniable. All authorities in philosophy, morals, politics, and jurisprudence assert it; the state assumes it as its own immediate basis, and the codes of all nations are founded on it; universal jurisprudence, the jus gentium of the Romans, embodies it, and the courts recognize and administer it. It is the reason and conscience of civil society, and every state acknowledges its authority. But the law of nature is as much in force in civil society as out of it. Civil law does not abrogate or supersede natural law, but presupposes it, and supports itself on it as its own ground and reason.

Though Locke acknowledges a law of nature, it is not the natural law of Aquinas. For Locke, civil society somehow supersedes the law of nature through a social contract that appears out of nowhere. Brownson grasped that civil society, to function, must remain rooted in the realism of natural law.

Brownson goes on to note that the radical individualist ideology of the South had been defeated in the

Civil War and the progressive ideology of the Union abolitionists mistakenly took the defeat as their own victory. In Brownson’s view, the war was between two forms of abstract ideals, that of the individualist and the progressive. In **The American Republic**, he put it plain:

The great body of the [American] people instinctively felt that pure socialism was as incompatible with American democracy as pure individualism.

As a Catholic, Brownson had faith in God; it was this faith that made him a realist rather than an idealist concerning American democracy. Natural law is realistic and has been demonstrated as such by civil societies for centuries. Enlightenment “Laws of Nature” are idealistic, purely human constructs. America, for Brownson, is based on democratic realism, not the idealism of radical progressives or rabid individualists. Idealism tends toward ambiguity.

Reductionist movements like Marxism, Maoism, and Critical Race Theory have run rampant through the twentieth century and into our own. Beware. They all aim for ideals forever out of reach, ill-conceived utopias that banish the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Rome fell due primarily to tribalism in the empire along with moral decay. Let this not be the case for America. The solution is obvious but difficult to achieve. The Judeo-Christian tradition, which merges Jewish, Greek, and Roman cultures and nurtures them into fruition, must prevail against the idealism of progressives and individualists who would be gods themselves by

creating heaven on earth. America is not a utopia and never will be. Its mission is to *strive* toward a more perfect union. When the *striving* ends, so does the American experiment.

As for Catholicism? It, too, is obvious. The Church sets the agenda for “the world,” not vice versa. Scripture and Tradition trump utopian delusions each and every time. Heresies come and go. The Church abides.

Grounded in Scripture and centuries of Tradition, Catholicism is real. God the Father is real. Jesus Christ is real. The Holy Spirit is real. The Eucharist is the Real Presence of Christ. There is nothing ambiguous about these claims. They are the Rock upon which the Church abides.

Just as Catholics look to Scripture and Tradition to connect to reality, Americans must employ the entire tradition of the West as their compass. When they do, they will discover that the Judeo-Christian God is true north.

Jack Gist is a professional writer who has published essays, poetry, and fiction in journals such as *Catholic World Report*, *Galway Review*, *First Things*, *The Imaginative Conservative*, *New Oxford Review*, *Academic Questions*, *St. Austin Review*, and in other national and international venues. He can be reached at:

creativechristiancommunications.com.



Teche Cafe

Serving Breakfast & Lunch

Tuesday-Friday
5:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday
7:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.

Thursday, Friday
& Saturday Evenings
5:00-9:00 p.m.

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Louisiana

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