



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 CMF, Associate Pastor

Deacon Roland Jeanlouis, Pastoral Associate

pastor@stjosephparishonline.org

stjosephparishonline.org



For the sake
of His
sorrowful
Passion
have mercy
on us
and on the
whole world

Please pray for our parish family members who are sick:

Stuart Sandoz, Duffy Domingue, Eric Clements, Trevor Louviere, Austin Willett, Willey Poirrier, Butch White, Patricia Freyou, Lecia Broussard, Ashley Hebert, Stephen Dugas, Jade Delcambre, Pat Villermin, Brennan Wingfield, Betty Suire, Joe Judice, Mike Habetz, Nona Bourque, Leroy Begnaud, Betty Champagne, Leroy and Gloria Courville,

Wayne LeBlanc, Melvin Broussard, June Granger, Max Borres, Vivian LeBlanc, Beckie LeBaron, Patricia Sorrell, David Dupuy, Ava Rose and Olivia James Dworaczyk, Ray Broussard, Shyla Romero, Bart Doucet, Ellenor Hebert, Jory L. Bernard, Annette Dugas, Kayla Barras Veronie, Jamie Ransonet, Robert LeBlanc, Sr., Randy Dugas, Rudy Delcambre,

Ted Habetz, Clarence Theriot, Junelle Jefferies, Robin Neuville, Fred Thibodeaux, Lucy Bernard, Leif Melancon, Charlie Berard, Brad and James Clifton, Holly LeBlanc, Judy Theriot, Carl LeBlanc, Sophie Bonin Reese, Robin Wisdom, Mike Shield, Bernard Hebert, Jillian Faye Boudreaux, Kaylee Landry.

| March 31, 2024 | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Regular Sunday Offering Envelopes | \$ 7,841.00 |
| Regular Sunday Offering Loose | \$ 4,303.00 |
| Regular Collection Total | \$ 12,144.00 |
| Weekly Budget | \$ 7,385.00 |
| Difference | +\$4,759.00 |
| Present Loan Balance | \$ 133,508.61 |
| Donation Against Loan Balance | \$ 305.00 |
| Insurance Balance 2023-2024 | \$ 32,743.00 |
| Insurance Collection | \$ 745.00 |
| Holy Thursday | \$ 1,276.00 |
| Good Friday | \$ 2,097.00 |
| Lenten Folder — Water Project | \$ 1,972.00 |

The Sanctuary Lamp is burning for
For the Community

Flowers on the Altar are in loving memory of
Ossie Romero, Jr., Daisy and Perlice Armentor

The Vocation Chalice is in The Adoration Chapel

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

Saint Joseph Altar Candles are burning for: Champagne, Chad Romero, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Steve and Donna Berard Special Intention, Domingue Family, Lynn and Theresa Delcambre Ancestors and Descendants, Leed and Mable Gondron, Carl Wayne Judice, C. L. Romero, Ravine “Choo Choo” Guidry.

Mass Intentions

Saturday 4:00 p.m. and 10:30 a.m. StJo — Robert Judice, Sr., Judice and Laviolette Families, Dr. James Russell Romero, Gaylord Theriot, Dupoy and Lasseigne Families, Steve and Donna Berard, Special Intention, Elton “Red” Boutte, Boo Castille, Malcolm and Verna Boudreaux Family, Russell “Heavy” Derise, Herman and Pliny Walet, Dr. John Rellus Hebert, Perry J. Judice, Loraine Breaux Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Clyde Hebert, Lucille Landry Hebert, Audie Delahoussaye, Ancestors and Descendants, Robert Lee Prados, Lucille Breaux Prados, Nola Champagne, Ancestors and Descendants, Elvige Prados, Mathilda Prados, Becky Doucet, Ancestors and Descendants, Howard Richard, Irene Richard, Rachel Ransonet Romero, Jimmy Clifton, Brad and James Clifton (Rec.), John Howard Valls, John Valls, Sr., Elaine Hernandez Valls, Ronald Albert, Antoine “Boy” LeBlanc Family, Johnny and Rose Albert, Sidney Breaux Family, Craig Breaux, Pauline Guidry, John Vedia and Barbara Ann Ozenne Perez, Joe Escagne, Leed and Mable Gondron, Carl Wayne Judice, Rickie Oubre, Huey Olivier Family Ancestors and Descendants, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants, Ronald Albert, Ossie Romero, Jr., Daisy and Perlice Armentor, Billy Degeyter, Chester “Butch” Gonsoulin and Parents, Mutchie Ransonet, Sady and Daisy Ransonet, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Nola Champagne, Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Landry and Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Chad Romero, Deyna Champagne, Harold Champagne, Audrey Crochet, Paul Crochet Family, Jordan Prince and Special Intention, Vance Breaux Sr., Sally Domingue, Cabrol and Domingue Family, Sam and Glo Delcambre, Martha Escagne Rodriguez, Albert Rodriguez, Melvin Dugas, Roy Sr. and Gladys Berard, Lloyd and Anne Broussard, Simon and Felicie Granger, Forbus and Myrtle Mestayer, Kay Dooley and William and Dolores Dooley, Kim Decuir, Carl Wayne Judice, Leed and Mabel Gondron, Forgotten Souls in Purgatory, Rickie Oubre, Loto Louviere, Jr., Pliny and Carolyn Walet, J. O. Neuville, Sr. Family, Arceneaux and Mestayer Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Gam and Velma Gondron Family, Anite and Alton Gondron, Pamela Bonin, David Thibodeaux, Allen Gondron, Shirley Hernandez, Laurent Gondron, Shelton

Joseph Freyou, Ella Desormeaux Freyou, Beau Martin, Arceneaux and Mestayer Families, Ancestors and Descendants, C. L. Romero, Harriette Boudreaux, Mark Tauzin, Edmond Ray and JoAnne Broussard, Jeanne and Albert Broussard Family, Mayor Al, Lora Bloom, Noelie Seneca, Rowena Borel, Lovell Romero, Henry and Renella and Josh Pelafigue, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, John Michael Steiner, Jay Gonsoulin Family, Paul Sonnier Family and Clyde Warfel Family, Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry, Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Joe and Rita Habetz, Mary Kay Habetz, Tom Voothies, Tommy Breaux, Jennings Fournet, Mr. and Mrs. John Prados, Maude Granger and Benny and Glo Granger, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Granger, Tim Edler, Richard and Edler families, Doris Roslie Lejeune Family, John Lacour Family, Special Intention, Larry Crochet, Matthew Thibeaux, Edmond Lancon Family, Louis Thibeaux Family, Keri Bonin Boutte, Bonin and Boutte Family, Clyde Dressel, Judy Judice, Beauregard Judice, Gondron and Deville Family Ancestors and Descendants, Holy Souls in Purgatory, Wayne Guillory and Mathilde Romero, Horace and Sylvia Thibodeaux, Sandra Angelle and Glenn Angelle, Solari Family, Wade & Lou Dupre, Gus Dupre, Barbara Sonnier, Steve Michel, Aline Smith, Derrick Taylor, Nellie Hebert Arceneaux, Sara Escamilla, Trenace Songe, Myra Starr, Brian Robichaux, Jane Watkins, Claire Landry, Lee Villarrubia, Milton Martinez, Bishop Warren Boudreaux, Bishop Joseph Latino, Msgr. John Newfield, Msgr. Francis Amedee, Msgr. Andrew Frey, Rev. Albert Richardson, Msgr. Richard Soseman, Fr. Varin Slacke OFM, Deacon Mel Marts, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Clotilde Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet, Francis Crochet.

Sunday 7:00 a.m. StJo — *Pro Populo* Saint Joseph & Our Lady of Victory

Monday 6:45 a.m. OLV — Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Huey Olivier Family Ancestors and Descendants, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants, Jason Suarez Family, Cameron Barrilleaux Family, Destani Armstong Family.

Tuesday 5:30 p.m. StJo — Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Steve and Donna Berard, Special Intention, Huey Olivier Family Ancestors and Descendants, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants, Jason Suarez Family, Cameron Barrilleaux Family, Destani Armstong Family.

Wednesday 6:45 a.m. StJo — Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Clarence and Nola Champagne, Families Ancestors and Descendants, Huey Olivier Family, Ancestors and Descendants, Roy and Michael Thibodeaux, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants, John Michael Steiner, Andrew “Toupee” Bonin, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Bonin, Sr., Joseph and Helen Bastian.

Thursday 5:30 p.m. StJo — Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Huey Olivier Family Ancestors and Descendants, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants.

Friday 6:45 a.m. StJo — Lloyd and Maudrey Landry, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants, Mark and Penny Landry Ancestors and Descendants, Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priests, Religious, Clarence and Nola Champagne Families, Ancestors and Descendants, Judice and Walet Families, Orford Breaux Family, Lenwood Delcambre Family, Lynn and Theresa Delcambre, Ancestors and Descendants, Huey Olivier Family Ancestors and Descendants, Michael and Christine Arceneaux, Ancestors and Descendants.

Please pray for our Priests, Seminarians and Deacons

Eternal Father, we lift up to You these special men. 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.

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|----------|---|
| April 7 | Rev. Msgr. Russell Harrington/Haden Coleman Dcn. Durwood Viator |
| April 8 | Rev. David Hebert/Carter Domingue Dcn. William Vincent |
| April 9 | Rev. Matthew Hebert/Rev. Mr. John Dugas Dcn. Douglas Wimberley |
| April 10 | Rev. T.J. Hebert/Seth Dupre Dcn. Byrne Winn |
| April 11 | Rev. Gregory Heslip, LC/John Michael Fruge, Jr. Dcn. Jerry Wyble |
| April 12 | Rev. Matthew Higginbotham/Brother John Paul Fruge Dcn. Michael Yenik |
| April 13 | Rev. Brian Hoelzen, LC/Brother Francis Xavier Gyles Dcn. Thomas Adams, Sr. |

MINISTERS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

| | Readers | Eucharistic Ministers | Altar Servers |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| April 13 4:00 p.m. | Earl Price | Margaret Bonin | Volunteers |
| April 14 7:00 a.m. | Sam Schexnayder | Jackie Schexnayder | Volunteers |
| 10:30 a.m. | Mike Lawson | Raymond Bergeron | Volunteers |

I shall sing forever the Lord's mercy (Psalm 89 [88])

Today is the Sunday of Divine Mercy, the Octave Day of Easter.

From Creation, God has revealed His nature as Love itself, in Sacred Scripture and most perfectly in the Life, Passion, Death and Resurrection of His Son, Jesus. In his second encyclical, *Dives In Misericordia* (Rich in Mercy), Pope Saint John Paul II offers an extended meditation on the Mystery of God's Mercy, which he calls "the greatest of the attributes and perfections of God" (*Dives in misericordia*, 13). He returned to this theme throughout his pontificate:

As a gift to humanity, which sometimes seems bewildered and overwhelmed by the power of evil, selfishness, and fear, the Risen Lord offers His love that pardons, reconciles, and reopens hearts to Love. It is a love that converts hearts and gives peace. How much the world needs to understand and accept Divine Mercy!

Lord, Who reveals the Father's Love by Your Death and Resurrection, we believe in You and confidently repeat to You today: *Jesus, I trust in You, have mercy upon us and upon the whole world.*

Pope Saint John Paul II
Regina Caeli message
Divine Mercy Sunday
April 3, 2005

The Divine Mercy Sunday origin is from a revelation to Saint Faustina, a Sister of Mercy in Poland who initiated the Divine Mercy devotion. Between 1930 and 1938 the Lord Jesus requested numerous times a Feast of Divine Mercy. On May 5, 2000, five days after the canonization of Saint Faustina, the Vatican decreed that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as Divine Mercy Sunday.

Prayer of the Nine Month Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe

To be prayed daily throughout the nine-month novena from March 12 to December 12, 2024.

O Virgin Mother of God, we fly to Your protection and beg Your intercession against the darkness and sin which ever more envelope the world and menace the Church. Your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, gave You to us as our Mother as He died on the Cross for our salvation. So too, in 1531, when darkness and sin beset us, He sent You, as Our Lady of Guadalupe, on Tepeyac to lead us to Him Who alone is our Light and our Salvation.

Through Your apparitions on Tepeyac and Your abiding presence with us on the miraculous mantle of Your messenger, Saint Juan Diego, millions of souls converted to faith in Your Divine Son. Through this novena and our consecration to You, we humbly implore Your intercession for our daily conversion of life to Him and the conversion of millions more who do not yet believe in Him. In our homes and in our nation, lead us to Him Who alone wins the victory over sin and darkness in us and in the world.

Unite our hearts to Your Immaculate Heart so that they may find their true and lasting home in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Ever guide us along the pilgrimage of life to our Eternal Home with Him. So may our hearts, one with Yours, always trust in God's Promise of Salvation, in His never-failing mercy toward all who turn to Him with a humble and contrite heart. Through this novena and our consecration to You, O Virgin of Guadalupe, lead all souls in America and throughout the world to Your Divine Son in Whose Name we pray. Amen.

— Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke



Knights of Columbus Men's Softball

Meeting on Monday, April 15
6:30 p.m. in Saint Theresa Hall

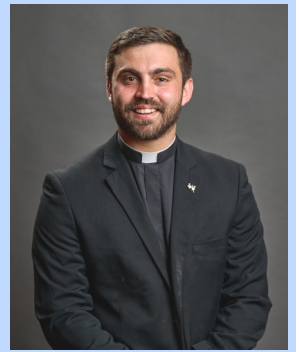
If you are interested in joining the team, please call Dana @ 337-201-1232

Must be 18 years or older

Deacon John Dugas

**Priesthood Ordination
Saturday, 8 June 2024
10:00 a.m.**

**St. Mary Magdalen Church
Abbeville, Louisiana**

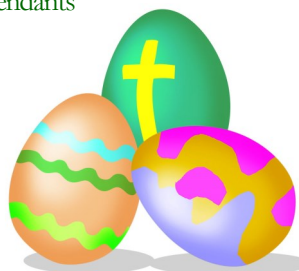


Glenn and Sandy Angelle, Aunt Lone Angelle, Pee Wee Broussard,
Russell "Heavy" Derise, Gerard "B-Boy" Gondron, Choo Choo Revigne Guidry

Allen Rosen, Mr. and Mrs. Merlin Walet, Butsy,
Dr. Harold and Kathleen Heitkamp

In Honor of Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants

Herman, Theresa, Rita, Lillian, Pliny and Delia Walet
Catherine, Mike and Anthony Catanzaro
Nancy Percle, Chris Percle, and Karen Percle
Ed Broussard, Sam and Glo Delcambre, Mich Bienvenue
Eric Suire, Chalie Latiolais, Roland Champeaux
Louto and Anite Gondron Family
Lisa, Jamie and Frankie Landry
Alton and Deanna Gondron, Troy LeBlanc
Clark, Mary Ann and David Provost
Albert, Lydia and Bob Thibodeaux
Whitney, Goldie and Mollie Viator



Mr. and Mrs. Howard Walet, Herman, Pliny, Caro and Carolyn Walet
Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Walet, Rita, Teresa and Lillian Walet
Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Spiess, David, Mary Ann and Clark Provost
Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Savoy and Daughters
Mr. and Mrs. Clet Dugas and Daughters

Lionel and Leta Duplechain Families Friends and Neighbors

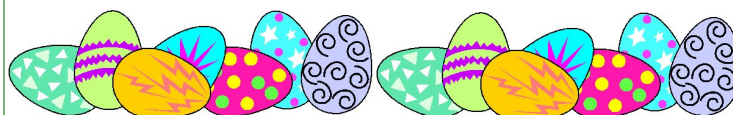
Louise Mestayer and Sisters
Johnny Albert, Sr. Family
Robin Bonin Family
Ozenne Chataignier Family
Nick LeBlanc, Jr. Family
Nick LeBlanc, Sr. Family
John V. Perez Family
Deceased Foreman Family
Deceased Menard Family

In Honor of the Crochet and Prince Families

In Honor of the Leger Family
In Honor of Howard Percle, Sr.
Breaux and Delcambre Families

Mr. and Mrs. Orford Breaux
Mr. and Mrs. Lenwood Delcambre
Mr. and Mrs. Sherman Deville
Mr. and Mrs. Clayson Dugas
Mr. and Mrs. Leander Gondran, Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. Antoine Judice
Mr. and Mrs. Jean Laviolette
Mr. and Mrs. Bud Pearce
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Thibeaux



Evan and Owen Allen
Bert and Stella Amedee
Earl and Mary Lou Barras
Marvis and Elsie Barras
Cal and Margie Berard
Willie and Louise Bonin
Melvin and Rae Borres
Wilson and Emily Boudreaux
Margaret and Sidney Breaux
Albert and Jean Broussard
Camille and Catherine Broussard
Ray and JoAnn Broussard
Clarence and Nola Champagne
Billy and Jeanne Clifton
Ernest, Sr. and Ena Cook
Louis and Edith Crochet
William and Delores Dooley

Claude and Nola Dugas
Lorena and Francis Dupoy
Lavinia and Eddie Edler
Barbara and T.J. Eldridge
Kathy and Darrel Eldridge
Eddie and Evelyn Gary
Gam and Velma Gondron
Ronald and Mildred Gonsoulin
James and Anthony Hebert
Wilfred and Bertha Hulin
Anna Mae and Ronald Judice
Been and Mag Judice
Elbay and Louis Judice
Roland and Hilda Judice
Walter and Doris M. Judice
Lloyd and Maudrey Landry
Theresa and Pat Latiolais

Ben, Sr. and Valerie Lissard
Leah and Loto Louviere, Sr.
Mary Katheryn V. McGee
Sam and Grace Napoli
Marie and J. O. Neuville
Mary and Clark Provost
Sis and Maurice Provost
Jennie and Julius Ransonet
Hazel and James Richard
Lily and Hubert Richard
Noelie and Warren Solar
Buddy and Paul Stephens
Jim and Walter Voorhies
Carolyn and Pliny Walet
Howard and Lawrence Walet

Special Intention

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Lori Albert | Wolla Mae Broussard | Ozita Pierre Egby | Jon Luke Lancon | Berle Pullin |
| Marc Barras | Deb Burke | Jesse Foreman | Mae Provost Lassalle | Lucy Quinlan |
| Wayne Bienvenu | Deyna Champagne | Marion Forstall | Roland Leborde | William J. Quinlan |
| Elodie Bodin | Eric Champagne | Virginia Frioux | Isodor "T-Boy" Leger | Kirby Rebert |
| Andrew "Toupee" Bonin | Harold Champagne | Gerard "B-boy" Gondron | Loto Louviere, Jr. | C. L. Romero |
| Beryl Bonin | Jimmy Clifton | Leander Gondran, Jr. | Doris Luke | Chad Romero |
| Allen David Borres | Janice Cole | Pauline B. Guidry | Claire Bonin Myers | Mathilde Romero |
| Chuck Michael Borres | Julia Cole | Richard Guillotte | Bea Napoli | John Steiner |
| Bonnie Boudreaux | Wade Cole | Virginia Adcock Hebert | Sammy Napoli | Bruce A. Temple |
| Hariette Boudreaux | Wilbert Cole | Carl Wayne Judice | Bonnie E. Oubre | Matthew Thibeaux |
| Howard Boudreaux | Audrey Crochet | Perry M. Judice | Bonnie E. Oubre | Genevive Thibodeaux |
| Ray Boutte | Earline Crochet | Robert Judice, Sr. | Eddie Pierre | Curtis Toffier |
| Cheryl Lancon Bradshaw | Jeanette Crochet | Suzette Judice | Lucille Pierre | Helen Toups |
| Cobey Braquet | Paul Crochet | Wayne Butch Judice | Yola Pierre | David Viator |
| Craig Breaux | Phil Dore | Audrey Kern | Magnolia Pratt | James B. Voorhies, Sr. |
| Albert Broussard, Jr. | Kamryn Elizabeth Dorsey | Gertrude Kern | Jordan Prince | |
| Louis Broussard | Etta B. Dugas | Edmond Lancon | Jordan Prince | |
| Ronald Broussard | Tim Edler | Euline J. Lancon | David Provost | |

Easter Flower Memorials

Baseball and Rumors of Angels by George Weigel

The sport of baseball is a “signal of transcendence” — a window into the supernatural — in several ways.

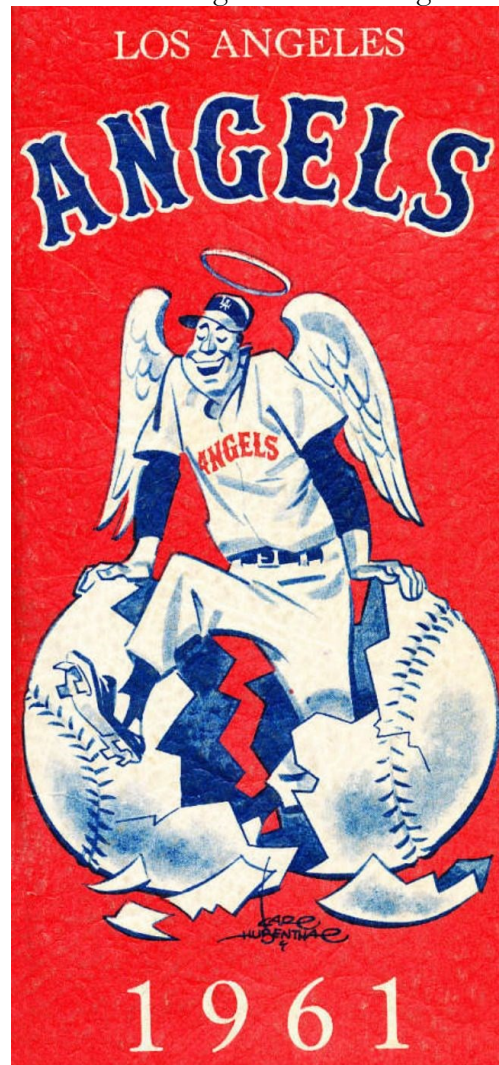
One of my life’s great blessings has been to have known and worked with men and women whose books I first studied in college and graduate school. High on that roster of intellectual-mentors-become-friends-and-colleagues stands the late Peter L. Berger, the distinguished sociologist of religion who brought the humanities (including philosophy and theology) into his work as a social scientist, thereby enlivening and illuminating the number-crunching typical of his fellow sociologists. (Andrew Greeley once snarked that “the only numbers in Berger’s books are at the bottom of the page.” More power to Berger, say I.)

One of Peter’s best books, and his smallest, is very much worth reading 55 years after it was written. Its winsome title, **A Rumor of Angels**, was then explicated in a more stolidly academic subtitle (**Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural**), which locates the book in recent cultural history.

A few years before **Rumor’s** publication, the April 8, 1966, issue of *Time* magazine shocked middle-class America with its stark black cover, on which was emblazoned a blunt question in large red letters: *Is God Dead?* The mid-1960s were the heyday of “secular theology,” which, to simplify greatly, tried to have Christianity without the supernatural: a school of thought popularized by Harvey Cox in **The Secular City: A Celebration of Its Liberties and an Invitation to Its Disciplines**. As things turned out, of course, the “liberties” of a world without God — a world tone-deaf to the supernatural — were the polymorphous perversities of lifestyle libertinism, and its “disciplines” were the breakdown of the family, social solidarity and public order.

A Rumor of Angels drove a stake through the desiccated heart of “secular theology” by demonstrating in 97 finely wrought pages that, embedded in empirical reality, were “signals of transcendence:” which Berger defined as

“phenomena ... found within the domain of our ‘natural’ reality but that appear to point beyond that reality.” The most primal of these phenomena, Peter suggested, was that of a mother comforting a frightened child who “wakes up in the night, perhaps from a bad dream, and finds himself surrounded by darkness, alone, beset by nameless threats.” What will any good mother do? “She will speak or sing to the child and the content of this communication will invariably be the same — ‘Don’t be afraid — everything is in order, everything is all right.’” Reassured, the child will go back to sleep, reassured that “everything” — the order of Being itself — is benign.



The fun and the sheer joy of play is another “signal of transcendence,” in which “it appears as if one were stepping not only from one chronology to another, but from time into eternity” — from this world into a grander reality that englobes and gives meaning to this world. Imagine a game in which you were completely absorbed while playing it — from cerebral chess to brawling rugby to standing at the

foul line with the game at stake — and you’ll get the point.

And that brings us to baseball in this opening week of the major league season. For baseball is a “signal of transcendence” — a window into the supernatural — in several ways.

Baseball is played on a field that is theoretically infinite. While the inner diamond is carefully calibrated in precise (some might say, divinely inspired) measurements — 90 ft. between bases, 60 ft./6 in. between pitching rubber and home plate — the foul lines and the outfield could, in principle, be extended forever: a possibility that came closest to realization in the vast center field of New York’s old Polo Grounds (which in turn gave birth to Hadley Arkes’s great historical mnemonic: “I can always remember when Saint Augustine was born — it was 1,600 years before Willie Mays robbed Vic Wertz at the Polo Grounds”). Unlike a football gridiron, basketball court or ice hockey rink, baseball is played in an environment that hints at infinity.

Then there is time. Before the advent of Manfred Man — the ghost runner who now mysteriously appears at second base in the 10th inning of a regular-season game — a baseball game was potentially endless: another signal of eternity embedded in empirical reality. Still, even with the aberration of Manfred Man and the new (and, I confess, welcome) pitch clock, the fact that a baseball game unfolds without a temporal countdown, unlike sports played within a fixed period of time, is another of Peter Berger’s rumors of angels: a quotidian experience that lifts us out of the humdrum of the here-and-now into a different, transcendent realm — a realm akin to the timelessness of heaven.

So: Play ball! And be attuned, at the ballpark and elsewhere, to those rumors of angels.



The Resurrection, in Our Own Days by Hadley Arkes

The philosopher Spinoza had raised the question: Why do people take miracles — the striking departures from the Laws of Nature — as the sign of God, rather than taking the Laws of Nature themselves as the most striking evidence of a Creator forming *a universe governed by laws*? But as C. S. Lewis observed, the popular “religion” of our day seems to be averse to a God Who does miracles. What sense is there, after all, to a God Who suspends the laws that govern everywhere else for the sake of relieving the affliction of *this* person and not *that* one, who could be far more deserving?

For certain minds, it may appear unseemly for God to engage in “special effects.” But the base of the aversion, as Lewis suspected, was the resistance to the notion of a “living God” Who takes an interest in persons. There has been a remarkable, enduring appeal to the notion of a God Who just blends in with the world, with the sun and wind and stars. It becomes pantheism under one variation or another.

The curious mark of an age high in schooling and diminished in education is that this view of God should be taken as something novel and avant-garde. In fact, it has been one of the most primitive temptations wrapping itself in the pretensions of theology. As Lewis remarked, “If ‘religion’ means simply what man says about God, and not what God does about man, then Pantheism almost *is* religion.”

But as Ronald Knox reminded us with a sharp note, “Don’t let’s make any mistake about this; [Jesus] claimed to do miracles, and claimed, by doing miracles, to prove where He came from; to prove that He came straight from God.” And the culminating miracle, of course, was His own Resurrection.

It was, as Knox said, “the climax of

that series of miracles by which our Lord justified His claim to be the Ambassador of a Divine Revelation.” Jesus had raised three other people from the dead — apart from Lazarus there was Jairus’ daughter and the widow’s son at Nain. Each of these happenings was taken as a miracle, stunning in its own way.

And yet, as Fulton Sheen noted, the curious thing was that the Resurrection had come as a surprise to the disciples. They had heard or seen of the other miracles; why would they not have anticipated that Jesus would have performed the same miracle for Himself?

But it has been, over the years, a further confirmation of the account in the Gospels that the disciples were ordinary men, anchored in the world, largely bereft of illusions. They had to be shown. It was a small, telling part of Luke’s account that Jesus asked whether they had any meat. He was there in His body, and hungry. They gave Him “a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them.”

It is hard to avoid the inference that the shock and the surprise for the disciples was not a surprise or disappointment for Jesus. The jolt and deep astonishment were critical ingredients in imparting the news — and the lesson — to disciples, and to a larger world, that could not be counted on to be credulous.

I write these notes on Easter Sunday, with the Masses overflowing at Saint John the Beloved church in McLean, Virginia. This must be one of the darkest times for Catholics in America, as we see the politics that engulfs us and the corruption of our laws. And yet, I’ve rarely seen people happier or more upbeat. The greetings of “Happy Easter” rang from friends met again, on foot and in passing cars.

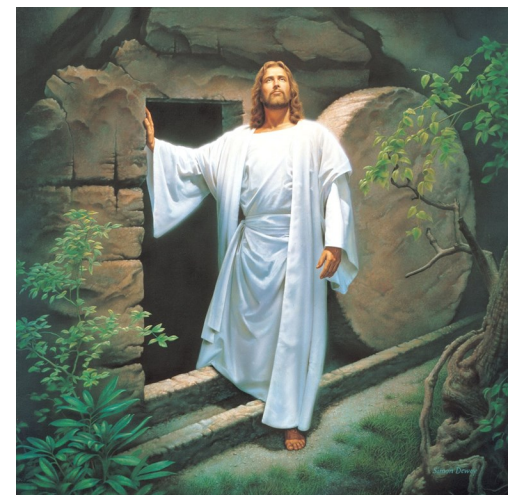
Aided by one of the first days of spring, the sense of life reborn was in the air, and that itself was a kind of miracle. The venerable Fr. Franklyn McAfee recalled the claims arising now

and then to the discovery of the bones of Jesus in or around Galilee. He recalled also a man he had known saying that it would make no difference, that he would continue practicing the faith and attending Mass. Fr. McAfee pronounced that view as “preposterous” and indefensible. If the dead body of Jesus were found, he said, he would leave the Church and so should the people assembled there on Sunday.

For if the Resurrection had not happened, if Jesus was not Who He claimed to be, what would all the rituals mean but an elaborate series of play-acting? But the Resurrection of Jesus was also the Promise to the rest of us that we, too, may rise again, and yet even more: that we may rise with Him even now, in our days here.

The lines I’ve cited here from Ronald Knox come from a series of sermons that he delivered during the Second World War, to girls who had been evacuated to the Assumption Convent in Aldenham Park. The times were far darker than our own, but Knox told his pupils that they might live in equally troubled times, “when it will look as if everything we Catholics care for were going under.”

But the Church, he said, “is the Church of the Risen Christ, and till the end of time every death She undergoes will be the prelude to a resurrection.”



The Church: The Sacrament of Salvation by David G Bonagura, Jr.

The Second Vatican Council's constitution *Lumen Gentium* offers a number of images to describe the Church, but the Church as "The People of God" surpassed all others. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger wrote that the understanding of this image quickly degenerated as certain partisans recast it in political terms, pitting "the People" in a power struggle against the hierarchy for control of the Church. Associations ranging from *We Are Church* to the *Voice of the Faithful* have been founded on this myopic premise, and shallow slogans that champion "the People" as a church unto themselves still linger in parish hymnals and religious education programs.

The future pope explained that viewing the Church in this manner is the result of leaving out what is most essential — God: "what then remains is merely a dispute about power." After the Council, the People of God properly conceived would have been much better served had theologians, pastors, and writers focused on the power of God to transform human beings — rather than on human beings' power over each other.

Lumen Gentium certainly discusses what secular observers would call "power," namely, the collegial relationship between the pope and the bishops, which is still a matter of no small controversy. But collegiality plays only a supporting role in the document, which, like the Church Herself, has at its center one overriding focus: Jesus Christ. "Christ is the Light of humanity," begins the Constitution. The Church exists for the sole purpose of bringing Christ's Light to the world.

From this beginning, *Lumen Gentium* made a great contribution to ecclesiology in the very next sentence: by virtue of Her relationship to Christ the Church Herself "is in the nature of a Sacrament — a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men." Understanding the Church as Sacrament readily presents the Church's Mission in light of her simultaneous vertical and horizontal orientations while stalling temptations to debate power structures.

The Church perpetuates Christ's saving Mission in the world. Like the seven liturgical Sacraments, the Church is both a

sign and an instrument of God's Grace. As sign the Church points the faithful, by Her very constitution, toward communion with God and neighbor in this life and eternal union forever in the next. As instrument the Church makes communion with God possible by means of the Gifts given to Her by Christ: Her doctrine, laws, and Sacraments. The Church, then, is the Sacrament of Christ: She makes His work of salvation visible and accessible to human beings.

Thus the Church functions analogously to the seven liturgical Sacraments: She leads us to a share in God's Life and union with Christ. But the Church is not properly the "eighth" Sacrament; rather theologians have called the Church the "fundamental" or "root" sacrament because the seven liturgical sacraments receive their power through the Church, which, rooted in the Mystery of God, receives Power from Christ. Each liturgical Sacrament brings about a specific grace proper to its physical sign; the Church is the sign of Christ's enduring Presence in the world. In the words of theologian Scott Hahn, the Church is more than an institution that exists for the sake of performing Sacraments; She is Herself a sacramental institution that does what She is.

Lumen Gentium rightly calls the Church "the universal Sacrament of salvation" since Christ, Who "is continually active in the world," leads all people to the Church so that He may "join them more closely to Himself." Through the Holy Spirit, Christ's Mission of salvation "continues in the Church in which, through our faith, we learn the meaning of our earthly life, while we bring to term, with hope of

future good, the task allotted to us in the world by the Father, and so work out our salvation."

The current scandal is a constant reminder that Church members can rather effectively blunt the Church as a sign of salvation. It is one of the great Mysteries of faith that, in the words of Cardinal Ratzinger, "God comes to men only through men." But despite the failings and sins of bishops and laity alike, the Church remains Christ's one and only instrument of salvation because She is not merely an association of "the People" gathered by their own initiative and will. She is instead the "ecclesia," "the assembly called together" personally by God. This chosen assembly has a divine Founder Who continues to direct the Church through the Spirit as Her invisible Head. Christ, moreover, chose this assembly to dispense the fullness of Grace — His Teachings and Sacraments — for all people. It is not surprising, then, that our greatest efforts to impede the Plan of Salvation, which all involve turning away from God and focusing on ourselves as "the People" who know best, have yet to succeed in eliminating the Church.

Cardinal Henri de Lubac wrote that "[i]f the world lost the Church, it would lose the Redemption too," for She alone communicates God's Grace to us. Faith in the Church as the universal Sacrament of Salvation rests ultimately upon Christ, Who continues to will that sinners carry out His Mission to sinners. True Power comes from God in the Church and the Sacraments, visible signs that point our way back to Him.



We were privileged to welcome Mr. Francisco Gonzalez to our parish. He is from Argentina and was visiting friends in New Iberia. Mr. Gonzalez assisted with our liturgical music during the Easter Triduum. His visit was for the purpose of applying to the Eastman School of Music in New York so that he could continue his music studies in violin and voice. We wish him well in his music career and hope that he can visit with us again.

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