



CHURCHWORK



**THE 179TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE DIOCESE OF
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF LOUISIANA**

IN THIS ISSUE: The 179th Annual Convention

On the Cover

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Delegates working at the 179th Annual Convention of the Diocese of the Episcopal Church of Louisiana held at St. Martin's Episcopal School, Metairie.

179th Annual Convention

- 03 Bishop's Address to Convention
- 09 Highlights of Convention

Reflections

- 12 Addictions Recovery Ministry
- 15 Flood Recovery in the Diocese
- 18 UBE Conference

Out and About in the Diocese

- 20 Clergy Transitions
- 22 Photographs
- 32 Bishop's Journal

CHURCHWORK

Churchwork (since 1950) is an official publication of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana.

1623 Seventh Street
New Orleans, LA 70115
(504) 895-6634
www.edola.org

Our Vision

The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana is one church, faithful to our Lord Jesus, united in mission, reaching out through service and proclamation to all for whom Christ died. We live in joyous expectation of God's transforming power, compassion, and mercy in our lives.

Publisher

The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr.
(mthompson@edola.org)

Editor and Art Designer

Karen Mackey (kmackey@edola.org)

Copy Editors

The Rev. Canon John Kellogg

Contributors in This Issue

Lance Armstrong
Fortunata Jefferson
Karen Mackey
The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan
The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr.

Subscriptions

Churchwork is a free quarterly magazine published digitally by and for The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. To be added to the mailing list or update your address, please email Karen Mackey at kmackey@edola.org.

Submissions

Churchwork provides news and information about the diocese and wider church; and is a medium of theological reflection. Please submit articles in Microsoft Word; photographs should have a resolution of 300. Letters to the editor will not be printed. Submissions should be sent by email to Karen Mackey at kmackey@edola.org. We reserve the right to edit all material, and cannot guarantee that every submission will be published.

Churchwork is a member of the Episcopal Communicators.



Bishop's Address to the 179th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

Let us pray: *Come Holy Spirit, kill us and make us alive.*

In your hands we rest; in the cup of whose hands sailed an ark, rudderless, without mast. In your hands we rest; who was to make of the aimless wandering of the ark a new beginning for the world. In your hands we rest; ready and content this day.

What a great day this is. Here we are, the gathered community.

Wendell Berry speaks of the gathered community in this way: "Oh yes brothers and sisters, we are members one of another. The difference, beloved, ain't in who is and who's not, but in who knows it and who don't. Oh, my friends, there ain't no nonmembers, living nor dead nor yet to come." (*Hannah Coulter* by Wendell Berry page 97)

No one is left out; we are all gathered together in the midst of love. That is what I see as I stand here in front of you, the gathered community. We are different to be sure, but still the gathered community never the less. Anglo-Catholic, Protestant, low church, high church, big, small, and medium size. We are the gathered community. I hope you know that.

In this gathered community life is not always easy, or agreeable. We may differ on theological positions, liturgical practices or where we stand politically. In my mind, this is the best kind of community because it causes us to listen to one another, lean on each other when we can't seem to find our way. This kind of community calls us to be vulnerable, to be teachable.

Recently we have been rising to this standard of being. This summer the ugly face of racism was raised in our back yard. The shooting of a black man by white policemen and the shooting of white men by a black man sparked outrage throughout the diocese and the nation. Days later the heavens

The 179th Annual Convention

opened up and over 30 inches of water poured down on homes, businesses and the lives of thousands. Two of our churches, St. Patrick's in Zachary and St. Francis in Denham Springs, were affected as well as our largest school, Episcopal School of Baton Rouge. As cruel as it was, not all was lost. In the midst of chaos, the gathered community answered the call of presence.

After the shootings, the Racial Reconciliation Commission gathered and showed their support for a better way of life, a way for reconciliation to take place. St. Luke's Church turned its attention towards caring for the police department that resides next door. In July, the Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry visited us through the invitation of the Union of Black Episcopalians. Hopeful words, kind actions, and serious dialogue have taken place and will need to continue if we are ever going to make a dent in loving our neighbor as we love ourselves.

After the rains came and the flood receded, the gathered community lent a helping hand in ways that best spoke to them. You will hear more about this later, but let it be known that the Episcopal Church, not only in this diocese but from all over the United States has risen to the aid of our wounded community. I have been touched by the generosity of people, people right here and people who have never even been to Louisiana but opened hearts and reached out to us. I am forever grateful.

Another heartbreak for me was the realization that we could not raise the funds needed to reshape the property on Canal Street formally known as Grace Church. As you know we had plans to move the diocesan offices to Canal Street and then restructure our present office into apartments to be used as a way to fund outreach throughout the diocese. Our consultant broke the news to us that the interest wasn't there with the people with whom he spoke. Therefore, the Executive Board has withdrawn this phase and we are now in the market for a buyer or someone to lease the property. As we all know, everything has a life cycle, even

churches. We will move forward discerning the direction God has for us.

Recently I listened to the book, *Grandma Gatewood's Walk* by Ben Montgomery. It's a delightful story about Mrs. Gatewood's trek over the Appalachian Trail. She was the first woman to have walked all 2200 miles of the trail that stretch from Springer Mountain, Georgia to Mount Katahdin, Maine. In 1955 at the age of 67 Ms. Gatewood set out with a pair of Keds tennis shoes, a shower curtain to keep her dry and a rucksack thrown over her shoulders for a few supplies and went walking. As I listened to the narrator, I could see Ms. Gatewood walking up the mountain through the lush green forest along damp trails. To strike out on a trip like she did, one must have the courage and the fortitude to endure the hardship of traveling alone, seeking food and a place to sleep. It is not easy but the marvel of it all makes the trip worthwhile.

One of the ways Grandma Gatewood made the journey was to make friends along the trail. Those at rest stops and those in the small towns she crossed. People were amazed at her resilience of walking the distance. Sometimes she slept in people's homes or was fed a meal to give her strength. It was the gathered community giving aid to a member of its own. I see our diocese in this light. Giving members the things we need to sustain our lives together.

I often hear that the Episcopal Church is shrinking, that her members are leaving. In some respect this is true. Our average attendance is down, not everywhere, but in many of our churches. I have a question to pose. Why do you think our numbers are down?

I think it is because we have become distracted from the ways of knowing God. We seem obsessed in the largeness of the offerings of life. We want big things, big homes, big churches, big cars, and large salaries. We are so obsessed with super sizing that we have forgotten the still, small, gentle voice where God is found in majestic ways. Where like Elijah we can hear the

discerning call of God in silent ways that speak directly to the soul.

In the coming year as I make my visitations, I want to hear what you are hearing and how it is forming your church, your communities, and your very soul. I want to hear how God is touching you, changing you. I want to know what you are learning and how your learning can teach me.

In her book, *The Soul of Money*, the book I hope every church will read for Lent, Lynne Twist tells a wonderful story about meeting Mother Teresa. Twist's work involved The Hunger Project. She was committed to ending world hunger by raising funds to make this a reality. Just meeting Mother Teresa was an overwhelming experience, she said. Twist spent time telling Mother Teresa about her family, her work and Mother Teresa said how much she admired Twist for her work of raising funds to support this very important ministry.

While the two were meeting a noise occurred down the hall. First Twist said she smelled them and then she saw a couple trying to get past others to see Mother Teresa. Twist at first didn't know what was going on but as time played out it was evident that these two individuals who happened to be married, wanted to see Mother Teresa. They had been with her earlier but didn't get a photo of Mother Teresa and the two of them together. Both husband and wife were decked out with what Twist describes as lavish bangles and diamond studs in the ears and nose. It was clear these people were very wealthy and as far as Twist was concerned, very obnoxious.

Twist immediately disliked this couple because they had interrupted her sweet moment with Mother Teresa and imposed themselves on her, shoving a camera in her face to take their picture with Mother Teresa.

The rest of the day and into the night Twist was furious first with the couple and then with herself. She had allowed this experience to bring out the worst in her, her prejudices and dislikes

of rude people. She was so upset with herself that she sat down and penned a letter to Mother Teresa asking both for her forgiveness and her counsel.

A few weeks later Mother Teresa wrote back. In her letter to Twist, Mother Teresa admonished her, saying "that while she had expressed compassion for the poor, the sick, the faint, and the weak all her life, that would always be a place where her self-expression and service would easily flourish. The vicious cycle of poverty, she said, has been clearly articulated and is widely known. What is less obvious and goes almost completely unacknowledged is the vicious cycle of wealth. There is no recognition of the trap that wealth so often is, and of the suffering of the wealthy; the loneliness, the isolation, the hardening of the heart, the hunger and poverty of the soul that can come with the burden of wealth. Mother Teresa told Twist that she had extended little or no compassion to the strong, the powerful, and the wealthy, while they need as much compassion as anyone else on earth. 'You must open your heart to them and become their student and their teacher, Mother Teresa wrote. When we think of the poor only in dollar signs and forget the soul, we have perpetrated a grave sin on ourselves. We have judged some to be worthy of attention and others not so.

This story made me wonder, what are we teaching in our congregations? Do we provide adult formation where these and other issues can be discussed and learned? Once again, we have allowed our attention to turn towards menial matters and have forgotten our calling to teach, and raise up informed members of the body, but we can't do this work if we are not providing places of intentional learning. I want to strongly encourage every congregation to create forums where adult and youth education take place on a regular bases. It is not enough to say we say our prayers in the morning. Our world calls us to wrestle with complex issues and for the Christian, our formation begins with reading scriptures in

The 179th Annual Convention

the context of our surroundings. Where is God in this moment is a beginning question to always ask.

Another area I want us to tend is the Stewardship of our Environment. If this year hasn't gotten our attention regarding the changes in climate then we are not paying attention. Extreme drought out west has brought millions of dollars in fire damage. In the south, heavy floods have wrecked havoc to the tune of billions of dollars and on the shores of Louisiana, our coastline is ever so quietly creeping inward. The erosion of our state is increasing at a pace that is frightening. Scripture has something to say about the stewardship of our environment.

The Psalmist tells us the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. Ps.24:1, and Ps 95: 4-5 says, "In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land." God has given us this planet earth our island home to care and nourish. It was not created for us alone but for our children's children. You and I are called to care for it like we care for ourselves. Shortly after this convention ends I will pull together a group of individuals who have a passion for environmental matters so they can teach us how we can better care for the gifts God has given us. Being mindful is the first step in acknowledging our dependence upon God and all that God has provided for us.

Which brings me to steps towards healing. This convention's theme is Grace and Addiction: Saved by Grace. Our desire is to raise awareness of the brokenness that addiction so often brings to everyone involved and also that one does not have to travel this road alone. The Church can and often does play a significant role in supporting wholeness and healing. There is not a family present that has not been affected by the addiction of drugs, alcohol, or other forms of addiction. It is all too common and for many the pain of living with an addictive person or being addicted is a pain that runs deep.

As the year unfolds I want to encourage every church to have an active community in some form of recovery work. Open your doors to Alcohol Anonymous, Al-Anon, Alateen, Narcotics Anonymous or any other group that is supportive and life-giving. Hold Recovery Sunday's where the Twelve Step Eucharist is used. There is so much that we can be doing to help the gathered community.

The last initiative I want to address is our relationship with the Diocese of Tohoku. As many of you know, our diocese and the Diocese of Tohoku, Japan have been in a partnership that began before WWII. It began with a missionary from our diocese going to Japan. Recently, I traveled to Sendai, Japan, the See City of Tohoku. I met for the first time, Bishop John Kato and his wife Joann. The people are so generous with their hospitality. Everywhere I traveled their welcome overflowed.

One of our common bonds is our propensity for terrible weather: their tsunami, our Katrina, their earthquakes, our floods. As I traveled their diocese, I saw the destruction from their tsunami. If I hadn't known any better I would have thought I was looking at New Orleans after the storm. Five years after their disaster there are still many people displaced who lived around the nuclear power plant that will never be able to return. They live on a fragile island. While I was there, riding on the bullet train we came to a crawl because an earthquake was shaking the ground. We have much in common.

Before I left we made an agreement to work harder in building relationships between our laity. It is our dream that every two years we will visit one another to begin building the bonds that are so important. We don't need another fifty years to go by before another bishop or delegation from our diocese visits our partner. So get your chopsticks ready!

As I close my remarks, I want to thank you for the work you do for your church, your community, and this Diocese. You wouldn't be

here if you were not invested in the work of this body.

I want to also thank my staff for all their dedication. They are willing to move mountains for you if that is what it takes to get the job done. I am very blessed to have such committed individuals working beside me.

The clergy know this but some of you don't. Beginning in January of 2017, I will be taking a three-month sabbatical. This will be the first one I've ever taken and to be honest, I have some reservations about taking the time. This job is demanding and I find I need to be refreshed. So I will be spending time reading on the subject of reconciliation. The question of what it means to be reconciled to God and neighbor is of great interest to me. I also plan on helping our son and his wife when their daughter is born in January. I've discovered the joy of having grandchildren and it gives me great delight. I look forward to a trip to Kansas City, Missouri, where our daughter and son-in-law have made a home.

In my absence, I've asked Bishop Brown and Bishop Jenkins to assist in making some visitations. The Standing Committee will be ready to assist if the need arises. And, I'll be just a phone call away.

I want to close with a poem written by James A. Autry, titled "Paying Attention." (*Life After Mississippi*, pp. 54-55)

*There came a time in my volunteer life
when I began to give in
to the seductions of righteousness
and to think of my work as a sacrifice for the
good of others.
I would make schedules no one should try
so that people would ask
how it was possible for one man to do so
much.
It was a time of three speeches*

*and three cities
in one day,
and in all the scurrying
I did not want the delay
of a restroom conversation
with a hesitant little man
in a cheap new suit.
I needed a quick pee, five minutes to think,
and two minutes to get to the podium.
But there he was,
with the side effects I knew so well,
the puffy cheeks, the swollen gums
as he smiled and told me he had a job now
and hadn't had a seizure in six months.
I gave him the quick pat on the back
and the smile,
never expecting to see him again.
But he sat in the front row
and smiled a greeting when I rose to speak,
the dignitary from the national office,
bringing word from Washington,
the National Commission,
the Hill, the White House.
He smiled too often
and over-nodded and made too much of his
notes,
clicking his pen and turning pages,
back and forth,
as if studying what he'd written.
When our eyes met he smiled and nodded,
another guy, I thought who wants people to
think he knows the speaker.
So I avoided looking at him*

The 179th Annual Convention

*until he shuffled, crossed his legs,
and stretched them in front of him.
When I saw the soles of his shoes,
slightly soiled, less than a day worn
I realized he had bought the suit and shoes
just for this meeting
just to hear a speech squeezed
into an afternoon between two other cities.
He had looked forward to it,
planned for it,
put new job money into it,
and would make notes
so that he could remember always*

*what the important man came to teach.
But the lesson was mine to learn—
about sacrifice
and counting blessings,
about patience
and paying attention to teachers
wherever I find them.*

May God give us the grace and courage to pay attention, to live fully into the gathered community.



Highlights of the 179th Annual Convention



the Twelve Step Eucharist liturgy. Bishop Taylor was the preacher for the service. Music was provided by Greg Tanner Kim Richert, Lance Armstrong, and Jarrett Follett.

The Friday evening reception was catered by St. Martin's Episcopal School. The Saturday morning breakfast was provided by the Episcopal Church Women of the Greater New Orleans Deaneries.

Actions Taken by Convention

Elections

The following were elected to fill offices:

- Marsha Wade, St. James, Baton Rouge, for a one-year term as Secretary.
- Les Bradfield, Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans, for a one-year term as Treasurer.
- Rob Courtney, St. Paul's, New Orleans, for a three-year term as clerical member of the Standing Committee.
- Julio Figueroa, Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans, for a three-year term as lay member of the Standing Committee.
- John Craft, Chapel of the Holy Comforter, New Orleans, for a three-year term as clerical member of the Executive Board.
- Penny Dralle, St. George's, New Orleans, and Shirley Young, Trinity, Baton Rouge, for a three-year term as lay members of the Executive Board.
- Stephen Crawford, St. Mary's, Franklin, for a three-year term as clerical member of the Disciplinary Board.
- Dave Foster, St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge, and Nicolle Hammill, All Souls, New Orleans, for a three-year term as lay members of the Disciplinary Board.

The 179th Convention began with Merry Sorrells, Head of School of St. Martin's, welcoming the delegates to the 179th Diocesan Convention which was held November 4-5 at St. Martin's Episcopal School, Metairie. The theme for the convention was Grace and Addiction: Saved by Grace which highlighted the work of the Addictions Recovery Ministry of the diocese.

Several members of the Addictions Recovery Ministry shared moving stories regarding the effect addiction has had on their lives. They encouraged churches to include addiction recovery as a vital component of their ministries. The keynote speaker was the Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor, former Bishop of Western North Carolina, who shared his own personal story of alcoholism.

The Convention also heard updates on flood recovery in the diocese. The Episcopal Church Women recognized Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative as a 2016 United Thank Offering grant recipient.

The Convention Eucharist, held in the school's Dan and Francis White Chapel, incorporated

The 179th Annual Convention

- Jason Akers, St. Paul's, New Orleans, for a three-year term as a lay representative to the Sewanee Board of Trustees.
- Elected as Deputies to the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church:
Clerical Order: Richard Easterling, St. George's, New Orleans; A.J. Heinie, St. Augustine's, Metairie; Anne Maxwell, Christ Church, Covington; and Edward Thompson, All Souls, New Orleans
Lay Order: Lindsey Ardrey, St. George's, New Orleans; Carolyn Harris, St. Luke's, New Orleans; John Musser, Trinity, New

Orleans; and Ed Starns, St. Luke's, Baton Rouge

- Elected as Alternate Deputies to the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church:
Clerical Order: 1st Alternate is Sharon Alexander, Trinity, Baton Rouge; 2nd Alternate is Tommy Dillon, St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge; and 3rd Alternate is Peter Kang, Grace, St. Francisville.
Lay Order: 1st Alternate is Anne Ball, All Saints', River Ridge.

Resolutions

The Convention passed the following resolutions:

- To authorize the Executive Board of the Diocese to elect the persons nominated by the Bishop of the Diocese to serve on the Board of Trustees for The Episcopal School of Baton Rouge and St. Martin's Episcopal School beginning in the school year 2017-18.
- To the observance of Ecumenical Sunday, January 22, 2017, and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2017.
- To create a study commission to consider Canon 22 with regard to support of the Episcopacy, its mission and ministry and the mission and ministry of Ecclesiastical Units within the Diocese.



The Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor delivers the keynote speech to the 179th Convention

The 179th Annual Convention



Left: Lance Armstrong address the Convention to talk about the Addictions Recovery Ministry; Middle: The Very Rev. Richard Easterling delivers the courtesy resolutions; Right: The Rev. Peggy King Scott invites the Convention to the Prison Ministry Conference to be held at St. James in March 2017.



Left: Bishop Thompson lends his support while Laurel McCartney acknowledges Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative, represented by Executive Director Nicole Barnes, as a 2016 UTO grant recipient; Middle: The Rev. Canon John Kellogg address the Convention to provide personal testimony on the affect his father's drug addiction has had on his life; Right: The Friday evening reception at St. Martin's Episcopal School.



Left: Preparing to enter the Convention Eucharist; Middle: The Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor delivers the sermon during the Convention Eucharist; Right: The Addictions Recovery Ministry band provided music during the Convention Eucharist.



A few of the vendors and exhibitors— Left: Education for Ministry; Middle: The Stephen Ministry of St. James Episcopal Church; Anna's Place of St. Anna's Episcopal Church.

REFLECTIONS

Grace & Addiction: A Reflection on the Addiction Recovery Ministry by Lance Armstrong, Convener of the Addiction Recovery Ministry of the Diocese of Louisiana



[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Lance Armstrong talks to the 179th Convention about the Addictions Recovery Ministry of the diocese.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith” – Ephesians 2:8

We are all prey to spiritual ills, and we are all in need of God’s grace. This is the great equalizer for Christians that requires us to look at all people as our brothers and sisters. This is the scripture supporting the theme of the Diocesan Convention – “Grace and Addiction: Saved by Grace.” Addiction is a specific spiritual ailment that impacts ten percent of our population. While alcoholism and drug addiction have physical and mental components, at heart it is a spiritual malady with a spiritual solution - it is not a matter of will power or moral fiber or lifestyle choice. This is one of the reasons that the church is in a unique position to help alcoholics and addicts. There is no conflict between the 12 Steps of recovery and the precepts of our Church. A good recovery program and a good religious program go hand in glove – each can strengthen the other. One way that we can all help and support those in need of grace is

through the Diocesan Addictions Recovery Ministry.

The Diocesan Addictions Recovery Ministry Commission has been in existence since 1984. This ministry welcomes recovering people into the Episcopal community and also helps recovering Episcopalians find a home within the organized Church. Within the diocese, the Addictions Recovery Ministry provides education, guidance, and support for families and parishes struggling with, or wishing to learn more about, addiction. The recovery ministry walks that line between secular recovery and Christian faith. For over thirty years, the ministry has organized two annual recovery retreats touching thousands of lives. We usually fill up the Solomon Center. We have also helped individuals and families in the diocese find the recovery resources they need. In addition, we have been invited to assist with Recovery Sunday programs in a handful of parishes. I have never participated in one of these programs where someone did not come up afterward to share their own personal or family experience with addiction.

Members of the recovery ministry are volunteers who see the growing problem in our communities and our nation and just want to help. The only requirement is a heart for service – you do not have to be in recovery or have any prior experience with addiction. You may feel that you don’t understand addicts. You may feel that since you don’t have that problem, you can’t relate or help. But what I want to tell you is that you don’t need to understand or identify with my alcoholism. You can share the message of hope and the path of a spiritual life regardless of your personal experience with addiction or lack thereof.

An addiction is *any substance or behavior* that we place ahead of God, and any of us can be addicted. It can be work, or money, or sex, or the internet, or any number of things. In that sense, I think all of us struggle with addictions – with places where we want to do things our way, not God’s.

My parents were not alcoholics. I did not come from a broken home. I was not an abused child. I had a roof over my head, food on the table, and clothes on my back. Nevertheless, I was a fifth a night drunk. I did well in school. I was my high school valedictorian, National Merit Finalist, and Top 100 Scholar. I graduated LSU, got a good job, married a beautiful woman, bought a home and everything looked good on the outside. I was active at church. I was Sr. Warden at St. Alban’s and at the service most Sundays. But addiction is a disease of isolation. I was kneeling in the pew hungover, sweating, and totally alone even though I was surrounded by people that knew and cared about me. I did not know how to escape the trap of addiction, I did not know how to ask for help, and it was not a topic that was ever discussed.

One of the biggest hurdles I had to overcome in getting sober was my own preconceptions. I said to myself, “I may drink a fifth a night, but I’m not like them. I have a family, a house, a car, a job – I can’t be an alcoholic. I’m different, and you just don’t understand.” Today I know that I am no different than the person living under the overpass, panhandling at the intersection, or serving jail time. These are the places that addiction will take anyone affected. And it is not just the addict who is affected. All whose lives touch the sufferer’s – family, friends, and co-workers – are impacted by this disease; and also need grace, comfort, and support. I was asked by Fr. Patrick Smith to represent St. Alban’s in the recovery

ministry in 1999 and have been privileged to participate ever since.

Membership on the recovery ministry commission is not publicized whether you are in recovery or not. There are some of us, like myself, who have decided to publicly discuss our addiction and recovery, but we respect the anonymity of those in recovery who wish to serve on the commission. And make no mistake, there is still a huge stigma associated with public admission of addiction. I have many friends in recovery who are faithful Episcopalians but do not share that fact due to



[Photograph by Deacon Jay Albert]
The Addiction Recovery Cross

REFLECTIONS



fear of how it can negatively impact their careers and social relationships. Just within the past few years, my wife, Linda, was at one of her Bible study groups, and it was appropriate for her to mention that I was a recovering alcoholic. One of the well-educated, mature leaders of the group said, "And I always thought he was such a nice person." Well, I am and most of us are, but the stigma and misconceptions remain strong.

Many people who are dealing with a problem would never think of going to a 12 Step meeting or discussing it with their doctor. But sometimes a friend or speaker at church can open the door to acknowledging a problem and seeking help. Most of us in the recovery ministry are not medical professionals, but we can put you in touch with them. Most of us are not associated with recovery centers, but we know the people who are. We are familiar with the many 12 Step recovery programs in the diocese. We are willing to share our experience, strength, and hope in dealing with addiction and recovery privately and confidentially.

One of the goals of the diocese is that every parish has a representative on the Addictions Recovery Ministry Commission. The commission meets four times a year at parishes around the diocese. I invite anyone

with an interest in this ministry to attend, and it's okay for a parish to have more than one representative. If you are interested, please contact one of the ministry representatives listed below.

In closing this reflection, I ask you to think about how addiction may be affecting the people in your lives. I ask you to consider how you respond to them and what your own prejudices might be regarding the stigma of addiction. And the message that I want to leave with you is that there *is* a serious problem in our communities, that the church has a role in the spiritual solution for that problem, and that *you* can help spread the message of hope through God's transforming love and salvation through grace.

Bill LeBlanc (Baton Rouge): bill.leblanc@gmail.com

Chris Martin (New Orleans): martin@chaffe.com

Dcn. Jay Albert (Northshore): albertjay3@gmail.com

Mtr. DeeDee Estes (Chaplain): dianemanguoestes@gmail.com



[Photographs on this page by Deacon Jay Albert] An addiction recovery retreat is held each August for men and women and in January for just women.

Flood Recovery in the Diocese

Where We Are Today

August 12-14 brought historic rainfall that flooded over 100,000 homes in 20 parishes across south Louisiana. In the Diocese of Louisiana, three Episcopal institutions sustained damage from the storm.

St. Francis, Denham Springs, received flooding in all of its buildings with approximately four feet of flooding in the sanctuary. As of December 2016, they are holding services at the neighboring United Methodist Church in Denham Springs, and are currently exploring options on plans for the rebuilding of the church.

Episcopal School of Baton Rouge flooded in the gyms and lower school building. They have returned to classes, but have a fundraising campaign underway to fully restore the athletic facilities.

In Zachary, St. Patrick's sustained flooding to the preschool playground and from rain entering when the roof was damaged.

Episcopal Relief and Development continues to be an invaluable partner in the response. As of mid-December, we have given to needy families over \$140,000 to help rebuild homes and provide other assistance. Our diocese, with the help of so many across the Episcopal Church, has helped countless people through the distribution of gift cards and donations distributed from food pantries.

We are continuing to accept out state volunteers who are being housed at churches in New Orleans and St. Francisville. The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan is coordinating the volunteer efforts with assistance from Meg Kendrick and the Rev. Peter Kang.



[Photograph by Karen Mackey] St. Francis, Denham Springs, gathered for Holy Eucharist on the Sunday after the flood in the church parking lot. The congregation is now meeting at the local United Methodist Church while their own church is being rebuilt.

REFLECTIONS

The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan's Address to Convention

The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan delivered the following reflection to the 179th Annual Convention on November 5.

We are in many ways a small diocese, but our relationship with the rhythms of nature has made us resilient, strong, determined, and deeply committed to the needs of the most vulnerable among us. When disaster strikes, this small diocese becomes a giant and we put aside our differences- our cultural, theological, and political persuasions and liturgical preferences. We jump in and grab our crowbars and do what we do best. This is beautiful to see. There is nothing more joy producing than watching a high Anglo-Catholic swing a crowbar, especially if they wear a cassock.

When others come and go as quickly as the storms themselves come and go, we stay to the very end. As the staging sites of others are taken down, our staging sites continue to be built. As others go back to the new normal, we choose to dwell in the dysfunction of falling sheetrock, piles of debris, and the broken lives those mountains of debris hide.

This last August, our diocese became a giant once again. Soon after the storm, we saw brothers and sisters from around the diocese organize to provide relief to those who had lost everything. Within days we had teams working in St. Francisville, Denham Springs, and Baton Rouge. Parishes reached out to their neighbors immediately after the storm and took care of police men and women, teachers of various schools, and their own parishioners.

We began reaching out beyond our churches and started walking the streets. Streets that looked like a war-zone destroyed by the fierce storm. We started to meet people of all ages, walks of life, and financial situations. We started to listen to incredible stories of heartache and hope. We began to see the generosity of many who would direct us to help their neighbors first even though

they themselves were underwater.

We have done a great job, but in many ways, our work must continue. Thanks to Episcopal Relief and Development, we have given over \$140,000 to needy families. The Bishop's Fund has raised additional funds which we have used for small \$1,000—\$5,000 grants for families who are ready to start rebuilding. The list of those sending their requests to the committee for consideration continues to grow.

Please note that we are here for the long haul. We have resources we can use to help your parishioners. We can help and we want to help, but to do that we need your help. Please continue to pray for us. Continue to support us. There is something everyone in our congregations can do.

Do we still have work? The answer is absolutely. We are deeply concerned for the elderly and for those who are poor, who now find themselves in even more trouble than they even were before.

We need volunteers. Come and partner with us. Send us your congregation. Send us your volunteers. Send your financial resources to Episcopal Relief and Development and the Bishop Fund for Flood Relief. Send us your support in the form of prayers.

Thank you for being such a giant in this time of crisis.

The 179th Annual Convention



Left: Grace Church, St. Francisville, prepares meals for flood survivors. Middle: Bishop Morris Thompson, Deacon Elaine Clements, and Canon Shannon Manning talk with Hugh McIntosh, Head of School of Episcopal School of Baton Rouge, about the needs of the school after the flooding. Right: St. Luke's partnered with Olive Garden to provide lunch to flood survivors.



Left: Volunteers from St. Paul's, New Orleans, St. Anna's, New Orleans, and Grace Church, St. Francisville gather before gutting houses. Center: Fr. Roman Roldan providing pastoral care to those staying in the Celtic Studios, which operated as a flood evacuation center. Right: Trinity Church, New Orleans fed National Guard Troops and flood victims after the storm.



Left: St. Paul's (as did many of churches) collected donations for flood victims. Center: St. Matthew's School, Houma, adopted a school in Prairieville after the flood. Right: Trinity, Baton Rouge, had a tremendous increase in the use of their food pantry after the flood. Many of the churches (pictured are parishioners from St. Michael's, Mandeville) donated food to the pantry.



Left: Fr. Peter Kang gives a safety talk to volunteers before heading out to gut houses. Center: Gutting houses in Solitude. Right: Episcopal School of Baton Rouge students volunteered to clean flood-damaged houses throughout the neighborhood where the school is located.

REFLECTIONS

UBE Conference & Visitation of Presiding Bishop Curry

by Fortunata Jefferson, UBE Curtis Sisco Chapter President

It was a homecoming of sorts for the Union of Black Episcopalians in the Diocese of Louisiana. Twenty-five years ago, UBE visited New Orleans for the Annual Business Meeting and Conference.

From July 31, until August 4, a sentimental journey for UBE members took place for many members had originally come to New Orleans in 1991, and many had returned. Some had not been to New Orleans since Katrina and were anxious to see what changes had taken place.

For everyone, it was a joyful celebration. Eucharist was a celebration of our faith as only African American Episcopalians can worship was so uplifting to share our worship experience with friends and family in the Diocese.

The most moving experience was to see Bishop Curry, our African American Presiding Bishop take his seat in the Bishop's Chair that had been crafted by slaves. The descent of slaves taking his rightful place in that chair in the Cathedral was awesome.

Presiding Bishop Curry's sermon was uplifting and hopeful and I am sure that it was so for the nearly one thousand people in attendance.

The second night was even more special. The purpose of the memorial service was to remember all those UBE members who had left us in the past year, in particular, Fr. Curtis Sisco. I know that on that special night he was in all our thoughts and prayers.

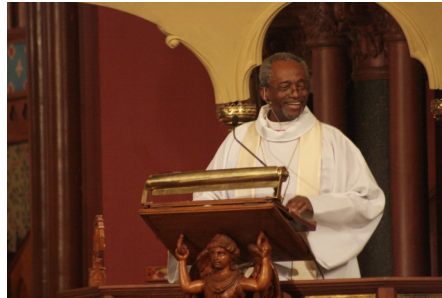
Bishop Vashti McKenzie preached a sermon that was a positive call to action. It expanded on the theme of "Black Lives Matter" in a way that I appreciated. Instead of preaching blame

and negativity, she spoke of our individual responsibility to our lives and those of others with whom we come in contact. It was a way of thinking about our being answerable for some of the things that are happening and how we can positively affect the changes. I hope to hear her preach again.

The workshops were varied and informative, but my favorite was the Rev. Kellie Brown Douglas who spoke about her latest book *Stand Your Ground*. She spoke of the social repercussions that the recent tragedies have produced and of what is needed to be done to positively move past these events. I was very grateful that she could make it to New Orleans.

The Young Adults had their own conference elements and although we didn't see much of them, we did know that they were enjoying their activities. For the first time, two young people from this Diocese participated and really enjoyed their experience.

All in all, it was an experience that was invaluable, in that it inspired all of us to look at our daily church life and to begin to search out ways of creatively communicating with each other and building new relationships in the Episcopal Church. I hope that it will continue to provide the wherewithal that we as a community, both black and white, need to grow.



[Photographs by Karen Mackey] 1st Row Left: Bishop Thompson presents Presiding Bishop Curry with a gift from the Diocese of Louisiana. 1st Row Middle: Presiding Bishop Curry preaching at Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans during the opening Eucharist of the UBE Conference. 1st Row Right: Presiding Bishop Curry is seated in the Bishop Polk Chair at the Cathedral. 2nd Row Left: The Rt. Rev. Nathan Baxter preached at Historic St. Luke's, New Orleans, during the UBE Conference. 2nd Row Middle: Holy Eucharist at Trinity Episcopal Church, New Orleans. Celebrant was the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, first female bishop of the Episcopal Church. Preacher was the Rt. Rev. Vashti McKenzie, first female bishop of the African Episcopal Church. 2nd Row Right: Eucharist at Historic St. Luke's, New Orleans. 3rd Row Left and Middle The Youth Service featured youth choirs and dancers from St. Anna's, New Orleans, and youth from across the Episcopal Church. 3rd Row Right: Closing Eucharist. 4th Row Left: Jericho Road and the Racial Reconciliation Commission exhibited at the conference. 4th Row Middle: Tyronne Walker, Spokesman for Mayor Mitch Landrieu, welcomes conference participants to New Orleans 4th Row Right: Nicole Barnes of Jericho Road spoke at the UBE Conference as part of a panel to discuss community development.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

The Clericus (July 1, 2016-December 1, 2016)

Transitions in the Diocese

Deacon Quin Bates retired from active service at St. Andrew's Church, Bayou Dularge, on July 7, 2016.

The Rev. Harold "Hal" Roark was called as Rector of The Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs, New York, effective September 1, 2016. Letters Dimissory were sent on July 18, 2016 transferring him to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of New York.

Deacon Charles deGravelles retired from Episcopal School, Baton Rouge, on July 31, 2016 to pursue a full-time writing career. He continues to serve as a Deacon at Trinity Church, Baton Rouge, and St. Andrew's Church, Bayou du Large.

Deacon Daniel "Mark" Hudson left his position as Deacon at St. John's, Kenner, and began a new appointment as Deacon at St. Mark's, Harvey, on August 1, 2016.

The Rev. Minka Sprague retired as Chaplain at Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans, effective November 20, 2016.

Deacon Debbie Scalia retired from St. Martin's School, Metairie on June 1, 2016. She continues to serve as a Deacon at All Saints', River Ridge.

The Rev. J. Mark Holland was called as Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. Francis, Denham Springs.

Shortly after the devastating August 2016 Flood in Louisiana, Bishop Thompson appointed The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan to

serve as the Diocesan Flood Response Coordinator.

The Rev. Ashley Freeman was called to be the next Rector of St. Patrick's, Zachary, effective November 27, 2016.

New Clergy of the Diocese

The Rev. Jane-Allison Wiggan-Nettles was called to serve as Chaplain at Christ Episcopal School, Covington, effective August 1, 2016. She is a transitional deacon from the Diocese of Upper South Carolina and is licensed to serve in the Diocese of Louisiana.

The Rev. Tommy Dillon was called to serve as Priest-in-Charge at St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge, effective September 1, 2016.

Deaths

Archdeacon Richard Ormonde Plater died on August 6, 2016 after a lengthy illness. Deacon Plater was ordained in 1971 and faithfully served the Church in many capacities, including prison and hospital ministry, as well as the education and formation of deacons across the denomination.

The Rev. Gene R. Haddock died on September 6, 2016. After his retirement he lived in Sherman, Texas. His funeral was held at St. Luke's Church in Denison, Texas on September 10. Fr. Haddock was 78 years old.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE



1st Row Left: The Rev. Mark Holland celebrates Holy Eucharist with the congregation of St. Francis, Denham Springs, after the August flood; 1st Row Middle: The Rev. Tommy Dillon during his first Holy Eucharist as priest-in-charge of St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge; 1st Row Right: The Rev. Minka Sprague celebrates her last Holy Eucharist as chaplain of Chapel of the Holy Spirit; 2nd Row Left: The Rev. Ashley Freeman celebrates his first Holy Eucharist as rector of St. Patrick's, Zachary; 2nd Row Middle: The Very Rev. Dr. Roman Roldan organizes volunteers on a volunteer day; 2nd Row Right: Deacon Quin Bates reads the Gospel at St. Andrew's, Bayou Dularge; 3rd row: New clergy in the diocese since the 178th Convention- (left to right) The Rev. Tommy Dillon, the Rev. William Miller, the Rev. Morgan McIntire, the Rev. Ashley Freeman, the Rev. John Pitzer, the Rev. Seamus Doyle, and the Rev. Joe Reynolds



St. Paul Summer Soiree (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] On August 6, St. Paul's, New Orleans, held their first annual Summer Soiree with the *Grease* and 50's era inspired theme "Hopelessly Devoted." Proceeds benefited theological education. This was also a going away party for Caroline Carson, who is attending seminary at Sewanee.

Anna's Place Kids in Concert (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] The children of Anna's Place finished their summer by holding performances throughout the diocese. They performed at Grace Church, St. Francisville, St Anna's, and at Lakeview Mall in Metairie. In December, the children's choir performed in a Christmas concert with the LPO and the 610 Stompers.



Mount Olivet Cooking Series (left)

[Photograph from Mount Olivet Facebook Page] On October 12 at Mount Olivet, New Orleans, Chef Richard Bond presented an Italian menu of garlic soup, veal piccata, and fresh strawberries in a balsamic reduction sauce as part of the long-running Mount Olivet Cooking Series.

St. George's Goes to Mexico (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] On December 9, St. George's, New Orleans, held a Mexican style fiesta in the church undercroft for their annual fundraiser. Each year in December parishioners hold a fundraiser for the church highlighting food from various cultures.



Mr Lawrence Brooks Celebrated his 107th Birthday (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Mr. Lawrence Brooks celebrated his 107th Birthday on September 12 at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. He is believed to be the oldest living WWII Veteran in this region and the oldest parishioner in the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana.

Youth Ministry Workshop (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] People from across the diocese participated in the August 13 Youth Ministry Workshop led by Randall Curtis, Ministry Developer for Young Adults and Youth in the Diocese of Arkansas. The workshop was held at Trinity Episcopal School, New Orleans. The theme was "Developing a Sustainable Strong Youth Ministry."



Outreach to Help With the LSU Lead Study (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Joey Clavijo, a deacon postulant in the diocese, organized a day for Episcopalians to join with LSU in bring safe drinking water to residents in New Orleans. Participants went door to door urging homeowners and renters to enroll in the LSU study that tests for high levels of lead in the drinking water. Many neighborhoods in New Orleans are prone to lead in their drinking water. If tests come back positive, LSU will help with the installation of water filters.

Reformation Sunday (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] The Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans, serves as a chapel for both Episcopal and ELCA students at Tulane and Loyola. Each year they celebrate Reformation Sunday, inviting members of Lutheran churches across the New Orleans area to attend. The Rev. Racheal Ringlaben, preached and celebrated. In January 2017, The Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church will celebrate 15 years of being in full communion with one another.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE



International Food Festival (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Parishioners of Historic St. Luke's, New Orleans, celebrate the Feast of St. Luke's by throwing an International Food Festival. The festival showcases food from the Caribbean nations, France, Central America, Vietnam, and of course, New Orleans.

Forgiveness Weekend (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] The Rev. Dr. Rob Voyle of the Clergy Leadership Institute, came to Christ Church Cathedral in October, to teach clergy and laity to let go of resentment and resolve grief. This workshop was part of the congregation development training series organized by the Diocese of Louisiana.



Deepening the Dialogue (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] On Sunday, October 8, the Racial Reconciliation Commission organized a screening of the documentary *Repairing the Breach: The Episcopal Church and Slavery Atonement* followed by a discussion with director, Katrina Brown.

Teddy Bear Tea (right)

[Photograph by Marilyn O'Leary, All Saints] On Saturday, December 3, 2016, All Saints, Ponchatoula, had a Teddy Bear Tea with story time, snacks, games, and lots of fun for all ages. Kids brought their teddy bear with them and also got a bear to take home.



St. Matthew's Installs New Stained Glass Window (left)

[Photograph by Jay Theriot, St. Matthew's] In July, St. Matthew's, Houma, installed the Nativity Window, one of the last windows to be installed following the opening of the rebuilt church in 2015. The windows were dedicated on the Feast of St. Matthew in September.

Bishop Presented With Vietnam Veterans Pin (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] St. Martin's Episcopal Church parishioner, Dennis Bergeron, is a Marine involved in honoring veterans through the Paul E. Boyd Unit 579 of the Marine Corps League Auxiliary. Dennis stopped by the diocesan office on September 27 to present a pin to Bishop Thompson who is a former Marine and Vietnam Era Veteran.



New Stained Glass Windows at St. Andrew's, Bayou Dularge (left)

[Photograph by the Rev. Canon Ron Clingenpeel] Parishioners of St. Andrew's, Bayou Dularge, have designed stained glass windows to be installed in the church. Senior Warden Alan Marcel is hand building each one. Fr. Ron wrote, "They are doing all the work and it is certainly a labor of love. I think they are beautiful and even more so because this comes from the work of their hands."

Clergy Day of Prayer on World HIV / AIDS Awareness Day (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Clergy from all faiths gathered at St. George's Episcopal Church during HIV/AIDS Awareness Week to renew their commitment and encourage faith communities to become leaders in compassion and education for those affected by HIV/AIDS. Deacon Jay Albert helped organize the event and led a discussion during the pancake breakfast.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE



St. Luke's Installed New Head of School (left)

[Photograph from the St. Luke's Episcopal School Facebook Page] On September 22, Greg Hutchinson was installed as the 9th Head of School of St. Luke's Episcopal School, Baton Rouge.

Marine Corps Birthday (right)

[Photograph from the Grace Church Facebook Page] On Thursday, November 10, Grace Church, St. Francisville, held its annual celebration in commemoration of the Marine Corps Birthday. Various dignitaries were present to place a wreath at the gravesite of General Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps, who is the only Admiral buried outside of Arlington Cemetery. General Barrow was a faithful member of Grace Church.



Pumpkin Patches (left)

[Photograph from the Grace Memorial Facebook Page] Several churches throughout the diocese held their annual pumpkin patch fundraisers in the month of October. They could be found at Grace Memorial, Hammond, St. Mark's, Harvey, St. Augustine's, Metairie, St. Martin's, Metairie, and St. Paul's Episcopal School in New Orleans.

St. Patrick's Angel Tree Toy Drive (right)

[From the St. Patrick's Facebook Page] St. Patrick's Church and Preschool held a toy drive for families in need this Christmas season. The Rev. Ashley Freeman helped deliver the toys.



Jr. High Rally (left)

[Photograph by Delta Moran-Colley] Junior high youth from around the diocese enjoyed a beautiful weekend at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center the first weekend of October. This year, Junior High Youth Rally was postponed from the spring. The theme was GO! It was inspired by the sermons of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

Capes for Kids (right)

[Photograph from the All Saints Facebook Page] In October, the youth and ECW of All Saints', River Ridge, partnered together to create and donate superhero capes for kids who are living in shelters.



Sites, Sounds, and Smells of Christmas (left)

[Photograph by Judy Weber, Trinity, Morgan City] On December 17, Trinity Church, Morgan City, opened their doors for people to stop and focus on the "reason of the season." The tour began in the sanctuary to view artful displays of nativity scenes and listen to Christmas hymns. It concluded in the parish hall with cookies, hot chocolate, and a chance to make Christmas ornaments.

Bishop Thompson Visited Japan (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Bishop Thompson has recently returned from a week long trip to the Anglican Diocese of Tohoku in Japan. The Diocese of Louisiana and the Diocese of Tohoku have been partners in prayer for over 60 years. Our two dioceses have not only prayed for each other on a daily basis, we have stood by each other's side after recent natural disasters, namely Hurricane Katrina and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. Pictured with Bishop Thompson is Bishop John Hiromichi Kato and parishioners from Tohoku.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE



St. Martin's Food Drive (left)

[Photograph from the St. Martin's Episcopal Church Facebook Page] In November, parishioners from St. Martin's, Metairie, collected food and socks to donate to the Rebuild Center in New Orleans, a coalition of Catholic and faith based organizations providing services to the homeless and others in need.

Trinity Wall St Volunteers (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] From August 1-7, parishioners from Trinity Wall St in New York returned to New Orleans for their yearly service trip. This year they worked on landscaping at St. Mark's, Harvey, and assisted with the summer camp programs at St. Anna's and All Souls in New Orleans.



Interfaith Service for the Homeless (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] The Ecumenical Commission of the Diocese of Louisiana participated in the Interfaith Prayer Service for the Homeless on December 7 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in New Orleans. The Rt. Rev. Duncan Gray, St. Paul's, delivered one of the reflections in the service.

NAES Conference Held in New Orleans (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey] The New Orleans Marriott Hotel was the location of the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES) Biennial Conference held November 9-11. Representatives from Episcopal Schools from across the country met to discuss innovation, improvisation, entrepreneurship, and an ever-widening understanding of equity, justice, and diversity in Episcopal schools. On Thursday evening, the Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson celebrated the Holy Eucharist. Choirs from St. Matthew's School, Houma, St. Paul's Episcopal School, New Orleans, Trinity School, New Orleans, and Ascension Episcopal School, Lafayette, led by Anais St. John of Trinity, New Orleans, provided the music for the service. Faculty and clergy from several local schools provided their expertise in leading workshops for the conference.

Letter from the Bishop on the Closing of All Souls Episcopal Church

The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a season for everything under the sun. Everything has a life cycle, even churches.

Over the past couple of years, All Souls Episcopal Church and Community Center has struggled to cover its overhead costs, cultivate outside funding sources and sustain its ministries. During this period of time, the diocese has also been involved in negotiations surrounding the lease agreement between Walgreens and the corporation that owns the property where All Souls is located. I continue to be grateful to our chancellor, Cove Geary, for leading us through the process and to Walgreens for their incredible generosity. The end result of these negotiations is that All Souls will have to vacate the property by February 2017.

In light of these complicated circumstances, I have made the difficult decision that All Souls will begin the process of closing.

Since the early days after Hurricane Katrina, the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana and Trinity Wall Street have partnered to sustain and support All Souls and its surrounding community. I am grateful for Trinity's commitment to this ministry and while All Souls will no longer exist in its present form, I am working to ensure that its mission and legacy will live on.

All Souls has made a positive impact on an incredible number of lives. Groups from all over the United States have traveled to the Lower Ninth Ward on mission trips to participate in work groups and teach children enrolled in All Souls' after school program and summer camps. Congregations in our diocese have also given generously. I am thankful for all who have offered their presence, prayers and gifts to help accomplish the work God put in front of us.

Before the doors are closed we will gather once again at All Souls to give thanks for her ministry. More information regarding this service will follow soon. For now please keep the community of All Souls in your prayers.

Peace,

The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr.
Bishop of Louisiana

Bishop's Journal: May 9, 2016— December 7, 2016

May 9: Today was my day off. I was also fitted for my new hearing aids. What a grace it is to be able to hear clearly.

May 10: The day began with our weekly staff meeting and then I drove to Baton Rouge for an early afternoon meeting with Dr. W. Joseph Hicks regarding the Racial Reconciliation Committee. Later I attended the St. James' Place board meeting. The day ends with dinner with Marvin McLennon, the Diocesan Youth Coordinator.

May 11: I dropped my car off at the dealership for some scheduled maintenance and was picked up by Chris Speed who drove to Baton Rouge to meet with the vestry of St. Michael and All Angels. After lunch, I picked up my car and had a meeting with a parishioner interested in discernment. The day ended with me celebrating the Baccalaureate for Episcopal High School. I drove back to New Orleans for the night.

May 12: The day began with Fr. Richard Easterling's annual consultation. Fr. Easterling is also the Dean of Uptown Deanery. Following that meeting I met with Trevor-David Bryan and April Williams for pre-marriage work. I will officiate their wedding in August. I had a lunch meeting with Canon Kellogg and then a phone conference with Bishop Matt Gunter. My last meeting for the day was with Fr. Stewart Cage and Chris Speed.

May 13: I spent the morning working on my sermon and then drove to SECC for the night and the opening of the Deacons retreat.

May 14: I woke early to work on my sermon and prepare for the Deacons retreat and the Executive Board. I first spent time with the Deacons and then rushed over to the Executive Board meeting. The Executive Board meeting went way too long. I've got to do a better job of moving things along. Two and a half hours is not acceptable for a meeting. I rush to eat lunch and get back with the Deacons. The retreat ends with Eucharist and I head home.

May 15: Rebecca and I drove to Houma for my

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

annual visitation where we celebrated Pentecost. It was a great day to usher in the Holy Spirit. We drove back to New Orleans where I dropped off Rebecca and headed back to the Solomon Center for the SECC Board retreat. We spent time Sunday evening reflecting on who we are and where we want to go in leading the retreat center.

May 16: The retreat continues at the conference center. We made good progress and I feel good about our direction. By two that afternoon, I head back to New Orleans for an appointment.

May 17: Staff meeting began the day followed by a meeting with Fr. Duane Nettles and Jane-Allison pre-wedding planning. The staff had Eucharist together led by Fr. Kellogg. Following lunch with the staff I head to St. Mary of the Pines to see my spiritual director for a brief getaway.

May 18: I see my spiritual director in the morning and then head back to New Orleans for a lunch meeting with the three headmasters of our high schools, Merry Sorrells, Hugh McIntosh, and John Morvant. That meeting is followed by a phone conference with our Canal Street consultant Jerry Henry and Canon Manning. The day ends with a meeting with Kellan Lyman who is going to spend a year doing missionary work in the Philipppians. She is seeking support and I assured her our diocese is very generous.

May 19: Rebecca and I get up extra early to get her to the airport. She is traveling to Oklahoma for a Bishop's spouse retreat. I drop her off and then head to Covington for Christ School's Bacculaureate where I preach and celebrate. After the service, I meet with Fr. Bill Miller. I hurry back to New Orleans where I meet with Cove Geary to signed papers and then with a group of representatives from St. Andrew's school.

May 20: I get up early to work on my sermon and in the afternoon I head to Covington where I take part in the graduation service of Christ Episcopal School. After the service, I drive back to New Orleans.

May 21: I pick up Canon Manning, Canon Kellogg, and Karen Mackey and we head to Baton Rouge where I will officiate the service to receive Fr. John Pitzer into the Episcopal Church. It was a

glorious service and Canon Manning preached a fantastic sermon. We drive back that afternoon to New Orleans.

May 22: Around 8:15 a.m. Fr. Ralph Howe called to tell me Fr. Pitzer was in a car accident last night and was in ICU at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital. My heart is heavy with worry for him and all those involved. I make my visitation to St. Martin's Church where I preach and celebrate, confirm, receive and reaffirm several parishioners. Following the service, I briefly attend the reception and then drive to Baton Rouge to see Fr. Pitzer. I find him better than I had expected and was able to speak with him. I am very pleased and thankful.

May 23: After last week I take the day off and work from the house on several matters.

May 24: The day began with our weekly staff meeting followed by Fr. Jim Morrison's annual consultation. He is doing fine work at St. Andrew's, New Orleans. In the afternoon, Canon Manning and I have a phone conference with Jerry Henry our consultant. He delivered not so good news regarding a capital funds campaign. The day ended with a good meeting with Canon Kellogg, Lance Armstrong, and Mother Dee Dee Estes regarding convention in the fall.

May 25: The day began with a meeting with Mother Kimberly Knight followed by a meeting with Lindsey Ardrey and Trevor-David Bryant regarding the racial reconciliation commission. They have made great strides this year. In the afternoon, Agatha and I spend time catching up on items that need attention. I drove to St. Martin's School for a board meeting followed by their Bacculaureate service.

May 26: The early day began with a phone conference with the Rev. Daniel Heischman, Executive Director of NAES. In the afternoon Fr. Paul Bailey visits for his annual consultation. Fr. Bailey is very active in our diocese and I am grateful for his leadership. This meeting is followed by a brief meeting with Forbes Mann, a Postulant at Sewanee.

May 27: I take the day off.

May 28: I take the first half of the day off. In the evening I conduct the wedding rehearsal for Fr. A J

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

Heine and Shannon Payne.

May 29: Because it is a holiday Sunday I don't have a visitation but in the evening I officiate at the wedding of Fr. A.J. Heine and Shannon Payne and then attend a lovely reception that followed.

May 30: Memorial Day Holiday-office closed.

May 31: I have a high fever and for the first time I call my physician for an appointment.

June 1: Agatha is on vacation and I spend most of the day catching up with correspondence.

June 2: Feeling a bit under the weather. Working from home today.

June 3: I spend the day working on my sermon for Sunday, hoping I can deliver it.

June 4: I have the day off today.

June 5: I drive to St. James for my annual visitation. I don't have any confirmations since that was taken care of earlier. After the service, I had to rush out to catch a plane to Sewanee for a Regents meeting. I arrived at Sewanee late that evening. Today is also my wedding anniversary. I can't remember the last time Rebecca and I were together on this special day.

June 6: Today is a full day of Regent meetings.

June 7: Another full day of important material to go over for the University of the South and for the School of Theology. The day ends with a nice meal with Bishop Dabney Smith, his wife Mary, Bishop Gary Lillibridge and his wife Catherine.

June 8: I got up early and drove to Nashville to catch a plane home to New Orleans. I arrive home beat.

June 9: The day began with a wonderful meeting with Fr. Bill Terry. Fr. Terry continues to carry out strong ministries at St. Anna's. I drive to St. George's for a wedding rehearsal for Fr. Duane Nettles and Mother Jane-Allison Wiggin. Following the rehearsal Duane, Jane-Allison and I have a nice lunch to catch up. I stop by the office to sign some papers and then head home to put the finishing touches on my sermon for the wedding.

June 10: Bishop Gray and I are able to squeeze in a round of golf at the Audubon course but not before a deluge forces us to stop for a nice break.

June 11: The wedding of Duane and Jane-Allison is lovely. It will be nice having Jane-Allison in our diocese as an ordained priest.

June 12–20: Rebecca and I pack up the car and head to Sandestin for a summer vacation. Our children, their spouses, and our grandson Mack join us. It is a joy to have everyone under the same roof even if it is for a short time.

June 21: We have our staff meeting and it is good seeing everyone following my vacation. We celebrate the Eucharist together and then order food so we can all eat together and catch up on what has been going on the past few weeks. Later in the day Dr. Bill Soileau, Interim Director of SECC, comes in to discuss the conference center.

June 22: I have a morning meeting with Ms. Fortunata Jefferson, President of UBE to talk over the National UBE meeting to be held in New Orleans in July. There has been a lot of planning taking place. I drive to Legacy Kitchen where I have lunch with Fr. A J Heine and his two wardens. It is good to hear of the good things taking place at St. Augustine's.

June 23: I have lunch with Chancellor Cove Geary to talk over issues about the Diocese. Later in the day, the Board of Trustees meet to talk about the future investments and who would be helping us.

June 24: I have lunch at Commanders Palace to celebrate the retirement of Linda Bradfield. It is a wonderful celebration.

June 25: Work on my sermon for Sunday.

June 26: My visitation is at Christ Church, Slidell, where I preach, baptize, confirm and receive four individuals. A very nice reception in the parish hall. I leave early to check on Rebecca who is not feeling well.

June 27: I take my day off.

June 28: We have our staff meeting and then I eat lunch with Ann Ball. I am traveling to Japan in October and want to hear about Ann's previous travels and what to expect. I am very excited about

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

meeting the bishop of our companion diocese, John Kato.

June 29: I have a morning meeting with Fr. John Craft concerning maintenance at Holy Comforter. I go home early to pack and drive to Jackson for a long weekend.

June 30 –July 4: In Jackson, Mississippi.

July 5: It is time for journaling and other written material. Spend time writing and calendaring with Agatha.

July 6: Have lunch with Rob Courtney and then do office work and phone calls.

July 7: Drive to Thibodaux to have lunch with the clergy in the Southwest Deanery.

July 8: I have an early morning conference call followed by lunch with staff.

July 9: No meetings today.

July 10: No visitation today. Rebecca and I enjoy worshiping in the congregation.

July 11: Day off. Working and did some cooking.

July 12: Early morning phone conference with CPG then a meeting with Lindsey Ardrey, followed by a doctor's appointment. Drive to Denham Springs to meet with their vestry and then on to Chatawa to meet with my spiritual director.

July 13: Drive to Jackson for a brief pause.

July 14-17: In Jackson.

July 18: Early eye appointment.

July 19: More eye appointments to find out why my sight is blurred.

July 20: Drive to Baton Rouge and meet with the clergy following the shootings. The city is anxious and you can almost feel it.

July 21-24: Drive to Jackson for a quick respite.

July 25: Day off but have a few phone calls to make and receive. Entertain a group of youth from Columbus, MS by cooking hamburgers.

July 26: Our weekly staff meeting begins the day followed by a parishioner interested in the discernment process. Later in the day, I have lunch with Fr. Joe Reynolds, the Interim Rector of St. James, Baton Rouge. In the afternoon, I have several appointments and then a hospital visit before going home.

July 27: Early morning meeting and then phone calls in the afternoon.

July 28: I have meetings throughout the day.

July 29: I have early morning phone calls and then a visit by a former priest.

July 30-31: We are getting ready for the Presiding Bishop and UBE who arrive on Sunday. The service is wonderful and the Cathedral is a great host.

August 1: UBE begins their meeting. I arrive to greet and thank them for choosing New Orleans to hold their gathering.

August 2: Trinity Wall Street is in town for their mission week. We have staff meeting and I participate in a conference call.

August 3: I travel to Baton Rouge to meet at Episcopal High along with other headmasters of our schools. It is a good meeting.

August 4: I participate in the closing of the UBE worship service and then bid them farewell. Later I meet with Maggie Charles from Trinity Wall St.

August 5: I go to St. Mark's Harvey to see the work TWS is doing. I have a wedding rehearsal in the evening.

August 6: I officiate at Trevor and April's wedding then drive to Baton Rouge.

August 7: My visitation is at St. Margaret's in Baton Rouge and it is also Rebecca's birthday. They get wind of her birthday, sing happy birthday and present a beautiful cake. It is a great day.

August 8: I take the day off.

August 9: The day begins with our weekly staff meeting followed by meetings on the hour until 5:30.

August 10: The day begins with a phone conference

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

followed by an early lunch with Fr. Jim Morrison and the new headmaster of St. Andrew's Mel Brown. I work from home and return phone calls.

August 11: I have a light day with one appointment in the morning and one in the afternoon. I work a bit on my sermon.

August 12: I spend the first part of the day working on my sermon and then a meeting with Deacon John Holbert. At noon, I have a long phone conference call regarding All Saints Vicksburg.

August 13: I'm the celebrant for Deacon Ormonde Plater's funeral. Several of the clergy cannot attend due to the flooding beginning to take place in Baton Rouge.

August 14: My visitation is at St. Michael's, Mandeville. I confirm, preach and celebrate. Following there is a very nice reception. I make calls to find out how our clergy are doing in Baton Rouge.

August 15: I have more eye appointments.

August 16: We begin the week with our staff meeting and then I drive to Lambeth House where I preach and celebrate the service and then have a wonderful meal with the residents. In the afternoon, I have a meeting with one of our deacons.

August 17: Canon Manning, Deacon Elaine Clements, Karen Mackey and myself drive to Baton Rouge to tour the damage from the flood. It is a sad sight to behold, so much destruction.

August 18: The day begins with meetings with the former Arch Deacon, Priscilla Maumus, followed by a meeting with Canon Manning. I have lunch with Fr. Corky Carlisle regarding Trinity, New Orleans.

August 19: I'm at home today to work on my sermon.

August 20: I travel to Baton Rouge to attend the funeral for Meg deGravelles. Spent the night in Baton Rouge.

August 21: My visitation is at Trinity, Baton Rouge. I confirm, preach and officiate. It is a good day but what is on people's mind is the flood and taking care of those affected.

August 22: I take some of the day off then go into

the office for a Commission on Ministry meeting followed by dinner with several clergy.

August 23: The day begins with our staff meeting then I have one meeting after another until three in the afternoon. I drive to St. Paul's to meet with their vestry.

August 24: My day begins with an early clergy meeting followed by appointments on the hour until three in the afternoon. I drive to St. Paul's to speak on gun violence. We have a good conversation but it is clear people are fearful of having their guns taken away.

August 25-26: I drive Rebecca to the airport at 6 am to visit with our daughter and son-in-law at their new home in Kansas City, MO. Then drive to Jackson. I pick up supplies that are hard to find such as masks and gloves for mucking out houses.

August 27: Saturday morning I drive through the back roads to St. Francisville to deliver the items and tour the clean-up. So many people are helping. I drive to Denham Springs to see the work at St. Francis and then have lunch with Fr. Mark Holland.

August 28: My visitation is at St. Augustine's, Metairie. I teach Sunday School then confirm, preach and celebrate. Following a very nice reception I travel to the Solomon Center to participate in the closing for Happening where I confirmed one youth. On my way home I drive to the airport where I picked up Rebecca returning from Kansas City.

August 29: My day off and I'm ready for it.

August 30: The day begins with our weekly staff meeting and then I have a few appointments. In the afternoon, I travel to Baton Rouge where I have two more appointments. I stay for the night.

August 31: I have five appointments and then drove back to New Orleans.

September 1: Because it is Labor Day weekend Rebecca and I drove to Jackson for the long holiday.

September 6-10: Canon Kellogg, Rebecca and I fly to Panama at the request of Trinity Wall St. We are there for our Partner's Round Table. We share what is going on in our part of the world. It is a good meeting. Rebecca and I must leave early so I can get

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

to my Sunday visitation.

September 11-13: My visit is with St. Patrick's, Zachary and it is a great day. Following the visitation, I drive to the airport and fly to Sewanee, TN for the Regent's meeting at the University of the South. I'm there for two days then fly back to New Orleans.

September 14-21: The House of Bishops' meeting in Detroit. This is an unusual meeting in that over half of the Bishop's get food poisoning, the Nora virus. I am one of them. I am glad to get home.

September 22: I have some meetings in the morning and then lunch with Canon Manning to catch up on some of our work. That afternoon I drive to Baton Rouge to participate in the service for their new headmaster, Greg Hutchinson. I drive home after the service.

September 23: I spend the morning working on my sermon.

September 24: The Executive Board meets in the morning and then I drive to Baton Rouge to spend the night.

September 25: My visitation is with St. Augustine's, Baton Rouge. It is a small mission but their passion for the Church is evident. I drive back home following a very nice reception.

September 26: I have several doctor's appointments then go home for a nice walk. In the evening, I am invited to go to the Saints Monday night game. It isn't a good night for the Saints.

September 27: Following our staff meeting, Mr. Dennis Bergeron presents me with Vietnam service pin. While I never served in Vietnam, I am a Vietnam Era Veteran. It is a nice visit from one Marine to another. In the afternoon, I have three more meetings.

September 28: Agatha schedules a free day for me but it quickly fills up. I meet with the Uptown deanery and then back to the office to work on my sermon for the evening. I drive to St. John's, Kenner, to confirm several individuals. It is a festive night.

September 29: I drive to St. Martin's School to bless their extended cottage. I always enjoy seeing our schools in action. I leave and go get my haircut

and then participate in a video for Convention. In the afternoon, I have a phone call with our chancellor.

September 30: I have an early flight for Ashville to participate in the ordination of Western North Carolina's new bishop, Jose McLaughlin.

October 1: The service for Bishop José is wonderful. I fly back to New Orleans that evening.

October 2: I don't have a visitation today.

October 3: My day off and it is nice.

October 4: I have staff meeting in the morning followed by several appointments. I order lunch for the staff so we can get caught up on each other's lives.

October 5: I travel to Sewanee for the yearly Trustee's meeting. I have dinner with our seminarians. They seem to be doing well.

October 6: A full day of meetings for Trustees.

October 7: I fly home after our meeting.

October 8: I drove to the Solomon Center for a board meeting. Following the meeting I drive to Denham Springs to see what is going on at St. Francis. Fr. Mark Holland and I have lunch together. I spend the night in Baton Rouge.

October 9: My visitation is at the LSU chapel, St. Albans. As always it is a joy to worship at the chapel. Good things are going on under the leadership of Fr. Drew Rollins.

October 10: I take my day off until 4:00 pm when there is a called Executive Board meeting.

October 11: I have morning meetings and then go home to pack for my trip to Japan.

October 12-19: Japan. It has been quite some time since a Bishop has visited Japan. The trip is long but upon arriving in Sendai I am met by their Bishop and five other individuals. I am immediately drawn to their kindness and genuineness. We drive to the cathedral for dinner and to meet members of the parish. Over the next several days I'm driven around the diocese viewing the damage left by the tsunami. I meet people who continue to be homeless because they lived near the nuclear power plant and they will never be allowed to go within 30 kilometers of the

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

plant. It is very sad yet they continue to go on with their life. Everywhere I go I meet generous people who share with me a bit of their lives. While in Japan I learn how to use my chopsticks better and sit on the floor somewhat better. My hips just don't bend very well. Bishop Kato has been the bishop for a long time and the tsunami has taken a toll on him but he is resilient. It is clear to me he is beloved by the people of Tohoku. I return home on the 19th, tired but very grateful for meeting the people of Tohoku and their Bishop, John Kato.

October 20: I spend the morning trying to regain my bearings from the long flight. I think I've lost a day.

October 21: I go to the office to go through mail and catch up with Agatha and the Canons.

October 22: No appointments.

October 23: My visitation is with St. Anna's where I preach, celebrate and confirm. It is a glorious day. Later, I have dinner with Fr. Corky Carlisle, Fr. Ed Bacon and our spouses. The night is filled with telling stories when we all served together. After dinner, Rebecca and I drive to the airport to pick up Bishop Scott Benhase who is to lead our Presbyters' retreat.

October 24: Bishop Benhase and I travel to SECC to get ready for the Presbyters' retreat. His topic is on leadership as understood through the teachings of St. Benedict. It is a very successful retreat.

October 25: Retreat.

October 26: Retreat ends at noon.

October 27-29: I drive to Jackson for a quick respite of silence.

October 30: My visitation is with All Saints River Ridge. It is a good day

October 31: I have several workmen in the house and then spend time reading.

November 1: We began the week in staff meeting and getting ready for Convention that will be underway in four days. In the afternoon, I am surprised with Ms. Townsend's resignation. I have a phone conference with our chancellor in the afternoon.

November 2: I spend time working on my address

for the convention and in the evening participate in an Interfaith Service.

November 3: In the morning, I have a meeting with Merry Sorrells regarding St. Martin School. The afternoon is filled with pre-convention work.

November 4: Our keynote speaker Bishop Porter Taylor arrives and our convention begins in the afternoon. It is a good beginning.

November 5: Our convention ends with a feeling that we accomplished much. The topic of addiction recovery is well received.

November 6: I drive to Columbus, MS to help my son begin his move to Meridian where he will be the new priest-in-charge at Mediator Episcopal Church.

November 7: The office is closed.

November 8: I travel back from Meridian in time to vote.

November 9: I have an early morning conference call from Trinity Wall Street. The rest of the day is spent helping my new administrative assistant Cassandra Reiger settle in.

November 10: My day begins quickly at 8:00 a.m. and doesn't end until 6:30 that evening. I am the celebrant for the NAES convention being held here in New Orleans. It is also the Marine Corps birthday. Semper Fidelis!

November 11: Conference call early then a meeting. The rest of the day is spent on sermon prep.

November 12: No appointments.

November 13: I have a full day visiting Christ Church, Covington. I preach, celebrate, and confirm for both of their services. I also lead the adult forum. After the work, I am treated to a nice brunch at a local restaurant. I'm happy to see the new energy at Christ Church.

November 14: I travel to Hammond to interview a prospective hire for SECC. As it turns out I hire Tanja Wadsworth as the new Director of the Solomon Center. She has worked for us before and loves the place.

November 15: I travel to Asheville, North Carolina to

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE DIOCESE

meet with Jose McLoughlin the new bishop of Western North Carolina. I will be his coach for the next three years.

November 16: Visit with Jose in the morning then fly back to New Orleans in the evening.

November 17: This morning I'm in the office with meetings, then drive to Jackson to attend the funeral of my father's wife.

November 18: Attend the funeral for Frances Thompson.

November 19: Attend to family matters then return to New Orleans.

November 20: My visitation is with All Souls. It is a hard meeting where I explain to 13 people that we will be closing the church and community center. To my surprise, they are expecting this and relieved to have the burden taken away. Their membership has declined to the point they can no longer care for the ministry.

November 21– 28: I take the week off for Thanksgiving. Our children will be with us for the first time in quite some time.

November 29: I have meetings all day long. In the afternoon, I drive to Baton Rouge to spend the night.

November 30: I have morning meetings then drive to the Solomon Center to meet with Tanja and the staff then drive back to New Orleans.

December 1: I have several meetings in the morning then in the afternoon I go home to work on my sermon for the upcoming wedding. The day ends with the wedding rehearsal for Rebecca Pitre who used to work for the diocese.

December 2: I make a few phone calls in the morning. The day ends with the wedding.

December 3: I travel to the Solomon Center for a meeting with the Racial Reconciliation Commission.

December 4: My visitation is with St. Andrew's, New Orleans. I confirm one and receive another.

December 5: Canon Manning, Canon Kellogg and I drive to All Souls to review what needs to be taken care of before we exit in February. The work will be tremendous. Take the rest of my day off.

December 6: The day begins with our weekly staff meeting.

UPCOMING BISHOP'S VISITATIONS

Bishop Thompson will be on sabbatical from January 1–March 31, 2017. The Rt. Rev. James Brown and the Rt. Rev. Charles Jenkins have graciously offered to supply during this time period.

January

8 at 10:30 am

St. George's, New Orleans (Celebrant: Bishop Brown)

10 at 6:00 pm

Church of the Transfiguration, Angola (Celebrant: Bishop Jenkins)

February

5 at 9:00 am

St. Paul's/Holy Trinity, New Roads (Celebrant: Bishop Jenkins)

12 at 10:30 am

St. Philip's, New Orleans (Celebrant: Bishop Brown)

19 at 10:00 am

Church of the Nativity, Rosedale (Celebrant: Bishop Jenkins)

March

1 at 12:15 PM

Christ Church Cathedral for the Ash Wednesday Service

April

2 at 10:0 am

St. Paul's, New Orleans

9 at 9:00 am

St. Andrew's, Clinton (Palm Sunday)

10 at 11:00 am

Christ Church Cathedral (Chrism Mass)

15 at 7:30 pm

Trinity, Morgan City (Easter Vigil)

16 at 10:00 am

Christ Church Cathedral (Easter Sunday)

22 at 4:00 pm

St. Mary's, Morganza