

The Chapel of the Holy Spirit

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Diocese of Louisiana.

This past year has been a series of challenges and joys for the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. As everyone knows, the Spring semester did not end like we thought it would. As the reality of Covid-19 became apparent and New Orleans was a hot-spot, we faced abrupt changes from in-person gatherings to online. We were set to have a confirmation and two receptions in April, and all of a sudden, we did not know what would be happening. It was incredibly hard for our seniors who found themselves saying goodbye to friends who lived across the country, and they did not know when or if they would see each other again. On top of this, they only had a week to move.

The emotions were high, and we saw our students through this unusual time of transition. They were and are still very close. They adapted to the online formats very quickly and have continued to gather online and maintain their friendships in ways that those of us who graduated before them may never have thought possible.

One of our students, Kiera, who was to be received in April, has also found an Episcopal Church in her home state of New York and has convinced her mother and two sisters to join her. During the lockdown, they would gather with us on Zoom or Facebook for our Chapel services. We look forward to the day that she and her family can be officially received into this branch of the Jesus movement.

As with every church, we have adapted to virtual worship and continue to find safe ways to gather. With restrictions on campus, this fall semester has proven challenging for evangelism. Still, we have maintained a core group of students and look to expand and ramp up evangelism efforts in the Spring.

Through all of this, we have developed stronger ties with faculty and staff at Tulane. We have been helping with childcare for faculty and staff while schools are closed, and that program will wrap up on October 30th. Fr. Lamb is also teaching an Urban Gardening Course in which students help start and maintain gardens at schools and non-profits around New Orleans. This course ties together practical gardening knowledge with ethical questions about sustainability, race, inequality, and environmental consciousness within an urban environment.

Please keep the Chapel in your prayers as we look to transform how we use our facilities to deepen our connection to the communities we serve. The Canterbury House is available again for ministry, and we are thinking through some creative ways to center the space in ministry for students and the University communities we serve. The Spirit is very much alive and moving in our community. We appreciate your prayer and financial contributions to this ministry of the Diocese and the Church's future.