



St. Mary of False River

A Eucharistic Community Since 1728

† St. Mary's Church 1823 • St. Francis Chapel 1738 †



DECEMBER 18, 2011 - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Surprise!

My husband turns fifty this year, and his family traditionally expects a giant surprise party when each of hits the big 5-0. However, I've already informed my in-laws that (1) my husband doesn't want a party and (2) I exhausted my party-planning abilities on our wedding reception: "I'll be incapable of throwing any more parties until 2075." After all, while the moment everyone jumps out and yells "Surprise!" is terrific, it takes a heck of a lot of coordination, work, and careful—often sneaky!—planning to get there. I sometimes wonder if the angel Gabriel was accompanied by a heavenly chorus of angels shouting "Surprise!" to Mary. How shocked she must have this unexpected announcement. The Gospel tells "greatly troubled"—she must have been confused and very afraid, not only at being chosen for such a profound mission, but, also, at the prospect of being an

unmarried pregnant woman in a society that stoned such women to death. Yet behind this "Surprise!" was God's magnificent plan. The surprise was on Mary and on us—that God would dare to become human to bring salvation to all people. Despite her fear, Mary was open enough to trust God's plan and speak the yes that transformed the world. Our preparations for this Great Surprise (better known as Christmas) are ending soon, yet we know the divine plan continues to unfold. God no doubt has plans to surprise us—with comfort in our pain, with a challenge for our growth, with a mission for us to undertake. Will we be open enough to say yes like Mary? And how might our yes transform ourselves, others, or even the world?

JANEL ESKER

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Readings

MONDAY

Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a • Lk 1:5-25

TUESDAY

Is 7:10-14 • Lk 1:26-38

WEDNESDAY

Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a

Lk 1:39-45

THURSDAY

1 Sm 1:24-28 • Lk 1:46-56

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 • Lk 1:57-66

SATURDAY

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

VIGIL MASS

Is 62:1-5 • Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

Mt 1:1-25

SUNDAY

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Is 52:7-10 • Heb 1:1-6

Jn 1:1-18

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Robert H. Berggreen, M.A., M. Ed., M. Div.

Deacon: Mr. Tom Robinson

Parish Ministry: Sr. Mary Anne Hebert, C.S.J.

Dir. of Christian Formation & Youth Minister: Mrs. Emily Froeba

Address: 348 West Main Street, New Roads, Louisiana 70760

Telephone Numbers:

Parish Office: 638-9665

Fax: 638-6346

Rectory: 638-6070

Religious Education Office: 638-6508

E-Mail Address: stmaryfr@bellsouth.net

Web Site: www.stmarysfr.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmarysfr

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday

8:00 a.m. to 12 noon - Friday

Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 7:00 a.m. (St. Francis Chapel)

9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Weekday Mass Schedule:

Monday, Thursday and Friday 7:00 a.m.

Tuesday and Wednesday: 12 noon

Catholic of P.C. School Mass: Check "This Week's Schedule"

Reconciliation: 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday; weekdays 5 minutes before Mass; or by appointment

Children's Church: 11:00 a.m. Mass every Sunday

Preschool of Religion: During 11:00 Mass on 1st & 3rd Sundays

Nursery: During 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sunday Masses

Perpetual Help Novena: Wednesday following 12 noon Mass

Perpetual Adoration: Every hour of every day in Perpetual Adoration Chapel

Anointing of the Sick and Communion for the Sick:

Call parish office to make arrangements

Baptisms: Celebrated monthly except during Lent and Advent. Please contact the parish office;

a seminar for parents and godparents is required.

Marriages: Contact priest prior to making plans; at least six months preparation is necessary.

PARISH REGISTRATION FORMS ARE IN THE REAR OF CHURCH. PLEASE NOTIFY THE PARISH OFFICE IF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGES, OR IF YOU MOVE OUT OF THE PARISH.

THE DEADLINE FOR PLACING ARTICLES IN THE BULLETIN IS WEDNESDAY AT NOON. ARTICLES CAN BE FAXED TO 638-6346, OR E-MAILED TO stmaryfr@bellsouth.net.

FROM THE PASTOR:

Last month we reflected on the angels and saw that they are created spirits without bodies, having understanding and free will. We concentrated on those angels who remained faithful to God, but, we also saw that there were some who did not remain faithful to God. This week, a brief reflection on these latter.

What happened to the angels who did not remain faithful to God? They were cast into hell, and are called bad angels or fallen angels or devils or demons. “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matt. 25:41). They were led by the most excellent of the angels created by God, Lucifer or Satan. They *refused to obey* God when He tested them. “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . . You said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, . . . I will be like the Most High.’” (Isaiah 14:12-14). Jesus said, “I was watching Satan fall as lightning from heaven.” (Luke 10:18).

God did not create devils, but glorious angels. The rebel angels turned themselves into devils by their sin. By one grave sin against God, these angels of light became vile demons and were condemned to hell for all eternity. We should draw a lesson from this as to the evil of sin, and determine never to sin. Not satisfied with revolting against God by sinning themselves, the bad angels try to get mankind, also, to revolt against God by sin.

The chief way in which the bad angels try to harm us is by tempting us to sin. The bad angels *tempt* us and try to draw us away from God. Often the devil appears as an angel of light, and we are tempted by evil which appears good. Under this guise, the devil is most dangerous. “Be sober, be watchful! For your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8-9). Without God’s permission, the devil can do us no harm. God sometimes permits the devil to tempt just people, to cleanse them from imperfections. Our Lord Himself was tempted by the devil. God permitted Job in the Old Testament to be bodily harmed by the devil. Saint Anthony, Saint Teresa, and many other saints suffered from the temptations of the evil one. But, these temptations only drive the just to greater love of God. “The life of man is a warfare.” (Job 7:1).

Do all temptations come from the devils? No, *some* temptations come from the fallen angels, but other temptations come from ourselves and from the persons and things around us. This is what is meant by saying that temptations come to us from the *world*, the *flesh*, and the *devil*. The evil inclinations of our weak and fallen human

nature tempt us to sin. The world, with its sinful wants and vanities, tempts us to sin. The devil goes about continually tempting us, making use of both our nature and the world for his evil purposes.

It important to remember, however, that in itself, temptation is *not a sin*. It becomes sinful only when: (a) we bring it upon ourselves by carelessness or over-confidence; (b) we play with it, take pleasure in it, or yield to it. The greatest saints have often been most strongly tempted. Our Lord even permitted Himself to be tempted. So, we see that temptation is not a sin, because we are not responsible for it.

God allows us to be tempted in order to test us, to let us win an eternal reward. God subjected the angels to a test. Those who passed it are now enjoying Him in heaven, their reward. “Because you were acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove you.” (Tobit 12:13). God permitted the devil to tempt our first parents. Temptations serve to keep us humble. God permits all mankind to have temptations, but never temptation beyond our strength to resist. “God is faithful and will not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

We can always resist temptations. We can always resist them, because no temptation can force us into sin, and God will always help us if we ask Him. The length of time during which a temptation persists does not make it sinful, if we continue resisting it. No temptation can do us harm if we obey God’s laws and keep away from sin. If we resist a temptation, it will ultimately flee from us. When assailed by temptation, we must at once *resist*. It is easier to conquer temptation at the beginning than later on, just as a fire is easier to put out at the onset. Since nothing can be done without divine grace, we must pray. We must imitate the Apostles who had recourse to Jesus when a storm arose. Let us say at once, “Lord make haste to help me!”

And finally, some *remedies* against temptation are: (a) watchfulness and prayer: “Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.” (Matthew 26:41); (b) frequent confession and reception of the Eucharist; (c) devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Guardian Angels; (d) practice of penance and self-denial. The Church, especially during Advent and Lent, encourages us to practice some form of penance.

Msr. Beppien

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

PLEASE REFER TO THE FRONT OF THE BULLETIN FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED MASSES AND SERVICES.

Sun., Dec. 18	11:00 am - Preschool of Religion 11:00 am - Children's Church 6:00 pm - Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group(PO)
Mon., Dec. 19	7:00 am - Mass 7:30 pm - Men's Bible Study (PO)
Tue., Dec. 20	No Elementary PSR 8:30 am - CSPC Christmas Mass (Gym) 12 noon - Mass 5:00 pm - Youth Group - Christmas Caroling 6:30 pm - Choir Practice (CH)
Wed., Dec. 21	10:00 am - Children's Hour (AC) 12 noon - Mass & Novena 6:30 pm - Advent Penance Service (CH)
Thur., Dec. 22	7:00 am - Mass 6:00 pm - St. Francis Chapel Choir Practice (CH)
Fri., Dec. 23	7:00 am - Mass Parish Office Closed
Sat., Dec. 24	2 nd Collection - Diocesan Services collection 12 noon - Adoration Chapel closes for weekend 4:00 pm - Christmas Eve Mass 6:00 pm - Christmas Eve Mass
Sun., Dec. 25	2 nd Collection - Diocesan Services collection 8:00 am - Mass (at St. Mary) 10:00 am - Mass

MASS INTENTIONS

Sun., Dec. 18	Parishioners of St. Mary; John & Elsie Blanchard; Nelsi Bondi; Myles Bueche; Lillian Chustz; Emerson Comeaux; Ida M. David; Emerson Perrault, Jr.; Ivy Robillard; Violet & Chris Robillard; Cile, Gene & Edward Roy; Eldora "Bonnie" Somsen; Sidney Stoute, Jr.; Joseph B. St. Romain; Dr. Bud Weigand
Mon., Dec. 19	Jerry Cagle; Leroy & Audrey Chustz
Tue., Dec. 20	Andrew Mixon
Wed., Dec. 21	Cleveland "Clevy" David; Nolan & Eve Jarreau
Thur., Dec. 22	Claire Langlois; Hilary Langlois, Sr.; A. O. Lindsly, Jr.
Fri., Dec. 23	Allen "Bill" Cline; Ludovic, Adrienne, Gaston, Lionel & Mildred David; Sam & Josie Grezaffi; Allen J. Guidroz; Jack Guidroz & Family; Gladys St. Romain; Lynn Schexnayder; Howard, Greg & Jeff Smith; Eldora "Bonnie" Somsen
Sat., Dec. 24	Albert & Myrtle Aguiard; Louis Aguiard; Marlene Bateman; Lester Bergeron, Sr. & John Dale Bergeron; Bernie & Beatrice Bourgeois; Erlin J. Crochet, Sr.; Jeff David; Vic & Fredda Debetaz; Dan Ewing, Jr.; Joseph Grezaffi; Ted Guidroz; Adolph Jarreau & Beverly J. Guidroz; Lee Hotard; Claude & Anna Belle Hymel; Stella Latham; M/M Robert LeBoeuf; J. P. Maggio, Jr.; Jacques & Isabel Major; Lillian Major & Lisa Dauzat; Nolan & Hazel Miller; Edwin Mix, Sr. & Edwin Mix, Jr.; Virgie Naquin; Benny Pourciau; Blake Prevot; Catherine Russo; Clarence Saizan; Mitzi Saizan; Tony Triola
Sun., Dec. 25	Parishioners of St. Mary; Kyle & Clovis Bergeron; J.C. & Ernestine Bergeron; Myles Bueche; Bill & Jeanette Burkstaller; Jules Cazayoux, Jr.; Joseph & Inez A. Costello; Clevy David; Linda Gail David; Wickliffe & Mildred David; Gassie & Mabel Deville; Whitney Gremillion; Alberice & Lucia Guidroz; Ida Mae & Lawrence Guidroz; Irene Guidroz; James & Renee Guidroz; Queenie Hebert; Lee Hotard; Arthur & Maude Jarreau; Ed Mix; Robert Mougeot; Etienne & Angela Olinde; Francis Patin; Cile, Gene & Edward Roy; V. J. Russo, Sr.; M/M A. K. Smith; M/M F. A. Smith & Kackie Thomas; Jeff Smith; Joane Smith; Horace Swindler, Jr.; Ida Mae & Morgan Vosburg

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

Wednesday, December 21 at 6:30 p.m.
at St. Mary

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE - ALL MASSES AT ST. MARY

Christmas Eve - 4:00 p.m. - Adult Choir
- 6:00 p.m. - Children's Choir
Christmas Day - 8:00 a.m. - St. Francis Choir (at St. Mary)
- 10:00 a.m. - Cantor

Please Note: For the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass, the overflow crowd can participate in the Parish Hall. Mass will be viewed on a large screen and Eucharistic Ministers will distribute Communion there.

MASS SCHEDULE FOR SOLEMNITY OF MARY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31- 4:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 - 7:00 A.M. AT ST. FRANCIS

- 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M. - AT ST. MARY

ADORATION CHAPEL CLOSURES NOTICE

Christmas Closure:

The Adoration Chapel will close at 12 noon on Saturday, December 24, and will reopen at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, December 26.

Solemnity of Mary (New Years) Closure:

The Adoration Chapel will close at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 31, and will reopen on Monday, January 2, at 8:00 a.m.

ADORATION CHAPEL

Adorers of the Perpetual Adoration Chapel attest to the following favors received: "Thank you, Lord, for my sister's full recovery from brain surgery." and "Thank you, Lord, for answered prayers."

CAN YOU WATCH ONE HOUR WITH ME? Committed adorers are needed:

Monday - 2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. (NEEDS PARTNER)
Wednesday - 1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. (VACANT)
Thursday - 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (NEEDS PARTNER)
Saturday - 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (VACANT)

THERE ARE NUMEROUS OTHER TIMES AVAILABLE WHEN PARTNERS ARE NEEDED.

If you can commit to spending one of these hours with Jesus, or serve as a substitute, please call Regina Kott at 638-2972 or Freida Whitney at 638-6508.

STEWARDSHIP OF FINANCE

• Offertory collection last weekend:
Identified Contributors \$ 8,289.00
Non-Identified Contributors 896.00
TOTAL \$ 9,185.00

- Feast of Immaculate Conception collection - \$1,038.00
- Retirement Fund for Religious collection - \$4,478.00

DIOCESAN SERVICES COLLECTION

There is a second collection Christmas Eve and Christmas Day for Diocesan Services. Thank you for your generosity.



YOUTH NEWS

NO YOUTH NIGHT this Sunday, December 18.
Prayers for your exams!

Junior High and High School Youth Christmas Caroling

Tuesday, December 20, starts at Pointe Coupee HealthCare at 5:00 p.m. Bring money for meal.

STEUBENVILLE OHIO

June 28-July 2, 2012! Life changing and fun experience of a trip to Franciscan University campus! Open to current 8th-12th grade teens. All teens and adults must register by JANUARY 5! Turn in form and \$50 deposit to church office. Cost is \$270 for teens and \$170 adults. Financial assistance is available! Don't miss Steve Angrisano, Leah Darrow, Matt Maher, and above all - Jesus Christ! For more info contact Emily at smfryouth@yahoo.com.

RESERVED SEATING FOR 4:00 P.M. CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

Would you like to have reserved seats for the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass? You'll have that chance if you buy a raffle ticket for \$5. There will be seating for four (1/2 pew) on the second row. The drawing will be held on Wednesday, December 21. Proceeds from the raffle will help the Altar Society pay for the missalettes, music books, hosts, wine and candles, and sacramental receptions. Parishioners have received tickets for purchase or sale in the mail.

You are reminded that all Christmas Eve Seating Raffle monies and raffle stubs must be turned in to the Parish Office no later than Monday, December 19, at 4:00 p.m. The drawing will be held after the 12 noon Mass on Wednesday, December 21. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Donations for Christmas Flowers are being accepted. Please place your donation in the envelope provided with your December offertory envelopes. If you do not receive envelopes, just place your donation in an envelope and mark it "For Christmas Flowers" and place it in any Sunday collection, or in the Parish Office mail slot.



FIRST TIME EVER: CATHOLIC ADS

AIRING NATIONALLY ON PRIME-TIME NETWORK TV

On December 16, CatholicsComeHome.org began airing Catholic TV ads nationwide, inviting relatives, friends, and others to return home to the Catholic church. Help now to usher in *the largest family reunion in Church history!* Pray and spread the word by sharing this link with all Catholics you know: www.CatholicsComeHome.org/Advent.

Visit the Holy Land with Father Paul Counce

There are only a few seats left for our upcoming 10 Day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land February 28 - March 8, 2012, led by Father Paul Counce, sponsored by The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. This Pilgrimage will visit historic places and sacred sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Jordan Valley, Nazareth, Tiberias, Capernaum, Haifa, and Caesarea. This trip includes first class hotels, round trip airfare from New Orleans and much more. For further information and a brochure, please call Lennette Lasseigne in the Stewardship Office of the Diocese of Baton Rouge at 225-336-8787.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Couples who celebrated their Wedding Anniversaries in 2011 for their 25th, 50th, 65th, or above, will be honored at the 4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass on Saturday, December 31. If you would like to be recognized at this Mass and did not receive a letter, please call the Parish Office at 638-9665 no later than Tuesday, December 20.

SOCIAL CONCERNS CORNER

SOCKS FOR SENIORS

We will be collecting **SOCKS FOR SENIORS** for area nursing home residents and for St. Mary's homebound parishioners this month to help them keep warm. Collection boxes can be found in church, the Adoration Chapel and the Parish Office.



BISHOP'S RESPECT LIFE RALLY

Sunday, January 8 • 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Main Auditorium of the Catholic Life Center

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Shenan Boquet

Bible crafts for children 7 years and younger during keynote speech. For more information, contact Shannon Baldrige at Diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life 242-0323 or sbaldrige@diobr.org.

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT

ST. MARY CHURCH "SUNCATCHERS"



The Knights of Columbus are selling stained glass "suncatchers" of St. Mary Church. They can be purchased at the Parish Office or from any K.C. Member for \$10. Please support our Knights of Columbus in this important fundraiser.

FR. BOB KONOPA'S BOOK STILL AVAILABLE

Copies of Fr. Bob Konopa's book - *God, You Must Have Me Confused with Someone Else: Seeing What I was Missing* - are still available and can be purchased at the Parish Office during normal working hours. The price of the book is \$11.95. This book is filled with many stories, true stories, which make its message more real, relevant and meaningful to a wide range of readers. (Fr. Bob Konopa, OFM is the Franciscan priest who was stationed here July - September 2009 when Fr. Bob Stine was on sabbatical leave.)

VOCATIONS

From the angel Gabriel, Mary heard God's plan for her life and she said, "Yes!" and so the Savior came into the world. Pray to know God's will for your life so as to help bring Jesus to our world. If you think God is calling you to a Church vocation, call Msgr. Berggreen at 638-9665, or you can call or e-mail Fr. Matt Lorrain at 225/336-8778, mlorrain@diobr.org, or visit www.diobr.org/vocations.