



April 19, 2026 | VOLUME 56 NUMBER 16 | Third Sunday of Easter

LORD JESUS, OPEN THE SCRIPTURES TO US;
MAKE OUR HEARTS BURN WHILE YOU SPEAK TO US.



A Letter From Our Deacon



Apostolic Mission

The Sunday readings today and throughout all of the Easter season will include excerpts from the book of the Acts of the Apostles to give us a glimpse of what life in the early church was like just after the death and resurrection of Christ. As a backdrop, it is important to note that the historical setting is within the Roman Empire, a culture that had a god for almost anything you can imagine. The Apostles and the early church were not only trying to convince the Jews of that time of the resurrection of Jesus but they were also in opposition to the Roman way of life of multiple gods. Within their lifetime, they would see the destruction of the Jewish temple, the center of the Jewish faith and a representation for the Jews of the whole of creation on earth.

Have no fear though, we have the benefit of seeing how this story progresses through history with the fall of the Roman Empire and the gradual, but consequential, rise of Christianity in the Western world, so much so that most of our present-day economic, political, and social life was inspired by Christian principles. This “Christendom” age began with the emperor, Constantine, making it the official faith of Rome in the 4th century and continued into the 20th century. Sadly though, in 1974, Archbishop (soon to be Saint) Fulton Sheen declared that we are “at the end of Christendom.” Pope Francis similarly declared that “Christendom no longer exists!”

If the Apostles and the early church took us from Apostolic Mission to Christendom, and now Christendom is behind us, then where are we today? It is not difficult to see that our culture today mimics the Roman Empire with our own gods such as misused science and technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), self above others, abortion, etc. If we are going to overcome these false gods to maintain a church centered on Christ, then we need to think more like the Apostles and acknowledge that we are yet again in an age of Apostolic Mission.

In Apostolic Mission, we can’t depend only on the hierarchy of the church, the clergy, alone to devise all the pastoral and evangelistic strategies that are needed. We must all be engaged to bring Christ to others. A key teaching of Vatican II is that the laity (all the non-ordained) in the church are “co-responsible with bishops, priests, and religious for Christ’s mission on earth.”

It is my prayer that as we progress through this Easter season, we, the Body of Christ, are inspired by the readings from scripture that the Church provides and are moved to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles and the early church to bring Christ to the world, or at least our little part of Baton Rouge!

He is Risen!

Deacon Paul

The 45th Annual St. Thomas More Parish Festival is only TWO weeks away!

Eagles Ranch will be here before you know it! The excitement is palpable and you will begin to see the campus transform each day. The STM Festival Committee is looking forward to seeing the months of preparation come to fruition and hope you will appreciate the efforts in continuing to improve the festival experience.

The Festival Committee asks for your help the week of setup - each day, help is needed to set up the games, booths, tents, and all else. The annual **Set Up Saturday** begins with a prayer on Saturday, April 25, at 7:30 a.m., and work starts after prayer and breakfast. We invite you to help with the setup. For the remainder of the week, crews will begin to work each evening at 4 pm. Once the closing ceremonies end on May 3, help is also needed to take it all down!

Festival programs will be available online at stmfestival.com and at the main entrance of the church after Masses next weekend. They will contain menus, booth information, and the full entertainment schedule.



stmfestival.com

* **Ride bracelets and merchandise may be purchased in the Activity Center** from 7 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. on Thursday (4/30) and Friday (5/1). This is your last chance to buy them before the festival starts!

* **Eagle Bands – NEW THIS YEAR** – Tap & Go RFID wristbands are replacing Festival Bucks as the cashless payment option for the STM Festival food, drink, and game booths on the grounds. STM Eagle Bands will be provided to festival attendees; attendees will upload funds via an online portal (or via cash deposit at a designated spot). There is a one-time \$3 activation fee when adding funds via online deposit or credit/debit card. Eagle Bands will be given out in advance in the church office through noon on Friday, May 1, or in the Activity Center on April 30 or May 1. Eagle Bands will also be available for pick up on the field (and uploaded with cash and credit/debit cards) throughout the weekend. Eagle Bands will be scanned for payment at each booth. Credit/debit cards will be accepted at the Beer Booth.

WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS:

Friday, May 1: 5 pm Opening prayer & rides begin; 7 – 10 pm Pants Party; 11 pm Field Closes

Saturday, May 2: 11 am Rides open; 12-2 / 3-5 pm Bingo; 3- 6 pm Mike Broussard & the Night Train; 7-10 pm Blue Crab Redemption; 11 pm Field Closes

Sunday, May 7: 11 am Rides open; 12 pm Student Performances, 1-3 pm Bingo, 4 pm Raffle Drawing and Closing Ceremony

The **Sweets Booth**, under the big tent this year, requests delicious sweets for the festival weekend. This is an easy way to volunteer your time (and maybe a secret talent). Bake or make a batch of cupcakes, cookies, dessert bars, cakes, pies, sugar-free items, fudge, pralines, Mississippi mud, banana pudding, etc. Sweets can be dropped off on Friday, May 1, from 7:20 a.m. - 8 a.m. in front of the church Activity Center, or anytime throughout the weekend at the booth. Contact Megan Campagna via email: mscampagna@cox.net, by phone: 225-276-1257, with any questions!

The **Plant Booth** asks for your generosity in the form of plant donations to sell at the booth during the weekend. Plant donations can be dropped off at the Plant Booth right before the festival on Friday, May 1. Contact Sterling or Liz Core at 936.5759 for more information.

The **Book Booth** is returning in 2026! You can drop off donations in the Book Bins around campus or bring them directly to the church office. Contact Susan Weber at 225-907-4175 or Shari Ashe at 225-205-8486 to ask questions or to schedule a donation drop-off. The Book Booth will be in the STM Gym Lobby throughout the 2026 STM Festival.

The most important part of the festival is YOU! Not only is the festival for you and the STM Church community, but it cannot happen without YOUR help. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please email stmchurchfestival@gmail.com. The signup genius is on <https://www.stmfestival.com/volunteer>.

FESTIVAL RAFFLES: You can still purchase raffle tickets online until 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 3, or in the Raffle/Merchandise Booth throughout the festival weekend. Take a chance to win one of these fabulous prizes:

- The \$10,000 Raffle: SIX winners will be drawn (1) \$10k, (2) \$1,000, (1) \$500, and (2) \$250. Only 400 Tickets will be sold! \$100 per ticket.

- The Big Ticket Raffle: Win a \$2,500 farm-to-table beef package featuring locally sourced cuts of your choice, professionally processed and packaged, plus a deep freezer included.

- The Cash Raffle includes four prizes: \$3,000, \$1,000, \$500, and \$250; \$10 per ticket.

To purchase raffle tickets before festival weekend by check (made out to STM Festival) or (exact) cash, visit the church office. You may also contact the following raffle volunteers to purchase tickets: for cash or big-ticket raffles, contact Lisa Johnson, 225-802-3222, and for \$10,000 raffle tickets, contact Dana Hebert at 225-275-0979 - - only 400 \$10K tickets will be sold.

Raffle tickets will be sold after all Masses next weekend, April 25-26.

Fall 2026 Confirmation Registration

Registration for 7th and 8th graders for Fall 2026 Confirmation opens April 30 and will close July 17.

Important: A mandatory parent meeting will be held on July 26, 2026. Parents are asked to attend to receive important information about the program, schedules, and preparation requirements.

Students and parents are encouraged to register early to ensure a smooth start to the Confirmation process. For questions or more information, please contact Bridget Day in the church office at 225-275-3940 or dayb@stmbr.org.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

When I first read Homer's *Odyssey* as a teenager, one scene captured my imagination: Odysseus finally returning home after 20 years, yet no one recognized him. Disguised as a beggar, he speaks with his wife, his son, and even his enemies. He is fully present, yet hidden. Only at the right moment does he reveal himself, and everyone realizes he has been with them all along. I was struck by the mystery that he could be so close to his loved ones, and yet they simply could not identify him.

A similar mystery is at the heart of today's Gospel. Two disciples walk the road to Emmaus with Jesus, but "their eyes were prevented from recognizing him." (Luke 24:16) He listens, teaches, and eats with them, yet they remain blind until he breaks the bread. Suddenly their eyes are opened — and at that very moment, he vanishes. His disappearance is not absence. Rather, it is revelation. The Risen Lord is now present in a new way, in the breaking of the bread and in the life of His Church.

Faith is this shift of vision. Instead of searching for a visible Jesus as if he were absent, we learn to recognize him unveiled in hidden ways — in Scripture proclaimed, in the Eucharist, in the sacraments, in the very life of the Church. And what is true of him is true of us. Just as he disappears into the mission of his Body, we too are meant to be hidden in him. When we live hidden in Christ, we are seen for who we really are.

— Father John Muir, ©LPi



Help STM School by donating Community Coffee proof-of-purchase labels! Drop off your labels at the school or church offices — all year long!

MASS INTENTIONS

Tuesday, Apr. 21 - 6 p.m.: John Hubbs, Mona Villemarette, Jack Bonaventure
Wednesday, Apr. 22 - 12 p.m.: John Hubbs
Thursday, Apr. 23 - 8:45 a.m.: Holy Souls in Purgatory
Friday, Apr. 24 - 12 p.m.: Mary Lee and Anthony Culotta
Saturday, Apr. 25 - 4:30 p.m.: Thomas Kleinpeter
Sunday, Apr. 26 - 8 a.m.: Carol Speyrer; **10 a.m.:** STM Families, Friends, and Neighbors; **5 p.m.:** Holy Souls in Purgatory

ACTIVE DUTY

MILITARY PRAYER LIST

Please remember in your prayers:
Capt. Austin Starks, PFC Alyssa Richardson, SSG Brian Edwards, SPC Havyn Henley, PO3 Tytan Henley, MAJ Nate Conlon, MASA Landry Helmke, E-5 David Meyers, SGT Nicholas Lee, SSgt Carlos Burn, CPO John W. Arceneaux
(Add/edit: receptionist@stmbr.org)

PRAYER LINE FOR IMMEDIATE PRAYER REQUESTS

For serious or urgent prayer requests, call Sharon Hebert at 225.978.1246 (leave your name and phone number if there is no answer), or send a request by email to kennyshar69@att.net.

PRAYER LIST FOR THE SERIOUSLY ILL

Our prayer list is being refreshed to ensure it remains current. If you would like to add the name of an immediate family member, please contact Daphne in the church office after receiving permission to have their name shared publicly. **The new prayer list will begin running in the Apr. 26 bulletin.**

Vacation Bible School Registration is Open!



Get ready for an unforgettable adventure at Rainforest Falls, June 15–19! Step through the mist into a vibrant rainforest of waterfalls, towering trees, and colorful creatures. Kids will explore the nature of God, grow in faith, and discover what it means to be rooted in a relationship with their Creator.

Children entering kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join. Rising sixth graders and older, as well as adult volunteers, are encouraged to help as junior leaders, sharing their time and faith while supporting the children. A nursery will be available for children over the age of ONE whose parents are volunteering at VBS.

Children registered for STM Summer Camp do not need to sign up or pay separately; their VBS registration is included as part of summer camp.

Adult volunteers must have Child Protection certification. For more information, contact Bridget Day in the church office at dayb@stmbr.org.

Participants will enjoy Bible stories, music, crafts, and games while making lasting friendships in a fun, faith-filled environment.

Register today at stmbr.org/news/vbs.

Join us at Rainforest Falls—where faith flows, roots grow deep, and hearts are refreshed!



JUNE 15-19, 2026

9 AM - 12 PM

STMBR.ORG/NEWS/VBS





ST THOMAS MORE
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Enroll Now
for 2026-2027

stmbr.org/apply

Limited availability for qualified candidates
in PK3 through 8th grade and
ACCESS Special Education Program (2nd - 8th)

Schedule your private family tour
at stmbr.org/tourSTM



11400 Sherbrook Dr. • Baton Rouge, LA 70815 • 225-275-2820



The Story That Never Ends

The biggest mistake we can make as Christians is to think that the Resurrection is the end of the story.

Christ gave us everything. He gave us “happily ever after.” But what do you do with everything? What do you do with “happily ever after?” What do you do with the Resurrection? What do you do with salvation?

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Eddie Martin

Permanent Deacon

Rev. Mr. Joe Scimeca

Permanent Deacon

Rev. Mr. Paul Soileau

Administration

Ms. Sarah Neau

Formation/Liturgy

Mrs. Tricia Greely

Religious Education

Ms. Bridget Day

Executive Secretary

Mrs. Ellen Guidry

Receptionist

Mrs. Daphne Bihm

Music Director

Mrs. Mallory Sollie

Sacristan

Mrs. Kay Fetterman

Maintenance

Mr. Alex Ho

Custodial

Mr. Roosevelt Hamilton

Mr. Rommell Richard

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

In a caring environment

dedicated to celebrating the Catholic faith

and modeling the life of Jesus Christ,

St. Thomas More Church provides worship,

education, ministerial and social opportunities

for the spiritual growth of the parish family.

Stay connected!



STM website: stmbr.org



facebook.com/stmchurchbr



Sign up for the e-newsletter
on our parish website, under
Links/Resources



[youtube.com/
stthomasmorebatonrouge](https://youtube.com/stthomasmorebatonrouge)

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

11441 Goodwood Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70815

stmbr.org | Office Phone: 225-275-3940

Office Hours: Mon.- Thurs.: 8 am - 12 pm and 1 - 5 pm; Fri.: 8 a.m. - 12 pm

DAILY MASSES

Tuesday: 6:00 pm; Wednesday: 12 noon (Rosary @ 11:30 am)
Thursday: 8:45 am; Friday: 12 noon (6 pm during Lent)

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday: 4:30 pm Vigil; Sunday: 8 am, 10 am, and 5 pm

RECONCILIATION

Tuesdays of Lent from 5:00 - 5:45 pm; Wednesdays from 11:15 - 11:45 am
Thursdays from 8:00 - 8:30 am; Saturdays from 3:15 - 4:15 pm
- and by appointment -

Emergencies After Hours:

Please call 225.275.3940 and follow voicemail instructions