

The TOWER

Serving St. Thomas More Catholic Church Since 1970

August 9, 2026 | VOLUME 56 NUMBER 32 | Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



A Letter From Our Pastor

Trust in God

It can be very difficult to step out of our comfort zone and into a challenging situation. Peter had the zeal to join Christ and, for a short while, walked on water. But the realization of what he was doing, or more accurately, what God was doing through him, was too much for him, and down he went.

Why do we not trust in the works of God in our lives? Did He not promise we would do the great works He was doing and more? If you are like Peter and me, it may be because you are too focused on your failures and past sins. Never forget, every saint has a past and every sinner a future.

Also note that there are two instances in which Jesus calms the apostles' fears while they are on the lake. Today's, and the instance where Jesus is asleep in the boat. In both instances, it seems as though God is absent and unaware of the trouble the boat is in. In both instances, He steps up, removes all fear, and instills tranquility on the sea and in the hearts of his Apostles.

The boat can represent the Church, the ark that carries God's people through the travails of every generation, including ours. It has a particular message for us today in a society that is turning away from Christian faiths of every stripe and seeking fulfillment in empty and shallow worldly pursuits. Has God abandoned us? Is He asleep in the hull?

Let us learn to trust in God, even when it appears the ship is going down. Let us never forget He has not and will never abandon us. Maybe it is you and me that He is calling to step out onto the troubled sea and accomplish His works. The Church has always had challenges to



confront; let us embrace and trust in God as we confront those of our day. We must all focus on what we have control over; pour ourselves completely into whatever Christ is calling each of us to. Let us have no doubt He can and does use each of us, despite our past failings, to do great things. Let us pray for our Church, especially for all those in positions of leadership, as God continues to guide his ark over troubled waters.

Smooth sailing to all, and let us trust always!

Blessings,
Fr. Eddie

Blessing of the Backpacks, Student-Led Mass & Fellowship – This Weekend!

Join us this weekend, Aug. 8-9, as we celebrate the beginning of a new school year! Students of all ages are invited to bring their backpacks to Mass for a special blessing as we pray for a safe, successful, and faith-filled school year.

Our 10:00 a.m. Mass will be student-led, and all are invited to stay afterward for a Back-to-School Fellowship hosted by the Catholic Daughters. It's a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with parish friends, welcome new families, and celebrate the start of another school year together.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Southeast Baton Rouge Coalition **St. Jean Vianney St. Thomas More St. Patrick**

Retreat Registration now open!



Men's ACTS Retreat #4: October 8, 2026 - October 11, 2026

**First Come/First Served
Home parishes Preference**

Men's Link to Register:
<https://forms.gle/6wV7k1CanEwo82br6>

Questions: Contact Retreat Director:
Kerry Gaspard
Enter email kerrypgaspard@gmail.com



What is an ACTS Retreat?

An ACTS Retreat is a parish-based event which offers parishioners an opportunity to experience the love of Jesus and in turn foster a desire for intentional discipleship. ACTS Retreats are given by parishioners for parishioners, with support of parish clergy, and in this way, serve to build Christian community within the parish.

ACTS is an acronym based on the activities and fruits of the retreat.

Adoration - Responding through prayer & worship to receiving God's gifts of grace, mercy, and love
Community - Participating in the One Body of Christ as Church
Theology - Deepening our relationship with God in order to better understand & fulfill His will for our lives
Service - Answering the call to discipleship by following the model Christ gave us.

The Retreat Experience:

While utilizing prayer, service, and teaching, the ACTS Retreat meets people where they are in their spiritual journey and invites them to experience God in a manner that is both personal and communal. In this way, the ACTS Retreat fulfills the mission of "Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ among Catholic Communities through ACTS."

It's a Spiritual Reflection & Spiritual Surrender:

The ACTS Retreat experience is rooted in the Paschal Mystery in that retreatants are invited to reflect on the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout the weekend, they are invited to prayerfully consider how they can respond to His love by spiritually surrendering to Jesus in order to have new life with Him.

**get
YOUR
TICKETS**



**STM
AUCTION**

**SATURDAY
AUGUST 22, 2026**

STMBR.ORG/AUCTION



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Needed

Throughout the history of the Church, the ministry of distributing Holy Communion has developed to meet the needs of God's people. Today, qualified laypeople may be appointed by the pastor to serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, assisting the ordinary ministers—bishops, priests, and deacons—in the distribution of the Eucharist.

St. Thomas More is always grateful to welcome new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. This ministry is open to confirmed Catholics in good standing who have a deep love for the Eucharist and a desire to serve. Extraordinary Ministers help foster a reverent celebration of the Mass by distributing Holy Communion with faith, dignity, and joy.

While many ministers serve during Mass, others also bring Holy Communion to parishioners in hospitals, nursing homes, and to the homebound, extending the care and presence of Christ beyond our church walls.

We have a particular need for Extraordinary Ministers at the 5:00 p.m. Sunday Mass and encourage those who regularly attend that liturgy to prayerfully consider serving.

If you feel the Holy Spirit may be calling you to this ministry, please contact Deacon Paul Soileau at soileaup@stmbr.org

Thinking About Becoming Catholic?

Interested in learning more about the Catholic faith?

OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) is for adults and children (age 7+) who want to become Catholic, Christians from other denominations seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, baptized Catholics who still need First Eucharist and/or Confirmation, and anyone wishing to deepen their faith.

Introductory Meeting

Tuesday, August 25

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Mother Teresa Room

We are also seeking volunteers to serve as catechists, sponsors, and hospitality ministers for the OCIA program.

For more information or to register, contact Tricia Greely at greelyt@stmbr.org or call the parish office at 225-275-3940.

Sacramental Preparation for First Reconciliation & First Eucharist – Registration Open

Preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist is an exciting milestone in your child's faith journey. By registering for Sacramental Preparation, parents agree to:

- Bring your child to Mass regularly and model active participation in Sunday worship and Holy Days of Obligation.
- As the first teachers of the Catholic faith, study with and prepare your child for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist using the provided resources and complete all assigned materials.
- Attend both the First Reconciliation and First Eucharist parent preparation meetings.

Please Note:

Children must have completed 1st Grade Religious Education through either a Catholic school or a Parish School of Religion (PSR) before preparing for these sacraments.

If your child is not enrolled in a Catholic school, you must register separately for Parish School of Religion (PSR) in addition to Sacramental Preparation. PSR registration and workbooks are separate from Sacramental Preparation.

Sacramental Preparation takes place in the parish where your family is registered. If you are not registered at STM, your child may still receive the sacraments here with written permission from your home parish's pastor.

If your child was baptized outside of STM, a copy of their baptismal certificate is required.

Registration Ends: September 1 | Registration Fee: \$40.00 | Visit stmbr.org/news/psr

Parish School of Religion 2026-2027 - Registration Open

STM's Parish School of Religion (PSR) provides Catholic faith formation for children attending public schools or non-Catholic private schools.

- Grades 1–5 participate in a home-based program using textbooks and online assessments.
- Second-grade students preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist must also register separately for Sacramental Preparation.
- Grades 6 and above attend in-person classes as part of their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Registration Fee: \$40.00

Registration Deadline: September 1

To register, visit: stmbr.org/news/psr

Outdoor Mass & Parish Picnic

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25

SAVE THE
DATE



KICKOFF!



*Join us
for mass, girl dinner, and meeting*



*Tuesday, August 18, 2026
6 pm Mass*

*followed by dinner and meeting
in the Activity Center*



girl dinner: (noun) a viral social media trend describing a quick, low-effort meal made of random snack foods instead of a formal meal. It requires zero to minimal prep work—think opening packages rather than using a stove.

Faith. Friends. Potluck.

*Food and drink can be dropped off in the
Activity Center prior to Mass*



All are welcome! Come get involved!

MASS INTENTIONS

Tuesday, Aug. 11 - 6 p.m.: Tom Webre, Roy Tucker, Stephen Thomas

Wednesday, Aug. 12 - 12 p.m.: Holy Souls in Purgatory

Thursday, Aug. 13 - 8:45 a.m.: Joseph Abadie, Barry Sanders

Friday, Aug. 14 - 12 p.m.: Holy Souls in Purgatory

Saturday, Aug. 15 - 4:30 p.m.: STM Families, Friends and Neighbors

Sunday, Aug. 16 - 8 a.m.: Mitch Rabalais, Jim Stiglets, Carolyn and John Perkins, Frances Breaux;

10 a.m.: Mark Midboe; **5 p.m.:** Holy Souls in Purgatory

SANCTUARY LIGHT

The sanctuary light in the church will burn in memory of Barry Sanders the week of Aug. 2 as requested by his family.

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

Kindly remember in your prayers the following individuals who are seriously ill: Louis LaBauve, Becky Cline, Tim Bonin, Joe Bonin, and Karen White.

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, and LCpl Joseph Lemoine.

(Add/edit: receptionist@stmborg.org)

CHURCH STAFF

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Rev. Eddie Martin

Permanent Deacon

Rev. Mr. Joe Scimeca

Permanent Deacon

Rev. Mr. Paul Soileau

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You're invited to the
**Magnificat of Baton Rouge
Prayer Breakfast**

Featured Speaker:

Ryan Gaudet

Saturday, August 29, 2026

Oak Lodge Reception & Event

2905 Westfork Dr., BR

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Ryan Gaudet, a second-year seminarian at Notre Dame Seminary and former summer seminarian with our parish family, will share his inspiring story of faith, conversion, and his call to priesthood.

Register:

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/prayer-breakfast-13>

or contact Gwen Gillis at 225-505-7050 or Dianne Lencse at 225-235-3021

Experience The Chosen – Season 4 – at STM

Join us as we continue The Chosen, a powerful series on the life of Jesus told through those who knew Him. Directed by Dallas Jenkins, it's the largest crowdfunded TV series ever made.

Details:

Thursdays, Sept. 3-17,

Oct. 1-15, 29 & Nov. 5

10 am – 12 pm

Mother Teresa Room Format:

Watch an episode + guided discussion with Scripture

Cost: Free (registration required) **Register: 225-275-3940** Capacity: Limited to 30 participants

All are welcome—come grow in faith and invite a friend!

Stay connected!



STM website: stmbr.org



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



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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



WHY THE TOWER?

SINCE ITS FIRST PUBLICATION IN 1970, THE TOWER HAS BEEN A FITTING NAME FOR OUR PARISH BULLETIN. IT REFLECTS BOTH OUR PARISH'S PROMINENT THREE-BELL TOWER, A VISIBLE REMINDER OF CHRIST'S CALL TO WORSHIP, PRAYER, AND COMMUNITY, AND THE STEADFAST WITNESS OF OUR PATRON, ST. THOMAS MORE. DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT IN THE TOWER OF LONDON, ST. THOMAS MORE REMAINED FAITHFUL TO CHRIST, CONTINUING TO PRAY, WRITE, AND BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH.

FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY, THE TOWER HAS KEPT OUR PARISH FAMILY INFORMED AND CONNECTED. ROOTED IN OUR HISTORY AND INSPIRED BY THE EXAMPLE OF ST. THOMAS MORE, IT CONTINUES TO SHARE THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH AND ENCOURAGE US TO LIVE THE GOSPEL EACH DAY WITH FAITH AND COURAGE.

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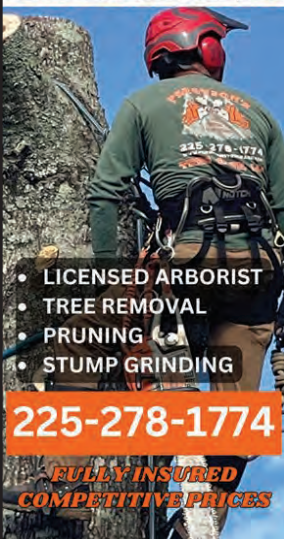
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