

in a
WordTM

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EVERY DAY IS EARTH DAY!

Photo by Father James Pawlicki, SVD

HOLY WEEK IS ALWAYS AN ADVENTURE

by

Father Jerome LeDoux, SVD

Holy Thursday celebrated in the chapel of Our Lady Of Prompt Succor Nursing Home was a first for me, and a welcome one at that. With the Marianites of Holy Cross and a goodly number of the elderly for whom they care, we had a cozy, family-style congregation of folks eager to track the final, sorrowful days of Jesus.

Another first followed that with the doleful ritual of Good Friday, a day so bad that it is called good, thanks to the horrendous but saving passion and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I could easily see myself in the faces and demeanor of the nursing home occupants, slipping gradually, inevitably into the weakness, the physical shortcomings and the numerous inconveniences of old age.

Senescents are one of several groups of people who, by their very condition, can easily relate to Good Friday and the passion of Jesus. Another group consists of those not particularly old but grievously afflicted because of addiction, such as the prescription opioid epidemic that is sweeping the country. You say “Self inflicted?” It is nonetheless just as oppressive and deadly, snuffing out numerous lives every day.

But don’t leave out alcoholics, who outnumber many other groups, gambling addicts who number about 2 million while another 6 million are problem gamblers, and barbiturate addicts – bathroom junkies – who may be the most numerous of all. Barbiturates can be a veritable beast and are very difficult to kick.

Age is often not a factor in other star-crossed groups hounded by sundry illnesses, by the lingering effects of an accident or by congenital diseases or defects that bring mayhem, misery, depression and near hopelessness into their lives. Such folks can say with conviction that most of their life is spent in the travails of Good Friday, not in the triumph of Easter. Yes, they live in the context of Good Friday.

Until Monday of Holy Week, I was scheduled to be “off” on Holy Saturday. But then Father Albert Nunez, pastor of Saint Joseph Church in Plaisance, Louisiana, called, requesting a priest for the Holy Saturday vigil service at his mission church of Saint Ann in the neighboring village of Frilot Cove.

My somewhat dim recollection puts me on a non-ministerial visit to Frilot Cove some fifty years ago. Going online, I saw that sociologist J. Hardy Jones, Jr., in a April 24, 1951

article, “A Study of Racial Hybrids,” describes Frilot Cove as “a color-conscious, isolated rural community of 302 persons with an antebellum culture.” What must one expect 66 years later? With bated breath, I entered Saint Ann Church.

Just about as I expected, the appearance of the folks of Frilot Cove is very similar to that of the Cane River black Creoles of Cloutierville, Louisiana and Belle Isle, Louisiana. Frilot Cove is another of several enclaves of black Creoles. In any case, the Holy Saturday Vigil service, with close to 100 folks in attendance, was quite meaningful, opening another door of black Creole culture in a distinct locale.

Reminiscent of Nathaniel’s question in John 1:45-46 concerning Nazareth, the town of Jesus, we might ask, “Can anything good come out of Frilot Cove?”

Of course. Among the fine people who hail from Frilot Cove, Dominic Carmon, whom I have known since his arrival at Saint Augustine Seminary in Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi in September of 1946 when I was a senior, is a native of Frilot Cove. Dominic was ordained an SVD priest on February 2, 1960, and was ordained an Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of New Orleans on February 11, 1993.

Lying 32.3 miles from Frilot Cove, Basile is a Louisiana town of about 2,000 souls, whose status might be questioned in the same way, “Can anything good come out of Basile?” Of course. Basile is the native town of John Douglas Deshotel who was ordained a priest on May 13, 1978, and was ordained a bishop for the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana on April 27, 2010. He speaks proudly of his native town.

Another Louisiana townlet, Mallet is 26.1 miles southwest of Frilot Cove. “Can anything good come out of Mallet?” Of course. From a great family and people, Curtis John Guillory began his studies at Saint Augustine Seminary in September of 1960, was ordained an SVD priest on December 16, 1972, and was ordained Auxiliary Bishop for the then Diocese of Galveston-Houston on February 19, 1988.

Of similar origins, South Vacherie, a town of almost 4,000 souls, lies 127.1 miles southeast of Frilot Cove. “Can anything good come out of South Vacherie?” Of course. From another great family, James Terry Steib entered Saint Augustine Seminary circa September of 1954, was ordained an SVD priest on January 6, 1967, and was ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Louis, Missouri on February 10, 1984.

INSTITUTE FOR BLACK CATHOLIC STUDIES 2017

Dear Friends of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies:

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 2017 course offerings for the Th.M. degree in pastoral theology and continuing education and enrichment programs.

I am elated by the depth and breadth of the courses that we are offering from “Black Approaches to Theology” to “History of Black Catholicism;” from “The Spirituality of Black Literature” to “Moral Questions in the Black Community,” to name a few of the degree courses. As well as the engaging and enriching courses offered in the Continuing Education and Enrichment Program such as “Pastoring in the Black Catholic Community,” “A Prophetic Word for These Times”, “Nurturing the Psychological Strengths of African Americans,” “A Theology of Black Lives Matter,” “Community Organizing for Justice,” “Evangelization and Catechesis in the Black Community” and many more ...

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Consider registering yourself, parishioners and or friends for the 2017 IBCS summer session today!

The classes are conducted from June 26-July 14, 2017. However, we ask that all degree students and first week C&E students arrive on Friday, June 2 before Noon.

You can find more information and enroll on our website at www.xula.edu/ibcs or by calling the IBCS office at (504) 520-7691 Monday through Friday from 8:30AM- 4:30 PM.

I look forward to personally welcoming you to the “Crescent City” of New Orleans, the most African and Catholic of North American cities!

Hope to see you soon!

Peace and blessings,

Father Maurice J. Nutt, C.Ss.R., D.Min.
Director



XAVIER UNIVERSITY
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**INSTITUTE FOR
BLACK CATHOLIC
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in a word or two

On April 22nd, Earth Day Network (EDN), the global coordinator for Earth Day, will launch its Earth Day 2017 three-year campaign for Environmental & Climate Literacy.

The campaign is focused on promoting mandatory environmental and climate literacy along with civic engagement and sustainable economic development.

Earth Day 2017 will see teach-ins around the world and a March for Science rally on the National Mall that will bring together scientists and supporters to demand that our leaders recognize the scientific truths across all disciplines, including climate change and other environmental issues.

“We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the concepts of climate change and aware of its unprecedented threat to our planet,” says Kathleen Rogers, President of Earth Day Network. “Environmental and climate literacy is the engine not only for creating green voters and advancing environmental and climate laws and policies but also for accelerating green technologies and jobs.”

Using the teach-in concept deployed at the very first Earth Day in 1970, EDN will build an international movement with the following goals:

- Educating citizens about the environmental and climate issues they face and creating a world that internalizes environmental values and develops sustainable communities for all people
- Mobilizing a global citizenry to proclaim the truth of climate change.
- Empowering the public with the civic engagement and public outreach skills necessary to take action for the environment in their local communities.
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In 2020, Earth Day will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Our five-year campaign, which began in 2015, continues to build on these efforts. Our goals by Earth Day 2020 include:

- Continuing to build the world’s largest environmental service project, A Billion Acts of Green with the goal of reaching 5 billion acts by 2020
- Planting 7.8 billion trees, one for each person on Earth, starting in 2016.
- Launching our 2017 campaign for global climate and environmental literacy

“As we face the realities of climate change – unpredictable temperatures, endangered species, and an increasing number of severe weather events – ensuring that our children are prepared to become environmentally literate citizens is more essential than ever,” said Dan Abrams, Director of Earth Day.

“Earth Day Network is the largest recruiter to the environmental movement, and works year round to support civic action. 2017 is a historic year for activists all over the world who are uniting to promote climate and environmental literacy and activism with more than 1 billion people participating each year,” said Kathleen Rogers, President of Earth Day Network. This year’s D.C. rally and teach-in, along with activities across the world, will kick off a week of action throughout local communities to support science across all disciplines.

Earth Day Network is publishing Earth Day and Teach-In toolkits online that lay out steps for holding a successful event. To learn more about Earth Day Network and March for Science go to www.earthday.org.



Human beings too are creatures of this world, enjoying a right to life and happiness, and endowed with unique dignity. So we cannot fail to consider the effects on people’s lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and the throwaway culture.

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet: “Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest”.

-Pope Francis

ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME



Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Arkansas.

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