



BISHOP'S LETTER

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

Beloved Children of God:

Alleluia! He is Risen! Jesus, through the gift of God, plunges into death, taking our sin with Him, arising out of the tomb, and gathers us eternally within the bosom of His Sacred Heart. On this Easter morning, we hear our salvation history come alive through Mary Magdalen's report of the empty tomb. We run with the apostles, Peter and John, to see for ourselves what we have heard. We arrive at the empty tomb surrounded by all the faithful, the choir of angels and the communion of saints and we praise God and rejoice. The message of this death of Jesus is not about life ending, rather it is about life beginning. God is with us always. He tells us to seek what is above; to continue to seek God in all our ways that we are not led away from Him.

[READ MORE](#)

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ANNUAL FORM

DUE June 1, 2026 - Start to schedule those meetings with your Pastors.

ORDINATIONS-MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Priest Ordination: May 23, 2026. Deacon Dan Bassile and Deacon Sinclair Cushman will be ordained into the Priesthood. This Ordination Mass will take place at St. James Cathedral at 10:00 A.M.

Diaconate Ordination: Nine men will be ordained at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe at 10:00 A.M. on June 6, 2026. We will be sending a registration form for you to complete. Remember your wives are welcome. There should be plenty of seating.

ANNUAL DIACONATE CONVOCATION: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026

We are excited to announce that our Keynote Speaker for our annual convocation will be **Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ**, who is a leading advocate for the abolition of the death penalty. She is known for her best-selling book, *Dead Man Walking* (1993) based on her experiences with two convicts on death row whom she served as spiritual adviser before their executions. In her book, she explored the effects of the death penalty on everyone involved. In 2019 she wrote a memoir titled *River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey*. In it she talks about her spiritual journey leading her to engage in social justice work. Don't miss this opportunity to hear this wise and powerful speaker and to spend time reconnecting with our diocesan diaconal community.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ANNUAL DEACON COUPLE RETREATS

**Registration for the LAST Annual Deacon Couple Retreats for 2026.
CLICK HERE TO REGISTER .**

April 17-19, 2026: Spanish Language Retreat

Led by Father Carlos Agudelo

Reverend Carlos A. Agudelo is the Pastor of St. Leon Church in Corona, New York, where he also serves as Area Dean and a member of the Presbyteral Council for Pastoral Practice Affairs. Ordained a priest in 1998 in Medellín, Colombia, he has served in the Diocese of Brooklyn since 2010 and was incardinated in 2016. With 27 years of priestly ministry, he exercises comprehensive pastoral and faith leadership for his parish community. Additionally, he has taught for several years in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program and for one year at the Josephinum Institute.



PARISHES STILL IN NEED OF DEACONS

Several pastors have requested additional deacons be assigned to their parishes. If you feel God may be calling you to one of these parishes, or that God may be letting you know it is time to change parishes, please contact **Deacon Dave** to discuss one or more of these opportunities:

ST. ANDREW PARISH

801 N. Hastings St., Orlando | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Leo Hodges

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH (WINTER HAVEN)

532 Ave. M, NW, Winter Haven | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Parochial Administrator: Father Glenn Lopez

BLESSED TRINITY PARISH

4545 Anderson Rd., Orlando | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Phil 'Skip' Negley

ST. PAUL PARISH AND SCHOOL

1330 Sunshine Ave., Leesburg | Needs a deacon (bilingual Spanish/English preferred).

Parochial Administrator: Father Stephen Ogonwa

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

1136 Seminole Drive, Rockledge | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Joseph Shaute

As we approach our next Diaconate Ordination, we will begin to review parishes with an abundant number of deacons and thus reassignments will be made. As you can see, several parishes need help. We are ordained to serve the needs of the people of the entire diocese.



MINISTRIES

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, PATHWAYS TO CARE

Learn how to volunteer.

TOURISM

Serving at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe continues to be a deeply rewarding ministry. The beauty of the liturgy, our collaboration with the Diaconate Formation Program, and the opportunity to accompany pilgrims in prayer and conversation make this service especially meaningful.

As visitation grows, we are having trouble covering all scheduled Mass times. We invite deacons to consider volunteering—even once per quarter—to support this important ministry to the thousands who visit the Basilica.

If you would like to be included in the rotation, please contact **Deacon Joe Gassman**.

DIVINE MERCY/FIRST FRIDAYS

Looking for deacon couples to lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet on First Fridays at the Basilica. For more information, contact **Deacon Joe Gassman**.

MINISTRY TO THE INCARCERATED

If you want to learn more about this ministry, reach out to **Deacon Jimmy Avellan**. If you know of prisons or jails that are underserved, please let us know.



APPLICATIONS FOR COHORT 2032

The diaconate formation admissions team is in full gear reviewing the applications that have been received from men discerning a call to the permanent diaconate. Each application is thoroughly reviewed by several members of the team, and a decision will be made on who to call in for interviews in May. After the interviews are complete, we expect to recommend approximately 20 men to Bishop Noonan for inclusion in the formal Discernment Year starting in September. Please pray for the admissions team, the applicants, and their wives.

GOOD NEWS

Kassandra Pagan's Victory Walk. This young lady has had a bone marrow infusion in hopes of curing her Sickle Cell disease. Kassandra went home with her parents on March 24, 2026. Here is Kassandra's victory walk.

[KassandraVictoryWalk.mp4](#)

KASSANDRA PAGAN'S STORY

I am Kassandra Pagan,

Growing up, my parents describe me as a happy, energetic little girl. But I was born with a condition that caused me to be in and out of the hospital many times each year. Year after year, I was hospitalized because of intense pain that required strong pain medication, IV fluids, and many blood transfusions just for me to feel better. I also went through multiple surgeries because of organ damage and complications from this disease. I was born with Sickle Cell Disease.

Sickle cell anemia is an inherited blood disorder, meaning a person is born with it because it is passed down by their parents. It affects the red blood cells, which carry oxygen throughout the body. Instead of being round and moving easily through the blood vessels, the cells become stiff and sickle shaped. This can cause blockages, leading to severe pain, infections, fatigue, organ damage, and even



GOOD NEWS

KASSANDRA PAGAN'S STORY

death. Living with this condition is not only physically painful, but also spiritually challenging.

During my journey, I had many ups and downs. At times, I felt hopeless, crying out to God and wondering, does He hear me, or does He hear me but is not paying attention to my pain and tears? I would beg and pray that He would cure me, that a miracle might happen, just like the miracles my parents read to me in the Gospels where Jesus heals the sick.

I remember my mom and dad taking me to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and all I could do was ask Him, if it was His will, to please let me be cured. I would cry and pour out my heart before Him with my mom and dad. I did not want to continue having those painful crises. I did not want to live in fear. I cried in desperation for sixteen years. This desperation would sometimes fill my faith with doubt. Did God really listen to prayers? Does He really care? Does He listen to the prayers of children? Does He listen to mine? I will tell you one thing that I know now. God surely does listen. He was listening every time I prayed, every time my parents prayed for me to be protected, to be healthy, and to live a long life. God listened to my family's prayers and cries. He also listened to the prayers of the members of our church, St.

Rose of Lima, who were always praying for me. You see, God had been working behind the scenes through science, guiding the scientists in their work and bringing the cure my way. It just took fourteen years.

I remember, sitting in my oncologist office, thinking it would be a regular appointment. But little did I know that this appointment would change my life. My doctor began to talk about a treatment called gene therapy that had recently been approved by the FDA, called Lyfgenia, a treatment that could cure sickle cell disease, and that I was a perfect candidate for. At that moment, I did not know what to think. I did not understand the process, and I felt anxious about going through something so life changing. I began to wrestle with the decision. Can you believe that? I started doubting if I should even be cured.

I had cried out to the Lord so many times in my pain and had not received a miracle of healing. I had been in pain for so long in my young life that I had learned to live with this condition. Pain was just a part of my life. Still, there was a light of hope inside of me. A hope of trying new things and finally being able to live my life without the fear of pain coming at any moment. I held on to that hope, even in my anxiety. I held on to God's hand, walked

GOOD NEWS

KASSANDRA PAGAN'S STORY

the path He placed before me, and trusted Him along the way, even in the middle of uncertainty. And I am so glad I did. Because I came to see that my prayers were answered, not in the way I expected, not through a sudden healing miracle, but in a different and beautiful way.

My doctor said that Gene therapy is a treatment that uses a patient's own stem cells to fix the problem causing the disease. So they were going to use my own cells, the same ones that cause me all my pains and alter them, and cure me with them. My journey began with many blood exchange transfusions over a year to keep me as stable and as free from pain as possible. Then doctors collected my stem cells from my blood. These cells were sent to a laboratory, where they were modified to produce healthy hemoglobin instead of sickle hemoglobin. This process took several months. When the cells were ready, I was admitted to the hospital and received chemotherapy for four days to make space in my bone marrow for the new cells to grow. After the chemo, I received my corrected stem cells back into my body through an IV. All this happened during the season of lent.

I spent a total of five weeks in the hospital. So while others were figuring out what to give

up for lent, I was receiving many medications, blood transfusions, and platelet transfusions. I felt very sick because of the chemotherapy, which weakened my immune system. But by the fourth week, I started to feel better, and my body began to recover. Now, my body is producing healthy red blood cells that do not sickle. Today, I can say that I have been cured. I continue with my doctor's appointments as my immune system fully recovers and my body heals from the effects of chemotherapy. I have so many dreams for my future. Now I can learn how to swim without the fear of getting pain afterward. I dream of traveling long distances without worrying about my oxygen levels dropping or having sudden pain. I dream of going back to school to be with my friends, and one day, when I am an adult, working without the fear of losing a job because of my condition.

I am so grateful and thankful that God made this possible for me. Because if it was not for Him, for all the prayers, and for the doctors, nurses, and scientists, I would not be where I am today. Now, I pray for others to be cured too. I have faith that they will. I trust in Jesus, and I know that they will be, through His mercy.

SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

APRIL CALENDAR

San Damiano Senior Day- Scriptural Roots of Divine Mercy

Thursday, April 9, 2026 | 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Divine Mercy is the boundless love of God poured out upon us, especially in our weakness and sin, inviting us to trust in His forgiveness. Through Christ's Passion, we encounter a mercy that restores, heals, and never tires of welcoming us back.

[View Event](#)

Feast of Divine Mercy Sunday

Sunday, April 12, 2026 | 3:00 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Join the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Veneration, and the praying of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

[View Event](#)

VIVET- Youth and Young Adult Formation & Adoration

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

7:30 PM 8:30 PM

All youth and young adults are invited to join the Servants of the Pierced Heart of Jesus and Mary for Adoration, Praise, Worship and Prayer!

[View Event](#)

Stretch and Reflect with Dawn Marie

Saturday, April 18, 2026 | 10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

This faith-centered practice offers an alternative to secular mindfulness by intentionally glorifying God through prayer while caring for the body as a gift from Him. Together we seek renewal, peace, and a deeper awareness of God's presence.

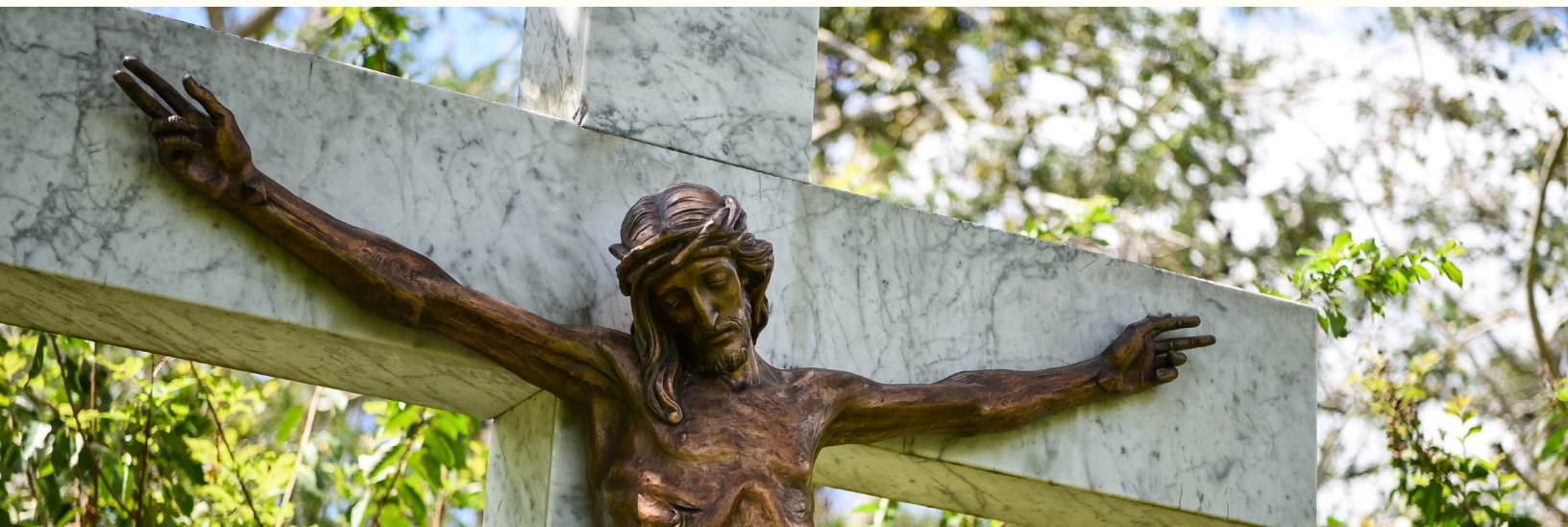
[View Event](#)

Stations of the Light

Thursday, April 23, 2026 | 7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Pray with Christ through fourteen of the most inspiring events of His post-Resurrection life on Earth

[View Event](#)



SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

APRIL CALENDAR

9th Annual Friends of San Pedro Gala

Saturday, April 25, 2026 | 5:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

We are thrilled to announce plans for our 9th Annual Friends of San Pedro Gala on Saturday, April 25, as we honor the Most Reverend John Noonan and his 16-year legacy serving as Bishop of the Diocese of Orlando.

[View Event](#)

Eucharistic Cenacle

Friday, May 1, 2026 | 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

Join the Servants of the Pierced Heart of Jesus and Mary for Mass, Adoration Praise and Worship and Prayer!

[View Event](#)

Come to the Fountain Healing Prayer

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 | 7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

All are invited to join the Servants of the Pierced Heart of Jesus and Mary to pray the Rosary and other prayers to our Blessed Mother.

[View Event](#)



FDLC UPDATES: THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

The USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship, in collaboration with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), has prepared a national survey on the Order of Christian Funerals. This survey will assist the bishops of the Committee on Divine Worship as they review the ICEL Green Book translation. The feedback received will play a critical role as the Committee reviews the rites and texts which have no equivalent in the Latin editio typica.

We kindly ask that you distribute the link to this survey through your network of contacts, especially to anyone involved in ministry to the dead and bereaved.

[Click here to register.](#) We will accept responses to the survey from now until the end of April.

Please accept the gratitude of the Committee on Divine Worship in advance for your participation with this important consultation. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance and for your work in sacred ministry.

DIOCESAN CHOIR

If you would like more information about joining the Diocesan Choir for future liturgies, please email David McIntyre.

2025 EMHC WORKSHOPS

EMHC Coordinators or Liturgy Directors ONLY:

Please fill out our [EMHC Formation Workshop Host Application](#) to schedule a workshop for the Spring 2026 season.

Please note these workshops are for new EMHCs and are open to the whole deanery. Those looking to become an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion can apply this Fall. EMHC Candidates must register for a workshop online via Eventbrite. A completed Petition for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion with the pastor's signature must be sent to the Office of Liturgy.

Please visit the [EMHC webpage](#) for more information.

St. James Cathedral

Orlando (CS) | May 2nd, 2026

English & Spanish

St. Clare

Deltona (E) | May 16th, 2026

English & Spanish

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Candler (N) | May 23rd, 2026

NEW RITUAL BOOKS

Beginning Easter Sunday, April 5th, 2026, the new English translation of *The Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of Their Pastoral Care* (2026) is mandated to be used in the Dioceses of the United States. This includes the Ritual de la Uncion de los Enfermos y de Su Atencion Pastoral, Traducccion a lespanol de acuerdo a la edicion tipica para el uso en las diocesis de los eastos unidos de american. Aprobado por la conferencia de obispos catholicos de los estados unidos y confirmado por la sede apostolica (2026).

[Click here](#) to access the order links from our February newsletter.

CONFERENCES, EDUCATION, & OPPORTUNITIES

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS

Join us for the 50th anniversary of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians in 2026! This year's theme, "Forever We Will Sing," takes its inspiration from Psalm 89. NPM's work to foster the art of musical liturgy has shaped Catholic worship since the Second Vatican Council – and our work is not done yet.

Join us on July 19th-24th at Catholic University of America for 4 days of:

- Plenum Addresses – Breakouts
- Networking Opportunities – Community
- Special Events – National Awards – Exhibits

[Click here to register.](#)

PARISH GRANTS PROGRAM FROM OREGON CATHOLIC PRESS

The Parish Grants Program is open to all Roman Catholic parishes and campus ministries in the United States and U.S. territories. Awarded grants must be used for liturgical and/or musical purposes that strengthen parish worship. Typical uses include purchasing new music and worship resources; repairing or replacing musical instruments; supporting the formation of musicians and liturgical ministers; enhancing multicultural ministries through training and the purchases of bilingual or multilingual resources. Funds may also be applied to other music-related needs that directly support the liturgy.

[For more information and to apply click here.](#)

2026 DEACON SUMMER WORKSHOP JOURNEYING WITH ST. PAUL THE MISSIONARY

Fr. Llano B. Briese, STD, a brilliant scripture scholar and a popular professor here at SVDP, will delve into the writings of St. Paul.

In response to recent calls to missionary discipleship, he will look to the Church's most prolific missionary disciple, St. Paul, on his three missionary journeys especially as reflected in his earliest letters. We shall especially look at the Pauline texts read as second readings in Year A. See BIO at www.svdp.edu/ongoing-formation.

Each year St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary sponsors an event offering ongoing formation for permanent deacons. The workshop begins with a 6:00 pm dinner on Thursday followed by the first presentation and a social in the seminary's Community Center. It closes on Sunday

with an 11:00 am Mass and a full brunch. This format is designed to enable deacons to attend without losing an entire work week.

Daily Mass, Morning Prayer, and Evening Prayer is included in the schedule, as well as times for rest, quiet prayer and shared company. Meals are exceptional and each evening includes a social. Our beautiful grounds provide spaces for walking, running or just meditating quietly. The exercise facility is fully equipped. An outdoor 24-yard swimming pool is always open. Each participant will enjoy a private bedroom and bath.

Do consider taking a break from your busy schedule to learn, relax, pray, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow deacons from around the country.

OPENS THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

3:00-6:00 P.M. Arrival and Registration in Kreitner Lounge (Signs will direct you.)

5:45 P.M. Evening Prayer St. Mary's Chapel (optional)

6:00 P.M. Dinner, Refectory

7:00 P.M. Welcome and introductions

8:00 P.M. Social in Community Center

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY - FULL SCHEDULE

CLOSES SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2026

The workshop closes with 11:00 A.M. Mass and an 11:45 A.M. Brunch

REGISTER ONLINE NOW

TO REGISTER:

www.svdp.edu/workshops/ongoing-formation

Payment due upon online registration.

COST:

\$495: Tuition, Room and Meals

\$250: Commuter - Tuition and Meals

Happy Birthday

DEACON JERRY KELLY 87

DEACON RAFAEL MEJIA 87

DEACON LUIS ABREU 86

DEACON BOB BASYE 85

DEACON PHIL PIERPONT 84

DEACON LUIS ROMAN 84

DEACON JOSE VIDAL RAMOS 84

DEACON LARRY BROCKMAN 83

DEACON LEE LEVENSON 81

IN REMEMBRANCE

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM, O LORD, AND MAY PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM. MAY THEIR SOULS AND THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD REST IN PEACE.

AMEN.



Memorial Mass

SPANISH - FRIDAY, APRIL 17TH, 8:15 A.M.

ENGLISH - FRIDAY, APRIL 24TH, 8:15 A.M.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD CHAPEL
SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

DIOCESAN CALENDAR

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DIOCESAN CALENDAR](#)



LITURGICAL CORNER



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