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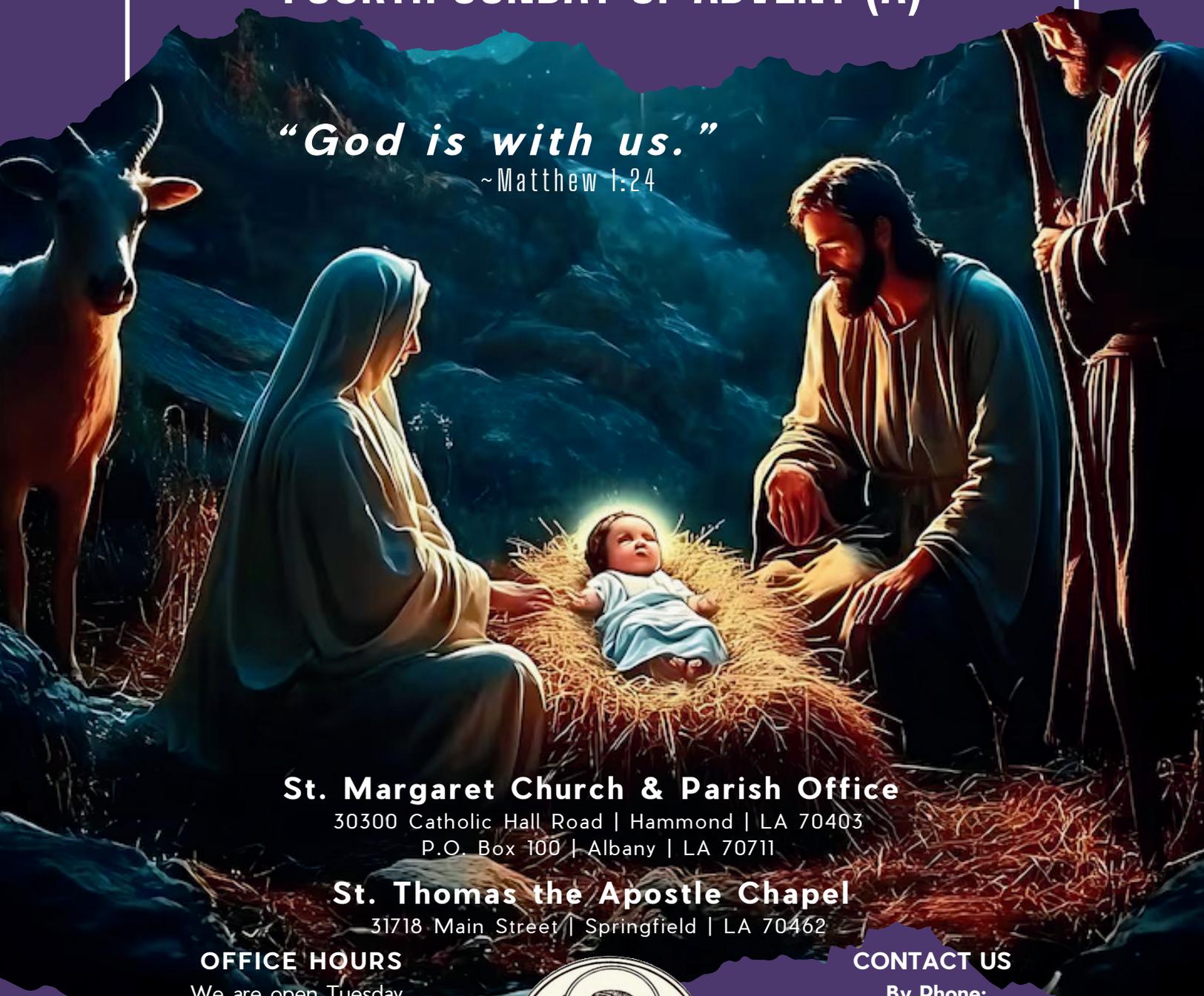
DECEMBER 20/21, 2025

PEW BUDDY

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

"God is with us."

~Matthew 1:24



St. Margaret Church & Parish Office

30300 Catholic Hall Road | Hammond | LA 70403
P.O. Box 100 | Albany | LA 70711

St. Thomas the Apostle Chapel

31718 Main Street | Springfield | LA 70462

OFFICE HOURS

We are open Tuesday through Friday from 8:00AM until 3:00PM, but closed for lunch from 12:00PM until 1:00PM!
We are closed on Monday!



CONTACT US

By Phone:
225.567.3573
By Email:
stmargaret@diobr.org
Website:
stmargaretstthomas.com



PONDERINGS OF THE PEDAL-N-PADRE

By Father Paul Gros

Dear Family in Christ,

Peace in the Lord Jesus Christ! As your pastor, I want to wish you a blessed and wonderful 4th Sunday of Advent and Merry Christmas! Every time Christmas rolls around, I am always reminded of a quote by Saint Therese of Lisieux– **“A God who became so small could only be love and mercy.”**

Yes, to ponder on the great mystery that God became an infant child, who was completely helpless in the arms of his mother, Mary, is mind blowing in my estimate. The Creator of the entire cosmos, who is completely self-sufficient and perfect in and of Himself, made Himself completely self-dependent because of His mercy and love. And yet, despite this truth, through his infinite wisdom and power, He was and is still in control of everything. God reveals something so extraordinary about Himself through the incarnation.

The mystery of Christmas is something that we could ponder on for a lifetime. This is why the Church has us ponder on this mystery every year through the liturgical calendar. In every new liturgical year, we have the opportunity to think about the life of Jesus in a deeper and more profound way. May this Christmas celebration of 2025 draw your heart more deeply into the love and mercy of the God who became one of us, beginning His life on earth as a small helpless child!

Have a wonderful Christmas week!

Fr. Paul Gros



FROM THE ST. MARGARET STAFF

EVENTS AROUND THE PARISH

MARCH FOR LIFE PANCAKE BREAKFAST!

Join the St. Margaret March for Life Pilgrims on **Sunday, December 21, 2025**, immediately following the **10:00AM Mass**. Your kids will enjoy a "build your own" pancake bar, with breakfast sausage and an assortment of juices and milk! They will be able to take a photo with Santa and make a Christmas craft. Adults can enjoy the same breakfast with coffee and a morning of fun with their family. Tickets are \$15. All proceeds will directly benefit the students attending the 2026 March for Life in Washington D.C. If you have any questions, email Baleigh Henderson at bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com!

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Join us to celebrate the season! Our Mass schedule for Christmas 2025 will be as follows:

- **Wednesday, December 24, 2025**, Christmas Eve at **4:00PM** and **6:00PM** at St. Margaret in Albany
- **Thursday, December 25, 2025**, Christmas Day at **12:00AM** Midnight at St. Margaret in Albany and **8:00AM** at St. Thomas Chapel in Springfield.
- Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God will be on **Wednesday, December 31, 2025**, at **6:00PM** and **Thursday, January 1, 2026**, at **10:00AM** at St. Margaret Church.

CLOSURES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

In observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays, and to give our staff some well-deserved rest, the parish office will be closed **Wednesday** through **Friday December 24 - 26, 2025**, and **Wednesday** through **Friday, December 31, 2025**, through **January 2, 2026**. Please tend to any business that you might have before or after these days. We hope that you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season!

In observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays, there will be no OCIA class on **Wednesday, December 24, 2025, or December 31, 2025**. There will be no PSR classes on **December 21 or 28, 2025**. Classes will resume on **January 4, 2026**. The Youth Group will not meet on **December 24, 2025, or December 31, 2025**. Mondays with Mary Ministry will not be meeting for our weekly rosary on **Monday, December 22, 2024, or Monday, December 29, 2025**. Enjoy the break! Return refreshed! We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!

VOCATIONS AWARENESS MINISTRY

Join our newly established Vocations Awareness Ministry on **Tuesday, January 13, 2026**, at **6:00PM** to discuss upcoming events and the direction of the ministry to support and promote vocations. For more information, call Baleigh Henderson at the parish office or email her at bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com.

HE IS THE KING OF GLORY

The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.

CATHOLIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

Every year the Louisiana State Knights of Columbus recognize one boy and one girl from each KC Council awarding them with a cash prize. If you are a high school senior and you would like to be considered for this honor, contact Glenn Young at 225.964.0947 for instructions/information to complete the online CYLA application form. The completed form **MUST** be emailed to rgyoung2@bellsouth.net before **Saturday, January 24, 2026.**



TICKET SALES PURCHASED THROUGH THE LINKS/QR CODES BELOW BENEFIT CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE



Women's



Men's

STEWARDSHIP THIS WEEK

Thanks to your generosity, the **Regular Collection** for the weekend of **December 13/14, 2025**, totaled:

\$12,914.00.

The **Retirement Fund for Religious Collection** totaled:

\$1,540.00.

The Second Collection for **Christmas** will be for the **Parish Debt Reduction!**

There will be no **Special or Second Collection** next weekend!

Thank you for your kindness and generosity to our ministries!

**TO
GIVE...**



BLUE CHRISTMAS

A Community Worship Service of Loss and Remembrance

We invite you to join our 7th Annual Blue Christmas

**Sunday, December 21st
6:00 - 7:00p.m.**

Followed by a light meal and fellowship

**Knights of Columbus Hall
Pecan Ct.
Ponchatoula, LA
Doors open at 5:45pm**

SEATING IS LIMITED

For more information or to reserve your seat, please call 985-687-4458.

Sponsored by St. Joseph's Stephen Ministers & Ponchatoula Knights of Columbus

St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church

Rekindling a Tradition

Several years ago a long-time parishioner recounted a Christmas tradition at St. Margaret from her childhood whereby everyone was invited to the sanctuary to take a piece of straw from the manger and to present a gift to the Baby Jesus. This piece of hay was to serve throughout the coming year as a reminder of Jesus and his many blessings.

After Mass, please come to the sanctuary for a piece of straw from the manger and leave your gift for Baby Jesus.



Origin of the Manger and Taking a Piece of Straw

(as told by Thomas of Celano and paraphrased by Dawn Rusinko, OFS, CLM)

Did you know that putting the manger under the tree at Christmas was started by St. Francis of Assisi? Did you also know that the reason people take a piece of straw from the church manger on Christmas has to do with St. Francis of Assisi too? If not, here is the story of these two great traditions.

It started with a man named John who lived in the town of Greccio, Italy. Fifteen days before Christmas St. Francis told John to go and prepare the things needed to recreate the events that took place that special evening in Bethlehem. He wanted others to know the inconveniences of the baby Jesus - how he lay in a manger surrounded by oxen and asses laying on hay. John prepared all that he needed to recreate the birth as instructed by St. Francis.

Men, women and children gathered together with open hearts bringing with them candles and torches to light the night like the gleaming star. When St. Francis arrived and saw everything prepared as he wished and the town of Greccio turned into the stable at Bethlehem, he was filled with joy.

God's blessings multiplied that night, and a miraculous vision was given to a virtuous man. He saw the baby Jesus lying in the manger lifeless, and he saw St. Francis wake the baby from a deep sound slumber. This vision was a true representation of the deep sleeping baby Jesus, who was forgotten in the hearts of so many. By the Grace of God, he was brought back to life again by St. Francis, who reawakened their memory.

The hay placed in the manger was saved so that God would multiply His blessings and save the animals through His mercy because there were illnesses around the region killing large numbers of animals. When the animals ate of this hay they were cured and sustained. When hay was placed on laboring women in pain, they stopped laboring and delivered safely. Births increased in Greccio and those suffering from various illnesses obtained health.

So, the next time you gaze upon the Nativity scene think about the events created by St. Francis that inspired the tradition of bringing the stable at Bethlehem into your homes. When you recall the story, also recall, the necessity to arouse the deep sleeping baby Jesus within your heart and don't forget to pick out a piece of straw from the manger at Christmas.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

The Sanctuary Lamp at St. Margaret is given in memory of
George & Eric Navarre by Kim Navarre.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Saturday, December 20, 2025, 4:00PM Vigil Mass

Bergeron-Plauche' Families, Jessica Galatas Bleakley, Philip Brabham,
Karen Chemay, Gwendolyn Delaneuville, Larry J. Evans,
June & Peter "Larry" Fos, Jr., Homer Gaspard, Linda C. Gaudin, Ricky Genre,
Hilton Hoover, Mary, Joe L. & William Juhasz, Albert & Francis Kronlage,
Vernon & Dorothy Landry, Ray & Connie Louviere, Manina Family,
Adam & Gina Mocsary, Judy, Mitch, Andrew & Tony Monistere, Patty Niehaus,
Sue Novak, Dr. William T. O'Brien, III, June Koles Olah, Sidney Ourso,
Sal Pellittieri, Sr., Lynette Pfiffner, Peter J. & Elizabeth Pfiffner, Anne Sherman,
Judy Sherman, Sharon Stanley, Yancy Watkins, Barbara Wilson
and Deceased Members of the Bleakley & Robichaux Families

Sunday, December 21, 2025, 8:00AM Mass

Jerry Adamcewicz, Fred J. Armand, Jr., Lloyd Dominguez, Donivan Jones,
John LaGrange, Charlie Martin, Chucky Martin, Steve Prokop, Jr., E.D. Purvis,
Gill Scioneaux and Gerard Lou Staub

Sunday, December 21, 2025, 10:00AM Mass

The Missa Pro Populo (The Mass for all the Parishioners)

Sunday, December 21, 2025, 5:30PM Mass

Chuck Raborn, Sr.

Tuesday, December 23, 2025, 7:00AM Mass (Weekday in Advent)

George & Eric Navarre

Wednesday, December 24, 2025, 4:00PM Mass (Christmas Vigil Mass)

Kelsey Martin

Wednesday, December 24, 2025, 6:00PM Mass (Christmas Vigil Mass)

Chuck Raborn, Sr.

Thursday, December 25, 2025, 12:00AM Mass (Christmas Day Mass)

Victor & Mary Peptone

Thursday, December 25, 2025, 8:00AM Mass (Christmas Day Mass)

Jeanne Guillot

Friday, December 26, 2025, NO Mass (Feast of St. Stephen)

PAROCHIAL DASHBOARD

SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament is offered weekly at 4:00PM on Thursday and on Saturday at 3:00PM at St. Margaret Church or by acceptable scheduled appointment with a priest.

MARRIAGE

Interested parties should contact the parish office at least six (6) months prior to their desired date and must complete an acceptable Marriage Preparation Program.

BAPTISM

Contact the parish office for preliminary information and to schedule a home visit from the Baptism Prep Team.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK

Visits to the hospitalized and infirm are made regularly. Contact the office for a priest or deacon for home or hospital visits.

FUNERALS

Call the parish office during normal hours for scheduling. After hours, please leave a message on the emergency line at extension 106.

OUR LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil-4:00PM - St. Margaret Church
Sunday-8:00AM - St. Thomas Chapel
10:00AM & 5:30PM - St. Margaret Church

Daily Masses

Tuesday through Friday-7:00AM
St. Margaret Church

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday-7:30AM-8:00PM
Concluding with Benediction
St. Margaret Church

CLERGY & STAFF

PRIESTS

Father Paul August Gros (*Pastor*)
Father Kumar Kolakani (*Assistant Pastor*)

DEACONS

Deacon William "Byrd" Corbett
Deacon Tim Messenger

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Mary E. Herbert
(*Pastor's Administrative Assistant*)
Tammy Resetar (*Receptionist
& Cemetery Liaison*)
Peggy Desselle (*Contributions Manager
& Sacraments Coordinator*)

PASTORAL STAFF

Baleigh Olah Henderson
(*Religious Education, Youth Minister,
& Communications Coordinator*)
Debbie Corbett (*Safe Environment*)

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Gather Hymnal Number 1000

Isaiah 7:10-14

God promises a sign, if asked.

Romans 1:1-7

Paul preaches Jesus, the Son of God.

Matthew 1:18-24

A sign is given to Joseph.

Anticipating Next Week's Scriptures

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
December 27/28, 2025

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

Colossians 3:12-21

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

OUR CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent!

NO PSR Classes Today!

11:15AM—**Pancake Breakfast**, Parish Hall

Monday, December 22, 2025

8:30AM—**St. Matthew's Guild**, St. Cecilia Room

6:00PM—**Advent Young Ladies Bible Study**, St. Elizabeth Seton Room

Tuesday, December 23, 2025

6:00PM—**Advent Book Study "Into the Deep"**, St. Margaret Church

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve!

Parish Office Closed!

Debt Reduction Second Collection!

4:00PM—**Christmas Eve Mass**, St. Margaret Church

6:00PM—**Christmas Eve Mass**, St. Margaret Church

Thursday, December 25, 2025

Merry Christmas!

Debt Reduction Second Collection!

Parish Office Closed!

12:00AM—**Midnight Christmas Mass**, St. Margaret Church

8:00AM—**Christmas Mass**, St. Thomas Chapel

Friday, December 26, 2025

Parish Office Closed!

No Extraordinary Events Scheduled Today!

Saturday, December 27, 2025

KC Consecration to the Holy Family!

3:00PM—**Confessions**, St. Margaret Church

**THERE WILL BE NO EUCHARISTIC
ADORATION ON WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 24 OR WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 31, 2025.**

GATHER HYMNAL:

SANCTUS, number **308B**;

AGNUS DEI, number **313B**



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Join Bishop Michael Duca to celebrate couples who are married for 25, 50, 65 years or more in 2025 on **Sunday, March 22, 2026**, at **2:00PM** at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Denham Springs. The families of the honored couples are also invited to attend the liturgy and the reception. Would you like to register as a participant so that our diocese can celebrate your important anniversary? Contact Tammy in the parish office by **Thursday, February 26, 2026**, to register!