

# St. Gerard Majella Church

A Redemptorist Family



5354 Plank Rd, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70805

225.355.2553 | stgerard@diobr.org

StGerardMajellaChurch.org

Easter Sunday

April 4, 2021



## Jesus Is Risen! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### ARE WE THE PEOPLE OF THE RESURRECTION?

Dear Parishioners, Alumni, Teachers, Students, Parents and Friends,

**Easter is the New Life. Jesus is risen!**

I am excited to celebrate this Easter with you because this is my first Easter as a pastor. Last year we had to battle many unknown causes of Coronavirus. We were scared and cautious. Today, we give God thanks that we are still here together to experience the New Life God has given us through Jesus Christ and through one another.

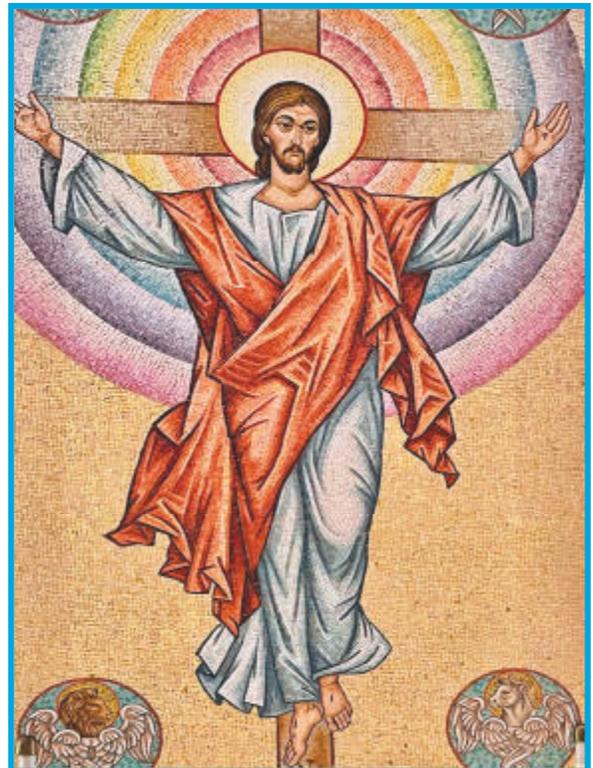
I am so blessed to be here with y'all. Everyday I wake up, I feel energized without fears, only joy and surprises. During this Lenten Season, I can share with you my fresh reflections written from my desk in the rectory's library. Some were long; some were short. But I thank God for giving me enough gift to share with y'all "a little cup of inspiration" of mine.

**You are God's surprises and joys in my life.** Each of you is special for me. You give me purpose, vision and new hope every day. I could see the face of God and Jesus Christ in you. It does not matter who you are or where you came from, I've loved y'all. Thank you for being a little Easter in my life every day, every week and every year. Happy Easter!!!

Thank you for allowing me to lead you in Sacraments and in education of our young people. How beautiful and sacred it is to celebrate Baptism, Eucharist, Anointing of the sick, Confession, Confirmation, Marriage and Holy Order with you. **Sacraments are the signs of hope and Easter for us.** When we celebrate any Sacraments, we're yearning to the New Life, which is God's. We should celebrate frequently and fully. And when I celebrate Mass with our students, I celebrate Easter as well. They are fresh, young, blessed and full-of-life. They are growing and longing to be blessed with education, care and love from adults.

We celebrate Easter because we believe in the New Life. **I hope that all of us are the people of Easter.** Every Sunday (Mass) is Easter for us to experience and live. May we be blessed with God's abundant joy and many wonderful surprises!

In Christ the Resurrection,  
Fr. Tat



*Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.*  
--Luke 24:5

Today's readings may be found in the green GATHER hymnal book on Page 971

# EASTER REFLECTION - GOD IS GOOD

With Easter week upon us, I was reflecting on what I was thankful for. I thought about when I met Father Tat about a year ago and I was struggling with what I would do with my life in retirement. My life was one challenge after the other, from high school, to college, to running my energy consulting business, operating my game ranch in Texas, marriage, and raising children. All of this kept me busy, occupied and basically happy. There came a time when I had transferred my oil and gas business to my son John, operations of my ranch to my daughter Maria, and Janet and I were isolated due to COVID restrictions. Friends often told me that people need a Plan B at this phase in their lives, which often involves reinventing their lives with new friends and volunteering. So, I set out to invest the time and effort into family and friends that I neglected through the decades of living in this world. **I thought and prayed about the concepts I often heard and read about called "surrendering to the will of God" and "trusting in Jesus."**



I learned that I really never completely surrendered and trusted until I committed to do something that was not in my Plan B. After retiring I began going to daily Mass as often as I could, and volunteering at all the places I thought I should. I never felt the sense of accomplishment and happiness I felt in running a business and raising children. I felt stuck in this world and wondered if this is how life was going to be for my future. It was a very depressing thought. As the weeks and months passed with the COVID isolation and disappointment in my personal retirement plan, I slowly started to reconnect with long past friends at Mass. Then one morning Janet and I after Saturday morning Mass and adoration at Our Lady of Mercy, my old friend Rick Blackstone greeted us. I told Rick I prayed and prayed and listened and listened, and even went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but never found the peace and happiness that I was trying to make happen. Then Rick introduced me Father Tat. I was struck at how joyful this man was, and that I wanted what he had. As time went on I would follow Fr Tat's live stream of his daily Mass while Janet and I isolated ourselves at our Texas ranch. During this time a friend told me two things that I took to heart: the first being that true friendships take a lot of work, and the second being that **all people need purpose, people, and pleasure to have a meaningful life.**

So I made the decision that when I visited with friends or met new people that I would sincerely ask how they were doing and if there was anything I could do for them, and mean it. Little did I know, how this would impact my life with Father Tat. Many months ago after attending a study group led by Fr Tat called "The Word Made Flesh," I would ask him how are you doing and is

there anything I can do for you.

About six months later, I got a call from Fr Tat where he said in his joyful voice, "Johnny, I have something to talk to you about," and to come to St Gerard immediately. This caused me great anxiety and I started calling my wife, kids, and Rick worried about what I was in trouble for or if he would ask for something I could not financially afford or could do. A million things ran through my thoughts on my drive to St. Gerard. When I got there I held my breath when Father said "Johnny, do you remember six months ago when you asked is there anything I can do for you?" Still holding my breath I said yes. Father said, "you are an engineer, and engineers know math, and I have six 8th grade students who need a math tutor to get ready for the LEAP test." I couldn't say no because I asked him, gave him my word, and commitment. I surrendered, trusted, and said yes to Father.

**I soon discovered after my first day of tutoring, what Father had told me and knew all along. Father told me that I would benefit as much or more from these kids, by mentoring them and their gift to me, set aside the academics. I will never forget the absolute joy I felt from spending just an hour of tutoring with the young adults.** The fact is, they are very smart, respectful, eager to learn, polite, aware of their blessings, spiritual, ambitious, loving and accepting, all the things good in human beings. **These six students gave me people, purpose, pleasure, and much more.** They gave me their commitment in return for mine. **They gave me hope for the future.** What they gave me was pure joy and happiness that I have not felt since I was a child or when my kids were born. No matter how bad this world seemed, week after week when I walked out of that class room I felt great.

The three young ladies would always answer "pray for me" and the young men would ask me to spend more time tutoring them. These kids want to be engineers, a college math teacher, a nurse, and a digital artist. **These kids are well aware of their situations and challenges ahead of them. They are aware of the blessings offered them in the past and opportunities for the future.**

Before one tutoring session it occurred to me the great blessings these kids are giving me. I asked them, why don't y'all ever ask how I am doing or if there is anything y'all can do for me? So they asked and I answered them by telling them that I too needed their prayers and that I needed them to let me tutor them. I let them know just how much happiness and joy they brought me. The kids seemed stunned that a grey haired man would actually need their prayers, or that just being their good selves could impact someone.

I suppose when I surrendered and trusted, God used Fr Tat to call me to tutor math to six 8th graders at St Gerard of all things, people, and places. I could not make this up or plan this in my wildest dreams or self made plans. The fact is, God is good. When I began to believe I might not find great joy and happiness again in anything in this world, set aside the news I will be a grandpa soon, once I quit pursuing my plans and designs, I had unconsciously truly surrendered, God opened the door to let these few great kids show me true happiness and joy.

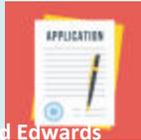
**The world claims it has a cure for everything through success, wealth, and possessions. I will attest that that is absolutely false. True happiness is through giving, and in my case it is reciprocated from six humble and good kids. God is good. - John**

# Announcements



Divine Mercy Sunday April 11th - We will have the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 9:30am before the 10:00 Mass

REDEMPTORIST ST. GERARD is still accepting applications for the 21-22 school year. Financial assistance is available. Call the school or the church office for an application for you or someone you know.



Coach Sid Edwards

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Calling RHS Classes of '61, '71, '81, '91 and 2001! We'd love to help you host your class reunion! Contact the church office for more information.



A big Thank You to all those who donated Easter Flowers and decorated the church. May God bless you and your families.

### Contact Us:

Office: 225-355-2553 or Rectory: 225-355-2600  
Fr. Tat Hoang, C.Ss.R., Pastor, thoang@diobr.org  
Fr. Kevin Zubel, C.Ss.R., Chaplain of Hisp. Min., kzubel@diobr.org  
Fr. Tim Watson, C.Ss.R., Hispanic Ministry  
Fr. Jaime Arrambide, C.Ss.R., Hispanic Ministry  
Fr. Donald MacKinnon, C.Ss.R., In Residence  
Cindy Thibodeaux, Secretary, stgerard@diobr.org  
Chris Dickerson, Bookkeeper  
Dr. Joshua Medrano, DMA, Organist  
Mary Rosenbloom, Music Director  
Greg Accardo, Knights of Columbus, greg.accardo@gmail.com  
Jim Richard, Friends of RSG School, jim.richard@albermarle.com  
Cheryl Domino, Principal of RSG - 225-355-1437  
Claire Willis, Principal Cristo Rey - 225-615-7479

### Weekly Collection Totals:

Date of Collection:	March 27-28, 2021
Regular Collection:	\$ 1,694.00
Maintenance Collection	\$ 1,000.00
Sacramental Offerings	\$ 794.00
Special Collection	\$ 0.00
<b>Total Collected:</b>	<b>\$ 3,488.00</b>

The Ray M. Lorio Council of the Knights of Columbus #17544 is selling raffle tickets for a crawfish boil for 20 with funds being raised for improvements to the gym restrooms at Redemptorist St. Gerard. Contact any member of our KC or the Church office for your chance to win (225)355-2553 or ask Father Tat after Mass!

## Ray M. Lorio Knights of Columbus Council #17544 Crawfish Boil Raffle



### Crawfish Boil for 20 people from Tony's Seafood

- 100 lbs. Boiled Crawfish
- 30 Boiled Corn
- 6 lbs. Boiled Potatoes
- Sauces - 100 Cajun Boudin Balls - 20 Disposable Trays

Drawing to be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church.

*Need not be present to win - \$20 Donation*

*All proceeds used to refurbish the restrooms at the Redemptorist/St. Gerard School Gym*



# Mass & Ministries

Monday, 4/5	MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
9:00 a.m.	The Sorrentino Family
Tuesday, 4/6	TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
9:00 a.m.	<b>Novena of our Mother of Perpetual Help</b>
9:00 a.m.	Dominic Hoang & Maria Hoang; Thomas Monk
Wednesday, 4/7	WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
9:00 a.m.	Mary & Norris O'Neal
7:00 p.m.	The Gospel of Hope on ZOOM
Thursday, 4/8	THURSDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
8:00 a.m.	<b>Eucharistic Adoration</b>
9:00 a.m.	Richard Boeker, Mr & Mrs Frank Kolwe, Sr.; Sr Roslyn Boidouin, MHS; Mr & Mrs Gustav Gueniu
5:30 p.m.	<b>The Word Made Flesh</b>
Friday, 4/9	FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
9:00 a.m.	Mary & John Seeser
11-1 p.m.	<b>FEEDING THE POOR (Seelos Hall)</b>
Saturday, 4/10	SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER
4:00 p.m.	Toni Young
Sunday, 4/11	<b>SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY</b>
8:00 a.m.	People of St. Gerard; Jeanette & P.C. Baker
9:30 a.m.	Divine Mercy Sung by Mary Rosenbloom
10:00 a.m.	Dominic & Maria Hoang; Amy Holtkamp

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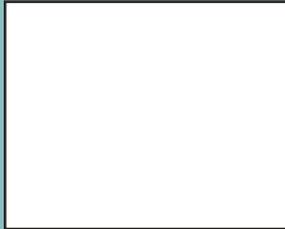
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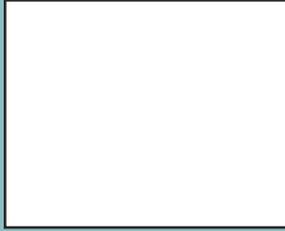
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