

- How One New Orleans Catholic Community Is Recovering From Hurricane Katrina
- Soccer Classic Tournament
- St. Matthew Teacher Receives Award

## Katrina Devastation Still Felt

### Parishioner Robert Tabern Reports on His Recent Visit to New Orleans

So what were you doing on August 29, 2005? Chances are most of us here in Southeast Wisconsin probably are not able to think back and remember the answer to that question. However, for residents of New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast area, the date of 8-29-05 will always stand out... perhaps just like 9-11-01 does to many of us. For five years, I attended college and worked in Arkansas. During that time, I would make frequent trips to New Orleans, which was a few hours drive down Interstate 55. Ever since Hurricane Katrina hit last summer, I was eager to see for my own eyes just how one of my favorite cities was coping and hopefully recovering. I recently had the opportunity to visit the 'Big Easy', and what I saw was definitely not something I was prepared for.



Even though it has been more than nine months since the massive storm washed ashore, signs of disaster were everywhere. I arrived in New Orleans on an Amtrak train from Chicago, and as soon as we crossed the Lake Poncha-



train bridge, dead forests left behind by Hurricane Katrina lined the side of the tracks and adjacent highways. As we approached the outskirts of the downtown area, which used to bustle with life, there were no signs of people. It was just empty homes that I was later told were under between eight

and ten feet of water. It honestly looked like a war zone and put you in a state of shock.

When I told my friends I was planning to visit New Orleans, I got a lot of second looks... in addition to a lot of "Whys?" and "What's left down there?". That was exactly the point of my visit. I wanted to go on the trip because I knew that even though the hurricane was out of the news, there was still work to be done. I wanted to see how people, in particular the Catholic community, were coming together. I didn't want to focus on the devastation, but rather the rebuilding.

One of my first stops was at the Saint Louis Cathedral in the French Quarter. It's a historic and religious site in Jackson Square featured prominently on postcards and paintings. Louisiana's archbishop, Alfred C. Hughes, calls it "the soul of our city". The cathedral was originally built in 1727. The first Church of St. Louis lasted 61 years, until it was destroyed by fire. The new version of the current cathedral was constructed in the 1790's; the building underwent an extension renovation into its current appearance in the 1850's. Pope John Paul II even celebrated mass there in 1987.



The author poses in front of Saint Louis Cathedral in New Orleans.

*Hurricane, continued from page one.*

The French Quarter, and in particular the cathedral, are located in one of the highest spots in New Orleans. Hurricane Katrina's floodwaters did not reach the French Quarter, unlike other parts of New Orleans. However, the high winds caused some moderate damage to the parish. Due to wind and rain, the roof of the cathedral must be completely replaced. The 4,500 pipe grand organ was heavily damaged and was removed and shipped to Cleveland for repair. The interior walls will have to be cleaned of water marks and mold, then repainted. Katrina took a big hit on Saint Anthony's Garden



**Deacon Richard M. Brady of St. Louis Cathedral. The hurricane forced the cancellation of nearly five weeks of services at the cathedral.**

which is located behind the cathedral. The parish lost a number of large trees. Other damage included a fence, a statue, and part of the interior of the worship space. The total bill from the storm was nearly \$3,000,000 there alone for the parish.

I learned just what an impact Katrina really had on New Orleans after talking with Deacon Richard M. Brady, who is the pastoral associate and business manager of the Cathedral. Even though the

building weathered hurricanes and hail storms in the past, it had never seen anything like Katrina. For about five weeks after the monster hurricane hit, services were canceled. Deacon Brady attended the first post-Katrina Mass in early October 2005 and he says it's something he will never forget. Brady reminisced, "The first Masses were mostly filled with relief workers from the National Guard. They lined the pews and even sat around the altar. The choir sang songs about getting through dark times and finding shelter in a storm."

Brady, a life-long New Orleans resident, says he was blessed to escape the storm with just moderate damage to his home. He commented, "Sure my home had several of inches of water in it, but others like our maintenance man just lost everything."

Deacon Brady said at first Catholics living in New Orleans were just numb, and for many, feelings quickly turned toward depression. However, the church is giving people a new light and hope in devastated New Orleans. And even though another hurricane season is already here, residents are trying to look

forward to the future and rebuilding.

"One of the most amazing things is all the work being done by high school and college students," Brady said.

"They could easily head to the beaches and spend their spring or summer

breaks having fun down there, but so many people I met have given up their vacation time to come here to New Orleans to help with the rebuilding effort. It really has people looking on our youth and college students in a new way."

The following day on a tour of some of the hardest hit areas of New Orleans, I ran across some Catholic college students from Virginia, who like Deacon Brady mentioned, gave up their vacation time to help clean houses. Instead of stripping down to bathing suits and sunglasses, the group decided to put on coveralls and goggles. Junior Anna Garrity said, "I just didn't realize how much had to be done. When we were driving from the airport, we were just kind of in a state of quiet reflection and shock. We were over in nearby Bay Saint Louis earlier this week and one woman's house was hit by a 42-foot wall of water and nothing... not even a pipe was left."

People who are lending a helping hand to victims of last summer's hurricanes extend all the way here to the Milwaukee area as well. Later this month, the youth from St. Matthew plan to visit parts of hurricane-damaged Mississippi, as part of their annual mission trip. In the July and August edition of 'The Buzz', we'll hear more about their experience and meet a college student who is helping promote fundraising at St. Matthew for the trip. In the meantime, keep the residents of the Gulf Coast, and our youth who are traveling down there in your prayers.

— *Article and photos by Robert Tabern*



**Part of St. Louis' 286 year parish history includes a visit in 1987 by Pope John Paul II. In contrast, St. Matthew parish has been in existence for 165 years.**

# A Great Weekend for Soccer and More

The warm, sunny Memorial Day weekend provided a great weekend for this year's St. Matthew's Soccer Classic, and players and parishioners enjoyed the soccer matches as well as the other activities provided throughout the weekend.

With this being the fourth year the event was held, the St. Matthew's Soccer Classic has continued to grow. Twenty-nine teams played matches on three fields this year; that is the greatest number of teams to enter the event so far. Other teams wanted to enter the event, but due to limited playing space, they had to be turned away this year.



Children from kindergarten to eighth grade participated in games on the soccer fields. The smiles on their faces indicated that they were having a great time. In the 5th/6th grade competitive division, the team from St. Matthew's came in first. In the 7th/8th grade competitive division,

the team from St. Roman's came in first.

Activities off the field also kept the players and spectators busy as well. The warm weather provided a strong demand for drinks. In fact, Sue Maurer reported that the volunteers staffing the concession stands needed to go shopping for additional drinks three times during the weekend.

This year was also the first year that a concession stand was set up in the new garage near the soccer fields, and it proved to be a popular draw. The 50/50 raffle was another popular activity this year. The earnings from the raffle



were double the earnings from last year.

While the 2006 Soccer Classic was clearly a great success, the soccer committee is already think-

ing of ways to ensure the growth of the event. One of its goals is to involve more parishioners, even if they don't have children playing in the matches. One parishioner who stopped by the event this year summed up the fun that the soccer committee hopes to extend to more parishioners next year when he said, "I came for good food, sunshine, and company."



To provide this enjoyable experience, the soccer committee wants to make sure all parishioners know that the spaghetti dinner on Friday night is open to them. It also wants to add more activities, especially on Saturday night. Sue Maurer explains, "We're trying to make Saturday night a festival for the whole parish." The concession stands and activities will remain open even after the games end on Saturday night. The committee is also investigating the possibility of holding an outdoor mass on Saturday evening next year. Finally, the committee is eager to use the new pavilion as a gathering space next year.

Of course, members of the soccer committee would like to thank all of the players, volunteers, and parishioners for helping to make this Soccer Classic a success. Proceeds from this year's 50/50 raffle will help fund the building of the new pavilion. Other proceeds will go to the capital campaign and to the future gym fund.

— *Article by Rick Barribeau*

— *Photos by Sue Maurer*





Soccer strategy is discussed during the St. Matthew Soccer Classic Tournament, which was held this past Memorial Day Weekend.

# Welcome New Parishioners

Neal Baldwin, Trisha Kaczmarowski, Alexyss Russell and Araceli Blevins  
 Joseph and Dawn Bode, Adrienna Richard and Christine Bolender  
 Nina Case, Rianna  
 Kenneth and Courtney Conway, Caitlyn, Cassandra Thomas and Cassandra Delaney, Mikayla Fox  
 Joseph and Karen Dolan, Fiona, Thomas Jerome and Shelly Galaszewski, Taylor  
 Thomas and Julie Grotophorst, Larissa Phyllis Hamann  
 Allison Hunt  
 John and Kim Karls, Abigail, Owen  
 Gary and Jennifer Lenda, Kaitlin, Jack  
 John and Lisa Marshall, Sean, Sara, John, Isabella  
 Daniel Noe and Susan Beck, Robert, Samantha Beck, Jonathan, Spencer Beck  
 Jayne and Darren Philpott, Mason, Grant, William  
 Eric and Toni Repinski, Capri, Davis, Keely  
 Ruth Rec  
 Robert and Nancy Ristic, Ashley, Michael  
 Jonathon and Erin Seel, Erin  
 Thomas and Lorelei Smith, Jordan, Dylan  
 Gina and Robert Spaid  
 Judy Wargin  
 Sheri Weiss  
 Bobby and Diana Wilkum  
 Allen and Judith Zebrowski

## St. Matthew School Teacher Receives 25-Year Award

St. Matthew School 7th grade teacher Mary Jean McDonald attended the annual Wisconsin Math Council conference in Green Lake on May 4th and 5th. There were 1,300 Math teachers registered from around the state. This year Mrs. McDonald received the 25-year award. The award is given in recognition of Mathematics Education for 25 years of teaching. The award was given from the Wisconsin Mathematics Council. Her son, also a member of WMC and a math teacher, and her husband were present when she received her certificate. She has been a member of WMC since 1987.

## St. Matthew Parish Buzz

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