



Sts. Pontian and Hippolytus
August 13, 2021

Dear Fête-Dieu du Teche Boaters and Participants,

Grace and peace in our Blessed Lord as we embark on our 7th annual Assumption Eucharistic Boat Procession. I want to take the opportunity to personally express my deep gratitude and appreciation for your generosity and support of the Catholic Faith in Acadiana. I know it is a big sacrifice to participate in this all-day holy-day, but I have no doubt that our Blessed Lord will not be outdone in generosity and will bless you and your family abundantly. Thank you!

This year Fête-Dieu du Teche 2021 occurs during the Year of the Family and the Year of St. Joseph. We are offering the procession for the sanctification of the family, something so vital to our society and to our Church. Last year we prayed for an end of the pandemic. While we are experiencing still the menace of COVID, we saw a sharp decline in all three civil parishes immediately following Fête-Dieu 2020. We are holding this year's Fete in the midst of COVID-19 again and add to our intention that the Lord may command His angel to give the command "Stop! Enough!" We want to worship publicly but safely, so we have implemented precautions. Please check your temperature Sunday morning and do not participate if you are running a fever or have any of the COVID symptoms. Masks or face coverings are required inside for all those 5 years and older. Please try to observe social distancing as well. When social distancing cannot be observed outside or while on boats, masks are recommended. In addition to plenty of water for yourself and "ship's company" please have some extra masks and some hand sanitizer on board.

Boats will be launched in Leonville from about 6 am till 8:30 am and then the landing will be cleared and the Eucharist, Blessed Mother, and St. Joseph boats will be readied for the foot procession. At 9:30 AM we will depart for Arnaudville. Once the Eucharist Boat has departed, any remaining boats that need to be put in can continue to do so at the landing. Please bring an Acadian Flag if you have one and affix it to your boat. Also, I ask that you review the instructions and regulations again. Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries may be present to make sure you have enough PFDs for everyone in the boat, a fully charged fire extinguisher, etc. The regulations, event map (showing restroom locations and bridge heights), the COVID requirements, etc. can all be found at www.fetedieuduteche.org

We will travel at about 8 mph throughout in order to make our schedule. Stops along the way for Rosary and Benediction will each be for 45 minutes. Please do not fall too far behind in the procession. We normally like to stay about 150 ft distance between the boats. Remember to

bring your FM radio so that you can follow the prayers and songs on FM 90.1. If you have a smart phone with internet, you can also access the prayers and activities on the Eucharist Boat and at the landings on Facebook live at www.facebook.com/CommunityofJesusCrucified/

This is a solemn event and we want to remember that we are following our Blessed Lord as we would after Mass in a foot procession. This is not a boat parade but rather a boat Eucharistic procession. Please keep prayer going in your boat and be reverent. Also, no shorts or tank tops for the entire day as we are in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Please make sure you have signed waivers for your travelers, have enough personal flotation devices for everyone, and drink plenty water.

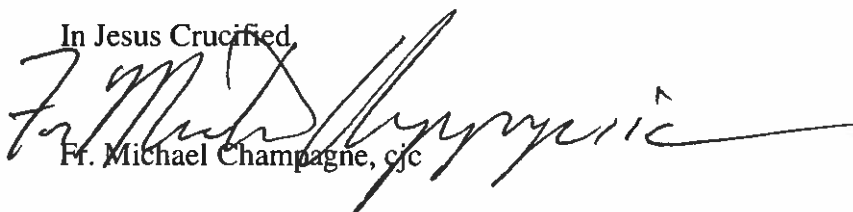
Portalets will be available at stops between the churches and at the churches. We would prefer boats just pull in tight at the various church stops and anchor in the bayou and not get down. We do not have much space for safe disembarking at the various stops. Only server boats, the Blessed Sacrament boat, the Assumption boat, and the St. Joseph Boat should be disembarking at the various altars along the way until we get to our final destination and foot procession. In St. Martinville, we will arrive behind Notre Dame Church just past the Evangeline Oak at about 4:45 pm. We will disembark there and have benediction outside, then process down the street to St. Martin de Tours to do the same, and then finally down Main Street to Mater Dolorosa for Solemn Vespers and Final Benediction. Please try to remain to the end of the journey and see the Blessed Sacrament disembark, even if you can't make the foot procession. The bridge will probably not need to be reopened for most of the boats, but it will be reopened as necessary to allow boats to return upstream toward the landing. The boat landing is only 1 mile north of the bridge. The draw bridge in Breaux Bridge will be left in the upright position the entire weekend to allow passage.

We have an Acadian Ambulance paramedic and doctor travelling with us. In event of need for medical attention call (337) 380-3166. In event of engine trouble or a non-medical issue, call Eric Martin at (337) 277-3960.

Finally, remember the plenary indulgence that Pope Francis has granted to all participants. Make sure you get to confession if you haven't been in a while, you will need to receive Holy Communion, pray for the Pope's intention and end the day or your participation with the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and a prayer to our Lady. You may offer the indulgence either for yourself or for a deceased loved one.

As we conclude the day honoring Our Lady, let us ask Our Blessed Lord, Our Lady of the Assumption, and Patron of the Universal Church St. Joseph to bless families across Acadiana and to bring an end the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us also pray for the holiness of priests and for vocations as requested by our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

In Jesus Crucified,



Fr. Michael Champagne, cjc