



St. Bernard Parish Government

8201 West Judge Perez Drive Chalmette, Louisiana 70043
(504) 278-4227 Fax (504) 278-4330
www.sbpbg.net

Louis Pomes
Parish President

President's Report

From the Desk of Parish President Louis Pomes

December 3, 2024

To the St. Bernard Parish Councilmembers and Residents,

As we transition into the holiday season, I'm proud to share updates from around St. Bernard Parish, celebrating the growth, achievements, and festive spirit of our community.

I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. This time of year reminds us of the importance of gratitude and community. I am deeply thankful for the incredible people who make St. Bernard Parish such a special place to call home.

I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to the **Chalmette High Fighting Owls football** team on their phenomenal season. Under the leadership of Head Coach Jason Tucker and the dedicated coaching staff, these student-athletes have brought pride to the entire parish. Their determination, teamwork, and sportsmanship both on and off the field are an inspiration. To the players, their families, and the entire Chalmette High community—thank you for representing St. Bernard Parish so well. We are immensely proud of your accomplishments.

This week, I wrote and submitted a letter to the Archbishop of New Orleans on behalf of our parish government, residents, and the entire St. Bernard Parish community, **advocating for the preservation of St. Bernard Catholic Church by the Archdiocese of New Orleans**. This letter emphasized the church's deep cultural and historical significance to our region, highlighting its role as a spiritual and community anchor for generations. From baptisms to weddings, Sunday Mass to the annual Blessing of the Fleet, this church has been a steadfast presence in our lives. Personally, I shared my own lifelong connection to the church, reflecting on its impact on my family and countless others that I know of.

Preserving this cherished landmark is vital to honoring our heritage and ensuring the community's future. A copy of my letter is included at the end of this report for your reference. I encourage everyone to join me in supporting this important effort. Together, we can demonstrate the enduring strength and spirit of St. Bernard Parish, and work together to find a sustainable path forward for this historically, spiritually, and culturally significant St. Bernard Parish landmark.

Additionally, I'm thrilled to share some exciting news about **the installation of a brand-new sign** at the intersection of Judge Perez Drive and Paris Road in Chalmette. This stunning work of art, created by local visionary metal artist Luis Colmenares of Art Metal Studio in Meraux, is a true masterpiece that reflects the unique spirit and beauty of St. Bernard Parish. Crafted with care and creativity right here in our community, the sign is made from 80% recycled metal scrap collected throughout the parish. Its steel frame and aluminum wrapping are complemented by intricate designs, interior and exterior lighting, and a hand-painted finish sealed with automotive paints for durability.

The installation of this sign is a proud milestone for myself, my staff, and Luis, and we hope that St. Bernard Parish residents will feel the same sense of pride when they see it. It's more than a welcoming landmark for one of our major thoroughfares; it's a celebration of the ingenuity, artistry, and resilience that make St. Bernard Parish so special. I encourage everyone to take a moment to pass by and see it for themselves—it truly is a sight to behold!

New Businesses

I am pleased to welcome the following businesses that were issued new or renewed permits to operate in St. Bernard Parish since my last report. Please welcome and congratulate; Smashed Burgers, Serigne's Live Bait, Char Da' Inc. Contractors, Southern Gleauz Tanning, Inspirations Beauty Salon.


These new ventures reflect the ongoing growth and vitality of our local economy. I encourage everyone to support these businesses as they settle into our community, alongside the established businesses that are the backbone of St. Bernard Parish.

Capital Projects Updates

Our Public Works department continues to make steady progress across several key projects. In Old Arabi, drainage improvements are ongoing with pipe lining, pipe replacement, and the installation of new drains continuing. The Florida Walk project is moving forward with the rock base being laid in preparation for pouring the slab at the bottom of the canal. A walkthrough is scheduled this week for the Old Arabi Streetscape project, marking the next phase of development for this ongoing infrastructure improvement. At the Fanz Trailer Park, crews are replacing pumps and pouring the driveway. Construction of the new public library in Meraux is progressing, with glass and curtain walls being installed currently, and work underway on sidewalks and handicap ramps. A Fire Marshal inspection is scheduled there next week. Vista Park's HVAC and utility building are nearing completion, while Patricia Park is awaiting the delivery of its HVAC unit. For miscellaneous drainage projects, a new drain line is being installed on Fable Dr. in Meraux. The first concrete pour on neighboring Legend St. is now complete, with additional pours scheduled for later this week. Finally, the Riverbend Force Main project has received its wetlands permit from the Corps of Engineers, enabling work to begin at this site, excluding the Violet Canal crossing.

In closing, as we celebrate the holiday season, I want to express my deepest gratitude, once again, to each of you for your commitment to making St. Bernard Parish a thriving and welcoming community. Let's carry this spirit of unity and joy into the weeks ahead, embracing the opportunities to connect, celebrate, and build an even brighter future together. Wishing you and your loved ones a safe and joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,


Louis Pomes
Parish President
St. Bernard Parish Government

[Attachments: information about upcoming special events, letter to the Archbishop of New Orleans]



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

December 3, 2024

Upcoming Events: The holiday season is in full swing, and we are excited to share several upcoming events to bring joy to the community.

Christmas at the Complex Parade & Tree Lighting Celebration

- **Date:** Friday, December 6, 2024
- **Time:** Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Celebration follows; Tree lighting at 7pm.
- **Location:** 8201 W. Judge Perez Dr, Chalmette, LA

The parade will travel from Dr. Meraux Drive to Patricia Street and Jean Lafitte, concluding in the Civic Center parking lot. Festivities include photos with Santa, train rides, cookies, hot chocolate, snow flurries, and live music by Adam Pearce. Bring your chairs and blankets for an evening of holiday cheer!

Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony

- **Date:** Saturday, December 7, 2024
 - **Time:** 11 a.m.–12 p.m.
 - **Location:** Pearl Harbor Memorial Park, 7215 W. Judge Perez Dr, Arabi, LA
- Join the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association for a moving tribute honoring the lives lost during the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The ceremony will feature a Memorial Wreath presentation.

Los Islenos Christmas & Bonfire

- **Date:** Saturday, December 7, 2024
 - **Time:** 3 p.m.–8 p.m.
 - **Location:** Los Islenos Complex, 1357 Bayou Road, St. Bernard, LA
- Celebrate the season with school performances, caroling, and holiday festivities on the beautifully decorated Los Islenos grounds. The evening concludes with the lighting of a holiday bonfire.

Santa on the Bayou

- **Date:** Saturday, December 14, 2024
 - **Time:** 5:30 p.m.
 - **Location:** Los Islenos Complex, 1357 Bayou Road, St. Bernard, LA
- This year marks the 25th anniversary of Santa on the Bayou! This beloved tradition features holiday-themed drive-through distribution of gifts for children, and snacks for the whole family. For 25 years, Santa has distributed 25,000 gifts through this wonderful event. It's always been particularly near and dear to my heart, as it reflects the immense generosity of our community and true spirit of the holiday season.

For a complete list of holiday events, visit our website at www.sbpbg.net/calendar



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Louis Pomes
Parish President

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans
7887 Walmsley Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70125

November 8, 2024

Most Reverend Archbishop Aymond,

I am writing on behalf of our community here in St. Bernard Parish, particularly for the people of St. Bernard Village, to express my deep concern over the potential closure or consolidation of St. Bernard Catholic Church. For me and countless others, this church is more than a place of worship; it is part of the very fabric of our lives and history. I was born and raised in St. Bernard Village, and I can tell you that my formative years were shaped by the church and the community it nurtured. This letter is both a personal plea and a collective one, from those who see St. Bernard Catholic Church as a treasured link between our past, our present, and our future.

St. Bernard Catholic Church has stood as a spiritual and cultural pillar of this parish for well over a century. Its location among the fishing camps, boats, and bayous reflects our way of life—a life grounded in faith, family, and resilience. For generations, this church has hosted baptisms, Sunday Mass, weddings, and funerals, and it has served as the focal point for major community events like the Blessing of the Fleet. The church cemetery across the highway is a resting place for countless members of our community, including my own family. Here, people visit to honor loved ones who have passed, keeping our heritage alive and present.

For me personally, St. Bernard Catholic Church is woven into the memories of my childhood and family life. My brother and I served as altar boys here when I was around 13 years old, and those

early days at the church laid a foundation for the values and faith that would guide my life. As a teenager, I spent countless hours maintaining the church grounds and helping with repairs, working alongside other members of the community to preserve the building that meant so much to us all. My family and I returned to this church time and again, whether to celebrate life's joyous moments or to find comfort in times of loss. St. Bernard Catholic Church has been, and still is, at the heart of my family's life and of this community.

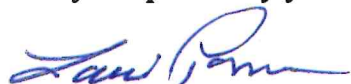
St. Bernard Village itself is a place with deep roots and a unique culture, shaped by generations who have lived off the land and water. The people here are fishermen, craftsmen, and families who have weathered hurricanes and challenges, bound by shared faith and traditions. The church represents this spirit, and it has stood alongside our people, reflecting our values and our endurance. To us, the church isn't simply a building; it's a testament to our heritage. For many parishioners, every major life milestone—from baptism to marriage to funeral—has taken place within these walls, connecting us to the generations before and, we hope, those yet to come.

The Blessing of the Fleet is a shining example of this connection. Each year, our community gathers around the church for this event, which serves as both a spiritual ceremony and a major fundraiser that benefits the Archdiocese. It also offers a vital opportunity for outreach within our fishing community. For us, this annual blessing symbolizes protection, gratitude, and faith—a way to honor those who work on the water while ensuring the church remains a living part of our community's future. Losing St. Bernard Catholic Church would mean losing the place where we anchor this tradition and so many others.

I humbly urge you to consider the profound cultural, spiritual, and historical significance of St. Bernard Catholic Church to our parish. Moving or consolidating our parish would break the continuity that has defined St. Bernard for generations and strip us of a part of ourselves that we hold dear. We ask, with the utmost respect, that you help us protect and preserve this church, so that it may continue to serve as a place of worship, connection, and community for the people of St. Bernard Parish.

It is my understanding that St. Bernard Catholic Church has no debt, and is operating on a cash basis. The church is also up to date with paying their assessment. Together, church leaders and members of the congregation are working hard to prepare a sustainable budget for the next several years. In my many discussions with them, the congregation have expressed that they are committed to finding a way forward. I am confident that there is no obstacle, spiritual, financial, or otherwise, that the congregation of St. Bernard Catholic Church cannot solve if given sufficient time, support, and direction. Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my thoughts and deep feelings on this important matter.

Very respectfully yours,



Louis Pomes

Parish President

St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana