

*Sunday August 4, 2019*

## **Pastor's Column**

Retreat, Vacation and Barry

My annual silent retreat was on July 4-10 at Sacred Heart Retreat Center in Sedalia, Colorado. Sedalia is nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, about 30 miles south of Denver. It is a beautiful place with cool air, low humidity, gorgeous vistas, deer, rabbits and lots of hummingbirds. This was my third retreat at this location. I find it easy to experience God in nature and particularly in cool weather. The retreat renewed and refreshed my spirits. Thanks for your prayers for me and know that I prayed for each of you daily during my retreat.

When my retreat ended, I took some vacation days on July 11-17. I originally planned to stay in Colorado for vacation but changed plans and came back to Metairie to be available for decision-making regarding the renovations to the Parish Center and St. Joseph Hall. Little did I know that Hurricane Barry would occupy a chunk of my week. However, I see the return home as providential. I was here to make important decisions about the renovations and to do some preparations for the hurricane. (By the way, I want to acknowledge the exceptional work of our Facilities Supervisor, C.J. Rowden, regarding both the renovations and hurricane preparation. Well done, C.J.).

With regard to my vacation, it turns out that New Orleans is a good place for a “stay-cation.” I enjoyed visits to local museums, the theatre and other attractions, visits with friends, and lots of sleep – that was the sweetest part.

As regards Barry, we give thanks to Our Lord and Our Lady of Prompt Succor that our area was largely spared of significant damage. Our prayers for protection were answered by persistent dry air from the west which prevented Barry from developing into a major storm. Though Barry hung around and had our attention for several days, in the end, it turned out to be a nuisance, not a devastation. Given the extremely hot weather of late, I suspect we will be on our knees quite a bit praying during the remainder of the hurricane season.

As I said at the beginning of the summer, I hope each of you has some opportunity for rest and recreation during the summer months. The re-start of school and parish ministry activities is right around the corner. Prayerful best wishes to all in these final weeks of the summer vacation season.

God bless,  
Fr. Joe