

# Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

*"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"*

## Newsletter

May 5 and 12, 2019

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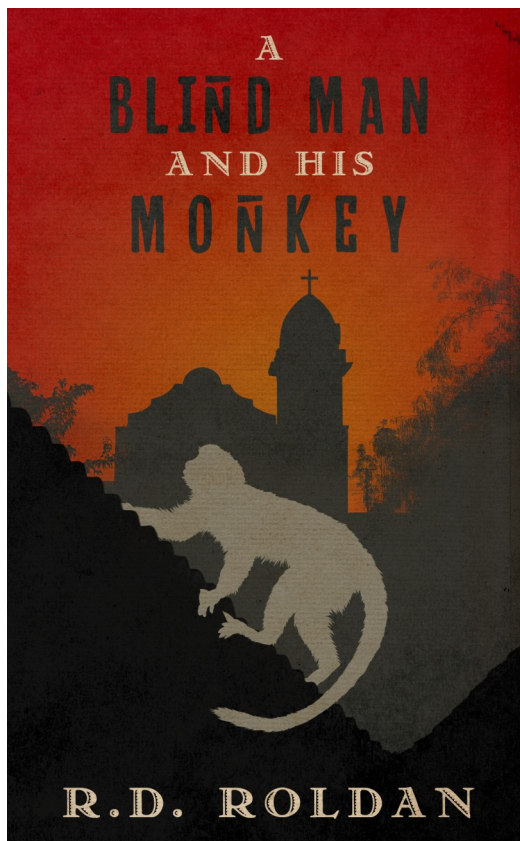
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[www.gracechurchwfp.org](http://www.gracechurchwfp.org)

## *A Blind Man and His Monkey by R. D. Roldan*



This is not a sales pitch for my book. I promise! In fact, once you read this article, you may realize you don't have to buy the book because you already know the story. Now, before I tell you about the book, let me share some of the reasons why I decided to commit this story to writing. First, I have always been a story-teller. In fact, all preachers are tellers and creators of stories. Second, I have told my kids brief episodes of this story over the years, and I felt it was time to leave them a written account they can share with their own kids someday, if they choose to do so. Third, it has been 37 years since the events of that painful December in 1981, and I have begun to forget important details of the story. I have postponed the writing of this book for a long time, primarily out of fear of rejection. The longer I am separated from those events by the passing of time, the more blurry the memories become. Basically, it was now or never!

A few people have asked me if this is a religious book. The answer is that this book takes place within a deeply religious context, but it is not a theological or religious book per se. The setting is a Roman Catholic boarding school for teens who felt called to the priesthood. Prayer, Scripture reading, liturgy, and theological learning were everyday practices for us. The book, however, is not as much about what we did at the Center, as much as it is about my relationship with my roommate of 11 months from January through December of that year. The larger context of the book is the Medellin of Pablo Escobar and his Cartel. In 1981, Medellin was on its way of becoming the most dangerous city in the world: Street violence was on the rise, kidnappings for ransom were a popular way for gangs to subsidize their lifestyles, corruption was at an old-time high, and human life had become extremely cheap. It was common to see the victims of violence floating down rivers, left in local parks to be discovered in the morning, or rotting on garbage hills around the city. The result of so much senseless death was a deep depression, which fell over the entire city, touching all social classes, all towns and boroughs, and all age brackets. No one was spared. We all suffered from

what Miguel de Unamuno used to call, "A tragic sense of life." Fear was all around us, and many of us expected to be the next innocent bystander to be shot in a crossfire, or the next victim to be mistaken for an enemy or a former friend.

The book introduces the reader to Joe Cardenas, a fifteen year old, Colombian boy, at a Roman Catholic boarding school in Medellin in 1981. Joe is religiously conservative, socially awkward, fearful of the future, insecure about his short stature, and eager to please, especially those he considers his superiors. The seventh of eight children in a low-middle class family, Joe learned to make due with little, to endure hardship without complaining, to rely on God above all things, and to offer family and friends unquestioning loyalty. Joe has been forced by circumstances to grow up faster than most kids his age: He speaks like a much older person, uses sarcasm and foul language at times, trusts few people, and keeps his emotions hidden from grown-ups.

In January of 1981, Joe meets Alex, his new roommate. He is tall, handsome, wealthy, gregarious, and sophisticated. His family is one of the wealthiest in the city, and he grew up with all the privileges and comforts Joe could only dream about. Despite the refinements of his class, there is a darkness in Alex's heart that ultimately leads him to suicide in December of that year, during a school break. Hours before Alex takes his own life, he calls Joe to say good bye, and to request a favor. Joe agrees to the mysterious request, believing that his friend is going on a trip for vacation. Fulfilling his promise to Alex, Joe delves into the dark reasons for his friend's suicide. The truth he discovers threatens the lives of everyone he knows, as he faces Cartel-connected enemies determined to hide powerful secrets. Armed with nothing but his ingenuity, and his blind loyalty towards Alex, Joe dives deeply into a dark and dangerous world that will test his faith, and bring him to the brink of despair.

This is the book in a nutshell. Now, one last answer to a question you may have: Is this a true story? A small portion of the book took place as narrated: Joe, Alex, Aunt Irene, Fr. Garcia, and the people at "The Oaks" are all real people, although their names have been changed. Alex's suicide is real, as are all the scenes that have to do with his funeral. Joe's grief and loss are real, and I tried hard to highlight them as much as I could. Lastly, Joe's relationship with his sainted mother is real, although it pains me to acknowledge this now. Much of the rest is fictional.

Now, let me conclude this brief article with my now-famous fear of rejection: You will find a missing comma here and there. You will find phrases that are rather utilitarian, and lack the cleverness and artistry of professional writers. Finally, you will find scenes that would benefit from further development. Although I am a story-teller, I am not a professional writer. Please help me by sending me an e-mail with your comments. I promise I will use your feedback to refine this manuscript between the first and second printings. I hope to see you all at The Conundrum on Friday, May 3, from 6:00-8:00 pm, and I hope you enjoy the book. Blessings to all, Fr. Roldan+

Fr. Roldan+

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#### A Note from the Rector:

I would like to apologize to those who attended church on Wednesday, April 24, at 5:15 p.m., only to discover that there was no priest on-site. Meg and I had made arrangements with a fellow clergyman to come and do the service and, despite our sending him our information by e-mail and text several times, he wrote it in his calendar for 6:30 p.m., rather than 5:15 p.m. We apologize for this, and we will endeavor to correct this in the future. Thanks, Fr. Roldan+

#### Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Bianna Blanchard, Diane Christopher, Neal Kelly, Jason Kennedy, Charlotte Maxwell, Tom Morris, Eric Nelson, Sara Nelson, Kay Tengler, Mary Thompson, Wendell Wade, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

#### Birthdays

Alexandra Kennon, Samantha McClendon, Austin Loyacono-May 5; James Wray, Carolyn Porche-May 6; Katharine Leak Anderson-May 7; Kent Mitchell-May 8; Alyson Ballard Bell, Alan Dwyer, Susie Persons-May 9; Rhona Wray, Kristin Beauchamp, Susie Tully-May 10; Lisa Kleinpeter, Jackson Foster-May 11; Nolan Pruitt, Paige P. Woodard, Sharon Wilson-May 12; Kristen Lyon, Sarah Smart Feirn, Cappie Leake, Mickey Melancon-May 13; William Croft, Lynn M. Gaudet, Carol Woodward, Coco Treppendahl-May 14; Judy Nordgren-May 15; Marsha Lindsey, Olivia Elliott-May 16; Mary Austin Willis-May 18

#### Wedding Anniversaries

Thomas and April La-Croix-May 5; Sam and Barbee Irwin; Tab and Jeanne Ballard-May 6; Sarah and Kyle Rhody-May 9; Kevin and Lori Griffin-May 10; James and Ashley Fox-Smith-May 13; Abram and Lacey Harvey-May 14; David and Coco Treppendahl-May 18

**Grace News & Upcoming Events**

**Congratulations to Meg Bankston and Drew Nordgren** who were married on Saturday, April 27th.

**Please welcome Wilson Sawyer Louis**, who was baptized on April 28th, he is the son of Alyssa Louis.

**Please keep Michelle Weeks and John Flippen** in your prayers, they will be married on May 4th.

**We will be recognizing and celebrating our graduating seniors** on Sunday, May 5th at the 10 a.m. Eucharist with a special coffee hour to follow. Please join us to celebrate the following Grace seniors and the Class of 2019:

Mary Elizabeth Barrow  
Brandon Blanchard  
Brianna Blanchard  
Landry Higgins  
Jack Hosford  
Hayden Howle  
James Kirschling  
Ethan Lyon  
Karina Mulkey  
Evan Pinson  
Madison Pollet

**The Over 50's Club will be dining at the El Magey Mexican Buffet** on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. They will leave following the Senior Recognition Coffee Hour. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. This trip will be Dutch treat. Grace does have scholarships available if needed, please contact Fr. Roldan or Maria Gerry. Please contact Maria Gerry if you have questions.

**Learn s'more about Grace's Youth Group!** They will be hosting an open house for all interested youth entering 6th–12th grade for the 2019-2020 school year and their parents on Wednesday, May 8th from 5–7 p.m. Come find out what youth group is all about! Please reach out to Alyssa Louis for more information, youth@gracechurchwfp.org.

**Please join us on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at 4:00 pm** for a birthday celebration in honor of Mrs. Carol Woodward, who is turning 90 years old. This celebration is being hosted by the Over-50 Club. Mrs. Carol, as the eldest Klein sister is known, has been involved in our nursing home ministry for nearly 25 years, and has been a faithful member of our Friday morning fellowship breakfast and Bible study for over 15 years. Many of you remember her for the decades she gave to our Grace Choir, from which she retired two years ago. If you would like to bring a dish to share, please call Maria Gerry or the office.

**Church Mice will be held on Sunday, May 19th from 4 p.m.—6 p.m. in Grace Preschool.** This program is open to all children Pre-K through 5th grade. Children will be taught a fun bible lesson, complete a craft, and join together for a meal and fellowship. Invite your friends!

**Parent Fellowship will also be held on Sunday, May 19th from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.** Join other parents of children 18 years and younger for an evening of fellowship and refreshments. Bring your own drinks and an appetizer or dessert to share. We hope you can join us!

**Pentecost Sunday is June 9th.** This year we are going to have a pot-luck lunch here in Jackson Hall following the 10am service. Grace Church will furnish the meat; please bring a dish to share. There will be lots of games and activities for the children to do. There is a sign up sheet in the narthex.

**Grace Preschool is still accepting registrations for the 2019-2020 school year.** Our preschool is open to all students who will be three years old by September 30th, 2019. Registration packets are available in the church offices or online, <https://www.gracechurchwfp.org/preschool.html>.

**Other persons**

**prayers are asked for:**

Claiborne Arbuthnot, Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Wayne Bergeron, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Luanne, Phillip Bowen, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Mason Brudewick, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Daryn Conrad, Rob Cox, Frances Woods Curry, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Ellen Ewald, Sara Fahey, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jerry Green, Jim and Claire Hackney, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudson, Joel James, Michelle Jeansonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cathy K., Jody Lemoinne, Jessica Liddle, Max, Charlotte Mayeaux, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Cheryl Meaux, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Elizabeth Poole, Susanna Prescott, Tammy Riggs, James and Sylvia Roach, Cole Rourke, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Rusty Snyder, Cade Stapleton, Angel Thompson, Roland Touns, Deborah Vines, Emily Walz, Trey Watson, Dennisia Williams, Lynn Zinn.

**Those serving in the armed forces:**

Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Polly Finley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Aaron Zuccaro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

**Grace Church**  
of West Feliciana Parish  
P.O. Box 28  
St. Francisville LA 70775

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## Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

### Sunday May 5, 2019

**Acolytes:** Grant Rome, Crew Rome, John Barrow  
Klein, Colt Rome  
**Chalice bearers:** 7:30 a.m.: Bryan McClendon  
10 a.m.: Sara Klein, Rucker Leake  
**Ushers:** Tom Morris, Will Plettinger  
**Lectors:** Will Plettinger, Donna Wright  
**Vestry Rep:** Tom Flynn  
**Altar Guild:** Team 1  
**Children's Church:** Charlotte Peno  
**Altar Flowers:** Flippen wedding  
**Sanctuary Candle:** Stacy and Tommy Loyacono  
**Coffee Hour:** Linda and Tom Flynn  
**Babysitters:** Madie Kane, Sarah Roldan

### Sunday May 12, 2019

**Acolytes:** Wyatt Olsen, Joey Peno, Oliva Adams,  
Hannah Adams  
**Chalice bearers:** 7:30 a.m.: Carol Stamey  
10 a.m.: Joey Gammill, Brandie Olsen  
**Ushers:** Tiger Olsen, Shannon Pollet  
**Lectors:** Landon Anderson, Justin Peno  
**Vestry Rep:** Zed Howell  
**Children's Church:** Carly Whatley  
**Altar Guild:** Team 2  
**Altar Flowers:** Kathryn and Kelly Ward  
**Sanctuary Candle:** Martha and Dwight Singer  
**Coffee Hour:** Linda and Tom Flynn  
**Babysitters:** Madison Pollet, Emma Olsen

### May 5, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist  
8:45 a.m. Bible Study  
10:00am - Holy Eucharist  
Class of 2019  
Recognition  
Special Coffee Hour

### May 12, 2019

7:30am - Holy Eucharist  
8:45 a.m. Bible Study  
10:00am - Holy Eucharist  
Coffee Hour

### Wednesday, May 8

5 - 7pm - Youth Group Open House  
5:15pm - Eucharist

### Thursday, May 9

9:15am - Morning Prayer  
10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, May 10

7:00am - Eucharist  
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

### Sunday, May 12

7:30am - Eucharist  
8:45am - Bible Study  
10:00am - Eucharist

### Wednesday, May 15

5 - 7pm - Youth Group  
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

### Thursday, May 16

9:15am - Morning Prayer  
10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

### Friday, May 17

7:00am - Eucharist  
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study