Cardinal Pio Laghi tours the Teche Area

Cardinal closes chapter on Acadian exiles by blessing Wall

By TIMOTHY BOONE

ST. MARTINVILLE - In a move that officials predict will trigger a chapter in the history of the Acadian community, Cardinal Pio Laghi blessed the new Teche Wall proposed by the Southern Heritage Association.

The wall, which is to be located near the Teche River, will serve as a memorial to the Acadian exiles who were forced to leave Louisiana in the late 18th century.

Laghi also blessed a statue of St. Martin, which was erected in front of the church.

Cardinal Pio Laghi stops to enjoy the singing of Kay Green, with guitar, and the students of St. Edward School.

Cardinal breaks ground at Hanson, speaks at St. Edward

Cardinal Pio Laghi, the Catholic Church's ambassador to the United States, was in St. Martinville this week to bless a new Teche Wall and to speak at St. Edward School.

Laghi, who is known for his warm and friendly demeanor, was greeted with a warm welcome at the St. Edward School and at the Teche Wall dedication ceremony.

Laghi spoke about the importance of preserving the history and culture of the Acadian community.

"The Teche Wall is a symbol of our heritage," Laghi said. "It reminds us of the sacrifice of our ancestors and their contribution to Louisiana."

Laghi also blessed a statue of St. Martin, which was erected in front of the church.

But before Laghi left, he attended a Mass at St. Martinville, where he was greeted with a warm welcome.

"It was a honor to be here," Laghi said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to bless this new Teche Wall and to speak to the students of St. Edward School."