

Catholic Connection

Respect



Life



FROM THE CHANCELLOR

PRO-LIFE: RESPECT LIFE SUNDAY

The USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities reminds all parishes that Respect Life Program begins anew each year on Respect Life Sunday, the first Sunday in October. The program is highlighted in liturgies and marked by special events. The Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities publishes a program packet each year to call attention to numerous human life issues. Each contains information on current issues, program suggestions, liturgy resources and clip art. It may also contain prayers for daily recitation and parish bulletin briefs. These materials may be ordered by contacting the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 3211 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1194, Tel: 202-541-3070, Website www.usccb.org/prolife.

OFFICIAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY FOR PASTORS & PARISH OFFICES:

2007 Official Catholic Directory (OCD)

Watch your mailbox in early September for the Official Catholic Directory (OCD) update form. This form (blue for parishes, pink for schools, and white for other institutions/organizations) is mailed directly from the OCD office. After correcting information from the previous year, return forms to the Chancery. Prompt and accurate completion ensures continuation of our tax-exempt status. For questions, contact Christine Rivers, Chancellor, Diocese of Shreveport, at (318) 868-4441 or (800) 256-1542, or e-mail criverss@dioshpt.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

13TH ANNUAL RED MASS IN MONROE will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 5th at 1:00 p.m. in St. Matthew's Catholic Church at 121 Jackson St. in Monroe. This Mass officially marks the opening of the Fourth District Court and is attended by judges, lawyers and elected officials from throughout northeast Louisiana. Area religious leaders of various denominations and faith traditions will join in the service. All will gather to ask the blessings of the Holy Spirit upon the administration of justice. For more information contact: Judge Wendell Manning, (318) 361-2270.

80TH ANNUAL FLYER BOOSTER BBQ for the benefit of Loyola College Prep will take place October 18th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in Riverview Hall formerly Convention Hall next to the Civic Theatre at 600 Clyde Fant Parkway. The tickets are \$25.00 or \$50.00 a couple for steak and all the trimmings and is adult only. Tickets may be purchased at the door or at the Alumni Office at the school. This is the oldest continuous Catholic School fundraiser in Shreveport.

BLUE MASS to be held for the fifth year at Mary, Queen of Peace on Sept. 22nd at 10:00 a.m. This is a special Mass to honor, pray, and appreciate all who are in law enforcement and firefighter services with chaplains, ministers of other faiths and traditions united together in prayer. Fr. Joseph Ampatt and Bishop Friend will preside.

PASTORAL STATEMENTS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESS

The Catholic Bishops of the South have completed a series of pastoral statements on the criminal justice process and a gospel response. After the final statement is issued in Advent, Glenmary Home Missioners will compile and publish the statements in one volume. Once printed a copy will be available in Slattery Library. Presently the statements may be accessed on the web site of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky (www.ccky.org), at the Contents box, then Pastoral Resources/Southern Bishops.

BEQUESTS

The Diocese of Shreveport is pleased to acknowledge receipt of two bequests. The diocese was designated beneficiary of a life insurance policy in the Estate of Mr. Dale H. Cooper. The bequest will benefit the Bishop's Tuition Assistance Fund. A gift from the Estate of Mr. Charles Eagle was received and at his direction a donation to the diocesan Vocations Fund will be made. We are very grateful for the generosity and planning of these individuals.

OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS

By order of the Most Reverend William B. Friend, the following appointments are published.

- Rev. Dariusz Pawlowski is appointed pastor of St. Joseph Church in Bastrop, effective June 1, 2006.
- Rev. Joseph Ampatt is appointed pastor of Mary, Queen of Peace Church in Bossier City, effective July 1, 2006.
- Rev. Monsignor Earl V. Provenza is appointed pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Shreveport, effective July 1, 2006.
- Rev. Patrick A. Scully is renewed in his pastoral assignment as Senior Pastor in St. Clement Church, Vivian, effective July 7, 2006.
- Rev. Blane O'Neill, OFM, is appointed to ministry as Senior Associate in St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Ruston.
- The retirement from ministry of Rev. John D. Kennedy is accepted as of May 31, 2006, and for Rev. Monsignor Franz Graef as of June 30, 2006.
- Deacon Ron Morris is appointed to serve as Permanent Deacon at Holy Trinity Church, Shreveport, and his appointment to serve in Mary, Queen of Peace Church, Bossier City, is withdrawn, effective July 1, 2006.
- Deacon Jorge Martinez is appointed to the Office of Deacon for ministry in Holy Trinity Church, Shreveport, and relieved of ministry in the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans, effective July 15, 2006.
- Mrs. Martha Martinez is commissioned for service as Lay Ecclesial Minister in Holy Trinity Church, Shreveport, effective July 15, 2006, and relieved of service in the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans.
- Mrs. Emily M. Paul is appointed to the Office of Principal of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Academy, Shreveport as of July 1, 2006.

CHRISTINE RIVERS
Chancellor

A Friendly Reflection

BY BISHOP WILLIAM FRIEND



Housing is a problem that calls us to action

Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of man has no where to rest his head” (Luke 9:58). The would-be followers of Jesus were challenged by such sayings as He spoke of the severity and the unconditional nature of Christian discipleship. We, too, are challenged by the call to discipleship and how it applies to everyday experiences and problems of today. In each person or family lacking a basic good, and above all housing, the Christian must recognize Christ himself (See Matthew 25:45 ff). There was no room for him in the inn, either (Luke 2:7).

There is little doubt that the housing problem, locally and globally, is one of today’s most serious social problems that invites us to study and action.

We have for weeks witnessed televised reporting of warfare in which people’s homes are reduced to rubble. Homes have been destroyed as a reprisal for injury or loss suffered. Still other people are driven from their homes by warlords who seek ethnic or religious cleansing, thus violently forcing innocent people to have to emigrate from their homeland, and often become homeless strangers.

All of us in this state are well aware of the suffering of homelessness introduced by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. Many in this area of North Louisiana generously opened their own homes to the evacuees and became part of the solution to the problem. Appreciation of our own homes and comforts grew, too.

Many local residents help, too, in serving the numerous individuals among us who are homeless, suffer personal problems – alcoholism, drug abuse, mental challenges, unemployment, family crises or social marginalization – for whom the solution does not simply rest in being given shelter or a safe place to live. Fortunately, care providers and agencies come to the rescue.

Families are aware that young people who want to marry often discover that the amount of money needed to acquire a decent home at an affordable price can

involve long and painful delays before they can find a place to live and enjoy a family of their own.

One can reasonably ask the question: Why is the cost of housing so high? Is it due to the cost of materials, or the cost of labor, or the cost of land? Or does speculation and profiteering play a significant part in all of this? Does greed get in the way of housing? The Church teaches: “God destined the earth and all it contains for all men and all people, so that all created goods would be shared fairly by all mankind, under the guidance of justice tempered by charity” (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, N. 69). In reflecting on this particular principle, we can better understand that housing constitutes a basic social good and cannot simply be considered a market commodity.

The issue of housing certainly sets forth the socio-economic inequalities in our midst. And, of course, principal sources of the housing problem are the issues of low salaries, unemployment, certain employment practices of reduced hours of work to avoid paying benefits, and certain dimensions of public policy and attitudes that fail in working for the common good of all people.

What can church folks do to become part of the solution to the housing problems? Join in the work of Habitat for Humanity; the Fuller Center (Shreveport), the rescue missions, the armies special housing and centers serving the homeless. Become advocates for the homeless and assist them in relating to bankers, developers, contractors, and elected officials. Work for recreating the spirit of neighborliness in our various communities. Invite planners and developers to think of the poor and tithe their talent, time and resources to better the lives of all our citizens. Are only the well-to-do in our communities to benefit from new housing? Can’t all citizens have opportunities to benefit somehow?

What is our public policy on housing? How has it been developed? How is it monitored and evaluated? Who benefits most, and who is burdened most? Do we really care?

As you can tell, I surely do not have all the answers. I bet though, that with caring and concern we, all together, could certainly help to improve the way things are at present. Answers can be discovered.

The gift of being able to live in one’s own house, with one’s family is truly a treasure. In the Bible it is perceived to be a sign of happiness and peace (Psalm 128/127; Job 29:4; Jeremiah 29:5-28, 30:18).

Remember what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: “the political community has a duty to honor the family, to assist it, and to ensure especially.... The right to private property, to free enterprise, to obtain work and housing, and the right to emigrate...” (N.2211). At the same time, “political authority has the right and duty to regulate the legitimate exercise of the right to ownership for the sale of the common good” (n.2406). Don’t you wonder about this civic responsibility when it comes to abandoned property, absentee owners, and slum landlords?

When we read the Bible we can see that our Christian religious tradition, inherited from Judaism, attributes a fundamental value to “housing” which we can still recognize today. In reality, because of God’s love and His outreach to us, we are truly gifted and called to be stewards of that which is in our possession. God who is generous to all of us, invited us to follow the path of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who gave until death. Yes, we need to keep the long-range perspective of life in mind, therefore. We should continue to work for the common good of all.

We welcome your presence into our homes, Lord, and we pray that you teach us how to celebrate your presence faithfully. Help us to assist others to make a place for you in their homes as well. May all of us together, know peace and love, living the spirit of hospitality and caring, always. Amen. ✦

+WILLIAM B. FRIEND
Bishop of Shreveport

Una Reflexión Amistosa

POR OBISPO WILLIAM FRIEND

La Vivienda es un problema que nos pide acción

“Los Zorros tienen cuevas y las aves tienen nidos; pero el Hijo del Hombre no tiene donde recostar la cabeza” (Lucas 9:58) Los que seguirían a Jesús eran desafiados por estos dichos cuando Él hablaba de la severidad y la naturaleza incondicional de discípulos Cristianos. Nosotros también tenemos el desafío del llamado a ser discípulos todos los días en nuestras experiencias y problemas actuales. En cada persona o familia que no cuenta ni con una de las necesidades básicas, mas que todo un lugar donde vivir, los Cristianos debemos reconocer al mismo Cristo (Ver Mateo 25:45 y un poco mas adelante) No había posada para él en el mesón, también en (Lucas 2:7)

No cabe duda de que el problema de vivienda, local y globalmente, es uno de los problemas sociales más serios que nos invita a reconocer y actuar.

Por semanas hemos sido testigos de los reportes de televisión de guerra en la que las viviendas se convierten en escombros. Casas han sido destruidas como sufrimiento de heridas o represalias. Aun mas otra gente ha sido sacada de sus casas por militantes que buscan pureza étnica o religiosa, sin embargo violentamente obligan a la gente inocente a tener que emigrar de sus tierras natales, y frecuentemente se convierten en extranjeros sin hogar.

Todos nosotros en este estado sabemos muy bien del sufrimiento y de la falta de hogar que trajeron consigo los huracanes Katrina y Rita. Muchas personas en esta área del Norte de Louisiana abrieron generosamente sus propios hogares a los evacuados y se convirtieron en la solución del problema. Nos dimos también cuenta del valor que tienen nuestras casas y comodidades.

Muchos residentes locales ayudan también, sirviendo a las muchas personas entre nosotros que no tienen hogar, que sufren de problemas personales— alcoholismo, abuso de drogas, discapacidades mentales, desempleo, marginados por crisis familiar o social— para quienes la solución no es solamente proveerles con un lugar donde vivir. Afortunadamente, gente y agencias vienen al rescate.

Las familias se dan cuenta que cuando una

pareja se quiere cazar a veces descubre que para poder comprar una casa decente a veces tienen que esperar mucho tiempo para encontrar un lugar donde vivir y disfrutar a su propia familia.

Podemos razonablemente preguntarnos: ¿Porqué el costo de vivienda es tan alto? ¿Es por el costo de los materiales, o de la mano de obra, o el costo de la tierra? ¿Será que la especulación y la ganancia juegan una gran parte en todo esto? ¿Será que en el obtener una casa hay ambición? La Iglesia nos enseña: “Dios destinó la tierra y todo lo que contiene para el hombre y toda la gente, para que todo lo creado fuera compartido justamente por el hombre, bajo la guía de la justicia” (Vaticano II, Gaudium et Spes, N. 69) Al reflexionar sobre este principio, podemos entender mejor que la vivienda constituye una necesidad social básica y no puede considerarse simplemente como un mercado de comodidad.

El tema de la vivienda ciertamente establece las inigualdades socioeconómicas entre nosotros. Y, por supuesto, los recursos principales del problema de la vivienda son bajos salarios, desempleo, prácticas de ciertos empleos de reducir horas de trabajo para no tener que pagar beneficios, y ciertas dimensiones de la norma pública y actitudes que fallan en el trabajo por el bienestar común de toda la gente.

¿Qué puede hacer la gente de la iglesia para ser parte de una solución a los problemas de vivienda? Unirse al trabajo de Habitat for Humanity (Habitación para la Humanidad); El Centro Fuller (Shreveport), las misiones de rescate, la habitación especial de la armada y centros que sirven a nuestros hermanos sin hogar. Conviértete en partidario de las personas sin hogar y ayúdalas recomendándolas con banqueros, constructores, contratistas y con los oficiales electos. Trabaja para crear un espíritu de vecindad en varias de nuestras comunidades. Invita a los organizadores y constructores a pensar en los pobres y dar el diezmo de su talento, tiempo y recursos para ayudar a mejorar las vidas de nuestros ciudadanos. ¿Solamente los más ricos de nuestras comunidades tienen que beneficiarse de las nuevas casas? ¿No pueden todos los ciudadanos tener oportunidades de beneficiarse de alguna manera?

¿Cuál es nuestra política pública en lo que se refiere a vivienda? ¿Cómo se ha construido? ¿Cómo se ha desarrollado? ¿Cómo se maneja y se evalúa? ¿Quién se beneficia mas, y quien sale mas lastimado? ¿En realidad nos interesa?

Como pueden ver, Yo ciertamente no

tengo todas las respuestas. Les aseguro que con cariño e interés todos, todos juntos, podríamos ciertamente ayudar a mejorar la manera en que las cosas están hasta hoy. Podemos descubrir respuestas.

El regalo de vivir en una casa propia, con su propia familia es un verdadero tesoro. En la Biblia esto se percibe como una señal de felicidad y de paz (Salmo 128/127; Job 29:4; Jeremías 29:5-28, 30:18)

Recuerden que el Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica nos enseña: “la comunidad política tiene una tarea de honrar la familia, ayudarla, y de asegurarle especialmente... El derecho de tener propiedad privada, libre iniciativa, obtener trabajo y vivienda, y el derecho de emigrar...” (N.2211) Al mismo tiempo, “la autoridad política tiene el derecho y obligación de regular la práctica legítima y ejercitar el derecho de poseer para la venta del bien común” (n.2406). ¿No se preguntan acerca de esta responsabilidad cívica cuando se trata de propiedades abandonadas, dueños ausentes, y arrendadores de barrios bajos?

Cuando leemos la Biblia podemos ver que nuestra tradición de religión Cristiana, heredada del Judaísmo, atribuye un valor fundamental a la “vivienda” la cual podemos aun reconocer en nuestros tiempos. En realidad, por el amor de Dios y Su extensión hacia nosotros, somos verdaderamente capaces y llamados a ser administradores de lo que poseemos. Dios que es generoso con todos nosotros, nos invita a seguir el camino de nuestro Señor, Jesucristo, que dio hasta la muerte. Además, sí necesitamos tener en cuenta la perspectiva de la vida a largo plazo. Debemos continuar trabajando por el bien común de todos.

Damos la bienvenida a tu presencia en nuestros hogares, Señor, y oramos para que nos enseñes a celebrar tu presencia fielmente. Así mismo ayúdanos a apoyar a otros a construir un lugar para ti en sus hogares. Que todos nosotros juntos, conozcamos la paz y el amor, viviendo siempre el espíritu de hospitalidad y cariño. Amen. ✦

+WILLIAM B. FRIEND
Obispo de Shreveport

Para recibir esta suscripción gratis mensualmente o para cambio de dirección, favor de llamar a: Blanca Belaire 219-7311

Upcoming Second Collections

DIOCESE OF SHREVEPORT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Collection Date: September 23rd & 24th

Catholic schools are a treasure for the parents and children affiliated with them and even for the Church at large because they complement Catholic families' efforts to raise their children in the faith. The Catholic Christian environment builds up the community of faith and prepares future leaders who have been immersed in its teaching and tradition. The Bishop's Tuition Assistance Fund enables some families whose income does not meet a sufficient level to pay the entire cost of tuition. This second collection today is an effort to build-up the principal upon which future education grants can be made. Please give us your considered support.

How well did the Diocese do?

How well did you, the lay faithful, contribute to the Diocese of Shreveport's Second Collections? Below is a recent report from our Diocesan business office of monies collected.

**DIOCESE OF SHREVEPORT
RETIRED PRIESTS' FUND**
April 29 & 30, 2006
\$ 58,148.75

HOME MISSION APPEAL
May 27 & 28, 2006
\$ 20,020.63



NATIONAL COLLECTION FOR HURRICANE RECOVERY

Collection Date: October 7th & 8th

A first national collection for humanitarian assistance for those affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 brought in \$130,000,000.

The diocesan recovery needs of the Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Diocese of Biloxi are as large now as they were immediately after the storms. \$70,000,000 worth of damage was endured by 428 of the 433 church-owned structures of Biloxi, \$35,000,000 of it uninsured. Archbishop Hughes of New Orleans estimates \$52,000,000 of uninsured flood damage on buildings they are trying to reopen right now, and another \$70,000,000 uninsured flood damage on buildings they are delaying reopening.

60% of the second national collection will be provided to the Archdiocese of New Orleans, 40% to the Diocese of Biloxi. Archbishop Hughes and Bishop Rodi will give reports to the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops on the disposition of funds.

Please give this collection your prayerful consideration. May God bless you. ✦

VERY REV. DAVID RICHTER, JCL
Vicar General



A Journey of Hope

New Immigration Bill: May 25, 2006, the Senate passed the S.2611 bill (Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006)

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops supports this bill and asks us to become better informed about the need for comprehensive reforms in our laws and policies toward immigrants. The parishes are an important place for this educational process and the grassroots advocacy that will be essential in bringing about change.

Please look for a Justice for Immigrants Campaign workshop in the upcoming months in your parish or call the Office of Immigration Services of

the Diocese to have a workshop for a specific group (i.e. Altar Society, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Prayer Group or a Social Action Committee, etc.)

These are some of the topics that would be covered:

- What is a legalization program?
- How would a legalization program impact our church?
- Who is an immigrant?
- Should our church work for immigration reform?

The following churches have scheduled workshops for September:
Mission of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Farmerville

Christ the King Church in Bossier City
St. John Berchmans Cathedral
Jesus Good Shepherd in Monroe
Sacred Heart in Oak Grove
St. Paschal Church in West Monroe ✦

ROSALBA (ROSE) QUIROZ

*Office of Hispanic Ministry and
Immigration Services*

3500 Fairfield Ave., Shreveport, LA 71104
1-800-256-1542 Ext. 265 or 219-7265

Respect Life

Created, loved, redeemed by God.

Most of us probably take for granted (at least some of the time) that we are created, loved and redeemed by God. Yet, distracted as we are by the noise and activities of daily life, we need to make time to reflect on this central truth of life – and the answer to the universal human question: Who am I, and what am I doing here?

When our ancestors in faith lost their moral and spiritual bearings, Jesus took on human flesh to show us the radical nature of God's love. His love is far from being passive, generic or abstract. It is not just a kindly feeling toward others. Jesus' love was personal, passionate and self-giving.

He showed us by example, as well as through parables, what God expects of us. At the Last Supper, he told the apostles: "This is my commandment: Love one another as I love you" (John 15:12). Jesus was not speaking of affectionate feelings that we have for family and friends. The model of love by which we will be measured, according to the parable of the Last Judgment (cf. Mt 25: 31-46), is that of the righteous who visited prisoners, and fed, clothed, welcomed and cared for the needy and strangers. They were serving Christ in the needy and will "inherit the kingdom prepared for [them] from the foundation of the world" (Mt 25: 34).

As Christians, then, each one of us is called, to the best of his or her ability, to be involved in:

- personal, concrete and practical acts of kindness toward those whom God puts in our paths
- organized charitable activities, through personal service and/or financial support
- working toward a just ordering of society by taking part in public life to help ensure that laws and policies respect the lives and dignity of all, especially those who are most vulnerable (Pope Benedict XVI, *God Is Love*)

Most of us, even if we slip up more often than we care to admit, understand the importance of treating all with kindness. We understand the need to work with the Church's charities serving those in need, whether we do so by donating our time or our financial support.

But we are called to do more. As the U.S. Catholic bishops explained in *Living the Gospel of Life*: "The common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of

human rights – for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture – is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination" (no. 19, quoting *Christifideles Laici*, 38). In other words, talk about the value of human life and the sacredness of human dignity can become empty platitudes unless we act on our convictions.

Today the intentional destruction of human life at its beginning and at its end have become the preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself.

- Well over a million children are aborted every year in the United States alone; some are killed by methods so brutal society would not tolerate their use against defenseless animals. The reasons given for undergoing abortion are overwhelmingly social reasons.
- Abortion harms women as well. Some die (not just the publicized deaths from RU-486), and others are scarred physically and emotionally. Increasing numbers of women are speaking out about the years of grief and depression that followed their abortions.
- Scientists destroy human embryos to harvest their stem cells – perhaps convincing themselves that the killing is outweighed by potential cures. Some are trying to clone human embryos to use in research. These unethical efforts continue despite impressive medical successes in treating patients with adult stem cells, including those from umbilical cord blood, and despite the fact that potential cures from embryonic stem cells remain theoretical. Several states have even begun to fund unethical cloning and embryo research with taxpayer funds.
- Increasingly it is argued that assisted suicide and euthanasia are appropriate treatments for the very old and for those with mental or physical disabilities. In the U.S., Oregon is the only state to have legalized assisted suicide, but other states are being urged to follow suit. Legal euthanasia and assisted suicide are spreading across Europe.

No amount of good social policy, such as programs that feed the hungry and

Priceless

shelter the homeless – as vitally important as they are – can make up for bad policies concerning the protection of life itself. Without the fundamental right to live, the right to not be killed, no other rights are meaningful. In fact, without life no other rights can exist.

Pope Benedict reminds us in *God Is Love* that, as Catholics, we are called to make God's love present in the world. He noted that the bishops "help form consciences in political life and stimulate greater insight into the authentic requirements of justice" (no. 28). But, he emphasized, it is the responsibility of lay Catholics to work for a "just ordering of society" and "to take part in public life in a personal capacity" (no. 29).

In other words, it is up to Catholic laypeople to participate directly in public life, helping to enact laws and policies that respect the lives of all, especially those who have no voice—unborn children, human embryos targeted for destructive research, and those who are cognitively impaired, disabled or dying.

Whether we are writing letters to elected representatives, voting, campaigning, or simply providing friends and colleagues with solid information about the grave moral issues of our day, our participation in American public life should at all times be guided by this fundamental truth: each one of us—including those with whom we strongly disagree—is created, loved and redeemed by God. We, and they, are priceless in his eyes.

By speaking the truth about human life in love, we can help build a society that protects and respects every human life, born and unborn, and better reflects our status as children of God. ✦

SECRETARIAT FOR PRO-LIFE ACTIVITIES
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Labor Day - The Work of Learning

Each year, on the first Monday of September, we celebrate a special holiday – LABOR DAY! I’ve always enjoyed this end-of-summer celebration. We stop for a day to say goodbye to our summer vacations, backyard barbecues and the hours reading under a shady tree. It is time to consider when we will have to fold up the lawn furniture and deflate the wading pool. On each Labor Day America celebrates the end of summer, the coming of fall and on that day we focus on work. This day marks the gift of work -- the jobs we are called to do and the skills we continue to develop.

The main “job” for most children is to be a learner. This learning task occurs not only at school but also at home and in play with friends. The focus of this month’s Home Plate article is work – especially the work

of learning!

Plan this month to take a little time together to consider learning as an important “job.”

As a parent, think about your own labor, your experiences, and your job related activities. Consider how you have learned to do the things you do – whether that is cooking, teaching, building, serving, organizing. Focus on the things you learned through the years. Over time we experience many opportunities for learning. Think about how you have used that learning through the years. An example might be how you learned how to speak in front of a group or how classes and apprenticeship taught you how to repair plumbing or construct a building. Perhaps you learned to dance as a child and now as an adult you are able to enjoy dancing at a party.

This month, share with your

children stories of learning and how you now use what you learned.

You can make an activity sheet this month to help you and your children identify the many skills each of you already have acquired and then leave a column to encourage each family member to choose something he or she would like to learn this year. Take time to thank God for our jobs and our pride in the things we can do.

Have fun and don’t forget that St. James is the patron of Laborers, St. Thomas Aquinas is the patron of Students, St. Gregory is the patron of Teachers, St. Monica is the patron of Moms and that St. Joseph is the patron of Dads.

And may God bless you in all your good work! ✦

MARY MCGILL
Director of Catechetics

Take a few minutes each morning this month to ask God’s blessing on our work. Hold hands as a family member leads this prayer.

A Morning Blessing:

We gather as a family this morning, Lord, to thank you for the work you have given each of us today. Help us to have clear minds and strong bodies to accomplish all we are asked to do.

Help us to be kind and caring with those around us.

Help us to be patient and to have a good sense of humor when things become difficult.

And forgive us, Lord, because we know that sometimes Even though we work hard – things don’t turn out the way it should.

Be with each of us, Lord:

Bless _____ today in his/her responsibilities as: _____ - _____
(include all family members – Mom, Dad, Kids)

We ask especially for your help with: _____
(note any special needs... like Clare’s spelling test, Mom’s workshop, Alec’s interview, Dad’s meeting...)

Bring us back together tonight safe and strong, as we work to be your good followers, your good workers!

AMEN

Sr. Marilyn speaks at **National Canon Law Convention**

The annual National Canon Law Convention is being held on October 9th- 12th in Fort Worth, Texas. This convention is attended by bishops and canon lawyers throughout the world. In addition, members of tribunal staffs and interested laity are also invited to share in learning the newest advancements in Church Law. The theme of this year's convention is "Consultation in the Life of the Church: In Service of Communio." All of the speakers are addressing the need for continued changes in the governance of the Church and the growing involvement of the faithful in such structures.

Sister Marilyn Vassallo, C.S.J., J.C.L., Associate Judge of the Marriage Tribunal in our Diocese, will give two seminars at the National Canon Law Convention. Sister's presentation is "Lay Advocates: Collaborative Bridge between Tribunals and Parishes." Sister Marilyn has been involved in forming priests, deacons and lay advocates, from all of the dioceses in the Provinces of Mobile and in New Orleans on the canonical and pastoral issues surrounding the annulment process. Using our experience in the Diocese of Shreveport, this presentation is designed to show the collaborative interaction possible between the tribunal and advocates in ministering to those in need of annulments in the Catholic Church.

Other topics concerning Finance Councils, Collaboration between priests and bishops, Advocacy for priests and Consultation in Church Governance promises to make this convention one of great interest for all members of the faithful. For more information regarding registration, contact the Canon Law Web site www.clsa.org. ♦



Sr. Marilyn Vassallo, CSJ, JCL
Director of Canonical Services

Humanitarian and President's Awards – Serra Club Installation Banquet July 20, 2006

We are all here because we have an interest, a vested interest in vocations; particularly religious vocations. You can talk all day about the word "vocation" its meanings, derivations, definitions and you will always come back to terms like, a career, what will I be, what is my purpose in life, do I have a calling, have I a call from God. From Jesus to Pope John Paul II, when one of them talked about vocations or a "call" – it WAS a call from God, but it was always "A call to SERVE!" Christ said many times that "He came to serve not to be served." No matter what we are called or led to do if we approach it in terms of service we will reap the rewards that Christ promised.

The Board of Directors of the Serra Club of Shreveport wanted to acknowledge someone that they felt lived his/her life serving, whether it was serving the physical, material and spiritual needs of others or serving to support and encourage religious vocations through prayer, moral support, encouragement and financial support. Therefore the Board determined that each year two awards would be given at

the Banquet to acknowledge their choice of deserving recipients.

One of the awards is a Humanitarian Award. This recipient is voted on by the Board of Directors and is a non-Serran. This is awarded for the humanitarian efforts of one individual who has sacrificed many things in his/her life to be very visible, very active and I am sure you will all agree very deserving. This past year was a particularly busy year. I am sure knowing this person that it was frustrating at times because she could only do so much with so little resources and such huge needs. But she continued to serve. Knowing this person you can almost see SERVICE written across her forehead. The plaque read:

"For outstanding achievements in making life better for other people is presented to Ms. Dotye Sue Stanford. Through personal sacrifice and generosity of her time, talent and treasure particularly this past year as President of St. Vincent de Paul Society for the Diocese of Shreveport and the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. July 20, 2006 Serra Club Of Shreveport."

The other award approved by the Board of Directors yet voted on only by the President and past Presidents of the Serra Club is the President's Award for Vocations. This award again exemplifies the word service. Through many years of hard work both in the forefront and behind the scenes he has worked for vocations. He was an active member of

the first Serra Club chartered in 1952. He is also a member of the current Serra Club chartered in 2003. Both his moral support, his prayerful support and his financial support through the years saw a son and a grandson discern a call to the priesthood before pursuing other calls of service to their country and to their families. This recipient once told me, "I grew up in a rural farm community without a lot of church and not much time or invitation to consider a vocation to the priesthood, but I have often wondered if given the opportunity or the invitation to be a priest to serve for Christ how would I have done. My reply was, 'Wow I am sure you would have been a wonderful priest yet look what the world would have missed had you not been the wonderful family man and physician that has given so much for so long serving so many of your fellow man.'" The plaque read:
"PRESIDENTS' AWARD for the Support and Encouragement of Vocations is presented to Dr. Joseph Holoubek. Through timeless energy and personal prayer; a lifetime of support for the Mission of the Serra movement and support of the seminarians and priests of our diocese. July 20, 2006 Serra Club of Shreveport." ♦

RANDY TILLER
Director of Mission Effectiveness

A year after hurricanes, Southern dioceses still trying to recover

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Southern dioceses from Texas to Alabama are still reeling from the swath of destruction left by last year's hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Diocese of Biloxi, Miss., both hit hard by Hurricane Katrina Aug. 29, have taken steps toward recovery, but full-scale restoration is still a long way off as thousands of residents no longer have a place to live, churches and schools remain damaged and community service programs are no longer operational. The coastal area of the Archdiocese of Mobile, Ala., is also in the midst of recovery. Church structures have been repaired, but residents of the small fishing village of Bayou La Batre, Ala., are still living in trailers and trying to salvage what they can from destroyed homes and fishing livelihoods. Farther west at the Texas-Louisiana border, the impact of Hurricane Rita, which slammed the area Sept. 24, is evident in ongoing repair work. In the dioceses of Beaumont, Texas, and Houma-Thibodaux, La., there has been a flurry of repairs of homes, schools and churches, but in a storm-devastated area of the Diocese of Lake Charles, La., repairs are only just beginning. ♦

Door-to-door post-Katrina counseling critical to recovery

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) – The long haul is here. Every day, teams of counselors and social workers with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans visit hurricane-devastated neighborhoods and go door-to-door asking people simple questions related to complex problems. Behind every door is a Katrina survivor with his or her sobering story. The stories haven't changed much since Katrina hit nearly a year ago, and that is perhaps the saddest indicator of a community in the midst of a collective mental health crisis. By early July, social workers and counselors with Catholic Charities' Louisiana Spirit outreach program, had personally visited 65,000 people and reported spikes in domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, depression and suicidal tendencies. Now the program is in danger of elimination because the Federal Emergency Management Agency is refusing to pay for certain previously approved and budgeted services, leaving Catholic Charities with a \$20,000 daily shortfall and an uncertain future. ♦

Nun talks with New Orleans resident returning home six months after hurricane

Sister Vera Butler, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, talks with a resident just returning to his neighborhood six months after Hurricane Katrina. She is the 2006 recipient of the Lumen Christi Award from the Catholic Church Extension Society. The award is to be presented at a special Mass and dinner Sept. 23 in Chicago. Catholic Extension will also give Sister Vera \$10,000, and the Archdiocese of New Orleans will receive \$25,000. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec) (Aug. 14, 2006) ♦



Caskets, tombs displaced by Katrina returned to Louisiana cemetery

POINTE A LA HACHE, La. (CNS) – Mike Mudge, a councilman for the civil entity of Plaquemines Parish, will never forget what he saw from a helicopter weeks after Hurricane Katrina swept through Louisiana's southernmost parish: hundreds of coffins and concrete vaults – entire tombs – resting in debris miles away from any cemetery. Mudge said the caskets, moved by the force of Katrina's floodwaters, were found all over. "They were in the tops of trees, on top of house trailers, inside people's homes, under houses, under trailers. If you found one, you kept looking in that area because there'd be another there," he told the Clarion Herald, newspaper of the New Orleans Archdiocese. Months of tedious recovery and detective work by Mudge, his tiny staff, funeral home executives and archdiocesan cemetery officials have resulted in small victories, which culminated July 22 in the reinterment of 15 people in St. Thomas Church Cemetery in Pointe a la Hache. ♦

Holy Trinity Catholic Church Sesquicentennial - 1856 to 2006

Exhibit at Slattery Library continues. . .

A large collection of memorabilia will continue to be displayed in the Slattery Library during the month of September in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Holy Trinity in Shreveport. The display includes many old photographs and news articles as well as other items of interest pertaining to the rich history of the oldest standing church building in Shreveport. The Holy Trinity display will be available for viewing Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the Slattery Library, 3500 Fairfield Avenue, Shreveport.

Who Do You Say That I Am?

THE "MESSIAH"

In Mark 8:29, Peter correctly identifies Jesus as "the Messiah." The word, Messiah, comes from the Hebrew word that means "the anointed one." The Greek translation of this word is "Christ." This title reflects the Church's belief that Jesus is the anointed one of God who inaugurates the Kingdom of God among us. For more on this teaching, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 436-440.

On Catechetical Sunday, we commission as catechists those men and women, who by their love, lived example, and sharing of the Church's teaching, draw us closer to Jesus Christ, and help us to answer for ourselves the question, "Who do you say that I am?"

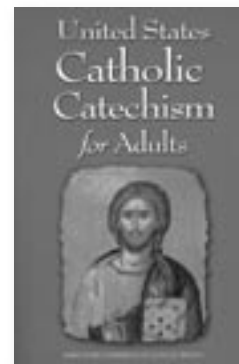
CATECHETICAL SUNDAY

September 16-17, 2006



U.S. adult catechism is new faith resource for adults

WASHINGTON (CNS) – When U.S. Catholics celebrate Catechetical Sunday Sept. 17, they will have a new resource available to help them deepen their understanding of the faith – the U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults. Within two weeks after it went on sale July 31, the 664-page adult catechism had sold more than 25,000 copies according to USCCB Publishing, the publishing office of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Adopted by the U.S. bishops in November 2004 and recently approved by the Holy See, the U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults is the first official catechism produced by the nation's bishops since the creation of the Baltimore Catechism, first published in 1885 and revised in 1941. Unlike the Baltimore Catechism, which was aimed primarily at the religious education of children, the new adult catechism is intended chiefly as an instrument for adults. Those entering the church can use it to learn about the Catholic faith, while adults who were born and raised Catholic can use it to deepen their understanding of Catholic teachings that they learned about more superficially as children. ♦



CNS

Safe Environment Updates

Facilitators. In January, Christie Weeks trained four new facilitators in order to help provide enough sessions of Protecting God's Children throughout the Diocese. Our new facilitators are Mary Chauvin, Donna Frasier, Vonny Jaubert and Michael Straub. Christie Weeks still serves as a facilitator as do others, most of whom have been helping out since the inception of the program in our Diocese. Those others are Florence Bice, Debi Book, Phyllis Lee, John Mark Willcox and Tammy Yatcko.

Second Year Module. Many of you have received a system-generated notice regarding the second year module. After you've had your VIRTUS account for one year the system assigns a recertification module. After the second year, the system assigns another. These modules are similar to the bulletins but they are sort of a re-cap of the whole year so it takes about 15 minutes to complete. The access to these modules is a little bit different than the bulletins. When you go to the training tab in your account, look on the left side of your screen about half-way down. Click on "Online Training Modules" then click on the title of the module you want to complete. Don't click on "Online Training Report" because that won't let you get to the module itself. You don't have to finish the modules in one sitting. You can do part of it then come back to it. Thank you for your continuing efforts to keep up the awareness of child sexual abuse.

Director of Human Resources and Coordinator of Safe Environments to Change. My position has been turned over to Deacon Michael Straub. I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to serve the Diocese and I'm confident that I'm leaving the office in very capable hands. Thanks for all of the support everyone has provided in keeping up with the safe environment requirements year after year. ♦

DEBBIE SCHMIDTKE
Director of Human Resources

Atlanta conference aims to help African-American Catholics evangelize



Lari Newman-Williams, front left, of Holy Cross Church in Dallas and her daughter, Annelle, sing the gathering hymn "This Is the Day" during the Aug. 4 opening prayer of the Interregional African-American Catholic Evangelization Conference in Atlanta. The Aug. 4-6 gathering drew more than 500 participants. (CNS photo/Michael Alexander, Georgia Bulletin) (Aug. 8, 2006)

ATLANTA (CNS) – Nearly 500 African-American priests and Catholic laypeople from 20 U.S. dioceses came to Atlanta in August to focus on becoming better evangelizers through prayer, the sacraments and solid formation, and trusting in God's grace and love to overcome any personal limitations. The Aug. 4-6 Interregional African-American Catholic Evangelization Conference had as its theme "Gettin' on the Good Foot, Runnin' to the Kingdom," a reference to the prophet Isaiah's call to the people who had grown complacent in exile to return to Jerusalem to work and wait for the promises of God to be fulfilled. At the opening Mass Auxiliary Bishop Martin D. Holley of Washington spoke of the importance of having solid catechetical formation through the study of the catechism, Scripture, church documents and the lives of the saints. He also stressed the value of feeding one's spirit to become enlightened through Christ and thus a light to others. "Don't settle for junk food or fast food when you can have a gourmet meal," Bishop Holley said. ♦

INTERFAITH SUCCESS STORY

You Make A Difference!

At the May 23 meeting, the City Council of Shreveport voted to begin Extended-hours Bus Service beginning September 11 on five new routes in Shreveport-Bossier, giving people greater access to jobs, medical services, shopping and entertainment from 7:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. For two years the Northwest Cluster of Northern and Central Louisiana Interfaith, spearheaded in this effort by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, worked hand-in-hand with those in our community who thought they had no voice in government, and together they got it done!!! How sweet it is....

So what and who is Northern and Central Louisiana Interfaith group (that also helped pass a sales tax to benefit schools in Ouachita Parish)? Starting in Monroe/West Monroe about 8 years ago, the group now has a Northwest cluster (the Shreveport-Bossier area), a Central Cluster (Rapides-Avoyelles parishes) and a beginning effort in the Delta parishes, along with "sister organizations" in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Strongly supported by our diocese since its beginning, this broad-based coalition of institutions includes Christians,

Jews, and Muslims, rich and poor, black, white, and brown, who work together for the common good of our community. The clergy and lay leaders of Interfaith are committed to developing leaders as well as to building relationships among the churches, the private sector, business and government. Sponsoring neither candidates nor parties, the group endorses a number of issues agreed upon by the group such as Public Education and Youth Development; Neighborhood Revitalization; Job Access and Development; Infrastructure; Community and Police Relations; Homelessness; and Racial and Religious Diversity. Experienced professional community organizers from the I.A.F. (Industrial Areas Foundation) guide the Interfaith in the work of public decision-making that is the democratic process.

If you'd like to see the group in action in the Shreveport-Bossier area, check out the Mayoral Accountability Session on Sunday, September 17, 2:45-4:30 p.m. at Evergreen Baptist Church, 804 Allen Ave., where the major candidates will respond to a number of questions about the group's issues. For more information on your local Interfaith group contact Ray Vallillo (318-797-9582) or Bobby Mattei (318-868-2121) in Shreveport or Eva Dyann Wilson in Monroe (318-680-9601). ♦

BOBBY MATTEI & SR. DOLORES SANCHEZ

As displaced Lebanese return home, CRS coordinates assistance efforts

ROME (CNS) – As those displaced by the fighting in Lebanon returned to their hometowns, Catholic Relief Services and other international aid agencies were sending assessment teams throughout southern Lebanon and were meeting to coordinate their efforts.

David Snyder, spokesman for CRS in Beirut, said in a telephone interview Aug. 17 that "90 percent of the people" housed in shelters during the monthlong fighting "left within the first 48 hours of the cease-fire," which began Aug. 14.

"Many shelters are down to a handful of people," said Snyder. CRS is the U.S. bishops' international relief and development agency.

After providing shelter, food, clothing and medicine in the shelters, CRS and the other aid agencies are shifting their focus to meeting the needs of returnees, many of whom are going back to houses destroyed or damaged, without electricity and clean water.

"Everyone is trying to figure out what to do next," Snyder said. "Close coordination is essential" so that efforts are not duplicated and "no one is left out in the shuffle."

While CRS is working in partnership with Caritas Lebanon, the largest local humanitarian organization in Lebanon is not participating in the coordination efforts.



The Shiite Muslim movement Hezbollah, in addition to having a militia and a political wing, for decades has operated a charitable network, which was expanded as soon as Israel reacted to the militia's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers and its killing of others.

Snyder said a U.N.-related relief agency sent an assessment team into the Shiite neighborhoods of south Beirut as soon as the fighting ended, and the team was told that Hezbollah needed no help with its relief and reconstruction efforts.

White House spokesman Tony Snow told reporters in Washington Aug. 16 that Hezbollah reportedly was to receive more than \$150 million from Iran to help its reconstruction efforts, provide relief supplies and give cash payments to those impacted by the fighting.

Snow said Hezbollah knowingly invited "billions of dollars of destruction into Lebanon ... and now they're saying, 'Oh, we'll give you a little tiny, itty-bitty,

fractional, tiny sliver of that money back in terms of cash payments.' I'm sure the people will accept the cash, but they're probably not all going to be all that deluded about the nature of the people who are delivering it."

Snyder said that even if Hezbollah is using aid to try to win the hearts of the Lebanese people it is not the role of Caritas Lebanon and the international agencies to use their aid as a counterenticement.

"If Hezbollah is in one area handing out blankets, we don't need to," he said.

"The needs are way too big for one organization to handle, no matter how much money it has," he said.

As many as a million people are on the move in Lebanon, returning to their homes and trying to move back in or seeking other shelter as they try to repair their houses.

In an Aug. 15 statement, CRS announced plans for an emergency response and rehabilitation program of at least \$10 million for the Middle East region, including the Gaza Strip, northern Israel and Lebanon.

CRS said it has assisted 85,000 out of the more than 900,000 people displaced from the war between Israel and the Hezbollah militia. The war left more than 1,200 dead in Lebanon and northern Israel. ♦

BY CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

Cutting Edge

Where did the summer go? A few years ago I wrote these Beatitudes for Students. They might be good to review since most colleges around here are revving up to begin a new academic year.

Blessed are the students who stay in touch with God during their academic life, they will always have a Friend by their side. So many times students see college as a good way to stay away from church. It is important and very fruitful to pray daily and to be involved in one's parish or campus ministry. It is amazing how thoughts of God reappear at exam time!!! At the University of Michigan I could always tell exam times when our daily Mass was overflowing with students!

Blessed are the students who study and go to class, they will become educated. In college no one watches what students do as happens in high school. Most students are free to go to class or not. College calls for a greater responsibility. Those who waste their education regret it later. They are often left with big loans and little to show for them!

Blessed are the students who get involved in some extra-curricular activities, they usually develop into well-balanced people. Study alone does not make for an educated person. It is very enriching to become part of student organizations.

Blessed are the students who volunteer to help others, they will deepen their capacity to love. Service to others is a major part of being a Christian. There are many opportunities at most schools to reach out to others. Working for Habitat for Humanity, homeless shelters, tutoring, are to name only a few. In addition to God's call to love, reaching out helps people feel good about themselves.

Blessed are the students who keep away from drugs and alcohol, they are least likely to get into trouble. Using chemical substances may seem fun but this behavior often ends in tragic accidents, pregnancies, poor grades and so on. Furthermore abusing one's body is sinful.

Blessed are the students who pray about and think through important decisions, they will probably do God's will. Often times people make major decisions without enough thought or prayer. It is important to learn the art of discernment and reflection to make good choices for one's life.

Blessed are the students who keep in touch with family and friends, they will have a good support system. In some ways college is a form of liberation. Even so, it is important to stay connected to one's family and the values taught there.

Blessed are the students who take time to discover their gifts and use them to better the world, they will develop into mature Christians. All of our talents and abilities come as gifts from God to be used to build God's Kingdom. When we keep those gifts hidden under a bushel basket the world and the Church suffer.

May this new academic year be a time of growth and self-discovery for all students everywhere. May each stay close to the Lord and get to know God more deeply. And know that God is with us in all our ups and downs. ✦

SISTER MARGIE LAVONIS, CSC

*Sisters of the Holy Cross Congregation Communications
Bertrand Annex--Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, IN 46556
www.cscsisters.org*

Open House Ceremonies held for three single family homes in Lake Providence

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Region V (Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama) has sponsored Lake Providence Ministries for ten years and these ten years have been wonderful indeed. The Sisters have done such marvelous work in the Lake Providence area. They work so well with the people, in the schools, in the community, in the parish, with all the churches of the area and in so many other "quiet" ways. I have witnessed their work personally and experienced time with the people. What a wonderful ministry. The three sisters who are working there now – Sisters Karen, Marian Perpetua and Bernie – absolutely love their work.



LCWR Region V is proud of all the sisters who have ministered at Lake Providence in the past and all those ministering there in the present. The new endeavor of helping people in the area obtain new houses is certainly a blessing for the people. ✦

NANCY REGYNOLDS, S.P.
Chairperson, LCWR Region V

New Life in a Big Way!!

It's not every day you have 12 baptisms at once. Of course, it's not every day you can get a Spanish-speaking priest (Fr. Mark Watson) to Oak Grove for baptisms. Through the zeal and hard work of the English-speaking parishioners of Sacred Heart Church led by Evelyn Ridings and Cathy Couey, Fr. Mark began to offer Mass in Spanish there once a month, starting with an Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration in 2004. Now the pastor Fr. Zacharias Prakuzhy celebrates in Spanish every Sunday, drawing folks from Arkansas as well as that area of northeast Louisiana. Thanks to the collaboration of the English and Spanish-speaking parishioners, including Feliciano and Rosie Munoz who helped with the Baptismal class, 12 new little ones are beginning to follow Jesus the Way in our Church. Thanks to all who worked together to make this celebration of rebirth into God's life possible for these young ones and their families! ✦



September 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p><i>Looking Ahead:</i> October 1st (Sunday) – Respect Life Sunday October 7th & 8th (Saturday & Sunday) – National 2nd Collection for Hurricane Recovery</p>				1	2
3	4 Labor Day Catholic Center Closed	5 Red Mass St. Matthew Monroe 1:00 p.m.	6	7 Catholic Connection Deadline for October issue sheflin@dioshpt.org	8	9
10 40th Anniversary of Church of St. Benedict the Black, Grambling	11	12 LCC/NOPC Meetings (Louisiana Catholic Conference/New Orleans Provincial Council)	13	14 Archbishops' Anniversaries: Hannon 50th; Hughes & Schulte's 25th Archdiocese of New Orleans	15 Day for Women Religious Catholic Center Alumni Hall 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.	16 Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting Catholic Center 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
17 National Catechetical Sunday and World Priest Day	18 Louisiana Interchurch (LIC) Meetings-Monroe	19 Louisiana Interchurch (LIC) Meetings-Monroe Presbyteral Council Meeting, SEAS	20	21 Serra Club Meeting Catholic Center Patio Room Noon	22 Blue Mass Mary Queen of Peace 10:00 a.m.	23 2nd Collection for Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools
24 2nd Collection for Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools	25	26	27	28	29	30

My Summer in Guadalajara

ENGLISH

I could not believe ten weeks had passed since I arrived in Guadalajara on May 28. I finished my classes on August 4 after spending a week reviewing all of the topics I had studied and returned to Shreveport on August 5.

I arrived there with no knowledge of the Spanish language. I left there with some knowledge of the language but more importantly with a greater understanding of the Mexican people. I had lived with them, ate with them, worshiped with them and experienced sorrow and joy with them. Ten weeks is a long time to be separated from family and friends and from your language and culture but it is plenty of time to understand what is real and important. Holy Mother Church and her sacraments transcend the boundaries people use to separate themselves from others. Whether I received Eucharist from the hands of a Benedictine Monk in St. Meinrad, an Indian Priest in Shreveport, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion in Guadalajara or a Mexican Priest in Manzanillo it is the same Christ. That was a wonderful lesson to be reminded of once again.

I lived ten weeks with a great-grandmother who with her three daughters and sons-in-law, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren welcomed me into their lives and family. Birthday parties and Sunday lunches were regular parts of my life in Guadalajara. The wonderful thing was that I was never treated as a stranger but as a member of the family.

School was five days a week, six hours a day, one on one with my teachers. With patience, understanding, and intelligence they guided me through the good days and the bad. They showed me the real Mexico: the poor and the rich; the good and the bad. I also learned about Mexican history and the history of the Church in Mexico which often go hand-in-hand.

Soccer, Soccer, Soccer is an important part of the Mexican culture. The World Cup dominated the entire country during my first month in Mexico.

The pride of the Mexican people regarding the national team and their country during the World Cup was incredible. The saddest day in Mexico was when the national team lost to Argentina and was eliminated from the tournament. I also went with my family in Mexico to watch the Chivas play, one of the most popular soccer teams in Mexico.

Finally I turn to the Churches. She reigns above all other saints. The same image hangs in every Church benevolently watching over a people she loves: Our Lady of Guadalupe. There are four virgins typical to Jalisco; the most important in Guadalajara is Our Lady of Zapopan. She travels throughout the entire diocese visiting each Church throughout the year. In the past she led the Mexican people into battle ensuring their victory. Now she intercedes on their behalf. Whenever I visited the Basilica of Zapopan I would see pilgrims on their knees traversing the plaza offering thanksgiving. The churches whether modern or old are always filled with people who are devoted to God and the saints.

What did I learn? I learned what it felt like to be a foreigner in a foreign land incapable of understanding the language, but with the benefit of having food and shelter provided. My advice is to be patient, kind and understanding to our brothers and sisters from other countries because they struggle not only to understand the language but to find food and shelter and maintain their family. Remember the words of our Lord: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40.

Mi Verano en Guadalajara

ESPAÑOL

No puedo creer que hayan pasado diez semanas desde que llegue a Guadalajara. Fui aquella ciudad el 28 de Mayo y regresé el 5 de Agosto. Termine las clases el 4 de Agosto después de una semana de repaso de todos los temas.

Llegue sin conocimiento de idioma. Salí con bastante conocimiento del mismo pero lo más importante con mejor entendimiento hacia los Mexicanos. Experimenté, la comida, la oración, el dolor y la alegría. Diez semanas es mucho tiempo para estar separado de familia y amigos, de lengua y mi cultura. Diez semanas son suficientes para entender lo que es real e importante. La Santa Madre Iglesia y sus sacramentos trascienden las barreras que las humanas usan para separarse de los demás. Si recibo la Eucaristía de manos de un monje Benedictino de San Meinrad, un sacerdote indio de Shreveport, un Extraordinario ministro de la santa comunión de Guadalajara, o un sacerdote mexicano de Manzanillo, es el mismo Cristo. Esta fue una lección maravillosa para mí.

Viví diez semanas con una bisabuela quien con sus tres hijas y

yeranos, ocho nietos y dos bisnietos me dieron la bienvenida a sus vidas y familia. Fiestas de quince años; cumpleaños y comida dominicales era una parte común de mi vida en Guadalajara. Nunca fui tratado como extranjero sino como miembro de la familia.

La escuela era cinco días a la semana, seis horas al día, en clases privadas directas con mis maestras. Con paciencia, entendimiento, e inteligencia ellas me guiaron a través de los buenos días y los malos. Ellas mostraron el México real: los pobres y los ricos; lo bueno y lo malo; la historia de México; y la historia de la Iglesia en México.

Fútbol, Fútbol, Fútbol. La copa del mundo domino todo el país en mi primer mes. El orgullo de Mexicanos sobre su selección y país durante la copa del mundo fue increíble. El triste día en México fue cuando perdió contra Argentina. Fui con mi familia de México a un partido de las Chivas, el equipo más popular de México.

Finalmente las Iglesias. Ella reina sobre todos los santos, la misma imagine en cada templo benévolamente observa a la gente que ama: Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. De las cuatro vírgenes típicas de Jalisco, la más importante en Guadalajara es Nuestra Señora de Zapopan. Ella viaja por toda la diócesis visitando cada templo. En el pasado ella guió a los Mexicanos en la batalla asegurando la victoria. Ahora intercedé por ellos ante Dios. Cuando vayan a la Basílica de Zapopan verán los peregrinos de rodillas atravesando la plaza y ofreciendo acción de gracias. Los templos antiguos o modernos están llenos de gente.

Que aprendí? Aprendí que se siente ser un extranjero en otro país incapaz de entender el idioma. Yo fui bendecido con comida y vivienda. Mi consejo es: sé paciente, amable, y comprensivo hacia nuestros hermanos y hermanas de otros países. Porque luchan para entender el idioma y también para encontrar comida, vivienda y mantener sus familias. Recuerde las palabras del Señor: "En verdad les digo que, cuando lo hicieron con alguno de los más pequeños de estos mis hermanos, me lo hicieron a mí." Mateo 25:40. ✦

MATTHEW TYLER LONG
Seminarian
St. Meinrad School of Theology



Rodriego Olvera Rubio instructs Matthew Long on the use of a lasso for a charriata.

**An exciting day at the
2006 North Louisiana
Catechetical Conference**

“Bring the Whole Community”



Catholic  Connection

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