

Why are you receiving this publication?

If you are receiving this publication, it is apparent that you are serving as an active Catholic means more to you than just Mass attendance on the weekend. As you have already experienced, our call as baptized Christians is an invitation from Christ Jesus to experience the fullness of what the Church has to offer to the active participant.

For some of us, our natural or professional talents are called upon to aid our parish or diocese as a Finance Council Member. While our shared Catholic experience largely calls the faithful to step outside of themselves via spiritual evaluation and a strengthening of our beliefs, the Church also warmly welcomes your time and talent which is an invaluable asset to its mission.

Part of your call is to keep abreast of *The Ministry of Administration* issues relative to guiding your parish through today's difficult maze of legal matters, risk management, personnel strategies, and inspired stewardship of the resources with which God has blessed your worship community.

Our aim is not to provide "heavy material" to our readers, but to give you quick, reference-oriented material that can assist you during your next finance council meeting. Feel free to provide feedback with comments, suggestions or complaints. Our prayer is that you will feel free to use what information interests you, as you seek to help make your parish serve its faithful in the best possible fashion.



The Business Side

Property and Liability Insurance Update

Our Diocesan Umbrella Plan renewed with Arthur J. Gallagher Co. on July 1, 2001. As a result of poor claim experience during the past three years and a turn in the insurance markets, we saw an increase of approximately 40% over the prior year. We are self-insured for individual claims (single events) under \$50,000 with an annual aggregate loss fund of \$350,000. For the first time, we made adjustments to parish premiums based upon claim experience. Diocesan locations were billed in September 2001 for this year's program.

The ministry of
administration

Administrative Services Quarterly

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Parish Finance Council Deanery Meetings

The Offices of Business Affairs and Human Resources are planning two meetings this fall in late October for parish finance councils and pastors. One meeting will be held in Shreveport and the other in Monroe. The agenda will deal with budgeting and financial reporting for parishes.

Everyone is encouraged to attend one of the two meetings. The dates will be announced shortly.

Vans

In the past, we have been contacted by certain parishes or schools regarding the purchase or leasing of vans for purposes of transporting parishioners and/or students. After reviewing the situation with our insurers, a policy was established to prohibit the lease or purchase of 12 - 15 passenger vans or club vans due to safety issues. If your parish is pursuing transportation of this type, please limit your consideration to mini-vans or the larger casino-type passenger vans. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Schofield in the Business Affairs Office.

Sales Tax Issues

We receive calls frequently regarding sales tax exemptions. Please note that the Diocese of Shreveport and its affiliates are not exempt from sales or use tax, unless specifically stated by the State Legislature. The only current exemption deals with bibles, songbooks, or other materials used for purposes of religious instruction or education. House Bill 104, which took effect July 1, 1996, and is still in force, exempted these items. We contacted your parish on September 16, 1996, relative to the exemption. We interpret these to include misselettes, hymnals, and other religious education materials purchased by the Church. The exemption is not automatic. Vendors must be provided with an Exemption Certificate, which should be available at your parish. In the event that one is not available please contact Marge Glennon in the Business Office, and she will fax one for your use.

~~*****~~ Living & Giving ~~*****~~

Your New Catholic Center Still Seeks Funding

Catholics from throughout our diocese now have a new Catholic Center to be proud of on Shreveport's historic Fairfield Avenue. Since last May, over 20,000 people have used the facility supporting a variety of unique events, classes, performances, conferences and seminars.

Now that we have completed such a wonderful new Catholic Center, funding is still sought from our faithful to complete paying for it.

- Have you made a pledge in support of this worthy cause?
- Have you encouraged others you know to do the same?
- Has your parish made a one-time contribution to assist with our new Catholic Center?
- Will you support continuing efforts by the diocese to bring this project to closure?

On October 17, 2001, your Diocesan Finance Council will be meeting to discuss options and strategies to meet this challenge. Your input is requested and appreciated!

Parish Stewardship

- Tired of seeing the same group of parishioners called upon to perform important tasks for your place of worship – year in, year out?
- Do you grow weary of seeking volunteers for your parish catechetical programs and youth ministry initiatives?
- Does the creation of an annual budget for your parish cause yearly discomfort for your councils and your pastor?

If you answered “yes” to two of these three questions, then perhaps it is time for your parish to consider an overall stewardship program. Successful stewardship is more than secure finances. . . it is also the eager gift of one’s time and talent for the Church.

For information on a stewardship program to fit your needs, contact the Office of Development and Public Relations at (318)868-4441 or (800)256-1542, or e-mail jwillcox@dioshpt.org.



Safety Soundoff

The Diocese of Shreveport Insurance Umbrella covers property, third party liability, auto, workers compensation, and crime insurance. We are self-insured up to \$50,000 per incident with an annual aggregate maximum of \$350,000. Every parish pays into the umbrella fund. Needless to say, we should all have great incentive to prevent losses in any of these categories. Each issue of *ASQ* will offer safety alerts, risk-reducing checklists, and basic prevention actions you can take to - most importantly - ensure the safety of all who come to your site and to minimize your parish/school’s exposure.

Window Blind Recall and Repair. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued a warning and recall concerning window blinds with pull cords and inner cords that can form a loop and cause strangulation. Many churches have blinds in nurseries and pre-school classrooms. If your church has blinds of this type, a repair

can be done in minutes without removing the blinds. Call the Window Covering Safety Council toll-free (800)506-4636 to receive a free repair kit for each set of blinds that need to be fixed. You can also visit their web site (www.windowcoverings.org) to get more information on checking your window covering. Be especially aware to keep cribs or children’s furniture out of reach of a window blind.

Fall Fire Prevention. With cooler weather upon us, remember to inspect your heating equipment. Also strongly recommended is a thorough storage inspection.

- Are flammable liquids stored near heating equipment?
- Are all hazardous chemicals and flammables stored to ensure accessibility only by authorized persons?
- What items are near hot water heaters? Check filters and vents.
- When was the last general housecleaning? Clutter and debris in kitchens, garages, and storage rooms can quickly fuel a fire resulting in severe damage.

Parish leadership prevention activities are a critical component of effective stewardship of life and property.



The Personnel File

Our nation’s bishops in their document *Called and Gifted for the New Millennium* put these challenges forth:

1. To develop and commit the resources necessary to help laity, both paid staff and volunteers, prepare for church ministry.
2. To practice justice in the workplace and to provide a living wage.
3. To incorporate minority lay ministers into ecclesial leadership.
4. To ensure that the Church becomes an exemplary steward of all its human resources.

Likewise, the world’s bishops in their letter, *Justice in the World* state, “While the church is bound to give witness to justice, it recognizes that anyone who ventures to speak to people about justice must first be just in their eyes.”

Just treatment of parish and school employees is the “fair, equitable, and mutually respectful structures and processes for dealing with employees and employee issues in the work environment.”¹

We encourage finance council members to review the Diocesan Personnel Manual available in the parish office. All employees should provide written acknowledgement that they have read the manual which outlines benefits, employee expectations, and employer responsibilities for parish and diocesan offices. Feel free to send your questions to the Office of Human Resources (cweeks@dioshpt.org). Our goal is to provide any help we can to assist your parish and its team of staff members to most effectively carry out the mission of the Church.

¹ *Just Treatment for Those Who Work for the Church*, National Association of Church Personnel Administrators. www.nacpa.org



Book Review

Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide
By Kay Redfield Jamison
Random House ©1999

[From the best-selling author of *An Unquiet Mind*: the first major book in a quarter century on suicide, with a particular focus on its terrible pull on the young.] *Night Falls Fast* is both compelling and timely: in the United States and around the world there has been a frightening surge in suicides committed by children, adolescents, and young adults. It is the third-leading cause of death in 19- to 24-year-olds, and the second in college students.

Weaving together a psychological and scientific exploration of the subject with personal essays about individual suicides, Dr. Jamison in this book brings not only her compassion and literary skill, but all of her knowledge, research, and clinical experience to bear on this devastating problem. In tracing the network of reason underlying suicide, she gives us astonishing examples of the methods and places that people have chosen to kill themselves and a startling look at their journals, drawings, and farewell notes. She also brings us vivid insight into the most recent findings from hospitals and laboratories across the world; the critical biological and psychological factors that interact to cause suicide; and the powerful but still insufficiently used treatments available from modern medicine.

Night Falls Fast dispels the silence and shame that too often surround suicide. It helps us to understand the suicidal minds, to better recognize the person at risk, and to comprehend the profound and disturbing sense of loss created in those left behind.

From *DFMC Herald*, Summer 2001
(DFMC = Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference)

Dates to Remember:

October

- 7 Respect Life Sunday
Anniversary Mass, Cathedral of St. John Berchmans,
11 a.m.
- 12 Diocesan Investment Committee, Catholic Center,
11 a.m.
- 16 Priest Retirement Board, Catholic Center, 11 a.m.
- 17 Diocesan Finance Council, Catholic Center, 12 noon
- 21 White Mass, Cathedral of St. John Berchmans,
5:30 p.m.
- 23 Eastern Deanery Appeal Advisory Committee,
Chateau Restaurant in Monroe, 12 p.m.
- 24 Southern Deanery Appeal Advisory Committee,
St. Joseph Church in Zwolle, 12 p.m.
- 25 Western Deanery Appeal Advisory Committee,
Catholic Center, 12 p.m.
- 27 World Youth Day (U.S.)
- 28 Daylight Savings Time ends: turn clocks back one hour
- 31 Halloween

November

- 1 All Saints Day - Catholic Center closed
- 2 All Souls Day
- 14 OHR Parish and Catholic school staff inservice in
Shreveport, Catholic Center, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- 15 OHR Parish and Catholic school staff inservice in West
Monroe at St. Paschal Church, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- 17 Diocesan Pastoral Council, Catholic Center, 9:30 a.m. -
2:30 p.m.
- 19-23 Schools closed all week for Thanksgiving holiday
- 22 Thanksgiving Day

December

- 2 Advent begins
- 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- 25 Christmas Day

OHR = Office of Human Resources

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