



Vocations and Seminarians Newsletter

April 14, 2006

Diocese of Baton Rouge

Dates to Remember

- World Day of Prayer for Vocations - May 7, 2006
- Serra Club Crawfish Boil - May 7, 2006
- Notre Dame Seminary Graduation - May 11, 2006
- St. Joseph Seminary College Graduation - May 12, 2006

Dear Seminarians and Friends,

The season of Lent always seems to rush by so quickly at the end, often leaving little time to reflect on the changes which may have occurred in our hearts. Has our Lenten fasting and sacrifice made any lasting difference in our attitudes, lifestyles, or dispositions? Can we discern any signs of growth when we examine ourselves in the mirror?

On the surface it is easy to say, "No, I have not changed, I feel just the same as before Lent. I still wrestle with the same weaknesses and grow impatient with the same situations." But maybe conversion lies not so much in having overcome these human struggles as having become more aware of God's abiding presence in the course of our search for a deeper faith.

Baptism is not an escape ticket to a life of comfort, but rather an invitation and a promise to a life of wholeness. In the end, we wish to be able to say that we have fully lived and experienced what it means to be a whole human being. We may even look back on some of the more difficult or painful moments as having provided a depth to our character which would not have otherwise developed.

A recent communication from Notre Dame Seminary included a quote from Pope Paul VI: "People don't listen to teachers, they listen to witnesses – and if they do listen to teachers, it's because those teachers are witnesses!" A faith-filled Catholic is able to give witness to Christ in different ways at different times: at one moment by displaying fidelity during a time of trial and at another moment by showing humility during a time of correction.

A writer from North Carolina described his early college years as a period of questioning and growth, which unfortunately did not include much reverence for his Catholic faith. The turning point came during a visit with friends to the apartment of a well-known and respected professor. The student was listening to music and barely paying attention to the conversation when he overheard the professor say rather matter-of-factly, "Well, of course, I'm a Catholic."

It turned out to be a moment of evangelization for the young writer who says that he felt an immediate bond with his professor. It reminds us of the power of community and of the significance of ordinary conversation as a potential vehicle for grace. Maybe the fruit of this season of Lent is not victory over some annoying habit but a capacity to bear witness to gifts of faith and community which are so important to renewing and sustaining life. We pray that the readings and liturgies over the next fifty days will help us to recognize and embrace the new life that has been born in our minds and hearts this Easter.

In Christ
Father Matt Lorrain

TV Reality Show Looks at Vocations

"God or the Girl" is the title of an A&E network mini-series which begins on Easter Sunday and which seeks to capture the real-life drama of four good-looking, talented, all-American guys who think God might be calling them to the priesthood. The show documents their struggles with the real-life challenges of dating and the potential call to married life, expectations from family and friends, common misconceptions about priesthood, and the attraction of material gain and success.

The four men profiled in the five-part series are: Joe Adair, 28, a campus counselor at John Carroll University in Cleveland; Dan DeMatte, 21, a second year student at Ohio Dominican University who shares a house with nine other celibate young men; Steve Horvath, 25, a successful consultant who shocked his family and friends by leaving his job to become a campus missionary at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln; and Mike Lechniak, 24, a Scranton, Pennsylvania native who grew up idolizing his parish priest but now has a deepening relationship with his girlfriend.

The series premiere is Easter Sunday, April 16, from 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. (episodes 1 & 2), followed by Easter Monday, April 17, from 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. (episodes 3 & 4), and finally concluding on the Sunday after Easter, April 23, at 9:00 p.m. (episode 5).

Serra Club Crawfish Boil

The annual Serra Club crawfish boil for all Baton Rouge seminarians has been set for Sunday, May 7, 2006, from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the home of Mr. Harvey Honoré located at 10840 Highland Road.

The Serra Club was founded in the fall of 1934 in Seattle, Washington by a group of Catholic businessmen and friends who gathered for lunch and discussion. The organization takes its name from Father Junipero Serra, the Spanish Franciscan missionary who founded nine California missions beginning with San Diego in 1769.

The Serra Club's mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the ministerial priesthood and vowed religious life, and through this ministry, further our members' common Catholic faith.

"Discerning Life Choices" at L.S.U.

The final session of an eight-part series examining vocation choices will be held this Wednesday, April 19, at Christ the King Church and Catholic Center on the campus of Louisiana State University. The featured speaker will be Father Gregory Boquet, O.S.B., a Benedictine monk and the President-Rector of St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, Louisiana, north of Covington.

The evening will follow a similar format as the previous seven sessions: Mass at 6:00 p.m. in the church, followed by a light meal at 6:30 p.m. in the activity center, and then the presentation from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

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Mark Your Calendars

2006

Saturday, June 3, 2006, 10:00 a.m. – Permanent Diaconate Ordination

Saturday, June 10, 2006, 10:00 a.m. – Transitional Diaconate Ordination

2007

Saturday, May 26, 2007, 10:00 a.m. – Priesthood Ordination

Saturday, June 9, 2007, 10:00 a.m. – Transitional Diaconate Ordination

Roster of Seminarians

Third Theology:	Howard Adkins..... 60, St. Agnes
	Michael Alello..... 25, St. Jude the Apostle
	Cary Bani 47, St. Joseph Cathedral
	Chris Decker 24, St. Isidore the Farmer, Baker
	Jason Palermo..... 26, St. John the Evangelist, Plaquemine
	Chris Redden 31, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Greenwell Springs
Second Theology:	Jamin David..... 23, St. Ann, Morganza
	David Dawson..... 23, St. Patrick
	Andrew Merrick 25, St. Mary of False River, New Roads
	Paul Yi 33, St. Theresa of Avila, Gonzales
First Theology:	Mark Beard..... 44, Our Lady of Mercy
	Paul Gros 23, Most Blessed Sacrament
Fourth Philosophy:	Brent Maher 21, Immaculate Conception, Denham Springs
Third Philosophy:	Todd Lloyd 22, St. Thomas More
	Bryan Thompson 25, Our Lady of Mercy
First Philosophy:	Joseph Hoang Vu..... 18, Sts. Anthony/Le Van Phung

Good Shepherd Sunday

World Day of Prayer for Vocations, May 7, 2006, is observed each year on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as "Good Shepherd Sunday," and intended to promote all Catholic Church vocations.

Of course, just calling it a "Day of Prayer" doesn't make it one: spending extra time that day praying for vocations will! And why not choose someone who would make a fine priest, deacon, brother or sister and let them know that you will be praying in a special way that day for them? Imitate the Good Shepherd and be a spiritual strength for them!