



Vocations and Seminarians Newsletter

August 16, 2006

Diocese of Baton Rouge

Dates to Remember

- Mass & Lunch for Seminarians and their Parents with Bishop Muench at the Bishop Tracy Center - September 16, 2006, 10:30 a.m.
- World Youth Day - October 29, 2006 - Diocesan Rally at St. Isidore the Farmer Church, Baker
- Holy Hour for Seminarians with Bishop Muench at the Bishop Tracy Center - December 21, 2006, 5:00 p.m.

Dear Seminarians and Friends,

A few years ago one of our priests' retreat directors, Father Carl Arico from Newark, New Jersey, referred to a clergy convocation as a "gathering of the walruses." It is a humorous image which nonetheless captures some of the dynamics of our priestly fraternity. We can be generous and supportive at times and competitive and critical at other times, yet I have to say I enjoy the occasions when we gather to celebrate our common life and ministry. While not a substitute for wife and children, I hope that the thought of a brotherhood among priests is something that helps to support your seminary formation and preparation for holy orders. This is the reasoning behind the planning of socials and other events which allow seminarians and priests to come together in fraternity and friendship for the nourishment of our vocations.

Last Saturday's Mass and social for seminarians and priests at St. Louis King of France Church was just such an event and one which I found to be particularly enjoyable. We had all 21 new and returning seminarians in attendance, plus 15 priests, Bishop Muench, and Sister Lucy Silvio, CSJ. Our hosts were Father Jack Nutter, along with his excellent staff and the parishioners of St. Louis Church. We began by joining the parish community in the celebration of their regular 4:30 p.m. Vigil Mass, and then moved over to the rectory for a buffet dinner. It was a very peaceful and relaxed gathering of the walruses, mostly because of the ample supply of good food as well as the good humor of those in attendance.

Several of the seminarians gave brief reports on their summer ministry assignments, and all seem to have benefited from their experiences. We also heard from Notre Dame Student Government president Paul Yi and St. Joseph Seminary College senior Todd Lloyd on some of the happenings and plans for the coming year at their respective schools. Renovation and rebuilding continues at both schools but hope is present as they prepare for the start of a new year. The Diocese of Baton Rouge is fortunate to have 14 seminarians at Notre Dame Seminary and 7 seminarians at St. Joseph Seminary College for the coming year.

A highlight of the evening was a brief sharing by Msgr. Leo Guillot regarding the insights gained during his 50 years of priesthood. When asked if he had a few words of encouragement for the seminarians, Msgr. Guillot directed us to 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 where St. Paul speaks of being given a "thorn in the flesh" to prevent him from becoming proud. Three times St. Paul begged that God might remove this aggravation, but God's only answer was "My grace is sufficient for you..." Msgr. Guillot shared that this response has also been the guiding principle of his own priesthood - that God's grace has always been sufficient for the particular challenge or difficulty.

At yesterday's feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we were reminded of the generosity of God's grace and the corresponding faithfulness of those who trust that the promises of the Lord will be ful-

filled. Feelings of unworthiness are transformed to feelings of blessedness and gratitude as God's call is received in the depths of the heart. Please join me in praying that we might be given the same experience of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Paul, Msgr. Guillot, and others, that God's grace is always sufficient in the living out of a religious vocation.

In Christ,
Fr. Matt Lorrain

New Seminarians for 2006

The Baton Rouge Diocese joyfully welcomes seven new men to its program of priestly formation. **Brad Doyle**, 18 years old, is a parishioner of St. George Parish and a 2006 graduate of St. Michael the Archangel High School. **Joshua Johnson**, also 18 years old and a parishioner of St. George Parish, is a 2005 graduate of Lee High School. Brad and Josh will both enter St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, north of Covington, as freshmen. **Kevin Piper**, 19 years old, is from St. Joseph Parish in French Settlement and has just completed his freshman year of studies at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond. He will transfer to St. Joseph Seminary College as a sophomore.

Matthew McCaughey, 22 years old and originally from St. Thomas More Parish, is a 2006 graduate of L.S.U. in Chemical Engineering and a parishioner of Christ the King Parish. He will attend the pre-theology program at St. Joseph Seminary College. **Peter Ai Dang**, 40 years old, is a graduate of Divine Word College in Iowa, and a parishioner of Sts. Anthony of Padua & Emmanuel Le Van Phung Parish in Baton Rouge. Peter will attend Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans as a pre-theology student.

Mark Gyan, 51 years old, has worked in both retail management and financial planning, attends St. John the Evangelist Parish in Prairieville, and is the brother of Father Eric Gyan, pastor of St. John. **Al Davidson**, 52 years old, worked as a self-employed carpenter and is a parishioner of St. Agnes Parish. Mark and Al will both enter the pre-theology program at Notre Dame Seminary.

Mass and Lunch for Parents of Seminarians

The annual Mass and lunch for seminarians and their parents is set for Saturday, **September 16, 2006**, at 10:30 a.m. in St. Joseph Chapel of the Bishop Tracy Center. The main celebrant for the Mass (and host of the lunch) will be Bishop Robert Muench. Father Matt and Sister Lucy will also be present to visit with the parents and seminarians. A light lunch will be served in the Borders Dining Room immediately following the Mass.

Weekend Assistance for Priests

An important role of the Vocations Director is to offer weekend assistance to the parish priests of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. As of this writing Father Matt is still available for the following dates in 2006: September 2/3, 17; November 18/19, 25; December 2/3, 9/10, 16/17, 23, 30/31, plus numerous weekends in 2007. Please give him a call at 225-336-8778 if he can help in your parish.

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Roster of Seminarians

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| Fourth Theology: | Howard Adkins60, St. Agnes |
| | Michael Alello26, St. Jude the Apostle |
| | Cary Bani.....48, St. Joseph Cathedral |
| | Chris Decker25, St. Isidore the Farmer, Baker |
| | Jason Palermo26, St. John the Evangelist, Plaquemine |
| | Chris Redden.....31, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Greenwell Springs |
| Third Theology: | Jamin David23, St. Ann, Morganza |
| | Andrew Merrick.....25, St. Mary of False River, New Roads |
| | Paul Yi.....33, St. Theresa of Avila, Gonzales |
| Second Theology: | Mark Beard45, Our Lady of Mercy |
| | Paul Gros.....24, Most Blessed Sacrament |
| Pre-Theology: | Peter Ai Dang40, Sts. Anthony/Le Van Phung |
| | Al Davidson.....52, St. Agnes |
| | Mark Gyan51, St. John the Evangelist, Prairieville |
| | Matthew McCaughey.22, St. Thomas More |
| Fourth Philosophy: | Todd Lloyd23, St. Thomas More |
| | Bryan Thompson.....25, Our Lady of Mercy |
| Second Philosophy: | Kevin Piper19, St. Joseph, French Settlement |
| | Joseph Hoang Vu18, Sts. Anthony/Le Van Phung |
| First Philosophy: | Brad Doyle.....18, St. George |
| | Joshua Johnson18, St. George |

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Why not write one or more of our seminarians a note of support and encouragement?