



Vocations and Seminarians Newsletter

November 16, 2007

Diocese of Baton Rouge

Dates to Remember

- Holy Hour for Seminarians with Bishop Muench - December 20, 2007, 5:00 p.m., Bishop Tracy Center.
- Diaconate Ordination for Andrew Merrick - December 29, 2007, 10:00 a.m., St. Joseph Cathedral.
- National Vocation Awareness Week - January 13-18, 2008.
- Parish Vocation Committee Workshop - January 26, 2008, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, Bishop Tracy Center.
- World Day for Consecrated Life, Sunday February 3, 2008.
- "Come, Follow Me", Vocation Discernment Retreat - February 8-10, 2008, Rosaryville Retreat House, Pochatoula.

Dear Seminarians and Friends,

Most of the work of a diocesan vocation director revolves around fostering vocations to the diocesan priesthood. The majority of our church parishes are staffed by diocesan priests and we want to nurture and develop a pool of faith-filled candidates adequate to serve the needs of our Diocesan family. But this does not mean that diocesan vocation directors are unconcerned or uninterested in vocations to the vowed religious life.

In many cases diocesan priests are educated in seminaries staffed by Benedictine priests and brothers, Dominican priests, Jesuit priests, Marist priests, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Sulpician priests and Salesian priests, with courses taught by Benedictine sisters, Dominican sisters, Marianites of Holy Cross, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Christian Charity, Sisters of Mount Carmel, Sisters of St. Joseph and Teresian sisters. Our priesthood is continually enriched and informed by the witness of consecrated religious both within and beyond the boundaries of our diocese.

The religious priests and sisters working in our diocese have been very supportive of our diocesan vocation efforts and I am happy to return the favor by promoting their vocation programs. Please note the two articles which follow this letter regarding discernment retreats being offered by the Jesuit and Benedictine communities. The Brothers of the Sacred Heart are also hosting a discernment retreat a little later in April of 2008 which I plan to advertise in a later issue of the newsletter. Please pass this information on to others you know and remember to pray for the success of all of these retreats, including those sponsored by women religious.

I attended a wonderful "Come and See" weekend this past week hosted by the seminarians and monks of St. Joseph Seminary College. About 35 candidates attended, including eight from the Diocese of Baton Rouge. We attended morning prayer, evening prayer, and Mass with the seminary and monastic communities, and also listened to presentations on various aspects of priestly formation. We were able to witness the construction of an immense bonfire in preparation for the annual football game between Notre Dame Seminary and St. Joseph Seminary which takes place this very afternoon and evening, November 16, 2007. The "old men" of Notre Dame won bragging rights last year and we anxiously await the outcome of this year's contest to see if the younger guys attain redemption or a further measure of humility.

St. Joseph Abbey and Seminary College continues to hold a special place in the hearts of our local priests, seminarians, and many lay Catholics. I am reminded of this every time I visit the seminary and even though I am not an alumnus of the school. Our current Baton Rouge seminarians are both contributors to and beneficiaries of the exceptional spirit of "St. Ben's," and I pray that many more young men will be inspired to follow

their example and enter the seminary in pursuit of a priestly vocation and a deeper relationship with Christ.

In Christ,
Father Matt Lorrain

Jesuit Discernment Retreats

The Jesuit Vocation Office will host two discernment retreats Nov. 21-25 and Dec. 15-19 at St. Charles College in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. Retreatants will spend part of their time with Jesuit novices who are studying there and the remainder of the time with a Jesuit spiritual director in a silent, privately-directed retreat. For more information, call Fr. Marvin Kitten, S.J., vocation director at 504-571-1055, email mkitten@norprov.org, or visit the website www.norprov.org/vocations.

Benedictine Discernment Weekend

St. Joseph Abbey in St. Benedict, Louisiana (north of Covington), will sponsor a discernment weekend Friday, Nov. 30, through Sunday, Dec. 2, for men between the ages of 20 and 45 who may be considering a call to the monastic life. The weekend will begin with Vespers at 5:30 p.m. on Friday and will conclude in the early afternoon on Sunday. Men interested in more information should contact Brother Jude Israel, O.S.B., the vocation director of St. Joseph Abbey, at 985-867-2249 or brjude@sjasc.edu.

Holy Hour for Seminarians and Bishop

The annual holy hour led by Bishop Muench with the seminarians of our diocese is scheduled for Thursday, December 20, 2007, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in St. Joseph Chapel at the Bishop Tracy Center. The holy hour will be followed by a supper with Bishop Muench, Father Matt Lorrain and Sr. Lucy Silvio, C.S.J.

Seminarians are kindly asked to communicate **regrets only** to Fr. Matt or Ms. Mary Layman.

Diaconate Ordination

Fourth Year theologian Andrew Merrick will be ordained a transitional deacon on Saturday, December 29, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge. Bishop Robert Muench will be the main celebrant for the Mass, assisted by the priests and deacons of the Baton Rouge Diocese. Andrew is currently assigned to St. George Parish for his six month parish internship prior to a final semester of seminary studies. All are invited to attend. A reception following the ordination will be held in the Kleinpeter Activity Center at St. George Catholic Church.

Parish Vocation Committee Workshop

The Office of Vocations will host a training and enrichment workshop for all parish vocation committees on Saturday, January 26, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in room 206 of the Bishop Tracy Center in Baton Rouge. This workshop is designed to offer training for both new and existing committees, and will include opportunities for participants to share success stories and ideas for use in other parishes. All parishes are invited to send representatives to the workshop. Please call Ms. Mary Layman at the Office of Vocations (225-336-8778) to register so we can prepare enough materials.

“Come Follow Me” Retreat

The Diocese of Baton Rouge is joining with our sister Dioceses of Lafayette and Lake Charles to offer a discernment retreat on February 8-10, 2008, at the Rosaryville Retreat House in Ponchatoula. It is open to all interested men in high school, college or professional life who are considering a call to the priesthood. Transportation will be provided to and from the retreat. Please contact Father Matt or Ms. Mary Layman at the Vocation Office (225-336-8778) for more information or to register.

Help Promote Vocations in 2008

The 2007-2008 seminarian posters have arrived and will be delivered to all parishes and schools in the coming days. Brochures and prayer cards are also being prepared as companion pieces to the posters to help form a more comprehensive campaign this year. Posters may be placed in church foyers, parish halls, gymnasiums, cafeterias, parish offices, religion classrooms, and wherever they might best be seen. The accompanying brochures and prayer cards are ideal for pamphlet racks and other display areas.

Earlier this fall, parishes were mailed hard copies of the catechetical and prayer resources for the annual observances of:

National Vocation Awareness Week, January 13-18, 2008, which is observed in the first week of Ordinary Time each year;

World Day for Consecrated Life, February 3, 2008, which is observed on the Sunday following the feast of the Presentation of the Lord; and

World Day of Prayer for Vocations, April 13, 2008, which is observed on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as Good Shepherd Sunday.

Electronic copies of the materials are also available by calling or emailing Mary Layman at the Vocation Office.

Weekend Assistance for Priests

The Vocation Director offers weekend assistance to the parish priests of the Diocese of Baton Rouge as he is able. As of this writing Father Matt has three weekends still available in **2007**: Dec. 8/9, 15/16, & 22/23. In **2008**, he is free on the following dates: May 10/11 & 18; June 1; Aug. 2/3, 9/10, 16/17, 24, & 30/31; Sept. 6/7; Oct. 4/5, 11/12, 18/19, & 25/26; Nov. 1/2, 8/9, 15/16, 22/23, & 29/30; Dec. 6/7, 13/14, 20/21, & 27/28. Please give him a call at 225-336-8778 if he can help.

Roster of Diocesan Seminarians

4th Theology:	Jamin David 25, St. Ann, Morganza
	Andrew Merrick 26, St. Mary of False River, New Roads
	Paul Yi 34, St. Theresa of Avila, Gonzales
3rd Theology:	Mark Beard 46, Our Lady of Mercy, Baton Rouge
	Paul Gros 25, Most Blessed Sacrament, Baton Rouge
1st Theology:	Peter Ai Dang 42, Sts. Anthony/Le Van Phung, Baton Rouge

Contact Us

Office of Vocations
Diocese of Baton Rouge
P.O. Box 2028
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028

Telephone

225-336-8778

Fax

225-242-0342

E-mail

vocations@diobr.org

Website

www.diobr.org/vocations

Todd Lloyd 24, St. Thomas More, Baton Rouge
Brent Maher 23, Immaculate Conception, Denham Springs
Bryan Thompson 26, Our Lady of Mercy, Baton Rouge

Pre-Theology: Al Davidson 53, St. Agnes, Baton Rouge
Mark Gyan 53, St. John the Evangelist, Prairieville
Matthew McCaughey... 23, St. Thomas More, Baton Rouge

3rd Philosophy: Luke Ordogne 23, Our Lady of Mercy, Baton Rouge
Kevin Piper 21, St. Joseph, French Settlement
Joseph Hoang Vu 20, Sts. Anthony/Le Van Phung, Baton Rouge

2nd Philosophy: Brad Doyle 20, St. George, Baton Rouge
Joshua Johnson..... 19, St. George, Baton Rouge

Seminary Contact Information

Notre Dame Seminary and Graduate School of Theology

2901 South Carrollton Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70118-4391
Telephone: 504-866-7426
Fax: 504-866-3119
Website: <http://www.nds.edu>

St. Joseph Seminary College

75376 River Road
St. Benedict, LA 70457-9900
Telephone: 985-867-2232
Fax: 985-867-2295
Website: <http://seminary.saintjosephabbey.com>

Have you encouraged a seminarian lately? Why not write one or more of them a note of support?

Our seminarians will also be glad to write a note of encouragement of their own to someone you think might have a vocation! Don't be shy about suggesting names to them or to the Vocations Office!