

June 13, 2008

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dates to Remember

- ◆ **Transitional Diaconate Ordination - Mark Beard and Paul Gros - June 21, 2008, 10:00 am, St. Joseph Cathedral, Baton Rouge**
- ◆ **Bishop Robert Muench's 40th Priestly Anniversary Mass - June 29, 2008, 3:00 pm, St. Joseph Cathedral, Baton Rouge**
- ◆ **Seminarian Gathering - July 10, 2008, 5:30 pm, Holy Rosary Parish, St. Amant**
- ◆ **Fr. Vincent Dufresne's 25th Anniversary Mass - August 3, 2008, 3:00 pm, Immaculate Conception Parish, Denham Springs**
- ◆ **Fr. Cleo Milano's 25th Anniversary Mass - August 17, 2008, 5:00 pm, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Plaquemine**
- ◆ **Seminarian Mass and BBQ with Bishop Muench - August 23, 2008, 4:00 pm, St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Baton Rouge**
- ◆ **Parish Vocation Committee Workshop - September 6, 2008, 10:00 am, St. Thomas More Parish, Baton Rouge**

Dear Seminarians and Friends,

The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) located at Georgetown University conducts an annual survey of ordinands to the priesthood in the United States. Their profile of the Class of 2008 is available on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at <http://www.usccb.org/vocations/classof2008>. Here are a few of the findings:

- ◆ The average age of ordinands for 2008 is 37.
- ◆ One in three ordinands was born outside the United States, with the largest numbers coming from México, Vietnam, Poland and the Philippines.
- ◆ Half attended a Catholic elementary school.
- ◆ Most ordinands participated in liturgical ministries before entering the seminary. 73% were altar servers, 63% were lectors, and 47% were extraordinary ministers of holy communion.
- ◆ One in five ordinands participated in a World Youth Day before entering the seminary. About three in ten served as a parish youth minister.
- ◆ On average, the ordinands were about 18 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. 80% were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a priest, and 50% by a friend.

The 2008 profile is very encouraging and matches some of the anecdotal reports one hears when discussing the current state of vocations. The typical seminarian had been active in his faith at the parish or university level; and a priest, friend or family member played an important role in encouraging him to consider the seminary and priesthood.

The number of those ordained this year is also significant. Many large archdioceses like Newark, St. Louis and Los Angeles were also blessed with large ordination classes: 9, 9 and 12 respectively. However and important for us, small and medium size dioceses are also seeing an increase in seminarians and ordinations: Saginaw has 30 seminarians and ordained 4 priests this year; Madison has 30 seminarians and also ordained 4 priests; and Boise has 28 seminarians and ordained 6 priests (all born outside of the US).

Baton Rouge has just 11 seminarians at present and we hope to increase our number to 14 by the start of the fall semester. Yet we are still rejoicing over the ordination of eight new priests for our diocese these last two years. I continue to be encouraged as I assess the potential for vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the Catholic families and parishes of our diocese.

The Gospel reading for this Sunday contains Jesus' words to his disci-

ples: "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). We did exactly that this past Sunday at a special Mass celebrating Father Henry Vavasseur's 50th anniversary of priestly ordination. We concluded the Mass by praying our diocesan Prayer for Vocations. Fidelity to prayer and the scriptures is the reason for our hope.

In Christ,
Father Matt Lorrain

"How Can I, As a Young Catholic, Bring Others to Christ?"

By Alison Torregrossa, 7th grade
Serra Club Essay Contest Winner
Most Blessed Sacrament Parishioner and Holy Family Homeschooler

Because I was baptized a Catholic, I was given a mission by Christ: to be an apostle. Being an apostle is sharing the Gospel through word and deed and bringing souls to Christ. There are three effective ways that I can bring others close to Him. By being a true friend to others, I can get to know their needs and tell them that Christ is the only one who can successfully fill their needs. By sharing the love of Christ with others, I can help others to understand the depth of Christ's love. And by setting good examples to those around me, I can reflect complete joy so as to draw others to Christ.

Being a friend to others is not easy. In fact, it is one of the hardest things for me to do. As a true friend, I must put the needs of others before myself. In this way, I can identify that soul's desire and lead him to understand that Christ cares for him deeply. Only through Christ will his needs be filled. I cannot be a friend to my enemies without God's help. God is all good. He will always help. I must have faith to know that God will give me the graces needed to be a true friend. The mission of an apostle is important because Christ is depending on me to bring lost sheep to the shepherd.

Sharing the love of Christ means sharing His Word with others. It means I need to lead others to experience the depth of his love. Only then can a soul truly love others. When someone really feels how much Christ loves him, that He would die for him, that person can't help but love Christ in return. Because Christ has given me so much love, I feel the need to share that love with other people.

Lastly, I must set good examples through my behavior towards others. I must be authentic in my faith. Everything I do must be for the love of Christ. What good is it if I preach the Gospel, but behave in an unloving way? Actions speak louder than words. I must do my best to always imitate Christ, reflecting His love and joy. That way, souls will be drawn to Christ through me. When I set good examples, others see me and want to do the same.

Being an apostle means following my mission by helping others grow closer to our Lord, Jesus Christ. He is the way to eternal happiness. He loves us so much that He gave His life for us. We must thank Him in every way. When we truly know Christ, we can't help but love Him, then we will want to serve Him.

Diaconate Ordination

On Saturday, June 21, 2008, we will celebrate the ordination of two of our seminarians to the transitional diaconate. Fourth year theologians Mark Beard and Paul Gros are scheduled to be ordained deacons by Bishop Robert Muench at a special 10:00 am Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral in downtown Baton Rouge.

Attendance is open to everyone. A public reception will be held afterwards in the Main Auditorium of the Catholic Life Center located at 1800 So. Acadian Thruway immediately following the ordination Mass.

Path to Priesthood II



Catholic Life Television has been honored with three international awards for the first *Path to Priesthood* produced last year capturing the journey to the priesthood of Fathers Michael Alello, Howard Adkins, Cary Bani, Christopher Decker and Jason Palermo. Join Catholic Life Television of the Diocese of Baton Rouge when it airs *Path to Priesthood II: The Rite of Ordination* of Jamin David, Andrew Merrick and Paul Yi. Journey with these three new priests through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Listen to their stories of inspiration, as well as insights from Bishop Muench and others about priestly formation and the Rite of Ordination. *Path to Priesthood II* can be seen on Catholic Life Television through June 28 at the following times:

Baton Rouge, Cox Communications, Channel 15

Sunday, 6:30 pm
Tuesday, 9:30 am
Wednesday, 7:00 pm
Thursday, 2:30 pm
Saturday, 9:00 pm

New Roads, Charter Communications, Channel 44

Sunday, June 15, 11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 9:00 pm
Sunday, June 22, 11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 9:00 pm

Hammond, Charter Communications, Channel 74

Sunday, June 15, 11:00 am
Sunday, June 22, 11:00 am

St. James Civil Parish, Charter Communications, Channel 10

Sunday, June 15, 11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 9:00 pm
Sunday, June 22, 11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 9:00 pm

First Assignments

Father Jamin S. David, parochial vicar of St. Anne Church in Napoleonville, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Plattenville and St. Philomena Church in Labadieville

Father Andrew J. Merrick, parochial vicar of Immaculate Conception Church in Denham Springs

Father Ju Hyung "Paul" Yi, parochial vicar of St. Aloysius Church in Baton Rouge

Contact Us

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Benedictine Discernment Weekend

St. Joseph Abbey in St. Benedict, Louisiana (north of Covington), will host a discernment program from Tuesday evening, July 8, through Sunday, July 13, for men between the ages of 20 and 45 who may be considering a call to the monastic life. Participants will pray and work with the monks as well as attend informational talks on topics related to monasticism. Participants will also have the opportunity to celebrate the Solemnity of St. Benedict with the monastic community. Anyone interested in more information should contact Brother Jude Israel, O.S.B., vocation director of St. Joseph Abbey, at 985-373-7843, or brjude@sjasc.edu.

2008 Seminarian Summer Assignments

Fourth Year Parish Internship

Mark Beard – St. Thomas More Parish (Baton Rouge) / Father Tom Duhé

Paul Gros – St. Jean Vianney Parish (Baton Rouge) / Father Tom Ranzino

Institute for Priestly Formation

Al Davidson – Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

Mark Gyan – Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

Matthew McCaughey – Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

Summer Parish Ministry

Peter Dang – St. George Parish (Baton Rouge) / Father Mike Schatzle

Todd Lloyd – St. Joseph Parish (Paulina) / Father Frank Uter

Brent Maher – Our Lady of Peace Parish (Vacherie) / Father Michael Miceli

Brad Doyle – St. John the Baptist Parish (Brusly) / Father Matt Dupré

Specialized Ministry

Joshua Johnson – Mission Program, El Paso, Texas, and Sierra Tarahumara, México

Joseph Vu – Work/Study, St. Joseph Seminary College, St. Benedict, Louisiana

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 the following dates still available in **2008**:

◆ November 1/2, and December 6/7 and 13/14.

Please telephone him at 225-336-8778 if he can help.