

## Development Director named for the Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES— The Most Reverend Edward K. Braxton, Bishop of Lake Charles, announced Tuesday, June 7, the appointment of Ms. Kyra Randall as the full-time Director of Development for the Diocese. The appointment is effective August 1, 2005. Mr. Morris LeBleu has served as both Director of Development and Director of Communications for the Diocese for the past 12 years.

Ms. Randall is currently working in Program Development and Management at McNeese State University, serving as Coordinator of Planned Giving and Donor Research for the McNeese State University Foundation. In this capacity she identified prospective donors and directed solicitation of their contributions. Prior to her McNeese position, Ms. Randall worked in development at UC San Diego (2000-2004), where she planned high profile fund raising and stewardship events and managed Student Affairs Development.

Commenting on the appointment, which is one of his last official acts as Bishop of Lake Charles, Bishop Braxton, who departs on Thursday, said:

"I have been convinced since my earliest days here that our Diocese has needed a full-time development director in order to raise the funds needed for the work of the Church most effectively. Though Mr. Morris LeBleu's work has been outstanding, it is not possible for one person to oversee both of these important undertakings (development and communications) to their fullest potential. I am very pleased to engage the services of Ms. Kyra Randall. She has a history of experiences that should be an excellent background for expanding the development efforts of our Diocese. She has been highly recommended, not only for her outstanding abilities but also for her personal qualities, including her communication skills and outgoing personality. I believe she will be a genuine asset to the Diocese.

"There are several potential projects in the diocese which my successor may choose to undertake which could not be brought to a successful conclusion without the efforts of a full-time Director of Development. I am very grateful to the Catholic Church Extension Society for responding to my personal request for assistance which has made this important step forward for our Diocese possible."



**Bishop Edward K. Braxton, left, Bishop of Lake Charles, stands with the newly appointed Director of Development of the Diocese of Lake Charles, Ms. Kyra Randall, at the Pastoral Center. The appointment becomes effective August 1. (Photo by Morris LeBleu, Diocese of Lake Charles)**

## LCC web site contains information about legislature, church's position on issues

By Laura Deavers  
Editor, The Catholic Commentator

[www.louisiana.nasccd.org](http://www.louisiana.nasccd.org)  
This is the address for the new web site for the Louisiana Catholic Conference (LCC), the arm of the Louisiana bishops that works for legislation that represents the position of the Catholic Church.

According to its mission statement on the web site, the Conference serves to coordinate teaching through joint pastoral statements; to promote collaboration in shared projects among Catholic dioceses and other entities; and to communicate and interact with local, parish, state and federal bodies.

The web site has valuable information about key legislative issues being followed in the church. Along with this is a list of do's and don'ts on how to effectively approach legislators to encourage them to vote for or against a legislative bill based on the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The new directory of Catholic social services that are available in the dioceses of Louisiana is also on the site, and can be downloaded and printed.

Eventually, all of the pastoral letters issued by the Louisiana bishops back to 1979 will be on the site as well, said Daniel Loar, LCC executive director. He said that the bishops have written pastoral letters on end of life issues, the death penalty and racism.

"We are doing this for the

common good, not just for Catholics," said Loar. He added that this will help people of goodwill come to an agreement on the issues that Catholics are concerned about.

Loar said that through the site, people can learn that one in every four persons living in poverty in Louisiana was served by a Catholic charity program affiliated with one of the seven Louisiana dioceses last year. The Catholic dioceses are the largest private provider of services to the poor in the state.

"Our services are about more than pro-life and schools," said Loar. The church is putting faith into action through many, and varied programs that assist people. "This is a concrete way we can show what we do."

The site also has links to all of the Louisiana dioceses, the Vatican, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as well as the governor's office and the Louisiana Legislature for tracking bills.

The Louisiana Legislature is in session until June 23. This is a 45-day fiscal session, which is dedicated to the state budget. But, last year, the populace approved legislators introducing five bills during a fiscal session that are not associated with the state budget. Loar explained that because of this, legislators have filed 1100 bills this session, a third of what was filed last year during a regular session. "There is a lot of anxiety in the legis-

lature that there will be a major log jam" caused by the number of bills and that there will not be enough time spent on the state budget, said Loar.

This year, LCC, which includes Loar and the bishops of the state, has put their energies into four major issues: cloning, the Stelly plan for taxation, cuts to Catholic schools and immigration.

Since 9-11, people who have lived in the United States almost all of their lives, but who have never become citizens of this country, can be deported if they plead guilty to a crime. Loar said the issue is to have a bill passed that would require judges and defense attorneys to formally notify a non-citizen if he pleads guilty or *nolo contendere* that he will be deported.

This bill was lost in the House Criminal Justice Committee. "The judges and district attorneys were able to convince the committee that having to read one sentence to an immigrant is too much of a burden for them to bear," said Loar.

Two bills dealing with cloning, one a house bill, and the other a senate bill, have been assigned to committee. LCC supports the House Bill 492, and opposes Senate Bill 306.

HB 492 states that it is intrinsically evil to destroy human life, said Loar. He explained that many, who are pushing for embryonic stem cell cloning, rather than adult stem cell, are scientists who want the government to pay for their research, since

investors won't put money into embryonic stem cell research.

Loar commented that women who are interested in women's rights are realizing that embryonic stem cell research is not good for women because it will exploit women, especially poor women.

The Stelly tax plan is a good plan of taxation, according to Loar, because it takes the tax burden off of the poor and puts it on the wealthiest people of the state. People making less than \$80,000 a year have come out better under the Stelly plan, said Loar.

With the federal government cutting back funding for Medicaid, a huge hole is being created in the state budget. Consequently, the budget presented to the appropriations committee cuts two programs for the Catholic schools in the state.

Required services are being cut 5.6 percent or \$572,234 and transportation is being cut 3.5 percent or \$261,216. Non-public schools are required by state law to perform certain tasks. The money for required services is to reimburse them for this work.

Loar has established a statewide network of people who are willing to contact legislatures to push issues affecting the Catholic Church. People who are interested in participating in this effort should contact him at the LCC web site.

## The Diary of a Bad Statistic

By Susan E. Wills, Esq.

Did you know that abortions have gone up 25 percent since George Bush was President? Are you shocked? Skeptical?

When Howard Dean, the Democratic National Committee Chair, hurled that 25 percent factoid at Tim Russert during a recent broadcast of Meet the Press, all the host could do was cut to commercial. But there was good reason to challenge him.

According to data from the Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), abortions are continuing their gradual 20-year decline. AGI interim figures show 0.8 percent fewer abortions nationwide in 2001 than in 2000, and a similar drop in 2002. No more recent figures are available nationwide.

How could Dr. Dean be so far off the mark? Not to mention Senator Hillary Clinton? On May 26, she told CNN,

during the Clinton administration, abortions went down, and they have gone back up under the Bush administration. Senator John Kerry, who told Meet the Press on January 30: Do you know that in fact abortion has gone up in these last few years.

It is a politically useful claim for those who want to discredit efforts to protect the unborn. But it simply isn't true.

Factcheck.org (a service of the Annenberg Public Policy Center) has traced the claim that abortions are increasing during Bush presidency to a pre-election article published in the online edition of Sojourners. In the article's opening sentence its author, Dr. Glen Stassen, claims to be trained in statistical analysis, but he must have skipped class pretty regularly. His conclusion that abortions increased during the Bush presidency

(52,000 more abortions occurred in 2002 than would have been expected) is loosely cobbled from misread and/or unrepresentative data, plus erroneous extrapolations and unsupported assumptions. Some examples:

His claim is based on figures from only 16 states. By comparison, AGI found decreased abortions from analyzing 44 states, after excluding two statistically unreliable states which Dr. Stassen showcased.

Stassen lists South Dakota and Wisconsin as states where abortions increased from 2001 to 2002, but state health records contradict his claim. For South Dakota, he may simply have misread the table: he asserts a 2.1 percent increase in abortions (in fact births rose 2.1 percent), while abortions de-

creased 9.7 percent perhaps that year. Oops.

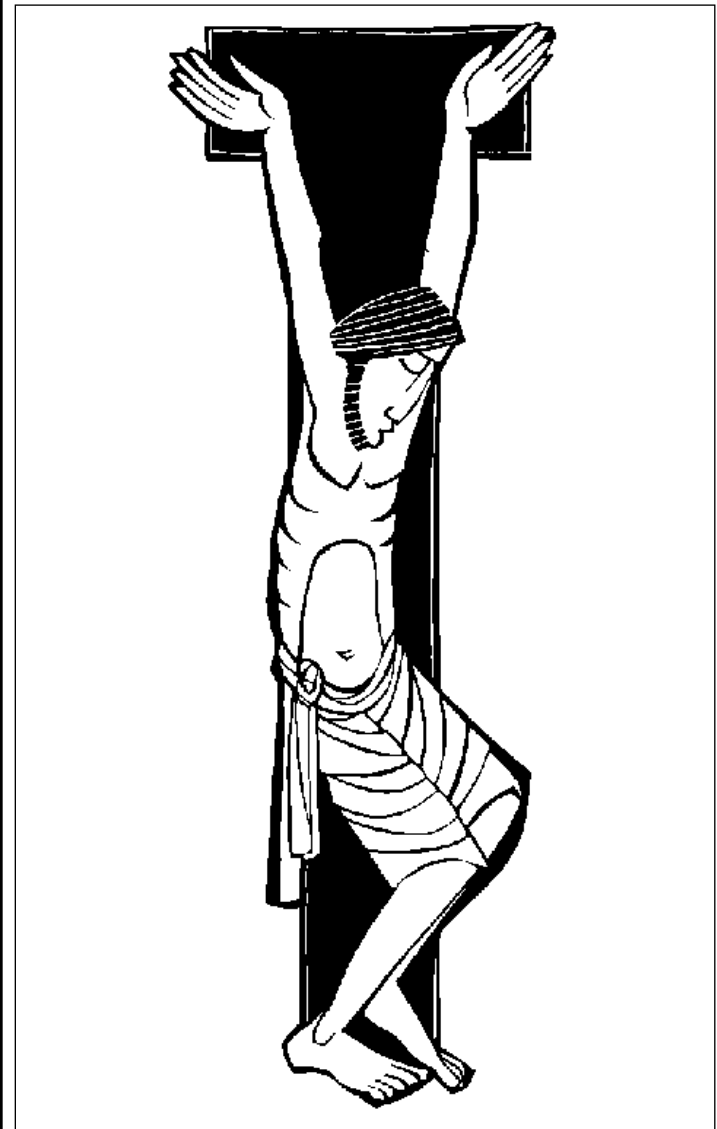
He claims that abortions are rising in Illinois, based on a 0.9 percent increase in 2002. But he ignored Illinois' 10% decrease in abortions in 2003, more indicative of a long-term downward trend than a one-year statistical blip.

He relies on apparently skyrocketing increases in abortions in Colorado and Arizona between 2001 and 2002, but fails to note that both states issued caveats along with their figures. Each had revamped abortion reporting requirements, and explained that the 2002 numbers likely resulted from better reporting and not from a true increase (which is why AGI excluded them). Moral: If an abortion statistic seems too good, or too awful, to be true, check your facts.

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In those days, the Israelites came to the desert of Sinai and pitched camp. While Israel was encamped here in front of the mountain, Moses went up the mountain to God. Then the LORD called to him and said, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob; tell the Israelites: You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians and how I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself. Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people, though all the earth is mine. You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation."  
*Exodus 19:2-6a*



Brothers and sisters: Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.  
*Romans 5:6-11*



At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." Then he summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus; Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him. Jesus sent out these twelve after instructing them thus, "Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give."  
*Matthew 9:36-10:8*