

# CATHOLIC CALENDAR.

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## Ministries provided through Diocesan Services Appeal

**LAKE CHARLES** – The successful administration of each of the programs and ministries of the Diocese of Lake Charles over which Deacon Edward Lavine is responsible relies in no small part on contributions to the Diocesan Services Appeal, formerly known as the Bishop's Services Appeal.

Deacon Lavine oversees the offices of Black Catholics, Prison Ministries, the Deaf Apostolate, Counseling Services, Apostleship of the Sea, Immigration Services, and Hispanic Ministries. Without the continued support of the Catholic faithful of the Diocese many of these programs and ministries would be difficult to sustain. For more than 26 years gifts to the Appeal have made up approximately one third of the annual Diocesan budget. This year is no different save for the fact that the Appeal was not held last year due to the devastation wrought upon so many by Hurricane Rita. This year's Appeal will begin on the weekend of Nov. 4-5 in the Churches of the Diocese.

The Office of Black Catholics is taking up a large portion of Deacon Lavine's time at present as preparation begins for next year's National Black Catholic Congress X, in Buffalo, New York on July 12-15, 2007.

In anticipation of the Congress, a Day of Reflection will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, at St. Louis Catholic High School, according to Deacon Lavine.

"We are now gearing up by bringing the past advisory board together to help me put on the Day of Reflection," Deacon Lavine said. "At present, as we prepare for the day, we will be looking at eight principles – Spirituality, Parish Life,

Youth and Young Adults, Catholic education, Social Justice, Racism, HIV/AIDS, and Africa.

"These eight principles will be reflected upon, discussed, and reviewed by the eight different discussion groups facilitated by eight different individuals," Deacon Lavine continued. "These reflections will look at the specific principle within a Sacramental vision.

"Racism will be reviewed within the Sacramental vision of Christian Initiation, Baptism, Penance and Reconciliation while Africa will be viewed within the vision of the Sacrament of Baptism, the Eucharist, Penance and Reconciliation," Deacon Lavine said. "Spirituality will come under the Sacramental vision of Confirmation;

Youth and Young adults under the vision of Confirmation and the Sacrament of Holy Orders; Catholic Education under Holy Orders, Parish Life, Matrimony; Social Justice, the Holy Eucharist and HIV/AIDS, Anointing of the Sick."

Rev. Timothy Goodly, Spirituality; Rev. Msgr. Ronald Groth, Parish Life; Dr. Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, Catholic Education; Rev. Richard Adiukwu, Africa; Judge Gene Thibodeaux, Racism; Rev. Henry Mancuso, Ph.D., Social Justice; Mrs. Milissa Thibodeaux, Youth and Young Adults; and Dr. Susan Jones, HIV/AIDS will be the facilitators for the Day of Reflection.

Deacon Lavine and a group of nine men from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, both in Lake Charles, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Jennings, attended the recent National African American Catholic Men's Conference held in Houston. The Conference focused on developing spiritual and life enhancement skills that will help men live more effective and nurturing lives.

As Deacon Lavine goes out the business of preparing for next year's Congress X, he is also watching over the other ministries under his charge.

"We furnish Deacon Patrick LaPoint, director of the Seafarers Center, with Bibles from Extension Society along with other reading materials we acquire from our magazine drive each year," Deacon Lavine said. "The Rosary Makers at Our Lady of Good Counsel also provide us with rosaries for the sailors."

Bibles, rosaries, and other religious reading materials are also made available to prisoners at the jails and prisons within the Diocese. Deacon Lavine also works to provide for the celebration of Mass for minimum security inmates in Calcasieu Parish at the Calcasieu Parish Correctional Center

"Mass is celebrated at 2 p.m. on Tuesdays and there is a Communion Service at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays," he continued. "For female inmates we offer occasional Confession and counseling services and a women's group helps with an ecumenical prayer service. A group from St. Henry Parish helps greatly with the ministry."

Father Daniel Torres, pastor of St. Joseph Church in DeRidder, makes weekly visits to the C. Paul Phelps Correctional Center in DeQuincy, according to Deacon Lavine.

In Allen Parish, at the prisons in Oakdale as well as the prison in Oberlin, Deacon Lavine has had assistance from Mike and Bonnie Richard in Elton.

"They monitor the needs in the prisons and let us know what is going on," Deacon



Attending the recent National African American Catholic Men's Conference held in Houston from the Diocese of Lake Charles were, from left, Joseph Cornerly, Willie Mouton, Craig Guillory, Michael Jones, Erroll DeVille, Deacon Edward Lavine, Derek Covert, all of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. Kneeling is Rev. Henry Mancuso, pastor of Sacred Heart. Also attending, but not pictured, were Rev. Hyacinth Okafor, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Jennings and Adam Rosemore of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.

Lavine continued. Recently a Mass kit and vestments have been made available for priests to celebrate Liturgy for prisoners at the Oakdale Detention Center. The ministry also provides inmates with rosaries, rosary guides and other religious material.

"We have a regular schedule of priests and the laity that go into the prisons in Oakdale and Oberlin," Deacon Lavine said.

The Deacon hopes to begin a dialogue with Jefferson Davis Parish sheriff Ricky Edwards about "some of the needs in his jail."

Deacon Roy Nash of Our Lady Star of the Sea had been working with the inmates in Cameron Parish, but Hurricane Rita forced Deacon Nash to move to Kinder and the inmates were moved to Lake Charles.

Deacon Lavine's work with Immigration is to see that the priests from other countries who come to the Diocese of Lake Charles are properly documented. "We work strictly with and for the priests from other countries serving us," Deacon Lavine said. "We help with their immigration concerns. In some cases we have to help them to secure a religious visa and in others we get an extension of a

religious visa. Also we help them with permanent residency applications and citizenship questions.

Deacon Lavine pointed out that like the Black Catholic Pastoral there is also a National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1987.

"We have a Hispanic Commission here in the Diocese and four of us will attend a conference in New Orleans on Nov 11," Deacon Lavine said.

**There are many generous people in the Local Church of Southwest Louisiana who have been generous to the Diocese of Lake Charles annual Appeal for years. Without that generosity, the programs and ministries managed by Deacon Lavine would not be able to aid as many people as they might otherwise. Please remember those people and their needs. Consider making your gift to the 2006-2007 Diocesan Services Appeal.**

## Ministries and Programs of the Diocese of Lake Charles

The following is a list of the programs and ministries of the Diocese of Lake Charles funded by contributions to the annual Diocesan Services Appeal.

### Education and Evangelization Services

- Catholic Schools
- Clergy Continuing Formation
- Evangelization
- Religious Education
- Youth Ministry
- Adult Education
- Communications
- The Catholic Calendar
- Glad Tidings TV Program
- Cathedral Radio Mass

### Pastoral and Community Services

- Apostleship of the Sea
- Counseling Services
- Catholic Service Center
- Child and Youth Protection
- Deaf Apostolate
- Family Life
- Immigration Services
- Pro-Life Activities
- Saint Charles Center
- Ecumenical Affairs
- Office of Black Catholics
- Hispanic Catholics
- Liturgy and Worship
- Tribunal
- Prisons Apostolate
- Vocations and Seminarians

## Annulment information workshop planned

**LAKE CHARLES** -- During this time of the change of the seasons, a workshop for persons interested in church annulments will be held on Saturday, Nov. 11, from 9 a.m. to noon in the Activity Room of the Monsignor Irving A. DeBlanc Family Life Center, located at the corner of Quilty and Monsignor Irving DeBlanc Place.

There are many misconceptions about annulments and these should be cleared up in the workshop, according to Deacon George Carr, a member of the annulment workshop team. Participants will receive information on what might be grounds for an annulment, how to complete the various forms, what supporting documents are needed and how to prepare testimony.

Persons who are divorced or in second marriages outside the church needing annulments from throughout the diocese are welcome and encouraged to participate in this cooperative effort of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church and the Office of Family Life of the Diocese of Lake Charles, an agency supported by contributions to the Diocesan Services Appeal.

There is no fee to participate and no preparation is needed. Advance registration is not necessary but, it would be helpful for planners to know how many persons wish to participate to allow for sufficient handouts to be available. Please call Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church at 477-1236 if you will be attending or are seeking more information.

## Working with youth of Diocese important ministry

**LAKE CHARLES** – Working with the youth of the Catholic Church in Southwest Louisiana is an extremely important task. One which Milissa Thibodeaux, the Director of the Office of Youth Ministry for the Diocese, takes very seriously.

**Without contributions to the Diocesan Services Appeal, many of the programs provided for our youth by the Office of Youth Ministry could have their effectiveness on the youth minimized. Our youth are the future of this Local Church and all the good work of the Office of Youth Ministry and the Youth Ministers in each parish of the Diocese must continue. Your gift, no matter the size, to the Diocesan Services Appeal, can make that happen. The Appeal this year begins on Nov. 4-5 in the Diocese.**

According to Thibodeaux, "youth ministry is the developing of a program to provide young people, teens, and young adults with activities and events that promote their Catholic faith, help them know what it means to serve, help them learn leadership skills and help them develop spirituality.

"If you ask a teenager what youth ministry is, they would say it's something that we can do that we can have fun with our friends, we can meet new people, and we can do it in a safe and exciting environment," she said.

As the Director, Thibodeaux inherited a long-standing program put together through the work of Sandy Gay, who directed Religious Education and Youth Ministry activities since the establishment of the Diocese, along with steadfast volunteers.

"The Office of Youth Ministry as Sandy had it, did two major things a year, first was the Diocesan Youth Conference in Beaumont, predominantly for high school students," Thibodeaux said. "That is where all of the parishes of the diocese will be able to bring their young people and have a three-day youth ministry gathering with keynote speakers, Reconciliation, break out sessions, workshops on topics of importance to the teenagers, lots of music, some social time, some game time and it is typically held the weekend before Mardi Gras. That's the first big thing that is been part of this office for years.

"The next big thing we do is our weeklong Christian Leadership Institute held at Bundick's Lake," she said. "We have been holding that for many years. It developed from a program done on a national basis and Sandy and a group of young people adapted it for our Diocese."

The weeklong camp provides teenagers with the opportunity to learn leadership skills, learn how to work with a

group, how to do team building exercises, how to do problem solving and conflict resolution.

"They are taught a planning process, from how to plan a morning prayer to how to plan environment for meals, how to plan for liturgy," Thibodeaux said. "They go through this planning process throughout the week. All of it is done through a Christian basis. The entire leadership camp is done that way."

While those events have continued this year under her leadership, "We have adapted a new plan for this year," she said. "Since this is my first year in the office, we wanted to do some things and see what works."

Her first effort, a family Catholic music festival called "Proud 2B Catholic," was very successful and has energized Thibodeaux.

"It was a phenomenal event, we had live music on two stages going on all day, with product vendors, Catholic organizations, and Catholic stores on site," she said. "We had an Adoration Chapel that was open for most of the day, with live music in there as well, 10 food booths outside, jumping things for the kids outside, breakout sessions throughout the day where different topics of youth ministry were discussed. We sold about 1500 tickets and probably, because 12 and under got in free, we had about 2000 people walk through the doors."

Not resting on their laurels, the Office has already scheduled the next Proud 2B Catholic event for September 8, 2007 and, if things fall just right it could be a coup for the Diocese of Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana as a whole.

"Although we haven't signed a contract, we got confirmation that Tony Melendez has it on his calendar and we hope we can get the contract signed soon," Thibodeaux said. "We are still negotiating."

Perhaps the most heart-rending vision of the Nicaraguan-born Melendez who was a "thalidomide baby," born without arms because his mother was prescribed the drug to combat morning sickness during her pregnancy, was his Sept. 15, 1987 performance for Pope John Paul II, playing the song "Never Be The Same," after which the Holy Father approached the stage to kiss him in appreciation.

"We have already signed contracts with Father Stan Fortuna, known as the "rapping priest" to many of our young people, and Jesse Romero, a lay evangelist and a former kickboxer who had a conversion experience," she said. "Romero goes around and shares his story with young people and adults as well."

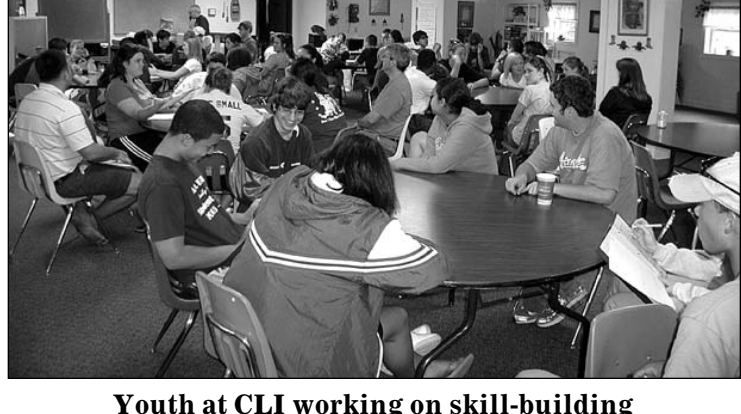
The Office continues to hold regular monthly events for youth, including the upcoming Youth Rocks, Agape Retreat, the Diocesan Middle School Rally,

Thibodeaux says she continues to learn and grow in her job, spending hours upon hours getting youth ministry resources together. She has put together a catalog for youth ministers and recently presented two workshops at the Diocesan Catechetical Conference.

"I want all of our parishes to know that we are all one church," she said. "If we use the resources that we have and if we use each other and help each other and encourage each other, our kids will see that and youth ministry will explode."

"I think it is important that our young people know we have a church that they are a part of and we plan things and organize things that will help them when they get in their young adult lives and that they don't go away."

**Without your contributions to the Diocesan Services Appeal, to aid in the administration of the Office, the many programs offered for the youth of our Diocese could be affected. Consider making your gift to this annual Appeal this weekend.**



Youth at CLI working on skill-building

(This page paid for by the Diocese of Lake Charles.)