

# Merry Christmas!

The Diocese of Lake Charles  
lcdioocese.org



# Catholic

Vol. 36, No. 2

## A Christmas Message from Bishop Glen John Provost

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." Isaiah 9:1

When we find something really valuable, we rush to possess it. Whether it is finding some treasure we thought we had lost or finding the answer to a question we have pondered all our lives, we embrace it, we make it our own, and experience an excitement like no other. Jesus spoke of the exhilaration of discovery when He compared the kingdom of heaven to the discovery of "a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matthew 13:44). Or Jesus said, it is like "a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it" (Matthew 13:45-46). The experience of discovering the long-desired prize is so fundamentally human, because the human heart is lacking something. God knows it, and Christ comes to provide it.

In one of his early Christmas messages, Pope Benedict XVI said:

Despite humanity's many advances, man has always been the same: a freedom poised between good and evil, between life and death. It is there, in the very depths of his being, in what the Bible calls his 'heart,' that man always needs to be 'saved' (December 25, 2006).

To me this is what Christmas proclaims: the answer to the human heart. This is why, I think, the shepherds "went in haste," the Gospel tells us, "to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us" (Luke 2:15, 16). This is why the

Magi are "overjoyed at seeing the star" (Matthew 2:10). The star leads them to the object of their search that answers the deepest desire of their hearts.

I recall the Christmas Eve nights of my childhood. There was something mystical about them. The frosty night descended. The house lay decorated awaiting the arrival of the family on Christmas Day. At eleven o'clock we did something we never did on any other night of the year. We dressed in our Sunday best and hurried to Mass at midnight. The music was like no other. We sang of "shepherds" and "angels," "harps" and "gifts," and faraway places like "Bethlehem." There was the smell of incense in the air, mixed in with a whiff of mothballs from woolen coats and furs released from storage. The oneness of everyone present was "electric," as we turned to people, known and unknown alike, and offered to them our greetings of "Merry Christmas." There was a perception of having discovered something very special. Christ was born. The Word of God was made flesh. We could hear Him, touch Him, feel Him, and, yes, eat His banquet of love.

Only with the passage of time and the advance of years, do these mystical experiences become dulled. They become dulled not because they lose their significance. The message is the same, after all. "A child is born to us, a son is given us" (Isaiah 9:5). No, the dullness comes from us. Our hearts are burdened. Our minds become cluttered. We have experienced too much pain, too many disappointments, too great a separation through sin. We become cynical, and the world in which we live does not help. It

is much too self-absorbed to help us, more conscious of correctness than what truly ails the heart. "Merry Christmas" becomes just another "Happy Holiday," and the cause of joy for shepherds and angels is replaced with a marketing idea of a "Winter Festival."

In spite of all this, the angelic message remains. "Do not be afraid" (Luke 2:10). What a glorious message! The heavens open and angels tell us not to fear. The world would have us fear everything. Everything is in crisis: the economy, peace, employment, our safety, our health. But the angel said: "Do not be afraid." For that matter, so did our Lord. And why should we not be afraid? The angels continue: "For behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy" (Luke 2:10). We would love to hear "good news." And what is that news of great joy? "In the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord" (Luke 2:11). That is news like no other. To paraphrase once again the words of Pope Benedict XVI, our freedom is poised between good and evil and much more fundamentally between life and death. We have a choice. We can choose light or darkness, feast or famine, good or evil, and life or death. God has given us a free will to love, and we misuse that freedom by making false and deceptive choices. "Man always needs to be 'saved.'" That is the basic need we have and the message of Christmas satisfies it. This is why the message of the angels is "good news" and why it should bring "great joy." I have a choice never to be the same again. I am not locked into selfishness. Death is not necessary. Darkness is not inevitable. God has provid-

ed me with a choice.

In this moment of "poise," we join the shepherds. Gathered on a hillside, we are attending to our work and daily concerns. Deep inside us, we know that our hearts yearn for more and that promises have yet to be fulfilled. Suddenly God makes known to us "good news." We no longer remain poised. We are free, we leap up, and we hasten to the source of our joy. At the end of our journey we find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, asleep in a manger, warmed by the breath of cattle, and nursed by a Virgin Mother. The sight astounds us, for this is the "Messiah and Lord" proclaimed by the angels. Our freedom can never be the same again, because the object of our hearts' desire has been revealed. Grace fills our freedom. "To those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:12-14).

To you and your families and friends, I extend my blessings for a joyful and peaceful Christmas!

+Glen John Provost  
Bishop of Lake Charles

## Annual Catechetical Conference Jan. 30

LAKE CHARLES - The annual Diocese of Lake Charles Catechetical Conference will be held Saturday, January 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in St. Louis Catholic High School, 1620 Bank Street.

Roy Petitfils, a well-known speaker from the Diocese of Lafayette, will be the keynote. The event is sponsored by the Office of Religious Education of the Diocese. Denise Donahoe, director of the office, said, "Parish and school catechetical leaders, parish catechists, school religion teachers, youth ministers, and Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults and evangelization team members are invited. Actually, any adult wanting to learn more is welcome."

Petitfils is a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church Parish in Broussard, La., and earned his Masters in Counseling from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette and is a alumnus of St. Joseph Seminary Col-



Roy Petitfils

lege in Covington, La. For two years, he studied ministry and spirituality at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

Upon returning from Italy he began teaching and ministering at St. Thomas More Catholic High School in Lafayette, serving in numerous capacities.

Today, Petitfils serves as a counselor and administrator at St. Cecilia School in Broussard and as Counselor

Intern at Pax Renewal Center in Lafayette. His counseling ministry draws upon his own experience of the therapeutic process.

Petitfils and three other campus ministers from around the United States have co-authored *A Practical Guide to High School Campus Ministry* (St. Mary's Press, 2007) and he has now added another title, *What I Wish Someone Had Told Me About the First Five Years of Marriage* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2010).

Petitfils has made presentations around the country including the Archdiocese of Detroit, Archdiocese of New Orleans, Diocese of Little Rock, Diocese of Lafayette, Diocese of Shreveport, Diocese of Baton Rouge, and the National Catholic Education Association. He has also done many school retreats and in-service workshops in the Diocese of Lafayette.

For more information contact the Office of Religious Education at 337-439-7400, Ext. 309.



Seventy-five men from Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi took part in a Come and See vocation discernment weekend held recently at St. Joseph Seminary College. Eight of those participants, pictured here with seminarians already attending St. Joseph, were from the Diocese of Lake Charles. From left, local attendees included, Jared France, Matthew Cormier, Logan Blanchard, Jacob Elly, Levi Thompson, John Trost, Jacob Rigmaiden, Lee Sonnier, Cristian Gonzales, Larry Finley, and Rev. Ruben Buller.

The next Catholic Calendar will be published on January 22, 2010.

## Christmas Day Masses in the Diocese of Lake Charles

<b>Bell City</b> St. John Vianney (7120 Hwy. 14 E.) 7:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.	<b>Hackberry</b> St. Peter the Apostle (1210 Main St.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>Christ the King</b> (7680 Gulf Hwy.) 8:00 a.m.	<b>Oberlin</b> St. Joan of Arc (110 W. 5th Ave.) 10:00 a.m.
<b>Cameron</b> Our Lady Star of the Sea (135 Our Lady Road) 10:30 a.m.	<b>Iowa</b> St. Raphael (211 S. Thomson Ave.) 10:15 a.m.	<b>Immaculate Heart of Mary</b> (2031 Opelousas St.) 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.	<b>Ragley</b> St. Pius X Chapel (16816 Hwy 171) 8:30 a.m.
<b>Carlyss</b> St. Theresa of the Child Jesus (4822 Carlyss Dr.) 8:00 a.m.	<b>Jennings</b> St. Peter Claver Chapel (503 Second Street) 8:30 a.m.	<b>Our Lady of Good Counsel</b> (221 Aqua Dr.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>Raymond</b> St. Lawrence (5505 Pine Island Hwy.) 8:00 a.m.
<b>DeQuincy</b> Our Lady of LaSalette (203 S. Grand Ave.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>Immaculate Conception</b> (705 S. Lake Arthur Ave.) 6:30 a.m., 8:30 a.m.	<b>Our Lady Queen of Heaven</b> (3939 Lake St.) 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m.	<b>Sulphur</b> Immaculate Conception (2700 Maplewood Dr.) 9:00 a.m.
<b>DeRidder</b> St. Joseph (1125 Blankenship Dr.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>Our Lady Help of Christians</b> (710 N. State St.) 8:30 a.m.	<b>Sacred Heart of Jesus</b> (1102 Mill St.) 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.	<b>Our Lady of LaSalette</b> (602 N. Claiborne St.) 9:00 a.m.
<b>Elizabeth</b> St. Frances of Rome Chapel (204 Poplar St.) 8:00 a.m.	<b>Our Lady of Perpetual Help</b> (920 S. Broadway) 10:00 a.m.	<b>St. Henry</b> (1021 8th Ave.) 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. (Spanish)	<b>Our Lady of Prompt Succor</b> (1109 Cypress St.) 10:00 a.m.
<b>Elton</b> St. Joseph (209 N. Washington St.) 8:30 a.m.	<b>Kinder</b> St. Philip Neri (607 Fourth Ave.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>St. Margaret of Scotland</b> (2500 Enterprise Blvd.) 7:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m.	<b>Sweetlake</b> St. Patrick Chapel (469 Hwy. 27) 8:00 a.m.
<b>Fenton</b> St. Paul (1100 St. Mary St.) 7:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.	<b>Lacassine</b> St. John the Evangelist Chapel (306 Ann St.) 7:00 a.m.	<b>St. Martin de Porres</b> (5326 Elliott Rd.) 8:00 a.m.	<b>Vinton</b> St. Joseph (1502 Industrial St.) 8:00 a.m.
<b>Grand Chenier</b> St. Charles Borromeo (804 Third Ave.) 8:45 a.m.	<b>Lake Arthur</b> Our Lady of the Lake (203 Commercial Ave.) 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m.	<b>St. Patrick Hospital Chapel</b> (524 Dr. Michael DeBailey Dr.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>Welsh</b> Our Lady of Seven Dolours (209 N. Adams St.) 8:00 a.m.
<b>St. Eugene</b> (5035 Grand Chenier Hwy.) 8:00 a.m.	<b>Lake Charles</b> Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (Corner of Kirby and Bilbo Streets) 8:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m. (Extraordinary Form)	<b>LeBleu Settlement</b> St. Joseph Chapel (2110 Claude Hebert Road) 8:30 a.m.	<b>Westlake</b> St. Joseph (310 N. Sarah St.) 10:30 a.m.
		<b>Moss Bluff</b> St. Theodore (785 Sam Houston Jones Pkwy.) 9:00 a.m.	<b>St. John Bosco</b> (1301 Sampson St.) 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.
		<b>Oakdale</b> Sacred Heart of Jesus (1208 E. 7th Ave.) 10:00 a.m.	

This page paid for by the Diocese of Lake Charles through the generous sponsorships of the following:

For sponsorship information  
Call Laurie Cormier at 337-436-5037  
or lcormier62@yahoo.com

Your  
Knights of  
Columbus  
Council Here

Your Knights  
Peter Claver  
Council Here

In Memory  
Of Your  
Loved One  
Here

"Connected Catholics"  
Diocesan Singles  
Ministry 337-439-7400

Catholic Charities  
Diocese of  
Lake Charles  
337-439-7436

Watch "Glad Tidings"  
Sunday at 6 a.m.  
on KPLC-TV

# Feliz Navidad

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

## Calendar



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost  
Bishop of Lake Charles

December 25, 2009

### Bishop Provost celebrates Mass for Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

LAKE CHARLES - The Most Reverend Glen John Provost was the main celebrant of the Mass honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe on Friday, Dec. 11, in St. Henry Catholic Church. The Bishop celebrated the liturgy in Spanish.

Priests concelebrating were Rev. Arturo Lozano, S.J.; Rev. Carlos Garcia; Rev. Archimandrite Herbert J. May and Rev. Daniel Torres, Vicar General and Pastor of St. Henry Parish. Assisting Bishop Provost were deacons Ray Granger, Edward Lavine and Scott Conner. Rev. Ruben Buller was the master of ceremonies.

A large crowd was present for the annual liturgy honoring the appearance of the Virgin Mary to Juan Diego, a native Mexican worker, in December, 1531. The Virgin told Juan Diego, who became the first indigenous American saint in 2002 when he was canonized by Pope John Paul II, that he was to bring her message to the bishop of the area that a church must be built on the site he had first seen her, Tepeyac Hill.

After several attempts to convince the bishop of the validity of his claims, Juan Diego was asked to bring proof of the Lady's identity. Before he could get back to the Lady, he found that his uncle was dying and he went about trying to find a priest, missing the appointed meeting with the Virgin.

However, the Lady met him on the path and told him that his uncle had been cured and that Juan Diego was to climb to the top of the hill where they first met. When he did he miraculously found flowers growing from the frozen earth. He gathered them into his cloak and immediately took them to show the bishop.

When he arrived, he told the bishop what had happened and opened his cloak sending the flowers falling to the ground. They were Castilian roses, which were not grown in Mexico. But what made the largest and



In the top photo, Bishop Glen John Provost incenses the altar at the beginning of the Mass celebrated in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Henry Catholic Church. At the bottom, Rev. Arturo Lozano, S.J., Director of the Office of Hispanic Ministry, reads the story of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe during the musical serenade to Our Lady held before the Mass.

most lasting impression was the glowing image of the Lady imprinted on the inside of Juan Diego's cloak, or tilma.

Immediately the bishop set about to build the church on the spot where the Virgin had first shown herself to

Juan Diego. Thousands of people converted to Christianity and Our Lady of Guadalupe was later declared the patroness of all the Americas.

Prior to the Friday night liturgy, there was a serenade to Our Lady of Guadalupe as

Father Lozano, director of the Office of Hispanic Ministry, read the story of Juan Diego and his vision of the Virgin Mary.

Following the Mass, a fiesta reception was held in the St. Henry Community Center.

### Did you know...

Rev. (later Msgr. George Bodin) was the founding pastor of St. Margaret Parish and saw to the establishment of the school in 1949, which was staffed by the Sisters Marianites of the Holy Cross. The first principal was Sister Mary Anthony who, along with other nuns, taught 154 students in grades one through three.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the see church of the Diocese of Lake Charles, is not the largest in terms of capacity of worshippers. Do you know which church holds that distinction? Find out in our next Catholic Calendar.

### Charlene Richard bio available

LAKE CHARLES - The Rev. Joseph Brennan, a priest of the Diocese of Lafayette, has penned a biography of Charlene Marie Richard, who is known to some as the "Little Cajun Saint."

"My Name is Charlene: The Story of a Special Little Girl" depicts the short, inspirational life of the young girl, who died August 11, 1959. The book is now available at Crossroads Bookstore, 601 West Prien Lake Road in Lake Charles.



The 10th Anniversary of the establishment by the Louisiana Catholic Daughters of the Americas of the CDA Kids program was celebrated at St. Raphael Parish in Iowa recently. Local courts in each diocese of the state adopt a special needs child for a year, providing the child with support, whether for medical needs, special toys or in some cases financial assistance. Helping with the program were special guests Hambone, Spark, and Grumpy who entertained the children and adults attending the event. State CDA officers pictured are, from left, Barbara Michael, state treasurer; Pat Myers, state treasurer; Joyce Stein, 1st Vice Regent and Gloria Newman, state Regent, with grandchildren Brianna and Katelyn. In the background are Mary Jenkins and Tina Dupre from Ville Platte. Two CDA kids who attended the event seated, left to right, in front were Taylor Harrington and Mya Louviere.

### Diocesan Briefs

#### Abrazando Cristo registration opens

LAKE CHARLES -- Registration for the 2010 Abrazando Cristo Mission Trip to Nicaragua has begun, according to Very Reverend Daniel Torres, Vicar General and Pastor of St. Henry Catholic Church

The trip will be July 3-11 and the cost of the journey is \$1,800, which includes all air and ground transportation costs, meals, lodging, tips, taxes, Retreat, and two mission shirts. A \$300 non-refundable deposit is due by Jan. 15, according to Father Torres.

An information packet and registration form is available by calling Father Torres at 337-439-7400, Ext. 215. Only 25 seats are available for the trip.

#### Diocesan Office Christmas schedule

LAKE CHARLES - The offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed until 8:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 4 for the Christmas holidays.

#### January SE initial training sessions

LAKE CHARLES - Three Safe Environment Initial Training Sessions will be conducted in January, according to Bernell Ezell, Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection of the Diocese of Lake Charles.

All three sessions will be held in the Chancery of the Diocese, located at 414 Iris Street.

The sessions are set for Sunday, Jan. 10 at 2 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 19, at 6 p.m. and Monday, Jan. 25, at 6 p.m.

Please contact Mrs. Ezell at 337-439-7400, Ext. 305 if you plan to attend.

#### "Walk in the Light - March for Life" Jan. 22

LAKE CHARLES - The "March for Life" held on the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v Wade decision will begin at 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 22 on the steps of the Calcasieu Parish Courthouse, where those in attendance can "Stand Up for Life" in remembrance of the unborn.

At 6:45 p.m., a candlelight procession will move from the courthouse to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception to gather as one voice to pray for an end to abortion.

Following the prayer service, the evening will conclude with a "Holy Hour for Life"

New Life Counseling, the crisis pregnancy center, will accept donations of baby items, such as booties and blankets as well as monetary contributions either at the courthouse or during the prayer service.

The event is being sponsored by the offices of Family Life and Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Lake Charles.

#### St. Louis Catholic registration dates set

LAKE CHARLES - Registration dates for the 2010-2011 school year at St. Louis Catholic High School have been announced.

Incoming ninth grade students from support schools will register from Monday, Jan. 11 to Friday, Jan. 15. Ninth grade students entering St. Louis from any other school may register from Tuesday, Jan. 19 through Friday, Jan. 22.

St. Louis Catholic continuing students in the grades 10 through 12 will register Monday, Feb. 8 through Friday, Feb. 12. Transfer students in grades 10 through 12 will be able to register Monday, March 1 through Friday, March 5. Registration is held on all dates from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#### Bishop's monthly presentations resume in Feb.

LAKE CHARLES - The monthly presentations of Bishop Glen John Provost on the Book of Revelation were not held during December nor will they be in January.

Bishop Provost's First Friday Men's Prayer Breakfast will next be held on Feb. 5 while the Women's Prayer Luncheon with the Bishop has been set for Tuesday, Feb. 9.

The Breakfast will be held in Ave Maria Hall at the corner of Kirby and Bilbo Streets at 7 a.m., following the 6:30 a.m. celebration of the First Friday Mass in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Men may register by calling 439-7400.

The Women's Luncheon will be held in the Lake Charles Civic Center. Those who wish to attend should send a check in the amount of \$10, payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles, to Ms. Esther Gallardo, 612 Alamo Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601 and include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

#### "Come Follow Me" Retreat

LAKE CHARLES - The Diocese of Lake Charles is joining with its sister Dioceses of Lafayette and Baton Rouge to offer a discernment retreat on February 5-7, 2010, at the Bishop Tracy Center in Baton Rouge. It is open to interested men 16 and older, in high school, college or professional life that may feel a call to the priesthood.

Registration forms are available from your Church office or you may contact Very Reverend Marcus M. Johnson at 436-8093 for more information. Please mail all registration to Father Johnson at 2031 Opelousas Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601

#### Central Deanery Vocaré meeting dates

LAKE CHARLES - The Central Deanery Vocaré meetings for the spring have been set, according to Rev. Nathan Long, Vocation Recruiter for the deanery.

These Sunday meetings begin with a meal and discussion in the offices of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church, 617 West Claude, followed by time for Adoration. Young men 16 years or older, who feel they have a vocation calling should contact Father Long at nathan.long@lcediocese.org, or call Our Lady Queen of Heaven at 477-1236.

Spring meeting dates, all beginning at 7:15 p.m., are Sunday, January 10; Sunday, March 14 and Sunday, April 11. A Vocaré game day is scheduled for Saturday, May 8 at a time to be determined, according to Father Long.

Interested young men are encouraged to attend the Come and See Weekend (for high school seniors and college students) on Feb. 18-20 at St. Joseph Abbey and Seminary College, St. Benedict, LA, and for all men 16 years and older on March 26-28

This page paid for by the Diocese of Lake Charles through the generous sponsorships of the following:

Abrazando Cristo Mission Trip July 3-11, 2010 439-7400, Ext. 215	Spring Holy Cross classes slated - call Bobbie 439-7400, Ext. 309	In Memory Of Your Loved One Here	Saint Charles Center/Tabor Retreat House 337-855-1232	Crossroads Your Store of Faith 474-7100
--	---	----------------------------------	--	--

For sponsorship information  
Call Laurie Cormier at 337-436-5037  
or lcomier62@yahoo.com

# Y PRÓSPERO AÑO NUEVO