



## My journal from National Black Catholic Congress XI

By Sandra Jones

We depart by car from Sacred Heart Church in Lake Charles for Houston to fly to the National Black Catholic Congress in Indianapolis, Indiana. In our group are: Ella Dartz Williams and Althea Williams of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Jennings, Jacque Mathews of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Jacqueline Semien-Guillory, Creighton Guillory, and me; a parishioner of Sacred Heart.

After an uneventful, but rather long, day of driving and flying, we arrive late in the day, quickly getting our car to the hotel, and checking in with no major problems.

The downtown area of Indianapolis is set up within a skywalk, which inter-connects hotels, a civic center and mall so a walk to anywhere will keep you out of the elements (heat and rain). The next morning we walk from our hotel (the Westin) to the Conference at the J.W. Marriott. Registration is as I thought it might be, with over two thousand participants trying to check in at once.

Following a series of glitches we are finally given our badges and campaign bags and enter the large conference hall where we are greeted by Bishop John Ricard, retired Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

The hall came to life with over a thousand voices singing the Lord's Prayer. I knew then that this would be a spiritual two days! Shortly after, the atmosphere became that of a national convention with the announcement of each diocese represented; amid cheers and the occasional flub, like the announcement of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux being in the state of Tennessee or the omission of a diocese in attendance.

Our routine set in with workshops and dai-

ly liturgies, the first being celebrated by our former Bishop Edward Braxton, now of Belleville, Illinois. The choir, made up of voices from all over the United States, was strong and faith-filled. The music set the tone for the liturgies and energized each participant. Just to see the many clergy filing into the great hall was a true spectacle.

His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston celebrated the second day's liturgy. Archbishops and Bishops in attendance were (New Orleans) Archbishop Greg Aymond, (Atlanta) Archbishop Wilton Gregory, (retired New Orleans Auxiliary) Bishop Dominic Carmon, (New Orleans Auxiliary) Bishop Shelton Fabre, (Beaumont, Texas) Bishop Curtis Guillory, (retired Washington, DC Auxiliary and Lake Charles native) Bishop Leonard Olivier, (Memphis, Tenn.) Bishop Terry Steib, (Washington, DC Auxiliary) Bishop Martin Holly, just to name a few. Numerous priests, deacons and religious were also present.

Each morning brought us to the main hall where a continental breakfast was set up and we got to visit with as many persons from all over the United States as possible. There were vendors also set up where one might purchase anything from books, CD's, religious articles and even African attire.

We met with another delegation from Immaculate Heart of Mary, The Reverend Marcus Johnson, Claude Syas and his wife, Johnnie and Christine Collins. We also met one a seminarian from Lake Charles, Robert Boxie, III who is studying for the Archdiocese of Washington. We were also able to sit with the delegation from the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.



Some members of the Lake Charles delegation to the National Black Catholic Congress XI in Indianapolis visited with Robert Boxie III, a Lake Charles native studying for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, during a break in the conference schedule. Pictured, from left, are Claude Syas, Boxie, Sandra Jones, Jacque Mathews and Christine Collins.

We all attend different workshops so that we might bring back as much information on our experiences as possible. I was able to attend a number of them, including one on Marriage and one on family healing. There were so many different workshops offered and so little time to attend them all. Separate healing services were held for both youth and adults and well attended.

Saturday morning brought us to the award presentation led by Bishop Steib where Mrs. Pearl Cole of our diocese was one of only sixty presented with an award called the *Servant of Christ Award*. Because Mrs. Cole was not in

attendance, I received the honor of accepting it for her. Upon our return, Bishop Glen John Provost presented it to her. Shortly after the ceremony, we rushed back to our hotel to catch the shuttle to the airport and our trip home.

I can truly say my experience was informative, spiritual and one of fellowship. I certainly hope this will not be my last conference and I do look forward to the next one in five years in New Orleans.

Sandra Jones is the Administrative Assistant to Bishop Glen John Provost. She has worked for the all three Bishops of the Diocese in her 27 years at the Diocese of Lake Charles.



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, recently received a check in the amount of \$2,280.00 from Donald J. Laurent, Diocesan Coordinator for the Fourth Degree in the Diocese of Lake Charles. The money came from contributions from all the Fourth Degree Assemblies domiciled in the Diocese of Lake Charles - Father James J. Shahrigran Assembly #2182 of DeRidder, Msgr. Hubert Cramers Assembly #320 of Lake Charles, Father Veillard Assembly #2087 of Sulphur, and Msgr. Joseph Peeters Assembly #332 of Jennings - to aid in the continuing education and training of diocesan religious education instructors through the Adult Education component of the Office of Religious Education. Pictured, from left, are Jack O'Reilly, Msgr. Cramers; Donald Laurent, Father Shahrigran; Bishop Provost; I. J. Tarou, Father Veillard; and Craig Louviere, Father Veillard.

## Bishop's Golf Classic Friday, Oct. 5

LAKE CHARLES -- The Bishop's Golf Classic this year is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 5, at the Lake Charles Country Club. The four-person scramble tournament will have morning and afternoon tee times at 8 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Sponsors for this year's tournament include Iberia Bank, Alfred Palma LLC, and Bubba Oustalet.

Fees are \$500 per team, with prizes for first, second and tenth low gross for both morning and afternoon rounds, is limited to 22 teams per session. Prizes will also be given for the longest drive and closest to the hole for each round and a \$5,000 cash prize goes to the first golfer to score a hole in one.

Tee box signs are available for \$150, greenside signs are \$300 and a banner sponsorship is \$1,000.

Proceeds from the event provide financial assistance to the Seminarian Education Fund and the Priest Retirement Fund.

Ten men are studying for the priesthood for the Dio-

cese this year in four different seminaries and the cost of educational expenses will exceed \$316,000. The Diocese currently has 11 retired priests, including Bishop-emeritus Jude Speyrer, and expends more than \$350,000 to maintain their health and welfare.

Registration forms are available at area golf courses and the Diocese of Lake Charles.

Payment of fees and registration using a credit card is also available on the Diocese website - lcdiocese.org. Just click on the "Support the Diocese" button and follow the easy steps to register your team or become a sponsor. Forms can also be downloaded from the website (see Bishop's Golf Classic news story), completed and returned to P.O. Box 2225 with a check payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles. Deadline for entry is Wednesday, Sept. 26.

Contact Larry DeRoussel at 337-794-8339 or at lderoussel@laia.com for more information.



Msgr. Daniel Torres delivers a prayer before the morning round

## St. John Chapel celebrates 75 years

LACASSINE -- The faith community of St. John the Evangelist Chapel, a mission of St. Charles Borromeo in Fenton, celebrates its 75th anniversary Saturday, Aug. 18, with Bishop Glen John Provost celebrating the 4 p.m. Vigil Mass.

The story of St. John community has its beginnings in France in 1814, when Jean Bertrand Pousson was born. At the age of 26, he came to this country and opened a country store in the community of Chataignier in what is now the Diocese of Lafayette.

Twenty years later, to honor God for the success he had achieved, Pousson donated land for a cemetery and what is now the church parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

In 1872, Pousson moved to Lacassine and he welcomed the priests who traveled across the southern prairie into his home. It was not long before the residence became a meeting place where the Mass was celebrated. Pousson reserved a room as a prayer chapel for his family and neighbors where the Blessed Sacrament reposed.

As he had done before, he donated land for a cemetery and church in Lacassine. In 1881, he became the first person buried in the cemetery.

Progress was coming to the area through the railroad and along with the trains came farmers and tradesmen from out of state, which substantially increased the population. Our Lady of Seven Dolours in Welsh was established as a parish in 1904 and Lacassine was one of many villages whose Catholic

faithful were served by priests from the church in Welsh.

By 1906, Mass was being celebrated every second Sunday and one Saturday a month in the Lorraine Chapel, originally called the "Lacassine Chapel." Father Jules Daigle was appointed Pastor of Our Lady of Seven Dolours in 1930 and ministered to the people of Lacassine.

A year later St. Raphael Parish was established in Iowa with Father Wilfred Belanger as founding pastor. Father Belanger became responsible for the Catholics of Bell City and Hayes.

A hurricane later destroyed the Lorraine Chapel and it was not rebuilt. St. John Vianney Parish in Bell City was established in 1937 and Father Daigle built the chapel of St. John the Evangelist in Lacassine on property donated by Jean Pousson. Father Daigle celebrated Mass and taught catechism there each Saturday.

The care of St. John the Evangelist was transferred from Our Lady of Seven Dolours to St. Raphael in 1939.

Clergy who have served the St. John include Father Armand Hamel, who replaced Father Belanger; Father J. M. Audette, Father Theo Hassink; Father Anthony Genna; Father Viator Desilets and Father Robert Shreve; Father Aloysius Van Buijtenen; Father Michael Herpin, Father Walter Chmurea, Father Ronald Groth, Father John Poerio; Father Edward Degeyter; Father T. L. Herlong; Deacon Benny Morello. Father Bert Mead, S.J.; Father Gerard Smit, Msgr. Bede Becnel; Fa-

ther John Poerio; Father Herbert May, Father Milton P. Miller, Father Carlos Garcia, Father Aubrey Guilbeau, Father William Miller; Father Augustine Mulanjanany; and, today, Father Roland Vaughn.

Father Van Buijtenen was an especially beloved shepherd and upon his death in 1983, he was buried at the foot of the cross in the cemetery of St. John the Evangelist, which was his wish.

A memorial altar, paid for with the contributions of the people of Lacassine, Iowa, Bell City and Hayes as well as others, was erected over his vault.

Father Mead became the first resident priest in Lacassine in 1983, designated as "priest in charge."

In 2001, Bishop Edward K. Braxton transferred the pastoral care of the chapel from St. Raphael to St. Charles Borromeo in Fenton. In 2003, a fire destroyed the chapel. It was rebuilt and dedicated in 2005 by Msgr. Harry Greig, diocesan administrator.

With the community continuing to grow, planning and fund raising has begun for a church hall and religious education building.

The Offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed Monday, Sept. 3 - Labor Day

## Prayer for Safety in Hurricane Season

The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, has asked that during the hurricane season of 2012 the people of the Diocese of Lake Charles pray the following prayer, composed by The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Second Bishop of Lafayette, following Hurricane Audrey in 1957:

O God, Master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of your children. The Sea of Galilee obeyed your order and returned to its quietude. You are still the Master of the land and sea. We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control: the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, and overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land and spread chaos and disaster.

During this hurricane season we turn to You, O loving Father. Spare us from past tragedies whose memories are still so vivid and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with the passing of time. O Virgin, Star of the Sea, Our Beloved Mother, we ask you to plead with your Son in our behalf, so that spared from the calamities common to this area and animated with a true spirit of gratitude, we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son to reach the heavenly Jerusalem where a stormless eternity awaits us. Amen.

The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder  
Second Bishop of Lafayette

## Priests, deacons and religious to be honored

LAKE CHARLES -- The parish family of St. Henry Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus of the parish will honor priests, deacons, and religious celebrating significant anniversary years of a multiple of five on Wednesday, Sept. 12 at St. Henry.

Bishop Glen John Provost will celebrate a 10:30 a.m. Liturgy, followed by a luncheon in the St. Henry Community Center.

Priests to be honored for special anniversaries of ordination include Reverend Don Piraro, 45 years; Reverend Monsignor Vincent Sedita, 40 years; Reverend Aubrey Guilbeau, 40 years; Reverend Felix Anyikwa, 25 years; Reverend Monsignor Jace Eskind, 25 years; Reverend Susil Fernando, 25 years; and Reverend Charles Okorougo, 25 years.

Also, Reverend Carlos Garcia, 20 years; Reverend Brian King, 15 years; Reverend Alan Trouille, 15 years; Reverend Marcus Johnson, 10 years; Reverend Charles McMillin, 10 years; Reverend Clyde Thomas, 10 years; and Reverend Derek Covert, (5 years).

Deacons celebrating are Garret Caraway, 35 years; Ray Granger, 35 years; Sumner Kohlhund, 35 years; Jack Reynold, 35 years; H.E. Wagner, 35 years; and George Carr, 20 years.

# Calendar



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost  
Bishop of Lake Charles

August 17, 2012

## Local help flows to Nicaragua

LAKE CHARLES – The annual Johnnie Thibodeaux Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament held at Mallard Cove provides a moment in time for Charlotte Somarrriba to thank those men and women who assist the *Asociación Pan y Amor* and the Abrazando Cristo Mission Program through their play in the tournament.

Somarrriba's projects, the *Pan Y Amor* Boys Home and two schools with about 1,000 students in Nicaragua, have been aided for a number of years through this project and the work done by pilgrims who travel to Nicaragua each summer with Msgr. Daniel Torres.

Things have been going very well according to Somarrriba. "The children progress continually," she said. "We began our school year at the end of January. In Nicaragua it goes from February to November with a one-week vacation in June. Between the two facilities we have about 1,400 children.

"The *Pan y Amor* Boarding School provides for children from either poor families or those who come to us from other cities and regions of Nicaragua," she continued.

The original school was started in the market area of the city 13 years ago and goes from three levels of kinder-

garten to the sixth grade. "We are now in our third year in the big school, which was actually loaned to us," Somarrriba said. "We begin pre-school there and go all the way to high school, including three years of technical career training."

This training includes gaining skills in baking, woodworking, and sewing.

"The wood working shop used to be in the boys home but it moved to the big school this year and we added a building," she continued. "It also includes, above the woodworking shop, the tailoring shop. The tailoring shop had been in one of the classrooms but we had to move it to allow for more students."

Things are progressing in many other ways, including six soccer teams. "Finding shoes for all the players is a task," Somarrriba said. "We have a call out to people that when their children outgrow their sport shoes, they can send them to us."

Other advances have also occurred including fifth grade students involved in a book fair, having a dance team invited to participate in a program, and having other children invited to perform in programs.

"Over the weekend we have art classes at the boys

home and they recently took part in an art competition," she said. "We have for several years now but I noticed that their skills were growing much better. Now many of their images were full of detail. There was the outline of a map of the country and included things we are known for such as images corn, the volcanoes, the lakes, the national bird, the national tree, national flower, workers in the fields, and baseball. I looked at these and thought, wow, what a difference."

"When we started the school a big gift for me to see some of these children to be able to color inside the lines of a picture torn from a coloring book," Somarrriba said. "These children are beginning to see what they have and what they can do. Every year we see so much change in these children."

Many of the poor students and parents have a lack of the concept of responsibility, according to Somarrriba. "Up until now the poor's only responsibility was to survive and now there is more. We have a three prong process - work with children where we find them, work with our teachers (many of whom came from where the children came from), and work with parents about their responsibility and how they can

help us as we help their children"

Somarrriba is hoping that she will soon hear from the Archdiocese of Managua about a request to have the schools come under the umbrella of the Church.

"This would help us reinforce the spiritual part of the schools," she said. "We want to build that aspect of the schools, help to impart moral strength to the children."

There is still a tremendous need of funding in all aspects of the organization and many other groups, such as Abrazando Cristo, have come to their aid but so much more is needed.

"We connected with other organizations in Nicaragua years ago and young people came to help us. Those first ones are now in university and their younger brothers and sisters and cousins have come along with their friends.. these groups began and now the first ones are in university and younger brothers and sisters and cousins have come down along with friends."

The major part of the fundraising falls to Somarrriba and if anyone would like to make a contribution, more information can be provided by going to <http://www.es.panyamor.org.ni/> or Google *Asociación Pan y Amor*.



Susan and Johnnie Thibodeaux, Sr., are joined by Charlotte Somarrriba during the annual Johnnie Thibodeaux, Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament which raises funds to aid the Pan y Amor Association in Nicaragua and the Abrazando Cristo Mission Program of the Diocese of Lake Charles. The event honors the memory of the Thibodeaux's son who died in a tragic automobile crash.

## Pearl Cole honored at Black Catholic Congress

LAKE CHARLES -- Pearl Cole, the director of Abraham's Tent, was the recipient of inaugural Servant of God Award given at Black Catholic Congress XI held in Indianapolis recently.

The award was developed by the leadership of the National Catholic Congress to honor someone in individual dioceses who best personified Christian servant-leadership in the African-American Community. Each nominee was to show a servant-leadership that was creative and heroic, self-sacrificing and self-giving and exercised in the Name of Christ, who came "not to be served, but to serve." Bishops of every diocese in the United States were requested to submit the name of such a person.

Cole is a devoted member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church and was a previous recipient of the Caritas Award given by Catholic Social Services of Southwest Louisiana for her efforts. For the past 20 years, she has been steadfast in her work for the poor. Cole has unselfishly cared for hundreds of Louisiana residents who have been afflicted by poverty and displacement.

Abraham's Tent is a community-supported organization ministering to the poor, developed to meet the food needs of the poor



Bishop Glen John Provost, center, presents the inaugural Servant of God Award to Pearl Cole, right, director of Abraham's Tent. The National Black Catholic Congress began the award at its recent Congress XI. At left is Deacon Edward Lavine, coordinator of Black Catholic Ministries in the Diocese.

in Southwest Louisiana and is a collaborative effort of members from Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faith backgrounds. As the leader of this organization, in preparation for effects of Hurricane Rita, Cole prepared care packages for the homeless patrons of Abraham's Tent. Soon after Hurricane Rita passed, she and her

family worked tirelessly to get the food distribution service up and running so that hot meals could be served to the poor. It is said by many that Pearl Cole is a hero who makes all the difference.

In the presentation, by Bishop Terry Steib of Memphis, the award was called, "a small token of the National Black Catholic Con-

gress' gratitude and esteem, and we dare say, the esteem of African American Catholics throughout the country, which look to them with appreciate and gratitude."

It is the intention to continue the tradition of presenting such awards at subsequent National Black Catholic Congresses.

## Diocesan Briefs.....

### Jazz Brunch nets most ever, \$31,400

LAKE CHARLES – The recent Catholic Charities Jazz Brunch netted \$31,400, the most ever achieved for this annual fund raising effort, to support the organization's work of providing for the poor and needy in the five civil parishes of Southwest Louisiana making up the Diocese of Lake Charles.

### Youth 2000 retreat set August 24-26

LAKE CHARLES -- Priests of the Diocese of Lake Charles as well as members of the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Renewal from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico will participate in a YOUTH 2000 Retreat for those ages 13-39 on Friday through Sunday, Aug. 24-26 at St. Louis Catholic High School.

The registration fee of \$50 includes lunch and dinner, each with a drink, on Saturday. Leaving the site for these meals is not an option. Call 337-439-7400, Ext. 301 for more information and registration. Deadline for registration is Friday, August 17. Overnight accommodations are the responsibility of the participants.

### Bishop Provost will speak on Gospel of St. Mark

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost will begin his presentations on the Gospel of St. Mark at the Women's Prayer Luncheon on Wednesday, Sept. 5, and at the Men's Prayer Breakfast on Friday, Sept. 7, in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Office Building.

Men can register by calling 337-439-7400. Women should send a check for \$10, payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles, to Ms. Esther Gallardo, 612 Alamo Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601 at least a week prior to the luncheon. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be included.

### Veritas Conference Saturday Sept. 22

LAKE CHARLES – Dr. Brant Pitre, Professor of Sacred Scripture at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, will be the keynote speaker at the Veritas Catechetical Conference on Saturday, Sept. 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in St. Louis Catholic High School.

For registration forms or more information, contact Bobbie LeBlanc in the Office of Religious Education at 337-439-7400, Ext. 309.

### Life Awareness Program

MOSS BLUFF -- The Life Awareness Program is set for Friday, August 31 to Sunday, September 2 at Tabor Retreat House of Saint Charles Center. The retreat is for single Catholics between the ages of 17-40 contemplating religious life as a priest, sister or brother.

The fee is \$25 for the weekend and scholarship funds are available. It is a weekend of prayer, discussion and discerning with the staff and peers about life as a religious.

Contact Fr. Marcus Johnson at 337-436-8093 or e-mail: [marcus.johnson@lcdioocese.org](mailto:marcus.johnson@lcdioocese.org).

### Mass and Adoration for Healing First Thursdays

HACKBERRY – The Holy Mass and Adoration for Healing will be held on the First Thursday of each month at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church, 1210 Main Street.

## Bishop's Gala tickets available

LAKE CHARLES – Tickets for the inaugural Bishop's Gala, a black tie formal social and dance set for Saturday, Dec. 8, are now available at the Chancery of the Diocese (337-439-7400), 414 Iris Street; Crossroads Bookstore (3370474-7100), 601 West Prien Lake Road; in the parish churches of the Diocese, and online at [lcdioocese.org](http://lcdioocese.org).

Tickets are \$125 each and tables for 10 are \$1,100 each. Only 1,000 tickets will be available.

The Gala will be in the Exhibition Hall of the Lake Charles Civic Center with the doors opening at 6 p.m. and music by the 12-member Tommy Dorsey Orchestra from 8 p.m. to midnight. Proceeds will benefit the efforts of the Office of Com-

munications in evangelizing the Catholic faith through print (Catholic Calendar), television (Glad Tidings), radio (airing of the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass from the Cathedral); and the Diocesan website.

The date of the Gala is also the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, one of the patrons of the Diocese, and will kickoff the 100th

Anniversary of the construction of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the Historic Lake Charles City Hall, and the Central School Arts and Humanities Center.

There will also be a silent auction with many wonderful selections available. Winning bidders will have the ability to use credit cards on site to pay for their items.

## "Beat the Heat" applications still accepted

LAKE CHARLES -- Citizens of Southwest Louisiana, at least 65 years old and/or disabled, can still apply for a window air conditioner from the "Beat the Heat" program facilitated through Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana and assisted by Assembly #22, Fourth Degree Knights of Peter Claver.

"We are still taking applications," said Trish Trejo, Deputy Secretary for Catholic Charities. "They can come from any eligible individual in the parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jefferson Davis." Applicants must call 337-439-7436 to make an appointment and no walk-in applications

are accepted.

Through July, 45 applications were taken and 35 units installed.

Applicants must pass a screening process (including the appointment at Catholic Charities), a home inspection, and have a demonstrable need for the unit. No applicant may have central air

conditioning or more than one window unit already in the home.

Anyone wishing to make a financial contribution can call Catholic Charities at 337-439-7436 or mail a check payable to Catholic Charities of SWLA-a/c Program, 1225 2nd St, Lake Charles LA 70601.

## Did you know...

The first faculty members at J. A. Landry Memorial High School were members of the Christian Brothers. Those men included Brother Manuel, Brother Theodore, Brother Marlin, Brother Benedict, and Brother Benildus. The first principal of Landry was Brother Anselm.

One parish of the Diocese celebrates its anniversary during the month of August with four others established in September. Can you name those five faith communities? See the answer in the next Catholic Calendar.

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

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