



## Inaugural Pro Vita Awards presented at Respect Life Banquet

LAKE CHARLES – At the annual Respect Life Banquet, sponsored by the Office of Pro-Life of the Diocese of Lake Charles, two honors, the newly instituted the Pro Vita Awards recognizing individuals for their work and service to protect the unborn, were given.

In 2016, honors were given in two categories – to youth and adult laity.

Amy Angelle, a 10th grade and parishioner at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Jennings, received the inaugural award for youth. Rickard Newman, director of Pro Life, spoke of the jury's reasons for choosing Angelle. He said, "The jury indicated it felt that Angelle stood out for three important reasons. Her activities are not limited to the church community alone but extend beyond. Her pro-life activities embrace the whole spectrum of the stages of life from conception to death. Her prayerful and loving devotion to Christ and devotion to Our Lady in the Rosary are central to her efforts. She acts and prays, and engages others in action and prayer."

The recipients of the Pro Vita Award for Laymen were Mike and Lee Richard of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Sulphur.

In the citation, the couple was lauded for their many years of involvement in pro-life movement activities. "The range and depth of their engagement is a great testament to their passion to serve," Newman said. "They pray in front of abortion clinics, actively help mothers with crisis pregnancies, and volunteer for Rachel's Vineyard retreats to name a few of the many things they do."

"The jury considers them an excellent example of what a husband and wife can do together in living out and proclaiming their faith in the gospel, by giving back to the Lord with their time, talent, and treasure," Newman concluded.

According to Newman, the basis of these awards is found in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. In the Exhortation, the Holy Father lists a number of principles that are necessary for the mission of the Gospel. "One of these principles, that I men-

tioned in my introductory remarks, is that realities are greater than ideas," Newman said.

"This principle has to do with incarnation of the word and its *being* put into practice. The principle of reality, of a word already made flesh and constantly striving to take flesh anew, is essential to evangelization. It should urge us to put the word into practice, to perform works of justice and charity, which make the word fruitful. To not put the word into practice, to not make it reality, is to build on sand, to remain in the realm of pure ideas and to end up in a lifeless and unfruitful self-centeredness and Gnosticism," Pope Francis wrote.

Ramona Trevino, a former Planned Parenthood manger of an abortion-referral center in Texas told her story of how "40 Days for Life" and her working with the campaign director of the group – Shawn Carney – brought her to a true understanding of what she was doing, even if the facility did not actually perform abortions. She had worked for three years in the facility and this change of heart caused her to resign her position and make her conversion to a fighter for pro-life.

She said that even though the clinic she managed didn't perform surgical abortions, she was struggling 'with her conscience on contraception, abortion and her role in it.'

Trevino said she found it increasingly difficult to provide birth control and contraception to women with multiple sexual partners.

"You send them away with a birth control script, but is that really going to help the problem?" she said. "I know that as long as abortion is legal, women are going to continue to choose that option. Our job as Christians is not to judge that decision, but to help them heal from it."

She is now a spokeswoman for 40 Days for Life in Dallas. Trevino was, at the time, the second Planned Parenthood manager to leave the company following Abby Johnson.



The Office of Pro Life of the Diocese of Lake Charles presented two newly inaugurated awards recognizing individuals for their work and service protecting the unborn at the recent Respect Life Banquet. In the top photo, Amy Angelle, center, a parishioner of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Jennings and a tenth grader, accepts the inaugural Pro Vita Youth award from Bishop Glen John Provost, left, and Rickard Newman, director of the Office of Pro Life, right. In the bottom photo, Michelle Lee accepts the Adult Pro Vita Award on behalf of herself and her husband, Michael from Bishop Provost and Newman. The couple are parishioners of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Sulphur.



Bishop Glen John Provost, center, stands with Rev. Matthew Cormier, Chaplain for the Catholic Committee on Scouting in the Diocese, along with scout leaders and those presented with scouting awards following the celebration of Mass in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

## Catholic Scouting awards given

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost and Rev. Matthew Cormier, Chaplain of the Catholic Committee on Scouting in the Diocese of Lake Charles, presented a number of awards following the conclusion of the celebration of Mass recently in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Awarded the "Light of Christ" were Tyler Simmons and William Fain, Pack 21, Jayce Cooley, Pack 86 and Steven Velasco, Pack 72.

The *Parvuli Dei* medal went to Rory Richard, Pack 83, Mason Thibodeaux, Darren Thibodeaux, Dakota Martin, and Keegan Bertrand, Pack 25, Jacob LaBouve, Pack 59, and Carter Fain, Pack 21.

Alexx Bertrand, Troop 9353, earned the "Ad Altare Dei":

The Family of God award went to Mardee Bertrand and Lillian Ravia

Father Cormier was awarded the Bronze Pelican, which

a diocesan recognition approved by the Catholic Committee on Scouting and Camp Fire given to those who have made a significant contribution to Scouting in the field of religious Catholic relationship. Father Cormier is also Parochial Vicar at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church.

The Light of Christ program was developed by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting under the auspices of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. In order to receive the Light of Christ emblem, the scout must complete all requirements before he starts the third grade.

The *Parvuli Dei* (Children of God) emblem is a recognition that the Catholic Church presents to Cub and Webelo Scouts for advancement in religious knowledge and spiritual formation.

The *Ad Altare Dei* program is designed to equip the Scout to take his place in the world as a maturing Catholic and a maturing American.

## Lenten Regulations

Every Catholic, to enter more deeply into the life of Christ, is to participate in some way in the spiritual and penitential disciplines of Lent. The regulations for the Catholic Church in the United States are as follows: **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.**

The **obligation to abstain** from meat binds Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to **fast**, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals during the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18 to 59. Those younger or older are encouraged to voluntarily embrace these disciplines in so far as they are able.

Divine and Natural Law holds that all the faithful are morally bound to do penance. The Fourth Precept of the Church obliges Catholics to observe the penance of fasting and abstinence for Lent.

Fridays **outside of Lent** are also days of penance and spiritual discipline. Abstaining from meat the **traditional way** of observing these days of penance. The Bishops of the United States have granted permission for abstinence from meat on Fridays **outside of Lent** to be replaced with some other self-denial or personal penance. However, Friday remains a day of some penitential practice. As Bishop Provost stated in a recent pastoral letter: "The idea of sacrificing something is countercultural to the 'throwaway' mentality that plagues us today and of which Pope Francis has time and again warned us" (September 3, 2015).

Fasting and abstinence should never endanger one's health. Avoiding some form of permissible entertainment or performing sacrificial acts of charity, for example, could replace the fasting and abstinence when health is a consideration.

Finally, with any penitential discipline, both the letter and the spirit are to be maintained. For example, replacing meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with penitential practice. Also, the increasingly popular practice of hosting "crawfish boils" and entertainments on Good Friday is highly inappropriate. Good Friday remains an extraordinary and solemn day on which we recall the suffering and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Good Friday should remain a day of fasting, abstinence, prayer, penance, and interior and exterior quiet.

## National Second Collection, Feb. 10

LAKE CHARLES – Churches in the Diocese of Lake Charles will take up the Collection for Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe (CCEE) on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 10. The 2016 Collection will focus on the theme "Restore the Church. Build the Future."

This collection provides aid by the Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe through bishops' conferences of Central and Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union to meet the needs of rebuilding the Church. It focuses on training seminarians and lay leaders, supporting social service programs, youth ministry, pastoral and catechetical centers, schools, church construction and renovation, and evangelization through Catholic media.

The countries in Central

and Eastern Europe have faced many years of hardship. They have been oppressed by czars, radical communism, horrendous crimes against humanity, and revolutionary, civil, and world wars. Under communism, organized religion was opposed in favor of atheism to overthrow the power of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1991, Central and Eastern European countries have been working to rebuild political structures, social welfare, and their economies.

The USCCB Subcommittee on the Church in Central and Eastern Europe funds projects in 28 countries to build the pastoral capacity of the Church and to rebuild and restore the faith in these countries. The funds collected in the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Eu-

rope are used to support seminaries, youth ministry, social service programs, pastoral centers, church construction and renovation, and Catholic communications projects.

Years after the fall of communism, even though some are now European Union citizens, the Catholics of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union still have great needs.

In the predominantly Orthodox Russian Siberia, the Catholic Church makes up just a tiny portion of the faithful population. Yet, many Catholic religious communities from around the globe continue to make their homes in Siberia despite its rural terrain and difficult climate. These communities tirelessly provide necessary care for orphans, the homeless, and families in need.

## ASH WEDNESDAY MASS, MARDI GRAS OFFICE HOURS

LAKE CHARLES -- Bishop Glen John Provost will be the Celebrant of the 12:05 p.m. Mass, with the imposition of ashes, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 10.

The offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 8 and 9 for Mardi Gras. Regular office hours return for the remainder of the week for the Chancery and the Bishop Perry Building (414 and 411 Iris Street) from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the Office of Catholic Schools, 1112 Bilbo Street.





## Father Don Piraro receives Clergy Leadership Award

LAKE CHARLES –Father Don Piraro, Director-emeritus of Saint Charles Center, was named the 2015 winner of the Clergy Leadership Award given by the Bishop Jude Speyrer Chapter of Pontifical Knights and Dames at their annual Christmas luncheon.

The group presents the award in odd-numbered years.

Father Piraro, a Lake Charles native, was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Lafayette in 1967. Father attended local Catholic schools and Immaculata Seminary in Lafayette, receiving a BA in philosophy from Notre Dame Seminary of New Orleans, and did theological studies and graduate work in Graduate English at the Theological College of the Catholic University of America. He earned a Master of Education

from the University of Southwestern Louisiana and a Doctor of Ministry from the Catholic University of America.

Assignments in his early priesthood were varied, initially being named Principal of Hanson Memorial High School in Franklin right after ordination. His first pastorate was at Our Lady of Wisdom Church and the Catholic Student Center at USL, now UL-Lafayette, before returning to the Diocese of Lake Charles only two years after its establishment.

He served a number of roles in the diocese and was instrumental in the establishment of Abraham's Tent, serving as its general chair for nine years.

He had a major role in the design, fundraising and the building of Saint Charles Center in Moss Bluff. He was

named Director of the Center in 1993, helped oversee the construction of the buildings, and served as the Center's leader until his retirement in 2010.

He served as a columnist for the Franklin Banner-Tribune newspaper, the monthly Southwest Catholic, and as a book editor of Priest, a national magazine for Catholic clergy. He is the author of a number of articles published nationally and is a published poet.

New officers introduced included Gayle Zembower, President, Knight of St. Sylvester; Willie Moreno, Vice President/President-Elect, Knight of St. Gregory; Secretary: Gayle Marshall, Knight of Saint Sylvester; and Treasurer, Chester Jones, Knight of St. Gregory.



Father Don Piraro, director emeritus of Saint Charles Center, was honored with the 2015 Clergy Leadership Award by the Bishop Jude Speyrer Chapter of Pontifical Knights and Dames. A Lake Charles native, Fr. Piraro, center, was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Lafayette in 1967. He has served in numerous capacities in both the Lafayette and Lake Charles dioceses. Rev. Archimandrite Herbert May, Chapter Chaplain, left and Gayle Marshall, right present Fr. Piraro with the award plaque.

## Tammy Welch named Distinguished Catholic of Year

LAKE CHARLES – Tammy Welch, a parishioner of St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in Hackberry, was named the "Distinguished Catholic of the Year" by St. Peter Claver Court and Council #168 of St. Henry Catholic Church at the recent Sapphire and Ice Gala fundraiser. Msgr. Daniel Torres, pastor of St. Henry and diocesan Vicar General, made the presentation to Mrs. Welch.

Msgr. Daniel Torres, who introduced the winner during his remarks, pointed out that Ms. Welch, a staff member of St. Peter the Apostle, has been a parishioner there for 56 years. "She is very dedicated, loving, supportive, and a hard worker in her community and church parish," Msgr. Torres said. "Recognized by her community for her devoted love and service to her fellow man, Welch organizes each year's Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for the poor and

needy.

"She takes the youth of the parish to Christmas carol to the sick and elderly, offering them hope during the Christmas season," he continued. "She always makes sure that children who may need help with clothes, food or school supplies are aided. Promoting the values of life, she has accompanied parish youth to the national March for Life to Washington, DC, for the past five years evangelizing the Catholic faith to the nation that "All Life Matters."

Welch worked tirelessly following the hurricanes of Rita in 2005 and Ike in 2008 by helping with cooking, doctoring, and helping firemen, medical personnel, the Office of Emergency Preparedness, and local cattlemen during the after the devastating aftermath of the storms.

"She serves as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, lectors for funerals

and weddings, is director of Religious Education at St. Peter, is involved in the Curial movement, the parish bereavement committee, Legion of Mary, coordinator of Catholic Charities for the parish, and a Confirmation and First Communion teacher," Msgr. Torres continued. Welch has been previously honored for her work with the Devoted Service Medal from the Diocese.

Proceeds from the event will be used to support College-level seminarians studying for the priesthood for the Diocese of Lake Charles and the St. Henry Catholic Church's *Building Bridges* Capital Campaign.

Pastors of the church parishes of the Diocese of Lake Charles were asked to nominate an individual for the award, except for St. Henry since it was serving as a host for the gala.



Bishop Glen John Provost, left, presents the 2015 "Distinguished Catholic of the Year" St. Peter Claver Award to Tammy Welch of St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in Hackberry, middle, with St. Peter the Apostle pastor, Father Gijo Ikkaramattom, H.G.N., at right. St. Peter Claver Council and Court #168 of St. Henry Catholic Church sponsors the award.

## Annual Rite of Election Sunday, February 14, in Cathedral

LAKE CHARLES – The Rite of Election, the recognition of God's choice to call Catechumens for initiation into the Church, will be held at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, February 14, the First Sunday of Lent, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The Most Reverend Glen John Provost will preside and accept and greet those to celebrate all three Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil, March 26.

In previous years, the Bishop also met with the candidates, those previously baptized in another Christian faith who are to be confirmed and receive the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. This year, Bishop Provost will greet the candidates on Sunday, March 6, at 2 p.m. in the Cathedral.

The Rite of Election closes the period of the catechuminate, and begins the preparation for baptism at Easter.

Catechumens who undergo this rite are called the "Elect" during the period of purification and enlightenment.

Two elements are key to the Rite of Election: the inscription of the names of the Elect, and the testimony of godparents and catechists. Testimony occurs in the form of affirmation by the godparents and the assembly. After the catechumens are presented, the Bishop asks the godparents if they consider the candidates worthy for initiation.

This question and answer presumes that some deliberation has taken place prior to this moment. The Rite of Election brings to a ritual moment the decision that these catechumens are ready for baptism.

The inscription is made in the Book of the Elect of the names by which the Elect will be baptized. After the enrollment, the Bishop announces that the catechumens are members of the Elect. All offer prayers on their behalf.

### CORRECTION

St. Louis Catholic High School is the consolidation of three Catholic high schools in the City of Lake Charles – Sacred Heart Catholic High School, St. Charles Academy, and J. A. Landry Memorial High School. Sacred Heart High School was inadvertently omitted from a story on the St. Louis Catholic High Hall of Fame that appeared in the January 22, 2016 Catholic Calendar.



The 148 pilgrims from the Diocese of Lake Charles are shown above praying in front of the United State Supreme Court in Washington, DC, during their recent trip for the National March for Life on the anniversary of the *Roe v Wade* decision by the Court legalizing abortion.

## Diocesan Briefs.....

### *An American Phenomenon, Feb. 28*

LAKE CHARLES - The Lake Charles Kiwanis North will assemble a community choir under the musical direction of Don McZeal and the artistic supervision of Fred Houston to present its 3rd Annual Negro Spiritual and Gospel Sounds: An American Phenomenon at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church 2031 Opelousas in Lake Charles on Sunday, February 28 at 6 p.m.

For more information, contact McZeal at 337-853-2163 or Houston at 337-244-1182.

### *Women's Day of Reflection Feb. 27*

LAKE CHARLES – "The Woman You Were Made to Be," a women's day of reflection will be led by Sr. Camille Martinez, SEC, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in St. Louis Catholic High School on Saturday, February 27.

Open to all women, the day is sponsored by Fleur de Lis Theresians of Southwest Louisiana.

Early registration, by Feb. 20, is \$25 with registrations after that date being \$30.

Call Connie Walker at 337-298-0866 to register or for more information.

### *"Together with Jesus" at Our Lady Queen of Heaven*

LAKE CHARLES -- Together with Jesus, a program created for every Christ-centered married or engaged couple is being presented by Our Lady Queen of Heaven on Mondays - February 15, 29 and March 7, 14, 21, 28 - from 6 to 8 p.m. The event will take place in the Family Life Center Activity Room at 3939 Kingston Street.

Register by going to [www.olqh.org](http://www.olqh.org) by the February 10 deadline.

Call 337-477-1236 for more information.

### *March prayer luncheon, breakfast*

LAKE CHARLES – The March Ladies Luncheon and Men's Prayer Breakfast with Bishop Provost will take place Wednesday, March 2 and Friday, March 4, respectively, in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception of the complex.

Women should send a check for \$15, payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles, to Mrs. Gaynell Carrier, 414 Iris Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601 at least a week prior to the luncheon. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be included.

Mass is celebrated at 6:30 a.m. in the Cathedral before the breakfast. Men should call 337-439-7400 to register.

### *Marriage Preparation class, April 16*

LAKE CHARLES – Openings for the Saturday, April 16, Marriage Preparation class offered by the Office of Family Life of the Diocese of Lake Charles remain.

The class is held from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Chancery of the Diocese, 414 Iris Street. Registration is \$100, which includes the Prepare/Enrich online assessment, lunch, and materials. Registration and payment can be achieved online at [live.lcdiocese.org](http://live.lcdiocese.org) by clicking the Event Registration button, then the Marriage Preparation link.

A registration form can also be printed by looking for Marriage Preparation under the forms link.