



A Pastoral Letter From Bishop Provost

The Solemnity of All Saints

November 1, 2018

My Dear People of God,

In the words of St. Paul, "I give thanks to my God at every prayer for all of you, because of your partnership for the Gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:5).

Indeed your faith, support and steadfastness are a great encouragement to me personally and to all of those who pastor in the Diocese of Lake Charles. Recently, I had the occasion to meet with over 650 young men and women with whom I will celebrate Confirmation during 2019. How encouraging it was to meet them and their sponsors as they begin their immediate preparation for this important Sacrament. We should see this concerted effort as a sign of hope for the Church, for commitment to Jesus Christ is alive and well in the lives of our young people.

For this reason and for many others, the reports of sexual misconduct on the part of clerics have been so disconcerting and disturbing. We must insure that the young are not compromised. When victims of sexual abuse have made themselves known to us, we have done everything in our power to address their needs. Our commitment in this regard will continue, as well as our assurance that every criminal act will be immediately and uncompromisingly reported to the civil authorities. In the past the civil officials have publicly acknowledged our commitment.

I am writing to you, the good and faithful Catholics of the Diocese of Lake Charles, to offer my assurances in three specific areas about which many have inquired. My concern here is to make certain that you are informed of our efforts to reinforce the integrity of clerical ministry in this Diocese.

First, anyone who applies for admission to the seminary is rigorously vetted. During the initial stages of application, each candidate is interviewed intensely about his personal history and motive for seeking acceptance to seminary formation. Following this interview, a number of letters of recommendation are sought to verify the quality of the can-

didate. The prospective seminary student then undergoes a full battery of examinations before being accepted. These include psychological tests, medical examinations, interviews by an admissions committee, and the scrutiny of their autobiography and academic record. Only following this process does the admissions committee and vocation director make a recommendation to me for possible acceptance. To be clear, among the many qualities of his character, we look for evidence of a candidate's ability to live a holy and integrated life, especially in the area of celibate chastity. This application process has been in place for several years and has been modified over the last decade to make it more efficient and thorough.

Second, seminary formation has dramatically improved since the visitation of all seminaries in the United States by a board of examiners from September 2005 to July 2006. These improvements include a greater emphasis on the pillars of formation: spiritual, intellectual, human, and pastoral. Additionally, the Bishops of Louisiana meet with the administration of the two seminaries in the State at least twice a year to review their programs. I also serve on the Board of Governors for the Pontifical North American College in Rome, where we have four men now studying for the priesthood. The administrators of these seminaries give us reports, and we are free to make comments, raise questions and address issues. These are welcomed, and suitable changes are made. The vocation director and I also take time during the year to visit our seminarians at their respective seminaries to receive updates and to make further evaluations. The seminary also presents to us, the bishops, annual faculty assessments and evaluations on each seminarian. These are read and scrutinized. When the seminary makes the final recommendation for ordination, we are certain, to the extent that it is humanly possible, that the man being presented for Holy Orders is indeed spiritually, morally, intellectually, psychologically, and physically fit for Orders. Any man who does not evidence his ability to live a fully integrated priesthood will not be advanced to Holy Orders. We are confident that the three seminaries currently

in use by the Diocese of Lake Charles provide excellent formation for our seminarians. As proof, there are many fine priests currently serving in our diocese.

Third, there are no clerics employed or serving in any assignment in this diocese against whom there is a criminal accusation. Additionally, all clerics serving in the Diocese of Lake Charles have undergone background checks and Safe Environment certification and updating. Anyone knowing of any misconduct by clergy or any employee or volunteer in this Diocese should make a report to the civil authorities and to the designated diocesan official, our Vicar General, Monsignor Daniel Torres (337-439-7400). The Diocese also has a Victims Assistance Coordinator to direct outreach to the abused.

In conclusion, I return to St. Paul. We are in partnership with the Gospel, that same Good News that I saw being proclaimed to our young men and women preparing for Confirmation. May we live up to the highest standards set by Our Lord Himself and share in the gratitude of St. Paul.

We have much for which to be thankful. God has thus far spared our area of the Gulf region from significant storms during this hurricane season. He has also blessed our Diocese with thirteen future priests and many more who are considering a vocation to the priesthood. God has also blessed many in our area with jobs and employment. All of this, and so much more in our parishes, is good news and comes from a gracious God who cares for his people.

With prayers for your intentions and asking Our Blessed Mother to pray for us in our resolve, I remain

Devotedly yours in our Lord,

✠Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Live drama on first African American priest

LAKE CHARLES – *Tolton: From Slave to Priest*, the live theatrical one-man drama performed by actor Jim Coleman and directed by Leonardo Defilippis of Saint Luke Productions, will be presented in the gymnasium at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 8 and 9, beginning at 7 p.m. each day.

Admission will be a free-will offering and the event is being coordinated by Deacon Edward Lavine at edward.lavine@lcdioocese.org or (337) 439-2646.

Tolton: From Slave to Priest is a powerful new live production based on the life of Father Augustus Tolton, the first African American priest in the U.S. This compelling true story of courage,

forgiveness, and reconciliation resonates deeply with modern American audiences. Bishop Joseph Perry of Chicago, postulator for Fr. Tolton's canonization cause, is calling *Tolton* a production that will "inspire a new era of peace, hope and forgiveness in America."

It is a riveting multimedia drama not to be missed, running 75 minutes and suitable for middle school age and older.

To characterize Fr. Augustus Tolton's life as remarkable is an understatement. He was born a slave on a Missouri farm in 1854, and his mother risked everything to reach freedom in Illinois with her three small children. After settling in the town of Quincy, Illinois, the family continued

to experience hardships and prejudice.

In spite of this, he persevered in his deep desire to become a Catholic priest. When every seminary in the United States rejected him, he did not give up, and was finally ordained in Rome. Upon his return to Illinois, Fr. Tolton worked tirelessly to serve people of all races, especially the former slaves who flocked to Chicago.

Fr. Tolton saw the Catholic Church as the antidote to the discrimination and rejection that he experienced in his own life. "It was the priests of the Church who taught me to pray and to forgive my persecutors," he said. "We should welcome all people into the Church, not send them away." At the young age of 43, Fr.

Tolton died after collapsing from heat exhaustion in Chicago. Now his cause for sainthood is moving forward, as more and more people are beginning to recognize the humble perseverance, courage, and compassion of this extraordinary man.

The actor portraying Fr. Tolton, Jim Coleman, is excited and honored to be playing the role. Prior to his acting career, he served in the U.S. Army as a medic.

Having appeared in more than 50 national commercials, Coleman is best known for his role of Roger Parker in the hit Nickelodeon show *My Brother and Me*. "Father Tolton's story needs to be told," he said. "As a black man, this very important part of history is something that I

want the world to hear about. I truly feel blessed to be the one to share Father Augustus Tolton with all who will listen!"

Jim and his wife Robin reside in Florida; they are the proud parents of six children.

For nearly 40 years, Saint Luke Productions has been creating inspiring live dramas, films, radio programming, and more. Their productions on the Gospels and the lives of the saints, including the acclaimed feature film *Thérèse*, have been seen by millions of people worldwide. For more information about Saint Luke Productions, visit www.stlukeproductions.com.



Stage portrayal of Fr. Augustus Tolton

As it happened ...



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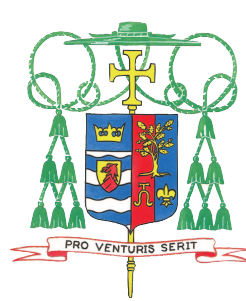


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In photo 1, Bishop Glen John Provost accepts a check for \$2,000.00 from members of St. Peter Claver Council and Court #168 of St. Henry Catholic Church representing a contribution from the organization's 2017 Sapphire and Ice Gala fundraiser. Shown with Bishop Provost are Joseph Bilbo, Deputy Grand Knight, Betty Simon, Grand Lady and John Halloran, Grand Knight. The Louisiana Interchurch Conference held its Fall board meeting at Saint Charles Center. Photo 2 shows Deacon Erroll DeVille officiating at the ecumenical prayer service that took place in the Chapel of the Assumption in Tabor Retreat House at Saint Charles Center. In Photo 3, Bishop Provost spoke to the over 650 young men and women, along with their sponsors, with whom the Bishop will celebrate Confirmation in 2019. The afternoon event was held in the Rosa Hart Theatre of the Lake Charles Civic Center. The Bishop is shown in photo 4 as he began Proclaim Week on the campus of McNeese State University with opening readings from the Book of Genesis. Proclaim Week, sponsored by the Catholic Student Center, had individuals reading 20-minute segments from the Bible, completing it over 100 hours and five days non-stop day and night. In photo 5, Monsignor Daniel Torres is shown with parishioners of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church at the Civic Center Seawall, along with many of the faithful of Southwest Louisiana, taking part in Rosary Around the Lake, sponsored by the Ruth Institute and as part of Rosary Coast to Seawall on Sunday, October 7. Rosaries were prayed throughout the U.S. at the same time seeking Divine Protection, Pardon for Sin, Salvation of Souls, and the Reunion of All Christians. Sponsored by the Office of Religious Education, the Special Needs Mass, photo 6, was celebrated by Bishop Provost in the commons of St. Louis Catholic High School. The Mass is open to all and is offered as an opportunity to worship despite difficulty, embarrassment or frustration



RETURN TO THE LORD CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Cathedral restoration continues



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Work on the restoration and repair of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, made possible by contributions to the *Return to the Lord Capital Campaign*, has continued unabated over the past several months. Moving forward and almost complete is the work beneath the Cathedral – in its crawlspace – where the area has seen removal of rotted soils, debris, abandoned electrical piping, HVAC return air ducts and supply ducts, the grading of soil, installing smooth river rock, high tensile strength water barrier and galvanized reinforcing and the pouring of concrete as a floor, shown in photo 1. Above the floor of the sacristy, photo 2, a room that will hold heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment is being built. Two other similar areas are being constructed within the current wall spaces above the eastern entry to the Cathedral. Photo 3 provides a view of the work being done to bring into the Cathedral refrigerant lines for the HVAC from the mechanical courtyard being constructed at the northwest corner of the rectory parking lot, away from the building to prevent obtrusiveness and unnecessary noise within the Cathedral. Work on the high roof, photo 4, will begin soon with the temporary removal of the clay tiles so as to replace needed wood as well as the felt underlayment, which at about 50 years old is at its life's end. Following this will be the replacement of the clay tiles thus assuring the cessation of leaks in order to allow plaster work to begin inside.

Prayer for Safety in Hurricane Season

The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, has asked that during the hurricane season of 2018 the people of the Diocese of Lake Charles pray the following prayer, composed in 1957 by The Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Second Bishop of Lafayette, following Hurricane Audrey:

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 former 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 on 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

March for Life pilgrimage Jan. 14-19

LAKE CHARLES – The Office of Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Lake Charles is sponsoring a six-day pilgrimage to Washington, DC – January 14 to January 19 – for high school teens and young adults attending the annual March for Life.

Three busloads of Southwest Louisiana pilgrims, including adult chaperones, will join hundreds of thousands of other pro-life supporters to mark the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision, including *Roe v Wade*, that legalized abortion.

Over the course of the trip, pilgrims will visit a few National Shrines, attend daily Mass including a Mass with Bishop Glen John Provost, pray in Adoration for the right to life, visit and pray at the Holocaust Museum, attend a national rally

with thousands of others. They will also participate in a prayer walk in front of the White House and Supreme Court, attend a Geaux Forth Rally with other teens from the State of Louisiana, visit national monuments and museums and most importantly join the thousands in solidarity to Pray and March for Life in front of our nation's capital.

The cost of the pilgrimage is \$625, which includes travel, lodging, most meals, scarf, hat, bag, journal and entry fees into various events and sites.

A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is due with the registration form, which can be completed online or in paper form for each person making the pilgrimage. Paying the deposit or the entire cost can be done safely using a credit card or an e-check online at lcdiocese.org

by clicking the Event Registration button.

Any payment balance for the pilgrimage must be paid by Monday, December 17. There will be an informational meeting that day beginning at 6 p.m. in the Diocesan Chancery Administration Building, 414 Iris Street.

Spaces for the pilgrimage are reserved on a first come, first serve basis. A spot will not be held without the non-refundable deposit and registration forms turned in to the Office of Youth Ministry, 411 Iris Street. Those considering taking part in this faith-filled journey should act quickly to reserve a seat.

Group leaders should contact Caroline Matt at 337-439-7400, Extension 301, or Milissa Thibodeaux at youth.ministry@lcdiocese.org with any questions.

Two editions of the Catholic Calendar will be published next month, Dec. 7 and Dec. 21.

The Offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 22-23. Regular office hours will be observed on other days during that week.

Diocesan Briefs.....

Events at Saint Charles Center

MOSS BLUFF — The schedule of remaining programs for 2018 at Saint Charles Center opens with "The History of the Mass: From the Breaking of the Bread to the Holy Eucharist" with Deacon Brian Soileau on Tuesday, November 20, from 6 to 9 p.m.

The suggested donation is \$20 with a registration deadline of today, Friday, November 16.

A Men's Spiritual Exercises Retreat presented by the Legionaries of Christ and *Regnum Christi* will be held Thursday, November 29, to Sunday, December 2. For more information about this retreat contact Michael Istre at 337-515-7164, email michaelwistre@gmail.com, or call 337-855-1232.

Two events will conclude the Fall season - "Silencing the Christians" with Sr. Diane Depwe on Tuesday, December 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. and Advent Penance Night at Saint Charles Center on Tuesday, December 18, from 5 to 7 p.m.

The suggested donation for "Silencing the Christians" is \$20 with a registration deadline of Friday, November 30.

There is no need to call for pre-registration for the Penance Night and there will be a number of area priests available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Chapel of the Assumption.

For additional information on any of these events or future programs e-mail michelle.monceaux@lcdiocese.org, deborah.faul@lcdiocese.org, or call 337-855-1232.

St. Henry to conclude anniversary year

LAKE CHARLES -- St. Henry Catholic Church's 60th Anniversary Year will close on the final Sunday of the Liturgical Year, November 25, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

"This celebration will be a moment devoted entirely to prayer," Father Matthew Cormier, pastor, said. "It will begin at 3 p.m., the hour of Our Lord's death on the Cross, with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a Holy Hour in the Church."

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed from 3 to 4 p.m., during which time the Sacrament of Confession will be available, in both English and Spanish, according to Father Cormier.

At 4 p.m., a Eucharistic Procession will move from the church, south on Eighth Avenue, then east on Third Street, then north on Ninth Avenue, west on Second Street, and finally south on Eighth Avenue, processing back into the church for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

"This procession will be an opportunity for us to publicly demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ and our love for His Eucharistic Presence," Father Cormier said. "It will also be a moment when Our Lord, in the Blessed Sacrament, blesses the Church grounds, buildings, and neighborhood with His

Presence."

Mass for the Solemnity of Christ the King begins at 5 p.m.

Part-time staff opening at St. Martin de Porres

LAKE CHARLES – St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church is seeking to staff its Youth Ministry Program on a part-time basis.

The individual or team would set goals and objectives; plan and execute youth ministry programs; keep current on youth ministry trends and issues by attending diocesan youth ministry meetings; maintain relational ministry with teens; communicate with church staff and advertise youth events; plan and implement parish youth activities that foster spiritual growth and fellowship.

The successful candidate should: be a prayerful, practicing Catholic who knows the Christian message and Catholic teachings; be a witness to the faith; be a participant in a Catholic faith community and be prepared to worship at St. Martin de Porres; and have prior training and/or experience in working with youth of middle school and high school age.

For application and full job description, contact Denise Donahoe at 337-478-3845 or ddonahoe@smdpcatholic.com

Pilgrimage to Italy in 2019

LAKE CHARLES — Visit Rome, Monte Cassino, San Giovanni Rotondo, Lanciano, Manoppello, Loreto, Tolentino, Assisi, Orvieto, Florence, Padua, and Venice with Spiritual Director Father Rommel Tolentino, on September 16-27, 2019.

The 12-day pilgrimage is \$3879 per person with double occupancy. The price includes round trip airfare from Houston, \$450 government taxes and airline surcharges, accommodations in first class hotels, most meals, comprehensive sightseeing, daily Mass, and more.

For a brochure and more information, call 337-436-7251 or email rommel.tolentino@lcdiocese.org. Space is limited!

Holy Spirit Women's Retreat

LAFAYETTE — Msgr. David Toups, Deacon Larry and Andi Oney will be featured at the annual Holy Spirit Women's Retreat Jan. 25-27, 2019, at the DoubleTree by Hilton.

The prophetic theme is "For Such a Time as This." The liturgies, music, prayer, teaching and fellowship will bring encouragement to all those who love the Lord and the Church.

Msgr. Toups is Rector of St. Vincent Seminary in Florida and Spiritual Director for Magnificat Ministry to Catholic Women. He writes and speaks out of his deep love for God and his profound faith.

Deacon Larry and Andi Oney will be leading an Empowerment Service Saturday night. Their preaching ministry has brought them around the world, most recently to Poland and Canada.

Patti Mansfield will be teaching on Spiritual Warfare and

Janice Charbonnet on the Feminine Genius. This retreat is sponsored by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of New Orleans (CCRNO) and has been serving hundreds of women from the Gulf South since 1988.

Weekend and Saturday commuters are welcome. Early bird savings until noon December 3. Register online at www.ccrno.org or call (504) 828-1368.

Center for Catholic Studies class schedule

LAKE CHARLES -- Father Ruben Villarreal, Ph.L., J.C.L., will lead Introduction to Philosophy in November and December at the Center for Catholic Studies at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church, 221 Aqua Drive, according to the Office of Religious Education and the Office of Adult Education of the Diocese of Lake Charles.

Father Villarreal's class will take place on Mondays November 5, 12, 26 and December 3, 10, 17 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., and is described as follows: What is philosophy? And how can it help us to better understand God, the world around us, and ourselves as human beings? How can it help us make heads or tails of what we hear in the news, and how can it help us strike that important balance between our emotions and our reason? This introduction to philosophy will explain what philosophy is by showing philosophy in action - as it helps to clarify our thoughts and to rid us of confused or even odd notions about God, the world around us, and ourselves. According to Father Villarreal, "If you would like to take this course, are a current college student and/or need financial assistance, please register by calling the Office of Religious Education at 337-439-7400, Extension 308."

Father Nathan Long will teach on the Letters of St. Paul during the months of January and February while Paula Hunter will teach Theology of the Body & Interior Life during March and April.

Cost is \$50 per person for each course. Click here to register online. For more information, or to be placed on a list for future announcements, call 337-439-7400, Extension. 308 or e-mail marlie.mudd@lcdiocese.org.

Pontifical Mass schedule announced

LAKE CHARLES — Bishop Glen John Provost will celebrate a Pontifical Mass in the Extraordinary Form on Friday, Dec. 28, the Feast of the Holy Innocents, at 5:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

The schedule of pontifical masses in the Cathedral during 2018 has also been set - Thursday, August 1, Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest, 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 29, Sunday in the Octave of Christmas, 11:15 a.m.