



## Veritas 2024 will feature Father Aquinas on Sept. 21

LAKE CHARLES — The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Catholic *Veritas Conference* in the Diocese of Lake Charles will feature Father Aquinas Guilbeau, OP, as keynote speaker on Saturday, September 21. A native of Carencro, La., Father Aquinas is a friar of the Dominican Province of Saint Joseph. He is Vice President of Mission and Ministry for Catholic University of America where he also serves as University Chaplain.

*Veritas*, which is Latin for Truth, will take place at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Family Life Community Center, 3939 Kingston Street, with doors opening at 8:00 a.m.

This year's theme is "The Life of Virtue." St. Thomas Aquinas, namesake for Father Aquinas, wrote extensively and insightfully on the concept of human nature and the virtues.

The conference is an event for all adult Catholics, consisting of keynote addresses, breakout sessions, prayer, lunch and vendors. It begins with Mass at 8:30 a.m. in Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, 3939 Lake Street, followed by the Welcome and Keynote at 9:30 a.m. in the Community Center.

Father Aquinas is an accomplished scholar and preacher, completing his doctorate of theology on the "common good" at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. Before his appointment at CUA, Father Aquinas taught moral theology at the Dominican House of Studies and has worked for several Catholic media outlets, including Aleteia.org and EWTN Radio.

He will put the concept of virtue in easy-to-understand terms and offer practical advice on how to grow in virtue and grow nearer to God.

In addition to the keynote, other highlights include breakout sessions by local clergy and lay presenters. Returning this year will be two sessions in Spanish. Another returning favorite will be exhibits by local Catholic organizations, artists, and businesses.

Breakout session presenters include:

- **Father Edward Richard, M.S., V.F.** — speaking on the topic of virtue. Father Richard is Pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church in Sulphur and Dean of the West Deanery.
- **Father Jeffrey Starkovich** — helping us understand how to speak to young people about virtue and moral living. Father Starkovich is Pastor of St. Pius X Catholic Church in Ragley.
- **Father D.B. Thompson, JCL** — presenting in Spanish. Father Thompson will cover Angelology. He is Promoter of Justice and serves as a judge in the Office of Tribunal.
- **Canon Jean-Marie Moreau** — speaking on the Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. St. Francis is one of three co-patrons of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, of which Canon Moreau is a member. Canon Moreau is Rector of St. Francis de Sales Oratory in Sulphur.

• **Father Levi Thompson** — presenting in Spanish. Father Thompson is Parochial Vicar at St. Henry Catholic Church and Chaplain of the Hispanic Ministry for the Diocese of Lake Charles.

• **Deacon Brian Soileau** — speaking on the Closeness of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration. Deacon Soileau is Director of Saint Charles Center and Camp Karol.

• **Ann Vincent** — We pray, we ask and struggle to hear Him give the answer. "Lord, can you write that down?" Bringing her insight from a lay perspective, Ann has been married 26 years and is a mother to five children ranging in ages 24 to 17. She is a parishioner of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

• **Justin Sittig** — speaking on the topic of Virtue of Religion. Justin is the father of three children and has been married for five years. He is a parishioner of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church.

Follow the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lake Charles Facebook page for updates on breakout session speakers.

Online registration is \$30 per person through August 31 and \$40 per person September 1 through noon September 20. On-site registration will be available at the door on the day of the event.

To register online, visit <http://www.lcdioocese.org/resources/event-registration> and click on Veritas Conference. Registration forms are also available in the parishes of the Diocese of Lake Charles and at the Office of Religious Education, 1201 Ryan Street, Lake Charles.

Cash (when paying in person) and check payments are accepted with paper registration. Call 337-439-7400, Ext. 200 or email [veritas@lcdioocese.org](mailto:veritas@lcdioocese.org) for more information. Please note that registration is non-refundable.

A limited number of box lunches may be purchased separately for \$7.00 per lunch, which are pre-purchase only.

The conference schedule, which is subject to change, is as follows:

- 8:00 a.m. — Doors open, Registration and Exhibits in Our Lady Queen of Heaven Community Life Center, 3939 Kingston Street
- 8:30 a.m. — Mass in Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, 3939 Lake Street
- 9:30 a.m. — Welcome and Keynote: Father Aquinas Guilbeau, OP, Community Life Center
- 10:45 a.m. — Break and Exhibits
- 11:15 a.m. — Breakout Session I
- 12:00 p.m. — Lunch and Exhibits
- 1:10 p.m. — Drawings for door prizes
- 1:15 p.m. — Keynote: Father Aquinas Guilbeau
- 2:30 p.m. — Breakout Session II
- 3:30 p.m. — Conclusion



Father Aquinas Guilbeau, OP  
Keynote Speaker

### Prayer for Protection during Hurricane Season

Bishop Provost has asked that during the Hurricane Season of 2024, the faithful 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 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, 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.*

### Grief to Grace Retreat

MOSS BLUFF — Saint Charles Center will host a "Grief to Grace" Retreat or anyone who has suffered degradation or violation through physical, emotional, sexual, or spiritual abuse. The five-day spiritual and psychological retreat will take place Tuesday through Saturday, September 24-28, at Tabor Retreat House of Saint Charles Center, 2151 Sam Houston Jones Parkway.

Grief to Grace is appropriate for those who have endured sexual abuse, rape, incest, or other forms of traumatic violation in childhood, adolescence, or as an adult. This retreat provides a process for helping victims of abuse to discover spiritual healing and transformation. Grief to Grace was created to end the isolation and secrets of abuse within a healing process that is fully centered upon the person and presence of Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician. It provides a model of care that is therapy for the soul.

Cost of the retreat program is \$1,500, which includes lodging, food, and materials. You may pay the entire amount at the time of registration, or pay a \$750 deposit and then pay the remaining \$750, when your application is confirmed or at a time prior to the start of the retreat. There may also be scholarships available. To register, call Mrs. Marjorie Long at 337-489-2473.

### New Life Counseling Pro-Life Banquet

LAKE CHARLES — New Life Counseling will celebrate its 40th anniversary during their annual Pro-Life Fundraising Banquet planned Tuesday, October 8, in the Lake Charles Event Center, 900 Lakeshore Drive. Keynote speaker will be Dr. George Delgado, founder of the life-saving Abortion Pill Reversal (APR). Dr. Delgado is president of The Steno Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to pro-life research, especially focusing on abortion pill reversal that allows women a second chance to continue their pregnancy.

For more information on tickets, sponsorship opportunities, or to donate silent auction items, contact New Life Counseling at 337-474-7003 or email [tabitha@nlcps.org](mailto:tabitha@nlcps.org).

## Father Michael Barras died July 7

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Rev. Michael J. Barras, 76, on Friday, July 12, from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in downtown Lake Charles at the corner of Bilbo and Kirby streets. The Most Reverend Glen John Provost was the Main Celebrant with Reverend Whitney Miller as the Homilist. Father Barras, a retired priest of the Diocese of Lake Charles, died on Sunday, July 7. Burial followed in Highland Memory Gardens, 6325 Common Street.

Born to Emile Mitchell Barras, Sr. and Therese Celine Pellerin Barras on October 20, 1947 in Lake Charles, he was educated at Immaculate Conception Catholic School and Landry Memorial High School before entering Immaculata Seminary in Lafayette in 1961. He entered St. Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, Indiana where he earned a BA in Classical Studies in 1969. He obtained his Theological education at Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, graduating in 1973 with a Master of Divinity.

Bishop Gerard Frey, Bishop of Lafayette, ordained Father Barras on May 19, 1973 in St. John the Evangelist Cathedral in Lafayette.

He celebrated his first Mass on May 20, 1973 at St. Martin Catholic Church in St. Martinville and celebrated Mass in his home parish of Immaculate Conception in Lake Charles on May 27, 1973.

Assignments over his priestly service have included

Associate Pastor at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church, St. Martinville; Assumption Catholic Church, Franklin; St. Ann Catholic Church, Mamou; Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, Lake Charles; Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception; and Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Lake Charles.

He was Pastor to St. Paul Catholic Church, Elton, as Administrator of St. Joseph Catholic Church also in Elton and later pastor to St. Joan of Arc in Oberlin.

He was In Residence at St. John Bosco Catholic Church in Westlake and Chaplain for West Calcasieu Cameron Hospital, Sulphur.

During his priestly service, Father Barras has served as a member of the clergy welfare committee of the Diocese of Lake Charles as well the clergy personnel advisory board and the committee on continuing education for clergy. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Father Barras was a third generation priest following the first Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, The Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard (born 1879) and Msgr. Jules A. Jeanmard (born 1913). An interesting point, each of the trio was born 34 years apart.

*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*



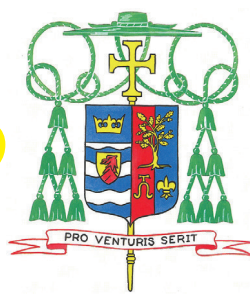
Rev. Michael J. Barras

### Labor Day Office Closure

The offices of the Diocese of Lake Charles will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2, in celebration of Labor Day, reopening at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 3, for regular office hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Summer hours on Fridays, which began on the Friday following Memorial Day, will conclude on Friday, August 30.

The next *Catholic Calendar* will be published on Friday, Sept. 20.



## Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass honors 37 couples

By Pamela Seal  
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES — The annual Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass honored 74 spouses Sunday, May 26 — the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity — in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

For a combined 1,910 years of marriage, 37 couples registered for the Mass and reception hosted by the Office of Marriage and Family Life.

Couples marking jubilee anniversaries of 25, 50, 55, 60, and 65 years in 2024 received a special blessing by The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles. He also blessed their wedding rings as each husband and wife stood facing each other.

“I think there is an important connection between the unity of the Trinity and the commitment a man and woman make in the Sacrament of Marriage,” said Bishop Provost.

“The love of the Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — is so genuine, true, lasting and binding that it reveals the Unity of the Three Persons of the Trinity,” he continued. “Human beings are made for love, because God made them, and He is love.”

“Like the Trinity, we exist for love,” the bishop said. “The union of husband and wife in Sacramental Marriage is a precious gift, celebrating the vocation of love lived out in a union of heart, mind, and soul.”

Among the couples honored during the Jubilee Anniversary Mass, several are celebrating 65 years of marriage, serving as a testament to their vocation of love lived out through Holy Matrimony.

• **Leroy and Joetta LaPointe** were married on August 1, 1959, in Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church in Lake Arthur by Rev. Fernand Gouaux. Theirs was the first wedding for Father Gouaux to officiate at Our Lady of Lake.

Having raised five children, the LaPointes are blessed with a growing family of six grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

Leroy (85) and Joetta (83) have this advice for young couples just starting out in marriage: “Always be sensitive to your spouse’s feelings in any situation, and always show love.”

A special way the LaPointes share their love — side by side — is through their prayer life together, made even more special with a room in their house created specifically for this purpose.

“When I came home from my Cursillo retreat in 2003, I asked Leroy to build a prayer room in our home,” said Joetta, noting that Leroy had made his Cursillo in 1970. “After the beautiful prayer room was built, we had it blessed, and that is where we share our prayers to the Lord side by side. I treasure that room. Leroy even made a kneeler and large cross.”

• **Melvin and Louetta LeBlanc** exchanged wedding vows on June 1, 1959, in St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Hathaway by Rev. Gerard Koppel, O.S.B.

“Marriage can’t be all for one,” said Melvin, who is 93. “Marriage must be give-and-take.”

Louetta, 87, advises newlyweds to always pray together — something she and Melvin do together as often as possible by going to daily Mass. It is one of the ways they are helping each other get to Heaven.

“Our Catholic faith has always been something we agree on, and we have grown together in our faith during 65 years of marriage,” said Louetta. In that time, the couple has been blessed with three daughters and four grandchildren.

Longtime members of the East Deanery Serra Club, Melvin and Louetta are doing their part to help foster vocations to the priesthood. Melvin said he is inspired by his wife’s faithfulness to prayer.

“Every day she prays her rosary and says her morning prayers. I try to do that also,” he said.

• **John and Joyce Vaughan** were married on January 17, 1959, in St. Paul Catholic Church in Elton by Rev. William Frantzen, the same priest who officiated the wedding of Joyce’s parents. Today they are parishioners of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Sulphur.

Joyce’s devotion to her Catholic faith played an important part in her husband joining her at Mass after many years.

“After 55 years of marriage, I started attending Mass with my wife,” said John. “After attending for three years, Deacon Bud Wagner and Father (Aubrey) Guilbeau were instrumental in my conversion to Catholicism so I could fully participate in the Mass.”

Now that they are retired, the Vaughans attend daily Mass together several times a week and assist in various ministries wherever needed.

Having raised two children and now the grandparents of two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, they have some advice for couples just starting out in the vocation of marriage.

Joyce had this to say: “Marriage is commitment and a job. Working together, good communication, and setting a budget that you both can manage with your income is very important.”

John added: “Help your wife with activities around the house. Have patience while adjusting to marriage.”

Those celebrating milestone anniversaries in 2024 are:

### 25 YEARS

- Octave and Gwenna Allen, St. Joseph, DeRidder
- Robert and Andrea Boutte, St. Henry, Lake Charles
- Tracy and Marissa Hudson, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lake Charles
- Keagan and Melanie Lefeune, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles
- Chad and Heather Tregle, Christ the King, Lake Charles



Several couples celebrating 65 years of marriage were honored during the annual Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass on Sunday, May 26, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Joining Bishop Provost are, from left, Leroy and Joetta LaPointe of Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church; John and Joyce Vaughan of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Sulphur; and Melvin and Louetta LeBlanc of St. Lawrence Catholic Church. Not pictured are Joseph and Marlene Guillory of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Lake Charles.

### 50 YEARS

- Anthony and Wanda Dourousseau, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lake Charles
- David and Theresa Foreman, St. Raphael, Iowa
- James and Joshlyn Foreman, St. Raphael, Iowa
- Joseph and Cheryl Governale, St. Joseph, DeRidder
- Hoyo and Susan Graves, Immaculate Conception, Sulphur
- Vincent and Paulette Lupo, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles
- Charles and JoLynn Marcantel, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles
- David and Simone Marcantel, Our Lady Help of Christians, Jennings
- Alexis and Annie Morrow, St. Joseph, Vinton
- James and Janis Pauley, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles
- Oliver and Donna Richard, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles

### 55 YEARS

- Leonard and Linda Arsement, St. Raphael, Iowa
- Mitchell and Glenda Dickerson, St. Raphael, Iowa
- Art and Dot Gellner, Immaculate Conception, Sulphur
- Terry and Barbara Hanks, Immaculate Conception, Sulphur
- James and Loretta Inman, St. Theodore, Moss Bluff
- Michael and Susan Jones, St. Raphael, Iowa

- Robin and Linda Mathis, St. Theodore, Moss Bluff
- Abraham and Florence McCleon, St. Joan of Arc, Oberlin
- Allen and Anna Thibodeaux, St. Margaret of Scotland, Lake Charles

### 60 YEARS

- Richard and Caren Dore, St. Martin de Porres, Lake Charles
- Wayne and Ruby Guidry, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Lake Charles
- Jerry and Sandra Hebert, St. Raphael, Iowa
- Bernette and Glenda Jardell, Immaculate Conception, Sulphur
- David and Sharon Phillips, Christ the King, Lake Charles
- Edward and JoAnne Richard, St. Margaret of Scotland, Lake Charles
- George and Pam Veron, St. Martin de Porres, Lake Charles
- Phil and JoAnn Watkins, Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Welsh

### 65 YEARS

- Joseph and Marlene Guillory, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Lake Charles
- Leroy and Joetta LaPointe, Our Lady of the Lake, Lake Arthur
- Melvin and Louetta LeBlanc, St. Lawrence, Raymond
- John and Joyce Vaughan, Immaculate Conception, Sulphur

## Lay Carmelite Community installs 2024-2027 council

By Pamela Seal  
Diocese of Lake Charles

The installation for the 2024-2027 Council Members of the St. Therese Little Flower Lay Carmelite Community #1916 took place on Saturday, April 6, at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church in Lake Charles.

The Lay Carmelite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Third Order) is an association of lay persons — men and women from all walks of life — who exhibit a love and commitment for the Carmelite Order and for Our Lady.

Rev. Josh Page, Spiritual Assistant for the Community, installed the following council members to serve a three-year term:

- Jeanne LeBato, Director
- Debbie Habetz, Formation Director
- Ruth McDaniel, Secretary
- Marie Davidson, Treasurer
- Dale and Ainsley DeSonier, Sick and Homebound Ministry

Not to be confused with members of an organization or a club, Lay Carmelite members have chosen to live out their baptismal commitment according to the spirit of the Carmelite Order.

The director, Jeanne LeBato, has been a member for 15 years and credits Ainsley DeSonier for inviting her to a Carmelite meeting in the Fall of 2009.

“As I sat in that meeting

‘falling in love’ with the Carmelite way of life, this was the ‘something more’ I needed to settle the restlessness within me,” said Jeanne who made her final profession on March 13, 2016.

“The quietness of contemplative prayer, the Spirit of common bonds in community, the call to service wherever we are in daily life, the breaking open of spiritual writings of the Carmelite Saints all immediately ministered to my soul,” she said. “My cup was being filled so I could go out and pour into others.”

St. Therese Little Flower Carmelite Community is made up of members from throughout the Diocese of Lake Charles who meet monthly for community and formation.

The Order is named after a mountain range in the Holy Land called Mount Carmel where Elijah’s contest with the prophets of Baal took place. The main Carmelite models are Elijah and Our Blessed Mother.

Being a Lay Carmelite is not just a devotion, but rather a vocation. By entering the Order, the Lay Carmelite takes upon him/herself the Carmelite charism of prayer, community, and service to others.

Jeanne said her prayer life has deepened through contemplation.

“From the teachings of

Carmelite doctors of our Church such as the simple childlike way of St. Therese to the complex writings of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, to the zeal of Elijah, to the Fiat of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, I have learned so much regarding personal and communal prayer life that has assisted me in ways I had not known before.”

With a focus on virtuous service to others, Jeanne said she has been strengthened through the Lay Carmelite Third Order allowing her to “be still and know that He is God” in all areas of her life.

Several goals for the Lay Carmelite include:

- Participate in daily celebration of the Eucharist when possible
- Spend about a half hour in meditation each day reflecting on scripture
- Pray the Liturgy of the Hours — Morning and Evening Prayer — in union with the Church throughout the world
- Spend time doing spiritual reading weekly
- Attend monthly community meetings and other periodic community activities
- Wear the Brown Scapular daily as a sign of dedication to Mary, trust in her mother protection, and as an expression of one’s commitment to live in allegiance to Christ by serving others. Those who wear the Scapular are called to be interiorly clothed with Christ

### “Come and See” planned Sept. 17

The St. Therese Little Flower Lay Carmelite Community in Lake Charles invites all men and women 17 and older to join them for a “Come and See” meeting to introduce the charism of Carmel. The meeting is planned for Tuesday, September 17, from 6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. in the old Adoration Chapel at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, 3939 Lake Street, on the feast day of St. Albert of Jerusalem, a Carmelite. For more information, contact Debbie Habetz, Formation Director, at 337-540-8148.

and to show in their lives his saving presence for the Church and for humanity.

The St. Therese Little Flower Lay Carmelite Community meets on the first Saturday of each month. Jeanne invites anyone who is searching for a way to find a

quiet sense of peace within their soul to discern if this is a vocation that God is calling you to.

“If you feel called to follow the charisms of contemplation, community, and service, I invite you to take the time to visit one of

our community meetings.”

Lay Carmelites must be at least 17 years old and be a Catholic in good standing. For more details on the formation process, contact Debbie Habetz, Formation Director, at cdhabetz@yahoo.com.



The 2024-2027 St. Therese Little Flower Lay Carmelite Community Council members are, from left, Jeanne LeBato, Director; Dale DeSonier and Ainsley DeSonier (in front), Sick and Homebound Ministry; Ruth McDaniel, Secretary; Debbie Habetz, Formation Director; and Marie Davidson, Treasurer; with Rev. Josh Page, Spiritual Assistant for the Council.