



Vocations & Seminarians Newsletter

AUGUST 18, 2005

DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE

*"...Whoever opens
his heart to Christ
will not only
understand the
mystery of his own
existence, but also
that of his own
vocation; he will
bear the abundant
fruit of grace."*

Pope John Paul II

Father Matt's Letter

Dear Seminarians,

This is the first issue of a new monthly newsletter from the Office of Vocations and Seminarians. It is not intended to be the only source of communication between us, but it will at least provide a means for sending out news and information on a regular basis. I also hope to use it to offer reflections on different aspects of the priesthood and our shared desire to serve God in the Church.

My transition to this new ministry continues to go well as I learn more about all of you and some of the activities in which you have been involved this summer. I am forming relationships with the staff who work in the various offices of the Chancery, reestablishing friendships with the rectors of our two regional seminaries, visiting with the priests who witness to vocations on the front lines of our parishes and schools, making initial contact with members of the Serra Club and other benefactors who support us in this ministry, and finally reaching out via telephone, email, and personal interview with those individuals who have recently expressed interest in the priesthood.

Similar to new L.S.U. football coach Les Miles, I feel blessed to have inherited a group of men with the amount of talent and depth such as that which exists in you, our current group of seminarians. I am very grateful to Father Jeff Bayhi and Sister Dianne Heinrich for devoting such great effort to this ministry over the past ten years. I am also very appreciative of the cooperative spirit shown by Sister Lucy Silvio, CSJ, our new assistant director of seminarians, as well as the kind assistance offered by Ms. Mona George, our office secretary.

My recent experience of saying goodbye to the parishioners of St. Jean Vianney Parish has reminded me that effective priestly ministry is all about relationships. As we grow in our capacity for establishing bonds of friendship and community with our parishioners, we find our work infinitely more satisfying, and our goodbyes increasingly more difficult. I found this most recent farewell to be very difficult even after just four years as pastor due to the realization that I have grown in my ability to invest myself in life of my parish community.

People enjoy being greeted by name when they arrive for Mass on Sunday. It may seem like a daunting task at first, but beginning with the liturgical ministers who serve at the Masses, and continuing with each baptism and wedding, priests slowly begin to recognize the faces and learn the names and family relationships of their parishioners. Likewise through our homilies and bulletin letters, we slowly reveal ourselves to them in order that we might truly become a community.

(continued)

My sadness over the loss of my parish family has gradually given way to excitement in regard to this new role and ministry. I have a great deal of listening and reading to do in order to become more familiar with the particular dynamics of this assignment, but I have already made significant progress in articulating a vision for myself concerning the growth of this ministry. Crafting a vision is a very important first step in any endeavor for the vision invites participation, builds unity, generates excitement, and sets the direction for the ministry.

Please keep me in your prayers as I go through the learning process during this first year, and be assured of my prayers for all of you as you resume your studies and reflect on your pastoral experiences of this past summer. I look forward to visiting you soon at the seminaries and becoming a part of the fraternity which we now share with one another.

In Christ,

Father Matt

A Letter of Introduction from Sister Lucy Silvio

Dear Seminarians,

I look forward to working with you and with Father Matt in the role that Sister Dianne Heinrich had for many years as Assistant Director of Seminarians.

Until we can meet face to face, let me introduce myself. I am a Sister of St. Joseph from Baton Rouge, although most of my prior ministries of education, community leadership, initial formation, spiritual direction and retreat work have been in Harahan, New Orleans and Cincinnati. Presently, I am serving in three part-time ministries: as Associate Director of the St. Joseph Spirituality Center, as Mission Effectiveness Director at St. Joseph's Academy and as Pro-Vicar for Religious for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. These ministries are possible because they are beautifully interrelated and I might add, geographically close to each other.

On a more personal note, my Myers-Briggs' profile is INFJ (introvert, intuitive, feeling, judging). My educational background in spirituality has come by way of the Jesuit Spirituality Center in Grand Coteau and Creighton University, with my key area of interest and practice being discernment. And I am very happy to be back in Baton Rouge since returning here in February 2002 after a wonderful sabbatical time with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Orange, California.

Please feel free to contact me. You can reach me at 225-383-3349 (Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.) and at 225-387-0561 (Fridays). My e-mail addresses are lucysilvio@aol.com OR lsilvio@diobr.org.

In Christ,

Sister Lucy Silvio

*National Vocation
Awareness Week:*

- Jan. 9-15, 2006

*World Day for
Consecrated Life:*

- Feb. 5, 2006

*World Day of Prayer
for Vocations:*

- May 7, 2006

*"If not us,
who?
If not here,
where?
If not now,
when?
If not for the
Kingdom,
why?
Dare the dream."*

August 27th Mass & Barbecue for Seminarians

All priests and seminarians of the Diocese of Baton Rouge are cordially invited to attend the annual Bishop's Barbecue to be held Saturday, August 27, 2005, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Plaquemine. The Vigil Mass begins at 4:00 p.m. followed by a social and supper. Bishop Robert Muench will be the main celebrant, assisted by Father Cleo Milano and the Baton Rouge seminarians. Seminarians are reminded to wear coat and tie for the Mass and for the official photographs to be taken by Ms. Laura Deavers immediately following the Mass. The dress code for the remainder of the evening is casual.

We realize that many of the priests will not be able to attend due to Saturday afternoon responsibilities in their parishes, but we invite those who are able to please join us for dinner after the celebration of their parish Vigil Masses. A different location is chosen for this gathering each year in order to facilitate attendance by the priests of the different regions. Many thanks to Father Cleo Milano and the parishioners of St. John the Evangelist for hosting this year's Mass and supper. Priests and seminarians are reminded to RSVP no later than Thursday, August 24, in order to assist with the preparations. The telephone number of St. John Church is 225-687-2402.

New Date Set for Mass with Parents

The annual Mass and lunch for the seminarians and their parents has been rescheduled for Saturday, December 3, 2005, at 10:30 a.m. in St. Joseph Chapel of the Tracy Center. A light lunch will be served in the Borders Dining Room following the Mass.

This gathering will provide the first opportunity for the seminarians' parents to meet new directors Father Matt Lorrain and Sister Lucy Silvio. The Mass was originally scheduled on the same day as the barbecue but was changed when it was discovered that neither Father Matt nor Sister Lucy were able to attend.

The morning also provides an opportunity for the seminarians and their parents to visit with Bishop Robert Muench, who will serve as the main celebrant for the Mass.

New Seminarians for 2005-2006

With gratitude to God, the Baton Rouge Diocese welcomes two new men to its seminary program of priestly formation. Mr. Bryan Thompson enters as a third year student and Mr. Joseph Vu as a first year student at St. Joseph Seminary in Covington, Louisiana. Bryan is 24 years old, a 1999 graduate of Baton Rouge Magnet High School, and a parishioner of Our Lady of Mercy Parish. Joseph is 18 years old, a 2005 graduate of Bishop Sullivan High School, and a parishioner of Sts. Anthony of Padua and Emanuel Le Van Phung Parish. Look for a more extensive article on Bryan and Joseph, as well as updated biographies on our returning seminarians in the September newsletter.

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