



# Vocations and Seminarians Newsletter

May 15, 2006

Diocese of Baton Rouge

## Dates to Remember

- Permanent Deacon Ordination - June 3, 2006
- Transitional Deacon Ordination - June 10, 2006
- Seminarian BBQ - August 12, 2006

## Dear Seminarians and Friends,

Summer pastoral assignments are a very important aspect of the process by which seminarians are prepared for the priesthood. The academic and spiritual formation that takes place in the seminary is enhanced by the practice of ministry in a supervised setting. The diverse placements are chosen to correspond to a candidate's ongoing personal development and readiness to assume roles which define a priestly identity. They offer a break from classroom instruction but not from ongoing education in respect to service, leadership, commitment, and priestly ministry.

Our college seminarians now working on their undergraduate degrees at St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict have the greatest degree of flexibility in regard to their summer assignments. Some may choose to work in a secular job in order to earn money sufficient to meet their personal expenses for the upcoming school year. Others may choose to work as a counselor at a youth camp, which also allows them to earn some income while developing skills for leadership, teamwork, and youth ministry. Still others may be assigned to Church parishes around our Diocese in order to accompany and assist the parish priests and others in the daily work of ministry.

Two of our college seminarians, Todd Lloyd and Bryan Thompson, will be attending a language school in Cuernavaca, Mexico, this summer. This serves the dual purpose of preparing our future priests for ministry to the growing number of Hispanic immigrants and guest workers in our Diocese, as well as affording an opportunity to experience the universality of the Church by witnessing the practice of faith in a different culture. They will reside with a host family rather than in a dormitory in order to share in a home-cooked meal at dinner time and benefit from the social interaction.

Seminarians engaged in post-graduate studies at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans have less flexibility in respect to their summer assignments. Those in pre-theology have the greatest number of options and may choose between parish work, Spanish studies, or a program of spiritual formation offered by Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. Seminarians completing their first year of theology are required to undertake an eight-week assignment in one of our parishes. This helps them to get to know some of the priests and parishioners in our local Church, to further develop skills for ministry, and to solidify their desire to serve God as a parish priest.

The second year of theology is followed by a rather intense summer program known as Clinical Pastoral Education, or C.P.E. for short. In most cases it is located within the pastoral care department of a hospital, with the seminarians and other participants assigned as chaplains to the various floors and units. The learning groups are usually ecumenical by design, and directed by a trained supervisor whose mission it is to help the participants become aware of their strengths and weaknesses for authen-

tic ministry. It can be a very challenging yet productive experience, and helps our men to grow in confidence and self-knowledge.

The summer following the third year of theology, or the last summer before ordination, sees the beginning of an extended parish internship lasting from the middle of June through December. Some dioceses ordain their seminarians transitional deacons at the beginning of this internship and others wait until after its completion to confer diaconal ordination. Our diocese is probably unique in that it makes use of both options according to which will best serve the needs of our individual candidates. In this particular year, four of our parish interns will be ordained deacons prior to the internship and two others will wait until its completion before receiving holy orders.

Parishes to which seminarians are assigned are considered "teaching parishes" by the seminary and Diocese. The priests, parish staff, and parishioners might even be called "adjunct faculty members" insofar as they assist the seminary in the important work of training future priests. Seminarians are instructed by the prayer life, example, and encouragement of the parishioners of a teaching parish. They also benefit from honest feedback regarding how they are perceived by others, their effectiveness in communicating their insights, and how well they collaborate with others.

Two of our seminarians, David Dawson and Brent Maher, have decided to take some time off at the end of this semester in order to spend more time in discernment outside of a seminary environment. This is entirely normal and appropriate, and we offer our wholehearted support for them during their sabbatical. I also cannot help but be a little sad by their leave-taking since both are such good candidates for the priesthood. However they decide to serve God, I know they will be an asset to the Church.

In Christ  
Father Matt Lorrain

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## Seminarians Elected to Student Government

Several Baton Rouge seminarians were recently elected to serve as officers of the Student Government Associations at their respective schools for the 2006-2007 school year. Paul Yi was elected president and Jamin David treasurer of the Student Association at Notre Dame Seminary. Bryan Thompson was elected parliamentarian and Joseph Vu yearbook editor for the Student Association at St. Joseph Seminary College. Congratulations to all four on the honor bestowed on them by their peers in recognition of their gifts for leadership.

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## Four to be Ordained Transitional Deacons

It is with great joy that the Diocese of Baton Rouge celebrates the ordination of four of its seminarians to the transitional diaconate on Saturday, June 10, 2006. Howard Adkins, Cary Bani, Chris Decker, and Jason Palermo will receive the sacrament of Holy Orders from Bishop Robert Muench at a 10:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral. All are invited to attend the ordination and reception which will follow immediately in the Main Auditorium of the Catholic Life Center at 1800 South Acadian Thruway.

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## 2006 Seminarian Summer Assignments

### Summer Parish Ministry and L.S.U. Studies

Joseph Vu – St. Aloysius Parish/Father Jerry Burns

### Spanish Immersion

Todd Lloyd – Cemanahuac School, Cuernavaca, Mexico

Bryan Thompson – Cemanahuac School, Cuernavaca, Mexico

### Summer Parish Ministry II

Mark Beard – St. Louis King of France Parish/Father Jack Nutter

Paul Gros – St. John the Baptist Parish, Brusly/Father Matt Dupré

### Clinical Pastoral Education

Jamin David – East Jefferson Hospital, Metairie, Louisiana

Andrew Merrick – Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, North Carolina

Paul Yi – Baptist-Princeton Hospital, Birmingham, Alabama

### Fourth Year Parish Internship

Howard Adkins – St. Jude the Apostle Parish/Father David Allen

Michael Alello – Immaculate Conception Parish, Denham Springs/Father  
Vincent Dufresne

Cary Bani – St. George Parish/Father Michael Schatzle

Chris Decker – Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish/Father Shelton Fabre

Jason Palermo – St. Isidore the Farmer Parish, Baker/Father Fred Youngs

Chris Redden – St. Jean Vianney Parish/Father Tom Ranzino

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## Serra Club Essay Contest Winner

Each year the Serra Club sponsors an essay contest open to all students in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades attending Catholic Schools in the Baton Rouge Diocese. Preliminary judging takes place at each individual school in order to select three essays to be sent to the diocesan Essay Judging Committee. The committee then selects one essay to represent each school, and then an overall winner from all of the participating schools. This year's essay topic was, "If you were a priest for a day, what Gospel story would you choose to preach about and how would you relate that Gospel to life today?"

The overall winner was Peter Sicard, a 7th grade student at St. Jude the Apostle Catholic School in Baton Rouge. Peter chose John 13:1-15, the Gospel reading for Holy Thursday which describes Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. Peter did such a beautiful job relating the theme to life that his pastor chose to incorporate some of his essay into the homily on Holy Thursday. Congratulations Peter!