

## Two to be ordained to Priesthood, one to Diaconate

LAKE CHARLES - Marking the beginning of the 29th year of the Diocese of Lake Charles, The Most Reverend Glen John Provost will ordain two men to the Priesthood and one to the Diaconate on Saturday, May 10 in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Mass will begin at 10 a.m. The Diocese of Lake Charles officially came into being on April 25, 1980.

Deacons Ruben Buller and Nathan Long will be ordained to the priesthood while Scott Conner will be ordained a transitional deacon. Buller and Long have been studying at Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology in New Orleans while Conner is a third year theology student at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.

The pair will be the second and third priests ordained by Bishop Provost, who celebrated his first anniversary as Bishop of Lake Charles on April 23. He ordained Father Derek Covert in 2007; not long after he himself was consecrated and installed as Bishop.

In commenting about the ordination Bishop Provost said, "Our Holy Father spoke of the real hope we have in Jesus Christ. My hope is that this ordination of two priests and a deacon for the Diocese of Lake Charles will be filled with many graces.

"For the men being ordained, I pray that they will be holy and effective servants of the Gospel and the



Deacon Ruben Buller

Church," he continued. "For the diocese, my fervent prayer is that this celebration will inspire others to respond to the call from God to be priests.

"For me personally, with God's help I seek to make it a profoundly spiritual moment, where I will join the Church and particularly those to be ordained in deep prayer," the Bishop added "May God clear our minds of earthly distractions. May God assist us to focus on what is really important. May God open our hearts to His presence, as we continue the work of Christ and His Church."

Both deacons are very excited about Saturday's ordination.

"When I first entered the seminary eight years ago my biggest frustration was the

fact that seminary was eight years long," Deacon Buller, who is a native of Fenton, said. "It is amazing how quickly it has gone by. It seems like yesterday now."

"I see myself very excited entering the life of the priesthood and with that the joy of being back home and serving as a priest of Jesus Christ," he continued. "We look at the future of the church and the reality of fewer and fewer priests. That is something to worry about, with priests getting older. At the same time, it gives me the feeling of a missionary. Once again, we in the ordained ministry are called to minister to more and more people."

For Deacon Long this time has a surreal feel to it.

"It had not hit home until I came into Lake Charles two weekends ago," he said. "I got the sense of joy that this will now be my home, that this will be a really wonderful vocation."

"School has been so busy I rarely have time to pause," Deacon Long continued "But, when I do they are profound moments. I get that time in prayer to understand that God is calling me to something intimate, something very important to the Church."

Long looks forward to celebrating Mass and hearing confessions, something that drew him strongly to the idea of the priesthood.

"When I first said yes to the vocation, I think it was the image of being able to tell somebody that your sins



Deacon Nathan Long

are forgiven that hit home and allowed me to say yes to the Lord," he said. "It has been a very important sacrament for me and I want to share that joy and that gift with everybody else."

Both men will be going back to New Orleans to tie up loose ends and graduate from Notre Dame on May 20. Each has definite plans for the time off they have before reporting to their first priestly assignments, which will be announced at the end of the Mass on Saturday.

"I will have to schedule some time for personal reflection to realize what took place," Buller said. "I plan on going to some of the places where I have been assigned in the past and I am also going to the ordinations of my classmates."

In June, Long will be go-

ing to a Catholic camp in North Carolina where he has worked for a number of summers.

"It was an important place for my formation and development," he said. "It has always been a dream to come back and serve as the campus priest and celebrate Mass for the kids."

Later in May, he will also be going on a fishing trip with a seminarian friend who will be ordained toward the end of the month. Then, he will return to the diocese to assist priests who will be taking vacations.

Long will celebrate his first Mass on Saturday, May 10 at 6 p.m. at his home parish of St. Raphael in Iowa while Buller will celebrate his first Mass on Sunday May 11 at 2 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Fenton.

It will also be an exciting day for Scott Conner, who will be taking another step toward the priesthood as he is ordained a transitional deacon.

"When you are discerning a vocation to the priesthood you don't think much about the seminary, you think what a priest does and what a priest is," he said. "That is what attracted me. Before you are ordained a priest, it takes several years of preparation. In a sense the excitement is I will now begin to do the things that God has called upon me to do."

Conner will be assigned as a summer intern to assist in diverse parish ministry in a parish of the Diocese. While ministering in the parish he



Scott Conner

will be working on his thesis in order to complete requirements for his bachelor degree in Sacred Theology.

The first Lake Charles seminarian to attend the Josephinum, he said he feels that it offers more opportunities and challenges. "Initially I was surprised but I think it has been a change for the best," Conner said. "I want to express my gratitude to the Diocese for its years of support and affirming my vocation to the priesthood. The vocation is ultimately a gift from God. At this time it is beginning to become a reality and I wanted to thank the people who have supported me, and thank God, who has given me this vocation."

It is anticipated that assignments for all three men will be announced following the Liturgy.

## Leadership institutes scheduled for June

LAKE CHARLES - The annual Christian Leadership and Advanced Christian Leadership Institutes, sponsored by the Office of Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Lake Charles, will be Sunday, June 8 through Friday, June 13, according to Milissa Thibodeaux, Director of Youth Ministry.

Emory Wallace Retreat Center at Bundick Lake near DeRidder will again be the venue for the weeklong programs.

Thibodeaux expects another full house at this year's event.

"We had 85 teens attend in 2007 with a fulltime staff of a little over 20 and some other volunteer staff who came and went," she said. "Last year was our biggest year in a while. We hope to hit the same numbers this year."

Thibodeaux is hoping to involve more parishes in the program.

The two training experiences focus on developing leadership skills that can be used in every aspect of young adult lives. The focus of the exercises includes ef-

fective communication skills, facilitation skills, decision-making skills, consensus seeking skills, temperament and leadership styles, male/female leadership styles, and call to ministry.

"CLI is about communications, facilitation, working as a group and recognizing your own gifts," Thibodeaux said. "Everything that happens the attendees plan and the creativity that comes out of that is wonderful. It is the best thing that we do ... because it trains the young church to go out and be productive leaders in a Christian environment."

The training involves experiential learning and is reinforced by hands-on activities. The young people themselves play a part in shaping the routine activities of each day from waking, to setting the environment and planning prayer for meals, morning and evening prayer, the evening liturgy to evening social activities.

"Our program is not static," she said. "It changes each year. The teachings are the same but the activities change, on a two or three

year cycle."

The advanced program sharpens the skills and planning process learned at the earlier training.

"Advanced CLI was ongoing when I first came in 2000," Thibodeaux said. "It has morphed as we go along. Of the 85 last year, 40 were ACLI, and in prior years it had been 16 to 24. We are getting so many people who come and want to come back again and again. Several kids have come 4 years in a row."

The Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) is for high school students including entering freshmen as well as recent graduates while the advanced program requires students to have participated previously in CLI and are at least a high school junior.

Cost of either program is \$275 and includes meals, housing, and materials for the week.

For more information, call Thibodeaux at the Office of Youth Ministry at 337-439-7400, Ext. 301.



Seafarers Center director Deacon Patrick Lapoint, left, looks on as Rev. Richard Adiuoku, chaplain for the Stella Maris Seafarers Center, points out the currency of his country to Bishop Glen John Provost on a wall of foreign currency in the Seafarers Center at the Port of Lake Charles. Bishop Provost recently made a visit to the Center along with the Rev. Henry Mancuso, Secretary for Pastoral Services of the Diocese of Lake Charles, which includes the care of seafarers.

## Abrazando Cristo mission to Nicaragua July 1-14

LAKE CHARLES - The Abrazando Cristo Mission Program will make its annual mission trip to Managua, Nicaragua on July 1-13, according to the Very Reverend Daniel Torres, director.

The journey will allow 25 missionaries from the Diocese of Lake Charles to bring their talents and offer their time to help the poorest of the poor in the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Work will be done in Managua and Nueva Vida with the construction of facilities, a medical clinic to offer health care assistance, evangelization to teach the Catholic Faith, and education assistance to foster the learning of English.

Fundraisers fostering the work of the mission group will be a golf tournament and a cash raffle.

Upcoming will be the Johnnie Thibodeaux Memorial Golf Tournament at Mallard Cove on June 14. The family and friends of the late LSU baseball player established a memorial tourna-

ment in his name following his death in an automobile crash. They have adopted the San Cristobal Home for Boys in Managua as one of the beneficiaries. Proceeds help with educational expenses and daily care for the boys. For more information, contact Johnnie or Susan Thibodeaux at 337-478-4095.

The group's cash giveaway raffle continues with first prize of \$5,000, second prize of \$1,000 and third prize of \$500. Tickets, only 500 of which are available, are \$100 each. The drawing for the prizes will be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 15 at the St. Henry Parish Community Center. All proceeds help with the mission program and the purchasing of medicines, construction materials, educational scholarships, food for the poor, and evangelization materials.

Tickets may be purchased at St. Henry Church, 1021 Eighth Avenue in Lake Charles or at the Chancery Office of the Diocese of Lake Charles, 414 Iris Street.

### Did you know...

until the November 2002 establishment of St. Martin dePorres and Christ the King parishes, the youngest parish in the Diocese of Lake Charles had been St. Charles Borromeo in Fenton. The parish, which had been a mission of St. Philip Neri Parish in Kinder, was the first new parish established by Bishop Jude Speyrer in the new diocese. This occurred on November 5, 1983 with the Rev. James Doyle named the founding pastor. Father Doyle was followed the late Rev. Al Volpe, Rev. Roger Quibuyen and, since 1996, Rev. Augustine Mulanjanany. The parish became responsible for the mission chapel of St. John the Evangelist in Lacassine in 2001.

In 1944, a native of Lake Charles and a parishioner of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church was ordained a priest of the Divine Word Missionaries. His ordination day was a day of distinction for the young man, who had entered the seminary at age 13, and for Southwest Louisiana. That day was to be surpassed by another banner day in 1965. Who was this pioneer? Find out in our next Catholic Calendar.



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, is surrounded by his Presbyterate during the celebration of the Liturgy on Wednesday, April 23, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The date marked the first anniversary of Bishop Provost's consecration as a bishop and his installation as the third Bishop of Lake Charles. Later in the week, on Friday, April 25, the Diocese itself celebrated the 28th anniversary of its formal establishment in 1980.