

National Maritime Day, blessing of fleet Sunday

LAKE CHARLES – The Apostleship of the Sea and the Seafarers Center of the Diocese of Lake Charles will celebrate National Maritime Day on Sunday, May 24, with the blessing of the fleet at the Lake Charles Civic Center Seawall, according to Deacon Patrick Lapoint, Director of the Seafarers Center.

The Rev. Richard Adiukwu, chaplain of the Center, will preside at the memorial prayer service and then bless the craft that pass the reviewing stand.

Deacon Lapoint invites the captains of all vessels, no matter the size, to attend and have their craft blessed.

National Maritime Day came into being on May 22, 1933 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress designating that day to remember the first transoceanic crossing by the steamship *The Savannah*, which happened in 1819.

In 2005, the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea was designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to encourage Catholics in the United States to support and participate in prayer services and remembrance of those who work in the maritime world. The event coincides with National Maritime Day in the United States of America.

There are 47 archdioceses and dioceses around the United State with Apostleship of the Sea facilities, which coordinate care at maritime ports in 61 American seaports and waterways.

The President of the United States is authorized and requested annually to issue a

proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such National Maritime Day by displaying the flag at their homes or other suitable places.

The Merchant Marine has over many years been the backbone of the distribution of goods over the seas of the world.

During World War II, some 6,000 American seafarers and more than 700 U.S. merchant ships fell to enemy action. No branch of the Armed Forces, except the Marine Corps, suffered a higher casualty rate.

Merchant mariners also played a vital role in the Korean Conflict, especially in the rescue of 14,000 Korean civilians by the *SS Meredith Victory*. During the Vietnam War, ships crewed by civilian seamen carried 95 percent of the supplies used by U.S. Armed Forces.

For generations, merchant marines and commercial sailors have assisted in the defense of the Nation. More than 5,000 merchant mariners supported Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom by serving aboard 157 ships moving essential supplies to the troops.

Since 1775, the United States Merchant Marine has served the U.S., helping America become a great maritime power. National Maritime Day pays tribute to these heroes who answered the call to serve when the Nation needed them most.

Today, merchant mariners continue to protect the U.S. homeland, including their support of American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Reverend Richard Adiukwu, the chaplain for the Seafarers Center of the Diocese of Lake Charles, located at the Port of Lake Charles, blesses the boats taking part in last year's National Maritime Day celebration. The event will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 24, along the Civic Center Seawall. The captains of vessels of all types and sizes are invited to attend and have their crafts blessed.

Zeb Johnson, ACTS Community to be honored at Jazz Brunch

LAKE CHARLES – Zeb Johnson and the "ACTS Community" will be honored for their service to the community during the Sunday, June 7 Jazz Brunch sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Lake Charles. The event begins at 12:30 p.m. in the Buccaneer Room of the Lake Charles Civic Center, according to Rev. Henry Mancuso, Secretary for the Ministry of Pastoral Services.

Father Mancuso emphasized the distinction between being *honored* and being *recognized*. "In the spirit of service," he said, "no one should be honored for doing one's Christian duty. On the other hand, recognition is offered in appreciation for what has been done and with the hope that others will be

encouraged to serve."

Mr. Johnson, will receive the 2009 *Caritas Award* for extraordinary service to the community in assisting with the recovery, identification, and reburial of bodies displaced by Hurricanes Rita and Ike. Recognized by the State of Louisiana Funeral Directors in 2006 with the "Funeral Director of the Year" award, Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana wants to use the June 7 gathering as an opportunity to express appreciation for his service to countless families in a very difficult and stressful time. *Caritas*, which means love, is an apt name for this award.

The men and women of the ACTS Retreat Community will be recognized with the 2009 *St. Peter Claver*

Award. St. Peter Claver once taught, "you must serve first with your hands and then with your words." Mrs. Trish Trejo, Director of Catholic Charities, notes that the ACTS Community "provides the heart of our volunteer community and they are, literally, the backbone and the hands" of our food distribution ministry. The need for food service has more than tripled since Hurricane Ike. Without the help of the ACTS community in unloading trucks, boxing food, and helping with food delivery, what is being done could not be accomplished.

For tickets, contact Catholic Charities, 612 Louisiana Avenue, Lake Charles, La. 70601 or by calling 439-7436.

Did you know...

The buildings of Saint Charles Center are named to honor people important in the history of the Catholic Church in Southwest Louisiana. The Administration Building at Tabor Retreat House, the main retreat facility, is named for the Oustalet Family, the largest donor to the Retreat Center project. The two guesthouses are named for Father (later Monsignor) Hubert Cramers, an early 20th Century pastor of Immaculate Conception Church (now Cathedral) and Father (later Monsignor) Joseph Peeters, a late 19th Century pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians in Jennings. Bulet Hall, the main meeting room on the east side of Tabor, is named in memory of the late Dr. and Mrs. W.J. Bulet, who were generous to the project. The youth facility at the front of the property is named for Saint Katharine Drexel, who was canonized October 1, 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

Over the years a number of priests have served extensive periods as pastors of particular faith communities. Do you know the longest-serving current pastor in the Diocese of Lake Charles? Find out in our next Catholic Calendar!

Diocesan Briefs

25th and 50th Wedding Anniversary Mass

LAKE CHARLES -- Bishop Glen John Provost will honor couples celebrating 25 and 50 years of marriage in 2009 at the 9:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, June 7, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Those celebrating Silver or Golden Jubilees of marriage and who wish to attend should register with their church parish office as soon as possible.

During the Mass, Bishop Provost will lead the couples in a renewal of their marriage vows. Following the Liturgy, a reception will be held in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral office building. Each couple will receive a special certificate honoring their achievement from Bishop Provost.

Abrazando Cristo Mission Fundraiser

LAKE CHARLES – The annual Abrazando Cristo Mission Fundraiser is underway and the big cash giveaway, with a top prize of \$5,000, will take place on Sunday, June 14, according to the Very Reverend Daniel Torres.

Second and third prizes are \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

Monies raised from the event benefit the mission work done in Nicaragua - to purchase supplies, Catholic Bibles, medicines and help with evangelizing the Catholic Faith.

For more information, contact Father Torres at 439-7400, Ext. 215.

Special Pre-K program offered

LAKE CHARLES – Qualified four year olds entering pre-kindergarten have an opportunity to be selected for free private school classes in the 2009-2010 school year at Sacred Heart/Saint Katharine Drexel Catholic School, the only private school in the parish to participate in the program in the upcoming school year, according to Ms. Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, principal.

Interested parents in Calcasieu Parish should contact the school at 436-3588 before June 30. For more information about qualifications, call 1-800-758-6934 or check www.PreKLa.org.

Benefit golf tournament scheduled

LAKE CHARLES – The Johnnie Thibodeaux Memorial Golf Tournament will be held Saturday, June 13, at Mallard Cove Golf Course.

A portion of the proceeds benefits the San Cristobal Orphanage in Managua, Nicaragua.

For information contact Johnnie and Susan Thibodeaux at 337-478-4095.

Seafarers' Center April report

LAKE CHARLES – During the month of April the Seafarers Center of the Diocese of Lake Charles visited 58 of the 82 ships which came into the Port of Lake Charles, according to Deacon Patrick Lapoint, Center Director

A total of 236 seafarers visited the Center and 497 were transported to various destinations by the centers van. Father Richard Adiukwu, Center chaplain, celebrated Mass on two vessels.

Six volunteers and three paid Center staff worked a total of 533 hours during the month.

Forty Hours Devotion schedule

LAKE CHARLES -- Forty Hours Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament to promote vocations to the priesthood and the religious life in the Diocese of Lake Charles continues at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in Hackberry May 25-29.

Breakfast, luncheon with Bishop set

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost's teachings on St. Paul will continue at the Men's First Friday Prayer Breakfasts and at the Women's Luncheons in June.

The next Men's Breakfast will be June 5 in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral Office Building, beginning at 7 a.m. Bishop Provost will celebrate First Friday Mass at 6:30 a.m. in the Cathedral. Men should register by calling 337-439-7400.

Bishop Provost will host the next Women's Luncheon on Tuesday, June 9, in the Lake Charles Civic Center. Women are asked to send a check in the amount of \$10, payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles, to Ms. Esther Gallardo, 612 Alamo Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601. They should also include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Catholic Bishops watching La. Legislature very closely

By Laura Deavers
The Catholic Commentator,
Editor

Everyone who receives any state funding is fighting to make sure the piece of the budget it has been allocated by Louisiana law is not cut during the current Louisiana legislative session.

The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops (LCCB) is among those closely watching the state budget bill, House Bill 1, to make sure the amount of state funding being received by Catholic schools, Catholic social service agencies and institutions, and health care providers is not reduced.

Of foremost concern, the Louisiana bishops want to make sure that scientists would be banned from mixing human and animal embryo for stem cell research,

said Loar. "This is unethical," Loar stressed. "They would be creating an unnatural species. It would be a global health hazard."

Loar said he and LCCB associate director, Rob Tassman, are working for passage of any legislation that would reject any or all parts of the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA). This proposed federal law, which President Barack Obama has said he would sign into law, would invalidate many Louisiana laws enacted to protect the life of the unborn, the well being of pregnant women and rights of health care providers.

LCCB is particularly concerned this session about a bill that would endanger the rights of certain health care workers who refuse to pre-

scribe contraceptive medication or perform abortions because these are against their moral conscience.

On Wednesday, May 27, principals of all of the Catholic schools in the state, and those schools that are members of Citizens for Educational Choice will meet at the Governor's Mansion for lunch and to hear an address by Gov. Jindal. They will then go to the state capitol to meet with their senators and representatives.

The LCCB website www.louisianacatholic-conference.org has a link to voterVOICE as a way citizens can let their elected officials know how the constituents want them to vote on a particular piece of legislation.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: For further information on this topic, go to lcdiocese.org)



Deacon Edward Lavine, left, who assists in the ministry of the Catholic Social Service Center, serves as Coordinator of parish outreach ministries, oversees ministry to the imprisoned, coordinates the Office of Cultural Ministry with direct oversight of the Ministry to African American Catholics and serves as administrator of St. Peter Claver Chapel in Iowa, with students from the Pre-K and kindergarten classes of Sacred Heart/Saint Katharine Drexel Catholic School on their visit to Oak Park Doctors Care. The group, along with Mrs. Phyllis Kittling, right, brought Easter joy to residents and staff at the facility. Tony Guillory and Royalty Limousine provided the group's transportation.