



Report of Bishop Provost on the *Ad Limina* Visit 2012

By The Most Reverend Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Perhaps the description of my *ad limina* visit to Rome is summed up in what happened at the airport on my way home. I approached the security agent, and he asked me, "Has anyone given you any packages to pack in your luggage?" Without giving my answer terribly much thought except to be honest, I answered, "Yes, the Pope." He smiled. I was glad he did. The Pope had given me a gift, and what a special gift it was.

The centerpiece of any *ad limina* is the audience with the Pope. The meeting with the Holy Father is usually scheduled sometime in the middle of the weeklong visit required every few years for each bishop in the Roman Catholic world. Uniformed ushers escort the bishops through the Vatican Palace to a waiting room outside the Pope's library. At this point a priest in the Pope's staff instructs us on etiquette and how the visit will proceed.

In our case, nine bishops of the Province of New Orleans, which includes Lake Charles, were led into the Pope's Library. Each bishop was allowed one priest to accompany him. The bishop then introduced himself to the Pope and then introduced the priest. I asked Father Derek Covert, who is finishing his last semester of Canon Law studies in Rome, to join me. Following the introductions, we posed for a photograph, and the accompanying priests were escorted out of the room. Only the bishops were present for this personal meeting and discussion with the Holy Father.

Pope Benedict XVI began our meeting with opening words of welcome and encouragement for us as successors to the Apostles. After all, the entire purpose of the *ad limina* visit is to maintain a vital link and communication between the local church in a diocese and the Holy See of St. Peter. Following his initial words, the Holy Father then invited the bishops to speak. The Archbishop of New Orleans, of course, went first, since he has precedence. Each bishop spoke on a topic of interest within the Church, such as vocations, education, charitable works, the New Evangelization, and religious liberty. My topic was the new translation of the Third Edition of the Roman Missal, which we have begun using as of the First Sunday of Advent 2011.

The Pope appeared very engaged and asked questions as well. He asked me whether or not the new translation of the Roman Missal had been well received. I responded that I thought it had. Of course, I added, there will always be some few who resist a change of any kind, to which the Pope smiled and nodded, but overall I found acceptance. The Holy Father then asked whether there had been appropriate preparation for the change in translation. I described what had been done over more than a year through conferences and workshops, as well as the various aids, to help in the implementation. I then thanked him for his leadership in the area of the liturgi-

cal movement, for his numerous writings on the subject beginning with *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, for his continued instructions on the summit of our worship which is the Eucharist, and above all for his approval of the new translation which I thought would be increasingly beneficial for enriching our understanding of what it is we celebrate in our Catholic liturgy.

This audience lasted about forty-five minutes, after which the Holy Father extended a blessing to us and to our dioceses. The bishops then approached personally for a final farewell and parting words. At this moment, he gave us each a pectoral cross, along with blessed objects for us to share with our families and collaborators in our dioceses. It was this package that I confessed to the security agent having in my luggage. I assured Pope Benedict of our daily prayers for his intentions. We then departed, thankful that we had had this opportunity to visit with the Successor of St. Peter and the Bishop of Rome.

On any *ad limina* visit bishops celebrate Masses at the tombs of the Apostles. So did we first at the tomb of St. Peter, then at the tomb of St. Paul. We also celebrated Masses at the tomb of Blessed John Paul II, at St. John Lateran which is the Pope's Cathedral Church, and finally at St. Mary Major which is the first church in the West dedicated to Mary, following the Council of Ephesus. On a personal note, it was here at St. Mary Major that I had celebrated my first Mass as a priest. Being in that holy place brought back many fond memories.

The remainder of our time was spent visiting Vatican offices, called dicasteries, agencies or offices that serve the needs of the Church throughout the world. We met with the Cardinal Prefect of each. In the Congregation for Clergy we discussed the needs of priests and deacons, as well as vocations. With the Congregation for Divine Worship, we spoke of our concerns over the liturgy. At the offices of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Catholic schools and seminaries were the topics under consideration. All in all, I visited ten different Vatican offices with my brother bishops and a few others on my own. Two of these will serve as examples of that experience.

On one occasion I made an appointment to visit the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Immigrants. In the Diocese of Lake Charles, we have an excellent apostolate which we call the Seafarers Center and it will celebrate its 50th anniversary on April 18, 2012. The work of the Seafarers Center is entitled the Apostleship of the Sea and is done in close collaboration with the Pontifical Council. I met with the President, Cardinal-elect Antonio Veglio, and one of the officials of the Council. There we discussed the splendid work of the Seafarers Center, an upcoming international conference on the subject of Catholic centers that serve the pastoral needs of merchant sailors, and the challenges for the future that such an apostolate faces.

Another day I scheduled a visit to the Apostolic Penitentiary. This is the Vatican office that cares for spiritual benefits. Here I was interested in discussing the upcoming centennial year for the Cathedral Church of the Immaculate Conception in Lake Charles. I learned that for such occasions the Church could be declared a pilgrimage site and I duly submitted my request for this privilege.

So much more could be said about these visits. I was truly inspired by the presentation of Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko of the Pontifical Council on the Laity. He gave a spirited and enthusiastic explanation of lay movements in the Church throughout the world and a report on the World Youth Day. The visit to the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization was most informative. Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella headed this Council and gave us a fine overview of the upcoming Synod on the New Evangelization in October. He also stated that the New Evangelization had primarily a threefold approach: liturgy, catechesis, and charity. He went into great detail about the hopes and dreams for an important initiative in the Church that we will all hear more about in the future.



Bishop Glen John Provost, left, is greeted by His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI in the Pope's library during Bishop Provost's recent *ad limina* visit to the Holy See. (Photo used with permission of L'Osservatore Romano Photographic Service)



Bishop Glen John Provost, center, introduces Reverend Derek Covert, left, to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI during Bishop Provost's audience with the Holy Father on the *ad limina* visit. Father Covert is completing his final year of Canon Law studies in Rome. (Photo used with permission of L'Osservatore Romano Photographic Service)

The *ad limina* was a true gift. At every turn, in every event, there was some benefit. We asked questions and were asked questions. We were filled with new ideas, took notes, and met those directly involved in some of the most important apostolic works of the Church in the world today. We heard of concerns and how to address them and were encouraged by so many who took seriously the words spoken by the Lord Jesus to St. Peter, "You must strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32). This is exactly what the Successor to St. Peter, Pope Benedict XVI, had done for us. We were strengthened by the spirit of the Apostle and by God's grace working through him and the Church. It was this spiritual gift, infinitely more important than anything material, that I carried with me as I left Rome.



Rev. Karl Klaus, right, pastor of St. Luke Simpson United Methodist Church reads from the Gospel of St. John during the annual Ecumenical Prayer Service for Christian Unity held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Rev. Msgr. Daniel Torres, left, Vicar General of the Diocese of Lake Charles, presided.

Ecumenical Prayer Service held

(Read more at <http://live.lcdioocese.org/news/1018-ecumenical-prayer-service-for-christian-unity-html>)

LAKE CHARLES - The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was celebrated in the Diocese of Lake Charles from January 18-25 and highlighted with an Ecumenical

Prayer Service held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The Rev. Karl Klaus, pastor of St. Luke Simpson United Methodist Church, presented the message while Rev. Msgr. Daniel Torres, Vicar General of the Diocese of Lake Charles, presided.

The annual event is sponsored jointly by the Diocese and the Imperial Calcasieu Cadre of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem.

Rev. Klaus read the Gospel taken from St. John 21:23-26 where Scripture speaks of the necessity of the grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying before it can bear fruit.

"I have always believed that, as Christians, there are many more things that unite us than divide us," Rev. Klaus said. "I could go through a check list of denominational differences, doctrine and dogma, cross reference that list, and then identify those things upon which we agree, and those things we don't."

A further statement by Bishop Provost on HHS mandate

Statement of Bishop Glen John Provost, Bishop of Lake Charles, in light of the so-called "accommodation" issued by the White House on Friday, February 10, 2012, concerning the mandate requiring Catholic entities to provide sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception:

The so-called accommodation for religious institutions regarding the mandate to provide coverage for sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception is, in effect, no accommodation at all. The major concerns raised with the original policy have not been addressed, namely, the infringement of religious freedom and cooperation with grave evil.

The shift in responsibility from employer to insurer is not a safeguard for Catholics. Religious organizations and institutions are both employers and insurers in many cases. This includes our diocese. How will insurers pay for these services which must be provided for free? Self-insured employers are still to pay for sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception, just as before.

The issue of religious freedom is continually obfuscated by talk of access to preventative services. Religious people and institutions that act as employers will still be required by force of law to purchase, provide or facilitate the purchase of health insurance that violates their religious freedom. We cannot comply with any policy that requires us to participate in a grave moral evil, nor should we accept attempts by the government to define our own religious principles.

I continue to take issue with the Administration's insistence that abortifacients, sterilization, and contraception are considered "health care." Pregnancy and fertility are not diseases or illnesses. Such terminology is misleading and erroneous.

When I attended elementary school, every child in the State of Louisiana, in public and private school, was at least informed about the letter of Thomas Jefferson to the Ursuline Nuns of New Orleans. The United States had just purchased Louisiana in 1803. These Catholic nuns, who ran the oldest Catholic girls school in the United States, wanted to know about their rights in their new country. Their inquiry was forwarded to James Madison, the Secretary of State, who in turn referred it to President Thomas Jefferson. In a letter dated May 15, 1804, President Thomas Jefferson replied to the Catholic nuns:

"The principles of the constitution and government of the United States are a sure guarantee to you that it will be preserved to you sacred and inviolate, and that your institution will be permitted to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules, without interference from the civil authority." The intent of our founding fathers must count for something.

Did you know...

As of last January 19, there were nine canonically vacant sees in the U.S. - that is with no seated Bishop. Since then, one has been filled - Salina, Kansas. The three Archdioceses in the eight sees still without an Ordinary are Denver, Baltimore, and Indianapolis.

In addition, there are nine dioceses and archdioceses where the Bishop has already had his 75th birthday and submitted his letter of retirement to the Holy Father but the Pope Benedict has yet to act upon the resignation. Again, three of those are in archdioceses. Can you name them? Find out in the next Catholic Calendar.

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Calendar



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

February 17, 2012

Catholic Identity: Personal but never private

By Reverend Nathan Long
Secretary for Ministry of Christian Formation

As we conclude our Catholic Schools Week, my thoughts turn to the topic of Catholic identity. Catholic identity, simply defined, is the mark of a Christian who is deeply rooted in Christ and the Church that He espoused. It means not being afraid to proclaim with your words and actions that you belong to the Catholic faith. It is a faith that is deeply personal, but never private. Indeed, one cannot sincerely follow the Catholic faith without bringing that faith into the public forum.

This notion of Catholic identity is especially important when dealing with education. Believing deeply and living the teachings of the Church does not take away from higher learning; rather, it greatly enhances it. The facts of history confirm that the Catholic faith is respon-

sible for advances in learning like biology, architecture, art, and civil government. The contributions of Catholic education are vast and all encompassing, including the invention of telescopes, international law, irrigation machinery, the university system, and much more. Because the Catholic faith sees reality from a wide perspective, it is able to enhance the arts and sciences we study so that they are more impacting and long lasting.

Unfortunately, many cultural and societal changes have seriously eroded Catholic identity in our own time. For example, Sunday has lost its prominence as a day of rest and worship, many children are left unbaptized, moral norms are abandoned, and many traditional observances like abstinence and fasting are disappearing. This is no doubt the result of materialism, relativism, and secularizing trends in our

culture.

If we are to recover these hallmarks of Catholic identity and learning, a few important steps must be taken. First, we must reclaim Sunday as the day of the Lord and the Christian's day. Sunday Eucharist must take first place, along with quality family time, over and above things like sports and other activities. One good way to do this is to attend Mass as a family and enjoy a nice family dinner afterward. Secondly, Catholics should enhance their knowledge of the Sacraments, especially the Real Presence in the Eucharist. Given the confusion that has arisen lately, another look at the sanctity of Holy Matrimony would also be in order. A basic knowledge of Catholic doctrine is another important step. Lastly, we should rediscover the great Catholic works of art, especially the contributions made in visual arts, music, and literature. Survey the

works of Michelangelo, the angelic sound of Palestrina, and the rich story-telling of J.R. Tolkien as examples of this rich tradition.

With so many saints who were educators and so many examples of Catholic ingenuity, we owe it to ourselves and our world to be bold in our practice of the faith. May the Lord bless all our faithful schools and institutions of higher learning.

(Editor's Note: Catholic Schools Week is celebrated each year throughout the dioceses in the United States and in 2012 was held from Sunday, Jan. 29 through Sunday, Feb. 5. This year's theme was "Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service." Father Nathan Long is the Secretary for the Ministry of Christian Formation, which includes the Office of Catholic Schools.)

Catholic Schools Week Mass celebrated at Cathedral

LAKE CHARLES – The annual Catholic Schools Week Mass was held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Tuesday, Jan. 31, with Rev. Msgr. Daniel Torres, Vicar General of the Diocese, as the celebrant and homilist. The eighth grade students of the Catholic schools of the Diocese along with the 12th grade class of St. Louis Catholic High School attended along with principals, faculty and staff of all diocesan schools and the Office of Catholic Schools.

The pastors of the various parishes where Catholic schools are located and were concelebrants included Msgr. Jace Eskind, Cathedral; Msgr. James Gaddy, Our Lady Queen of Heaven; Msgr. Ronald Groth, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Lake Charles; Msgr. Charles Dubois, St. Theodore, Moss Bluff; Very Rev. Marcus Johnson, Immaculate Heart of Mary; and Very Rev. Aubrey Guilbeau, Immaculate Conception, Maplewood. Rev. Nathan Long and Rev. Scott Conner served as masters of ceremony while Deacon Edward Lavine read the Gospel and served at the altar.

Catholic Schools Week is held across the country during the final week of January each year and this year's celebration of the Mass occurred on the feast of St. John Bosco, well known for dedicating his life to the betterment and education of street children, juvenile delinquents, and other disadvantaged youth. St. John Bosco succeeded in establishing a network of organizations and centers to carry on his work. He

was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1934.

In his homily, Msgr. Torres spoke about the saint's outreach to the young bullies he came into contact with, preaching about the direction their life should go in – a life of following Christ rather than of being a bully.

"Everyday of our lives we are challenged to strive to be a saint rather than a bully," Msgr. Torres said. "We are called to follow Christ and live with him by following his way, truth and life. Father Bosco knew that he had to be Christ with these young boys.

"The time has come to stop and reflect and realize that being a follower of Christ means to live in Him and with Him," Msgr. Torres continued. "We must possess humility as Jesus said, 'whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.' Don't we want to be seen like this."

Msgr. Torres pointed out that Catholics schools today are focusing on the importance of education, character and most importantly teaching the ways of Jesus Christ. "When we walk out of these doors today, no matter what our age, will we be seen as someone striving to be a saint or a bully?"

Following the Mass, the eighth graders spent the rest of the day as guests of St. Louis, where they were provided with tours of the school. All Catholic schools in the Diocese held a variety of events during the week at their respective campuses.



Priests walk into the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception as the annual Catholics Schools Week Mass begins on Tuesday, Jan. 31. Students from Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lake Charles attended the liturgy and music was provided by Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School students under the direction of Mrs. Collette Tanner and the St. Louis Catholic High School Concert Choir under the direction of Mrs. Pam LeBlanc.

Catholic schools marketing campaign airs

LAKE CHARLES – The Diocese of Lake Charles has joined with the other dioceses across Louisiana to produce an advertising campaign to promote Catholic schools throughout the state.

The campaign theme – "Catholic Schools – In a Class of Their Own" – was produced by Buisson Creative Strategies of Metairie. The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops agreed to provide the funding, \$175,000. Greg Buisson, who runs Creative Strategies, agreed to do the production work without charge.

The germ of the idea came

from a position paper of the state's Catholic Bishops, which spoke highly of a Catholic education and the need to market Catholic schools effectively.

The commercials will run during February, March and April on stations across the state, including here in Lake Charles on KPLC-TV.

Each commercial focuses on a fact or statistic about Catholic education, such as:

- 99 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college;
- Catholic school students in Louisiana were awarded more than \$221 million in college scholarships;
- Catholic schools produce graduates who are more engaged citizens, more tolerant of different viewpoints and more committed to service;
- With 81,457 students enrolled in Catholic schools

across Louisiana, the state saves \$410 million in education costs each year.

- Catholic schools score consistently higher on the ACT than other students, averaging about 23 against the national average of 21.

Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Lake Charles, Mrs. Kimberlee Gazzolo said, "Faith, Academics and Service; Catholic schools have a longstanding tradition of providing families with excellence in academics, rooted in Gospel values.

"As Superintendent of Catholic Schools, I am honored to witness that excellence on a daily basis, she continued. "Throughout this school year, we have continued our emphasis on student growth and academic performance. This year, students across the Diocese in grades 4 and 7, will be administered

the Stanford Writing Assessment. These results will add another piece to our already strong student assessment program.

"The newly formed Special Education Committee has been focusing on intervention strategies to increase learning for all students," Mrs. Gazzolo said. "In addition, as we look forward and begin to adapt our outstanding curriculum to include the Common Core Standards, we will continue to challenge our students to achieve. Our faculty and students show their generosity every day, by supporting programs such as Catholic Charities, United Way and Children's Miracle Network. It is this winning combination of faith, academics and service that continues to make Louisiana's Catholic Schools in a class of their own."

Rite of Election Feb. 26

(Read more at <http://live.lcdiocese.org/rcia-home/1017-rite-of-election-feb-26.html>)

LAKE CHARLES – The Rite of Election, the recognition of God's choice to call catechumens for immediate initiation into the Church, will be held at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26, the First Sunday

of Lent, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The Most Reverend Glen John Provost will preside and meet the Catechumens and Candidates.

The rite closes the period of the Catechuminate, and begins the preparation for baptism at Easter.

Diocesan Briefs.....

Applicants for Vianney House being accepted

LAKE CHARLES -- The Vianney House of Discernment is currently accepting resident applications for the 2012-2013 school year.

Vianney House is a residence for college-age men discerning the possibility of entering the seminary. Residents utilize a daily schedule of prayer and study while they seek to know the Lord's will. Applicants should be at least 18 years old, a high school graduate or intending to graduate high school this spring, and preparing to enroll in McNeese University for the fall semester.

Those interested should contact Fr. Nathan Long, the Director of Vianney House at 439-7400, or nathan.long@lcdiocese.org no later than March 1, 2012.

Bishop Provost to celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost will be the celebrant of the 12:05 p.m. Mass in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22. The Bishop will also distribute ashes at the Mass as the Holy Season of Lent begins.

Forty Hours Devotion schedule

LAKE CHARLES – Forty Hours Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, praying for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and the religious life in the Diocese of Lake Charles, continues at Our Lady of LaSalette in DeQuincy, Monday through Friday, Feb. 20-24.

Forty Hours Devotion will continue at St. Henry Catholic Church from Tuesday, April 10 through Friday, April 13 in the Day Chapel from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and then at St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church on Tuesday, April 17, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Thursday, April 19, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday, April 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Lake Branch set June 10

LAKE CHARLES -- The 2012 Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana Jazz Brunch will be held at the Lake Charles Country Club on Sunday, June 10. Doors open at 12:30 pm.

Tickets are \$50 per person. Food, entertainment, and the opportunity to bid on auction items are included with the price of admission. In addition, the 2012 recipients of the "Caritas" and "St. Peter Claver" awards will be announced.

For ticket information, call Catholic Charities of SWLA at 337-439-7436.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat

LAKE CHARLES – The next Rachel's Vineyard Retreat will be held Friday through Sunday, July 27-29 at Tabor Retreat House of Saint Charles Center.

Anyone who needs to experience healing from guilt, depression, regret, and other emotions after abortion, this retreat is the place they can go. Those who attend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat will experience the mercy and compassion of God in a non-judgmental, safe environment.

For information, call Rachel's Vineyard of Southwest Louisiana at 337-439-7400, Ext. 317 or e-mail rachels.vineyard@lcdiocese.org.

Men's Prayer Breakfast

LAKE CHARLES – Bishop Glen John Provost continues with his presentation on the Gospel of St. Matthew at the Women's Luncheon on Tuesday, March 6, and at the Men's Prayer Breakfast on Friday, March 9. Both are in Ave Maria Hall of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception office complex.

Women should send a check for \$10, payable to the Diocese of Lake Charles, to Ms. Esther Gallardo, 612 Alamo Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601 and include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Bishop Provost will celebrate First Friday Mass before the breakfast in the Cathedral. Men should call 337-439-7400 to register.

Book donations being sought

LAKE CHARLES -- The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd is seeking book donations for its Fifth Annual Book Sale. The 2012 Book Sale continues the tradition begun by Temple Sinai, which Good Shepherd adopted in 2008.

All proceeds will again go to 13 local charities, including Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana and Abraham's

Tent. Over the last four years, proceeds of approximately \$35,000 were donated locally.

Donations of used or new books, DVD movies and audio books on CD are requested. No encyclopedias or textbooks, please. Empty copy paper boxes with lids are also needed for storing books. Drop off boxes, available 24 hours a day, seven days, are located at the side entrance drive-thru of Good Shepherd, 715 Kirkman Street.

Camp Joshua set in March

MOSS BLUFF – Louisiana Camp Joshua, a weekend profile experience to train high school students to be pro-life leaders will be Friday through Sunday, March 2-4 at Tabor Retreat House of Saint Charles Center.

The cost is \$60 per person and includes lodging, meals and materials.

For more information, visit www.campjoshua.org or call 1-866-463-5433 to register.

Yom Hashoah observance April 19

LAKE CHARLES – Thursday, April 19, will be the day the community observes Yom Hashoah, a day to remember the Holocaust and heroism.

Events will include art displays, exhibits, and films from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Central School on Kirby Street as well as a civic program there from noon to 1 p.m.

A candlelight vigil will take place on the Lakefront Promenade from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. followed by a tree-planting ceremony.

The observance is coordinated by the Leadership Team for Community and Race Relations of the City of Lake Charles.

Immaculée returns to Cajundome

LAFAYETTE – Immaculée Ilibagiza, a survivor of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, returns to the Cajundome Convention Center for a two-day retreat, Monday and Tuesday, March 16-17.

Doors open at 5 p.m. on Friday with presentations from 6 to 9 p.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Lunch will be available for purchase during the retreat. For more information or to register go to www.immaculee.com.