

Office of Ministries Newsletter

Diocese of Fresno



Volume I, Issue III
January 2008

Message from the Director— *Patty Jiménez*

Happy New Year! We have begun the year with much excitement. This month we welcomed Father David Norris to our team. We are very happy to have him on board. Please see the section on Catechesis for news on a new Coordinator. In February we will continue interviewing for the various positions in the Diocese. Our office has also taken on a new task, the regular update of the Diocesan website.

To start off the year we began organizing our office, conference room, some of our storage areas and cubicles, and a section of the Media Center. We have also been quite busy in preparation for presentations at Convocation and the many retreats that

our office is coordinating. I recommend that you read the section on Youth Ministry in this newsletter as it includes important information on results from the Youth Ministry Survey.



Our office also sat down for an entire day to evaluate last year's Congress and to begin brainstorming for this year's event. It was a very productive meeting with many new ideas surfacing.

Next month our staff will be traveling

down to Anaheim for the annual Los Angeles Religious Education Congress. Please be aware that our office will close at noon on February 28 and all day February 29, 2008.

We have been blessed with much rain and snow in the Central Valley. It will certainly help in the coming year. As I reflect on nature, and observe some of the warnings of mudslides and flooding due to the recent fires in Southern California, I can't help but include a section on Global Warming. Please remember in your prayers our brothers and sisters down south, especially those in the Dioceses of San Bernardino and San Diego.

Patty

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Going Green— *Care for God's Creation*

As of late there has been much talk in the media regarding global warming. Did you know that as Catholics we are each called to be responsible steward's of all of God's Creation? The U.S. Bishops write, "Catholic Social teaching challenges all of us to consider the negative environmental impact brought about by some of our public policies and private practices. These do not affect only the terrain and the wildlife — they also affect the vulnerable residential communities and the lives of industrial workers. Catholic Social teaching and tradition encourage us to take corrective action and to act now for the common good." (*Principles, Prophecy, and a Pastoral Response: An Overview of Modern Catholic Social Teaching*).

Our office was already participating in the recycling of our discarded paper waste and several months ago our office switched to using recycled paper. We are also eliminating all products made of styrofoam (plates, cups, etc.) for use at all of our events. We hope that each of you will do your part to help take care of the earth.



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Youth and Young Adults

We have completed entering nearly half of the 2,600 youth surveys that were submitted. Thank you to volunteers from Holy Spirit in Fresno, St. Philip the Apostle in Bakersfield, OLPH in Clovis, St. Helen's in Fresno, staff at Three Rivers and San Joaquin Memorial High School students who helped us reach our goal. An interim report

was completed and presented at this year's Convocation based on the data thus far. The report will soon be available online.



We met with Coordinators of Youth Ministry in English and Spanish. The meetings were a great opportunity for youth coordinators to voice their concerns and opinions about Youth

Ministry in the Diocese. Both groups expressed the importance of hiring a Diocesan Coordinator for Youth Ministry as they have had very little support for many years.

We set 4 meeting dates for the next year to take place in each deanery. The English Coordinators set April 10, 2008 at 7 p.m. at St. Mary's in Visalia; June 21, 2008 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Fresno; early September in Bakersfield; and early February 2009 in Merced.

Spanish Coordinators will be meeting April 27, 2008 (site to be confirmed); a Saturday in June in Fresno; a Sunday in September at St. Mary of the Miraculous Medal in Delano; and February 2009 at St. Anthony in Atwater. Once dates and sites have been confirmed, we will send reminders and post them online.

All coordinators are being asked to begin meeting by deaneries on a monthly basis and to elect a leader/coordinator for each deanery.

Bilingual Coordinator:

Vacant

Bilingual Secretary:

Martin Barrera

(559) 488-7495

Catechetics



**Diocesan Catechetical
Advisory Board**

We are happy to announce that as of March 3rd, 2008 we will welcome a new Coordinator of Catechetics, Madeline Loiacono. Madeline and her family will be moving to Fresno from Kentucky where she has worked for many years in the area of Faith Formation.

This month, the diocesan Cate-

chetical Advisory Board met and we discussed issues, such as the DRE handbook, budgets, and collaboration. There are four board member openings in four of the deaneries. Current board members will be inviting DRE's /CRE's to visit a board meeting. If you are interested in serving in this capac-

ity, please contact Patty Jiménez for more information.

DRE's and CRE's will be on retreat at Three Rivers February 7-8, 2008.

Catechetical Coordinator:

Patricia Jiménez

Administrative Assistant:

Paul Mentlewski

(559) 488-7477

Media Center



Our Media Center has received our new software & barcode scanner. We hope this new equipment will make our library more efficient and will provide better service.



Just a friendly reminder that your media center will be in need of volunteers - switching to a new system will take much time and effort. Our hope is that it is completed by summer '08. Please contact Rosie Navarro or sign up online using our Volunteer Sign Up Form.



Remember your ideas are very important to us. We hope to hear from you soon.

LIBRARY HOURS –

Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. or by appointment. Group visits should also be scheduled by appointment only.



To Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, Clovis, for scheduling a tour of the Media Center & the Office of Ministries.

Bilingual Media Secretary:

Rosie Navarro

(559) 488-7474

Multicultural/Campesino Ministry

We met with the Spanish-speaking Sisters who minister in the various areas of the diocese. It was a great day for fellowship, reflection, sharing resources, and we were able to set some goals in assisting the sisters in their ministries.

The Mexican Consulate in Fresno, the National Council on Popula-

tion, the National Council for Culture and the Arts and the United Nations Population Fund, invite Mexican nationals or descendants of Mexican nationals, ages 16 or older, who have experienced the migratory phenomenon in a temporary or permanent way, and reside in the United States or anywhere else in the world, to participate in the Second Competition of "Historias de Migrantes". Participants must write and submit a

story in Spanish sharing their migratory experience of traveling between Mexico and any other country in the world. The entry has to be received on or before February 15, 2008. Each winning entry will be awarded a prize of \$20,000.00 Mexican pesos (\$2,000 USD). Competition rules and a list of the winning entries will be available online by visiting www.ime.gob.mx or by calling (559) 445-2615.



Director:

Vacant

Bilingual Secretary:

Martin Barrera

(559) 488-7495

Detention Ministry

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's recent budget proposals have been the biggest prison related news lately. Around 22,000 inmates would be released up to 20 months early over the next two years under this proposal, if their crime was not sexual, violent, or serious. To save costs, these inmates would be released on unsupervised, or summary parole. If enacted, this would be a significant change to the corrections system in California. Issues and challenges that remain for detention ministry:

— Similar, but smaller, plans have been proposed in the past, but were turned down by the legislature due to strong political opposition. This is still only a proposal and may never be approved.

— The change for state prison facilities in the Diocese of Fresno may be rather limited. This would remove 20 to 30 thousand inmates from a total system population of over 170 thousand inmates. Also, a number of prisons here are largely high security facilities which would see little change under this

proposal. No one is proposing the early release of maximum security inmates. And, all these facilities house more than twice as many inmates than they were designed for. Even if this proposal is passed, prisons will remain overcrowded.

— While the proposed budget does not appear to include cuts in chaplain positions, religious program budgets in prisons remain bare-bones, with little money for essential supplies. We will be sharing some of these needs with you in coming months.

The staff of the California Catholic Conference of Bishops in Sacramento is now investigating just what affect this would have on chaplains and chapel programs.

Director:

Claude Muncey

(559) 488-7494

School of Ministry

The programs of the recently established School of Ministry include the New Wine program/Vino Nuevo and the brand new Masters program from Holy Names University in Oakland. All certification of lay ministers (i.e. RCIA, youth,) will also fall under the School of Ministry.

The office of Ministries is happy to welcome Father David Norris to our staff! As the Dean of the School of Ministry, he is pleased to see such a wonderful response to this new M.A. program. Sixteen enthusiastic students are meeting Monday evenings at Fresno's Saint Agnes Medical Center for this interactive televised class. Beginning in Sep-

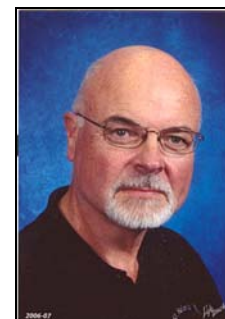
tember, thanks to the generosity of St. Francis of Assisi parish, Bakersfield, and their pastor, Father Craig Harrison, an additional site will open at that parish. Future sites are also planned around the diocese to remove the inconvenience of great travel distance.



A great deal of thanks is owed to Rosa Maria Guembe, Martha Danks-Ferguson, Deacon Jesse

Avila and Msgr. E. James Petersen and the Lay Ministry Institute Committee which grew from the Clergy Convocation in January, 2007. These people developed this exciting idea and, with the encouragement of Bishop Steinbock, gave the impetus for this School, especially the academic relationship with Holy Names University.

RCIA and New Wine students continue studying. New Wine students also participated in their yearly retreat as spiritual formation is an essential component of the program. New Wine Graduates will be on retreat February 15-17, 2008.



Dean:

Fr. David Norris

(559) 493-2871

Office of Ministries Newsletter

Family Life Ministry

2008 Catholic Engaged Encounter Calendar

February 22-24
April 18-20
May 30 - June 1
June 20-22
July 18-20
August 15-17
September 12-14
November 7-9

Held at St. Anthony Retreat Center, Three Rivers
To register call (559) 265-3365
Web: www.ceefresno.org

2008 Central California Worldwide Marriage Encounter Calendar

February 29 – March 2
Call: (559) 298-6481
(Marie and Paul O’Bara)
Web: www.wwme.org

Natural Family Planning Certified Teaching Couples (Couple to Couple League) in your area

Web: www.ccli.org

2008 Retrouvaille for Troubled Marriages Calendar

February 29 – March 2 Fresno area
June 13-15 Fresno area
July 18-20 Bakersfield area
November 7-9 Fresno area

Call: (559) 935-1424 Fresno area
(661) 747-2212 Bakersfield area

Web: www.helpourmarriage.com

E-mail: 6004@retrouvaille.org Fresno
6036@retrouvaille.org Bakersfield

2008 Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat Calendar (Post-abortion compassionate outreach)

February 15-17
July 18-20
November 7-9

Call: Jennifer (877) 629-6626
or (888) HOPE-790

E-mail: tjen98@sbcglobal.net
Web: www.hopeafterabortion.org

Bilingual Coordinator:

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Bilingual Secretary:

Martin Barrera

(559) 488-7495

Social Justice

I don’t know about you, but as I watch the so-called debates and statements of all those people running for the office of president, I am sometimes confused, sometimes upset, and sometimes pleased. For they occasionally contradict themselves, too often they are negative in their approach to each other,

but they often speak words of decency and hope.

It is our job, as Americans involved in the political scene and Catholics enriched by the Spirit of a loving God of all, to listen attentively to all the candidates, decipher what they really stand for and decide who would best fulfill our goals for a compassionate society, a society that looks to the good of

its citizens and its neighbors and the whole world. We must consider what is vital for us today and what will permit our children to have vitality tomorrow.

It’s not easy to practice political responsibility, or faithful citizenship. But that is what God calls us to do.

Jim



Director
Fr. James A. Rude, S.J.
(559) 488-7482

Upcoming Events



- Feb. 2 – RCIA Training
- Feb. 7-8 – DRE’s/CRE’s Retreat
- Feb. 15-17 – “New Wine” Graduates Retreat
- Feb. 23 – RCIA Training (in lieu of Mar. 1)
- Feb. 28-Mar. 2 – L.A. Religious Education Congress

- Mar. 13 – Diocesan Morning of Reflection and Holy Chrism Mass
- Apr. 5 – RCIA Training
- Apr. 12 – DRE’s/CRE’s Formation Day
- Apr. 15-20 – Pope Benedict XVI’s Apostolic Journey to the U.S.
- Apr. 22 – California Catholic Lobby Day

Diocese of Fresno

OFFICE OF MINISTRIES

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Director of Social Justice Ministry: Fr. James A. Rude, S.J.

Bilingual Secretary: Martín Barrera

Director of Detention Ministry: Claude Muncey

Administrative Assistant: Paul Mentlewski

Bilingual Media Secretary: Rosie Navarro

