



Have a Safe and
Happy July 4th!

Louisiana Interchurch
Conference
E-Newsletter

June 30, 2017



“To live the faith we hold in common”

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What Was He Thinking?

Article from our Director

Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”

Following Jesus was a real challenge for his disciples. Can you imagine? Just when his followers were about to send off a crowd of people to find their own food after they’d been with them all day, Jesus says to them, “You provide them something to eat!” He tells others to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. What does Jesus see that we don’t see that would cause him to make such demands, to have such high expectations? What was He thinking?

When we look around our world, it would certainly help if we heeded Jesus. America seems very conflicted at this time in our society, and it’s not difficult to see that some people might be seen as enemies. In the political landscape, the intensity of the rhetoric seems to have fueled violence in a number of instances around the country and most recently with the shooting of one of our own members of congress. Tensions are also very high because the health care system may change dramatically if a bill presented to the U.S. Senate that eliminates coverages for the working poor and other vulnerable populations is supported. There are racial and economic divides that can easily cause enmity to spring up as a demonic spirit that will not be satisfied.

One might ask, Where is the justice? How may our faith inform our actions and influence upon others? Morality plays a key role in the decisions we make, and our ethical commitments based on Gospel values and the Love Command are absolutely essential teachings in serving others in the name of Jesus. To take one example: America

may have the best health care in the world, but fewer people today are able to afford it. Corporations and employers in general are burdened by the expense of healthcare for their employees. Government is burdened by paying for healthcare for the poor the elderly. What shall we do? We're to find the money and resources to make it happen. More deeply we are called to love one another including our "enemies" that we might serve others.

Sometimes it seems easier to defend our ideologies than it is to stand up for our faith. Jesus was always pushing the envelope, challenging his followers to live life differently. We are called to love our enemies; beyond that how do we respond? Does faith teach us that people must earn their way and pay for health care? For a multitude of legitimate millions cannot. It would seem that God is calling us to stand up for those who have no voice.

Maybe Jesus had great expectations and made such demands because of a vision of human life truly fulfilled. We look at our children and think of what potential they have for their lives, and we hope they'll achieve everything they want to accomplish. As a nation on the verge of another anniversary we join with millions of other citizens to ask God to shine a light on our future. We pray fervently for the grace to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. We pray for peace as we strive for a more just society.

Fr. Dan Krutz

Help & helpers for those still recovering from the Flood

Flood-Impacted Homeowners

Restore Louisiana is trying to ensure all flood-impacted home-owners have an opportunity to complete a homeowner survey. See the below prepared social media and email campaigns that can be shared - please forward to your local churches, houses of faith, neighborhood and community organizations.

Flood-impacted homeowners need your help!

The Office of Community Development recently launched the Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program to aid people affected by the 2016 floods. **The program is designed to help with construction and reimbursements. It does not matter whether homeowners have started or completed their recovery process.** The goal is to ensure that impacted homeowners across the state are aware of this funding opportunity and are assisted throughout this process; to make this happen we have to get the word out! They are working with many of our churches, especially in heavily affected areas to assist members and provide additional support in completing the survey if needed.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Please pass along the message to members of your congregation to urge them to take the first step in receiving assistance by completing the survey. **Even if someone doesn't think they will qualify for assistance today, they may qualify as more funding becomes available. It only takes about 10-15 minutes.**

Online: restore.la.gov

Phone: [1-866-735-2001](tel:1-866-735-2001)

1. **Social Media** – There are banner images available at <http://restore.la.gov> for Facebook and

Twitter for use on social media accounts – individual neighborhood associations could use and also encourage their members to do the same.

In addition, they have developed social media post graphics and suggested content. Sample:
FACEBOOK: Were you or someone you know affected by the 2016 floods? The Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program is here to help homeowners repair and restore their damaged homes, or get reimbursed for work already completed. Take the first step – and encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to do the same – by completing a brief survey online at <http://restore.la.gov> or by phone at (866) 735-2001.
TWITTER: Affected by the 2016 #LAfloods? The #RestoreLA Program is here to help homeowners rebuild. Take the survey today: <http://restore.la.gov>

2. **Email Blasts** – encourage neighborhood associations to send the following message to their members

Were you or someone you know affected by the 2016 floods? The Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program is dedicated to helping homeowners affected by the March and/or August 2016 floods repair and restore their damaged homes, or get reimbursed for work already completed. In order to qualify for the program, you must complete a quick survey. You can take the survey online at <http://restore.la.gov/> or by phone at (866) 735-2001 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

All flood-impacted homeowners are strongly encouraged to complete the survey. Even if you don't think you will qualify now, you may qualify as more funding becomes available.

To learn more about the Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program, please visit <http://restore.la.gov/>. If you have any additional questions, feel free to email info@restore-la.org.

3. **Program Flyer/Posters** – share program flyers and posters with your members and request that community centers, stores, and other gathering places in your community to please post. They have attached electronic versions and you can request hard copies by contacting Jennifer Perkins at Jennifer.perkins@restore-la.org
4. **Neighborhood Outreach Event**–Program and outreach staff are prepared to attend an outreach event in neighborhoods throughout the state. Just let them know when, where, and what format. They have team members who can provide assistance in planning and logistics, as well as program representatives who can present, field questions, and assist homeowners with the survey process. To coordinate an event with their team, please contact Jennifer Perkins at Jennifer.perkins@restore-la.org

[Prayer Request](#)

Thank you for your prayers for **LIC Administrative Assistant**, Lorraine Grout. She recently had two major surgeries to remove cancer. She is back at work and recovering. Please pray that no cancer appears again!

[Some 940 HP ink to give away](#)

Recently the LIC office printer bit the dust & had to be replaced. This left us with some partially used HP ink cartridges that do not fit in the new printer, so we would like to give them away. The blue is almost full; the other 3 cartridges have small amounts of ink in them. We have HP 940XL Black, 940XL Magenta, 940XL Yellow, and 940XL Cyan. Please call or email our office about picking them up if your printer can use them. ☺

Friends mailout – 10 responses already – thank you!

In our May newsletter we let you know that the ‘Friends of the L.I.C.’ support request letters would soon go out. We have already received contributions from ten of our shared ministry supporters. Thanks to those who so quickly responded -- and to those who plan to do so! We look forward to hearing from you!

If you are not currently on our mailing list, and would like to contribute, please mail contributions to: Louisiana Interchurch Conference, Friends Pledge Drive, 527 N. Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or contribute online via PayPal/credit card at <http://www.lainterchurch.org/contribute/index.htm>. Thank you!

Good news for Justice Reform in Louisiana

The Louisiana Interchurch Conference and several other groups have been collaborating in bipartisan efforts to enact Criminal Justice Reforms in Louisiana.

The Legislative Justice Reinvestment Package (Criminal Justice Reform)

In March 2017, after nearly a year of study, the Louisiana Justice Reinvestment Task Force released a report of its findings and recommendations for legislative reform. Those recommendations were developed into ten bills, sponsored by Republicans, Democrats, and an Independent. All ten bills passed the Louisiana Legislature with strong bipartisan majorities. This comprehensive package will:

- Focus prison beds on those who pose a serious threat to society
- Strengthen community supervision
- Clear away barriers to successful reentry
- Reinvest a substantial portion of the saving

Impact of Reform:

With this ambitious package, Louisiana is projected to reduce the prison population by 10% and save \$262 million over the next decade. Seventy percent of these savings – an estimated \$184 million – will be reinvested into programs and policies proven to reduce recidivism and support victims of crime. It is also projected to reduce the community supervision population by 12%, making caseload sizes more manageable for probation and parole officers.

Additionally, Louisiana will finally lose its longstanding title as the most imprisoned state in the country. By 2018, Louisiana’s imprisonment rate is projected to dip below the #2 state’s current rate.

Louisiana is joining a number of its neighboring southern states, including South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi, that have enacted comprehensive criminal justice reform packages and have seen their imprisonment rate and crime rate fall simultaneously.

Edited from Legislative summary by Louisianans for Prison Alternatives

Bread or Stones – Has YOUR congregation joined??

Has your church joined yet??

The Bread or Stones campaign is proving to be an effective way to help children, but it only works with our combined efforts. There are many ways that a church can participate and many of those have **little or no monetary costs involved** to the church itself. This is doable!



There is a simple online application available to help facilitate congregations and ministries in joining the Bread or Stones Campaign. The link is below and is also available at website www.breadorstones.com on the "member" tab.

ONLINE APPLICATION:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdQbVBcVnIQ-uycDFbhorModhShXremLBqJzYqqEiweF6cNaw/viewform?usp=sf_link

Application questions are simple:

Contact information

Fill in any programs that are currently available at your church/organization

Are there any particular ministries that your congregation is interested in becoming involved with?

Ministry ideas are available at: www.breadorstones.com

Bread or Stones is an anti-poverty initiative for children.

Offering thanks to our recent contributors

The majority of the LIC operating income is contributed through the leadership of our member Judicatories, whom we deeply appreciate and depend upon. Additionally, we offer our sincere thanks to our ministry partners who have contributed as listed below.

Contributions received from May 26, 2017 through June 29, 2017:

Friends of the LIC and Miscellaneous Contributions: Mrs. Carol S. Broussard; Bishop James B. Brown; Rev. Jeff Day; Chaplain & Mrs. Bertrand Griffin; Dr. & Mrs. Kenny Crump; Bishop Michael Jarrell; Mr. & Mrs. Bill Bouldin (*in honor of and with prayers for Administrative Assistant, Lorraine Grout*); Bishop Shelton Fabre; Rev. & Mrs. Gregory Gyce; First United Methodist Church of Baton Rouge; and the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Lake Charles.

Thank you all!

Please pray for this ecumenical ministry. If you would like to help

financially, please mail contributions to: Louisiana Interchurch Conference, 527 N. Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or contribute online via PayPal at <http://www.lainterchurch.org/contribute/index.htm>.

Dates to calendar

Independence Day, July 4th. Happy July 4th!!! The LIC offices will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, July 3rd & 4th as we celebrate our Nation’s birthday.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

Annual Assembly meeting dates:

2018		March 5-6, Baton Rouge
2019		March 11-12, Lafayette

Fall Board meeting dates:

2017		Sept. 25-26, Alexandria
2018		Sept. 24-25, Lake Charles

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***“To live the faith we hold in common”***

*Louisiana Interchurch Conference  
527 North Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
(225) 344-0134 [www.lainterchurch.org](http://www.lainterchurch.org)*

*President: The Most Rev. Michael G. Duca; President Elect: The Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey;  
Executive Director: Fr. Dan Krutz*

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| <p>You are receiving this message because you have previously expressed interest in the work of Louisiana Interchurch Conference. <b><i>We hope you enjoy our newsletter!</i></b> However, if you’d like to discontinue receiving this e-newsletter, please <a href="#">click here</a> or call us at: (225) 344-0134.</p> |
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