



Louisiana Interchurch Conference

# L-Newsletter

June 27, 2018

"To live the faith we hold in common"

## Contents:

- *Sweet Land of Liberty (Article from our Director)*
  - *In need of Prayer*
  - *Fall Board Meeting - save the dates!*
  - *Anniversaries, Installations, and a Retirement*
  - *Farmers Need Wills, too*
  - *Appreciation Award for the Yorks*
  - *International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking*
  - *Fourth of July Greetings*
  - *Offering thanks to our recent contributors - we couldn't make it without you all!*
  - *Dates to calendar*
- ~~~~~



## Director's Corner

Article from our  
Executive Director,  
Rev. Dan Krutz



### *Sweet Land of Liberty*

*My country, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee I sing; Land where my fathers died,  
Land of the pilgrims' pride, From ev'ry mountainside  
Let freedom ring!*

According to Wikipedia the patriotic hymn *My Country, 'Tis of Thee* was written by Samuel Francis Smith while he was a student at Andover Newtown Theological Seminary in Andover, Massachusetts. It was written in 1831 and first performed on July 4, 1831 at a children's Independence Day Celebration at Park Street Church in Boston. The hymn served as one of the unofficial National Anthems until *The Star-Spangled Banner* was adopted as the Official U.S. National Anthem in 1931.

The phrase *Sweet Land of Liberty* evokes many and varied emotions especially when we ponder the lyrics surrounding the phrase that remind us of the hard-fought battles and sacrifices made by so many of our forbearers that brought about the freedom and liberty we cherish today. Because our country was a bold new experiment as a representative democracy, there weren't many historical antecedents that could serve as a guide about how to inaugurate this new enterprise. In many ways we are still developing as a democracy and exploring the limits of freedom and liberty. Social, economic, and cultural trends in our society along with the development of science, technology and other disciplines are ingredients that ramp up the pace of change.

Frankly, my sense is the pace of change in life is so rapid, we are not able to articulate a morality or system of ethics that "fits" the succession of new days dawning upon us. Of course, the nostalgia for bygone days is not far from our conscious minds as we attempt to make sense of decisions we have to make at a time when it's not always easy to figure out what is right and what is wrong. Segments of our society are trying very hard to take us back in time to what in their minds is a safer, calmer and more comfortable life, while others are thinking about a very different world and literally working to explore other worlds beyond our earth!

As we approach Independence Day 2018 what comes to mind for me as a kind of permanent wake-up call is the phrase most often associated with the Statue of Liberty "*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,*" from a sonnet by Emma Lazarus. To the degree those words of care and hospitality have been lived out by our nation, that's when America has been great. We are an immigrant nation, and how we treat today's migrants and immigrants will say more than anything else about the state of this Sweet Land of Liberty. May God help us to light that great torch of liberty for today and for the generations to come!

---

## *In Need of Prayer*



Our sympathy to the family of Mr. William "Bill" Rucker who passed away a few days ago. We have not yet been made aware of the arrangements. Bill was a longtime member of the LIC's Commission on Criminal Justice.

Please keep Bishop Robert Muench in prayer. He collapsed from being overheated this past Sunday, but after a brief hospital stay is doing much better now.

Please continue to keep the Rev. Dr. Mallery Callahan in prayer due to the pancreatic cancer. He was placed in a hospice program but has been doing better and has been able to attend some of his church/organizational functions. Praise the Lord!

Our sympathy to the family of Bishop C. Garnett Henning. Bp Henning served as LIC President in 2006 and had served as a Judicatory Leader to the LIC representing the 8th District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church before transferring to CA. He died on May 15th at the age of 82. [Click here for obituary link.](#)

---

## *Fall Board Meeting - save the dates!*

The LIC Fall Board Meeting will be held on September 24-25, 2018 at the St. Charles Retreat Center in Lake Charles. The theme for this year's meeting will be:

**"The Church and Advocacy - Seeking justice, mercy, and peace"**

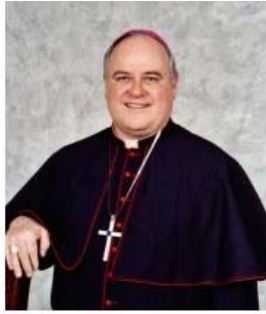
**As always, guests are invited to attend all speaker sessions.** Our keynote speaker will be Mr. Rob Tasman, Executive Director of the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, which represents the Louisiana bishops at the state legislative sessions concerning bills involving social justice and family life issues. Mr. Tasman received his bachelor's degree from Boston College, a Jesuit university. He received his master's in theology from Boston

College in 2004 and a law degree from LSU in 2008.

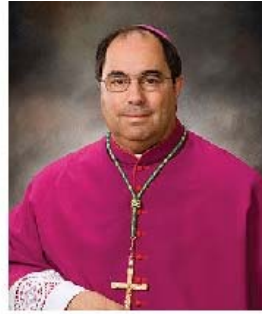
We'll be posting more information soon, as well as sending out invitation packets to all Board Members. In the meantime, **please save the dates!**

---

## *Anniversaries, Installations, and a Retirement*



**Bishop Muench**



**Bishop Duca**

Congratulations to the **Most Rev. Robert W. Muench** who celebrated the **50th Anniversary of his Ordination** this past weekend in a "Golden Jubilee" celebration at St. Joseph Catholic Cathedral in Baton Rouge. Bishop Muench, who is now 75, is also retiring. The Pope has accepted his resignation on June 26, 2018. We will miss Bishop Muench's leadership in the LIC but wish him many happy years of retirement.

Congratulations to the **Most Rev. Michael G. Duca** who has been appointed by the Pope to be the **Sixth Bishop of Baton Rouge**, replacing the retiring Bishop Muench. Bishop Duca is currently the Bishop of the Shreveport Diocese. He will be installed Aug. 24th at St. Joseph Cathedral in Baton Rouge. Bishop Duca has been a strong and active supporter of the LIC and its Bread or Stones Anti-Poverty Initiative for Children. We look forward to continuing to work with him.

~~~~~

We offer congratulations to the **Rev. Dr. Donald Longbottom** as, effective June 1st, he has now been officially installed as the **Called Conference Minister** of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. He has been serving as Designated Conference Minister up until this point.

~~~~~

We also offer congratulations to the **Rev. S. Scott Chemino**, of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, as June 19th was the **25th Anniversary of his Ordination**. He was wonderfully surprised when the parish in Bunkie turned out at 6:30 that morning as if it were a full Sunday Mass. A reception followed. Fr. Chemino relived many blessed memories of saintly people that he has known through the years and the mysteries of God that he has encountered in priestly service. He said it was a great day!

---

## *Farmers Need Wills, too*

Land is one of the greatest and most valuable assets farmers possess. When a farmer dies without a proper will, the estate can be lost or remain in limbo for years. In looking at Black farmland ownership, which peaked in 1910 at 16 to 19 million acres, we see that it has decreased to less than 3 million acres today. The causes of under-utilization and loss of rural black land are numerous and complex, but none is more notable than heirs property. *Heirs Property* is created when a landowner dies without a will, or other form of estate planning, for

the transfer of ownership of land to another prior to death. Subsequently, heirs property owners do not have clear title to the land they own. Today, it is estimated that over 60% of all black owned land is heirs property.

The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee has passed its version of the 2018 Farm Bill by a vote of 20-1. Senator Doug Jones of Alabama is expected to introduce a heirs property amendment, *"The Assist Farmers and Ranchers Operating on Heirs Property to Participate in USDA Programs Act,"* when the bill is up for a vote on the floor prior to the Senate's July 4 recess. This is aimed at allowing expanded authority for access to USDA programs. However, we advise proper planning of estates to avoid such problems in the future.

The LIC continues to operate a Farm Advocacy program with Mrs. Betty Puckett as our counselor to farmers. We encourage you to contact the LIC for further information.

---

### *Appreciation Award for the Yorks*

Our Executive Director, Rev. Dan Krutz tries to attend as many of the Annual meetings of our member organizations as possible. He was pleased to be present on June 21st at the AMEZ (African Methodist Episcopal Zion) Annual Conference held at Butler AMEZ in Amite, LA. In the photo above on the right, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth York and his wife, Abigail, received a gift of appreciation as presiding elder of the Roseland District of the AMEZ. Congratulations!

Bishop Michael Frencher serves as the Judicatory Leader for the AMEZ on the LIC Board of Directors and Rev. York serves as a Board Member at Large.



**Bishop Frencher**



**Rev. & Mrs. York**

---

### *International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking*

Drug abuse is a plague that is affecting our society in multiple levels. Prayers and putting feet to faith are actions needed in this war for minds and souls. Various practical actions and ideas are being put forth by many. The simple "Listen First" theme (as below from the UN General Assembly) may be at least one weapon in this battle.

*June 26th was the annual International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, as begun by the UN General Assembly back in 1987. It is an expression of a shared goal of achieving an international society free of drug abuse.*

#### **Listen First**

The theme for 2018 was: "[Listen First - Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe.](#)"

---

## Fourth of July Greetings



We wish all of you a  
Safe and Happy 4th of July!

The LIC office will be closed that day in honor of our country's Independence Day celebrations.

---

### Offering thanks to our recent contributors – we couldn't make it without you all!

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 30, 2018 through June 26, 2018:*

Bread or Stones Children's Anti-Poverty Initiative: Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans; and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

Friends of the LIC and General Fund Contributors: Bishop James B. Brown; Carol S. Broussard; Jane Snyder; Fannie Perkins Reddix; and Bishop Ronald Herzog.

#### **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

#### Annual Assembly meeting dates:

2019		March 11-12, Lafayette
2020		March 2-3, tbd – New Orleans or Houma

#### Fall Board meeting dates:

2018		Sept. 24-25, Lake Charles
2019		Sept. 23-24, Monroe

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

*President: The Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey; President Elect: The Rev. Dr. Timothy Jones;  
Executive Director: Fr. Dan Krutz*