



# Louisiana Interchurch Conference

**E-Newsletter** September 28, 2017

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

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Article from our Director

*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we<sup>[a]</sup> have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... Romans 5: 1*

Christians around the world will commemorate what is known as the beginning of the Reformation when Martin Luther attached his 95 *Theses* on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenburg, Germany, October 31, 2017. Luther's posting was critical of the practice of Indulgences whereby people who committed sins, by payment to the Church would have those sins remitted.

This past week those who attended the Board meeting of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference heard two presentations by Dr. Denis Janz, Emeritus Professor of the History of Christianity at Loyola University, New Orleans. In his presentations on Luther and the Reformation, Luther was described as a man and Priest consumed by his own sinfulness. In a very captivating manner Janz painted a picture of this Reformer having a breakthrough when he was able to see and analyze in his own life that a person's motives can never be truly pure. Sin seems always to surface even in one's purest acts. A person can do an act that is good, feel proud about that, and before one knows it, has committed sin. It's not so much sins that beset us as it is living in sin—sin being a condition of life—except for faith in God and the resultant grace. AND through the medium of Professor Janz, Luther reached through the centuries to touch me.

At one point, I was surprised to find myself shedding tears as the Professor described the moment of coming to faith in Jesus who already has saved us all through his death on the Cross. In my own journey of faith, I think I had to some extent grown numb to the reference to Christ upon the cross, like reading the creeds without thought. However, in his own way Denis Janz was preaching to me. I think I received just an inkling of what I believe Martin Luther experienced that propelled him into the spotlight of the late Middle Ages.

Luther would say God frees us to love, and sin is anything that obstructs that love from being effective in the lives of those we touch and those who love and touch us. It is sin that creates walls separating peoples and nations. It is sin that causes some to feel and think they are better than others. It is sin that raises its ugly head manifest in racism and so many of the other ‘isms.’ It is sin that we see in social inequality and the systems that perpetuate economic inequality. It is sin that causes us to believe that God’s love is too good to be true. It is God’s love in Christ that still woos us to cross denominational and doctrinal boundaries and touch one another, and we experience Oneness. Amazing Grace!

Rev. Dan Krutz

### *Prayer Intentions*

Our prayers remain with all of those affected by Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma, and the many volunteers & staff who are working to help.

### *Highlights from the Fall Board Meeting*

## Thanks to All who attended the Fall Board Meeting and the Monday evening Worship Service this week in Alexandria!

Thirty-six leaders and laity from many denominations gathered in sunny Alexandria for an informative and often humorous time of fellowship.

The meeting theme was: *“The Church, the Reformation and the Quest for Unity,”* in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

Dr. Denis Janz gave us a candid look at the works of Martin Luther, saying that some loved Luther and some hated him, both with valid reasons. He said that Luther was an excessive beer drinker with an extremely vulgar vocabulary, and yet God used this man to fuel a dire need for change in the direction of the church. Luther believed that the Pope did not know of the abuses going on in the church with the *selling* of Indulgences. Luther’s 95 Theses were originally intended to highlight such abuses, though, at the time, he did not condemn the Indulgences



<p>themselves. Later Luther would spur more dramatic changes as he preached that “Justification is by Faith Alone.”</p>	<p>Our keynote speaker was <b>Dr. Denis R. Janz</b></p>
<p>During his presentation, Dr. Janz displayed a typical Indulgence, written in Latin, and offered to sell it. There was good-natured laughter but no takers.</p>	<p><i>Provost Distinguished Professor of the History of Christianity</i></p>

**Business Session Highlights:**

A presentation was given by Mr. Rick Wheat, President and CEO of the United Methodist Children’s Homes. He cited the urgent and future needs of the orphaned and marginalized **children in this state**. Mr. Samuel Rottman followed that with a presentation on Bread or Stones. The churches are the first and most lasting line of defense/support for these children and **everyone can be a part of the solution**.

An environmental **Resolution** was put forth and approved to make **2018 a year of prayer for “Cancer Alley” in Louisiana**. Cancer Alley is a well-known area along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, which contains numerous industrial plants. In this River Parishes area, higher than normal cancer rates are found, as well as an abnormally high rate of rare cancers.

Rev. Jan Curwick has moved to another job location. Rev. Van Stinson of the UMC was voted in as the **new Treasurer** to replace her, and Mrs. Sandy O’Brien, a licensed CPA, was voted in as the **Assistant Treasurer**. (A vacant Board-Member-at-Large position will be addressed at the Annual Assembly in March.)

The **2018 proposed budget was approved**, with some necessary cuts. Many Judicatory members are generously maintaining or increasing their pledges for 2018; thank you all so much! However, LIC is expecting overall Judicatory funding to be reduced next year.

Bishop Cynthia F. **Harvey** gave an update on the UMC’s disaster response to Hurricane Harvey. She was quite disgruntled that ‘they’ named the storm “Harvey.” Rev. **Irma** Bañales kept quiet on the use of her name for the other recent hurricane.



*All business sessions and the evening banquet were held in Xavier Hall of the St. Francis Xavier Cathedral Church Complex. We sincerely thank Fr. James Ferguson for so graciously hosting us! Our thanks as well to Fr. Scott Chemino, Regional Coordinator for the area. These two men went out of their way to accommodate the group including extra perks such as tablecloths and flowers, and china and silverware for the evening banquet. And thank you to the St. Francis Xavier Altar Society members who served the evening banquet with such care and gracious hospitality!*



Rev. Supt.  
Woodrow Davis  
of COGIC



Fr. James  
Ferguson, JCL,  
Rector of St.  
Francis Xavier  
Catholic  
Cathedral,  
leading the  
processional.

## Evening Worship, Sept. 25th:

Rev. Irma Bañales preached at the ecumenical evening worship service held in the beautiful and historic St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Many others participated in the service as well (a few of them are shown in photos here).

Rev. Bañales stated that she is a sister, daughter, mother, and grandmother, but now she feels united in Christ with this opportunity to share the Word with all of these brothers and sisters. She spoke of the unity in her family that her mother always insisted on, and how her mother expects her to carry on that torch with her 9 siblings. She was excited when her Bishop told her to be ecumenical, saying that she can hang around with believers from many other denominations and not get in trouble! She went through the list of the denominations represented by the LIC and stated that the peoples of the LIC are ambassadors – bringing people together in unity.

LIC President, Bishop Michael Duca, observed in his closing statements that he heard in her sermon that “Unity does not happen by accident; it must be purposed.”



Rev. Irma Bañales,  
Evening preacher.



Bishop Michael  
G. Duca,  
LIC President



Mrs. Mary Collins  
President of CWU

**Thanks to all who joined us there!** It was a fairly small congregation worshipping together that evening and yet \$679.00 was contributed to the Endowment Fund for Christian Unity. Thank you all for your generosity!

*We will be posting the above information and more pictures, etc., on the LIC website in the next few days. We invite you view our Archives link at: [http://www.lainterchurch.org/Newsletter.htm#Board\\_mtg\\_archive\\_link\\_from\\_home\\_page](http://www.lainterchurch.org/Newsletter.htm#Board_mtg_archive_link_from_home_page) where you can find detailed information and many photos from our Board/Assembly meetings going all the way back to 2006! 😊 (The link can also be accessed directly from the home page, look for “Board Meeting Archives.”)*

## World Communion Sunday, October 1st



First instituted in 1934, World Communion Sunday offers congregations a distinctive opportunity to experience Holy Communion in the context of the global community of faith. The first Sunday of October has become a time when Christians in every culture break bread and pour the cup to remember and affirm Christ as the Head of the Church. On that day, they remember that they are part of the whole body of believers. Whether shared in a grand cathedral, a mud hut, outside on a hilltop, in a meetinghouse, or in a storefront, Christians celebrate the communion liturgy in as many ways as there are congregations. World Communion Sunday can be both a profound worship experience and a time for learning more about our wider community of faith.

For ideas on how you and your church can share in this ecumenical celebration go to: [http://www.globalministries.org/special\\_days\\_wcs\\_world\\_communion\\_sunday\\_ideas](http://www.globalministries.org/special_days_wcs_world_communion_sunday_ideas)

## St. Francis of Assisi Day-Coastal Creation Care-October 4th

Wednesday, October 4, 2017, is the annual Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi.

St. Francis has been declared the Patron saint of those who promote care for nature. He died in October of 1226, and his life is recommended as a guide for animal and nature lovers, environmentalists and ecologists, showing us how to live in a way that respects and honors nature as God's creation.

Link for a Saint Francis Day bulletin insert for your churches: <http://mississippiriverdelta.org/files/2017/09/Coastal-Creation-Care-092017.pdf>



## Reformation Anniversary Events in October

### **October 29, 2017 is Reformation Sunday** **(the 500th Anniversary)**

A **lecture** will be held at the Nunemaker Auditorium at Loyola University; *Luther's Spiritual Exercises*, by Rev. Dr. Philip Krey, author of *The Catholic Luther: The Early Writings*, Paulist Press, pub.; beginning at 7pm on Thursday, **October 12, 2017**.

A **500th Anniversary Commemoration Service** at St. Louis Cathedral, 615 Pere Antoine Alley, New Orleans, LA, beginning at 7:00 pm on Monday evening, **October 23, 2017**.

Archbishop Emeritus Alfred Hughes of the Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans and Bishop Michael Rinehart of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod, will be the keynote speakers at a **presentation titled: “Reformation, 500 years later – lessons learned.”** To be held at St. George Catholic Church, Kleinpeter Center, 7808 St. George Drive, Baton Rouge, from 10 am to 11:30 am on Tuesday, **October 24, 2017**. The event is Free. Please RSVP to the Interfaith Federation of Baton Rouge at 225-267-5600 or [www.ifedgbr.com](http://www.ifedgbr.com).

*If you know of other events occurring, please let us know so that we may possibly post them on the LIC website.*

### [National Children's Sabbath October 22nd](#)

*Make plans for your congregation now!*

The National Observance of Children's Sabbaths is an annual event held each year, typically during the third weekend of October. (Some choose to hold observances in May *and* October, and we encourage this.) Sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund, this event is a way for faith communities to celebrate children as sacred gifts of the Divine, and provides the opportunity for houses of worship to renew and live out their moral responsibility to care, protect and advocate for all children. This celebration is a part of a broader children's movement that aims to unite communities and religious congregations of all faiths across the nation in shared concern for children and a common commitment to improving their lives and working for justice on their behalf.



Please see the Bread or Stones website <http://breadorstones.com/home>, for more ideas on how your church can be involved with sermon ideas, prayers, and activities in commemoration of this event for children.

#### ***Bread or Stones Prayer***

*Most gracious heavenly Father, you give us all good gifts, loving us each as your own. Strengthen our resolve to ensure that all of the children of Louisiana receive the food, education, health care, and opportunity they need for growth and fulfillment of the lives they deserve. Bless the Bread or Stones Campaign as we work to improve child well-being, serving your children with the tenderness you have first shown us. We ask these things in the Name of your holy Child, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

[Click here](#) for the Louisiana Children's Sabbath Litany  
(PDF version available via that link as well).

### [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 August 31, 2017 through September 28, 2017:*

Friends of the LIC and Miscellaneous Contributors: Mrs. Ann Ball.

Endowment Fund Contributors: Supt. Woodrow Davis; Dr. Larry Cross; Rev. Barbara Driscoll; Mrs. Catherine Townsend; Mr. Robert Gorman; Mrs. Marie Ducote-Comeaux; Madre Annie Etheredge; and many anonymous contributors who gave cash contributions as the Fall Board Meeting ecumenical worship service.

Sabbatical/Cont. education fund for Executive Director: Mr. Dale S. Zuelke, in memory of his mother, Martha Zuelke; and Mrs. Jane J. Rainey, in memory of her son, William "Lucky" Thomas.

**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>.

### Various Dates to calendar

#### Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

##### **Annual Assembly meeting dates:**

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

##### **Fall Board meeting dates:**

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

#### Other Dates To Remember

**November 5, 2017** – Fall Back – turn clocks back one hour at 2am

**Sundays, November 5th & 12th, 2017** -- [Days of Prayer for the Persecuted Church](http://idop.org/web/)  
<http://idop.org/web/>

**November 8-10, 2017**, [NCCCUSA Christian Unity Gathering](#), Silver Spring, MD



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*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*

You are receiving this message because you have previously expressed interest in the work of Louisiana Interchurch Conference. ***We hope you enjoy our newsletter!*** However, if you'd like to discontinue receiving this e-newsletter, please [click here](#) or call us at: (225) 344-0134.