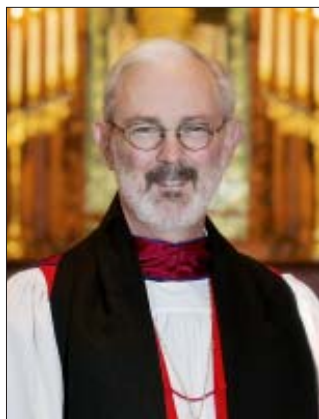


# ALIVE!

FEBRUARY 2015

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

VOLUME XXXVII, NUMBER 2



## God's Adult Children

The Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Ph.D., D.D.

Children delight me.

My own sons and daughter have reached adulthood. So when I hold babies, and watch toddlers stagger ahead of their parents, and listen to elementary school boys and girls banter, I smile with both nostalgia and genuine affection.

Some parents struggle to relate to their children once they enter puberty. Teenagers undergo startling physical, mental, and emotional changes in a relatively short timeframe. Consumed with forming their own identity, they test limits, question authority, and try out new ideas.

Still dependent upon their parents, teenagers want independence but they still rely upon their parents in a variety of ways. They

might even resent their parents for this. And let's be honest, the resentment can run in both directions.

I find youth endlessly fascinating. Teaching 18- and 19- year-olds introductory philosophy—watching them learn to think things through for themselves in a sustained, sophisticated way—was some of the most fun I've ever had. Conversations at the Owensby dinner table could be pretty energetic.

As much as I loved being a parent to children and to youth, I find being a parent to adults at once more challenging and significantly more rewarding.

The first challenge comes with recognizing that Andrew, Meredith, and Patrick are adults. I spent years accumulating the habits of caring for a dependent being and shaping the character of a young, malleable soul.

Even though we all know that the goal is to nurture our sons and

See Bishop's Message, page 11



## **Your can become a stronger, more knowledgeable Christian by attending Cursillo #148 at Camp Hardtner April 9-12**

Cursillo is a short, intense course in Christianity that has been formulated to build a foundation of leaders in the lay order of the Episcopal Church. Cursillo weekends are conducted by lay women and men with members of the clergy acting as spiritual advisors. It has been said many times that the only way to truly describe Cursillo is to live it. Lay Rector Richard Fincher, and Head Spiritual Director Father George Gennuso invite you to experience this life-changing weekend.

The three-day Cursillo weekend joins Episcopalians from different backgrounds from every area of the diocese to worship and share experiences while broadening their knowledge of the church. What's expected is to build stronger Christians by stressing the concepts of piety, study and action.

The next Cursillo weekend in the Diocese will be held April 9-12 at the

Hardtner Camp and Conference Center at Pollock, Louisiana.

If you are interested in attending a Cursillo weekend, ask someone in your congregation who has attended Cursillo to sponsor you. Applications are available online at the Cursillo of Western Louisiana Web site, [www.wlacursillo.com](http://www.wlacursillo.com).



## **Epiphany**

Epiphany means "revealing" or "showing forth" and begins January 6. The season begins with the showing forth of Jesus to the Gentiles, specifically the wise men of Matthew's Gospel, who are the first to know his divinity. Epiphany proclaims Jesus as Savior of the whole world and that God's promise of salvation now applies to all the people of earth.

## **Cursillo Music Fest**

**Saturday, February 7, 2015 at Camp Hardtner**

Make plans now to be a part of this great gathering. It's a time to relax, enjoy music, good food and fellowship.

Music Fest is a major fundraiser for the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Western Louisiana. Funds raised from the silent auction and gift store will help cover the costs of future Cursillos in the Diocese.



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Robert Harwell ..... Editor

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[robertharwell@centurytel.net](mailto:robertharwell@centurytel.net)

## **Daughters Care Taking Care**



**Receiving Care**

**Giving Care**

DOK Spring Assembly  
Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
St. Timothy's, Alexandria

A day of reflection and learning about taking care of our hearts, being a care giver for loved ones and receiving care when our reserves are low. Focus on Walking in the Light; caring for the elderly and ill in our families, churches and communities and tending to the care givers among us.

Cost is \$25

To Register: Mail checks to Ruth Gayle at 1216 Georgia St., Sulphur, LA 77063

Make checks payable to DOK of Diocese of Western LA  
For more information contact Debbie Fitzpatrick at 318-780-8088 or  
Judy Bordelon at 318-664-7844



## Upcoming

*Engaging God's Mission After the Field of Dreams: The Missional Church*

# THE ELEMENTS OF THE MISSIONAL CHURCH

*With the Rev. Richard Norman*

*Saturday, February 28, 2015*

*10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.*

*A one-day session at the Hardtner Camp  
and Conference Center in Pollock, LA*



**The Rev. Canon Richard Norman, Jr.**

The Rev. Canon Richard Hudson Norman, Jr. is the rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Monroe.

A native of Louisiana, Father Norman grew up in Alexandria, LA. An LSU graduate, he attended General Theological Seminary in New York City and was ordained a deacon by Bishop Robert J. Hargrove at St. Mark's Cathedral in 1992 and priest at St. Timothy's, Alexandria in 1993. He has served several churches in the United States and Europe and prior to coming to Grace, he was a senior canon at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Father Norman's wide experience uniquely qualifies him to identify and commend the Elements of successful missional churches.

### **The Congregational Vitality Institute**

CVI is a leadership training program focused on strengthening the spiritual community and organizational life of the congregations within the Diocese of Western Louisiana.

To equip lay leaders to serve in their congregations in mutual ministry is the mission of CVI. Specific training to enable these skills is provided by CVI. The desired result is stronger, healthier congregations that are visible in their communities, and fully responsive to God as missional churches.

CVI will present five programs in 2015. A one-time fee of \$25 entitles you to attend all five presentations. Saturday's session begins at 10:00 a.m. at Camp Hardtner in Pollock, LA, and will end at 3:00 p.m.

To register for this session, go to <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=myjrwflab&coeidk=a07eagae1rs357c5f7a>

Each person attending should register separately.

## ***NEXT CVI PRESENTATION: When in our music God is glorified, June 6, 2015***

Mr. Bryan Mitnaul of St. Mark's, Shreveport, is the presenter of this one-day session at the St. James Episcopal Church in Alexandria.

## **Absalom Jones Day to focus on American black life, history and culture, a century later**

by The Very Rev. Thomas T. Nsubuga

On Sunday, February 15, 2015, St. Luke's Episcopal Chapel will hold its annual Celebration Honoring the Life of the Reverend Absalom Jones. The Celebration will begin with the Eucharist Service at 10 a.m. followed by a luncheon. Both events will take place at Episcopal Church of St. Luke, 538 South Main St, Grambling, LA 71245.

Absalom Jones was born a slave in Sussex, Delaware on Dec. 6, 1746. He learned to read as a child. At 16 he was taken to Philadelphia to work in his master's shop where a clerk taught him to write. His savings enabled him to buy first his wife's and then his freedom. He became a friend of Richard Allen and together they founded

the Free African Society, which served as a protective society and social organization for free blacks. Jones and Allen were both



inclined to preach and were part of St. George's Methodist Church. Harassed by

white members, they made a decision to organize blacks outside of the church and so the Free African Society grew.

Toward the end of 1790, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen were encouraged to inaugurate a separate black church. In an election the majority of members of the Free African Society voted to affiliate with the Church of England. Absalom Jones accepted the pastorate and in 1794 the African Church of St. Thomas opened. Jones was active in the civic life of Philadelphia and in 1799 was among 75 free black men who sent a petition against the slave trade to Congress. This petition was the first official protest to Congress by blacks in

America. Jones died on February 13, 1818. The Episcopal Church recognizes Absalom



**Dr. Kimbrough**

Jones as its first black priest. A Day of Devotion is annually set aside in February by the church to commemorate the work of Absalom Jones.

Although there is a common history shared between Black

Episcopalians and African Methodist Epis-

*See Absalom Jones, page 10*

# Diocesan News

## New, simplified online registration for Diocesan events is now a reality

Great news: the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana is rolling out a new, simplified online registration system! Beginning with the JEYL Middle School Retreat, sign-ups for all diocesan events except summer camp at Camp Hardtner will be available at the diocesan website: <http://www.diocesewla.org>.

All you have to do is click on a link, fill out an easy form, and submit it. Your registration information will be stored in a database that will allow us to keep track of attendees, ensure that we have an accurate headcount for the event, and maintain email contact with participants.



As part of the registration process, there is an online payment option through PayPal. When you choose to use this service, you can access your existing PayPal account, if you have one, or you can use PayPal as a guest. Mailing in a check is also possible, and for many events you will be able to pay at the door by check or credit card.

Questions? Feel free to contact Joy Owensby ([jowensby@diocesewla.org](mailto:jowensby@diocesewla.org)) or Holly Davis ([hdavis@diocesewla.org](mailto:hdavis@diocesewla.org)).



### Camp Hardtner February 20-22

*Registrations should be received in the Diocesan Office by February 9, 2015*

Happening is a Christian experience presented by teenagers for teenagers with the help of clergy and lay adult leadership. During the Happening retreat, there are activities designed for fun and Christian community building among participants.

Throughout the weekend, youth staff and clergy present a series of talks about our Christian faith. Using personal life experiences, the youth staff members offer Christ's message to understanding Happenings on a level they can understand and address many of the faith questions youth struggle with daily. Clergy speak about church teachings and their importance in the lives of youth attending the weekend.

The entire series of talks is given in a sequence that is intended to guide Happenings by opening an avenue of discussions to help them verbalize and internalize their faith questions in a safe environment and hopefully lead to a renewed or new relationship with Christ.

Caritas — signs of God's love through letters, messages and small tokens — are distributed at times over the weekend to deepen fellowship and to demonstrate the knowledge and support that comes to each weekend from the "wider church."

Happening is for high school students in grades 10-12. Youth may participate in

It may seem strange to raise this question in January, but here goes: Has your church begun to make plans for Vacation Bible School yet? If not, now is the time to start!

To assist you in this process, every year the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary identifies and reviews both newly published VBS programs and perennial materials from a wide variety of publishers. These reviews are published online by late February and will be available at: <http://www.keyhallonline.org/>

Happening only once during their high school career. However, students who have participated in Happening may apply to serve as staff members in subsequent high school years.

This year's Happening will take place February 20-22, 2015 at Camp Hardtner. Registration forms can be downloaded from the youth page of the diocesan website: <http://www.diocesewla.org/ministries/youth/>. Cost is \$90/participant if received in the diocesan office by February 9. After this time, call Camp Hardtner to see if space is still available. Late registration is \$100/participant.

**THERE IS NO GUARANTEE OF LATE REGISTRATION.**

For additional information, contact Mother Mitzi George ([mothermitzi@hotmail.com](mailto:mothermitzi@hotmail.com)) or Joy Owensby ([jowensby@diocesewla.org](mailto:jowensby@diocesewla.org)).

## Have you planned Vacation Bible School yet?



<http://www.keyhallonline.org/> (click on the Reviews tab at the top of the page).

In the meantime, if you are new to VBS planning or simply want a refresher course in VBS basics, you might also consider taking a new online class entitled *How to Run a Vacation Bible School* (<https://www.churchnext.tv/school/catalog/course/how-to-run-a-vacation-bible-school-with-dorothy-linthicum/>).

[www.churchnext.tv/school/catalog/course/how-to-run-a-vacation-bible-school-with-dorothy-linthicum/](http://www.churchnext.tv/school/catalog/course/how-to-run-a-vacation-bible-school-with-dorothy-linthicum/)). Taught by Dorothy Linthicum, one of the foremost experts in the field, this course covers how to organize, put together a leadership team, choose a curriculum, and run a successful VBS.

If you need additional assistance in Vacation Bible School planning or any other area of Christian Formation, please contact Joy Owensby in the diocesan office ([jowensby@diocesewla.org](mailto:jowensby@diocesewla.org)) or (318-442-1304).

## clergy notes

Bishop Jake will host a special Clergy Day, Thursday, February 19, 2015 at St. James, Alexandria, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The Celebration of a New Ministry is scheduled for February 25, 2015 at Holy Trinity in Sulphur, where the Rev. Ally Perry has been called as Rector.

The Eastertide Clergy Retreat will be held at Camp Hardtner Tuesday, April 7, through Thursday, April 9. The retreat begins at 5:00 p.m. April 7.

## Upcoming

### SECOND ANNUAL DIOCESAN CHRISTIAN FORMATION CONFERENCE

# Engaging God's Mission: Forming Disciples Lifelong AND Life-wide

*Make plans to attend the 2nd annual diocesan Christian Formation Conference*

**Saturday, March 21, 2015**

**10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**St. James, Alexandria** (check-in begins at 9:00 a.m.)

**Our featured Speaker:** *Dr. Lisa Kimball, Director of the Center for Ministry of Teaching and Professor of Christian Formation and Congregational Leadership at Virginia Theological Seminary.*



Dr. Kimball will invite us to look at our formation as Christians "... as both a lifelong journey and a life-wide experience of the presence of God in every dimension of our being at any moment." Through her keynote presentation as well as large and small group discussion, she will help conference participants explore the connection between engaging God's mission and forming Christian disciples and will provide ideas and examples of how churches can be vital in the modern world.

**Who should attend this conference?** Christian Formation leaders, youth ministers, VBS directors, clergy, or anyone else with an interest in spiritual growth and development should plan to participate. In fact, Bishop Jake would like for every congregation to send a team to the conference.

Registration is \$20 per person and is available on the home page of the diocesan website: <http://www.diocesewla.org>. Childcare is available for children up through fifth grade.

**For further information, contact Joy Owensby ([jowensby@diocesewla.org](mailto:jowensby@diocesewla.org)).**

## APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 31

### Ministry Application Program (MAP) details and applications available on Diocesan Website

As stated by Bishop Jake in his Convention Address, "The 2015 budget puts our money where our mouth is."

In order to encourage missional thinking and risk-taking, the budget includes a grant program entitled the Ministry Application Program or MAP. This year a total of \$150,000 has been designated for this grant program.

Details of the program and applications for grants are on the diocesan website ([www.diocesewla.org](http://www.diocesewla.org)).

In short, annual grants for missional initiatives for up to \$7,500 are available. Grants for capital improvements in support of mission cap at \$5,000. Both kinds of grants will be awarded to new initiatives. They will not be used to supplement operating budgets. These grants are in addition to our longstanding grant program for Formation in Small Congregations.



# MAP GRANTS

**NOW  
AVAILABLE**



## Looking Back

### Bishop Jake stays busy during St. Paul's, Shreveport visit

Sunday, January 18, 2015 was a proud day for The Family of St. Paul's. Not only did they host their bishop, they were willing participants in the service in which Bishop Jake baptized, confirmed, reaffirmed and received. Swelling the Family rolls were the following:

**Baptisms:** front row, left to right, Aurorra Layne Butler, Tristan David Butler, Simon Douglas Wickham, and John-Thomas Wickham held by Dad, John Wickham.

**Confirmations:** second row, left to right, Verger-Jim Taliaferro (not confirmed) Jamie Hassell Hill, Karen Denise Harrison FitzGerald, Judith Merle Killough, Martee Malice Richardson Reeg, Seth David Reeg, Jessica Renee Trotta, and Verger-Susan Sherwin.

**Reaffirmations and Received:** third row, left to right, Heather Donna Mary Garraway, Monnie Frances Michalik - not pictured, Denise Renee' Bryant Moreau, Jackson Hines Hill, Bishop Jake Owensby, Gerald Paul Savoie, Lisa Kay Thompson Savoie, and St. Paul's rector Father Paul Martin.



### St. James, Alexandria Concert Series February Offering

The St. James, Alexandria Concert Series continues the 2014-2015 season with a concert by Armonia Celeste performing 16th and 17th century Italian madrigals.

Armonia Celeste (Heavenly Harmony) will explore intricate music from the repertoire of the Concerto delle Donne – a singing group of “Three Ladies” who flourished in the Ferrara, Italy court of Alfonso D’Este. The theme of love will interweave throughout the program, as befits a Valentine’s Day concert.

This concert will be presented in the reverberant acoustic of St. James Episcopal Church located at 1620 Murray Street and Bolton Avenue in Alexandria on Saturday, February 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Admission to this concert is free and open to the public.

For more information, please call the St. James Church office at 318-445-9845.

### Redeemer, Ruston brings “Spirit of Christmas”

The Church of the Redeemer brought the Spirit of Christmas to six “adopted” families, which included 20 children, that otherwise would have done without this joyous season. Gift tags (164) were placed on our Angel Tree and \$1,200 in donations given by parishioners assisted in buying groceries and additional gifts, which helped to make some extra special wishes come true.

Delivered on December 23, the rain didn’t deter our efforts. Thirty-one parishioners and friends gathered to deliver the gifts.

To see how some families in our own community struggle to survive is humbling and there were many occasions when both the givers and receivers were shedding tears of joy and appreciation.







## A Conference on Discernment

*Presented by the Commission on Ministry*

**Saturday, April 25, 9:00am – 4:00pm**

St. James Episcopal Church  
1620 Murray Street, Alexandria, LA

Registration Fee – \$25.00 per person

Registration: [www.diocesewla.org](http://www.diocesewla.org)  
Click on Discernment Conference

For more info, contact:  
The Rev'd Elizabeth Ratcliff at [erratcliff@att.net](mailto:erratcliff@att.net)  
Susie Drell at [susiedrell@gmail.com](mailto:susiedrell@gmail.com)  
or Laura Boyd, Chair, COM, at [lsb4437@aol.com](mailto:lsb4437@aol.com)

### **Bishop Jake is December visitor to Grace, Monroe**

On December 7, 2014 Bishop Jake made his Visitation to Grace, Monroe and Confirmed eight young people. Left to right: Hudson Norman, Mitchell Wood, Reece Myers, Ave McCarty, Grace Pettis, Wes Robinson, Grace rector, Father Richard Norman, Elliott Brunini and Molly Sager.



### **Arbor Day Celebration highlights ESA's beautiful Oaks**

The Arbor Day Foundation's mission is to "inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees." Even though the National Arbor Day is in April, states may choose their own day of celebration and this year Louisiana celebrated Arbor Day on the January 16<sup>th</sup>. But it seems like every day is an "Arbor Day" at Episcopal School of Acadiana!

ESA's Cade campus, once the home of the Oasis sugar plantation, is shaded by beautiful oaks. Twelve of the 100+ year old oak trees are registered with The Live Oak Society of the Louisiana Garden Club

*See ESA Oaks, page 12*



# Diocesan News

## We're delighted with the Summer Camping Staff we've hired!

by Jason Ezell

We are pleased to announce the 2015 Permanent Staff! After interviewing numerous qualified candidates, the Summer Camping Committee has hired a staff that we believe will be the best group of young adults to serve our campers this summer.

**Head Counselor** – Robert Whitley  
**Head of Worship & Music and Male Cabin Counselor** – George Flynn  
**Head of Nature & Archery and Male Cabin Counselor** – Alex “Pedro” Gibson  
**Head of Arts & Crafts and Female Cabin Counselor** – Molly Guidroz  
**Arts & Crafts staff and Male Cabin Counselor** – Craig Kleinpeter  
**Head of Waterfront and Female Cabin Counselor** – Alex Mims  
**Lifeguard and Male Cabin Counselor** – Aaron Gonzalez  
**Lifeguard and Male Cabin Counselor** – Jake Kyte  
**Lifeguard and Male Cabin Counselor** – Drew Coleman  
**Lifeguard and Female Cabin Counselor** – Sarah Sober  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Mary Alice Mouk  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Bailey Schehr  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Ivania Vallejo  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Francesca Piccione  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Betsy Bradshaw  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Hannah Rothermel  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Alyssa Garner  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Alex Angers  
**Female Cabin Staff** – Chloe Kingston  
**Male Cabin Staff** – Dan Murray  
**Male Cabin Staff** – Patrick Owensby

We ask that you keep these young adults in your prayers now through the end of the summer. The ministry they deliver is vital to the health of our dioceses by embracing the missional church model of “a body of people with hands to serve” in carrying out God’s mission.



On January 16-17, Camp Hardtner welcomed nearly 100 people attending the first session of the Congregational Vitality Institute (CVI). Bishop Jake opened the weekend with a Eucharist and followed up with the Keynote address Friday night.

Those gathered on Saturday were able to enjoy the presentation of Mack McCarter. The comments as people departed on Saturday ranged from feeling recharged about ministry to floating on air. If you did not attend the CVI event, it is not too late to attend the remaining 4 sessions in 2015. Get more CVI information on page 3 of this issue of *ALIVE!* and on the web at [www.dioceseula.org](http://www.dioceseula.org).

Hardtner also welcomed St. Michael’s of Pineville Vestry Retreat and the Louisiana Native Plant Society’s annual meeting, workshop, and plant sale. Music Fest always gets February kicked off and this February 7 will be no exception.

I know it may still seem early, but Summer Camp 2015 will be here before you

know it! We have had registrations rolling in during January. Please don’t delay in registering your child for camp. The deposit is only \$150 and that guarantees each camper place in camp. For those registering, please make sure the Camper Grade is their current grade for the 2014-2015 school year. If you have incorrect information on your

registration, please email [office@camphardtner.org](mailto:office@camphardtner.org) for assistance. To register, go to [www.camphardtner.org](http://www.camphardtner.org) and click the REGISTER link on the right side of the home page.

## Camp Able

We are also excited to offer 2 sessions of Camp Able. This is our third summer of the Able ministry at Hardtner and our numbers have grown. Both Camp Able sessions at Hardtner are now for those with special needs ages 9 and older. Get on board, make a donation, volunteer your time and talents, or find those campers and families that would greatly benefit from this awesome community. More information can be found at [www.camphardtner.org](http://www.camphardtner.org).

Finally, I would like to encourage everyone to look around your congregation and try to find one young person that deserves a summer camping experience. Then help them get to camp. Help can be in the form of an invitation to attend camp, financial assistance, maybe a new sleeping bag, or simply a ride or carpool to get them to camp and back home. The many little things we can do together as a large church family can produce life-changing outcomes in the world of a child.

Camp Session	Campers Accepted	Camp Dates	Cost
First Camp	Grades 1&2 with parent/guardian	June 4, 4:00 p.m. June 6, 11:00 a.m.	\$175 per person
Camp Able 1	Grade 3+ & 9+ years old; special needs only	June 9, 2:00 p.m. June 13, 9:00 a.m.	\$450
Primary Camp	Grades 3&4	June 16, 2:00 p.m. June 20, 9:00 a.m.	\$460
Jr. High Camp 1	Grades 5&6	June 23, 2:00 p.m. June 28, 9:00 a.m.	\$575
Jr. High Camp 2	Grades 7&8	July 2, 2:00 p.m. July 7, 9:00 a.m.	\$575
Sr. High Camp	Grades 11&12	July 10, 2:00 p.m. July 16, 9:00 a.m.	\$690
Mid High Camp	Grades 9&10	July 19, 2:00 p.m. July 25, 9:00 a.m.	\$690
Camp Able 2	Grades 3+ & 9+ years old; special needs only	July 28, 2:00 p.m. Aug 1, 9:00 a.m.	\$460

## JEYL Retreat for Middle School Youth at Camp Hardtner March 6-8

*Registration Deadline for JEYL Participants is February 26*

Registration is online and closes at 5:00 p.m. February 26. After this time, you must call Camp Hardtner to see if space is still available. Registration is \$85.00 per participant. Late registration is \$95.00 per participant. *There is no guarantee of late registration.*

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/?url=nywht&ccid=afca42m81b1bla>





## Anglican issues

*Historical prejudice, migratory labor demands offer perspective on the crisis*

### Presiding Bishop addresses statelessness in the Dominican Republic

By Lynette Wilson

[Episcopal News Service – Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic] A large crowd gathered to meet Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori in mid-December at Holy Cross Church in Santa Fe, in what was once the heart of the Dominican Republic's sugarcane producing region in San Pedro Macoris.

Jefferts Schori would later preach, but first she was scheduled to have a conversation with the immigrant community about its experience in the wake of a 2013 Constitutional Court sentence that annulled the citizenship of an estimated 200,000 Dominicans of Haitian ancestry, many of them women and children.

"The current reality is that there are generations of people with Haitian ancestry in the Dominican Republic; children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren born in the DR who now have been told that they are not citizens, which means that now they can't get passports (or) cellphones because they don't have identification numbers," said Jefferts Schori, in an interview with Episcopal News Service. "In a number of cases their birth records have been expunged or declared invalid. They can't go to school, they can't go to university, they can't get loans; they simply can't function in the normal areas of society.

"They are not just undocumented, they are 'de-documented.'"

The court's 2013 ruling came three years after the Dominican Republic changed its constitution removing *jus soli*, the right of anyone born in the territory of a state to nationality or citizenship – an almost universal right in the Americas. The 2013 sentence, or ruling, furthered the constitutional change, making it retroactive to 1929 and stripping the citizenship of three generations of people born in the Dominican Republic.

"The de-nationalization imposed by the sentence is an act of injustice, an iniquity; they are Dominicans that have been dispossessed by the sentence," said Dominican Republic Bishop Julio Holguín, who from the start has been involved with a solidarity committee of lawyers, activists and academics who've condemned the court's action and defended the rights of those affected.

"As a church we feel very committed and obligated to be the voice of those who don't have a voice."

Eight months after the sentence, in May 2014, following intense political pressure and international calls for justice, the president introduced and the Dominican Congress passed a law allowing children of "irregular" migrants, or non-residents deemed



Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori preached in mid-December at Holy Cross Church in Santa Fe, in what was once the heart of the Dominican Republic's sugarcane producing region in San Pedro Macoris. Photo: Lynette Wilson/ENS

"in-transit" under a 2004 law who have birth certificates, to become citizens and those without to apply for legal residency and later citizenship.

The May 2014 law would apply to about 20,000 people, which critics say falls short.

Without a birth certificate, a person cannot obtain an identification card, which is required to study, to apply for dignified employment, to marry, to register children, to qualify for state health insurance and pensions, to open a bank account, to apply for a passport, to participate in elections, or even to be baptized.

Obtaining a birth certificate, however, can be an arbitrary, expensive process in the Dominican Republic, given the current right-leaning, anti-immigrant sentiment percolating in advance of presidential elections in 2016. It's an already arduous task in a developing country with irregular record-keeping procedures made more difficult in small towns and rural areas where workers continue to live in *bateyes* – the informal communities that grew up around the sugarcane plantations where Haitian migrants typically lived and where poor, marginalized people continue to live long after the sugarcane industry's crash.

Back at Holy Cross Church, one young woman, Linda, a 24-year-old mother of two, shared her story of living without a birth certificate and thus an ID, which is necessary for her to continue her education and to register the births of her children, a 7-year-old boy and a 5-year-old

girl, both born in the Dominican Republic, one to a Dominican father, the other to a Haitian.

Linda held documents from the secretary of education saying she couldn't continue her night school studies without a birth certificate, a photocopy of her mother's identification card issued by the Dominican government in 2005, and a "to whom it may concern" letter signed and stamped with the seal of a Roman Catholic parish confirming her birth in 1990 and her mother's identity.

Without a lawyer to assist her in navigating the bureaucracy and what activists, lawyers and members of the Diocese of the Dominican Republic's Pastoral Committee on Immigration describe as an arbitrary process, Linda's life and that of her two children will likely remain in limbo.

Others in similar situations or with affected family members in the crowd of more than 250 people were fearful of sharing their story publicly. Following the meeting, however, outside the church during the Eucharist, they came forward in the hope of finding some assistance. Like Linda, many were looking to legitimize their residency in order to study, to work in the formal economy and provide a better life for their families. Without a birth certificate and a nationality, they are stateless, "a person who is not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law."

Statelessness has caught the attention of the International Anglican Family Network, which supports the campaign for universal birth registration, meaning it supports global efforts to ensure compliance in countries that

recognize the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Dominican Republic is party to the convention and therefore agreed to Article 7 which says children have a right to be registered immediately following birth and have a right to nationality, particularly where they otherwise might be stateless.

That said, the United Nations has resisted taking formal action against the Dominican Republic, which is not a party to either the 1954 nor the 1961 conventions on statelessness; and the country has ignored previous international legal attempts to protect the rights of Dominicans of Haitian descent.

In 2005, after seven years of litigation, the Inter-American Court of Human

#### Western Louisiana Medical/Dental teams minister in the Dominican Republic

For more than a decade, medical/dental mission teams representing the Diocese of Western Louisiana, and led by Dr. Richard Campbell, of St. John's Minden, have traveled to the Dominican Republic each summer. Their base of operations has been Barahona and the Church of Jesus Peregrino. Thousands of Dominican citizens and migrant Haitian migrants received free care and medications from these teams.

Rights ordered the Dominican Republic to grant birth certificates, and thereby citizenship, to two Dominican-born girls of Haitian descent.

The court concluded that the Dominican Republic had "violated the rights of children of Haitian ancestry and rendered them stateless by refusing to issue their birth certificates because of their race." Further, the ruling required the Dominican government to reform public policy to address historic discrimination in its birth registration procedures – to issue birth certificates to children regardless of their immigration status or the race of their birth parents, as well as to reform the education system.

In a press release issued immediately following the October 2005 court decision, one of the plaintiffs predicted the historical significance of the decision.

"This watershed decision will change the Dominican Republic just as *Brown v. Board* changed the United States," said Laurel Fletcher, the director of the International Human Rights Law Clinic of the Univer-

*Continued on the next page*

## Anglican issues

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sity of California, Berkeley, School of Law. It did not.

In 2007 the Central Electoral Board, which in addition to organizing and monitoring elections oversees the country's national identification program, implemented a resolution limiting access to birth certificates and government identification cards to Dominicans residents of Haitian descent. Recently, Holguín and other members of the solidarity committee held a press conference on Jan. 14 denouncing a recent decision by the electoral board to invalidate the IDs of 2 million people, "continuing the work initiated by the 2007 ruling."

Years of legislative changes and administrative policies aimed at limiting access to citizenship have further complicated an already complicated, unjust system.

"The justice issues are enormous. The human rights courts in Latin America have ruled this is illegal and have told the DR that it has to change its laws. But thus far the administration in the DR has resisted all such efforts by changing the interpretation of the law, denying that they have exceeded to the human rights covenants in Latin America. It's not clear that there is going to be any real resolution, quickly," said Jefferts Schori, during her mid-December visit.

"It's also apparent that if people have the financial resources to litigate, they often can get relief. But it's often very expensive and it takes a long time and clearly many people in the working class simply can't manage it."

Numerically, the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti is the largest in The Episcopal Church; the Diocese of the Dominican Republic is one of the fastest growing dioceses in Province IX, which covers Latin America. Following the Constitutional Court's 2013 decision, Executive Council suggested the presiding bishop travel to the Dominican Republic on a fact-finding mission.

Through her visit, which included briefings from the diocese's pastoral committee; a visit to Centro Bonó, a Jesuit-sponsored nongovernment organization; and informal conversations with journalists, academics and lawyers, who described the situation "as a threat to democracy," the presiding bishop hoped to make the larger church aware of the situation in the Dominican Republic.

"Certainly education helps people be better advocates with their own legislators. I think our own government has some ability to apply pressure on the Dominican Government. I think the change will come from international pressure," said Jefferts Schori.

"Trade relationships between the DR, the US and other developed nations are increas-

ing and at some point the economic pressure, the economic and political pressure, is most likely to have an effect."

An estimated 1 million Haitians have crossed the 170-mile border separating Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Recently minors have been crossing the border in record numbers, and tensions have flared after Haitian fishermen were arrested in Dominican waters near Pedernales, the southern-most border town on the Caribbean Sea.

"Occasionally conflicts arise on the border. Particularly when it is opened to make way for traders on both sides to sell their products," said Holguín, adding that in this case there were protests outside the Dominican consulate in Haiti. The protest stopped following the fishermen's release.

Additionally, months of ongoing violent protests in Haiti – calling for long-delayed elections and the president's resignation – and the Haitian parliament's recent dissolution have further created tension on both sides of the border.

"The political situation in Haiti has become difficult ... which worries some sectors on the Dominican side," Holguín.

### The rise in sugarcane production

Beginning in the 1870s and into the 1880s sugar production began to develop on an industrial scale in the Dominican Republic. Haitians eventually dominated its migrant labor workforce; by 1952 the two countries came to a bilateral agreement ensuring a continuing supply of Haitian workers to meet the seasonal demands of sugarcane production.

"Many, many Haitians came to work in the DR in the sugar industry under the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo," said Jefferts Schori.

"When the sugar industry collapsed and the labor was no longer needed, the Haitians stayed," she said.

In times of crisis, the Dominican Republic has responded generously to Haiti. Given its proximity, it was the first country to respond following the Jan. 12, 2010, catastrophic earthquake that killed between 200,000 and 300,000 people and leveled parts the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince and nearby Léogâne. The Dominican Republic provided emergency assistance, organized volunteers, and most significantly, opened the border restrictively at Jimani, 40 miles east of Port-au-Prince, to Haitians fleeing disaster.

An estimated 1 million Haitians fled to the Dominican Republic, doubling the size of the immigrant population. Of the 2 million Haitians living the DR, 70,000 were there legally, says Human Rights Watch.

### Shared border, shared struggles

Haiti is classified as a low-income country where 58.5 percent of the population lives in poverty; in comparison, the Dominican Republic is classified as an upper-



Dominican Republic Bishop Julio Holguín and members of the solidarity committee held a press conference on Jan. 14 denouncing a recent decision by the electoral board to invalidate the IDs of 2 million people.

middle-income country, with 40.9 percent of the population living in poverty, according to data from the World Bank.

Both the Haitian and the Dominican economies depend on wages earned by immigrants working abroad and sent back to support families in-country.

The Dominican Republic has recently ranked consistently among the fastest-growing economies in the world, averaging a 5.5 increase in gross domestic product annually for 20 years. The labor market has remained stagnant, with workers largely employed in low-wage jobs or in the informal economy, according to studies.

That the economy grows but demand for labor & wages remains stagnant stokes the

fires of resentment, which have increases noticeably since 2013, said Franklin Paula, who teaches English at an Episcopal school in Santa Cruz.

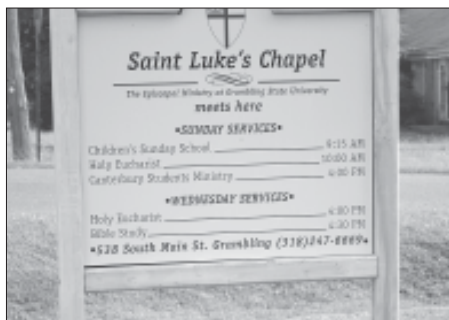
And Haitians, he said, who come to the Dominican Republic speaking two or three languages, often are preferred hires at the resorts that cater to European and American tourists, which leads to further resentment among low-wage Dominican workers.

—From the Website of the Episcopal Church USA and edited for space. The author **Lynette Wilson** is an editor/reporter for the Episcopal News Service.

### Absalom Jones

continued from page 3

palians in the personages of Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, the guest speaker on this year's celebration is Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough, a United Methodist preacher's



kid and the seventh president of Dillard University. Dr. Kimbrough will offer insights on the theme, "A Century of American Black Life, History, and Culture" and will help us to see the role of the Church in the shaping of this life, history and culture and what the church can do to keep the legacy of Absalom Jones and Richard Allen. We are thrilled to have Kimbrough, one of the youngest, energetic, visionary

college presidents in the nation, as our speaker. He is known for his active use of social media to engage and stay connected with students. He has been described by some as a hands-on administrator who has the ability to connect with college students and challenge them to get actively involved

in finding solutions to the problems that plague the Black community. Prior to taking office at Dillard University, *The Louisiana Weekly* quoted him, saying "It's not so much about a new president coming in and imposing his vision on everyone...a vision has to be collective and most people need to buy into it. I think part of being a leader is asking the right questions, so I'm going to come in and ask a lot of the right questions to help us to see where we are and then move forward." This time he is coming in to St. Luke's Chapel, Grambling to "ask a lot of the right questions," so come and join us, as we answer Dr. Kimbrough's questions. You never know, you may see where you are and discover where you want to be.

—The Very Rev. Thomas T. Nsubuga is vicar of St. Luke's, Grambling.



## **DIOCESAN DATES OF NOTE**

### **Planning an event in the diocese? CONTACT JOY FIRST!**

After a great deal of planning and hard work, the Diocese has established and will maintain a central diocesan calendar of events to be held in the diocese.

The creation and maintenance of that calendar is the responsibility of Missioner for Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Joy Owensby. (JOwensby@diocesewla.org)

SO, if you are planning an event to be held in the diocese, your first move is to CONTACT JOY! Still in its infancy, this central calendar has already helped avoid overlapping events.

Remember, your first move is to CONTACT JOY! JOwensby@diocesewla.org

#### **February 2015**

- 1 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. John's, Minden*
- 3 — Meeting of the Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*, 10:00 a.m.
- 7 — Kairos Outside Inventory, *Camp Hardtner*, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- 7 — Cursillo MusicFest, *Camp Hardtner*, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- 8 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christ Church, Bastrop*
- 9 — Registration deadline for Happening participants
- 11 — Bishop's Midweek Visitation, *Grace, Lake Providence*
- 15 — Bishop's Visitation, *Epiphany, New Iberia*
- 18 — Ash Wednesday
- 18 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. James, Alexandria*
- 19 — Clergy Day, *St. James, Alexandria*, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 19 — ALIVE! copy deadline for the March issue
- 20 — Happening at Camp Hardtner, 6:00 p.m. 2/20/15- 5:00 p.m. 2/22/15
- 22 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Matthias, Shreveport*
- 25 — Celebration of New Ministry, *The Rev. Ally Perry, Holy Trinity, Sulphur*
- 26 — Registration deadline for JEYL participants
- 28 — Convocational Vitality Institute Presentation: "The Elements of the Missional Church," *Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

#### **March 2015**

- 1 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christ Memorial, Mansfield*
- 3 — Meeting of the Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*, 10:00 a.m.
- 6-8 — JEYL Retreat at Camp Hardtner, 6:00 p.m. 3/6/15- Noon 3/8/15
- 7 — Daughters of the King Spring Assembly, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 8 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Patrick's, West Monroe*
- 19 — ALIVE! copy deadline for the April issue
- 21 — Christian Formation Conference, *St. James, Alexandria*
- 22 — Bishop's Visitation, *Holy Comforter, Lecompte*
- 27-28 — Kairos Outside Staff Training, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.
- 28 — Commission on Youth and Young Adults Meeting, *Online via GoToMeeting* 10 a.m. to Noon
- 29 — Bishop's Visitation, (*Palm Sunday*) *St. James, Alexandria*
- 31 — Deadline for MAP Grant applications

#### **April 2015**

- 5 — Easter Sunday
- 5 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Mark's, Shreveport*
- 7 — Meeting of the Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*, 10:00 a.m.
- 7-9 — Eastertide Clergy Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 5:00 p.m.
- 8-12 — Cursillo #148, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.
- 12 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Winnfield*
- 17-19 — Time for Joy Women's Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.
- 19 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Abbeville*
- 21 — Meeting of the Diocesan Council, *St. James, Alexandria*, 10:00 a.m.
- 22 — Board of Trustees, *Diocesan House*, 11:00 a.m.
- 22 — Bishop's Midweek Visitation, *Polk Memorial, Leesville*
- 24-26 — Kairos Outside, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.
- 25 — Discernment Conference, *St. James, Alexandria*, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- 26 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. George's, Bossier City*
- 28 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. George's, Bossier City*

### **Bishop's Message** *continued from page 1*

daughters toward being their own person, it can be hard to let go of the habits of treating them like children. Learning to relate to my sons and my daughter as equals has been one of the spiritual challenges of this phase of my life cycle. Letting go of my illusions of control has been immeasurably good for me.

And yet, there is something even more significant in this journey of parenting adults. As children, my sons and daughters related to me, and to some extent I related to them, by a series of default settings.

Responsible parents feed, clothe, house, educate, discipline, and chauffeur their children. Children should be able to take all of this for granted. When they can, they mercifully have no idea that we parents actually had a life before they came on the scene and have a life beyond their needs.

As adults, my sons and daughter are discovering that I'm a person. They are choosing whether and how to relate to me. And I am learning to acknowledge and appreciate who they are making of themselves.

We are all God's children. God loves us through our childhood and our youth. But

### **Church of England ordains, consecrates Lane as first female bishop**

Episcopal News Service] In a packed service at York Minster Jan. 26 attended by more than 100 bishops from the Church of England and women bishops from across the Anglican Communion, Libby Lane was ordained and consecrated as the first female bishop in the history of the Church of England.

Lane became the eighth bishop of Stockport and will serve as a suffragan (assistant) bishop in the Diocese of Chester.

Lane was anointed with oil by Archbishop of York John Sentamu, who later gave her a Bible.

Libby was first presented by the Bishops of Chester and Exeter (the Rt. Rev. Peter Forster and the Rt. Rev. Robert Atwell) and surrounded by fellow bishops at the foot of the nave platform. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby attended as did other senior Christian pastors and faith leaders.

Lane was appointed Dec. 17. Her appointment and the ordination and consecration on Jan. 26 followed more than a decade of often-emotional debate accompanied by various stages of legislative action. The Church of England voted in July to allow women to become bishops, a decision that was later approved by the U.K. Parliament and given the assent of Queen Elizabeth II. The approvals were required because the church effectively changed English law. (The Church of England is an officially established Christian church with Queen Elizabeth II as its supreme governor.)

Libby will be installed in a separate ceremony March 8 at Chester Cathedral.

God has always aimed at bringing us to spiritual adulthood.

Now we will never be equals with God. He is not only the maker of each of us, but the source of every star and electron and sheepdog and pelican that ever was and ever will be. He knows the number of hairs on our head and weeps with the fall of each sparrow. In other words, we're not on equal footing. We will always be dependent upon our maker for our very existence.

Nevertheless, being a spiritual grownup means that we choose our dependence upon God in very concrete ways. We could go through life oblivious to God's presence and activity. Or, we can actively rely upon God to become the image of him he created us to be. To participate in his mission of healing, restoration, and reconciliation in a wounded, aching world.

Lent is fast approaching. Ash Wednesday falls on February 18. The spiritual practices highlighted in Lent—self-examination, repentance, fasting, prayer, almsgiving, study—are all meant to help us take hold of our reliance upon God.

We are not trying to win God's approval by doing religious stuff. On the contrary, our spiritual practices offer us ways to choose a mature relationship with God. To be God's adult children.

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## ST. BARNABAS EYC HOSTS FIRST ANNUAL MARDI GRAS BALL

The St. Barnabas Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) held its first annual Mardi Gras Ball January 11, 2015. The ball was a missional offering on behalf of the EYC and their sponsors to the Down Syndrome Association of Acadiana.

The EYC adopted the Down Syndrome Association as a local mission in the fall when we joined the local chapter in the annual Buddy Walk. Since St. Barnabas has several special needs children actively involved in the Church community and because we discovered this was an underserved population, we decided to host a memorable event for those with Down Syndrome in our wider community.

The parish hall was transformed into a Mardi Gras Gala. It was splendidly decorated by EYC members and sponsors, using props donated by a local architect landscape company and others purchased by the EYC. Invitations sent out over a month ago allowed participants to RSVP in plenty of time for the event. Food preparations cooked while the hall was being transformed.

The EYC served jambalaya, brisket, meatballs, chips, salsa, cheese, king cake, and punch. They also participated as chaperones and dance partners. Music for the evening was provided by Laurent DePrins



who served as DJ, and everyone enjoyed endless dancing and refreshments.

The Down Syndrome Association of Acadiana was very appreciative of our efforts. A family from Alexandria who drove down to attend with their Down Syndrome child was especially grateful because there are no similar events in their local area. Parents, caregivers, and children all had a blast as we welcomed in another wonderful Mardi Gras season in southwest Louisiana!

## ESA Oaks, continued from page 7

Federation and are named in honor of people and places important to the development of the Episcopal Church.

In 2007, a student gathered acorns from the tree next to the Henton Chapel in order to sprout oak seedlings. Students traveled to the Croughan farm in Crowley to plant the acorns. In 2009, Coach Brian Rhoades, with the help of students, planted the young trees along Smedes Road, which runs through campus, creating "Oak Alley". Some of the young trees were also planted on the Lafayette Campus to bring a piece of ESA's original campus to the

Lower School.

Part of the legacy that Coach Rhoades left to ESA was his love and appreciation for the Cade campus oak trees. Until his passing in 2012, Coach Rhoades took care of these young trees and kept them watered. Many in the ESA community have accepted the responsibility for the care of these special trees.

We invite all of our Episcopalian friends in the Diocese of Western Louisiana to visit our beautiful campuses and to spend some time "beneath the oaks, amidst the cane..." (the words of ESA's alma mater).

