Building church in Lafayette is focus of City Deanery conference

By Kathleen Toups

LAFAYETTE

Relating to the convention theme "Heart to Heart, Hand in Hand," speakers here at the Lafayette City Deanery leadership convention proposed guidelines for building the church in Lafayette.

"Hand in hand, we can have shared programs and resources," said Msgr. Alexander O. Sigur, pastor of Our Lady of Fatima parish and deanery vicar. "We can work for parish renewal, evangelization and vocations."

Msgr. Sigur reminded, "We share a great tradition of Catholicism," but asked, "Why is the unity policy so distant? Why have we not forgiven each other's faults, and we do we not rejoice in each other's successes? We need to reach out to touch one another, to answer the call to serious lay ministry."

He suggested St. John of Capistrano as the saint for the day, citing him as a "man of faith and prayer who reached out to others."

Ralph Guidroz, Vicar for Lay Development, said, "History is the best teacher for Lafayette. Divine Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations."

He also emphasized, from the first encyclical of Pope John Paul II, "Everyone is called to a special task to build the Kingdom of God."

Guidroz said the deanery conventions "should set us in the path to share in the life of the church."

Speaking on the "Heart to Heart" phase of the convention theme, Claire Manes stressed that each should decide "who Jesus is for you. If you can continue to confess and profess him as Lord and Savior, this answer will determine future actions."

The afternoon session was devoted to a panel of speakers who discussed resources available in the city deanery. Roland Landry and Msgr. Sigur reviewed the services available to the poor and elderly through the Catholic service center. Sister Althea Jones, O.S.F., talked about her special ministry to the elderly, juvenile delinquents and the prisons.

Sister Mary Anne Owens, S.S.N.D., discussed concerns and resources in the city for the elderly, transients and the unemployed. Charles Jumonville, youth director, explained the services of his office.

The convention closed with Mass celebrated by Msgr. Sigur.

Church parishes represented at the one-day convention, held at St. Thomas More High School included Immaculate Heart of Mary, Holy Cross, Our Lady of Wisdom, St. Anthony, St. Edmond, St. Genevieve, St. John, St. Jules, St. Leo, St. Paul, St. Patrick, St. Pius X, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Mary, Our Lady Queen of Peace, and Our Lady of Fatima.