

SUMMARY OF VOTFSBA ACTIVITIES July 2007 – June 2008

EDUCATION

June 17, 2008. Dr. Paul Lakeland, theologian from Fairfield University, spoke at two events co-sponsored by VOTFSBA and Word and Life. Topics were "Catholicism at the Crossroads: The Shape of the Church and Its Future Prospects" and "Being Catholic, Being American: The Church and U.S. Culture."

April 21 and May 19, 2008. Two meetings devoted to study of Lakeland's *Catholicism at the Crossroads: How the Laity Can Save the Church*.

February 25 and March 10, 2008. Video and discussion series "Reconnecting with Our Roots" focused on two videos: "Portrait of a Radical" on the life of Jesus (Feb. 25) and "The Faithful Revolution: Vatican II" (March 10).

August 2007 to January 2008. Our invitation to Bishop Gumbleton to speak in Santa Barbara in January 2008 was thwarted by Cardinal Mahony's refusal to grant him permission to speak.

OUTREACH

June 21-22, 2008. About a dozen VOTFSBA members attended a talk by Olan Horne, Boston abuse survivor who spoke with Pope Benedict XVI.

June 17, 2008. Fr. Virgil Cordano, OFM, was posthumously named a VOTFSBA Priest of Integrity "in grateful acknowledgement of his support of the work of VOTF and his prayerful concern for survivors." Certificate was presented to Fr. Richard McManus, OFM, along with a donation of \$500 for the Virgil Cordano Memorial Fund.

June 12, 2008. Thirteen VOTFSBA members attended a talk in Culver City by Bishop Geoffrey Robinson of Australia on "Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church." Congratulations to VOTFSBA member Harriet Burke for her letter about the talk in the July 7, 2008 issue of the National Catholic Reporter.

April 10, 2008. A Steering Committee letter entitled "Laity Pay for Clergy Abuse Scandal," regarding the LA Archdiocesan decision to raise parish assessments by 25% (from 8% to 10%), was published in the *Santa Barbara News-Press* .

February 14, 2008. Three VOTFSBA members attended the special Deanery meeting at which Cardinal Mahony announced his plan to recover the costs of the 2006-07 sexual abuse settlements by raising parish assessments and seeking gifts and loans from parishes.

July 26, 2007. Steering Committee letter appeared in the *Independent*. Entitled "Truth and Reconciliation," it applauded the courage of the 508 survivors who participated in the LA abuse settlement.

2007-08. Kathleen Strittmatter serves as VOTFSBA liaison to the ongoing Solidarity Project, a group working to create a memorial on the Franciscan property to acknowledge and honor all those hurt by the sexual abuse crisis there. (See attached document or visit www.mysafenet.org)

STATE & NATIONAL OUTREACH

Monitored VOTF National website and publications, as well as emails and news reports from National office; sexual abuse settlements in LA and Orange County, bankruptcy in San Diego, Bishop Robinson's activities, among other issues. Continued contact with VOTF affiliates in LA and the Bay Area.