Tishomingo Catholics Pray Church Rebuilds

Fire Guts Small Historic Oklahoma Church

TISHOMINGO — Catholics at a small parish here are praying events will unfold that will allow the church to be rebuilt after it was destroyed by fire just before Christmas.

The fire consumed Saint Anthony's Catholic Church early on Sunday, Dec. 21. Judy Sanders, parish secretary and organist, said she received a call from the fire department at 4 a.m. She and her husband, Patrick, were on the scene a short time later and along with others have been working to move the rebuilding process forward.

They are working with insurance adjusters on inventory and other necessary steps.

Saint Anthony's is attended to by Saint Mary Church in Ardmore, about 35 miles away. Father Thomas O'Toole, pastor at Saint Mary's, will continue to celebrate Mass at 8 a.m. each Sunday in Tishomingo. Parishioners have been celebrating Mass in the Sanders' home.

"We'll continue to celebrate Mass here until I'm told otherwise," said Judy Sanders. "It's worked out pretty well, so far. We just rearrange the furniture a little."

Sanders said a Protestant church in town offered its space for Mass, but Father O'Toole said Saint Anthony's is like family and he preferred celebrating Mass at their home.

Saint Anthony is home to about 20 Catholics in Tishomingo. The Sanders have been parishioners for seven years. Several others have much deeper roots. "We have one lady who is in her 80s and she's been at Saint Anthony's since she was a little girl,"

Judy Sanders said.

Reports in the Johnston County Capital-Democrat, Tishomingo's local newspaper, said firefighters from Tishomingo, Ravia and Milburn responded to the scene and kept flames from spreading to a nearby residence. Saint Anthony's was built in the 1930s, according to the Catholic History of Oklahoma.

Fire Chief Paul Wilson told the Capital-Democrat shortly after the blaze that an investigator with the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal's Office had reported the cause of the fire to be electrical. But Sanders said officials have yet to determine the exact cause.

"We may never know because they had to push the walls of the church in," she said. "They were continued on page 3
My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

May all of you enjoy a Blessed New Year!

This morning, Jan. 1, as I celebrated my first Mass of 2009, I had a long list to bring before Almighty God. Family members, friends, relatives and associates were remembered by name. Joyful incidents of the past were recalled with gratitude to God and to you. Unpleasant and sad ongoing situations were presented to the Lord for guidance and solutions. Sick and ailing people were prayed for and those who died were commended to God for eternal life.

The New Year is now here. Most of the events that will transpire this year are still unknown to us. The joys and sorrows, the successes and failures that we shall experience are uncertain. Therefore, at the very beginning of this year, prior to the unfolding of these events, my prayer for every person of this Archdiocese is that you shall have a most blessed New Year. In that spirit of faith and confidence, I will pray for you all year long.

While there are some realities that we cannot change, there are others that we can. Moreover, realities good and bad will certainly affect us. In all instances, however, what matters most is how we respond or relate to them. For example, the severe financial crisis we all face can be inordinately feared and devastate us or it can lead us to be more prudent and realistic in our spending.

Similarly, the reality of the presence of God Who came to live among us can simply be taken for granted or it can be the daily motivating factor of how we live. God so loves us that He sent His Son Jesus to save us. Jesus loves us so much that He lived, suffered and died for us. God does not force His love on us. He offers Himself to us and waits for our response.

In praying that you and I, the people of this Archdiocese, will have a most blessed New Year, I assure you that God is always blessing us. What is necessary now is that we, all of us, respond to the Lord and live good and holy lives every single day of this New Year. Live the fullness of our Catholic faith and we shall become saints of God this year and forever!

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The Gift of Life is the greatest gift that we have received. In the moment that God created each of us, as He willed us into life, each of us became the unique person that we are. All other goods and blessings flow from this reality that we have been created by God in His own Image and Likeness.

From the beginning of human history, the gift of life has been under attack. In our own time, we have witnessed a decline in the respect for human life. In fact, the sacredness of human life has been abandoned for shallow, selfish concepts and choices.

As human beings who believe in God and in life everlasting, we have a serious obligation to help restore respect for all human beings. The right to life and respect for human life from conception to natural death comes from God, the Author and Giver of all life.

On Wednesday, Jan. 21, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City will celebrate a special program of LIFE at the Cathedral of Our Lady. I am extending a sincere invitation to all people to participate in this Life Program. I especially want to invite high school students to this Mass and program. I will celebrate the Mass at 6 p.m. in the cathedral. After Mass, there will be guided discussions on Catholic teaching about the dignity and sanctity of human life. The discussion for high school students titled “Life-Changing Decisions” will be led by Rev. William Novak. The discussion for adults titled “Profile in Everyday Life” will be facilitated by Rev. Raymond Ackerman.

Members of the Archdiocesan Sanctity of Life Committee join me in inviting teenagers and adults to come to the cathedral on Wednesday, Jan. 21, for this 6 p.m. Mass and the life program following the Mass. I look forward to visiting with you then!

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In praying that you and I, the people of this Archdiocese, will have a most blessed New Year, I assure you that God is always blessing us.

Catholic Women’s Conference of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 24.

Once again this year, I gladly extend a sincere invitation to the women of our Archdiocese to this Catholic Women’s Conference to be held at the Clarion Hotel on South Meridian in Oklahoma City.

The conference will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude with Mass at 5:30 p.m. The Mass, which I will celebrate, will be the Mass for the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time.

Since we began these annual Catholic Women’s Conferences, participation has increased every year. The large and enthusiastic participation requires us to find a larger gathering place year after year. The women attending have found this annual conference spiritually and emotionally uplifting. As a result, they return and bring others with them.

The conference program offers excellent speakers on interesting and relevant topics. There is also time for prayer, confessions and Mass. It is a wonderful way for a Catholic woman to spend a Saturday with other women from throughout the Archdiocese.

I am very pleased to be able to be a part of such a great program of faith. Therefore, I am personally inviting Catholic women, young and older, to come and participate in this year’s conference on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 9 a.m. through the 5:30 p.m. Vigil Mass at the Clarion Hotel on South Meridian Avenue in Oklahoma City.
Obituary

Father Gary Kayler Dies in Indiana

Rev. Gary W. Kayler, 61, retired Roman Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, died Jan. 4, 2009, in Indianapolis, Ind. Father Kayler was born May 12, 1947, in Chicago, Ill. He attended Mount St. Mary High School, Oklahoma City. Father Kayler received a bachelor of arts degree from Mount St. Mary University, San Antonio, Texas, and attended Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, La. He was ordained on Jan. 31, 1975. Prior to his retirement, Father Kayler served the parishes of Saint James the Greater, Oklahoma City, Saint Barbara, Lawton, Saint Francis Xavier, Enid, Saint Francis Xavier, Sulphur, Saint Joseph, Ada, and Saint Robert Bellarmine, Jones. Father Kayler was a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Father Kayler was predeceased by his father, Howard A. Kayler.

He is survived by his mother, Mary B. Janolek of Midwest City, and his brother, Richard A. Kayler of Oklahoma City.

Funeral Masses were celebrated at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2009, and the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City on Friday, Jan. 9, 2009.

Internment followed in the Resurrection Cemetery, 7500 W. Britton Road, Oklahoma City.

Funeral arrangements were under the direction of Smith and Kernke-North, 14624 N. May, Oklahoma City.

Tishomingo Catholics

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afraid of the fire spreading to a nearby home.” Sanders said a number of items were retrieved from the ashes, including a chalice containing consecrated Hosts and the 600-pound bell that called parishioners to Mass.

Sanders told the Daily Ardmoreite, Ardmore’s newspaper, that her husband and several others helped bring the church bell to their home. She said the bell was charred and cracked on both sides after falling to the ground as the tower burned, but that she believed it can be repaired.

Originally known as St. Francis Catholic Church, the parish was initially established to serve the large number of German and Bohemian settlers who moved into the area to work at the Washita Farm.

“Because of the large population of farm tenants who were members of the Catholic faith, the company contacted the bishop of Oklahoma and obtained the approval of developing St. Francis Parish at the farm headquarters,” local historian Letha Clark told the Ardmore newspaper.

“Father P.P. Schoeffer was assigned as the first pastor; the concrete house directly north of the headquarters building was provided as the home for the priest.”

Prior to the original church building’s construction in 1932, Clark said, services were held at a residence in Tishomingo.

“Due to the construction of Lake Texoma and the requirement of the Washita Farm tenants to vacate by 1942, the congregation decreased substantially,” Clark said.

“In 1943 the church was moved by the diocese and parish to its present location across the street north of Murray State College.”

It was at this time that the name of the church was changed to St. Anthony's, Clark said.

Sanders said Catholics in the area have started to rally around St. Anthony's. A woman from Ardmore sent a check for $50 to help with the rebuilding effort. She said the prayer is others will do the same.

Parishioners attend mass in the Sanders home. Photo/courtesy.
Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, the current state of abortion law under pregnancy. But that is precisely the reason at anytime during pregnancy. Forty-two lives are a lot to unjustly lose in a year, but every 14 minutes that many abortions are reported in the United States. Every day on average, 3,700 abortions occur, according to The Guttmacher Institute, a pro-abortion research arm of Planned Parenthood, America’s largest abortion provider. This number of 3,700 daily abortions or one about every 20 seconds is only the reported legal abortions. Many more illegal ones have been discovered that were covered up and many more are suspected to be unreported by this pro-abortion institute. With knowledge of the above facts and to still hold the belief that abortion and the death penalty require equivalent amounts of action is entirely illogical. As Catholics we are called to work toward God’s perfect and loving vision of creation. To end the immoral acts of abortion and the death penalty would be a huge step in that direction, but like I said before, abortion requires our work and attention in a much greater and direr way. I could, in good conscience, devote my entire life to ending abortion and never allocate one minute to ending the death penalty.

TJ Krug
Saint Monica Parish, Edmond

Survey Shows Most U.S. Adults Support Laws to Limit Abortion

WASHINGTON — A nationwide survey commissioned by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has found that four out of five U.S. adults (82 percent) think abortion should either be illegal under all circumstances (11 percent) or would limit its legality. Thirty-eight (38) percent would limit abortion to the narrow circumstances of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother; and an additional 33 percent would limit abortion to either the first three or first six months. Only 9 percent said abortion should be legal for any reason at anytime during pregnancy.

“These findings are remarkable,” said Deirdre McQuade, assistant director for Policy and Communications at the USCCB’s Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities. “Fewer than one in 10 Americans support legal abortion for any reason at anytime during pregnancy. But that is precisely the current state of abortion law under Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decisions that made abortion legal throughout the nine months of pregnancy for virtually any reason.”

The survey of 2,341 adults, conducted online Dec. 10-12, also found that laws limiting or regulating abortion enjoyed support as high as 95 percent among those expressing support or opposition to the six kinds of laws examined in the survey:

· 95 percent favor laws ensuring that abortions be performed only by licensed physicians
· 88 percent favor informed consent laws (i.e., that require abortion providers to inform women of potential risks to their physical and psychological health and about alternatives to abortion)
· 76 percent favor laws that protect doctors and nurses from being forced to perform or refer for abortions against their will
· 73 percent favor laws that require giving parents the chance to be involved in their minor daughter’s abortion decision
· 68 percent favor laws against partial-birth abortion (i.e., aborting a child already partially delivered from the mother), and
· 63 percent favor laws preventing the use of taxpayer funds for abortions.

“Support for these measures cuts across ‘pro-life’ and ‘pro-choice’ positions. Over a third (35 percent) of the small minority who said abortion should be legal for any reason throughout pregnancy nevertheless supported three or more of the six laws presented,” McQuade said.

“This research indicates how out of touch pro-abortion groups are with mainstream America,” McQuade said.

“These same widely supported, constitutionally valid measures, some of which have been proven effective in reducing abortion rates, are now seriously threatened by abortion advocates and their allies in Congress,” McQuade said. “On behalf of children and their mothers, we will have to fight to keep such laws in place.”

“Pro-abortion groups have already sent a comprehensive 55-page blueprint for their agenda to the incoming administration,” McQuade said. “But their agenda — including publicly funded abortions, passage of the so-called ‘Freedom of Choice Act’ (FOCA), and attacking the Hyde amendment and other longstanding pro-life provisions in appropriations bills — won’t sell in the general public.”

“Most people agree we should work to reduce abortions, but you can’t reduce abortions by promoting abortion and eliminating all the policies that have proven effective in reducing abortions,” McQuade said. “The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will oppose all such threats to human life in whatever manner they are proposed.”
Catholic Volunteers to Direct Woodward Homeless Shelter

By Glynda Lomax

Mooreland resident and longtime Sacred Heart parishioner Thurman Fussell recently volunteered as executive director for High Plains Outreach Center Inc., Woodward’s homeless shelter. Fussell had served for years as a board member to the shelter prior to retiring from Northwestern Electric Cooperative and volunteering to direct the facility on a temporary basis.

“We are doing God’s work. He asked us to care for those in need. “Whatever you do to the least of these, you do unto Me.” This is why the shelter exists — to answer His call to those in need,” Fussell said.

“It could be my own children or grandchildren that were here. If they missed a paycheck, what could happen to them?”

The shelter, completely furnished with donated items, has one full-time and three part-time employees, with no funds currently available to hire a full-time director.

“We’re here to help people that want to be helped, not the people who just want to manipulate the system. This is a working shelter. We don’t allow people to check in and just lay around,” said Sue McNeil, case manager/shelter coordinator.

When asked about their most pressing needs at the present time, Fussell said, “Obviously we need funds to continue to operate. We don’t need one interested person to give a million dollars because that means only one person is interested in our organization. We would like to find a million interested people who would each give one dollar and feel a part of what we are doing here, and that way it doesn’t hurt anybody.”

Fussell is available to speak to civic groups, churches or any organization that would like to know more about the problems of the homeless or the needs of the shelter.

High Plains Outreach Center Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible and the center is happy to provide receipts to donors for donations.

High Plains Outreach Center Inc. is located at 1220 7th Street, Woodward, Okla. 73801, (580) 254-5162.

Catholic Foundation Offers Scholarships

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc. has announced it will award a number of higher education scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year to qualifying Catholic students who are residents of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Seminarians and students enrolled in the Archdiocesan Pastoral Ministry program are eligible to apply provided they meet eligibility guidelines.

St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee and Newman University in Wichita, Kan., have generously agreed to match the foundation’s grant for scholarship winners enrolling at those schools.

The foundation will also award P.B. Connelly Medical Scholarships to Catholic students of low to moderate means. Applicants must be enrolled in the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine.

The Helen R. Hall Nursing Scholarship is offered by The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc. Full-time Catholic students enrolled in two-year or four-year accredited nursing programs are eligible to apply.

The Duffy Family Scholarship is offered by The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma to students who are enrolled full time at St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee.

The foundation’s guidelines of eligibility for scholarships state:

* Applicant must show scholastic ability.
* Applicant must show financial need.
* Applicant must be a full-time student (12 hours minimum).
* Applicant must be a resident of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and be a registered and active member of a Catholic parish.

For applications or information, contact The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc., P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73123, (405) 721-4115, fax (405) 721-4114 or e-mail tbothe@catharchdiocese-okc.org or check with your high school senior counselor or parish secretary or youth minister or go to www.cfook.org.

Applications must be completed and returned to the foundation office no later than Monday, April 17, 2009.

Starting January 20

Parish Program Invites Catholics to ‘Come Home’

Catholics who are separated from the church, for any reason, are being asked to “Come Home!”

The Evangelization Board at St. John the Baptist Parish is once again offering the “Catholics Coming Home” program. There will be a series of informal sessions facilitated by lay people, including former non-practicing Catholics, on three Tuesday evenings, Jan. 20, Jan. 27 and Feb. 3, 2009, in the Commons from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The church is located at 9th and Boulevard in Edmond. Child care will be provided.

If you are currently not practicing your Catholic Faith, you are invited to these listening sessions for an opportunity to voice concerns and ask questions about the Catholic Church.

The Catholics Coming Home ministry attempts to reach out to inactive Catholics in a loving, Christ-like manner. Every effort is made to be non-threatening and non-judgmental.

The facilitators do not attempt to solve problems, nor do they have all the answers. They will merely listen and provide guidance to appropriate resources.

For more information about Catholics Coming Home, call Jami Fenner at 229-3152 or Nancy Martin at 922-2292.
A New Year: Time to Consider Our Strengths, Weaknesses

By Joe Froehle

The beginning of the new year is a good time to experience satisfaction with our achievements and experience gratitude for the blessings in our lives. In addition, this is a good time when we can make a list of the gifts or traits we like about ourselves as well as the shortcomings or characteristics we would like to change.

Examples of our gifts might include: kindness, compassion, generosity, helpfulness and caring of others; intellectual prowess, being a good leader and/or a good influencer or team player; being loving, cheerful, understanding and accepting of others; being encouraging, enthusiastic and positive; the list goes on and on.

It is through exploring our gifts that we can wonder about and seek God's will for ourselves. It is through our gifts that we carry out God's will in our relationships with others and in serving and loving our fellow man. So it is important for us to be in touch with 10 to 15 gifts within ourselves, the ways God has blessed us so we can be following His will.

However, it is just as important for us to be in touch with our shortcomings, our character defects, the characteristics about ourselves that we would like to change. Getting in touch with these shortcomings is tough, for it requires us to be honest with ourselves about those things we may not necessarily want to accept as being a part of who we are.

We are brought up to help and serve others, to be competitive, to achieve, to contribute to society, to be productive, to be the best we can be. And it is through these activities that we often receive recognition, approval, validation, affirmation and all the things that help us feel good about ourselves.

So it is normal for us to fear and avoid looking at and being honest about our shortcomings, for they may bring judgment and criticism from others, which in turn may result in our feeling hurt, shame and guilt. However, it is only through this honest awareness of shortcomings that we can be redeemed. It is only through our recognizing our wrongdoing that we can be forgiven. It is only through awareness of our defects that we can be willing to have God change us and help us grow.

It is important to notice when we have been judgmental of another and in this noticing we can ask God for the willingness for Him to change our being judgmental. It is good to notice when we have been critical, belittling and hurtful of another, wondering if we owe an amends and to ask Him to remove this defect from us. It is only after noticing that we have been trying excessively to please others for our own benefit that we can ask God to soften this trait within us.

It is only after honestly admitting to ourselves that we have been giving excessive advice, can we ask God to help take action and lessen our advice-giving. It is only after noticing that we have tried to control others and get them to do what we think is right that we can pray for God's help in lessening this shortcoming. It is only after recognizing we felt hurt, resentful and angry, having taken something personally that we humbly ask God to help us in not being so sensitive.

So, this is a time of year when we can become aware of shortcomings that we would like God to change in ourselves. It is important to note that we alone cannot change ourselves or remove these sinful tendencies. Only God can. Our job is to have the courage to be honest with ourselves and to pray for the willingness to have God intervene with us, forgive us, and to soften these character defects.

So at this time of year, we can experience satisfaction for our achievements, be humbly grateful for our blessings, honor the gifts God has given us, and notice and be aware of the shortcomings we would like God to change within us. In these ways we are celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are honoring the presence of God within and we are allowing our spirits and souls to sing with joy.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Joe Froehle has many years experience in marital, individual and family counseling. He serves in the Counseling Center at St. John the Baptist, Edmond. His work includes many years at St. Anthony Hospital. He can be reached at (405) 359-8539 or by e-mail at jfroehle@subell.net.

Battle Against Poverty is Weakened by War Against the Womb

By Tom Grenchik

As we begin a new year, Pope Benedict XVI challenges each of us to confront the issue of global poverty. In his 2009 World Day of Peace Message, “Fighting Poverty to Build Peace,” the Holy Father repeats the observations of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. “Our world,” he wrote, “shows increasing evidence of another grave threat to peace: Many individuals and indeed whole peoples are living today in conditions of extreme poverty. The gap between rich and poor has become more marked, even in the most economically developed nations. This is a problem which the conscience of humanity cannot ignore, since the conditions in which a great number of people are living are an insult to their innate dignity and as a result are a threat to the authentic and harmonious progress of the world community.”

Pope Benedict then points to misguided ways that some powerful nations and organizations attempt to solve worldwide poverty. He states that “Poverty is often considered a consequence of demographic change. For this reason, there are international campaigns afoot to reduce birth rates, sometimes using methods that respect neither the dignity of the woman, nor the right of parents to choose responsibly how many children to have; grave still, these methods often fail to respect even the right to life. The extermination of millions of unborn children, in the name of the fight against poverty, actually constitutes the destruction of the poorest of all human beings.”

While this reproach is addressed to the entire world, it also poses a profound challenge to Americans as we prepare for a new administration and a new Congress. Will America regress to “exterminating millions of unborn children, in the name of the fight against poverty?” Tragically, there is already great pressure to do so.

Currently, the Mexico City policy prevents our taxes from funding non-governmental organizations that perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning abroad. We must urge President-elect Obama to not rescind the Mexico City Policy by executive order, as more than 60 pro-abortion groups are calling him to do. They are also demanding that our new president restore funding to the United Nations Population Fund. Under the Kemp-Kasten Amendment, the president has the authority to deny funding to any organization that he determines is supporting or participating in a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization. Since 1985, all presidents except President Clinton have invoked this policy to deny funding to the UN Population Fund for its support of China's coercive population control program. We must urge President-elect Obama to not fund the UN Population Fund or any program that “in the name of the fight against poverty, actually constitutes the destruction of the poorest of all human beings.”

The Holy Father closes his message on peace by extending “to every disciple of Christ and to every person of good will a warm invitation to expand their hearts to meet the needs of the poor and to take whatever practical steps are possible in order to help them. The truth of the axiom cannot be refuted: ‘to fight poverty is to build peace.’” Let us pray for and encourage our nation’s leaders to build peace by fighting poverty, while respecting the lives of the poorest, especially the child in the womb.

Tom Grenchik is executive director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Eagle Scout Rank Awarded to Eight at Christ the King

In a December ceremony at Christ the King Church, eight Boy Scouts were awarded the rank of Eagle Scout: Ryan Samuel Bass, Stuart Martin Cobb, William Joseph Donnelly III, William Richard Graves, Scott Evan Jackson, Kevin Michael McGarry, Alexander Chase Snodgrass and Nicholas Kelton Staples.

All eight Scouts attend Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. Seniors include Stuart Cobb, son of Julie and Robert Cobb; Will Graves, son of Beth and Cody Graves; Scott Jackson, son of Barbara and Rick Jackson; Kevin McGarry, son of the late Vickie and Kevin McGarry.

Stuart Cobb earned the Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei religious awards as well as the International Catholic Conference of Scouting International Awareness Award. His many leadership positions include bugler, quartermaster, assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, senior assistant patrol leader and senior patrol leader. In 2006, Stuart transferred to Troop 120 at Christ the King Church and has since been a member of the Leadership Patrol. For his Eagle project, he planned, organized and supervised the construction of a garden bench for the Benedictine Sisters at the Red Plains Monastery in Piedmont.

While in Troop 120, Will Graves served as quartermaster, assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, instructor, and as a member of Leadership Patrol. Will’s Eagle Scout project was the building of a brick pathway for Sister Barbara Joseph’s Food Pantry in downtown Oklahoma City.

Scott Jackson served as quartermaster, assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, senior patrol leader, assistant junior Scoutmaster and on Leadership Patrol. Scott’s Eagle project involved planning, organizing and building four cubby units for Sister Barbara Joseph’s Food Pantry. These cubbies are used to store blankets and clothes for the needy.

Kevin McGarry began his Scouting career as a Cub Scout in St. Louis, Mo. He moved to Oklahoma City for his freshman year of high school and joined Troop 120 as a Life Scout. He has held the leadership positions of assistant senior patrol leader and senior patrol leader. Kevin’s Eagle project was remodeling the Animal Rescue Friends (ARF) cargo van into a permanent, more efficient and easily accessible crate system for the weekly transport of dogs to show for adoption each weekend.

In their third year at McGuinness are juniors William Joseph Donnelly III, son of Liz and Bill Donnelly; Chase Snodgrass, son of Deby and John Snodgrass; and Nick Staples, son of Jana and Allen Staples.

The 2008 Saint Ann Retirement Center’s “Clothing Collection for the Poor” was a huge success, according to Sid Espinosa, executive director of the Catholic retirement community. Residents of the center donated 16 large bags of clothing to the Jesus House for distribution to those in need. This is the second year for the 180 residents of Saint Ann to collect clothing for the less fortunate. “I’m so proud of all our residents for their spirit of giving,” said Espinosa. “We are blessed with an incredible community.”
Kingfisher Eighth-Grade Students Put Faith Into Action

By Ray Dyer  
The Sooner Catholic

KINGFISHER — Eighth-grade students at Sts. Peter and Paul School focused heavily on service learning, or doing for others, during the first semester of school. They studied ways to fulfill the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and then they took a test. Not a written test, this exam was a little deeper.

Principal Kim Kroener said the eighth-grade class recently completed one project by partnering with Cross International Catholic Outreach. The students raised money to benefit the Father Fabretto Education Enhancement Center in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

The Father Fabretto Center offers an extended school day to students in Nicaragua. The Sts. Peter and Paul students learned without the program, the young people in that country would face an even more difficult life than what they already encounter.

One way the students chose to involve others in their effort was to approach the parish in Kingfisher. A presentation was developed during a series of meetings and the students then presented the speech to the entire parish at weekend Masses.

The goal was to raise $1,100 to help feed and care for the 240 children at the Father Fabretto Center for one month. By the end of their presentations to the parish, the students had raised triple their goal, enough to support the program in Nicaragua for three full months.

The project was done in honor of Archbishop Beltran, as a way to thank him for his unending dedication to Catholic education.

Kroener said the eighth-grade students continued to learn more about the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy when just before Christmas they toured the City Rescue Mission in Oklahoma City.

She called the field trip a “real eye-opener” for the students.

“When they walked into the dorm area where the women and children stay and they saw the bunk beds and how they were pushed together with a couple of stuffed animals on them and they realized this was Christmas for these children, it made their X Boxes and Game Cubes seem very special,” Kroener said.

The students will be studying and thinking of ways to partner with organizations such as the City Rescue Mission and Father Fabretto’s Center to help people learn to help themselves.

Kroener said when the students first started their project, they talked simply about “throwing money” at an issue. They now understand in order to make a long-term impact, their efforts need to focus on “doing with others rather than just doing for others.”

Catholic Schools Week 2009 Focuses on Service

WASHINGTON — Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally the last week in January, this year Jan. 25-31. The logo for the observance shows the words “Celebrate Service” and hands reaching out and surrounding a globe. The “T” in the word celebrate is formed as a cross.

“Civic engagement is a hallmark of Catholic education,” said Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). “The majority of elementary and secondary schools participate in service projects ranging from collecting canned goods for the homeless to rebuilding schools in the hurricane-torn gulf, so it was natural that we choose service as a major theme.”

Schools typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses and activities for students, administrators, faculty, staff, the community and families. Additionally, this year many schools will undertake new service projects.

The 2009 theme links to a recently completed NCEA initiative, “Birthday Blessings for Pope Benedict.” During the pope’s April 2008 visit to the United States, Catholic youth were asked to pledge hours of community service to honor the pope’s 81st birthday. More than 2 million hours of service were pledged by the end of the campaign. Wednesday of Catholic School traditionally is observed as National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools. On that day, student delegations meet on Capitol Hill to deliver packets of information about the good news of Catholic education to U.S. congressional leaders. Schools nationwide are encouraged to make similar presentations to local and state officials.

Catholic Schools Week is a joint project of NCEA and the USCCB. The NCEA, founded in 1904, is a professional membership organization that provides leadership, direction and service to fulfill the evangelizing, catechizing and teaching mission of the church. NCEA members include elementary schools, high schools, parish religious education programs and seminaries.
By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Valerie Libby attended a seminar at Saint Eugene’s School last year and came away really impressed with the Catholic environment she found there. So impressed was Libby, a teacher herself, she applied for a grant to help the school.

Following a recent school Mass and just before the Christmas break was to begin, Libby helped present the fruits of her labor to Principal Suzette Williams, Father Joseph Jacobi and the student body at Saint Eugene’s: a check for $61,000. The money will go for electronic equipment, including computers, digital cameras and big screen televisions, all courtesy of the Samsung Corporation’s “Hope for Schools” grant competition.

Saint Eugene’s was one of only two Catholic schools to receive the grant, the other winning school is in Kentucky. Another 36 schools, all public and scattered across the nation, were also declared winners.

Libby, who teaches English as a second language at Putnam City North High School, said this was the second time she has entered the essay grant contest. Three years ago, she helped Rosary School at Saint Francis, her home parish, win the Samsung equipment. The contest has grown over the years. When Rosary won, it received $20,000 in equipment, while Saint Eugene’s award tops the $60,000 mark, $61,000 to be exact.

Libby said she wrote the winning essay during the summer break.

“I get bored during the summer,” said the veteran teacher of 15 years. She said the challenge of the contest is to make a solid case for why a particular school deserves the grant and do it in 100 words or less.

Williams and Libby held up an oversized check to the delight of Saint Eugene’s students, who applauded loudly and often during the presentation. Williams told Libby she was welcome “anytime” at Saint Eugene’s.

Catholic Schools Save Nation Close to $20 Billion Each Year

WASHINGTON — While auto manufacturers, secondary mortgage lenders and investment bankers are reaping billions of dollars in federal funds, one entity is saving the nation billions — the network of almost 7,400 Catholic schools across the country.

According to Dr. Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), Catholic schools provide $19.8 billion in savings each year for the nation. The figure is based on the average public school per pupil cost of $8,701 and the total Catholic school enrollment of more than 2.2 million students.

“Catholic schools are a gift to the church — and to the nation,” said Ristau. “The enormity of this gift is more striking during these challenging economic times.”

In addition to the monetary rewards, the nation gains in other ways. Catholic school students excel academically on standardized tests, 99.1 percent graduate and 94 percent attend college. Studies show that graduates of Catholic schools are reliable workers, good citizens and more likely to attend church.

“Our graduates have a strong commitment to community service because that is a foundation of our schools,” added Ristau.

Research on school effectiveness in the last 10 years has focused on academic outcomes, including standardized test scores, graduation rates, post-secondary aspirations and college attendance. Catholic schools, while they aspire to academic success, include among their primary objectives an understanding of the Catholic faith, a commitment to the practice of religion and a strong set of values. These goals, along with academic achievement, are the key components of the Catholic school’s effectiveness.

Catholic schools provide faith formation and values. Teachers view the formation of Christian character as a non-negotiable, which is gospel-centered, environmental, cross-curricular and essential in a society where values are often ignored.
Mount Yearbook Staff Adopts Holy Family Maternity Home

By Megan Nash
Mount St Mary Yearbook

OKLAHOMA CITY — Each Advent, the Mount St. Mary's yearbook staff support a charity of their choice. Choosing a charity was difficult because there were so many worthy causes. This year, they chose the Holy Family Maternity Home after it was suggested by Kathy Rose, a supporter of the yearbook staff.

“Because I had a child at 18, I felt drawn to helping these girls. I know how hard it is to be a teenage mother,” said Rose. “Even if you have support from your family, which some of these girls don’t, being young and pregnant is extremely difficult. It changes you.”

Everyone on staff agreed on Holy Family. Since the yearbook staff was comprised of all girls, giving to other girls in need seemed perfect. They chose the Holy Family Home because it called out to them.

“We felt close to this cause because we’re the same ages as the girls living at the home,” said Theresa Nguyen. “We had a special connection to them, because of our similarities.”

The staff collected needed items like baby clothes, diapers, formula and blankets. Deciding it would be more meaningful to meet the recipients of their charity, yearbook facilitators Claudia Straw and Sarah Wangen organized a field trip to the Holy Family Home with Rose.

Armed with gifts, the yearbook staff left on Dec. 12. They piled inside the bus to go meet the young women whom they were helping. After arriving at their destination, they met Mary Webster, director of the house. They walked inside the large, double doors of the home and immediately saw a prominent painting of the Holy Family in the foyer. Webster educated the staff about pre-natal care and what the home required of the girls who chose to live there. The staff placed their gifts underneath the Christmas tree next to other presents. Webster guided them on a tour, visiting some of the girls’ bedrooms and stepping inside the chapel for a moment. The young women are allowed to decorate their bedrooms to showcase their individual style, and make them feel like home.

“I liked seeing the girls’ rooms. It made giving to them feel more personal, like we were giving gifts to a friend. It felt like we knew them as people and not just as a cause,” said Cody Woodward.

Seeing where their donations went helped the staff realize how blessed they were.

“I felt blessed for everything God had given me: a supportive family, a house to live in and a wonderful life,” said Jennifer Zapata. “This visit reminded me of everything I have to be grateful for.”

Mount Yearbook staff in front of Holy Family maternity home with their gifts.

St. Greg’s Art Students Turn Works Into Funds for Community

St. Gregory’s University art students recently held their first SGU Student Charity Art Print Sale at SGU’s Rockwood Center Dec. 2-4. High-quality reproductions of student artworks were created and mounted for the event, in which three-quarters of the entire stock was sold. Proceeds from the sale were donated to Family Promise of Shawnee, which is a cooperative effort of faith-based organizations offering overnight sleeping arrangements and three meals per day, along with case management, mentorships and classes to help homeless families. Churches of many denominations work together to help the guests of Family Promise get back on their feet.

SGU student Jeremy Lewis coordinated the sale in fulfillment of course requirements for a self-leadership class offered through the Department of Business at St. Gregory's. Participating student and former student artists included Jay Buttram, Sophia Chang, Takayuki Chino, Annetta Doyle, Shoko Fukushima, Ramon Garcia, Stephanie Ginn, Masashi Nakazoe, Elena Padilla, Patrick Simon, Masaya Todani, and Nanoko Yonemaru.

“arrestive results of the sale exceeded our greatest expectations,” said SGU visual arts program director Sheryl Cozad. “This experience left everyone feeling very upbeat!”

Plans are being made to repeat the sale each semester, with proceeds continuing to be donated to charitable organizations. For more information about the visual arts program at St. Gregory’s University, contact Sheryl Cozad at (405) 878-5162 or e-mail secozad@stgregorys.edu

For those who wish to make a contribution to Family Promise, contact Family Promise of Shawnee, 39604 Independence St., Shawnee, Okla. 74802, (405) 273-0161.

Family Promise of Shawnee’s representative Peggy North receives a donation check from SGU student Jeremy Lewis. Photo by Brother George Hubl, O.S.B.
Saint Gregory’s Celebrates Fall Commencement

SHAWNEE — St. Gregory’s University celebrated its fall commencement Saturday inside W.P. Wood Field House with bachelor’s degrees conferred on 52 graduates. An additional 20 received associate’s degrees and six received master’s degrees.

The Honorable Tom Thornbrugh, a district judge for Tulsa County, delivered the commencement address, encouraging SGU graduates to try new things and set their goals high, even if their “reach should exceed their grasp.”


“The diamonds you may seek, on all the land you need, can be discovered by just looking and recognizing the riches that are already available to you — in your own communities, families, friends and inner resources that are in your own back yard,” said Thornbrugh, who was first appointed to the bench in March 1997 by Gov. Frank Keating.

SGU College of Arts and Sciences valedictorian Allen Harvey also addressed the audience. Harvey, a Seminole native, provided his fellow graduates with three things to help them through life.

“There’s a time for work and a time for play, but you have to discipline yourselves to know the difference,” said Harvey, who maintained a 3.91 grade point average. “Secondly, it never hurts to ask someone for help. And lastly, willpower always wins. You’ll always achieve your goals if you have the willpower to do it.”

St. Gregory’s University is Oklahoma’s oldest institution for higher learning and the state’s only Catholic university. SGU has locations in Shawnee, Oklahoma City and Tulsa, serving more than 800 students in two colleges — the College of Arts and Sciences and the College for Working Adults.

The following students received their degrees:

**Associate’s Degrees**
- Broken Arrow: Robin Frith
- Chelsea: John Hendricks
- Fort Gibson: Michelle Satterfield
- Owasso: Annette Buller
- Ponca City: Jill Buoy
- Sand Springs: Sherrie Bullock
- Seminole: Karen Chandler
- Shawnee: Howie Blocker, Michael Cline, Angela Dye, Rene Eaton, Tamara Hale
- Tecumseh: Melinda Duin
- Tulsa: Desiree Fisher, Jason Mauricio, Robin Snuffer
- International: Eri Naito

**Bachelor’s Degrees**
- Bow, N.H.: Gerard LeMoine
- Broken Arrow: Shannon Bingham, Robert Chilcoat, Lorie Wheeler
- Chandler: Malissa Mackiewicz
- Claremore: Dustin Murdock
- Collinsville: April Bowlus
- Coweta: Dorenda Squire
- Del City: Anna Strange
- Fort Worth, Texas: Ayth Timmons
- Jenks: Christopher Okey
- Mannford: Patricia Gragg
- Mounds: William Bethel
- Okemah: Justin Horland
- Owasso: Catherine Sallee, Jason Stimson
- Sand Springs: Donnie January, Karmen Rice
- Sapulpa: Stephanie Greenfeather
- Seminole: Allen Harvey
- Shawnee: Mary Garcia, Laurie Mason, Dana Masquat, Angela Overley, Tanya Roach, Amanda Sauviller, Candace Schmidtkofer, Whitney Steele, Lakisha Wheeler Spring, Texas: Jose Ycaza
- Talala: Jeremy Coleman
- Tecumseh: Angela Annanders
- Tulsa: Nelson Allen, Gerald Barker, Tiajuana Berry, Keri Brazeal, Sheila Cook, Charles Dodson, Elizabeth Fisher, Barbara Higgins, Linda Jernigan, Denise Loeza, Julia Parks, Amanda Pilgrim, Victor Poole, Steven Rhoden
- International: Andres Pozo Jatem, Oscar Zuleta Raydan

**Master’s Degrees**
- Bixby: Candy Tarp
- Broken Arrow: Cecil Bevans
- Keller, Texas: Neal Bayless
- Tulsa: Ivy Lark, Pamela Mitchell, Emily Nolan

Space Available for Jan. 24 Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference

There is still time to register for the upcoming Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference this month. The conference will be held on Saturday, Jan. 24 at the Clarion Conference Center at I-40 and Meridian in Oklahoma City.

Four sessions featuring both local and out-of-state speakers have been scheduled, and vendors have contracted to set up booths selling books, clothing and religious items. Attendees will also be able to participate in Adoration and Reconciliation.

After Jan. 9, the registration fee is $50. Registrations can be submitted on the conference Web site using PayPal, or by mailing in a registration form.

The conference will begin with check-in at 8 a.m., and conclude with Mass at 5:30 p.m. celebrated by Archbishop Eusebius Beltran.

For registration and more information, visit the conference Web site at www.OCWConference.com.
Buenas Noticias...

...Bienaventurado Año Nuevo

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:

¡Qué todos disfruten de un Bienaventurado Año Nuevo!

En la mañana del primero de enero, cuando celebré mi primera Misa del año 2009, tenía una larga lista que llevar ante Dios Todopoderoso. Miembros de mi familia, amigos y conocidos fueron recordados por su nombre. Alegres incidentes que ocurrieron en el pasado fueron recordados con gratitud a Dios y a ustedes. Oramos al Señor por su guía y por una solución a los tristes y poco placenteros acontecimientos que están ocurriendo. Rezamos por la curación de los enfermos y por aquellos que han muerto y encomendados a Dios para la vida eterna.

El Año Nuevo está aquí. La mayoría de los eventos que transcurrirán este año no se conocerán todavía. Las alegrías y los lamentos, los éxitos y los fracasos que podamos experimentar son inciertos. Por lo tanto, en este comienzo de año, antes de que se nos sean revelados estos eventos, extiendo mis oraciones a todas las personas de esta Arquidiócesis, para que puedan tener un bienaventurado Año Nuevo. Con este espíritu de fe y confianza, rezaré todo el año por ustedes.

Mientras que existen realidades que no podemos cambiar, no obstante, hay otras que sí podemos cambiar. Es más, hay realidades buenas y malas que nos afectan en todos los ámbitos, sin embargo, lo que nos debe preocupar es cómo responder o relacionarnos a éstas. Por ejemplo, la grave crisis económica en la que estamos sumergidos no puede ser ignorada su furia y devastación, por lo que nos debe llevar a ser más prudentes y realistas en nuestros gastos.

Similarmente, la presencia de Dios, quien vino a vivir entre nosotros no puede ser tomada a la ligera o ser tomada como un mero factor de motivación de cómo vivimos nuestra vida diaria. Porque tanto amó Dios al mundo, que dio a su Hijo único para que todo el que crea en él no perezca, sino que tenga vida eterna. Dios se ofreció a nosotros y espera por nuestra respuesta.

En oración, ustedes y mi persona, el pueblo de esta Arquidiócesis, tendremos un bienaventurado Año Nuevo. Les aseguro que Dios siempre nos bendecirá. Lo que es necesario ahora, es que todos respondamos al Señor y vivamos una buena y santa vida todos los días de nuestra vida durante este Año Nuevo. ¡Vivamos a plenitud nuestra fe Católica y así podremos convertirnos en santos de Dios este año y para siempre!

El Regalo de la Vida es el más inmenso obsequio que hemos recibido. En el momento que Dios nos creó a cada uno de nosotros. Con su voluntad, Dios nos dio vida para que seamos la única persona que somos. Todas las cosas buenas y bendiciones fluyen desde esta realidad en la cual hemos sido creados por Dios a su Imagen y Semejanza.

Desde el comienzo de la historia humana, el regalo de la vida ha estado bajo severos ataques. En nuestro tiempo, somos testigos de un desgarrador irrespeto por la vida humana. De hecho, la santidad de la vida humana ha sido abandonada por la oscuridad, conceptos egoístas y la escogencia.

Todos los seres humanos, quienes creemos en Dios y la vida eterna, tenemos una seria obligación de ayudar a restaurar el respeto por todos los seres humanos. El derecho a la vida y el respeto por la vida humana desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural, viene de Dios, el Autor y Dador de toda vida.

El miércoles 21 de enero, la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, celebrará un programa especial llamado “Vida” y será en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora del perpetuo Socorro. Deseo extender una sincera invitación a todo el pueblo para que participe en este programa. Especialmente quiero invitar a los estudiantes de las escuelas de preparatoria a esta Misa y programa. Yo celebraré la Misa a las seis de la tarde en la catedral. Después de la Misa, habrá una discusión orientada sobre las enseñanzas Católicas, sobre la dignidad y santidad de la vida humana. La discusión para los estudiantes estará centrada en: “cambiando las Decisiones de la vida”, que la conducirá el Padre William Novak y para los adultos habrá una discusión llamada: “perfil en todos los días de la vida” que la dirigirán el Padre Raymond Ackerman.

Miembros del Comité Arquidiocesano para la Santidad de la Vida me acompañarán en esta invitación que hacemos a los adolescentes y adultos para que vengan a la catedral el miércoles 21 de enero a las seis de la tarde. La Misa se ofrecerá primero y luego el programa.

La Conferencia de Mujeres Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City está pautada para el sábado 24 de enero.

Una vez más, este año, tengo el honor de extenderles una sincera invitación a las mujeres de nuestra Arquidiócesis a la Conferencia de Mujeres Católicas que se efectuará en el hotel Clarion que queda al sur de la avenida Meridian en Oklahoma City.

La conferencia comenzará a las nueve de la mañana y concluirá con una Misa a las cinco y media de la tarde. La Misa, la cual yo celebraré, será la Misa para el Tercer Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario.

Desde que comenzamos estas conferencias para mujeres, la participación se ha incrementado todos los años. La gran y entusiasta participación nos ha requerido que encontremos lugares más grandes para que se reúnan año tras año. Las damas que asistieron a estas conferencias encuentran una emoción e inspiración espiritual. Como resultado de esto, ellas vuelven y traen a más mujeres con ellas.

El programa de la conferencia ofrece unos excelentes oradores que hablan sobre temas muy relevantes. Hay tiempo para rezar, confesarse y luego la Misa. Es una maravillosa manera para una mujer Católica pasar amenamente un sábado con otras mujeres a lo largo de la Arquidiócesis.

Estoy muy complacido de poder ser parte de este tipo de programa de fe. Por lo tanto, personalmente invito a las mujeres Católicas, jóvenes y mayores, para que vengan y participen en esta conferencia de este año, el sábado 24 de enero desde las nueve de la mañana hasta las cinco y treinta de la tarde. Una Misa de Vigilia en el hotel Clarion al sur de la avenida Meridian en Oklahoma City.
Solidaridad y firmeza para encontrar paz y justicia

Momentos de crisis nos obligan a estar unidos en Cristo

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — El valor de las acciones del ser humano radica en las escasanzas de Cristo y no en lo que hacemos o producimos materialmente. Ahora más que nunca la solidaridad, compasión y la unidad en Cristo se hacen imprescindibles para que tomemos medidas de reflexión ante una crisis económica que nadie sabe todavía cuándo va a tocarnos.

Lo cierto es que en este nuevo año 2009, cada vez se pierden más empleos y bienes materiales en el mundo, mientras que la necesidad de alimentar a nuestras almas con la esperanza de Dios en nuestra fe, cobra cada vez mayor importancia en la vida cotidiana de todos los seres humanos de todo el mundo cristiano.

Considerando lo anterior, surge la pregunta, ¿es que acaso Dios nos creó para gozar solamente de los bienes materiales hechos por el hombre o es que debemos reflectar y dirigirnos a Dios para pedirle nuestra conversión espiritual, para afrontar la actual crisis económica y el perdón de nuestros pecados?

Tomemos el caso de la presunta corrupción que ha llevado el debacle económico en el mundo del sector privado y público, especialmente en los Estados Unidos para responder a nuestra larga pregunta. Varias transnacionales con presencia en decenas de países y unos resultados económicos que hasta hace poco tiempo atrás siempre se presentaban en alza, se derrumbaron hace pocos meses después de que salieran a la luz el caso de sus cuentas truncadas, mismas que debían cuidar y que no solo no lo hicieron, sino que el Estado sospechosamente colaboró en su ocultamiento, a subyacentes de las implicaciones que esto podía tener. Sencillamente, estas empresas multinacionales han perdido la confianza de la gente. Pero en lo que ningún ser humano puede perder la confianza es en Dios. Más bien debemos confiarle a Dios la sanación de nuestras almas y de las almas de los pecadores que han llevado a esta espantosa debacle económica. Dios no nos traía al mundo para sufrir, sino para aprender el camino que debemos tomar para alcanzar la verdadera felicidad junto a Él en el cielo. Los bienes materiales se recuperan y rechacen con la fe puesta en Dios.

Aquellos que manejaron o manejan estas transnacionales, abusan nuestra confianza dando un golpe contundente a la paz del mundo y de nuestras familias, pero jamás manipularán la confianza que tenemos en Dios Todopoderoso.

Esas personas se equivocaron, sin embargo, no vamos a pasar toda la vida procurando buscar justicia humana cuando sabemos que la Divina Providencia está con nosotros.

Millones de personas perdieron su dinero al caer sus valores en la bolsa; otros se quedaron sin trabajo debido a esta crisis; representantes del Estado encargados de velar por la limpieza y transparencia del mercado financiero, se quedaron en el entredicho al no evitar una de las peores crisis económicas y escandalosas del país y de todo el mundo.

Todos de alguna manera directa o indirectamente estamos sufriendo alguna repercusión negativa de la mala actuación de una minoría de abusadores. El objetivo de la anterior reflexión es poner un ejemplo claro y reciente sobre la importancia que tiene en nuestras vidas la fe en Dios sobre nuestra salvación y auxilio.

Ninguna crisis económica por más severa que sea puede alejar a Dios de nosotros aunque menos desalentarnos en apoyar económicamente a nuestra Iglesia Católica para que siga con sus apostolados. Ahora bien, uno de los mayores preocupaciones que se levantan con la crisis económica es la indiferencia ante el incremento de la pobreza y la ayuda a los más desamparados. Ellos son los más vulnerables. Es bueno recordar que todo dinero recaudado por la Iglesia es para aliviar las expectativas de nuestro pueblo vulnerable. La lucha contra el hambre se hace vital para frenar su efecto negativo en nuestra sociedad. Así entonces, no podemos distraernos en el mero hecho de observar cómo la crisis se desarrolla y debilita a los más vulnerables.

Debemos accionar con obras de caridad y buena voluntad, debemos reflexionar el significado e importancia de la lucha contra la pobreza y el hambre.

El tiempo nos exige crear alianzas de colaboración, asegurando que quienes tengan más entreguen más y mejor ayuda, y se ofrecen mejores oportunidades para los pobres y más necesitados. Pero todo esto es solamente posible siguiendo los preceptos de Cristo para hacer el bien. Si en algún momento necesitas comida, puedes llamar a Caridades Católicas y obtener información sobre el Banco Regional de Comida en Oklahoma, ya que estas dos entidades trabajan mancomunadamente para prestar auxilio a quien requiera proveerse de comida en su hogar, sin importar su estado migratorio.

El número telefónico de Caridades Católicas es: (405) 523-3015 y puede pedir asistencia en español.
Jobs Box

Bookkeeper
Catholic Charities is seeking a bookkeeper to work in our Oklahoma City office. The successful candidate will have three-plus years related field experience, non-profit preferred, including payroll and benefits processing experience a must. Proficiency in Excel, Word, Outlook, Internet, ten-key and calculator is required. Experience with Financial Edge, Blackbaud desired. A working knowledge of computers and associated equipment as well as attention to detail, organization skills, accuracy and the ability to work with minimal supervision are essential.

Openings for Help with Adults with Developmental Disabilities
The Center of Family Love in Okarche has immediate openings for the following: LPNs — full-time shifts available (3 p.m. to 11 p.m). DCTs — Certified is great, if not we will train. Shifts available are 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Program coordinator — Four years experience working with people with developmental disabilities or degree combination. To apply, call 263-4658, fax 263-4718, e-mail alemke@cflinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche 73762. EOE

Health Clinic Coordinator
A part-time position for a health clinic coordinator is available for the Good Samaritan Health Clinic. Responsibilities include overseeing operation and management of a free health clinic, coordinating and supervising volunteer personnel and patient appointments, and maintenance and storage of confidential medical records. The applicant must have office management experience, proficient computer skills, excellent written and verbal communication skills and experience working in a medical clinic and fluency in Spanish is preferred. For more information, visit good-samaritanofedmond.com. Please submit résumé to GSHC@cox.net.

Volunteers
The Good Samaritan Health Clinic needs volunteer physicians, nurses, dieticians, social workers, Spanish translators and receptionists from 9 a.m. until noon on Saturdays beginning Feb. 14. Volunteering will be less than once per month. The application process and other clinic information is on the clinic Web site, good-samaritanofedmond.com. The state of Oklahoma has the largest rate of uninsured residents in the nation and about 8,000 to 21,000 live in Edmond.

Adjunct Faculty
St. Gregory's University, College for Working Adults in Tulsa is looking for adjunct faculty in the areas of accounting, English, finance, economics, philosophy, communications and graduate research methods. Applicants must have a graduate degree in one of these areas. Weekly opportunities for tutors in English/ Grammar/APA; Math Solutions for Business and Statistics; must have graduate degree in area and will be paid by the hour. Send cover letter, resume and three references to hr@stgregorys.edu.

Director of Institutional Advancement
St. Gregory's University Office of Institutional Advancement has an opening for the position of Director of Institutional Advancement and Alumni. We are seeking an assertive, personable self-starter with proven fundraising skills/experience to assume a leadership position in managing the Institutional Advancement (IA) office. The ideal candidate will have responsibility for developing and implementing IA's strategic vision, annual goals, and the necessary systems/procedures to ensure success. Strong planning, verbal and written communication, and creative application skills are necessary. The ability to motivate and mentor office members as well as develop and maintain relationships with university constituents is paramount. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of three years of senior fundraising experience and a bachelor's degree. A master's degree and experience in higher education is preferred. Send cover letter, resume and references to St. Gregory's University, Human Resources Director, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, or e-mail hr@stgregorys.edu. EOE

Dean of Enrollment Management
St. Gregory's University in Shawnee invites applicants for the position of Dean of Enrollment Management. Position responsible for the development, implementation, maintenance, analysis and general supervision of all programs related to the recruiting and retaining of undergraduate students. Involves developing and implementing the university's strategic enrollment and marketing plan and recruiting goals for the College of Arts and Sciences. This position manages the budget for the office and supervises the admissions counselors and office support staff. In addition, this position will coordinate and support the contracted recruitment companies. Applicants must possess an understanding of and willingness to support the St. Gregory's University Catholic and Benedictine mission. Master's degree is required. Experience as an admissions counselor and a minimum of two years experience in the director's or assistant position is preferred. Electronic résumés are preferred, and should include a letter of application describing experience, qualifications, vision and record of achieving/exceeding enrollment goals at one's recent institution. Shingi Goto, Executive Vice President, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, sngoto@stgregorys.edu, (405) 878-5435.

Provost
St. Gregory's invites nominations and applications for the position of provost. This executive level position is the chief academic and student oversight officer under the direction of the president, and is the administrator of academic affairs, student life, intercollegiate athletics and enrollment management. The successful candidate will provide visionary leadership in these areas, prepare and oversee budgets, ensure athletic program compliance with NAIA regulations, oversee the academic programs offered by the College of Arts and Sciences and the College for Working Adults, and ensure the academic integrity of all programs and adherence to the university's academic policies, regulations and procedures. The provost supervises the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the College for Working Adults, the registrar, the library director, the director of the Student Exploration Center, athletic director and the admissions director. St. Gregory's University, located in Shawnee, was founded in 1875 by Benedictine monks. A doctorate degree is required in a discipline represented among our academic programs and an academic background sufficient for tenure. This individual must be a practicing Catholic with knowledge of Benedictine spirituality. Salary and benefits are commensurate with experience. Electronic applications are preferred, and should include a cover letter and resume. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position has been filled. Nominations or requests for complete position specifications may be sent directly to the university: Shingi Goto, Executive Vice President, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, sngoto@stgregorys.edu, (405) 878-5435.

Adjunct Faculty
The College for Working Adults at St. Gregory's University on the Shawnee campus has openings for adjunct faculty at the undergraduate and graduate level: General Education, Business and Business Law, Computer Science, Professional Development and Psychology. A master's degree is required, preference for candidates with experience teaching adults. Candidates must be supportive of and willing to contribute to the Catholic and Benedictine identity of the university. Send a cover letter, vita and transcripts to hr@stgregorys.edu or mail to Dr. Denise Short, Associate Dean, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804.
ACCW Calls Oklahoma Catholics to Participate in Rose Day

Shirley Stricklan, president of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, invites men, women and students to attend Rose Day, the pro-life event held each year. Rose Day will be held Wednesday Feb. 4 at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

The ACCW has chartered a 32-passenger bus that will provide transportation to the event from Saint Francis Parish. The round trip to ride the bus will be $12 per person.

Mass will be celebrated at 7:30 a.m. in the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi Church, 1901 N.W. 18th on the second floor of the Meerschaert House. Following the Mass, a light brunch will be served in the Kelley Room on the first floor. There is no charge for the brunch. At 9:20 the bus will be boarded and at 9:30 it will leave for the Capitol. The bus will pick us up between 1:30 and 2 p.m.

Over the years the ACCW has noticed that Christians from other denominations have always outnumbered Catholics at Rose Day. The ACCW hopes that this year, with your help, this trend will be reversed. The Rose Day event begins at 10:30 a.m. Feb. 4.

Attendance at Rose Day is an important way for Catholics to show their love for the unborn child. On this day, red roses are presented to state legislators as a symbol of the sanctity of life and encourages lawmakers to support pro-life legislation.

Those attending Rose Day are asked to bring four red roses with them to the Capitol: one for the governor, one for lieutenant governor, one for your state representative and senator. The red roses are not a requirement.

At Rose Day, state lawmakers who support pro-life legislation will be introduced. Also, a keynote address will be delivered by Jane Brennan. A former post-abortive woman herself, Brennan will share her story of healing and hope after abortion and her amazing conversion when she attended Mass during her search for faith. In 2005, she received the Pro-Vita Award from the Archdiocese of Denver, an award given to those who have shown tremendous support for pro-life issues.

For reservations, call June Hovorka at 525-6904 or Shirley Stricklan at 1-800-725-8051 and mail your check made out to ACCW for $12 to Shirley Stricklan, 2318 West Gore Blvd., Lawton, Okla. 73505, as soon as possible.

LET’S FILL THE BUS.
Vocation Celebration

Holy Angels Church celebrated the 50th anniversary of the vows taken by Sister Maria Leiva, CMST, in December. Father Michael Chapman encouraged young women at the celebration to listen to their heart to see if God is also calling them to serve His people through a religious vocation. Pictured are Father Chapman, Deacons Lucio Nieto, Santos Hernandez and Sister Maria del Rosario Martinez, director of Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Also, Sister Ivana Mechaca, Sister Marileth Cabera, Sister Maximina Joselina Cedeno, Sister Rosa Elena Perez, Sister Maria Isabel Torres, Superior Provincial, Sister Sylvia Leiva, Sister Delfina Aralos and Sister Carmen Vasquez.

U.S. Parishes Called to Help Young Hear Call of Vocations

WASHINGTON — The Catholic Church in the United States will celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week, Jan. 11-17.

“This week is a chance for parishes across the country to highlight the gift of vocations in the church through prayer and education,” said Cardinal Sean O’Malley of Boston, chairman of the Bishops Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

Vocations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, added, “The church needs to help young people hear the Lord in prayer, so they can recognize him in their lives.

“This week reminds us that it is our responsibility to pray for vocations and to invite young people to consider a call to ordained ministry and consecrated life.”

The observance of National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW) began in 1976 when the National Conference of Catholic Bishops designated the 28th Sunday of the year as the beginning of NVAW. In 1997, this celebration was moved to coincide with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which falls on Jan. 11 in 2009, marks Jesus’ initiation into public ministry. At his baptism, Jesus is named the beloved Son of God. With this celebration, the faithful recommit themselves to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. They are also initiated through their own baptism to be the Beloved of God, commissioned to proclaim Good News with their lives.