OKLAHOMA CITY – Archbishop Beltran recently hosted a longtime friend when Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick visited the Archdiocese. During his stay, Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington D.C., celebrated Mass at Bishop McGuinness High School. Following Mass he enjoyed an informal chat with students. Archbishop Beltran and Cardinal McCarrick then visited the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial and Saint Joseph’s Old Cathedral. The two friends also made the drive to Okarche and the gravesite of Father Stanley Rother where both men prayed for the canonization of the slain Oklahoma priest. They later visited Holy Trinity Church where Father Rother was baptized and where a statue is dedicated to his memory. On Tuesday afternoon, Cardinal McCarrick spent two hours in an informal session with priests at the Catholic Pastoral Center. About 30 Oklahoma priests attended and later enjoyed dinner with the Cardinal. This was Cardinal McCarrick’s first visit to Oklahoma.
The Good News

Saint Joseph Church, Ada
Annual Hispanic Mass
October 4, 2008

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

What a beautiful day for the Hispanic community of our Archdiocese to celebrate this annual gathering. I am very pleased to see people here from many parishes and towns of the Archdiocese. I welcome all of you to Saint Joseph Parish here in Ada, Oklahoma. I thank Father Rusty Hewes and his people for hosting this year's celebration. I thank Sister Rosario and her staff and all who have worked so hard preparing for this day. Your work, your prayers and your dedication make this a great spiritual, cultural and enjoyable gathering. Thank you. Thank you and God bless you.

Today is the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. Saint Francis is one of the most popular of all saints. He is revered not only by Catholics but also by many people of other religious beliefs. In fact, he is respected even by people who have no formal religious affiliation.

A detailed study of the life of Saint Francis reveals a man of great character. He was indeed a person of integrity. Saint Francis seems to attract people because of three attributes. These are his humility, his love of poverty and his respect for nature.

Humility is a virtue in which a person seeks truth. A humble person therefore acknowledges that God is the author of all good. A humble person realizes that everything we have comes from God. There is no inordinate pride or false claim in such a person. Saint Francis was that kind of a person. Therefore, his preaching, his writing and, above all, his example brought people to God. This is his great gift to us. By living always in the Presence of God, not trying to seem important, Saint Francis has led and continues to lead people to God.

His love of poverty and his decision to live a life of radical poverty is truly in opposition to our materialistic society. He desired nothing since he depended upon God for everything. Thus today he continues to attract people who have much in the line of possessions but find no internal peace or joy. Again, his example teaches us that we can have true happiness and fulfillment in the Lord alone.

Finally, Saint Francis had a great respect for nature. He recognized that God is the Creator of everything. He loved all living things — plants, animals and people. He loved all life but especially human life created in God's image and likeness. Because of Saint Francis' love of life and respect for God's creation, he is very popular today. With a renewed consciousness about the environment, people see Saint Francis as a prophet and an example.

In each of these three instances, his humility, his love of poverty and his respect for nature, Saint Francis exerted his influence upon people who otherwise might never have turned to God.

Today we, who gather here on this Feast of Saint Francis, should also be inspired. Through Saint Francis we are brought into God's presence. Through him we can live a simpler but more profound life. Saint Francis shows us where true happiness and peace can be found and that is in God alone.

Just like all other people in the world, we are always in the presence of God. God sees us. He loves us. He blesses us. Like Saint Francis, who was always aware that he was in God's presence, we too must have that same awareness. Nature, family and friends all of creation can and should help us be aware of God's presence. But the most direct help we can ever have to become good and holy and faithful people of God is the Holy Eucharist, the celebration of Mass.


There is no substitute for the Eucharist because the Eucharist is God Himself. Although we are not worthy to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus, like Saint Francis, we come with humility and love. We come to receive Holy Communion, not because we are good and deserve this sacrament, but because God is good. It is His special gift to us. It is the gift of Himself coming to live in us and with us. This is Jesus who gives us life and leads us to life everlasting.

In faith and with confidence, let us respond humbly — Come Lord Jesus! Come!

... Come Lord Jesus

There is no substitute for the Eucharist because the Eucharist is God Himself.

Archbishop Beltran

A group of Oklahomans led by Archbishop Beltran were recent pilgrims in the Holy Land, visiting Israel and Jordan. They are shown here with His Beatitude Fouad Tval, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem in his parlor on Sept. 17.
Saint Vincent de Paul Raises Funds to Help Less Fortunate of Area

NORMAN — The South Central District Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrated the 175th anniversary of the founding of the society with a Walk for the Poor. It began with Mass and dinner at the Pastoral Center on Friday evening, Oct. 26. Archbishop Beltran was presented with an official Walk for the Poor T-shirt. The following morning more than 500 people gathered at All Saint’s Catholic School in Norman for the one-mile walk.

The master of ceremonies was Joseph Castiglione. Father Thomas Boyer blessed the walk with an inspiring prayer and Alex Court sang the National Anthem as well as several beautiful spiritual songs.

Students of All Saint’s had decorated the path with signs and footprints containing the Beatitudes and short prayers. Blue and white balloons added to the festive appearance of the area.

The goal was to raise $10,000 for the poor of the Moore, Norman and Purcell areas, however, the donations reached $22,000. This will be divided equally between Our Lady of Victory, St. Andrew’s, St. Joseph’s, St. Mark’s and St. Thomas More.

Council president Ed Marsom extended his thanks to all the members that have worked so hard on the project, as well as to all of the outstanding contributors. Marson said that it came at just the right time, as two of the conferences were no longer able to help the less fortunate that came to them because they were out of funds.

Beginning Experience Helped Heal Pain of Lost Relationship

By Paul Fagiano
For the Sooner Catholic

Pain, both physical and emotional, is what I was dealing with prior to learning about Beginning Experience. The emotional pain was hidden fairly well, but co-workers were beginning to wonder if I was terminally ill since I had lost a large portion of weight which I did not need to lose. Sleep deprivation had become so common I felt as if I could not escape the reoccurring thoughts of hopelessness that accompanied the betrayal I had been victimized by. The one person I loved so very much had betrayed me and treated me like a complete stranger. How could this loving woman turn so cold and heartless toward me? The pain was so intense I did not know if I would survive or if I even wanted to survive. Through the help of medical professionals and Divorce-Care, I survived and accepted my loss, yet I sought something more to help me move forward.

Growing up Catholic, including 12 years of a Catholic education, prepared me well for life’s experiences, but preparing me for the devastation associated with a failed relationship nearly destroyed me. Knowing the detachment often associated with divorce, I assumed the Catholic Church would turn away from me in my most desperate time of need. I was astonished to learn of the Beginning Experience group, which was originated by a Catholic nun for a friend of hers who was suffering the pain and devastation of divorce.

Without family and nowhere to turn, I sought answers, but there were no answers, just disbelief and despair. Keeping my faith, I prayed for some guidance and found a brief article in the St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church weekly bulletin. The article announced a Beginning Experience Weekend. The brief description identified a weekend for people who have experienced loss through the death or divorce of a spouse and who are ready to come to terms with their loss and begin to move forward with their lives. Something I had been searching for, a group that could relate to the pain I had been going through. I immediately called and spoke with one of the Beginning Experience local organizers and learned that this weekend encounter was for people just like me, seeking to discover more about themselves and desiring to forgive and let go of the pain.

I found myself driving to the Pastoral Center on Friday evening to begin an experience of uncertainty. Would this encounter be beneficial or would it simply magnify the pain I was carrying? As I entered the building, I was greeted by a friendly face named Al, who welcomed me to the Pastoral Center where I would be spending the entire weekend. I still did not know what to think. Did I commit myself to some sort of lockdown? What I learned was I had found a peaceful place filled with a group of people just like me who have each experienced painful loss and also have the desire to move forward.

Thinking my first evening would be a relaxing retreat was far from the truth. After introductions, we immediately began the experience. I can’t remember when I worked so hard at healing. The large group of participants was subdivided into small groups. There were gatherings with the large group and meetings with the small group. There were also times of solitude to reflect my most interpersonal thoughts and feelings to acknowledge what I had endured in my life. The weekend concluded on Sunday afternoon with a private Mass including a special blessing for each of us. I left the weekend exhausted but fulfilled. I developed friendships that are a continuing source of support for me.

For me to be whole is to embrace the power of the Holy Sprit by appreciating what I have rather than what I have lost. To fulfill this new appreciation, I felt compelled to give back, so I have trained to assist with facilitating future BE weekend workshops. The next BE weekend will be held Oct. 17-19, 2008, at the Pastoral Center, located at 7501 N.W. Expressway in Oklahoma City. If you or someone you know is experiencing the loss of a loved one through separation, divorce or death and have come to terms with the loss and are ready to begin to move forward, please consider contacting the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 108 for additional information. Another resource to learn more about BE can be found on the Internet at www.beginningexperience.org.
Eucharist Our Strength as We Struggle With Inadequacy

It is hard to measure up. In our lucid moments we admit this. Rarely is there a day when we could not echo these words by Anna Blaman:

I realized that it was simply impossible for a human being to be and remain good or pure. If, for instance, I wanted to be attentive in one direction, it could only be at the cost of neglecting another. If I gave my heart to one thing, it left another in the cold. No day and no hour go by without my being guilty of inadequacy. We never do enough, and what we do is never well enough done, except being inadequate, which we are good at because that is the way we are made. This is true of me and of everyone else. Every day and every hour brings with it its weight of moral guilt, as regards my work and my relations with others. I am constantly catching myself out in my human failings and, in spite of their being implied in my human imperfection, I am conscious of a sort of check. And this means that my human shortcomings are also my human guilt. It sounds strange that we should be guilty where we can do nothing about it. But even where there is no set purpose, no deliberate intention, we have a conviction of our own shortcomings, and of consensual guilt, a guilt which shows itself all too clearly in the consequences of what we have done or left undone.

Henri Nouwen occasionally expressed similar feelings: There is a nagging sense that there are unfinished tasks, unfulfilled promises, unrealized proposals. There is always something else that we should have remembered, done or said. There are always people we did not speak to, write to or visit. Thus, although we are very busy, we also have a lingering feeling of never really fulfilling our obligations. A gnawing sense of being unfulfilled underlies our filled lives.

When we are in touch with ourselves, we can relate to these words, these expressions of inadequacy. At the end of the day, we cannot measure up and cannot disappoint others and ourselves. Generally the fault is not that we are not sincere or that we do not put out the effort. The fault is that we are human. We have limited resources, get tired, experience feelings we cannot control, have only 24 hours in our day, have too many demands on us, have wounds and weaknesses that shackles us, and thus know exactly what St. Paul meant when he said: Woe, to me, wretch that I am, the good I want to do, I cannot do; and the evil I want to avoid, I end up doing!

That may sound negative, neurotic and stoic, and it can be those things, but, appropriated properly, it can generate hope and renewed energy in our lives. To be human is to be inadequate, by definition. Only God is adequate and the rest of us can safely say to ourselves: Fear not you are inadequate! But a God who made us this way surely gives us the slack, the forgiveness and the grace we need to work with this. Personally, I take consolation from the gospel parable of the 10 bridesmaids who, while waiting for the bridgroom, all fell asleep, wise and the foolish alike. Even the wise were too human and too weak to stay awake the whole time. Nobody does it perfectly and accepting this, our congenital inadequacy, can bring us to a healthy humility and perhaps even to a healthy humor about it.

But it should bring us to something more: prayer, especially the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is, among other things, a vigil of waiting. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he told the disciples to keep celebrating it until he returned again. A biblical scholar, Gerhard Lofink, puts it this way: The early apostolic communities cannot be understood outside of the matrix of intense expectation. They were communities imminently awaiting Christ’s return. They gathered in Eucharist, among other reasons, to foster and sustain this awareness, namely, that they were living in wait, waiting for Christ to return.

I try to celebrate Eucharist every day. I do this because I am a priest and part of the covenant a priest makes with the church at his ordination is to pray the priestly prayer of Jesus, the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours, regularly for the world. But I do it too, more personally, for another reason: The older I get, the less confident, in some ways, I am becoming. I don’t always know whether I’m following Christ properly or even know exactly what it means to follow Christ, and so I stake my faith on an invitation that Jesus left us on the night before he died: To break bread and drink wine in his memory and to trust that this, if all else is uncertain, is what we should be doing while we wait for him to return.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He can be contacted through his Web site, www.ronrolheiser.com.

Father John Futrell, SJ, Dies in St. Louis at Age 81

Father John C. Futrell, SJ, died Sept. 6, 2008, in St. Louis, Mo., after suffering a heart attack earlier in the day. Father John was a member of the Jesuit Hall (Fusz Pavilion) community. Internationally recognized for the workshops he developed in Ignatian discernment, John was 81 years old, a Jesuit for 63 years, and had just recently celebrated his golden jubilee as a priest.

Born in Oklahoma City on Oct. 14, 1927, John attended Regis College in Denver, Colo., for a year before entering the Society of Jesus at Florissant, Mo., on Aug. 8, 1945. He was ordained on June 18, 1958, at St. Mary’s College in Kansas. Tertiarianship in Belgium exposed him to life beyond the Midwest.

Father John’s first assignment sent him to Indonesia where from 1961 to 1963 he labored to establish an English department at Santa Dharma University in Yogyakarta. When he finished that work, he began doctoral studies in ascetical theology at Institute Catholique at the University of Paris. His dissertation was published in 1970 by the Institute of Jesuit Sources under the title Making an Apostolic Community of Love: The Role of the Superior according to St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Father John joined the faculty of the Divinity School at St. Louis University where, with Father David Fleming, he co-founded the Institute of Religious Formation in 1971. The nine-month program drew participants from around the world. The institute, which still continues at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, pioneered the idea of preparing men and women religious for work with novices and young religious in their communities.

When the divinity school closed in 1976, Father John and several others from the divinity school founded Ministry Training Services in Denver, where they refocused the IRF program and prepared scores of priests and religious for leadership positions in their dioceses and communities.

Throughout his lifetime, Father John traveled extensively giving workshops and retreats to religious communities in Africa, Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Australia, Canada and Ireland, to name but a few. He lectured regularly at the Gregorian University in Rome, and taught at various times at the Weston School of Theology, Boston College and Sogang University in Seoul, Korea. During the 1985-86 academic year he held the Flannery Chair at Gonzaga University.

The brother of Sister Jan Futrell, OSB, Father John is credited with helping to start the Retreat in Daily Life ministry sponsored by the Red Plains Monastery.

Sister Benedicta, OSB, called him “a very positive force” in the Retreat in Daily Life ministry. “I would put the establishment of the program at the feet of Father John Futrell,” Sister Benedicta said.

★★★★★

Dr. Camille Lewis Brown put this book together in the beginning as part of her course at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia to teach seminarians and others about African or black Catholics. The Church in the early days in northern Africa was a stronghold of Christianity for some centuries until the Muslim invasions of the seventh century. Some of the major heresies of the early Church were started and fought out in North Africa. Some of them were the Arian and Donatist heresies. Some of the major Church Fathers were from North Africa like St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Cyprian, St. Athanasius, and St. Cyril of Alexandria. Monasticism is believed to have started in Egypt which is in northern Africa. North Africa had major contributions to the Church in the early days.

Christianity came to the other parts of Africa when Europeans began colonizing the continent.

This book by Dr. Brown is concerned about African saints who were black-skinned. Some of the early African saints like St. Augustine and his mother, St. Monica, may or may not have been black-skinned. Many of the Christians from northern Africa like St. Cyprian and St. Athanasius were of Roman heritage, which means most likely they were white-skinned. Dr. Brown mentions some of these saints, but also notes that they might have been white-skinned Africans.

Bishop Joseph N. Perry, auxiliary bishop of Chicago, provides the foreword. Dr. Brown provides the introduction which sets the stage and reasoning as to why she set about researching Black saints and holy people. Most of the book is about people who have been declared by the Church as being saints, blessed or venerable; the other part is about those people whom Dr. Brown and others consider as candidates for sainthood. Some of the saints and others she presents are St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Josephine Bakhita, St. Benedict the Moor, Pope St. Gelasius I, St. Charles Lwanga and his Companions, St. Antony, St. Martin de Porres, St. Moses the Black, Bl. Marie Clementine Anuarite Negapeta, Blessed Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa and others. Those she includes in the second part who she considers worthy of canonization are Mother Mathilda Beasley, Dr. Lena Edwards, Mother Emma Lewis, Father Augustus Tolton, and others. She includes three appendices which include a calendar of selected saints, a litany of African saints, and a map of modern day Africa. She has a bibliography which includes not only books but also Web sites and other sources, notes and an index.

Dr. Brown presents 40 entries. The entry has the name or names of the holy person(s), dates and feast day on a side bar. Then she gives a short biography of the saint(s) which varies in length. She includes quotes from the saint(s) when available. After the biography there is a quote from Scripture that connects with the saint. She provides a prayer to the saint(s). She concludes the entry with a short reflection for the reader to ponder. This book is meant not only for information purposes, but also to provide material to meditate or pray with the holy person(s). She has done a great job in all these areas. The cover of the book is quite colorful with an African motif to it. There are oranges, tans, blacks and browns involved in it. The entries are very readable for scholars and general readers. This book is highly recommended to those who may want to use this book as an introduction to the study of black or African saints and holy people.

Dr. Camille Lewis Brown is the education coordinator of the diocese of Providence, R.I. She holds an M.A. in theology from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, and a Ph.D. in educational administration from Boston College. She founded the Bakhita Fund, a nonprofit organization designed to provide educational assistance to children around the world.

Brother Benet Exton is a Benedictine monk at Saint Gregory's.

EDMOND — Boy Scout Troop 331, chartered by St. Monica’s Catholic Church, helped the Knights of Columbus with a dinner to support the Peru missions. The Scouts, directed by Scoutmaster Tony Zabloudil along with several Scout leaders, helped serve food to nearly 200 people in attendance. The total service hours put in by the Scouts and adults combined for this project were 72 hours. Several of the Scouts and leaders had completed a 5-mile hike earlier in the day at Lake Arcadia in Edmond but that did not stop them from wanting to help out their chartered organization. Pictured here with the Scouts is Father Joe Uhen and Freddy Cornejo, who were visiting from Peru and took part in the celebration.
Marriage Created by God Can’t Be Altered by Modern Culture

Can a man marry a man? Can a woman marry a woman? Can a man simultaneously marry several women, or a woman several men? Can a man simultaneously marry several men, or a woman several women? Can a man marry his sister or his mother? His brother or his father? Can a woman marry her brother or father? Her sister or mother?

All of these questions are now on the table in our culture. They cannot be properly answered unless we know what marriage is. As Catholics, we have an incredibly rich body of teaching to draw from in order to understand the nature, meaning and purpose of marriage. Let’s begin with a basic definition drawn from Canon Law and the Second Vatican Council. Then we’ll look at each of its parts.

Marriage is the intimate, exclusive and indissoluble communion of life and love entered by man and woman at the design of the Creator for the purpose of their own good and the procreation and education of children; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.

Intimate communion of life and love: Marriage is the closest and most intimate of human friendships. It involves the sharing of the whole of a person’s life with his/her spouse. Marriage calls for a mutual self-surrender so intimate and complete that spouses — without losing their individuality — become “one,” not only in body, but in soul.

Exclusive communion of life and love: As a mutual gift of two persons to each other, this intimate union excludes such union with anyone else. It demands the total fidelity of the spouses. This exclusivity is essential for the good of the couple’s children as well.

Indissoluble communion of life and love: Husband and wife are not joined by passing emotion or mere erotic inclination which, selfishly pursued, fades quickly away. They are joined in authentic conjugal love by the firm and irrevocable act of their own will. Once their mutual consent has been consummated by genital intercourse, an unbreakable bond is established between the spouses. For the baptized, this bond is sealed by the Holy Spirit and becomes absolutely indissoluble. Thus, the church does not so much teach that divorce is wrong, but that divorce is impossible, regardless of its civil implications.

Entered by man and woman: The complementarity of the sexes is essential to marriage. It’s not that two men (or two women) could marry, but the church won’t “let them.” If we understand what marriage is, we will see very clearly that it is impossible for members of the same sex to marry.

At the design of the Creator: God is the author of marriage. He inscribed the call to marriage in our very being by creating us as male and female. We, therefore, are not able to change the nature and purposes of marriage.

For the purpose of their own good: “It is not good that the man should be alone.” (Gen 2:18). Conversely, it’s for their own good, for their benefit, enrichment and ultimately their salvation, that a man and woman join their lives in marriage.

And the procreation and education of children: Children are not added on to marriage and conjugal love but spring from the very heart of the spouses’ mutual self-giving as its fruit and fulfillment. Intentional exclusion of children, then, contradicts the very nature and purpose of marriage.

Covenant: While marriage involves a legal contract, a covenant goes beyond the minimum rights and responsibilities guaranteed by a contract. A covenant calls the spouses to share in the free total, faithful and fruitful love of God. For it is God who, in the image of his own covenant with his people, joins the spouses in a more binding and sacred way than any human contract.

The dignity of a sacrament: Marriage between baptized persons is an efficacious sign of the union between Christ and the church, and, as such, is a means of grace. That is, marriage — in as much as the union of man and woman truly symbolizes Christ’s love for the church — really communicates Christ’s love to the spouses and, through them, to the whole world.

We must find ways to respond charitably and forthrightly to the challenges posed by the modern move to redefine marriage. We will explore ways to do that in the next column.

Christopher West is a fellow of the Theology of the Body Institute in West Chester, Pa., and lectures worldwide on the subject. His books and other information are available at www.christopherwest.com.

Registration Opens for Annual Catholic Women’s Conference

The Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference has begun accepting online, discounted registrations for the January conference. The conference will be held on Saturday, Jan. 24 at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center at I-40 and Meridian in Oklahoma City.

Participants may save $5 by registering on the conference Web site at www.ocwconference.com before Oct. 31. Adult registration is $35, students are $25. A box lunch may be purchased for $10. Payment must be submitted through PayPal by e-check or credit card; a PayPal account is not required in order to register.

Mass will be celebrated at 5:30 p.m. with Archbishop Eusebius Beltran.

The speakers at the conference will include:

Johnnette Benkovic, founder and president of Living His Life Abundantly® International Inc., a Catholic evangelization apostolate with outreaches in television, radio, print and Internet communications. She is also founder of Women of Grace®, a Catholic apostolate for Christian women that features a number of outreaches including conferences, curricula, study groups and more.

Sheila Liaugminas, an Emmy Award-winning journalist with extensive experience in both secular and religious journalism. Her writing covers a variety of topics, with her particular interest being matters of the Church, faith, culture, politics and the media.

Father Shane Tharp, pastor of St. Wenceslaus in Prague and St. Michael in Meeker, and rector of the National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague. He assists with various pro-life apostolates, including Rachel’s Vineyard.

The conference will also include the sacrament of reconciliation, adoration as well as vendors.
Bringing Facts and Principles to the Health-Care Debate

By Kathy Saile
USCCB

Polls show that voters consider health care a central national issue for the upcoming elections. There is growing consensus that the health-care system in the United States is broken and needs reform. It serves too few and costs too much. The Catholic Bishops of the United States have offered several basic criteria for assuring health-care coverage for all that offers a moral framework for discussion in this election year. They include:

- Respect for human life and dignity
- Priority concern for the poor and vulnerable
- Pursuing the common good and preserving pluralism
- Restraining health-care costs

This overdue national discussion ought to begin with some basic facts. The fact is nearly 1 million babies a year do not see the day of their birth as a result of abortion on demand. The fact is that 47 million people in the wealthiest and most technologically advanced country in the world lack health-care coverage. The fact is that $1 of every $6 spent in the United States is spent on health care. And the fact is if you live in poverty in the United States, your life expectancy is nearly five years shorter than your more affluent neighbor. As a nation this is not morally right. We can do better.

The bishops statement, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, stresses that “affordable and accessible health care is an essential safeguard of human life and a fundamental human right.” Catholic teaching calls on society to respect and protect life from the moment of conception until natural death. All people have a right to health care regardless of where they work, where they come from or how much money they have. Quality health care should be accessible to every person as a part of basic respect for human life and dignity.

“The voices of the Catholic community should be loud and clear in public discussion on health care in this election and beyond. The health care status quo is morally unacceptable. Our nation can and must do better.”

As part of how we exercise faithful citizenship, Catholics voters should assess how political candidates’ health-care positions will bring about effective and affordable health coverage for all and enhance or diminish the level of dignity with which those in need are treated. No one should be left without essential health care. In addition, no national health-care proposal should advance or include threats to life, like abortion, euthanasia or assisted suicide. Health-care reform proposals should support preventive health-care strategies as well as ways to restrain increasing health-care costs. Health-care reform should begin with pursuing coverage for all and include a basic standard of care for physical and mental health as well as respect for pluralism in health-care delivery, including religious and other non-profit providers of care.

Health care is not just another issue for the Church. It is one way the Church continues Jesus’ mission of healing and care for the “least of these” (Mt. 25:40). The Catholic Church provides health care, purchases health care and picks up the pieces of a failing health-care system. We serve the sick and uninsured in our emergency rooms, shelters and on the doorsteps of our parishes. One out of six Americans is cared for in Catholic hospitals. We bring strong convictions and everyday experience to the issue of health care.

Our faith and this election year require Catholics to join with others in public debate and to share Catholic teaching and experience in the search for effective health-care reform.

The Catholic community offers voters a variety of resources to help form consciences as we cast our votes and hold elected officials accountable. The recent bishops statement, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, and accompanying resources are available at www.faithfulcitizenship.org. The bishops Framework for Comprehensive Health Care Reform (www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/COMPCARE.PDF) remains timely and offers useful criteria for reform. The Catholic Health Association (CHA) offers many resources, such as “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care,” which is rooted in the teaching of the Church and in the experience of Catholic health-care providers throughout the country (www.chausa.org). And Catholic Charities USA’s Campaign to Reduce Poverty offers specific policy recommendations for addressing the health needs of poor people in our communities (www.catholiccharitiesusa.org).

The voices of the Catholic community should be loud and clear in public discussion on health care in this election and beyond. The health care status quo is morally unacceptable. Our nation can and must do better.

Kathy Saile is director of the Office of Domestic Social Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development.

Oregon Bishop Admonishes Catholic Pro-Choice Governor

The Catholic News Agency

The Archbishop of Portland, Ore., John G. Vlazny, is lamenting the fact that Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski has become “a source of embarrassment for our church and a scandal for the Catholic community” by hosting a “political gala” for NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon this coming Friday.

Labeling the Catholic governor’s appearance a seeming “deliberate dissent” from the teachings of the Church, Archbishop Vlazny is calling upon Catholics to contact the governor and extending them an invitation to an upcoming Respect Life Mass. In a statement from the Archdiocese of Portland, the archbishop rebuked the governor, who with his wife is scheduled to be an “honorary host” for the fundraising dinner at a Portland hotel.

Archbishop Vlazny wrote: “It has come to my attention that Governor Ted Kulongoski will be hosting a NARAL Pro-Choice political gala two days before our Respect Life Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

“This is a source of embarrassment for our church and a scandal for the Catholic community. For a Catholic governor to host an event of this sort seems a deliberate dissent from the teachings of the Church.

“As I wrote in the Catholic Sentinel in August, ‘the very core of all Catholic moral and social teaching is respect for the dignity of everyone. Ours is a rich heritage of social teaching which forms the basis of what it means to be a faithful citizen as a Catholic.’

“Saying the “grave evil of abortion continues to be promoted as a legitimate moral choice by Governor Kulongoski and NARAL,” Archbishop Vlazny invited Catholics to attend evening Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Friday, the day of the NARAL gala. He also invited Catholics to attend the Respect Life Mass at the cathedral on Sunday.

Gov. Kulongoski spokeswoman Anna Richter Taylor characterized the governor as a longtime supporter of a woman’s right to choose an abortion. “The archbishop is the governor’s pastor, and he has only respect and admiration for the archbishop,” Taylor said. “They obviously disagree on the issue of choice.”

Archbishop Vlazny’s statement concluded with a call for Catholics to contact the governor. “I call upon our Catholic people to express their displeasure to the governor and to remind him of the demands of personal integrity as a member of our faith community in the exercise of his office and public activities,” he wrote, adding the governor’s phone number for public comments.
Novena for Faithful Citizenship

First Day

Opening Prayer
Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Reading Ps 8:2, 4-10
O LORD, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth! You have set your majesty above the heavens! When I see your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars that you set in place — What are humans that you are mindful of them, mere mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them little less than a god, crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them rule over the works of your hands, put all things at their feet: All sheep and oxen, even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatever swims the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth!

Reflection
How will I praise God today? How will I show respect for others, especially my neighbor or those in my community who are not like me?

Prayer
God of love, may we grow in our love for you by respecting the dignity of all people we encounter. Amen.

Novena Prayer (See red box)

Second Day

Opening Prayer
Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Reading Ps 146:1-8
Praise the LORD, my soul; I shall praise the LORD all my life, sing praise to my God while I live. Put no trust in princes, in mere mortals powerless to save. When they breathe their last, they return to the earth; that day all their planning comes to nothing. Happy those whose help is Jacob's God, whose hope is in the LORD, their God, the maker of heaven and earth, the seas and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.

Reflection
What actions do I perform to please God? How am I healing the wounds of my community?

Prayer
God of light, give us the freedom to walk in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus. Let our light shine out for all to see by turning to those who call for our help. Heal our wounds, heal our community. Amen.

Novena Prayer (See red box)

Third Day

Opening Prayer
Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Reading Is 58:2-3, 6-8
[The Lord said]: They seek me day after day, and desire to know my ways, like a nation that has done what is just and not abandoned the law of their God; They ask me to declare what is due them, pleased to gain access to God. “Why do we fast, and you do not see it? afflict ourselves, and you take no note of it?” This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed.

Reflection
How do I defend the right to life, especially of the unborn and those near death? How am I tempted to turn away from the commandments and not support the right to life of all people? How can I overcome that temptation?

Prayer
God of life, may we protect and defend the inviolable sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death with strong voices, gentle hands, and loving hearts. Amen.

Novena Prayer (See red box)
**Fifth Day**

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**Reading** 1 Cor 11:26-29

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

**Reflection**

How is the Eucharist central in my life? My community? Where do I reach out to the body of Christ in my community?

**Prayer**

Lord, we come together at the Eucharist to celebrate your death and resurrection. Help us experience authentic worship. Help us grow in awareness of each person’s dignity, and increase our sensitivity to injustices. Guide us to seek ways to redress them. Amen.

**Novena Prayer** (See red box)

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**Sixth Day**

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**Reading** Mt 5:43-46

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?”

**Reflection**

Who are my enemies? How do I love them? How do I live up to the definition Jesus provides for living a Christian lifestyle, a life of Christian love?

**Prayer**

God of peace, Give us the courage to be reconciled with our neighbors, our enemies. Give us the vision to truly see what it means to be a Christian so that peace and justice may rule in our world. Amen.

**Novena Prayer** (See red box)

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**Seventh Day**

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**Reading** Ephesians 4:1-6

I ... urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

**Reflection**

What divisions exist in my community? What structures in society seem unjust? How am I striving to achieve justice and peace in my neighborhood, church and nation?

**Prayer**

God of justice, we are created in your image. May we glorify you in all of our actions. Amen.

**Novena Prayer** (See red box)

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**Eighth Day**

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**Reading** Is 32:15-18

Until the spirit from on high is poured out on us, then will the desert become an orchard and the desert will bring about peace; right will produce calm and security. My people will live in peaceful country, in secure dwellings and quiet resting places.

**Reflection**

How do I recognize the Spirit’s involvement in my life in the community?

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you give us your love and your grace to do great things. Give us the faith to shine our light by walking humbly and acting justly before our God. Amen.

**Novena Prayer** (See red box)

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**Ninth Day**

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**Reading** Mt 5:13-16

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

**Reflection**

How am I salt for my community? How do I shine your light for all the community to see? What deeds am I performing in order to glorify God?

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you give us your love and your grace to do great things. Give us the faith to shine our light by walking humbly and acting justly before our God. Amen.

**Novena Prayer** (See red box)
Gay Marriage: Law of Man Doesn’t Supersede Law of Nature

By H. Richard McCord
USCCB

Gay marriage is a significant question that needs to be discussed and most important in the discussion is how the issue is framed.

The U.S. bishops in Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship urge people to study the issues before they vote in the coming elections.

Whether homosexual persons should be allowed to marry each other is one issue. The central issue is about the nature and purposes of marriage as a fundamental social structure and civil institution. It is not first a question about civil rights or discrimination or achieving the full social enfranchisement of homosexual persons nor about stabilizing a lifestyle.

The Catholic position begins not with sacramental theology, moral teachings and biblical passages. It begins with what can be observed in human nature and behavior and what we can conclude using our reason. This is the natural law position.

“... mutual love between the spouses and the procreation of children. No other human relationship, no matter how loving or caring or generative it might be, can make this claim or deliver on it.”

You don’t need religious faith to see that marriage is a unique relationship between a man and a woman. What defines this relationship is the fact that it is a partnership based on sexual complementarity. That makes possible the fulfillment of the two co-equal purposes of marriage: mutual love between the spouses and the procreation of children. No other human relationship, no matter how loving or caring or generative it might be, can make this claim or deliver on it.

Marriage is the union of a man and a woman. This is a truth discoverable by human reason. It is written in the law of nature and in the language of the human body and spirit. It is a truth enshrined from the beginning of time. Church teaching about marriage starts with this truth.

Since marriage is a fundamental social structure based on human nature, neither the church nor the state can change it at its core. Marriage, and the family it produces, is a society that precedes all other societies. It’s an institution we don’t own, but rather one that we receive. This does not mean that church and state cannot regulate marriage, for example, placing minimum age limits, but it does mean we are not free to alter its basic structure.

Marriage of a man and a woman makes a unique contribution to society. It is the fundamental pattern for male-female relationships. It is a necessary or even desirable, therefore, to tamper with a fundamental social structure in order to protect individual rights and to grant all citizens their legitimate social benefits.

The issue of same-sex marriage must be understood as a question about marriage as it has been received from the Creator and subsequently received from each generation throughout history. To perceive it as a question of justice for homosexual persons starts the conversation on the wrong path.


Bishop: Don’t be Misled by Pro-Abortion Politicians

By Bishop Michael O. Jackels

Let us not be misled by the public statements and positions of pro-abortion politicians who identify themselves as Catholics.

Some of them erroneously suggest that Church teaching on abortion is open for debate. Wrong. The Catholic Church has taught consistently and clearly that procured abortion is gravely contrary to the moral law.

From the moment of conception we are in the presence of a human being. That is when respect for the dignity of the human person begins, as well as protection of the rights to those things needed to live in dignity. The right to life is the most basic and fundamental human right and the condition for all other personal rights.

In addition, the Church exhorts its members to take seriously our duty to vote guided by a conscience formed according to Catholic teaching, and not simply on the basis of self-interest, party affiliation or the personal charisma of a politician.

In preparation for the upcoming election, re-read the document Moral Principles for Conscientious Voters, which is available in every parish or online at www.cdowk.org/lifeandjustice under “election year guidance.”

Let us not be misled by the public statements and positions of pro-abortion politicians who identify themselves as Catholics. They are wrong.

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Commission Awards Grants to Support Justice Projects

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Archdiocesan Commission for Justice and Human Development (CCHD) awarded seven grants recently to Catholic churches and organizations. Becky VanPool, director of Parish Outreach, said the “seed” grants range from $500 to $1,000 for grass-roots projects which promote institutional change and empowerment of poor and low-income people.

“We congratulate our recipients who are sponsoring programs that assist our communities and parishes,” VanPool said. “CCHD is proud to help in partial funding of these unique and worthwhile projects.”

The 2008 grants are as follows:
1) St. Ann Parish of Fairview for $1,000. The purpose of the “Hooked on Books” project for the Little Jacket Learning Junction is to foster healthy brain development, parent-child bonding and early literacy skills critical for school success by engaging parents in a routine of daily “lap reading” with their children. 2) St. Charles Borromeo Church of Oklahoma City — Oklahoma Interfaith Sponsoring Committee for $1,000. The purpose of the project is to build a congregation-based community organizing project that will be made up of 25 to 40 member institutions that will provide leadership training in congregational development and public action. 3) St. Benedict Parish of Shawnee for $600. The purpose of the funds is to assist the Project Gabriel Outreach program with a dedicated telephone service which may be used for participants who need a contact number for assistance. Volunteers who support the program will share the phone for contacts. 4) Immaculate Conception Parish of Oklahoma City for $2,000. Two projects were funded. The Riverpark “Diamondbacks” soccer program, which targets youngsters to play soccer and discourages gang activities. The second is the Catholic Heart Camp project, which works with the neighborhood to rehab and revitalize the neighborhood surrounding the church. 5) Sacred Heart Church of Oklahoma City for $1,200. The Counselor in Training Program will be a new addition to the Summer Academy — a neighborhood youth program that offers programs to develop self-esteem, leadership skills, human dignity, and provides education and culturally experiences. The Counselor in Training will offer high school youth employment to develop leadership and job skills while working with the youth. 6) St. Peter Church of Woodward for $1,705. The project will offer a parent education workshop presented in Spanish to assist and support Hispanic parents in the difficult job of raising children. The workshops will promote positive, healthy family development, including the issues of discipline and child abuse. 7) St. Peter the Apostle of Guymon for $1,000. The project is to establish a St. Vincent de Paul Society Thrift store to offer low-cost clothing and household goods to the immigrant community. Volunteers from the immigrant community and the St. Vincent de Paul Society will assist with staffing the store.

CCHD programs are funded through an annual collection in parishes each year. This year’s CCHD campaign will begin in November. “Catholics can be proud of the fact that their contributions during the annual CCHD collection are helping our communities and parish programs. Financial support from our parishes is a form of ministry,” said VanPool.

Since its start 37 years ago, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has worked to transform lives and communities, focusing steadily on breaking the cycle of poverty in thousands of communities across the United States. CCHD was established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops with a two-fold mandate to fund low-income controlled empowerment projects and to educate Catholics about the root causes of poverty within the context of the Catholic social tradition.

Catholic Charities Seeks Sponsors to Help With Adopt-A-Family Effort

Catholic Charities is seeking gift sponsors for the annual Adopt-A-Family Christmas program.

The program matches anonymous sponsors with families in need throughout the greater Oklahoma City area. Each sponsor receives a Christmas wish list for the “adopted” family, including each family member’s first name, age and clothing size. Sponsors wrap the gifts individually — labeling each gift with the appropriate family member’s name and family code number — and package them together in one container labeled with the family’s code number and the number of containers per family. Sponsors then drop off the gifts Monday, Dec. 8 at a central location where the families in need pick them up two days later.

Families in need are referred to the program from parish-based St. Vincent de Paul groups. Last year 1,784 individuals received gifts.

Cash donations also are accepted for the purchase of gift cards for families in need. Cash donations may be made in honor of a friend or relative. Cash donors who make gifts in someone’s honor will receive greeting cards they may present to their honorees acknowledging the gifts.

“It’s a good way to give a gift to a friend who has everything and a gift to a family who doesn’t,” said Becky VanPool, Catholic Charities Parish Outreach director.

Individuals or groups interested in sponsoring families, or anyone who would like to volunteer to assist with the gift drop-off and pickup process may call the Catholic Charities Family Support Services at (405) 526-2328.

St. Thomas More Annual Gala To Help Support Student Ministry at OU

NORMAN — Come dance with the stars at the St. Thomas More annual October Gala, benefiting the Catholic students of OU. "Dancing With The Stars" is the theme of this year’s fundraising gala, set for Friday, Oct. 24 at the OU Memorial Student Union. More than 250 patrons are expected to support this major event, which will benefit programs and events in campus ministry for OU students. These events include the annual mission trip to Arteaga, Mexico, in January, Alternative Spring Break service trip to the Gulf Coast in March, and a trip to help teach English to the seminarians and students at the Catholic University of Ukraine next July. The night kicks off at 6 p.m. and includes dinner, silent and live auctions, a performance from the OU Musical Theater's Hello Dolly cast, salsa dancers, a live band and dancing until midnight. Guests should come dressed as their favorite movie couple or in evening attire. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Debbie Kohls at (405) 321-0990 Ext. 206.
Buenas Noticias...

Muy Reverendo Eusebius Beltrán, Arzobispo Metropolitano de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City.

Aunque no seamos merecedores de recibir el Cuerpo y Sangre de Cristo, como San Francisco, venimos con humildad y amor.

Misa al Aire Libre....

Misioneras Eucarísticas de Santa Teresa.

La Eucaristía fue impartida en la Misa al Aire Libre y se celebró en familia.

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:

Que hermoso día para la comunidad hispana de nuestra Arquidiócesis al reunirnos para esta celebración anual. Estoy muy complacido de ver a gente de muchas parroquias y pueblos de la Arquidiócesis. Le doy la bienvenida a todos ustedes a la Parroquia San José, aquí en la ciudad de Ada.

Le agradezco al Padre Rusty Hewes y a su gente por darnos tan amable recibimiento en la celebración que hacemos en este año. También, le agradezco a la Hermana Rosario, a su personal y a todos los que han trabajado duro para hacer realidad este día. Sus oraciones, trabajo, y dedicación hacen de esta ocasión una gran oportunidad para compartir espiritualidad, alegría y cultura. Muchas gracias. Gracias a todos ustedes y que Dios los bendiga.

Hoy celebramos el día festivo de San Francisco de Asís. San Francisco de Asís es uno de los santos más populares. Él es reverenciado, no solamente por los católicos, sino por muchas personas de otras creencias religiosas.

Incluso, San Francisco de Asís es respetado por gente que no tiene ninguna afiliación religiosa.

Un detallado estudio de la vida de San Francisco revela que fue un hombre de un gran carácter e integridad. San Francisco atrae a mucha gente por tres atributos. Esos atributos son su humildad, amor hacia los pobres y respeto por la naturaleza.

La humildad es una virtud en la cual una persona busca la verdad. Una persona humilde reconoce que todas las cosas buenas son creadas por Dios. Una persona humilde se da cuenta que todas las cosas vienen de Dios. En una persona humilde no hay un orgullo insolente o reclamo falso.

San Francisco fue el tipo de persona que se identificó por sus sermones, sus escritos y por encima de todo eso, por el ejemplo que dio al pueblo de Dios. Todo ésto ha sido un regalo dado a todos nosotros. Por haber vivido siempre en la Presencia de Dios, sin tratar de ser o parecer alguien importante, es que San Francisco de Asís pudo liderar y llevar al pueblo hacia Dios.

En oposición a nuestra sociedad materialista, San Francisco dio su amor a los pobres y decidió vivir su vida en la completa pobreza desprendiéndose de lo material porque siempre creyó que todas las cosas dependían de Dios.

Así entonces, San Francisco sigue atrayendo a la gente, incluso aquellas personas que tienen bienes materiales pero no encuentran alegría o paz interna. Nuevamente, él nos enseña que la única forma de tener felicidad plena está solamente con nuestro Señor.

Finalmente, San Francisco de Asís, tenía un gran respeto por la naturaleza. Él reconoció que Dios es el Creador de todas las cosas. San Francisco amó a los animales, las plantas y al ser humano. Él amó toda forma de vida, pero especialmente a la vida humana creada a Imagen y Semejanza de Dios.

Es por eso que San Francisco demostró amor y respeto a la creación de Dios y se ha hecho muy popular hoy en día. Con una renovada conciencia sobre el medio ambiente, la gente lo debe ver como un profeta y un ejemplo.

En estas tres instancias como lo son la humildad, el amor a los pobres y el respeto a la naturaleza, San Francisco ejerció su influencia sobre personas que de otro modo quizás no se hubiesen dirigido a Dios.

Hoy, celebramos la Fiesta de San Francisco, por lo tanto debemos estar inspirados. A través de San Francisco somos llevados ante la Presencia de Dios. Mediante él podemos vivir con más sencillez una vida más profunda. San Francisco nos enseñó donde está la verdadera felicidad y donde podemos encontrar la paz que está solamente en Dios.

Como cualquier persona en el mundo, estamos siempre en la Presencia de Dios. Dios nos observa, nos ama y nos bendice. Como San Francisco, quien siempre supo que estaba bajo la Presencia de Dios, debemos tener esa misma actitud. La naturaleza, la familia, las amistades y toda creación pueden y deben ayudarnos a reconocer la Presencia de Dios. Sin embargo, la ayuda más directa que siempre podemos recibir para convertirnos en personas buenas, fieles y santas, es la Santa Eucaristía, la celebración de la Misa.

La Santa Eucaristía es el sacramento del Cuerpo y Sangre de Cristo. En la Santa Comunión, Jesús nos dice: “Tomad y comed todos de él, porque esto es mi Cuerpo, que será entregado por vosotros”. “Tomad y bebed todos de él, porque éste es el cántiz de mi Sangre”.

No existe nada que pueda sustituir a la Eucaristía porque la Eucaristía es Dios mismo. Aunque no seamos merecedores de recibir el Cuerpo y Sangre de Cristo, como San Francisco, venimos con humildad y amor. Venimos a recibir la Santa Comunión, no porque somos y merecemos este sacramento sino porque Dios es bondadoso.

La Eucaristía es un regalo especial para nosotros que viene de Dios para que Él mismo pueda vivir entre y con nosotros.

Es Cristo quien nos da vida y nos lleva a la vida eterna. Con fe y con mucha confianza, respondamos humildemente: ¡Vén Señor Jesús!
La Iglesia pide una solución humana e integral a la inmigración

Formando la conciencia para ser ciudadanos fieles para votar

El siguiente escrito es de Kevin Appleby, quien es director de la Oficina de Político Migratoria y de Refugiados de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos.

El debate nacional sobre inmigración ha generado grandes discusiones, a menudo emocionales, sobre el impacto del número creciente de inmigrantes indocumentados en nuestras comunidades. Predomina el diálogo acalorado sobre los aspectos económico, social y legal de la cuestión. Sin embargo, deberíamos entender que, por encima de todo, la inmigración es un asunto humanitario y, en última instancia, una cuestión moral.

Cada día en parroquias, programas de servicios sociales, hospitales y escuelas las consecuencias humanas de un sistema de inmigración inadecuado son patentes: familias separadas, trabajadores inmigrantes explotados por coyotes y empleadores sin escrúpulos, y seres humanos desesperados por sobrevivir que mueren en los desiertos de Estados Unidos.

Al tiempo que nuestra nación se beneficia del trabajo duro de los inmigrantes indocumentados, nosotros fallamos en extenderles las protecciones legales básicas para el lugar de trabajo. Aún peor, algunos usan a los inmigrantes como chivos expiatorios de nuestros problemas sociales.

El documento de los obispos estadounidenses Formando la conciencia para ser ciudadanos fieles urge a los católicos a que estudien temas como la inmigración antes de ir a las urnas. Dadas algunas prácticas y políticas actuales en algunos estados y ciudades de los EE.UU., y el efecto perjudicial que éstas causan sobre la vida y la dignidad humanas, los obispos han afirmado que la situación actual es inmoral y han hecho un llamado a la reforma integral del sistema de inmigración. Su receta para remediar el sistema es enfatizar la legalidad sobre la ilegalidad mediante la creación de vías legales para la inmigración y la legalización, con un camino abierto a la ciudadanía, para los inmigrantes indocumentados.

Desde luego, esto incluye un cumplimiento riguroso de las leyes, pero también sugiere una aproximación más integral que reforma todos los aspectos del sistema. Esto representa la forma más efectiva, humana y práctica para resolver nuestra crisis inmigratoria.

Algunos argumentan que los trabajadores indocumentados y sus familias no deberían recibir estatus legal porque viven fuera de ley. Antes de emitir juicio, debemos considerar que la política estadounidense ha creado, en realidad, condiciones que fomentan la inmigración ilegal y el incumplimiento de la ley. Por ejemplo, mientras el gobierno federal ha gastado billones de dólares en reforzar la vigilancia y la seguridad en la frontera en los últimos 15 años, durante el mismo periodo el número de inmigrantes sin documentos se ha duplicado en el país. Esto se debe, principalmente al hecho de que, incluso con las leyes en vigor, las inmigrantes indocumentadas encuentran trabajo en compañías estadounidenses. Este imán de trabajos disponibles induce a los inmigrantes a venir. Para agravar el problema, las leyes de inmigración de Estados Unidos no proveen vías legales para que estos trabajadores puedan inmigrar de forma segura y legal.

El número de visas de trabajo disponibles para trabajadores con poca preparación es absolutamente pequeño comparado con la demanda – 5,000 visas permanentes y 66,000 temporales por año. Los visados para mantener a las familias unidas pueden ser aún más escasos. Tiempo de espera de hasta 10 años para familiares cercanos de familias de México son algo bastante usual.

También debemos considerar la intención y el efecto de la transgresión legal por parte del inmigrante, dos factores atenuantes que se consideran en los tribunales de EE.UU. La intención de los trabajadores inmigrantes es la de trabajar para poder sustentar a sus familias y el efecto es que ayudan a la economía estadounidense al trabajar en industrias importantes que necesitan mano de obra.

Por ejemplo, algunos líderes en el sector de la construcción estiman que si los trabajadores sin documentos se marcharan de los Estados Unidos, la construcción de viviendas se retrasaría entre seis y ocho meses y el costo subiría en un 30 a un 40 por ciento. El sector sanitario se apoya fuertemente en trabajadores inmigrantes para el cuidado de ancianos y enfermos.

El Departamento de Trabajo predice que la demanda de trabajadores extranjeros en estas y otras industrias crecerá dramaticamente. La reforma migratoria integral representa una solución humana a nuestra crisis. Permitirá a los inmigrantes y a sus familias permanecer juntos y, al mismo tiempo, contribuir sin temor sus talentos a la comunidad. También ayudará a reducir la explotación de los inmigrantes y a reducir el número de los que perecen en el intento de venir a los Estados Unidos.

Los oficiales electos deben examinar las causas que originan la emigración desde sus comunidades de origen y trabajar con sus gobernadores para crear puestos de trabajo en esos lugares. Esta es la solución a largo plazo que el alzamiento de un muro de 700 millas en la frontera no logrará.

Es imperativo que ambos partidos y ambas cámaras del Congreso trabajen duro para producir leyes que creen un sistema de inmigración predicado en el cumplimiento de la ley y que enaltezca los valores que todos los americanos apreciamos — trabajo duro, oportunidad y compasión.

Afirmó el Papa que la crisis financiera muestra la importancia de la Palabra

VATICANO, (ZENIT NEWS) — Las actuales crisis financieras muestran la importancia de construir la vida sobre el fundamento firme de la Palabra, explicó Benedicto XVI en la jornada del Sínodo de los Obispos.

"Lo vemos ahora en la caída de los grandes bancos: este dinero desaparece, no es nada. Y así todas estas cosas, que parecen la verdadera realidad con la que contar, y que son realidades de segundo orden", explicó el Papa.

El Papa Benedicto XVI ofreció una meditación durante la oración de la Hora Tercía a los 244 padres sinodales presentes sobre el Salmo 118 (119) "La Palabra de Dios es el fundamento de todo, es la verdadera realidad. Y para ser realistas, debemos contar con esta realidad", aseguró el pontífice.

"Debemos cambiar nuestra idea de que la materia, las cosas sólidas, que tocamos, sean la realidad más sólida, más segura", exhortó. Recordó que al final del Sermón de la Montaña Jesús habla de las dos posibilidades de construir la casa de nuestra propia vida: sobre la arena y sobre la roca.

"Sobre la arena construye quien construye solo sobre las cosas visibles y tangibles, sobre el éxito, sobre la carrera, sobre el dinero. Aparentemente estas son las verdaderas realidades. Pero todo esto un día pasará", aseguró.

"Y así todas estas cosas, que parecen la verdadera realidad con la que contar, y que son realidades de segundo orden. Quien construye la vida sobre estas realidades, sobre la materia, sobre el éxito, sobre todo lo que parece ser, construye sobre arena", explicó.

"Sólo la Palabra de Dios es el fundamento de toda la realidad, es estable como el cielo y más que el cielo, es la realidad.

Por tanto debemos cambiar nuestro concepto de realismo. Realista es quien reconoce en la Palabra de Dios, en esta realidad aparentemente tan débil, el fundamento de todo".
**Jobs Box**

**Maintenance Supervisor**

St. Ann’s Home in Oklahoma City is looking for a maintenance supervisor. St. Ann’s Home is a 120-bed, long-term care facility. Must have knowledge in electrical, plumbing and carpentry. Must be able to organize and multi-task with contractors. Organizational skills and communication are must! Knowledge in long-term care a plus. Please apply in person at St. Ann’s Home, 9400 St. Ann’s Drive, Oklahoma City 73099.

**Chapel Staff Openings**

Tinker Air Force Base Chapel has the following positions to be filled: Catholic coordinator, Evangelization coordinator, Religious Education coordinator, choir director, choir director/musician and organist for Mass. The Statement of Work, explaining the position and necessary qualifications, is available at the base chapel weekdays. Once all resumes are collected, the applicants will be contacted to set up an interview time with the selection committee. Upon completion of the interview, valid applicants will be asked to formulate and submit a bid. The committee will score applicants and their bids on the basis of skills, education, experience, organization/administrative ability and motivation, ministry focus, people focus, and whether bids are reasonable/within budget and value received for the amount paid. If you have any questions, contact the chapel at 734-2111.

**Help Wanted with Adults with 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. and weekend doubles). Individual Program Coordinator — Must have good communication skills interacting with our clients, their families and the community. Qualified Mental Retardation Professional — Bachelor’s degree, master’s preferred. Prior experience working with developmentally disabled. Laundry aides, housekeeping and dietary aides — Full-time hours with possible rotating weekends. To apply, call 263-4658, fax 263-4563, e-mail alemke@cfllinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche, Okla. 73762. 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.

**Calendar**

**October**

12 Birth Choice 16th Annual Walk for Life at the Myriad Gardens, downtown Oklahoma City. Featuring a LifeWalk through Bricktown, Teen Fearless Factor Follies competition. For more information, call Ian O’Neill at 606-8426.

12 American Catholic Experience. This October join Stephen Reel as he explores the history of the Catholic Church in America in a five-part class. The American Catholic Experience will follow the 10 a.m. Mass in Room LL3 at Christ the King in Oklahoma City. For more information, contact the RE Office at 843-4766.

13 Weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at Christ the King Catholic Church, located one block north of Wilshire, halfway between Penn and May at 8005 Dorset Drive, every Monday beginning at 7 a.m. and concluding with Benediction at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Linda at 496-0033.

14 Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western, every Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to noon. The Rosary is said every weekday at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome.

15 All-Day Adoration, every Wednesday at St. Eugene Church, 2400 W. Hefner Road. Mass at 6:30 a.m., Exposition of Eucharist at 7 a.m., Confessions from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Anointing of Sick at 3 p.m. Devotions conclude with multi-lingual evening prayer and Benediction at 7:30 p.m. Contacts: Barbara Curcio, 755-9163, O en Espanol – Gloria Pantazis, 751-7115.

16 Mount St. Mary home football game vs Perry, 7:30 p.m.

17-19 God’s Music is Silence. Come away to a Silent Retreat with Katie Gordy. The retreat begins at 9 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 17 and ends Oct. 19 at noon. The retreat to be held at Mount St. Mary’s. Call Katie at 627-6954 to get more information or to register.

17-19 Beginning Experience Weekend. To register, contact the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

17-25 Monthly Novena to the Infant Jesus, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Nat’l Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Saint Wenceslaus Church, SH-99 7 miles N. I-40 or 20 miles S. I-44 at Stroud exit, Prague, (405) 567-3080.

18 Mass in Tagalog. St. Paul the Apostle Catholic in Del City will celebrate Mass in Tagalog (Filipino) at 7 p.m. each Saturday. A potluck dinner will occasionally follow Mass. All are welcome.

18 Anger, Conflict and Forgiveness Retreat with Marie Ballmann, OSB, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This spiritual approach helps you to identify the unresolved anger and conflicts that affect your relationships. Fee: $40 ($10 deposit). Register: (405) 373-0804. Bring a sack lunch. Place: Monastery Library.

18 Labyrinth Retreat with Melissa Anna Letts, OSB, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fee: $40 ($10 deposit). Register: (405) 373-0804. Bring a sack lunch. Place: Monastery Art Barn.

For a full calendar, go to catharchdioceseokc.org and click on Calendar of Events.
Growing Parish Plans for Building

By Ammanda McCabe
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Holy Angels Church is bursting at the seams. Holy Angels Church needs your help. “What we need now is a big worship space, a big space to gather for fiestas, and more space for religious education and youth groups,” said Father Michael Chapman, pastor at Holy Angels.

The parish is young and Father Chapman said averages “five to 10” baptisms per week.

“What we have is lots of young, working families with modest incomes and great hopes for the future,” he said. “With your help we can give these parents a hand up, not a handout!”

Father Chapman said a $1 million campaign has been established by the parish in an effort to construct a multi-purpose building to meet the needs of the growing parish.

New families are registering all the time, he said. The $1 million plan calls for the construction of the multi-purpose building with parking spaces and capacity for 500. Father Chapman said it would be used to celebrate Mass, hold RE classes, fiestas, and as a food dispensary for the poor.

Holy Angels parishioners are committed to raising $100,000 for the project. The parish is hoping others in the Archdiocese will contribute and help raise the $900,000 needed to complete the project.

“Sunday mornings the 11:30 Mass is little more than standing-room only,” Father Chapman said. “On pretty days the main door is open outside and still be at Mass. What a happy problem for a pastor!”

Priest Presents Colorful History of Holy Angels Parish

By Father Michael Chapman

Holy Angels Church began in 1926 with 45 families living within walking distance. Father James A. Garvey, the director of Catholic Charities, founded the parish and school.

From 1926 to 1960, the parish was closely associated with Catholic Charities through its pastors, Fathers James Garvey, John Garvey and Monsignor Anthony A. “Tony” Isenbart. The baptisms of children living at St. Joseph’s Orphanage in Bethany were also recorded in the sacramental books at Holy Angels.

It was Monsignor Isenbart who built the present church building in 1950. It is located at the corner of N.W. 3rd Street and Blackwelder. This building, which can seat about 250, was more than adequate for the number of parishioners in the 1950s.

Within 10 years, the school closed and many families moved to neighboring parishes.

In 1960, Father John Walsh became pastor. Under his direction, the school building became St. John Damascene School of Liturgical Art. For the next 29 years Father Walsh lived and worked at Holy Angels, producing many fine works of art which can still be seen at the Pastoral Center and around the state in various churches.

By 1989, only about 12 people were still coming to Mass on Sunday.

Archbishop Salatka was interested in serving the growing Hispanic community in Oklahoma. He encouraged all priests to learn Spanish, study the culture and make sure the basic religious needs of the community were being met. He set a good example by learning Spanish himself.

As part of this effort, upon the retirement of Father Walsh, he appointed Father Don Wolf to Holy Angels, with the specific task of welcoming the Hispanic community. This was an instant success! The new immigrants had moved into those old frame houses around the church where the first parishioners made a community in the 1920s. They loved them. Hot and cold running water! Electric lights! Paved streets with regular garbage collection. Porches and backyards where they could celebrate with family and neighbors. And a welcoming church within walking distance. It was history repeating itself 60 years later.

On Oct. 15, 1989, Father Wolf celebrated the first Spanish Mass in Holy Angels Church, two weeks after the feast of the Guardian Angels. About 15 families attended, and in only a few weeks it was up to 100 families. From the very beginning of this marvelous ministry, the lovely little church was inadequate in size. But the new parishioners were overjoyed to be there!

In rapid succession, the old school was remodeled into a parish hall which could also serve as class space, although too small for the numbers.

Thanks to Archbishop Salatka, the Missionary Carmelites of St. Teresa came in 1991, and more parishioners showed up. The Annual Carnival began in 1992, and the community continued to grow.

A building fund was established. A small white house, La Casa Blanca, located south of the rectory, was purchased through the stewardship of Father Roberto Quant. Under the direction of the Sisters, it was transformed into space for Pre-K and kindergarten. Planning began for an educational building. By the early years of the new millennium, over 500 families with 400 children in religion classes and four weekend Masses became the norm.

When I, Father Michael L. Chapman, became pastor in 2004, there was $120,000 in the Parish Deposit and Loan Fund (PDLF) designated as the Holy Angels Building Fund. There were 700 families with 600 children enrolled in RE classes meeting in the Parish Hall, the old frame church converted to classrooms, the Casa Blanca, the storage sheds, between bathrooms and hallways, in the Sisters convent, and in my living room! In bad weather, the groups patiently shared available space. Archbishop Beltran said in his letter of appointment that part of my responsibility would be to advise him about the possible future for Holy Angels.

After six months of study, review with former pastors and parishioners, and consultation with Archbishop Beltran, it was decided to stay and make it work. In short order, the architect, Kyle Lombardo, who had begun making plans with Father Quant, came up with a design for an education building. We did fundraising in the parish and among generous benefactors. We collected another $80,000 while the Archdiocese loaned us $400,000 interest-free for 10 years. And for a little under $600,000, Nashert Constructors built our “Catechetical Center” in 2005. The new building took pressure off our huge Religious Education Program, but the parish continues to grow.

Remember, the church can only seat 250!
Oliver Douberly Celebrates Twenty Years at the Cathedral

By Rosemary Griffis
For the Sooner Catholic

“When we sing God’s praises as one on Sunday, we are true successors to the first disciples of Christ, whose reaction to the resurrection was to spend their lives praising God in the temple (see Luke 24: 52-53).” From Choir Director Basics by Oliver Douberly.

On Oct. 1, 1988, Oliver Douberly Jr. was introduced to the parish of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help as their new organist, choir director and minister of sacred music.

The laid-back and gentle demeanor of Douberly (that’s dough? o ler o lee) is no façade. A true Southern gentleman, a native of Savannah, Ga., Oliver was born Jan. 10, 1948, the first child of Vera and Oliver Douberly Sr. (both deceased). He began his love of music very early, beginning piano lessons at age 7. By the time he started college in the 1960s, he was that most fortunate of people who recognized his life’s work, with the talent and opportunity to pursue it.

After receiving his bachelor of music in organ performance in 1970, at Jacksonville (Florida) University, Oliver proceeded to the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y.

In a portent of things to come, Oliver’s initial foray into Oklahoma was to the University of Oklahoma, studying in Norman with the renowned Mildred Andrews, where he received a master of music degree in organ. While in Norman and interning at St. Paul’s Episcopcal Cathedral in Oklahoma City, he came to the attention of the young Rev. Thomas Boyer, who was the assistant pastor at St. Joseph’s.

Oliver served parishes in Alabama and Virginia and was assistant musical director and accompanist for the Virginia Choral Society. During this time, he was an active faculty member of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM). While attending and teaching at NPM seminars and conventions, he and Father Boyer, who was also a faculty member of NPM, were traveling in similar circles.

They didn’t actually meet, however, until the mid-1980s. NPM had a canter workshop in Oklahoma City. The priest who was supposed to teach the Scripture section suddenly took ill. Since Father Boyer was local, he was asked to substitute. Later that summer, Oliver and Father Boyer presented another workshop.

One workshop led to another and the two liturgists found they really hit it off well. They developed a successful program and presented it regularly at workshops and seminars all over the country. When Father Boyer was assigned to be the rector at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City in late spring 1988, Oliver jokingly whined, “If you get to go to the Cathedral, why can’t I?”

Everything fell into place easily enough so that in early September, Oliver was invited to direct the choir and play the organ at the Cathedral to introduce him to the choir and congregation.

“The choir was wonderful that weekend,” remembers Oliver. The parish was welcoming and he felt blessed to have been given this “untapped opportunity.”

By the end of September, he had moved his collection of books and dogs from Virginia to Oklahoma. Then reality intervened. He was greeted at his first choir rehearsal by just seven singers, one man and six women, a few of whom are still in the choir at Our Lady’s.

In addition to his ministry at the Cathedral Parish, Oliver also founded the Oklahoma City Archdiocesan Chorale and serves as music director, an ambitious undertaking, combining choir members from parishes in the Archdiocese to sing at Archdiocesan events, such as mass, Chrism Mass and other Archdiocesan events. The installation of Archbishop Beltran in January, 1993, included full orchestra.

Oliver’s confidence in his Cathedral choir, now numbering more than 25 members, enabled him to take them to Italy in 1999. They sang in various venues in Assisi and Florence, culminating in a glorious Mass celebrating the feast of St. Gregory the Great before Pope John Paul II at St. Peter’s Basilica.

With all his talents and accomplishments and awards (some of the latest being NPM Musician of the Year in 1998, and the Faithful Servant Award by the Southwest Liturgical Conference in 2007), one would expect a giant ego as accompaniment. To the contrary, Oliver, the man, is truly humble, a gentleman, not one to boast or blow his own horn.


“His presence at the Cathedral causes the music to be profound. He has amazing understanding of liturgy and the role of liturgical music in worship,” Father Weisenburger said.

“My week hinges on the 10 a.m. Sunday liturgy. The full choir and the energy of Oliver’s playing combine to make a truly extraordinary liturgical experience.”

Rev. Thomas Boyer recalled an incident in particular that demonstrates Oliver’s ability.

“One weekend, I closed a homily quoting a few lines from that great American hymn ‘Blessed Assurance’. I stepped down from the pulpit as the strings from that great organ came up very quietly. Five hundred people sat breathless while he improvised on that hymn tune for just a moment, and there was neither movement nor a breath from any of us. It was a moment of magic when the Divine Artist is revealed in human craft.”

On Friday, the Cathedral Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help honored its organist and musical director and liturgist with an organ concert at the Cathedral featuring Denis Bedard, concert organist, composer and director of music at Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

On Sunday, following the 10 a.m. Mass, Oliver was to be the recipient of special presentations from his parish family, who are proud of a man who has done so much for so long to increase their faith.

Donna Robillard summed it up, “Oliver likes to pull out all the stops once in a while,” and in tribute, his parish will follow suit.