Archbishop Coakley: Our vision, “Go Make Disciples,” will inform all that we do for the next five years.

By The Sooner Catholic Staff

“Go Make Disciples” is the new, five-year vision statement of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Archbishop Paul Coakley announced it in an Oct. 7 pastoral letter.

The vision statement is the fruit of a 15-month process that included the formation of an archdiocesan envisioning team, eight listening sessions across the archdiocese and 12 six-hour discernment sessions facilitated by the Catholic Leadership Institute.

“This vision will guide our archdiocesan family over the course of the next five years,” the archbishop wrote. “It is where we are going. It is our mandate. For all of us and for each of us, it is both an invitation and a challenge; a call and a mission.”

In other words, for individual Catholics, living out the vision entails both personal discipleship and evangelization.

“When we begin to recognize our high calling, we see how utterly unworthy of our dignity it is to settle for a life of moral or spiritual mediocrity and shallow religiosity,” the archbishop said. “The call to baptism is the call to heroic sanctity, the call to become a saint.”

In the letter, the archbishop also announced three archdiocesan priorities, each of which will be supported by two specific and measurable goals.

The first of these priorities is “the new evangelization.” With support from staff and others, the archbishop will create an Office of New Evangelization by Nov. 1, 2013. The director of that office, in turn, will initiate an archdiocesan new evangelization plan in 20 to 30 parishes and all diocesan offices by Nov. 1, 2014.

The second priority is “faith formation,” with goals to implement a year-long “Transforming Adolescent Catechesis” program in 12 to 16 parishes and Catholic high schools of the archdiocese by Nov. 30, 2014, and to increase participation in adult faith formation opportunities by 5 to 10 percent throughout the archdiocese by July 1, 2015.

The third priority is “Hispanic ministry,” with goals to increase the number of Hispanic parishes to 10 percent throughout the archdiocese by July 1, 2015.

The archbishop’s full pastoral letter is available in both English and Spanish as a special insert in this issue of the Sooner Catholic, as well as online at www.archokc.org. Additional resources – including a video to introduce the new vision statement – are also available on the archdiocesan website. To receive tailored updates on progress toward specific and measurable goals in your email inbox, visit www.flocknote.com/archokc, register and subscribe to “Sooner Catholic E-Newsletter.”

Archdiocesan seminarian ordained to the transitional diaconate in Rome

On Thurs., Oct. 3, Christopher Brashears of Saint Joseph’s parish in Blackwell, Okla., was ordained to the transitional diaconate. His ordination took place at Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome, along with 40 classmates from the Pontifical North American College. The transitional deacons will continue their studies for the priesthood.

James Cardinal Harvey, Archpriest of the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Wall, ordained the new deacons. Mass was concelebrated by a number of bishops, including Archbishop Paul Coakley, and more than 300 priests, many of whom are faculty at the North American College. Brashears’ father, a permanent deacon at Saint Joseph’s Parish, was able to vest his son.

Deacon Christopher Brashears said he was overwhelmed by “surreal feelings” and “an immense feeling of joy (and) peace” as he lay prostrate on the cold marble floor of the basilica during the ordination, according to an article from Catholic News Agency.

Archbishop Coakley said he was really grateful to be able to share in the joy of the event.

“It was an especially touching moment when the 41 newly ordained deacons were being vested with their stole and dalmatic and Chris’ father, Deacon Bart Brashears, was able to vest his own son and welcome him to the Order of Deacons,” the archbishop said.

“Tere were lots of moist eyes in the basilica!”

Father Rick Stansberry, pastor of Christ the King, attended the Mass.

“Seeing the zeal that Chris and his classmates have for the faith and the reverence they show in the liturgy was awesome and moving,” he said.

Brashears is the fifth transitional deacon from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to be ordained this year. All five will be ordained to the priesthood at Our Lady’s Cathedral on June 28, 2014. According to Father William Novak, vicar general and director of seminarians, this will be the largest ordination class since 1991.

“What a great year for vocations in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. We now have five transitional deacons!” Archbishop Coakley said.

A graduate of Oklahoma State University, Brashears began his theological studies at Conception Seminary. He then began studying in Rome to fill the need for canon lawyers in the archdiocese. He spent last summer working alongside Father Stansberry in the archdiocesan tribunal. After his ordination to the priesthood, he will return to Rome for one year to finish his degree in canon law.

Father Novak said of Brashears, “He is a very smart man, also very compassionate and servant-minded. He is eager to serve and help… We are lucky to have him.”

Anamaria Scopelanda Biddick is a freelance writer and math tutor living in Oklahoma City.
GO MAKE DISCIPLES!

About 16 months ago I formed a team of clergy, religious, and lay men and women to assist me in discerning a mutually shared vision to guide the archdiocese for the next five years. We have concluded that work.

Each of us is invited to friendship with Jesus as a Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each of us is invited to be called a disciple, to become a missionary disciple. It is the mandate that Jesus gave his disciples as he ascended into heaven and left his Church with the mission: “Go, make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20).

The vision for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City today, we focus on the disciples of the Church. We focus on our priestly and diaconal leadership. We focus on the departments, parishes, organizations and institutions in our Archdiocese of Oklahoma City on our faith. What we have received as a gift we must be ready to give as a gift. We are called to be missionary disciples in the world. If we are not growing in our faith and sharing our faith with others, our faith may eventually atrophy and become a useless accessory in our lives.

The pastoral letter, “Go Make Disciples,” not only articulates a vision, but it also establishes three clearly focused priorities: New Evangelization, Formation and Hispanic Ministry. Like the vision itself, these priorities are intended to guide all of our archdiocesan departments, parishes, organizations and institutions in their decision-making and planning over the course of the next few years. Ultimately they challenge each of us to be more missionary disciples in our world, to make people to Christ and his church.

It is not first and foremost about building and maintaining the status quo and structures, though those have their proper place. Jesus first calls each of us to discipleship, and we are called to be missionary disciples on his behalf.

To become a disciple means to enter the way of conversion. Jesus Christ is the one who first challenges each of us to experience anew the good news of salvation in our lives. But this offer requires a response from us. It is not enough simply to maintain the status quo. We cannot simply be the beneficiaries or recipients of the gift of faith by placing it into some remote and self compartment of our lives. Living faith will make demands upon us as it enlightens and directs the whole of our lives.

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The Core of Discipleship

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The letter “Heartline, Oklahoma’s Community Cruise Connection,” a newsletter of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, highlights the upcoming feast of John Paul II. The letter opens with a story of a young couple who had met at the 2012 Diocesan Marriage Conference and had been married three years. The couple is looking forward to celebrating their third anniversary.

As the pope’s meeting-filled day in Assisi turned to evening, he arrived at the basilica and went straight to a group of people with disabilities, taking his time to bless them, kiss them and be kissed by them. He also entered a PA facility to visit the “Pendolino,” the tiny church first en- trusted to St. Francis in the early 1220s. Francis heard God tell him to rebuild the church, and he finally built it. Francis heard God tell him to rebuild the church, and he finally built it.

Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar

The following events are part of Archbishop Coakley’s official calendar:


Oct. 18 – Permanent Diaconate Ordination, 7 p.m., Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Oklahoma City

Oct. 18 – Annual Meeting with Permanent Deacons, 10 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center

Oct. 20 – Confirmation, 11 a.m., Sacred Heart Church, Konawa, Okla.

Oct. 22 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Church, Catholic Pastoral Center

Oct. 22 – Priests Council, 9:30 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center

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Oct. 23 – Mass and breakfast at the Discern, 6:45 p.m, Our Lady’s Victory Church, Oklahoma City

Oct. 24 – School Mass and classroom visits, 8:30 a.m., Saint James the Greater School, Oklahoma City

Oct. 24 – Catholic Charities Board Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Catholic Charities Office, Oklahoma City

Catechists are on the frontline of the new evangelization!

Learning this as easy as one, two, three....

By Pedro A. Moreno, OP, MRE
Director of Hispanic Ministry

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, recently addressed an International Pilgrimage of Catechists in Rome and his words offered both a clarion call and specific guidance to all catechists.

“Catechists are a vocation. So keep this in mind. I don’t think one can be a catechist, it has to be a vocation, because this is something that embraces our whole life. It means being with people who need the faith and our love, by giving witness... Being a catechist means unceasingly adapting oneself to one’s context in our personal life. This is not easy! We help, we lead others to Jesus with our words and deeds, our witness. What Saint Francis of Assisi used to say to his friars, “Pray the Gospel and then act as if you do not know anything about Jesus, in proclaim Jesus.”

Finally we come to stating clearly behind and going out to encounter others. This is a beautiful experience, because it is transformative as the presence of Christ at the center of our life, ourselves don’t become the center. “The more you unite yourself to Christ and he becomes the center of your life, the more, in spite of you, leads you from making yourself the center and space opens for the presence of Jesus...”

This is the job of the catechist: to catechetically to go forth to the peripheries where the Gospel is not known to anyone, to be small people to make small people to make small steps to reach small people...”

The teacher and the organizer who works in front of groups and beyond for CRS’ mission work is expected to perform five-fold work of service for the Rwandan communities. Through the conceived works which are finally oriented toward the people toward to provide food and medicine for survival of human life and home clothing. Second, SILC groups form a mutual support among the people with a bond of love, trust and care for everyday necessity of living. Third, SILC groups offer education, and to help the poor to keep their families fully conforms with Catholic teaching.”

Among the most moving sites we saw were the Gisozi Genocide Memorial where more than 250,000 of the nearly 1 million genocide victims were buried in mass graves, and the Kigali Genocide Memorial. The signs of new life abound. Child mortality has decreased. The econo-
**Seminarians**

1. What is your home parish? St. Monica’s in Edmond, Okla.
2. What seminary do you attend? Conception Seminary College in Conception, Mo.
3. If it is God’s will, what will you be ordained a priest in 2020?
4. How old were you when you first thought that God might be calling you to the priesthood? I was 15 years old.

**Seminarians Answered Questions**

Jane Dominic will focus on how our culture has struggled with the topic of the body. She will also make a call to action for the day,” said Sister Jane Dominic, a professor at Aquinas College in Huntington, N.Y., in 2012. Vatican officials are organizing a summit on the Theology of the Body.

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40 Days for Life

Pro-life activists pray outside the abortion clinic in Warr Acres, Okla., as a part of the 40 Days for Life campaign. The campaign runs from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day from Sept. 26 through Nov. 3.

Walk for the Poor

The Walk for the Poor T-shirt design won the national contest and was used across the U.S. this year.

Because of rain, the Walk for the Poor was inside this year.

Birth Choice Walk for Life

Walk for Life.

The Birth Choice Walk for Life drew a crowd of about 1,000 people. Representatives of 19 churches from various denominations were in attendance.

Young adult Mass and cookout with Archbishop Coakley

Pro-life advocates pray outside the abortion clinic in Warr Acres, Okla., as a part of the 40 Days for Life campaign. The campaign runs from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day from Sept. 26 through Nov. 3.
The Byzantine Community celebrates monthly Divine Liturgy

By Father John H. Keough

For the Catholic

Editor’s Note: This is the fourth in a series of articles to explore the various ways in which the Byzantine Catholic Church celebrates Divine Liturgy. The first article featured the Edmund parish Saint Demetrios Church in Columbus, Indiana. The second was on Father Philip Stetson’s parish featured the Oklahoma City-based Holy Family Byzantine Catholic Church. This article focuses on the Liturgy from the Saint Mary Parish in Tulsa. The third procession.

The original language of the Byzantine Ruthenian Church was originally Old Slavonic. Since the faith community that gathers for the Divine Liturgy is officially a mission of the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church of America, their bishop resides in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the third archdiocese of the Universal Catholic Church, a Maronite Rite parish. The third archdiocese of the Lilurgy is officially a mission of the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church of America, their bishop resides in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the third archdiocese of the Universal Catholic Church, a Maronite Rite parish. The third archdiocese of the Universal Catholic Church, a Maronite Rite parish. The third archdiocese of the Universal Catholic Church, a Maronite Rite parish.

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El Arzobispo Cokey: Nuestra visión: “Vayan y Hagan Discípulos”, informará todo lo que haremos los próximos cinco años

Por el equipo de redacción del "Preparación para ministros" "Vayan y Hagan Discípulos" es la nueva declaración de la visión de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Oklahoma City, el Arzobispado Público anunció un curso corto que fue basado en el trabajo de arquidiócesis en el mundo. La declaración, que fue presentada a la parroquia el 3 de noviembre de 2013, tiene como objetivo informar a todo el mundo sobre lo que haremos en los próximos cinco años, como lo haría el papa Francisco durante su visita a la ciudad en 2015.

El papa Francisco se basó en la declaración de la visión de la arquidiócesis de Buenos Aires para su visita a ese país en 2014. La declaración de la visión de la arquidiócesis de Buenos Aires se basó en las palabras del papa Francisco durante su visita a la ciudad en 2014.

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Fathers Schwarz, Kolb savor sixty years of priesthood

By Judy Hilovsky
For the Sooner Catholic

Editor's Note: This is the last in a series of four articles profiling the jubilarians of the archdiocese, those priests who are celebrating their 25th, 40th, 50th and 60th anniversaries of ordination to the priesthood. This article highlights the ministries of Father Elmer Schwarz and Father Joe Kolb, both ordained May 23, 1953. Both celebrate 60 years of priesthood this year.

Father Elmer Schwarz:

“God will always be in charge”

Born just northeast of Okarche, Okla., Father Elmer Schwarz was the youngest of Conrad and Susan Schwarz’s four children. Father Schwarz said he realized when he was in Saint Louis Preparatory School that he was destined to be a priest.

His path started in high school, when his parish monsignor was asked by Bishop Eugene McGuinness to find a seminarian from the parish. The monsignor asked the school’s principal, who said Father Schwarz was the “likely suspect.”

It was during World War II and Father Schwarz said he assumed he would be drafted. However, the monsignor informed him that, if he was in seminary, the military would defer service. So Father Schwarz spent four years at seminary, continually asking God in prayer, “Do you really want me to do this?” He continued his studies in theology at Mount St. Mary of the West in Ohio.

When he was to be ordained a deacon, he changed his prayer to “God, if you don’t want me to be a priest, get me out of here.” His education continued, as did his faith. The following year he was ordained as a priest.

Father Schwarz started his service as an associate pastor at Corpus Christi Church in Oklahoma City. He completed graduate studies at Catholic University, receiving his baccalaureate and licentiate in canon law. He then served as pastor at Saint William’s in Skiatook, Blessed Sacrament in Lawton, Saint John Nepomuk in Yukon, and, finally, at Holy Name of Jesus Church in Chickasha, where he spent most of his career.

He was also appointed as chaplain of the Saint Thomas More Society of Tulsa in 1959 and served as a judge in the tribunal from 1986 to 2012. “I like the whole process of being a priest,” Father Schwarz said. “The way I thought of myself in relation to God when I was ordained was, ‘God hired me for the job.’ He would give me the where-withal to complete all he wants me to do. The problem was I (acted as though I) was in charge. It took me 15 to 20 years to finally get the point. I truly realized God will be in charge all the time and I accepted that he will always be in charge.”

“My whole life became a lot more beautiful than it had been,” he added. “I became a happier priest.”

One of his favorite memories is of learning to say Mass in Spanish. “It was worth me going through the effort,” he said.

Father Schwarz said he was also proud that Oklahoma was way ahead of other dioceses in implementing Second Vatican Council changes.

“We were allowed to use English at Mass before the council ended,” he said.

Father Price Grimes said Father Schwarz has given a beautiful witness.

“Father Schwarz is one of the kindest priests, one of the most understanding priests that you could possibly have. He has been faithful to his priesthood through his life’s ups and downs,” Father Grimes said.

Father Joe Kolb:

“I wanted to spread the Good News”

Father Joe Kolb’s interest in the church started with his parents, John and Sophie, and their involvement in the church in Edmond, Okla. Along with his two sisters and two brothers, the family enjoyed many of the parish activities.

“I liked the activities and the work of a priest,” Father Kolb said. “I wanted to spread the good news of the church.”

After spending two years in the Army during War World II, Father Kolb attended three years at St. Ambrose Seminary in Milwaukee and Saint Mary Church in Okeene, Prince of Peace in Altus, Saint Rose of Lima in Watonga, Saint Joseph Church in Hennessey, Sacred Heart in Mangum, Saints Peter and Paul in Hobart, and Saint Ann Church in Elgin.

He was also the spiritual moderator for the Oklahoma Council of Catholic Women for 30 years and was present- ed the Father Stanley Rother Faithful Shepherd Award in 2009. Father Kolb said one of his favorite activities as a priest was the process of instructing adults and bringing them into the church and caring for those who couldn’t care for themselves.

His biggest challenge was learning to be a decision maker.

“It was kind of hard because we didn’t have to make any decisions until we were on our own,” he said.

Father Kolb has long since retired, but he still works to help those in need. He has rebuilt four bicycles and sent them to a mission in Peru. In addition, he has cleaned and sterilized thousands of medicine bottles to be reused in the poorer areas of Mexico. “I even buy press-on labels to help out,” Father Kolb said.

Father Price Grimes said of Father Kolb, “He is a faithful man who has served all over the state of Oklahoma and especially has a love of the Hispanic people.”