Relics of Saint Maria Goretti

More than 9,000 pilgrims made their way to Christ the King Church Nov. 9 to venerate the relics of Saint Maria Goretti, the Catholic Church’s youngest canonized saint.

When the doors of Christ the King opened at 9 a.m., about 100 people already were in line, watching a video in which Father Carlos Martins told the story of Saint Maria, who was martyred at age 11 for defending her purity.

The “Pilgrimage of Mercy,” the tour of her relics throughout the United States, seeks to spread the word about her forgiveness of her murderer.

The crowds included school groups from Christ the King, Saint Eugene, Sacred Heart and Mount Saint Mary in Oklahoma City and a group from Saint Mary Academy in Kansas. Several parishioners from New Mexico, Kansas and Texas also visited.

Pilgrims touched rosaries and crucifixes to the casket, which holds the bones of Saint Maria inside a wax form.

At the evening Mass, Archbishop Paul Coakley said, “Let us recognize the countless lives that have been touched through her witness ... that many, many more might be drawn to Jesus and might be drawn to the example of her holiness.”

Editorial: The culture of ‘Yes’

A recent episode of “48 Hours” told the story of Ethan Couch, a Texas teenager who drove while intoxicated and killed four people along the side of the road. The judge labeled Couch a product of “affluenza,” a condition in which children lack the ability to make good choices due to years of facing no consequences and parents never saying “no.”

He was allowed to do whatever he pleased – cocaine, whisky, all-night parties – because it made him “happy.” The tragedy personifies the current culture of “yes.”

It is a conversation I have often with my children, explaining that my deep love for them drives decisions to set bed times, limit gaming, teach character, to go to Mass despite occasional protests, and to sometimes say “no.”

And, yet, we as adults balk at the limits God has set for us. We are God’s children. God knows our temptations. He knows it can be difficult to do what is right instead of what is easy.

That is why He sent His only Son to show us the way, to set limits for His beloved children; to explain and demonstrate how we must follow the truth in His Word – even if it requires sacrifice and suffering.

“God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved” (Eph 2:4-5).

He calls for our commitment to families, to the unborn, to the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman, to pray, to serve others, to avoid the sins of gluttony, pride, lust and envy.

As we prepare for Advent and the coming of Christ in glory, let us take time to reflect and joyfully receive the limits our Father has set for us, and understand why He sometimes says “no.”

It is a gift of love.
Among the memories of my childhood home, the beautiful leather-bound family Bible that sat on a place of prominence on the coffee table in the living room is undoubtedly one of the most treasured. Ironically, the living room is where my siblings and I were often relegated to while the adults occupied the den. As children, we were ordinarily allowed to go except on special occasions. It was more of a family Bible than a personal one for us. I would have to say that the family Bible was probably treated in much the same way. I don’t recall looking at it, but I do recall seeing my dad looking at the wonderful glossy pictures of scenes from the life of Jesus and the Church. As a young Catholic, and a member of the vast majority of American Catholics who are not equally educated in Scripture, it is certainly helpful to have a good Catholic Bible. It is sure to the whole of God’s saving truth and plan for daily Scripture reading. Reading the Bible with the heart of a family (as the theme builds on Pope Francis’ recent celebration of the 50th anniversary of the publication of “De Verbo Verum”) is the key. The theme is built on the premise that the greatest fruits of the Second Vatican Council has helped usher in an era of much great-biblical literacy. Excellent print and visual aids, excellent commentary, and a keen sense of the politically correct are all important.
Intimacy with Jesus

Develop a plan for evangelization in your parish

Carole Brown
Director of New Evangelization

One of the theological controversies that arose in the Church over the past few centuries was the question of whether ordinary people can experience intimacy with God, or whether this is something reserved for a privileged few.

In the 18th century, a Jesuit priest named Father John Baptist Hector (1712) proposed that not all Christians are called to the same degree of perfection, and that, in fact, there were two distinct paths for us to follow. Some of us, he theorized, are only called to the ascetical life (obscuring passions, practices of vigilance and simple prayer), while others can achieve a more consummated life of contemplative prayer, or mysticism.

This two-tiered system, the experience of deeper, more contemplative prayer were seen as extraordinary rather than the normal maturation of spiritual life that results from cooperating fully with graces offered. Therefore, he concluded, ordinary people should not expect or even desire to experience intimacy with God. That was only for the “special people.”

A great controversy arose in Europe over these questions at the beginning of the 20th century. Scortumans’ views were rejected by other scholars (Sanderra and Poulain) who proposed that these arguments amongst themselves aroused no shortage of confusion. It was a Spanish Dominican, Father John Arinso, whose masterpiece of spiritual theology determined interest.

The evidence suggests that many of us have settled for much less than what Jesus wishes to offer us. Finite things have a limited ability to satisfy the hunger of the human heart for love. When anything other than Jesus is at the center of our lives, when we don’t know his love in an intimate way, we are Christians at risk. We become vulnerable to the temptation of lesser goods: addiction, selfishness, adultery, materialism, power, control — all offering false promises to fill this longing for love, while coothing us to bring in more sin. There is one way forward: take up the spiritual life with more seriousness.

Over the past 25 years, 25 leaders from various parishes around metropolitan Oklahoma City participated in a discipleship process that is designed to help people grow into an intimate personal relationship with Jesus, and develop the heart and habits of a disciple, as a Catholic.

This process also is designed to multiply. Those 25 who participated last year now have returned to their parishes and have raised up about 230 people who are present—
growing through the process. The first 25 is three 230 also will raise up small groups of disciples, and that this process will continue to be extended to others.

For more information about the process, and how to develop a plan for evangelization in your parish, please visit this evangelization webpage on the archdiocesan website: www.archokc.org/new-evangelization/home/

Becoming a steward: A grateful and generous disciple

By Brianna Osborne

Larger groups of ordinary Catholics — from around the world gathered in Chicago last month for the 2015 International Catholic Stewardship Conference to hear experts from across the world share — are those who make proper use of the spiritual gift that God has bestowed on them.

While parish leaders emphasized that money is essential for a parish to continue to serve the community — after all, the mandate to give is biblical — nearly every session speaker during the Oct. 22-24 conference emphasized a more personal and practical way of stewarding of God’s gifts if only the involvement in the parish and not the actual church is through donations. Each parishioner has to be a generous and good citizen in prayer and in service.

Father Dan Gurr, pastor of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla Parish in Winnipeg, Canada, spoke about living like a disciple daily in his talk entitled, “Introduction to the Spirituality of Christian Stewardship.”

Father Gurr’s experiences of being a pastor for 25 years were evident in his deeply inspiring talk on three “pillars” of living as a steward of God’s gifts: gratitude, generosity and trust.

“Gratitude is what enables the Christian to get through all of the experiences of life,” Father Gurr said. “When you’re grateful, you can’t be sad.

The dissatisfaction caused by modern consumerism and individualism may make one question how to make gratitude, one of the greatest challenges for people today, he said. However, “even our next breath we cannot take without God’s gift.”

“We’re busy living gratitude all the time,” Father Gurr said of Catholics. Prayers of gratitude should be a part of daily life, culminating in thanksgiving at Sunday Mass each week.

The second pillar, generosity, is difficult because of the fear of losing what we have. “Generosity where stewardship is needed (Christi- anity) hits the road,” Father Gurr said.

Father Gurr asked audience members to remember a birthday party they attended as a child, when they were so excited that they said, “Open my present first.”

“As adults, Father Gurr said, “we lose the joy of giving, and giving, and giving, so on.”

Each person must start giving (whether it be through donations, time spent with someone who needs help or volunteering in a parish ministry) until they begin to feel a deep need to be generous. The third, final, and pillar is living in the present moment.

Many people are living in the past or in the future. “If you can’t be present with Father Gurr, “We can do whatever God wants us to do if we just live in the present.”

When they began trusting in God, “people have talked to me with confidence and worry,” he said. “No task is ever too daunting.”

“Christ calls us to come back to that primordial spirituality,” he said. “Voluntary stewardship begins by helping people to realize that everything is God’s gift to you.”

Brianna Osborne is the managing editor of the Sooner Catholic.

Notable quotes from the 2015 International Catholic Stewardship Conference

On homilies: “Let your message marinate. Presentation, not content, determines interest.”

– Fr. Michael White, co-author of “Rebuilt” and pastor of Church of the Nativity, Timonium, Md.

“Be hospitable. [Jesus] welcomed everybody, to the point that it upset people.”

– Chris Stewart and Tony Branda, president and vice president of Casting New Ministries, Wichita

“Think about church from the ‘unchurched’ perspective. Create an excellent weekend experience. Move people to action. How? Ask them to participate in a stewardship/homily.”

– Tom Kendzia, recording artist, composer and director of music at Christ the King Parish, Kingston, RI

“The pastor leads the way. He must be a model of stewardship.”

– Eric McIlvaine, president of Catholic Stewardship Consultants

“Identify the key people or groups to whom your parish can offer hospitality: the homeless, those with disabilities, non-Catholics, occasional or returning Catholics, empty nesters, new moms, newly registered parishioners, etc. Say, ‘A Christian is someone who has learned to welcome.’”

– Christina Fass, pastoral associate at St. Clement Parish, Chicago

“We suggest a three-tier stewardship renewal throughout the year. Our past experiences on prayer and developing proper life during Lent; service and ministry during the Easter season; and service and ministry in the fall. Leaders speak on each aspect to supplement the pastor’s homilies.”

– Dr. Quentin, director of stewardship and evangelization for St. Pax X Catholic Church, Granger, Ind.

BMCES One Act Play wins third consecutive state championship

The Edmond McGuinness Catholic Trojans swept the state in their third consecutive Class 5A State Championship last month during the OSSAA state competition held in Duncan. The team performed their adaptation of the Alfred Hitchcock play “59 Steps.”

Cast members, seniors Chris Allen and Brian Clear and sophomores Wendell Hixson, were selected by the judges as part of the All State Cast, and the technical crew won the Outstanding Stage Crew Tech Award.

MHS Drama Club places at state and serves local community

The Mount St. Mary Catholic High School Drama Club collected 242 pounds of canned goods for St. Paul’s Pantry. The Mount St. Mary One Act Play won third in the state competition for their play “The Riverbed.” Mick Martinez was selected as one of only eleven states.
Blessings for attorneys, judges offered at Cathedral

By J. H. Elam

The traditional Red Mass for the legal profession was celebrated Oct. 1 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help as Archbis-
pope Paul Coakley was the principal celebrant with Bishop Anthony Taylor of the Diocese of Little Rock...

Red Mass Homily

Portions of the homily by Bishop Anthony Taylor, Vice-president of Little Rock

"Every year we celebrate this Mass to ask God to guide judges, attorneys, law school professors, students and public servants in the exercise of their duties in the light of God’s higher law, apart from which there is no true justice. The reason we call this a Red Mass is that in this Mass we invoke the Holy Spirit – whose spiritual color is red – asking the Holy Spirit to guide you in all you do in your difficult, but invaluable service to all of us...

Archbishop Coakley opened the prayers of intercession after the homily, calling on all “to pray for God’s people and for justice to reign over the world.”

After the prayers, he asked all members of the legal profession in the congregation to stand for a special blessing.

He asked God “to help them to be defectors of what is false and to ‘seek to protect peace,’ and to ‘secure for us all the blessings of liberty.’”

At a reception following the Mass, Paula Dailey, professor of law at Oklahoma City University, said she felt “renewed and encouraged” by the day’s program. She was reminded that “what I’m doing is the responsibility of my small way.”

Dailey, in her academic robes, also performed as one of the readers for the Mass.

Also attending were:

- Larry Han, chancellor for the archdiocese, who has been a priest for more than 35 years and serves as one of the leaders of the Equestrian Order.
- George Rigney, director of the archdiocesan Office of Family Life, who is a Canon lawyer. He obtained his licentiate in Canon Law from Saint Paul’s, a pontifical university in Ottawa, Canada.
- Attorney Paul Albert came from Elk City where he serves as deacon for Saint Matthew. Albert has obtained his licentiate in Canon Law from Saint Paul’s.

Meet the Monks

This is the third in a series to introduce the men of the religious orders of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Br. Damian Whalen, O.S.B.

What order do you belong to? I belong to the Order of St. Benedict (Beneditines).

When and at what age did you enter the community? I began novitiate in 1975 at age 21.

When did you profess your formal (permanent) vows? I professed my final vows on Aug. 20, 1979.

When and how did you first discern a call to religious life? I began discerning my call during elementary school and continued with the encouragement of the pastor and the sisters who taught me.

What is your ministry? My ministries are music and education.

What do you want people to know about monastic life? Monastic life is challenging, but it is full of opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, and is rewarding.

What is the most satisfying part of your vocation? The most satisfying part of my vocation is living and praying with my brothers in community at Saint Gregory’s.

What is your advice to young men who are in the process of discerning their vocation? We don’t enter a monastery because we are already perfect and holy, but we enter the monastery to become holy – it is the task of a whole life.

May God bless you in the vital service you provide to us and may the Lord continue to bless us through you!

St. Philip Neri students prepare for Future City

On the heels of Pope Francis’ visit to America, students at Saint Philip Neri began their mission to better the environment and develop the academic research needed to once more be successful in a national academic competition.

Saint Philip Neri Future City members are defending their regional championship title awarded in 2014 for Best Essay. Future City is a cross-cultural program that allows students in middle school to do the things engineers do, including identifying problems, brainstorming ideas, designing solutions, building and then sharing the results.

This year’s competition is a live-to-winner environmental task.

Led by Sue Sheeks and Monica Schmidlin, the team recently took a field trip to Midwest City’s Waste Management Facility. Students met Saint Philip Neri’s SAC President Matthew White, who serves as manager of the city’s sanitation and storm water quality departments.

The students learned about the process of solid waste management. The Future City Competition will be held in January in Edmond.

Dominican sisters visit Lawton families

The month of October brought extra ideas to the Linwood and Fort Sill area with a visit by Sisters Chiera Luce, Mary Simon and Teresa Reamer, O.P., of the Dominican Diocese of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist.

The sisters spoke to teenagers from Holy Family along with youth from Parishes of Peace in Altus, which was led by Father Cory Stanley. They visited students at Saint Mary Catholic School in Lawton, spreading the joy of the call to religious life and encouraging those they met to ask, “What does God want from me?”

The visits with students were followed by opportunities to celebrate a beautiful peace and supper presentation by the sisters. As they shared about their lives, their calling to the consecrated Christian life of poverty, chastity, and obedience, many children asked questions. The sisters also shared their curiosity even outside of the Church with multiple appearances on national talk shows and in newspapers.

They follow the footsteps of Saint Dominic who founded the Order of Preachers in the 13th Century. The Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, began with four sisters in 1997 and now have 130. They have sisters in Rome and in seven states who are teachers in elementary schools, high schools and colleges.

Prayer comes first in their lives, so that their apostolic work overflows from their love for God and a deep sense of sacrifice, which is nourished in the Eucharist.

They live in community with other sisters and treasure times of silence along with intense and prayerful study of the Word of God. They embrace the monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Throughout the year the sisters’ congregation hosts three Sacrament retreats at their mother house in Ann Arbor, Mich. They also have a new priory outside of Austin, Texas. The earliest that a young lady may enter their current is after high school graduation.

Truyen Nguyen joins Franciscan Capuchin religious order postulancy program

MIWAULKEE – Truyen Nguyen, son of Thinh Nguyen and Huynh Pham, has joined the postulancy program of the Capuchin Franciscan Community. Nguyen is a parochioner at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

“I moved to the U.S. from Vietnam about 15 years ago and realized I had a vacation day. Nguyen said.

“I was looking for a little ministry, a college seminar, I was sent to the Philippines for six months to work there in that role, I found an apostolic work I wanted to do and I was asked to join the Capuchins. I was looking for a contemplative life while working for those in need.”

Truyen is providing ministry to Capuchin Franciscan Sisters of St. Ben’s Community Meal Site, a social services ministry that provides nutritious meals six days a week to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

After one year of postulancy, the candidates continue their studies and vocational discernment process through training as novices, which is also one year in duration.

The novitate year is when they receive the Franciscan habit. The year focuses on personal and communal prayer, silence and spiritual direction. Novitate ends with the first profession of temporary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The Capuchin friars live as a community of brothers, modeling themselves after their patron, Saint Francis of Assisi, assisting the poor and marginalized. The Capuchin Province of Saint Joseph is headquartered in Detroit and serves California.

Capuchin ministries worldwide take different forms, go online to www.thecapuchins.org or www.capuchinfranciscans.org.

Couples celebrate wedding anniversaries at Cathedral

Chuan & Mai Nguyen, Cathedral parishioners, have been married 50 years.

John and Det Moak, parishioners at St. Mark in Norman, have been married 51 years. Photo Cara Koenig.

“A family, indeed, there are difficulties. But those difficulties are overcome with love.” ~ Pope Francis, speech at Festival of Families, Philadelphia
Archbishop visits schools in Norman, Ponca City

Archbishop Coakley visited All Saints School in Norman on Nov. 4. The students wore costumes for the Feast of All Saints. Photos Chris Porter.

St. Gregory’s Benedictine Hall Centennial celebrated

SHAWNEE — Saint Gregory’s University celebrated the centennial of Benedictine Hall on Nov. 7 with hundreds of alumni, community members, students, staff members and faculty joining Archbishop Paul Coakley, Tulsa Bishop Edward Slattery, Rt. Rev. Lawrence Stasyszen and Archbishop Emeritus Eusebius Beltran. This year marked the centennial celebration of Saint Gregory’s Benedictine Hall and the 100-year anniversary of the establishment of the Shawnee campus.

Benedictine Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places, and in November 2011, the building’s iconic status became dramatically apparent when a 5.6 magnitude earthquake destroyed its four turrets. The story received extensive national press, and more than 3,400 alumni, students, friends and donors offered support to rebuild them.

The community celebrated Saturday morning with a special Mass celebrated by Archbishop Coakley with Archbishop Beltran, Bishop Slattery and Abbot Lawrence as the concelebrants. Following Mass, the congregation processed to the front steps of Benedictine Hall for a re-dedication.

“This weekend was a joyful commemoration of Saint Gregory’s proud history, 100 years of our establishment in the Shawnee community and salute to the monks’ 140-year commitment to a Catholic liberal arts education,” said D. Gregory Main, president of Saint Gregory’s University. “This Homecoming also was a celebration of a revitalized university that, with the help of our many alumni and community, will graduate more generations of students who have grown in mind, body and spirit.”

The university also recognized Coach Don Sumner and Jenetta Sumner by renaming the fieldhouse in their honor and unveiling a new sign for the athletic facility. The Sumners have dedicated 75 years combined service to the Saint Gregory’s community. Former Saint Gregory’s basketball player and current ESPN sportscaster, Bryndon Manzer, regaled attendees with many stories of their time at the school.

The event concluded with a special Centennial Homecoming Gala at the Shawnee Expo Center where more than 300 alumni, community members and friends of Saint Gregory’s joined the celebration.

Oklahoma City University President Robert Henry served as the keynote speaker and spoke fondly of the tenacity of the Saint Gregory’s spirit and the monks who have served as its foundation for 140 years.
Advent: As Christ draws near
By J. E. Belin

Beginning the Church’s liturgical year, Advent (from, “ad-venire” in Latin or “to come to”) is the season encompassing the four Sundays before Christmas (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ’s second coming at the end of time and also the anniversary of the Lord’s birth on Christ-

mas. The final days of Advent, Dec. 24, focus particularly on our preparation for the celebrations of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas).

Advent devotions, including the Advent wreath, remind us of the spirit of the season. The Advent calendar can help fully enter into the season with the many activities and suggestions to prepare you spiritually for the birth of Christ.

Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnity of Christmas, in which the First Coming of Christ and the Incarnation of God to humanity is remembered, and a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas.

Preparations for Christmas include the Advent wreath, the Advent calendar, and a wreath with candles marking each week of the season, a traditional symbol of the liturgical year.

Advent wreaths have a significant role in the Advent season. “Emmanuel” is an ancient Latin hymn believed to be as old as the 8th century. Its origins are the beautiful O Antiphons, which may be older and which are still a part of evening prayer in the Litur-

gy of the Hours, accompanying the Magnificat.”

Each of the antiphons, or verses, addresses Christ with a title from Scripture, from Isaiah and Micah, and each begins with the ex-

clamation “O.”

The antiphon cry “Come and teach us.” “Come with outstretched arms to redeem us.” “Come, and save us.” “Come, and deliver us.” “Come and enlighten us.” “Come and save us”

This Advent, Christ comes, he draws near to us in Word and Sacrament, he will risk his life for our prayers and our practices, our observance of this most holy season.

For more on the Advent season, which begins with First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of Christmas, one can visit www.usccb.org/ resources, advent calendars, etc.

Advent begins with First Vesper (Evening Prayer I) of the Sunday that falls on or closest to Nov. 30 and it continues through the last Sunday of Advent (Evening Prayer I) of Christmas.

The weekdays from Dec. 17 up to and includ-

ing Dec. 24 are ordered in a more direct way to preparing for the Nativity of the Lord.

The liturgical color for Advent is purple, just like Lent — as both are seasons of prayer and fasting for great feast days. Also Advent (like Lent) includes an element of penance in the sense of...
¿Biblia de la familia o un libro para la familia?

Entrar las recuerdos de mi casa de infancia es la Biblia de la familia encuadrada en cuero y fruncido. Cuando en casa estaba la mesa en la sala de estar.

Pero, podemos prepararlas para la formación de nuestra propia lectura bíblica y orante de la familia. El tema que se propone para esta lectura orante y lectora "divina". Al llamar al Espíritu Santo y a leer, leemos en la Biblia para que el Palabra de Dios permita que la Palabra de Dios penetre nuevamente nuestros corazones y porte el libro diario con la Palabra que salva, para transferir con poder de tocar y convertir nuestros corazones.

Empezar la Semana Nacional de la Biblia en la comunidad católica hispana, dijo el obispo de Orlando, Florida.

La semana en fotos

HUNTINGTON, N.Y. — Según Jesús llamó a sus discípulos de muchas maneras, los directores de vocaciones en las diócesis necesitan de un gran poder de buscar, encontrar, ayudar y preparar a los hombres y mujeres a nivel local, incluso cuando una de las diócesis puede ser una posibilidad para el matrimonio.

¿Cómo se puede aminorar este tipo de lectura bíblica? Sin duda, es útil tener una Biblia de estudio católica, que puede proporcionar algunos antecedentes y el contexto de los diversos textos bíblicos. Estudios de la Biblia Católica también pueden ser valiosos para ayudarnos a crecer en nuestra educación bíblica.Excelente material impreso y en línea también está disponible gratuitamente en el obispo Noonan. Si tiene una Biblia Católica, un compañero útil también. Éstos son beneficios, pero no sus transformaciones, 28 de los cuatro requisitos básicos de la pareja: (1) son libres de nulidad, (2) su matrimonio católico válido requiere cuatro ingredientes, entre otros: la afirmación de los hombres y hembras en el camino de santidad, el matrimonio católico válido requiere que Cristo entre en sus vidas. "

Recuerda cómo entrar en estos cambios, me revisé en mi vida para abrir nuestra vida a la misericordia de Dios. La verdadera celebración de un año continúa y ofrece oportunidades a otros a disfrutar de la misericordia de Dios. La semana en fotos, dibujos y palabras, para aliviar algunas de las necesidades esenciales de la vida, la necesidad de darles esperanza de que es importante que Cristo entre en sus vidas", dijo el obispo Noonan. "No se equivocó en su trayectoria hacia el éxito", dijo el obispo Noonan.

La semana en fotos

Estamos a pocas décadas de distancia desde el principio del Jubileo Extraordinario de la Misericordia. Casi 10 años después, el obispo Francisco y programado para comenzar en la presencia Filarma de la inmaculada Concepción, de 15 de diciembre de 2015, a 20 noviembre de 2016. En este tiempo se habla de "Misericordiae 'ultra", donde describes las ideas clave de este jubileo. "El tema para todos" es "la Semana Nacional de la Biblia". Estas son las estaciones de esta celebración de un año de la semana en fotos.
The Catholic Foundation
CORNERSTONE
Don’t let Dec. 31 sneak up on you
With this year’s challenges and accomplishments still fresh in your mind, now is a great time to review and update your estate plans. To help you in this process, here is a checklist of acts in actions for you to review as the end of the year nears:
1. Review your current will and trusts. Do the circumstances need to be updated with major changes such as births or deaths, or moves, etc.?
2. Take inventory and make a written record of the contents of safe-deposit boxes. Give a copy to a trusted family member.
3. Review the beneficiary designations for your life insurance and retirement plans to make sure your beneficiary isn’t someone who is now deceased.
4. If you are age 70½ and receive a full distribution from your retirement account, consider making a gift to the Church with distribution. It passes tax free, but you must direct your fund to send the donation directly to the Church to qualify. (Call for details.)
5. Review your power of attorney for health care and living will as current.
6. Be sure you are comfortable with the guardian named in your will for minor children or named under your care.
7. Project charitable contributions by Dec. 31. As you think about special holiday gifts for family and friends, remember that making charitable gifts to the Catholic Foundation in their honor can increase charitable donations and provide you the tax benefits.

For more information, contact the foundation office at:
The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 32180
Oklahoma City, OK 73123
(405) 773-4111 www.cfook.org

Please remember the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in your estate plans.

Sealing Holy Door for Jubilee of Mercy
Archbishop Cookley at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, OKC, at 3 p.m. Nov. 22, for the sealing of the Holy Door for the upcoming Year of Mercy, followed by evening prayer. The sealing will take place on the feasts of Christ the King.

Bishop John Carroll Alumni Association
Join the OLPH-BRC Alumni Association. No cost. Register at www.bjpa.org. E-mail completed forms to alumni@1919bjpa.org, 11:59 a.m. Friday, Nov. 20. Print and mail to Bishop John Carroll School, 1100 N.W. 22, OKC 73118. Attn: Alumni Association.

Catholic Women’s meeting
Catholic women are invited to the Central Region Council of Catholic Women Meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 6 p.m., at St. James, 4201 S. McKinley Ave. Speaker is Deacon Jim Smith from Christ the King. He will share information about the Peru Mission trip. Call Deacon Yandel at (405) 523-3003.

Kendra Scott event to support Central Region of FFL
All are invited to shop at Kendra Scott jewelry with 20 percent of sales benefiting the Central Region of the Catholic Women’s Missionary Federation. Kendra Scott, Classen Curve, OKC. Check payable to Calvary Rosary Society. Contact Dorothy Klimkowski at (405) 454-2871.

Thursday dinner in Bison
St. Joseph, Bison, hosts its annual Turkey Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 22, in the parish hall, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with traditional kolaches, cinnamon rolls and baked items for sale. Dinner is $10 for adults and children age 11 and older, $5 for children ages 4-10. Call (405) 694-3468.

Friday Mass for the Sick at Noon and Veneration of the relics of St. Joseph

Saturday, Nov. 21
19. Chariotistic Catholic prayer meeting, 7 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center, C-2, Contact Tony Calaby at (405) 630-0539 or visit www.fflOKC.org.
20. Devotions to the Precious Blood of Jesus, Thursdays from 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., at St. James, 4201 S. McKinley Ave 420-2527.
21. The Lay Missionaries of Charity, the Secular (Early Order) of Blessed Teresa of Calcultta, at St. Ann Nursing Home, OKC Mass at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel with meetings immediately following. Contact Karen Banks at (405) 321-3907. stlmc.org
22. The community of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus – Oklahoma Community and Province
ting 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.
17. Monthly Aveuva to the In- sensate Jesus of Peace for three nine days, the novena prayers novena prayers will be as follows – Monday-Friday following Noon Mass, Saturdays following 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.
18. Veneration of the relics of St. Charles will be held at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church in Norman 1 p.m. to midnight. Divine Liturgy at 7 p.m. Confession available even throughout both days. (405) 321-3907. slm.org
19. Veneration of the relics of St. Charles, 10 a.m. to Noon and Mass for the sick at Noon and St. Joseph Divine Liturgy at 7 p.m.

Music director
St. Philip Neri, Midwest City, is seeking a music director, effective mid-Oct. The position offers a part-time position and the opportunity to grow in a welcoming community. The director will lead the liturgy team providing music during liturgy, youth, choirs, andły mass. The ideal candidate must have a bachelor’s degree and three years of experience in liturgical music and church volunteer experience. phối to Dr. Timothy Fuller, (405) 737-4476.

Job Openings
St. Gregory’s University is seeking a Director of Development and Stewardship to manage the overall strategies of comprehensive fund development. This position will direct and coordinate all phases of the annual giving appeal (ADF). The successful candidate must be a Catholic in good standing with the Church. Candidates are required to have a bachelor’s degree and five years of experience in development or related fund raising and R. Letter to Rev. William L. Novak, V.D., at novakr@archokc.org.

St. Theresa, Bixby, hosts an annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 22, at 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with traditional kolaches, cinnamon rolls and baked items for sale. Dinner is $10 for adults and children age 11 and older, $5 for children ages 4-10. Call (405) 694-3468.
22. Feast of St. Andrew Dung- Lac.
23. Thanksgiving Day
29 First Sunday of Advent

St. Theresa, Nov. 20, 2 p.m. at 1576 N. Tim Holt Dr. Cost is $7 for adults and $3 for children age 11 and under. Carryout orders available. Contact Bernadette Klimkowski at (405) 454-2871.

St. Joseph, Bison, hosts its annual Turkey Dinner in the parish hall, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with traditional kolaches, cinnamon rolls and baked items for sale. Dinner is $10 for adults and children age 11 and older, $5 for children ages 4-10. Call (405) 694-3468.
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Nov. 22 concert celebrates Epiphany pipe organ

By Judy Hilovsky
Special to the Sooner Catholic

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church in northwest Oklahoma City will reverberate with traditional pipe organ music as the church celebrates the 150th anniversary of the construction of its Carl Brandt Memorial Pipe Organ.

Bob Waldrop, director of music, will present a recital on Nov. 22 at 4 p.m. The event will feature the organ and the church’s Three Kings Choir. Nov. 22 is the Solemnity of Christ the King as well as the Memorial of Saint Cecilia, patron of musicians. The concert is free.

Waldrop, who has served Epiphany since 1999, will begin with a congregational hymn, continue with an organ recital followed by another congregational hymn. The event will conclude with Charpentier’s “Te Deum,” featuring Epiphany’s choir, Epiphany’s soloists, three guest soloists and opulent brass ensemble with timpani.

The Carl Brandt Memorial Pipe Organ is believed to be the oldest organ in Oklahoma, based on its construction date.

William B.D. Simmons originally built it in 1865 for a church in Watertown, NY. It was moved at the turn of the century to Our Lady of the Rosary Polish Catholic Church in Chicopee, MA. It then was relocated to Epiphany and rebuilt in 1984 with a new case by Andover Organ Company of Massachusett.

During the concert, Waldrop will showcase the many organ stops. An organ stop, often referred to as just “stop,” is the component of a pipe organ that controls the air flowing through the pipes that make the organ sounds. The Epiphany organ has 243 ranks of pipes and is mechanical inside, except that the hand pump bellows were removed and an electric fan was installed to pressurize the wind chest.

“The document ‘Sling to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship,’ produced by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, says that ‘Among all other instruments that are suitable for divine worship, the organ is accorded the pride of place because of its capacity to sustain the singing of a large gathered assembly,” Waldrop said. “The manifold possibilities of the organ in some way remind us of the immensity and the magnificence of God.”

Father Stephen Bird, pastor of Epiphany, added, “In a church, the organ is one of the instruments that accompanies hymns and provides solo music for meditation. Pipe organs also play an important evangelical role in the Church’s outreach to the wider community.”

The program was made possible through a grant from the Rosary Foundation of Oklahoma. The grant allowed Epiphany to upgrade its audio system, which will help with future concerts.

Mercy without borders brings healing, pathways to reconciliation

Salus animarum suprema ecclesiae lex

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

We are just a few days away from the beginning of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. A Holy Year called for by Pope Francis and scheduled to begin on the upcoming Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8, and end on the Feast of Christ the King, Nov. 20, 2016. In the Holy Father’s letter “Misericordiae Vultus,” where he describes the key ideas for this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, he points out the essence of this yearlong celebration:

1) “Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him. The Father, “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4), after having revealed his name to Moses as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (Ex 34:6), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature.

2) “We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, and vice versa, and opens the door to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.”

At the heart of this celebration we find a person, Jesus Christ, the face of God’s mercy. True celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee is to grow in our willingness to open our lives to the loving mercy of God, which is communicated to us through Jesus Christ and to help others to enjoy God’s mercy too. Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy will reach out to many and invite them back home to the community of faith centered on Jesus Christ.

One group of brothers and sisters that the Holy Father is reaching toward the men and women still hurting from a failed marriage. Pope Francis mandated certain changes to the laws of the Church regarding the process of nullity to alleviate some of the burdens the process has brought upon those seeking healing and reconciliation with Jesus.

Before I get into these changes, let me review some key teachings and requirements for the sacrament of marriage.

The sacrament of marriage makes our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ present in, and part of, the bond of love of the couple. This is a unique and indissoluble covenant with Christ as Center to the marital bond. For this sacramental bond to be valid, certain requirements need to be met. A valid Catholic marriage requires four basic ingredients from the couple: (1) they are free to enter into the covenantal relationship of the sacrament of marriage; (2) freely exchange their consent to enter this covenantal relationship; (3) intention to faithfully live out this covenantal relationship for the rest of their life and be open to new life (children); and (4) express consent in the presence of two witnesses and an authorized minister, which represent the Body of Christ. The process of nullity investigates whether all four requirements have been met. If the requirements were met, then what God has united, no one can break. On the other hand, if one or more of the requirements were not met, then there never existed a true covenant bond. The Church does not divorce them, the Church just recognizes and makes official that a true sacramental bond never existed.

I am simplifying this quite a bit. I clearly do not recommend anyone try and determine if an individual case can be obtained a decree of nullity. Leave this to the expertise of the tribunal.

The annulment process, while a sad reality that may bring forth pain, many times can serve as an opportunity for healing and reconciliation with Jesus. The faithful now can enjoy all means of salvation offered by Jesus and made available through His Church.

Pope Francis made the process for declaration of nullity easier. In his letter, known by its Latin title, “Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus,” which translates as, “The Lord Jesus, Clement Judge,” Pope Francis, among other things, shortened the process by eliminating steps considered duplication. It places the bishop, backed by the bishop’s conference, as a judge and supervisor of the clergy dealing with cases to give emphasis to the pastoral nature of the process.

Many cases, now can be dealt with locally even when one of the parties lives in a different country. If you have questions, speak to your pastor. If you still are not clear, then call the Archdiocesan Marriage Tribunal. Most documentation for the tribunal is now available in Spanish. Help spread the word. You might be the key to helping someone enjoy the loving salvation offered to all.