Book Provides Look Into How Oklahoma Catholics Responded to Bishop Reed and Vatican II

Archbishop to Host Book Signing on Dec. 5

The Road to Renewal offers an important contribution to the study of American Catholicism. It explores the process of Catholic renewal at the parish level, immediately following the Second Vatican Council, while also exploring the life and legacy of Bishop Victor Joseph Reed. From 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Dec. 5, Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran will host a book signing and lecture by author Jeremy Bonner at the Catholic Pastoral Conference Center, 7501 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City. The book will be available for purchase.

Following the event, the book may be purchased from The Catholic University of America Press, c/o Hopkins Fulfillment Service, P.O. Box 50370, Baltimore, MD 21222. It may be ordered online at cuapress.cua.edu or by calling toll-free 1-800-537-5487. Hardback $34.95. ISBN 978-0-8132-1507-5.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Between 1958 and 1971, Catholics in Oklahoma emerged from the sheltered world of the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church. In the face of divisive cultural forces from the non-Catholic world, many Catholics responded to the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council by embracing a wholesale transformation of the way the Church functioned in secular society, a process that brought national attention to the relatively small Catholic Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa and to its ordinary, Victor Joseph Reed. In this study, Jeremy Bonner explores the process of Catholic renewal at the parish level and assesses the role of Bishop Reed as an agent of that process — inspiring the faithful in Oklahoma and establishing a mission parish in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala.

A product of the Catholic Action and liturgical renewal movements of the 1930s and 1940s, Reed returned from the Second Vatican Council convinced of the need for greater participation by the laity and clergy in the life of the Church. Relaxation of the hierarchical structures of the Church in favor of a more consultative model was accompanied by a drastically restructured liturgical practice and a greatly reduced emphasis on parochial education. As more lay Catholics participated in parish-level ecumenical exchanges and in the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s, a decline in numbers occurred within the female religious orders, while the male priesthood was transformed into a more professionalized — and less distinctively Catholic — clerical body. In all of this, Reed proved a powerful voice in favor of a measured response, embracing neither outright rejection nor unqualified acceptance.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

“Bishop Victor Reed was a true visionary. Energized by the Second Vatican Council, he inspired the faithful here in

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The Good News

...Thanksgiving and Renewal

To all people of our Archdiocese and to your families and friends, I extend my very best personal greetings and wishes for a very happy and holy Thanksgiving Day. I ask Almighty God to bless you and all your loved ones in a very special way during this Thanksgiving-Christmas season.

As people of faith, we all know that God is good and loving. We rejoice in His presence among us and strive to open ourselves to His mercy and love. At the same time, each of us as individual human persons and as members of families and communities, experience tensions and difficulties in our relationships with each other. All of us, at some time or another, have felt the pain and sorrow of confrontation, misunderstanding, mistakes and failures. Sometimes we ourselves are the cause of these conflicts. Our guilt lies in the fact that there are times we do the wrong thing. Other times we do nothing, thereby failing to do the right thing!

In the Sacred Scriptures, God exhorts the person to humble and contrite heart. He calls us. He urges us. Jesus invites us to repent and to change so that His grace will work in us. Only God’s transforming power can enable us to be refreshed and renewed. Only God’s grace can heal us and make us whole. How fortunate we are that God’s help is available to us at all times! However, to be effective in us, we must lovingly receive God’s grace and follow His direction.

God’s direction is given to us in many places in the Bible. In one of those instances, Jesus reminds us that if we are in prayer, at the altar, about to offer our gift to Him but remember that our brother or sister has something against us, we must stop immediately. Jesus says, “Leave your gift there at the altar and first go and be reconciled with your brother or sister.” Only after you have forgiven them can we return to offer God our gift.

It is often very difficult to acknowledge our guilt or our fault. It is even harder to forgive one who has perpetrated evil against us. Yet, there is no other way to bring about healing and reconciliation without mercy and forgiveness. It makes no difference who the culprit is, the positive difference is made by the one who repents, who forgives and who serves as the instrument of God.

Notice, Jesus doesn’t tell us to try to justify ourselves. Nor does He tell us to confront or reprimand the other person. Rather, He urges us to take the initiative and to work for peace and reconciliation.

What better time to do the right thing than now at Thanksgiving and Christmas and the beginning of a New Year? What better way than to daily offer the beautiful prayer of Saint Francis? Yes, I ask you and I encourage you to recite this prayer daily at least for the remainder of 2007. Do not do it only as a poem or a literary exercise or a nice expression. Say it daily as a prayer. Let each invocation be a nice expression. Say it daily as a prayer.

O Divine Master, grant that for the remainder of 2007. Do not do it only as a poem or a literary exercise or a nice expression. Say it daily as a prayer. Let each invocation be a nice expression. Say it daily as a prayer.

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A Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is sadness, joy

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console.
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love
For it is in giving that we receive
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Road to Renewal—continued from page 1

Oklahoma and in our mission parish in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala. Jeremy Bonner has done exceptional work in writing this book. The Road to Renewal is an accurate, exciting and encouraging book for anyone who wishes to proclaim the Good News of Jesus.” — ARCHBISHOP EUSEBIUS J. BELTRAN, Archbishop of Oklahoma City

“This book provides extremely important insight into the changes in the church not only in Oklahoma but also in the nation as a whole. Bonner skillfully weaves a story about a moderately progressive bishop, Victor Reed, and also about larger issues in the diocese.” — GERALD P. FOGARTY, S.J., William R. Kenan Jr., professor of religious studies and history, University of Virginia.

“The Road to Renewal is a compelling study. In focusing on a particular churchman and his Oklahoma diocese, it assesses virtually all of the major developments of Roman Catholicism in America from the early 20th century through 1971. This outstanding work accomplishes its aim within a purview of “from Catholic American to American Catholic.”” — PATRICK FOLEY, Editor Emeritus, Catholic Southwest: A Journal of History and Culture.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeremy Bonner is an independent scholar in Pittsburgh, Pa. He received his B.A. in history from Durham University in England, his M.A. in political science and his Ph.D. in American history from the Catholic University of America. The Road to Renewal is his first book to be published. He has contributed several essays on religion to The Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Regional Cultures (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004) and the Dictionary of American History, third edition (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2003). Also, he has published book reviews and essays in several academic journals including Church History, Anglican and Episcopal History and The Journal of Mormon History.

ADDITIONAL BOOK SIGNINGS

Thursday, Dec. 6, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., St. Gregory’s University, James J. Kelly Library (Benedictine Hall), Shawnee, hosted by Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen, OSB.
Thursday, Dec. 6, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Holy Family Cathedral, 122 W. 8th Street, Tulsa, hosted by Monsignor Gregory Gier, Rector.

The Sooner Catholic is supported through the Archdiocesan Development Fund.
Fr. Rother Tribunal Requests Help

The Tribunal commissioned on Oct. 5, 2007, continues its work for the Cause of Canonization of Father Stanley Rother, killed at the Archdiocesan Mission in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala in 1981. During October and November, Fathers Anthony Taylor and Edward J. Weisenburger visited Guatemala to begin the lengthy process of conducting witness interviews and depositions. The Historic Commission has continued to organize and catalogue materials received. The Historic Commission continues to need your assistance in locating documents and photographs pertaining to the life and work of Father Rother. Of special significance are:

a. Documents created by Father Rother (correspondence, diaries, homilies, correspondence writings, etc.).

b. Recordings of Father Rother on video or audio tape.

c. Articles written about Father Rother (other than articles published in the Sooner Catholic).

d. Diaries, writings and letters containing recollections of Father Rother by persons who knew him or worked with him (this would include school friends, seminary colleagues, missionaries and visitors to Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala).

e. Information about or concerning Santiago Atitlan and Guatemala during the time of the Oklahoma presence at the mission (MICAT-OKLA), specifically 1964 to 1981.

f. Information about, or writings of, any of the missionaries or workers at MICATOKLA during the years 1964 to 1981.

If you believe you have items or documents of interest, please contact the Historic Commission at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 127. Leave your name and telephone number in voice mail and a member of the Historic Commission will contact you as soon as possible.

Pope Benedict XVI Sets April Visit to United States and UN

WASHINGTON — Pope Benedict XVI will come to the United States with visits to Washington and New York City on a six-day trip which includes an address at the United Nations.

The visit is slated for April 15-20.

Among venues during the visit will be the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where Pope Benedict will meet with the Bishops of the United States.

“This is a blessed moment for our nation,” said Bishop William Sklystad of Spokane, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “Pope Benedict is not just the leader of Catholics, he is also a man of inspiration for all those who work for peace.”

Cardinal Edward Egan of New York voiced the delight of the people of New York.

“When our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, told me last July that he would be visiting New York this coming April, I was delighted with the news and shared it with the People of God of the Archdiocese of New York and the entire community of greater New York. The response of all was both rejoicing and thanksgiving to the Lord for the great grace of the presence of the successor of St. Peter in our midst. I have assured the Holy Father of a warm and prayerful welcome. We all look forward to his visit with pleasure and anticipation.”

Archbishop Donald Wuerl of Washington spoke of “faith-filled joy and enormous enthusiasm” in the Archdiocese of Washington.

“Personally, and in the name of all of the clergy, religious and faithful of the archdiocese, I express our warmest welcome while renewing our sentiments of love and loyalty to our Holy Father. We all look forward to his visit as a time of renewal of our faith and pastoral ministry and an opportunity to confirm our solidarity with the Church universal made visible among us by the successor of Peter in the person of our Holy Father. We pledge to do all that we can to make his presence among us a moment of true spiritual renewal and a vibrant manifestation of God’s kingdom at work among us.”

Msgr. Walter Rossi, rector of the national shrine, noted the shrine’s importance in the nation.

“The shrine was established by the bishops of the United States as our nation’s tribute to Mary Immaculate and so it is appropriate that the bishops of our country meet with the successor of Peter in the house they established to honor the Mother of God,” he said.

The Midwest City Rotarians came to St. Philip Neri School. They gave to each third-grader a dictionary for their own personal use. They also talked to them about “The Four-Way Test” of the things we think, say or do. A label was put in each dictionary with their name on it. 1. Is it the truth? 2. Is it fair to all concerned? 3. Will it build good will and better friendships? 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned? The two men in the picture are, left, Dale Hawkins, a businessman in MWC, and right, Russell Smith, mayor of MWC. Students showing off their dictionaries are from left, Chase McMillan, Alexa Sheppard, Catherine Nguyen and Matthew Nguyen.

Dinner Set in Bison

BISON — Saint Joseph’s Parish will hold its annual turkey dinner on Sunday, Nov. 18 in Saint Joseph’s Hall. Dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Kolaches, pies and baked items will be available for purchase.
Mount St. Mary High School Hosts College Fair for Students

OKLAHOMA CITY — College representatives from eight states brought their best recruiting presentations for the Mount Saint Mary College Fair held Oct. 31. The College Fair, instituted by MSM counselor Deborah Wedel, provides juniors and seniors the opportunity to explore a variety of different options as they prepare to make a decision that will shape their future.

“We survey each one of our seniors in our College 101 program and they give us their top three college choices. We then invite all of those chosen colleges to participate in our College Fair and that response has been overwhelming,” said Wedel.

The goal of the College Fair is to put a sense of urgency into all seniors to get their college applications completed and to introduce juniors to begin the process that will lead them to an educated choice on their college future.

“The College Fair gave me the opportunity to look at all the various options that I have without walking outside the doors of The Mount,” said junior Whitney Tener. “I want to study in the field of nutrition, and now I have a good idea of what schools offer the type of program that I am looking for.”

The College Fair is of great value to MSM students, but also brings exposure and name recognition to the colleges and universities. “The College Fair gives us name recognition and allows students to see our colors,” said Janelle Warlick, admissions counselor at Oklahoma City University. She said the Mount students are very serious about the College Fair and attributed this to their upbringing.

“The kids are more serious at an event like this than students from the public school,” Warlick said. “They are more grounded because of their faith, and that extends to their educational aspirations.”

Mount students look over the various materials brought by the different colleges and universities to the College Fair.

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma has announced its 2007 grant recipients. Among the most notable programs receiving a grant award this year is the Summer Academy — a joint venture between Mount Saint Mary High School and Sacred Heart School.

“The Summer Academy provides underprivileged students a month-long exposure to a Catholic school environment,” said Joana Camacho, principal of Sacred Heart Catholic School. The academy focuses on academics, Religious Education, leadership and recreational activities in a relaxed atmosphere. “Many of the students do not have the opportunity to attend a summer camp, and the academy fills the void while nurturing self-esteem and fostering human dignity,” said Camacho.

“These are the kinds of programs where the Catholic Foundation finds a natural fit — investing in the future of our faith,” said Tom Casso, executive director. “Educating beyond the classroom and introducing Jesus Christ in new and exciting ways makes for a lifetime of benefits for the student and Catholic community both.”

Holy Cross in Madill and Saint Joseph in Ada each received grants for Youth Conferences, and Bishop McGuinness and Mount Saint Mary high schools received a joint grant for Catholic Virtues Presentations. Saint Mary in Guthrie and Christ the King in Oklahoma City each received a grant for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium Materials. Saint Peter in Woodward was awarded a grant for Hispanic Catechesis Training, while Saint Eugene in Oklahoma City received underwriting for Religious Education Youth Bibles and Spanish Hymnals.

The Archdiocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima and Saint Patrick in Oklahoma City received a grant for Youth Classroom Furnishings.

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Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Bishops Call For
Diplomatic Solution Between U.S., Iran

WASHINGTON — The prospect of permitting Iran to develop nuclear weapons is unacceptable, according to U.S. Catholic Bishops, but absent an immediate threat, the U.S. and other nations must be fully committed to pursuing a diplomatic solution to the present confrontation.

This was the message delivered by letter last week to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice from Bishop Thomas Wenski of Orlando, Fla., on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The bishops were reacting to escalating rhetoric and news accounts speculating about a potential preemptive use of force against Iran to deter further possible nuclear weapons ambitions.

“From a moral perspective,” Bishop Wenski wrote, “in the absence of an immediate threat ... military action would constitute an act of preventative war.” The Catholic Church teaches that “engaging in a preventative war without clear proof that an attack is imminent cannot fail to raise serious moral and juridical questions.” The bishops make clear their assessment that the Iranian situation does not presently constitute an immediate threat. Before military action could be considered, according to the bishops, all non-military alternatives must be exhausted. For the full text of the letter, log on to usccb.org/sdwp/international-2007-11%20Iran%20Letter.pdf.

In total, the Catholic Foundation awarded grants to assist eight states with Science Lab Equipment, 23 parishes with Science Lab Supplies, 7 parishes with Youth Classroom Furnishings, and 30 parishes with Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium Materials. Additionally, the Catholic Foundation awarded grants to assist Bishop John Carroll School in Oklahoma City with Literacy Testing Software and Saint James School in Oklahoma City with Science Lab Equipment.

As part of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) process, Saint Charles Borromeo School in Edmond received a grant for Hispanic Catechesis Training, while Saint Eugene in Oklahoma City received underwriting for Religious Education Youth Bibles and Spanish Hymnals. Saint Joseph School in Enid received a grant for the preservation of the Hymnals.
Building A Safe Environment

Committee Addresses Progress, Concerns in Annual Audit of Charter for Children’s Protection

From the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Committee

In 2002, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People which affirmed the bishops’ deep commitment to creating a safe environment within the Church for children and youth. The charter also recognized a need and commitment to reaching out to victims of abuse and their families.

A brief history lesson: Prior to the adoption of the charter, Archbishop Beltran and the priests and leaders of this Archdiocese recognized that abuse could and had occurred in our own Archdiocese and made a commitment to protecting children, youth and other vulnerable persons. In December 1991, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Policy Regarding the Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel was adopted (amended in February 2002). In 2001, the Archdiocese began background checks for clergy and employees. In the spring of 2002, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Hotline was placed in service and an ad hoc committee was established to carry out the Archdiocesan youth protection policies (the “Safe Environment Committee”). Archbishop Beltran also established an Office of Safe Environment and appointed a Safe Environment Coordinator.

One of the first tasks of the coordinator and committee was the development of an Archdiocesan Code of Conduct which was adopted by Archbishop Beltran on Aug. 20, 2003. The next major task of the committee was the development of a Safe Environment Curriculum mandated by the Code of Conduct as well as the charter. The curriculum was approved and its implementation in each parish and Catholic school mandated by Archbishop Beltran in the spring of 2004.

Today, every employee of the Archdiocese and every employee of a parish and all volunteers ministering to, or in contact with, children should have completed the Safe Environment Protocol: application, background check, reference check, acknowledgement of the Code of Conduct and Safe Environment training. Each parish should have designated a parish facilitator to work with parents and church leaders to carry out the directives of the USCCB and our archbishop regarding the protection of youth, children and other vulnerable persons. This school year every child in our Archdiocese should be presented the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Curriculum through their religious education program in their parish or Catholic school. It is grade-appropriate and allows personal safety to be taught within the context of religious education. “Children who have been taught child abuse prevention in the context of religious education report that having this information in this setting allows them to discuss values, the church’s teachings and Scripture as each relates to this topic. Teaching prevention also allows the church to offer children images of hope, comfort and healing that will be very useful to them in the future no matter what their experience.” Kathryn Goering Reid, Preventing Child Sexual Abuse; A Curriculum for Children Ages 5 to 8.

The audits: In order to assure compliance with the charter, the USCCB established an Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) and has retained an outside auditing firm to audit each diocese/eparchy annually. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has been found to be in substantial compliance with the directives of the charter in each of its four audits, the latest of which was conducted in September 2007. However, the audit revealed a troubling fact and area of concern. This must be corrected before our next audit. And it requires the assistance of each and every parent and guardian of our children and youth.

The concern: During the school year ending in June 2007, 12,692 children and youth enrolled (usually in August or September) in parish religious education classes. According to reports filed with the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education, only about 8,531 or percent 67 percent of these young people were instructed in the Safe Environment Curriculum. Why? The reasons vary, but the most plausible one is that our young people are not attending their religious education classes on a regular basis throughout the school year.

What can we do? Be involved. It is up to all of us to involve ourselves in the activities of our children and youth. Please take your children to their religious education classes every week and volunteer to help. Even if a child receives instruction on personal safety in a public school, the Safe Environment Curriculum is important. It is grade-appropriated and integrated into the general religious curriculum of our Church.

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To reinforce this need, some statistics. To date, more than 14,000 persons in the Archdiocese have had background checks. Not all of these are currently active volunteers or employees. At the end of June 2007 there were 8,537 screened and trained volunteers, 436 screened and trained teachers, 118 priests (all priests in ministry must be screened and trained), 93 deacons (all in ministry must be screened and trained), 31 candidates for ordination (deaconate and seminarians), 58 Archdiocesan employees and 852 parish/parochial employees. At present we have 96 parish facilitators.

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In summary, we are doing a pretty good job through our collective efforts to create a truly safe environment for our children and youth. As in all endeavors we can all improve. However, if we continue to work together for the sake of our children, there is no reason we cannot meet and exceed the national standards for safety set forth in the charter.
Immigration - Oklahoma Priest Offers Another Perspective

By Richard M. Doerflinger

The Guttmacher Institute, research affiliate of Planned Parenthood, has helped write a new study in a British journal called The Lancet, and the New York Times is excited: “A comprehensive global study of abortion has concluded that abortion rates are similar in countries where it is legal and those where it is not, suggesting that outlawing the procedure does little to deter women seeking it. Moreover, the researchers found that abortion was safe in countries where it was legal, but dangerous in countries where it was outlawed and performed clandestinely.” (Oct. 4)

Some news media tend to lose their critical faculties when presented with the opportunity for a breathless headline on abortion. In this case the basic finding of the study is reported accurately (though without the skepticism that should greet abortion news from the abortion industry), followed by two conclusions that are “spin,” not fact. The Lancet study did find that abortion rates are similar in countries where abortion is legal and those where it is not, but not safe. The Lancet study did find that legalizing abortion makes it “safe.” That was not the subject of the study. The researchers found no reliable way to count “unsafe” abortions directly, so for purposes of the study they simply defined “safe” abortions as “those that meet legal requirements” in countries where abortion is legal. They never found legal abortions to be safe, but assumed this in order to count something else.

In effect, “safe” became a euphemism for “legal.” A legal abortion was counted as “safe” even if it killed the woman; an illegal abortion was called unsafe and “harmful” even if no woman was harmed. This is stated explicitly in the study, which the Times perhaps did not bother to read.

In fact, studies in this issue of The Lancet note that Peru, the Philippines and Sri Lanka have all dramatically reduced maternal mortality in recent years, without changing their strong laws against abortion. In Sri Lanka included an improved health system, skilled birth attendants and improved status and literacy for women — factors long promoted by the Holy See at United Nations conferences. There are many ways to help women be “safe,” without urging them to destroy their children.

The central finding of the Lancet study is actually that the total worldwide abortion rate, including “unsafe” (that is, illegal) abortions, went down between 1995 and 2003. Women globally are turning away from abortion, especially when they are offered better choices. You won’t find that conclusion in the New York Times.

Father Jack Feehily is pastor of Saint Andrew Church in Moore.

Planned Parenthood Affiliate Lies About ‘Safe’ Abortions

By Richard M. Doerflinger

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Father Richard Doerflinger is deputy director of the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Oklahoma Priest: All of Us Must Battle Our Racist Outlooks

I am a racist. I always have been and probably always will be. Because of this, I have to constantly be on the lookout for ways that my distorted outlook affects the way that I treat and view others. I am constantly blinded by this plague called racism and I must continually ask God for the gift of sight. I was reminded of this poverty with which I struggle because of the new anti-immigration bill that went into effect last Thursday. I have personally seen how this bill has filled our Hispanic community with fear and anxiety. This struggle has brought to mind an old wisdom saying, “Never judge a man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins.”

A movie came out a few years ago that seems to fit in with this old saying. It is called The Day After Tomorrow. The story goes like this. After years of unabated global warming, the greenhouse effect is wreaking havoc all over the globe in the form of catastrophic hurricanes, tornadoes, tidal waves, floods, and as a result, the beginning of the next Ice Age. The United States is hit hard and most of the country becomes unlivable, because it is covered by ice. Only the most southern parts of the country can bear life. So, many Americans are forced to move to Mexico in an unprecedented migration.

Let’s imagine for a moment if this actually happened. And all of us living in (Mooreland) Woodward were forced to move to Mexico because (Mooreland) Woodward had been destroyed by this sudden and immediate climate change. Most of us decide to move to the same small Mexican City, so we can all be together. We leave with nothing. All of our money has been lost do to the crisis and we can only take a few of our belongings, some clothes and pictures. Arriving in this Mexican town, we quickly find out that the only jobs available are at the pig and cattle and chicken factories that pay low wages and require long hours of work. We look for better jobs but all of the higher-paying jobs require us to be fluent in Spanish, which we are not.

As a side note, I have been trying to learn Spanish since high school, I have been sent to the best language schools in Mexico and the United States, I have had private tutors and spent large amounts of time on studying the language and I still do not know it.

But back to Mexico. We find ourselves working 12-hour days, seven days a week at this pig plant, and the people working beside us are all Americans, hence we only speak English and when we get home from this long day, we hardly have energy to do anything else but eat and go to bed. We soon discover that the life of an immigrant is not an easy one. When we go to the store to buy groceries, we notice that some people seem to be staring at us. Anytime we speak English, we get angry looks from people behind us in line. In fact, one woman behind us in line yells at us and tells us that this is Mexico, speak Spanish.

I am sure after this, we would miss Woodward more than ever. Our homes, most of our family, our way of life, our dreams of how we thought our lives were going to work out, are all gone.

Then one day, we find a little Catholic church in our town. It is called la iglesia de San Pedro’s or St. Peters. The people there come up to us and look directly into our eyes and our hearts and say, “We know you are far away from home and that you have very little. You are most welcome here. You all are our brothers and sisters; we all eat the same body and drink the same blood each Sunday and we know that many of you do not have immigration papers. Do not worry; here your baptism is your passport. In fact, we know that many of you do not know Spanish, so we will start an English Mass for you. We know how important it is to worship and pray in your mother tongue. You all are strangers no longer; rather, brothers and sisters in Christ. Welcome. Welcome.”

How wonderful would that feel? I think it would be transformative.

 Jewish and Christian tradition have always taught that if a society was to be just, three groups of people had to be protected, widows, orphans and strangers, or put in another way, immigrants. Widows because they have no husband to protect them. Orphans because they have no parent to raise them. Immigrants because they have no country to support them.

 As a nation, we need to reform our immigration system, it is broken. Until this happens, you and I, as followers of the man who was once an immigrant himself, Jesus, are called to welcome the immigrants among us, with or without documents, as human beings, as children of God.

I have struggled with the racism I find inside of me for most of my life and still do today and I imagine that racism exists in every nation, in every people, and in every human heart, but so does love and my money is on love.

Father Scott Boeckman is pastor of Saint Peter Church in Woodward with missions at Saint Joseph in Buffalo, Sacred Heart in Mooreland and Holy Name in Shattuck. He delivered this homily on Nov. 4, three days after HB 1804 became law.

Catholic Charities USA Offers Support to California Fire Victims

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — Armed with their experience from Sept. 11, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and other disasters, a team from Catholic Charities USA’s (CCUSA) Office of Disaster Response has been deployed to southern California to assist Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside with its wildfire recovery efforts.

As a second responder in its community, the Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside niche in disaster response is helping individuals and families rebuild their lives. Following the 2003 wildfires, the agency served hundreds of low-income families in the two-county area and now anticipates a dramatic increase in calls from those seeking its services in the days and weeks to come.

Since last week, a team of five — including three staff from CCUSA’s offices in Alexandria, Va., and staff from Catholic Charities of Camden, N.J., and Catholic Charities of St. Petersburg, Fla. — have been on the ground here helping the local Catholic Charities agency assess the situation and develop its response plan, coordinate its efforts with national and local government and community responders such as the Red Cross, and build its capacity to handle the increased demand for help.

“Our time here is meant to build on the great work that Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside has been doing every day in the region for nearly 30 years,” said Kim Burgo, director of disaster for Catholic Charities USA.

With the help of Catholic Charities USA, Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside is standing ready to assist evacuated individuals and families regardless of their religious affiliation make the transition from their evacuation locations back into their homes.

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With the help of Catholic Charities USA, Catholic Charities stands ready to assist evacuated individuals and families regardless of their religious affiliation make the transition from their evacuation locations — shelters, private residences, hotels, RVs, and parks — back into their homes or other temporary housing and provide them with vital support, such as food, store vouchers, medicine, counseling, assistance with FEMA applications and other services.

The agency plans to dedicate at least five caseworkers to disaster recovery to increase its capacity to serve individuals and families. As necessary, it is also looking to tap into the resources from the Catholic Charities network of more than 170 agencies nationwide. Like they did following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Catholic Charities agencies across the country have offered to send staff, such as case managers and counselors, to help its fellow agency in southern California.

In addition to providing on-the-ground support, CCUSA’s Office of Disaster Response has provided financial support, granting Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside $10,000 in emergency funding.

Catholic Charities USA is collecting donations to support local agencies’ recovery efforts. To contribute:

Call (800) 919-9338
Visit catholiccharitiesusa.org
Send checks to Catholic Charities USA, Southern California Wildfires 2007, P.O. Box 7068 Merrifield, VA 22116-7068.
On a rather routine basis we read in the newspapers or hear on television how Oklahoma ranks near the top, or actually it’s the bottom, in categories we’re not very proud to be mentioned in.

We’re among the national leaders when it comes to putting our citizens in prison, both men and especially women. Oklahoma is among the national leaders when it comes to teen pregnancy, teen suicide and school dropouts. We’re one of the national leaders in the category of divorce and we’re near the top in unhealthy living, having been ranked 47th among the 50 states in one recent report. Our high rate of mental illness has been well documented, as has our inability to address the issue. In the past few years we have led the nation in the use of capital punishment and yet homicide rates in our largest cities continue to set records. We’re consistently ranked among the national leaders in childhood poverty and it seems every other day there is another story of a child being killed while living in some state-sponsored program. Even with oil near $100 per barrel, it’s a safe bet our per capita income still only outpaces perennial bottom dwellers such as Mississippi and West Virginia.

I know other states have problems. Some of their problems are every bit as bad and in some cases worse than the ones we live with. We have countless blessings in Oklahoma, we have much to be thankful for, and great progress is being made, but we also have tremendous challenges. For the fourth year in a row our state leaders have been handed a report card on health-related issues that negatively impact the lives of Oklahoma’s children. Are the issues being addressed as aggressively as possible by our state leaders?

That’s one of many things that really bug me about the new illegal immigration law that took effect Nov. 1. The law is known as House Bill 1804. Very few Democrats came out against the proposal and I’m thinking no Republicans cast a vote story day-after-day. I have to wonder if that decision was based on Dobbs’ and his networks’ true concern about the illegal immigration issue, or was it more in response to Bill O’Reilly and Fox taking CNN to the woodshed in the ratings battle? Tough may be the new sex when it comes to marketing.

Democratic Gov. Brad Henry said he signed HB 1804 because the federal government was not taking responsibility for the issue. Our federal government also doesn’t send us enough money to take care of the interstate highways it built through our state. Are we going to pass a law to tackle that issue as well?

Oklahoma lawmakers went along for the ride when it came to HB 1804. Very few Democrats came out against the proposal and I’m thinking no Republicans cast a vote annual migration report. In 2006, Oklahoma, considered at best a “balanced” state in terms of migration, had a 3 percent hike in move-ins, according to United. Will this be the case in next year’s report? How created by his town’s tough law targeting illegal immigrants. After so many people left because of the law, many businesses suffered extreme hardships. Many businesses closed. If business suffers, government suffers. “A lot of people did not look three years out,” said Conrad, who originally voted for the law but joined the majority recently in rescinding it.

Proponents of HB 1804 contend illegal immigrants are putting a tremendous strain on our health care system. OK, so is that why major medical providers and American Indian tribes in our state have announced plans to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in the construction of new hospitals? Is that why out-of-state firms are investing in small-town hospitals? Does the rhetoric match the reality?

Then there’s the argument that we have to get tough on illegal immigrants because they don’t pay taxes. So you’re telling me the cash registers at Wal-Mart automatically discount sales tax when an illegal steps up? Does a landlord not factor in property taxes when he sets the rent? And consider that the Social Security “Suspense Fund” contains billions upon billions of uncollected dollars. This money was paid into the fund by illegal immigrants who provided false Social Security numbers to their employers and who paid into the system even though they are not eligible to collect.

Illegal immigrants don’t pay taxes? In the words of a well-known football coach, “It ain’t true.”

Come on, Oklahoma. We need people moving here, not running away out of fear. Immigration is a federal issue. Can Oklahoma afford to lose another congressional seat? Oklahoma has much more serious problems that should be addressed by our elected state officials.

The sad reality is Oklahoma’s elected state leaders view illegal immigration as an easy issue because illegal immigrants really have no voice. There is no union to deal with, no special interest.

This is about human beings. This is about human dignity and this is about true and lasting progress.

In the 1960s, many Catholic priests, sisters and lay people were arrested for taking part in the civil rights marches that occurred in the Deep South. They were joined by Jewish leaders, as well as Protestants who did not agree with the ugly discrimination taking place in states such as Alabama and Mississippi. Our own Archbishop Beltran was involved in the marches. He was never arrested, but his bishop at the time made it clear that if any priests or sisters were arrested while participating in the demonstrations, they were on their own. The law was the law. That didn’t stop them. People were being treated unjustly by the local and state governments. As followers of Jesus Christ, these Catholics and other people of faith could not stand by and allow this to happen without raising their voices in protest.

Today, in Oklahoma some are accusing the Church of adding its voice of opposition to the recently enacted law known as House Bill 1804 for selfish reasons. They contend the Church is only involved in the protest because it wants to protect its members. But were all people being discriminated against in the 1960s Catholics? The truth is the Church wants to protect and lift up people who are created in the image and likeness of God. That means everyone.

An unjust law in Alabama in the 1960s is no different than an unjust law in Oklahoma today.

Ray Dyer
HB 1840 Creates Too Many Questions, Not Enough Answers

By now most everyone has seen the recent front page stories in the Daily Oklahoman. Over the past week their reports have dominated the media from around the world. It's all about HB 1840, the recent legislation concerning undocumented people, and its impact on our state. This week has been a busy time for reporters everywhere since the provisions of the law went into effect on Thursday, Nov 1. It seems that concerns about immigration are being brought into focus everywhere.

This slew of reports in the Oklahoman began two weeks ago with the Priests Council of the Archdiocese. The story was about the Council’s decision to sign a Pledge of Resistance to the provisions of the law. In no time at all the Priests Council story made its way onto the Web and was featured in national and then in international publications. Following this story were many others detailing the new law and speculating on its impact once its provisions became active.

By now the whole world knows about Oklahoma’s legislation. The author of the law promises that there will be further legislative action in coming sessions. He insists that immigration issues dominate the lives of Oklahomans and he is intent on addressing them. HB 1804 is just the first of many other laws that will be enacted, according to him.

Needless to say, the resistance to this law is much wider than just the Priests Council. Wide sections of public concern have been mobilized, including the response of community action leaders, ministers, lawyers and legislators. Like all political questions there are a spectrum of proposals, counter-proposals and responses that crisscross and are disconnected. For those who watch the news intermittently, the many voices sound like a kindergarden playground; all of the voices crisscross and are disconnected. For those who follow the issues, the welter of opinions and proposals sound like a football stadium; there’s a lot of noise from many voices directed in two directions. It’s been a lively time.

The Pledge of Resistance was an effort to highlight the difficulties that the provisions in the new legislation would cause. Part of the new law makes it a serious offense to help those who are undocumented. Something as inoffensive as offering transportation to someone who you know to be without papers could get you into serious trouble. It’s easy to see how that might become an issue for pastors and for the personnel in the programs that churches run.

Most every person who has come in through the front door over the last many years looks as American as you or I. But not everyone. And that’s the point. When do we begin to ask? When the person is unknown to us? When their accent is suspect? When they don’t speak English? Do we ask for everyone’s Social Security number?

That’s the rub that has begun to create a raw spot for priests and other pastors. If the provisions of the law are to be enforced strictly, then what are we going to do? This might sound completely overblown. Maybe it is. But here in Duncan the questions are just beginning. It’s even more pointed in other places. For example, when we reopen our Food Bank, will we be allowed to help people if they are undocumented? The short answer to the question is, we don’t know. Some of the food for the Food Bank comes from federal and state programs for the hungry. Will our participation in these programs prevent us from giving food to those who cannot prove they are legal residents? That’s not clear to us yet. Don’t get the idea that the Food Bank deals with hoards of immigrants every week. Most every person who has come in through the front door over the last many years looks as American as you or I. But not every- one. And that’s the point. When do we begin to ask? When the person is unknown to us? When their accent is suspect? When they don’t speak English? Do we ask for everyone’s Social Security number?

The Pledge of Resistance is a statement by the priests promising that our response to people’s needs is not subordinated to proof of residency. I don’t want to make too big of a deal out of this, but the law has the potential to make us into inevitable law-breakers.

Here’s another example. This one comes from a clinic in Oklahoma City run by one of the parishes there. The clinic was founded more than 10 years ago because of the large number of people in its boundaries who had been laid off from work and who ended up without health coverage. Doctors from the surrounding hospitals agreed to give their time to this outreach ministry. The single defining characteristic of the variety of people who come there is that they can’t afford to see a regular doctor. As the pastor of the parish continually comments, it’s a surprise to see who comes. The measure isn’t ethnicity, language or culture; it’s insurance.

But now, with the new law, there’s some question of whether the clinic can continue to keep its doors open. Since some of the doctors who serve there are part of a communal outreach by hospitals who take public money, it’s not clear whether they can continue to work at the clinic and serve everyone. Will they be in violation of the law if they serve people who are without documents? Will they require everyone to prove that they are legal residents? Or only the ones who look suspiciously like they don’t? While these concerns are swirling around the clinic, none of them changes the fact that the people who come are in need of medical care. No one knows, at least no one knows now, what must be done, what might be done or what can be done.

The cruceler part of the new legislation is this uncertainty. All it takes is the rumor that proof of residency is required and people will stay away from doctors. They’ll stay away from medicine or food or any other services they might need. Whatever the intent of the law and whatever the status of those affected by it, the hungry should be fed, the sick should be cared for, no matter who they are. The Priests Council of the archdiocese wanted to affirm that our service to those in need can’t be constrained by Social Security numbers.

Oklahoma has the power to pass laws; it is a democracy like any other state. It has the power to regulate the lives and practices of the people within its boundaries; that is what a state does. What it cannot do is solve the problem of immigration. The federal system is broken and isn’t likely to be fixed by our state. For the average person from another country who wants to become a legal resident of the United States, it is nigh impossible. The wait is often more than 20 years just to begin the process, the expense is tremendous and with all of that the process is not guaranteed. There are many reasons for this, some of them tied up in the compromises and difficulties of geopolitics, some of them economic and some of them cultural. But there is no feasible way to address the current concerns about migration that touch the people in our parish.

All that the state can do is make life miserable for those who do not have adequate documentation. In that the law succeeds. It has accomplished misery in the lives of quite a number of our parishioners. There are kids in our youth group, American citizens, who are afraid that they will be separated from their parents. There are young people who have been here their whole lives except that they were born in and spent one month in another country. They are afraid that now they could be deported to a place that is as foreign to them as it would be to me. There are people in the parish who will have to endure endless questioning about their origin and culture only because of the tint of their skin or the language they speak at home. All of these fears wear away at the lives of people. Misery won’t solve our immigration concerns; it will only produce what misery always produces, inhumanity.

These are difficult issues. No one should think that they will be solved by slogans or sound bites. The debased political culture of our country is not very good at complicated debate and reasoned solutions. Maybe democracies never are. But we won’t get very far in our community if we don’t try to keep a couple of principle concerns in mind.

The first is that we’re dealing with people’s lives. The anxieties that prompted HB 1804 are questionable but the provisions of the law are real and they affect real people. Real people’s lives will be interrupted and changed, mostly for the worse. Political decisions are not simply exercises in abstract reasoning but are measures of real actions.

The second is that we need to remember something about ourselves. Oklahoma prides itself on those who came and settled here illegally. We call them “Sooners.” They simply got here and set up shop before it was continued on page 12
The Seasons of St. Francis

Documentary on Enid Parish Recalls How Deep Faith Kept Church Together Through Times of Hate, War and Dust

By Eileen Dugan
The Sooner Catholic

ENID — In broad daylight on a Sunday morning in 1926, just as Mass was getting out, the Klu Klux Klan showed up on the street outside the church. Inside, a little girl was scared, very scared. The people coming down the street, their faces hidden behind white pointed hoods, had threatened to kill the priest and burn the church to the ground.

How this tense scene played out many years ago is just one of the questions about Saint Francis Xavier Parish that are answered in the film Seasons of Saint Francis. This new documentary, now available as a DVD, tells the story of Saint Francis Xavier Parish from the time of the land run in 1893, through the turbulent ‘20s with its troubles with the Klan, up to and including the challenges faced by the members of Saint Francis Church today.

As described on the jacket of the DVD, the people of Saint Francis Xavier Parish “brought with them their hopes and dreams and their faith in God. It was this faith that led them not only to endure the extreme hardships of this new land but also to persevere through religious prejudices to build a lasting Catholic church of their own in Oklahoma territory.”

Seasons of Saint Francis was written and directed by Rich Simpson and produced by his brother, Larry, as a fundraiser for Saint Francis Xavier Church. Tom Ward of Guthrie was the director of photography and Shel Wagner, the narrator.

For the DVD, Simpson talked with many old-timers in the parish, some in their 90s. “They were all so great,” Simpson said. “We have a 90,000-square-foot building in Enid. It was meant to intimidate. And it usually did, for it signified the Klan’s power and indicated that the property owners were marked for death.”

“Saint Francis had several crosses burnt on their property,” Simpson said.

“My mother witnessed it. She was the little girl in the church in 1926. She was scared to death. That incident really affected her.”

Yet, in the face of such intimidation, the parish of Saint Francis Xavier stood firm. It not only survived the Klan but the Depression, the Dust Bowl and World War II. The DVD makes clear that the determined individuals of Saint Francis prospered, facing the sorrows and joys of each day right up to the present time. Two “joys” mentioned in the DVD are the images of the incredible results of designer Jean Pollin’s renovation of Saint Francis Church in 1991 and an interview with a former pastor of Saint Francis Xavier Church, Father Marvin Leven.

“Everyone who has seen Seasons of Saint Francis thinks it’s interesting. Some things from the beginning of the parish were a real surprise to me, like learning that services were once held in a saloon,” Simpson said.

Rich Simpson was able to make this documentary because he and Larry own Skeleton Creek Productions, a film production company in Enid. The company usually makes films for family entertainment, mostly westerns of the old Hopalong Cassidy, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry type.

“Our films are suitable for anyone of any age,” he said. “We have a 90,000-square-foot building in Enid. Half of it is used as a film studio.

“We started making films in 1994. The first was a documentary on the miraculous staircase in the Chapel of Loretto, in Santa Fe, N.M. We did it originally for the TV show, Unsolved Mysteries,” he said. Later, Skeleton Creek Productions made the film of the marvelous staircase available for purchase.

While making this documentary, “We realized that no one was making the family-type entertainment we wanted to watch,” Simpson said.

Not many, if any, family-oriented TV shows or films of the 1990s have heroes. For the most part, the young people in these shows are presented as more mature than the adults, and the adults are portrayed as idiots. Few provide good role models for children. “We decided that we wanted to do some old-time westerns to give our kids some heroes. We’ve done four westerns now, and each is doing well,” Simpson said.

As for Seasons of Saint Francis, Skeleton Creek Productions paid for all the costs of making the documentary. Fifty percent of the proceeds from this DVD will go to Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Enid.

“We wanted to do something to help the church. We wanted to give something back. Hopefully, the money from the sale of this DVD will help Saint Francis,” Simpson said. “People should buy this documentary because it is a great story of faith. If you are at all interested in Catholicism and in the pioneer spirit and determination, you’ll want to see Seasons of Saint Francis.”

If you would like to support Saint Francis Xavier Church by purchasing a copy of Seasons of Saint Francis, make out a check for $22 ($20 for the DVD, plus $2 for shipping and handling) to Skeleton Creek Productions, and send it, together with a request for the DVD and your name and address, to Skeleton Creek Productions, 228 E. Randolph Street, Enid, Okla. 73701.
Shrine Reminds Faithful of Importance of Prayer and Hope

BISON — The small community just north of Hennessey off Highway 81 is home of the Archdiocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima. Situated in the front lawn of St. Joseph’s Catholic Church is a stone structure reminiscent of the grotto where the Blessed Virgin appeared to a group of three young children in the year 1917, in a mountainous region at the center of Portugal.

Elsewhere on the continent the “Great War” raged, that eventually cost Europe an entire generation — over 37 million lives. Besides sending her own sons to die in France and North Africa, Portugal was in political chaos at home. There was a succession of governments following a revolution in 1910. The monarchy had been replaced by a republic, with a new liberal constitution separating church from state. Government officials, under the influence of Freemasonry, were not sympathetic to the faith. But for the people themselves, the faith was the air they breathed. In the town of Fatima, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta were born and raised in homes where the catechism was their daily bread, stories from the Bible their recreation, and the word of the village priest was law.

Our Lady stressed the importance of praying the Rosary in each of Her apparitions — asking the children to pray the Rosary every day for peace. The shrine is truly a hidden treasure of the Archdiocese, and is currently planning for minor restorations and improvements. To assist with the project or learn more about the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, contact Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Hennessey at (405) 853-2158.

The Shrine to Our Lady of Fatima as it appears in Bison at Saint Joseph Catholic Church. Photo/Cher Casso

Oklahoma Catholics Pray Rosary as Mother of God Instructed

STROUD — Members of Saint Louis Parish held a “Rosary Rally” on Oct. 13, the 90th anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun. Parishioners prayed the Rosary at noon, the time of the miracle 90 years ago. Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, began appearing to three children in Fatima, Portugal, on May 13, 1917. She appeared to them on the 13th of every month ending with a visit on Oct. 13, 1917. Mary had told the children that on that date a special event would occur. It did. Much to everyone’s amazement, the sun appeared to come closer to the earth and swirled and danced in the sky. The unusual event became known as the Miracle of the Sun. Mary also told the children to tell everyone to pray the Rosary for world peace and the conversion of Russia.

NICOMA PARK — Members of Our Lady of Fatima Church gathered at noon Oct. 13 at the Shrine to Mary to pray the rosary. In 1917, exactly 90 years ago, Our Lady appeared at Fatima, Portugal, with a message for the world: Do penance, amend your life and pray the Rosary. The “America Needs Fatima” organization began the public square Rosary Rally whereby Catholics in thousands of cities prayed the rosary at the same time.
OBITUARY

Sister Hugoline Zimmerman Dies Peacefully in Wichita

Sister Hugoline Zimmerman, an Adorer of the Blood of Christ Sister for 78 years, died peacefully in Wichita on Oct. 10 at the age of 95.

Sister Hugoline was born in the leap year of 1912 on Feb. 29 in Park, Kan., to Anthony and Cecelia (Leiker) Zimmerman. She was their second child and was named Josephine. The family soon moved to Kinsley, Kan., where Josephine attended Saint Nicholas School run by the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

It was love at first sight. Almost at once the Zimmermans second oldest child longed to become an Adorer. At the age of 13, she got her wish. On Aug. 26, 1926, Josephine Zimmerman entered the aspirancy at Ruma, Ill. There, she received the name Hugoline, continued her novitiate training and professed her vows on July 2, 1929. Shortly thereafter, Sister Hugoline and several of her companions were transferred to the newly established Wichita province.

Upon returning to Kansas, Sister Hugoline began her ministry as a housekeeper at several small parishes in the area. For the next 55 years, she served willingly in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Kansas, at mostly large institutions. These included Saint Francis Hospital in Carlsbad, N.M., and Oklahoma Municipal Hospital in Stillwater, Saint Francis Seminary in Bethany and the Center of Christian Renewal in Oklahoma City. She also did a few years of parish ministry at Sacred Heart Parish, Dodge City, Kan.

Sister Hugoline had wanted to be a teacher, but when asked to go into housekeeping, she agreed, saying, “That’s probably what God wants me to do.” She never taught formally, but she found fulfillment in housekeeping duties of baking, canning, managing a cafeteria, serving nuns, and caring for elderly priests.

At one point in her life, Sister Hugoline wrote, “I think God gave my heart a corner of joy, because all my life has been a joy.”

Sister Hugoline had a strong devotion to the Eucharist and that attracted her to a new ministry after 55 years of housekeeping. At the age of 82, she went to Kingman, Kan., to take care of the Adoration Chapel at Saint Patrick Parish. In 1995, she returned to the Wichita Center to begin Living Ministry in Later Life.

Health problems slowed her activities, but she remained prayerful and zealous, enjoying the presence of the Adorers and an occasional visit from her sister, Elsie.

Preceding her in death were her parents, brothers, Adolph and George, and her sister, Marie Kline. Elsie survives and also a niece and several nephews. Her priest cousin, Father Donald Zimmerman, gave the homily and presided at her funeral Mass at the Wichita Center. She was buried in the community cemetery.

HB 1804: Too Many Questions

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legal to claim land according to the laws and provisions of the government. In the long run the legal system acknowledged their presence and legalized their actions because it would have been nearly impossible to follow the law as written. It’s part of our history.

It’s also part of our history that the most famous book ever written about Oklahoma is The Grapes of Wrath. It details the pilgrimage of Oklahoma families who became economic refugees in their own country. They went to where they could make a better life, to the West Coast. California eventually passed a law making Okie migration illegal. Abetting such illegal migration was punishable by the provisions of the law. Californians were afraid that the poor from Oklahoma would come and take away what they themselves had built. It’s preposterous now to think that Californians could have worried that their state would suffer from the effects of poor Okies gone wild; the economy of California now outstrips dozens of countries around the world by a factor of ten. Its prosperity and population begsgers anything imagined 70 years ago. Anyone from the hard red Oklahoma hills could have told them that. Californians had to wait on the decision of the Supreme Court to find it out. But until that decision was delivered, all it took was the wrong accent or lack of proof about where you were born to get your family evicted or to get you run out of town. We were once refugees.

Responding to these issues touches the core of the gospel. The people most affected by them are people that we know, people that we have seen over and over again here in our parish. Our lives are woven together. All of us may be the accidental people most affected by them. The program will be followed by Mass at 11:30 a.m. and lunch at noon.

Cost of lunch is $7.50 and reservations are a must. Contact Jeanne Ferguson at (405) 341-4396 before Friday, Nov. 23.
Letters

Why Now the Fuss?

On a Saturday morning in early November, The Republican Club, of which I am a member, had a meeting in my office conference room. The subject was HB 1804 and their support for the bill.

As I expected, I was the "Lone Ranger" as I did not support HB 1804. The Republican Club members' position was that "illegal immigrants" were breaking our laws by being here. My question, why are we bringing this up now? Undocumented peoples have been here since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt all the way to our present president, George W. Bush.

Hispanics have deep roots in our country and in Oklahoma. They may not have been documented before, but that has never stopped them from buying homes, establishing businesses, getting good jobs and getting a good education, both private and public.

The Republican Club members then said that "illegal immigrants" don't pay taxes. The fact is that they pay more taxes on their incomes than "illegal immigrants" don't pay taxes. The fact is both private and public.

In Oklahoma, many undocumented people have been here since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt all the way to our present president. I wonder if they would applaud anti-war groups publicly displaying graphic color photos of U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians maimed, burned or blown apart in the Iraq War. As much as I want to end the U.S. misadventure in Iraq and bring our troops home, I would never consider such a tactic.

Some of us comfortable Americans also know that 29,000 people, mostly children, die every day in the world from preventable disease and malnutrition. With one month's expenses for the Iraq War, the U.S. could virtually eliminate the plagues of malaria and tuberculosis that kill some 4 million people every year. Would publicly displayed color photos of starving and sick children helpfully awaken Americans to our opportunity for good in the world? I think not.

Lifting public dialogue on important political issues is noble. Publicly displaying gory color photos is reprehensible.

Nathaniel Batchelder
Oklahoma City

Across Oklahoma

Trees to be Sold

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop John Carroll School, 1100 NW 32nd, will again be selling Christmas trees for the 49th consecutive year at NW 31st Street just west of Western Avenue. Please drop by BJCS between Friday, Nov. 30, and Sunday, Dec. 23 to purchase your tree. The lot is open Monday through Friday from 5:30 to 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Any extra proceeds earned from selling these trees will be used to benefit BJCS athletics, and your support is greatly appreciated. We also may have openings to work the tree lot for high school students needing service hours or anyone else just wanting to help out. For more information or to volunteer, contact Mark Stranczek at 615-8376 or Richard Cudjo at 820-0619.

Irish Grad Wins Scholarship

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop McGuinness 2007 graduate Nathan Gardocki has been selected as a recipient of this year's Bernard C. Harris Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is offered by Harris Publishing to promote and support higher education for Catholic high school graduates. It was established in 1994 in honor of founder Bernard C. Harris, who strongly believed that family values and commitment to community provide the foundation for success in business and personal life. Nathan was praised for his entrepreneurial spirit and integrity. He was one of four people selected nationwide from almost 400 applicants. Awards of $1,000 are given yearly to each student and their graduating school.

Photos Not Necessary

I have seen before the graphic color photos publicly displayed by anti-abortion groups. I find them tasteless and a violent assault on the sensitivities of citizens and families driving by, which is of course the intention of groups displaying them recently in Edmond.

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Nathaniel Batchelder
Oklahoma City

Exorcism Talk Set at Christ the King

OKLAHOMA CITY — Jesus admonished the apostles to cure the sick, raise the dead, heal the leprous, expel demons. (Matthew 10:7-8) The ancient Roman rite of exorcism first sanctioned by the Catholic Church in the 17th century is used only in select cases today but there is much curiosity surrounding it. Monsignor Richard Gilles, Vicar General of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wis., will speak at Christ the King at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18, on the current teaching and practice of the Catholic Church regarding exorcisms. Msgr. Gilles has attended several special schools on this topic and is one of the leading experts in the upper Midwest. While not an exorcist himself, he has dealt with many and knows where to refer people who are seeking exorcism. Anyone interested in learning more about this ancient rite is welcome to attend.

Mount Dedication

OKLAHOMA CITY — On Tuesday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m. (between the varsity girls and varsity boys games), Mount St. Mary’s High School will host a ceremony to dedicate the remodel of the gym lobby. All are welcome to attend.

Prayer Day for Retired Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Office of Worship and Spiritual Life will host a Prayer Day for the Retired on Wednesday, Nov. 28 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway. There will be two reflections: one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. Registration and refreshments will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the first reflection at 10 a.m. Mass will begin in the chapel at 11:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon. There will be an opportunity to go to confession at 1 p.m. Prayer Day will end with everyone praying together in the chapel. Cost of the Prayer Day for the Retired (9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.) is $7, which includes lunch. To register, call the Office of Worship and Spiritual Life at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 158.

Fine Arts Night Dec. 4

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School will present Fine Arts Night on Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the Petuskey Performing Arts Center Auditorium. Fine Arts Night is a festive evening celebrating the visual and performing arts at Bishop McGuinness. Artwork and photographs will be on display in the hallways and there will be a performance by the performing artists, including DanceVisions, Queens Players, the McGuinness Choir and the Irish Band. Admission is free. Refreshments will be served. Please plan to attend this celebration and support our wonderful student artists.

Weekend Advent Retreat

This weekend Advent Retreat is for women only. The retreat will prepare you to welcome Jesus this Christmas. It begins at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7, and continues until 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9. Spiritual director Joanne Forg will direct this Retreat at Our Lady of Mercy Retreat Center, 917 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73109. Cost will be $100. For more information or to register, call (405) 634-1968 or e-mail srbelmer@mount-stmary.org. Registration deadline is Dec. 3.
Global Good News — You Won’t Hear it From the Networks

Doomsday-mongering is a staple feature of the faux-intellectual life, occasionally influential and sometimes quite lucrative. The Club of Rome’s dire certainties about the “limits to growth” shaped Carter administration thinking and policy. Paul Ehrlich’s tediously repetitious predictions that “over-population” would cause mass starvation and other global catastrophes were rewarded by a MacArthur Foundation “genius” grant, irrespective of the fact that none of Ehrlich’s alarms ever panned out. The nuclear freeze movement was whipped up by eminently-forgettable potboilers like the 1983 TV movie, “The Day After.”

The Great Satan of that moment was Ronald Reagan (whom many of his erstwhile critics now praise in preference to the archfiend Bush). Green doomsday-mongering is currently the fashion and just won Al Gore (with whom I once worked on alternatives to the nuclear freeze!) the Nobel Peace Prize — the Norwegian Nobel Committee thus reducing that once-distinguished award to the equivalent of an Oscar.

Catholic social thought has not always been immune to certain kinds of doomsday-mongering. The 1968 encyclical, Populorum Progressio [The Development of Peoples], was influenced by some of the convictions that led the Club of Rome to criticize what we now call “globalization.” Rumors of a new social encyclical to mark the 40th anniversary of Populorum Progressio have been circulating in the past few months. Should such an encyclical be in the works, its drafters would do well to cast a critical eye on the economic, anti-natalist and environmental doomsday-mongering of recent decades.

For, according to a recent U.N. “State of the Future” report, the happy news is that the human condition is improving, rapidly and exponentially: “People around the world are becoming healthier, wealthier, better educated, more peaceful, more connected, and ... are living longer.” Global illiteracy is now down to 18 percent, having been cut in half over the past two generations. The boy or girl born today will likely live 50 percent longer than a child born in the mid-1950s. More people are living in political freedom than ever before.

And poverty has been dramatically reduced. In 1981, 40 percent of the world’s population scraped out a life on less than $1 a day; today, that percentage is down to 25 percent. That is completely unacceptable; it is also a major improvement, most of which can be attributed to free trade (about which Populorum Progressio was skeptical).

As John Paul II taught in the 1991 encyclical Centesimus Annus, poverty today is caused by exclusion, and the cure is inclusion: exclusion from the networks of productivity and exchange that generate wealth must be remedied by empowerment strategies that give ever more people the skills to get into the game.

The real problem in the 21st century, according to Oxford economist Paul Collier, is the “bottom billion.” There are 6 billion people in the world, of whom 1 billion are rich and 4 billion are on track to get rich, if at different rates. The top 5 billion are linked to, and work within, those networks of productivity and exchange discussed by John Paul II; the “bottom billion” aren’t. Rather, according to Collier, they’re caught in various “traps,” including the trap of corrupt government, the trap of ethnic/tribal/religious conflict, the resources trap, and the trap of bad neighbors. Thus a rebel leader in Zaire boasted that you could do a successful coup d’etat with a cell phone and $10,000: the money to raise an army from impoverished tribesmen, and the cell phone to make deals to sell natural resources to the likes of China.

For the first time in human history, no one has to be poor. No one has to go to bed hungry or, worse, starve. The social teaching of the Church, which rightly gives priority to the poor, best serves the global dispossessed when it accurately identifies how billions of people have gotten unpoor. If the U.N. can figure that out, the Catholic Church certainly can.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Oklahoma Wrong to Support Industry of Death

Recently we learned that the U.S. Supreme Court would hear a brief submitted on behalf of a death row inmate who is scheduled to be executed by lethal injection.

His claim is that lethal injection is both cruel and unusual punishment, unconstitutional, and therefore should not be used.

Lethal injection is used in most, if not all of the 38 states that still execute those convicted of capital crimes. Thank God the Supreme Court has agreed to hear this case but it seems almost a “no brainer” that to plan to kill a person with a poison chemical is surely “cruel and unusual punishment.” It is not something that civilized people do on a normal basis. This argument would also apply to execution by firing squad, hanging or the electric chair. All forms of premeditated murder as a punishment is indeed cruel and unusual punishment. The worst part of our use of the death penalty, regardless of what method, is the high risk of killing a person who is indeed innocent!

We wonder if it is all about the money? Think about all of the people involved in the death penalty process — prosecutors, defense attorneys, investigators and all of the staffs that each office employs. Think about all of the appeals, judges, local, state, district and federal courts involved all over a period of several years. It runs into the millions of dollars — your tax dollars. This is quite a business.

There is, of course, an alternative punishment available and it’s called life without parole. It would take you and me out of the killing business. The loss of freedom is considered by some to be worse than death — as witnessed by the number of death row prisoners who do not wish to appeal their convictions, who would rather die than spend the rest of their lives in prison with no hope of freedom. The millions of dollars we would save by not using the death penalty could be spent to provide medical care to the children of our country who do without.

Think about it, wouldn’t we be a better nation?

God bless you all.

Editor’s Note: Jim Fowler has fought to end the death penalty in Oklahoma for years. His son, Mark, was executed by the state of Oklahoma for his role in the deaths of three people during a grocery store robbery. A few years later, the man convicted of killing his mother was awaiting execution on Oklahoma’s death row when DNA evidence proved he was not the killer. Since then Fowler has dedicated himself to ending capital punishment in our state. He argues life without parole follows with Church teaching on the issue.
Holiday Special Because It’s Wrapped in Gratitude

Of all the holidays, Thanksgiving is about my favorite. Thanksgiving is the smell of turkey and dressing wafting throughout the house, kids running through the living room, families being together, women chatting in the kitchen, men watching NFL football, a crisp coolness in the air, and not having to worry about gifts. But the thing I most like about Thanksgiving is that it is about gratitude.

More than 400 years ago, the pilgrims were grateful to the American Indians for helping them settle into the new world, surviving the first winter, and growing and storing foodstuffs for the coming winter. They were grateful for having survived the hardships of crossing the ocean, for their faith in God and for the ability to worship as they wished. Hence — Thanksgiving — a holiday focused on gratitude.

Gratitude is, for me, a key to peace and serenity, and here we have a holiday focused on being grateful for all the blessings in our lives. Being grateful for our faith in a loving God. Being grateful for families, kids, grandchildren, parents, spouses and extended families. Being grateful for health, life, jobs, careers, love and many other blessings. And at Thanksgiving we formally give thanks for these blessings, humbly asking, “How can I be so blessed?” What a wonderful holiday!!!

At Thanksgiving we don’t have to worry if Uncle Harry is going to appreciate the tie we give him, or if little Jeffie will like his toy truck, or if we are spending too much money on Game Boys, Ipods, jewelry, computers, TVs, etc. We don’t have to feel guilty about receiving too much, having to return items to the store, or exchang- ing them for things we prefer and being concerned that someone’s feelings will be hurt. Here at Thanksgiving we can just be grateful for what have we and be a little less concerned about what we don’t have.

Thanksgiving is a time to realize that for most of us our essential needs are being met: we have food on the table, a home, clothing, medicines, jobs, running water, loving spouses and/or parents, faith in God, etc. There is a real message here — that most of us do have our basic needs met and we can be at peace with a loving God.

At other times, being grateful can help me cope with frustrations, anxieties, worries and being upset. These feelings are caused by my not getting my way or being afraid of losing something I have. I may be upset I didn’t get that promotion, or my budget may not allow me to purchase something I really want. Or I may be building up in my mind worries that I may lose my job, I won’t get a good grade, she won’t like me, he will think less of me, I may not be able to pay the bills on time, etc.

I am learning to reflect on the things I can be grateful for when I experience these frustrations, anxieties, worries and upset feelings.

Being grateful helps to be in the present, in the here and now where God is. It is in the present I can experience calm, contentment and peace. I can be in touch with the blessings in my life and can be a bit more indifferent about the things I don’t have or may lose. What a blessing to reflect on and be grateful for the things I have and less concerned about the things I don’t have.

Gratitude truly does bring an awareness of God’s presence, peace, and the inner awareness that things will be OK. We have been here before and it has turned out just fine. I may not get my way, but that’s OK. And gradually, gently, softly, a sense of acceptance, peace, serenity can enter us. And this is the presence of God within … who loves us no matter what. He is my Thanksgiving!

EDITORS NOTE: Joe Froehle has over 16 years experience in marital, individual and family counseling. He serves in the Counseling Center at St. John the Baptist, Edmond. He can be reached at (405) 359-8539 or by e-mail at jfroehle@subell.net.

Some Rock Music Can Open Hearts to Search for Truth

John Paul II warned that if chastity is lived in a repressive way, it’s only a matter of time before sexual desires explode (see Love and Responsibility, pp. 170-171). I think we find here a key for understanding the sexual revolution of the 20th century. It was a ticking time bomb waiting to detonate in response to the prudery and repressiveness of the previous era.

If a culture’s music provides a window into the soul of that culture, I think the rise of rock music in the 1950s is very telling. Rock music seems to be an artistic expression of the explosion of all that pent-up desire. The very term “rock and roll” — coined by DJ Alan Freed in the early 50s — came, some say, from a slang term for sexual (mis)behavior.

Before you get the wrong impression, I’m actually writing as a fan of rock music — a big fan (of much of it, anyway). It’s in my blood. It’s “my” music. I can still remember my first record store — and the radio. “Ch-ch-ch-changes ...” by David Bowie. It was 1972 and I wasn’t even 3 years old.

Not all rock music glorifies lust and indulgence. Much of it expresses an earnest search for meaning. “Gimme the beat boys and free my walls; it shakes up the soul as well. As a rock drummer myself, I can’t tell you the number of times I have pounded those skins as a form of therapy. We’ve all got bottled-up stuff” that needs an outlet. Drumming has been a great one for me. A good, driving beat not only rattles the many signs, in fact, that a positive musical transformation is already quietly underway.

I want to point you to two of those signs: Mike Mangione and Vince Scheuerman. These two artists, whom I know personally, are part of a new breed of rock musician: Both grew up with the spread of John Paul II’s theology of the body — so, too, will a new form of popular music. They express a hunger for wholeness and communion in “Two into One” and the hope of rebirth in “Rise,” a song inspired by the tsunami of December 2005. Learn more and order Citizen at Armyofmeonline.com and see their video for “Going Through Changes” on You Tube. Look closely and you’ll even see this MTV rock star wearing a scapular.

If rock music was born from the explosion of sexual repression, we know it will take a new John Paul II’s “theological time bomb” detonates, Madonna might really and truly sing “like a virgin.”

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 christopherwest.com.

Counseling Corner

By Joe Froehle, LPC, ICADC

Body Language
By Christopher West

Killing Floor.” You can learn more and order his CD at mikemangione.com. Also, search for his name on You Tube to see him perform “It’s Me, Not You.”

Vince Scheuerman is the lead singer/songwriter for the band Army of Me. This past summer they toured with the Dave Matthews Band promoting their new album Citizen. Their video “Going Through Changes” has been a regular on MTV. While their sound is harder than Mangione’s, the lyrics come from that same place in the soul. They express a hunger for wholeness and communion in “Two into One” and the hope of rebirth in “Rise,” a song inspired by the tsunami of December 2005. Learn more and order Citizen at Armyofmeonline.com and see their video for “Going Through Changes” on You Tube. Look closely and you’ll even see this MTV rock star wearing a scapular.

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Buenas Noticias...

...Acción de Gracias y Renovación

Como pueblo de fe que somos, sabemos que Dios es bueno y bondadoso. Nos alegramos por la presencia de Dios entre nosotros. Nos reconciliamos por su piedad y amor. Al mismo tiempo, cada uno de nosotros, bien como seres humanos que somos y como miembros de familias y comunidades, experimentamos tensiones y dificultades, en las relaciones de la vida cotidiana con los demás. Todos de alguna manera hemos experimentado el dolor y el lamento de la confrontación, de los malentendiidos, de los errores y fallos. Algunas veces somos los que causamos los conflictos. Nuestra culpa recae en el hecho de que a veces hacemos las cosas incorrectamente. A través de estos, nos reconciliamos en hacer las cosas correctamente.

En las Sagradas Escrituras, Dios habla a la gente con un humilde y cálido corazón. Dios nos llama, nos pide y nos invita a que nos arrepientamos y cambiamos para que su gracia trabaje sobre nosotros. Solamente, a través del poder de Dios es que podemos cambiar y estar dispuestos a renovarnos. Sin la gracia de Dios es que podemos sanar y ser seres completos. Quizás arrependidos somos de que Dios siempre nos ayuda, pero también, que su amor se refleja en nuestro deseo de arrepentimiento y crecimiento.

La orientación de Dios es dada a nosotros en muchos lugares en la Biblia. En una de estas instancias, Jesús nos recuerda que siempre debemos caminar contigo, que no se arrepientes de nuestras acciones. Si, Jesús dice: "... dejad al Dios este mundo, ve a buscar la paz con tu hermano..." Solamente cuando perdones, volverás a ser, ya sea para el bien o para el mal. Puedes ser un instrumento de paz.

...Superaremos la discriminación, injusticia y desprestigio con nuestra fe

Inmigrantes solamente quieren vivir en paz y seguir los preceptos de Dios
Mensaje del Comité Arquidiocesano de la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro
Comentarios sobre el programa de Ambiente Seguro de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City hechos en la audiencia para cumplir con los Estatutos para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes

En el año 2002, la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos adoptó los Estatutos para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes, en los cuales los Obispos en general están profundamente comprometidos en crear un ambiente seguro dentro de la Iglesia para los niños y jóvenes.

Los Estatutos también reconocen la necesidad y el compromiso de sanación y reconciliación con las víctimas o supervivientes de abuso de menores.

Una breve descripción de los hechos: Antes de la implementación de los Estatutos, el Arzobispo Bétheliz, los sacerdotes y la diócesis de esta Arquidiócesis, reconocieron que el abuso pudo ocurrir y existía en nuestra propia diócesis, por lo que inmediatamente se hizo el compromiso de proteger a nuestros niños, jóvenes y cualquier otra persona vulnerable.

En diciembre de 1991, la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City adoptó una política de abuso de menores para el personal de la Iglesia, que fue reajustada y modificada en febrero del año 2002.

En el año 2001, la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, comenzó a chequear los antecedentes penales del Código y empleado. En la primera mitad del año 2002, se estableció una línea de teléfonos para denunciar los posibles abusos y se creó un comité para evaluar las regulaciones para proteger a niños y jóvenes (Esta comisión se llamó el comité de Ambiente Seguro).

En el Arzobispo Bétheliz también estableció la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro y nombró a un coordinador para este oficina.

Una de las primeras tareas del coordinador y de este comité fue desarrollar un Código de Conducta para nuestra Arquidiócesis, el cual fue adoptado por el Arzobispo Bétheliz el 20 de agosto del año 2002.

La tarea más grande hecha por este comité fue el desarrollo del currículum ordenado por el Código de Conducta, como también por los Estatutos. El currículum fue aprobado y se implementó en cada parroquia y escuela Católica por mandato del Arzobispo Bétheliz en la primavera del año 2004.

Hoy en día, todos los empleados de la Arquidiócesis, incluyendo cada empleado de las parroquias y los voluntarios en los diferentes ministerios de la Iglesia, que de otra manera tendrán algún contacto con niños o jóvenes, deben completar el protocolo impuesto por Ambiente Seguro, el cual establece llenar una planilla de datos, el chequeo de los antecedentes penales, revisar las referencias personales y la entrega del Código de Conducta y un respeto entusiástico.

Cada parroquia debe designar a una persona que estará a cargo de la dirección de la Comisión de la Arquidiócesis de los Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos y nuestro Arzobispo Bétheliz en relación con la protección de los niños, jóvenes y cualquier otra persona vulnerable.

Durante el año escolar, todos los niños y jóvenes de nuestra Arquidiócesis se les debe presentar el currículum sobre Ambiente Seguro mediante las clases de religión en las parroquias o en las escuelas. Es apropiado ver si se puede hacer un ambiente seguro en el contexto de la educación religiosa.

"A los niños y jóvenes de enseñarse como preservar el abuso en el contexto de las clases de religión, se demostró que cuando tienen información sobre ese aspecto, pueden disfrutar mejor sus valores, las enseñanzas de la Iglesia y sobre las Sagradas Escrituras. Enseñar a preservar también permite a la Iglesia ofrecer a los niños fechas, confiando y sanando a aquellos que siempre les será útil sin importar cuál sea su experiencia.”

Tomado del libro de Kathryn Goring Reed, Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, A Curriculum for Children, Ages 5-8.

La audiencia:

Para asegurar y cumplir con los Estatutos para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes, la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos estableció una Oficina para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes. Y ha contratado una línea de audientes para evaluar a cada diócesis y arquidiócesis en todos los años.

En lo que respecta a la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, los audientes encontraron que está cumpliendo estrictamente con los directivos de los Estatutos para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes, y han contado una línea de audientes y la última se efectuó en septiembre del año 2007.

Sin embargo, esta audiencia reveló un problema y un área que nos preocupa, por lo que se deben hacer los cometidos requeridos antes de la próxima audiencia. Para hacerlo, se requiere la ayuda de cada padre y representante de nuestros niños y jóvenes.

La preocupación:

Durante el año escolar que terminó en junio del año 2007, unos 12,800 niños y jóvenes se inscribieron en las clases de religión en las diferentes parroquias (usualmente entre septiembre y septiembre).

De acuerdo con las cifras de la Oficina de Educación Religiosa, solamente 8,851 o el 67 por ciento de estos jóvenes se les impartió el currículum del programa de Ambiente Seguro.

Pero esto no es lo más relevante. Pero lo más relevante es que nuestros jóvenes no asistieron a sus clases de religión regularmente a lo largo del año escolar.

¿Qué podemos hacer?

Bendecir o envolver. Es una responsabilidad de todos el envolver a los niños en las actividades de nuestros niños y jóvenes. Y favorece la educación de los niños a las clases de religión todas las semanas y confían en cada uno de ustedes y voluntarios para ayudar. Incluso, si cada niño necesita una instrucción sobre su seguridad personal en una escuela pública, el currículum del programa de Ambiente Seguro es importante. Es muy apropiado integrar este currículum en las clases de religión en nuestra iglesia.

Educamos:

Leer y entender el currículum que se implementa en las clases de religión es importante, incluyendo las lecciones que se refieren a la seguridad.

Es importante destacar estas lecciones con sus niños, no importa que edad tengan sus niños o jóvenes.

Fueron asistidos a más detalles en el Internet para recoger más información de cómo proteger a sus niños (www.archdioceseok.org), o (www.archdioceseok.org) o en esta página electrónica que requiere una clave para acceder (www.churchtvtoday.com).

Esta clave puede ser requerida al facilitador de la parroquia o la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro llamando al siguiente teléfono: 405-712-5851, extensión 150. El uso de esta página, la cual requiere una clave, es dada por la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City como un servicio a los padres de familias, representantes de menor de edad, maestros, ministros y todo el pueblo diócesis de esta Arquidiócesis.

Agradeciendo a sus segundos:

Es importante que se hagan saber a sus parroquias su apoyo y apoyo sobre la implementación del programa de Ambiente Seguro.

Agradeciendo a los facilitadores de las escuelas y parroquias, a los directores de las escuelas y las personas encargadas del ministerio para los jóvenes:

Completar el protocolo de Ambiente Seguro:

Durante el año 2007 más de 303 entrenamientos sobre Ambiente Seguro se llevaron a cabo a lo largo de la Arquidiócesis por los facilitadores.

Las fechas de estos entrenamientos fueron publicadas en los boletines de las respectivas parroquias y en los folletos de las escuelas Católicas. Si ustedes desean ayudar a que sus niños, niñas, sobresalban, eso se envuelven en este programa, solamente tienen que acelerar en estos entrenamientos.

Recuerden que toma tiempo preparar este tipo de adiestramiento, por lo que se les agradecerá que lo hagan lo más pronto posible. Tomen en cuenta que los facilitadores dan su tiempo y se alejan de sus familias para realizar los entrenamientos.

Para redactar este necesidad, hay lugares estadunidenses:

A la fecha a más de 16,000 personas en la Arquidiócesis se han hecho a sus antecedentes penales. No todas estas personas son actualmente voluntarias o empleadas.

Al finalizar el año 2007, 3,857 educadores se han realizado a los voluntarios con sus datos de entrenamientos. 138 maestros han recibido adiestramiento y adiestramiento, 118 sacerdotes, 58 diáconos, 31 candidatos a diaconado y casados, 58 empleados de la Arquidiócesis también han recibido sus datos de adiestramientos y adiestramientos. En los estu-

Momentos 56 facilitadores hay en las parroquias.

En fin, estamos haciendo un buen trabajo a través de nuestros enfoques y nuestros métodos para crear un verdadero Ambiente Seguro para nuestros niños y jóvenes. Podemos seguir mejorando.

Sí, embargo, si continuamos trabajando juntos no hay razón para no nos exceder las expectativas nacionales establecidas por los Estatutos para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes.
Asso. Director for Administration

Catholic Charities seeks an Associate Director for Administration. The successful candidate should have an advanced degree in accounting, finance or business administration or equivalent experience; supervisory experience and skills; sensitivity to diversity and to clients of differing racial, economic and ethnic backgrounds; the ability to manage multiple priorities and an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, the Catholic faith and traditions and the accessibility to the work of Catholic Charities. Send cover letter, including salary requirements, and resume to Human Resources, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., OKC 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org.

Bilingual Counselor Needed

Catholic Charities/St. Joseph's Counseling Center is seeking a part-time bilingual (Spanish) licensed counselor to work 20 hours per week providing professional counseling and related services to individuals, couples and families. Services will be provided in the St. Joseph's Counseling Center at Catholic Charities and at selected parishes within the community. Please submit a cover letter and resume to Human Resources, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., OKC 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org.

Network IT Personnel

Bishop McGuinness and Christ the King Schools are seeking a full-time, professional IT person. Experience and/or certification with the set-up and maintenance of integrated PC and Mac platform/computer systems for this co-oped position a must. Contact Trevor Swink, BMCHS technology director, at (405) 314-3378 for information. Send resume to swinks288@mcguinness.k12.ok.us.

Three-Year-Old Teacher Needed

Villa Teresa School in OKC has an opening for a 3-year-old class. Applicant must have an associate's degree in early childhood or child development. The position is a 12-month position with great benefits. Call Sister Veronica at 232-4286 if interested.

Teacher Sought

Sacred Heart Catholic

School in El Reno is seeking a pre-kindergarten teacher. Applicants must have a license or certification in Early Childhood. Please submit resumes to Principal Shannon Statton, 210 S. Evans, El Reno, Okla. 73036 or fax to (405) 262-3818.

Part-Time Youth Director

Holy Trinity Parish in Okarche is looking for a part-time youth director. Must be able to work well with youth. If interested, call Deacon Max Schwarz at 263-4760.

DRE Opening

St. Eugene Catholic Church in Oklahoma City is seeking a Director of Religious Education for grades K-8th. Requirements include, but are not limited to, a Catholic actively practicing their faith and in good standing with the Catholic Church, motivated and energetic with love of children and love of a multi-cultural community. A background in Religious Education, degree in theology and bilingual (English/Spanish) are a plus. Benefits include medical/dental insurance plus a retirement plan. If you are seeking to answer your baptismal call and are ready for adventure, contact Deacon Bill Bawden at 751-7115 Ext. 153 to make an appointment.

Job Coaches

The Center of Family Love in Okarche is looking for job coaches. This position is best described as a mentor for our community-based clients helping them to get to their jobs as well as helping them to understand what their employer needs and expects from them. For more information, call John Isenegger at the Center of Family Love at (405) 263-4658 or fax your resume to (405) 263-4563.

Direct Care

The Center of Family Love in Okarche is looking for Direct Care Technicians. These openings are at both the ICP M/R and the Loosen Center. We pay well and have a significant shift differential. We provide training and have a paid time-off program. For more information, call John Isenegger at the Center of Family Love at (405) 263-4658 or fax your resume to (405) 263-4563.

Adjunct Faculty

The College for Working Adults at St. Gregory's

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

Campus Minister

St. Gregory's University in Shawnee is looking for a campus minister. Responsibilities: Overseer and implement a comprehensive Catholic and Benedictine campus ministry program. Coordinate student-led retreat ministry as an outreach to area parishes and high schools (Buckley Team). Coordinate student liturgies and student liturgical ministries and assist in the planning of campus-wide liturgies. Provide catechetical and faith formation activities such as Bible study, Lectio Divina, discussions on Catholic social teaching, small faith groups, etc. Develop service and mission trip opportunities for students. Maintain a pastoral presence among students, faculty and staff. Qualifications: Master's degree in Theology or Pastoral Ministry is preferred. Bachelor's degree and experience in Youth/Young Adult Ministry will be considered. Mature understanding of the Catholic faith tradition and ability to communicate the tradition creatively and pastorally to young adults. Practicing Catholic in good standing. Good communication and social skills are essential. Willingness to work as part of a collaborative ministry environment. Willingness to work some evenings and weekends. Instrumental music ability (especially guitar or keyboard) is desirable. Completion of Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Safe Environment training program and requirements.

V.P. of Institutional Advancement

St. Gregory's University in Shawnee is looking for a vice president of Institutional Advance-
Venezuelan Prelates Plea for Peace

Tensions High as Vote Nears on Constitutional Reform

CARACAS, Venezuela, Nov. 12, 2007 (Zenit.org). — Venezuela’s episcopal conference decried the violence that erupted from both sides in the divided South American nation ahead of a referendum on President Hugo Chávez’s constitutional reforms.

At least seven people were killed last week amid protests against the 69 proposed constitutional amendments that would give more power to the president. The reform would eliminate presidential term limits and give Chávez control over the Central Bank. A Dec. 2 referendum is set to confirm or reject the changes.

The Venezuelan conference released a statement Thursday titled “Busca la Paz y Anda Tras Ella!” (Look for Peace and Go After It).

The bishops statement says, “Faced with the proposed constitutional reform, supported by some, questioned by others, Venezuela is living moments of great political intensity, which has led to legitimate student protests, but also to acts of verbal and physical violence that disturb peace.”

The bishops affirm they will “contribute to rescuing and promoting the necessary climate of social coexistence.” And they appealed to “all Venezuelans, and particularly to national powers and social, political and student leaders, from any sector or political party, to make an effort to act with serenity, with a truly democratic spirit, within the boundaries of the constitution and the law, to maintain peace and avoid violence, which we reject no matter from where it comes.”

However, the bishops defended peaceful protests as a legitimate demonstration of democracy and called on public officials to be fair in controlling public demonstrations.

The state and the government are constitutionally obligated to guarantee to all Venezuelans the exercise of their human rights, particularly the right to peacefully and publicly demonstrate their agreement or disagreement with the proposed constitutional reform, without being object of attacks, discrediting or offenses,” the bishops said.

“No one has the right to assault, discredit or offend those who dissent from their opinion,” they added.

Cardinal Jorge Urosa, archbishop of Caracas, said that the reform would endanger, among other things, “the religious aspect, which is fundamental for human beings,” reported the Associated Press.

Chávez attracted international attention Saturday when he was publicly told to “shut up” by Spain’s King Juan Carlos at the end of a meeting of leaders from Latin America, Spain and Portugal, held in Chile. Chávez repeatedly interrupted Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who was encouraging the Venezuelan leader to be respectful, despite political differences.
HARRAH — Last summer Marilyn Tytanic placed a small item in the bulletin of Saint Teresa of Avila Church. She had learned that Children’s Hospital in Oklahoma City was looking for donations of receiving blankets, baby flannel material and one-piece sleepers. The hospital uses the garments in its volunteer cuddlers program which involves “at-risk” newborns. Tytanic thought some of her fellow parishioners might have some interest in helping the hospital, and especially since it involved helping newborns.

She was right.

About a dozen parishioners jumped at the chance to help out and after several months of sewing, shopping and gathering, they donated more than 250 items to the cuddlerseffort at Children’s Hospital.

Father Alan Loth, pastor, said he was very pleased and impressed by the compassionate response from his parish. “All this just from a little bulletin announcement,” he said, looking over the stacks of colorful handmade and purchased items.

Tytanic coordinated the effort which included Saint Teresa parishioners as young as sisters, Elena Liebl, 5, and Katharine Liebl, 8, all the way to experienced seamstresses such as Louise Stramski, a 78-year-old Saint Teresa parishioner who had to excuse herself after several weeks for health reasons. “Louise was so excited about this project,” Tytanic said. She said Stramski is currently recovering from a stroke, but hopes to be back at the sewing machine in time for the next project.

Another young seamstress, Marietta Corona, 11, sewed 16 receiving blankets, earning her Girl Scout badge in the craft. Other volunteers included Kathy Colton, Jody Cook, Sharon Farnsworth, Pat Jorski, Elenora Lipinski, Gloria Owens, Josephine Scurra and Jackie Wilkens.

The items donated included:

- 125 new baby receiving blankets
- 19 used baby receiving blankets
- 8 new baby wash cloths
- 24 new baby burp cloths
- 32 new baby one-piece sleepers
- 16 used one-piece sleepers
- 2 used gowns
- 22 used onesies
- 5 used long onesies

Father Loth said it never ceases to amaze him how a parish community rises up to meet a need. “Different needs attract different members of the parish. It’s not always the same people answering the call,” he said.

Elena Liebl shows off one of the receiving blankets to be donated to Children’s Hospital.