Oklahoma Catholics prepare to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life

By Sarah Cooper
For the Sooner Catholic

Newly ordained priest, Father Simeon Spitz, O.S.B., had a unique vocational journey that took him from studying for the diocesan priesthood to professing vows as a Benedictine monk at Saint Gregory’s Abbey. Initially he wondered who he could reach serving as a priest while living the monastic life.

“I valued greatly the ministry of the diocesan priests and I wanted to be out preaching and doing God’s work,” Father Spitz said. “As time went on, though, I could not resist the monastic life and I came to realize that the monastic life is very evangelical. A life led in prayer is very powerful evangelism. The fact that monks can be happy by reading the scriptures and praying is a testimony to the truth of the Gospel.”

In order to place a spotlight on the work of men and women in consecrated life, like Father Spitz, Pope Francis has declared 2015 the Year of Consecrated Life. The observance begins on Nov. 30, the First Sunday of Advent, and concludes on Feb. 2, 2016, the World Day of Consecrated Life.

The term “consecrated life” most prominently includes those in religious life who live the three evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. The Year of Consecrated Life also coincides with the 50th anniversary of Perfectae Caritatis, the Second Vatican Council’s decree on religious life, and Lumen Gentium, the Second Vatican Council’s constitution of the church.

“The consecrated life reminds us of Christ’s commitment to us, that He loved us so much that He gave His life for us so that we could have Eternal Life,” said Sister Veronica Higgins, C.S.T. “Throughout the ages, people have responded to that gift by surrendering their will, their very selves to become like Christ.”

Dioeceses around the world have been called to observe the Year of Consecrated Life with prayer, service, and an increase of interaction between lay parishioners and religious.

On Jan. 25, 2015, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City will mark the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life with Vespers conducted by Archbishop Paul Coakley. The public is invited to join the religious men and women of the archdiocese at 4 p.m. at the Saint Francis de Sales Chapel in the Catholic Pastoral Center. In addition, on Oct. 18, Archbishop Coakley will again preside at Vespers followed by a dinner for all of the religious men and women in the archdiocese.

Often a hidden vocation, especially in the modern era, the consecrated life has much to offer today’s Catholic Church. The Year of Consecrated Life aims to connect lay Catholics with those who have dedicated their lives to serve Christ and his Church through a religious vocation.

“In my experience, religious are just as relevant as, and perhaps even more vibrant than in years past,” said Sister Catherine Powers, C.N.D. “The culture in which we live needs witnesses, those who can be countercultural by professing the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.”

Religious orders around the world hope the Year of Consecrated Life places a focus on the good works they are doing in the community as well increases interest in the vocation of religious life among young people. For the Catholic Church to thrive, it needs men and women to commit to lives of prayer and service through the consecrated life.

“This religious life is a gift from God to the Church, and we must move forward in hope that today’s young people will be generous enough to answer the call that God is most definitely continuing to give,” Sister Powers said.

Sarah Cooper is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Oklahoma Catholics prepare to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life

By J.E. Helm
For the Sooner Catholic

Every Christmas season, any number of people begin to dread the ordeal of “mall shopping.” What can I get for so-and-so who is so hard to buy for? How much money should I spend? Should I go on-line or get in line in the parking lot of one of the big box stores at 4 a.m.? Somehow, in all the flurry of credit card receipts, the spirit of Christmas seems to get lost.

It needn’t be this way. There are alternatives.

A gift can be a truly Catholic gift. Patron saint medals and beautiful rosaries are available at local Catholic gift shops. Ignatius Press, Eternal Word and Sophia Institute have wonderful selections of books and movies, the enjoyment of which will last long into next year.

Catholic Relief Services helps more than one million people overseas, and a gift purchased from their Fair Trade catalogue is twice a gift. Order hand-made baskets from Ghana, floral plate sets from Vietnam or fabric rugs from India. Delicious chocolate, wild rice, jams or coffee purchased through CRS will ensure that farmers and craft workers worldwide are treated fairly.

Heifer International boasts that it has “the most important gift catalogue in the world.” Instead of a conventional gift card, send an “honor card” (which can be downloaded on line) to purchase a $50 share of a heifer – a dairy cow that will help provide a family in need with up to four gallons of milk a day. Help a family in Guayavare.

Chocolate displayed at a CRS Fair Trade event. Photo Cara Roenig.

[/continued on page 7]
In the sample text, let's analyze the different pieces of content and their connections. This process involves identifying key players, events, and their roles or contributions. Here's the breakdown:

**Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar**

- **Dec. 3**: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on International Justice and Peace, Washington, D.C.
- **Dec. 4**: Catholic Relief Services Board Meeting, Baltimore
- **Dec. 5**: Dedication of Birchmore addition, 3 p.m., Birchmore, ORC
- **Dec. 6**: Confirmation, 10 a.m., St. Patrick Church, Anadarko (8 a.m., Civic)
- **Dec. 7**: Ann Retirement meeting, 10 a.m., CPC
- **Dec. 8**: Department head meeting, 10 a.m., CPC
- **Dec. 9**: Vocations board meeting, 11 a.m., CPC
- **Dec. 10**: School and classroom visits, 8:30 a.m., Holy Trinity School, Okarche
- **Dec. 11 - Mass and celebration of 125th Anniversary of Sisters of Sorrows Mother, 11 a.m., Via Christi Hospital St. Francis, Wichita
- **Dec. 12**: Blessing of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, 3 p.m., St. George’s Abbey, Shawnee
- **Dec. 12**: Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass, 7 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Norman
- **Dec. 14**: Mass and blessing of New Door, 1 p.m., St. Peter Church, Kingfisher

**Lessons from Dietrich von Hildebrand**

- **Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889-1977)** was a German philosopher and a devout Catholic. He was known for his philosophical analysis and was a significant figure in the Catholic intellectual community.
- **Dietrich von Hildebrand believed that** the Church needs to be protected against this “gnomological” affair.
- **Jesuit Moralists** also formed around Father Kastner’s, birthday. Three $100 donations were made by: Father Kirk Larkin Burse, Father James A. Kastner Burse, a $215 donation was made by Our Lady of Guadalupe
- **Church and archdiocesan events** can be found at www.onsavings.org

**Pope Francis announces 2015 visit to Philadelphia**

- **Pope Francis** will visit Philadelphia in September 2015. The visit will take place on the 2015 World Meeting of Families, an event that brings together families from around the world.

**Put Out Into the Deep**

- **Put Out Into the Deep Luke 5:4**
- **Father Joseph Ritter Burse**
- **A $50 donation was made by St. James Catholic Church.**
- **A $150 donation was made by St. Jo Ann Fletcher, 69, St. Anne’s Catholic Church, Fairview.**
- **A $200 donation was made by Holy Spirit Parish, Mustang.**
- **A $200 donation was made by St. Mary’s Parish, Guthrie.**
- **A $350 donation was made by Episcopal of the Lord Parish.**

**Sooner Catholic**

- **Church and archdiocesan events** can be found at www.onsavings.org
- **View our new Evangelization Toolkit at blogspot.com to see posts on the New Evangelization in the archdiocese.**
- **Plus, don’t miss daily updates on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!**

**Sooner Catholic Staff**

- **Find more news on the website by Sooner Catholic Staff**
- **Additional coverage of Church and archdiocesan news and events can be found at www.onsavings.org**
- **Pope Francis created six new saints on Nov. 24! Check our news section for more information.**
- **The Region 10 Youth Conference took place in the archdiocese Nov. 21-23.**

**Sooner Catholic International**

- **“United States Catholic Catechism for Adults” now available online**
- **The USCCA is based on the Church’s teaching. Following the outline given in the Catechism, the USCCA walks the reader through the Creed, the sacraments, moral life in Christ and the prayers of the Church. Each chapter begins with the doctrine, after which it explains, blesses, or holy man or woman, a closer look at the topological and ethical questions and a prayer. Also, included in the appendixes are a glossary of Catholic terms and traditional Catholic prayers.**

**Lessons from Dietrich von Hildebrand**

- **Dietrich von Hildebrand believed that** Nazism breached the ancient spirit of Christianity that was so dear to the Church. He could have no truck with it. Thus, von Hildebrand journeyed to Pentecost 1933, explaining that “it is completely immaterial if the historical Europe is saved through the Church for political reasons, or if the Church is destroyed through the Vatican. What is decisive is the spirit of the Antichrist, with whom the survery he represents, the crimes committed at his behalf. God is offended regardless of whether the victim of murder is a Jew, a Stalinist, a Catholic, or a Jew.**

**A $200 donation was made by Holy Spirit Parish, Mustang.**

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What Life Church is doing right

On Palm Sunday this year, I was standing in the foyer of one of the metro parishes where a literally sensitive usher was holding the strawberries at bay as the solemnities began. I found a place to lean against the wall when suddenly a man walked up to me and said, “Is this church always this crowded?” Since I was a visitor too, I indicated that we were all pretty much crowded and that I had somehow thrust myself into an evangelization emergency, and I needed to give him a good reason to stay. I searched my mind — what did we have that they didn’t have? Of course, the Eucharist! So, I quickly rattled off some heartfelt words of encouragement, that he shouldn’t miss out on the Bread of Life. His eyes glistened over and his words stumbled, “I see you are people who are born to be Catholic, and some people are making... you save me, and you are living in this life every day, enlighten, strengthen and free you.”

Saint Paul once distinguished between those members of the Church who need- ed the kerygma, those who needed meat. “I fed you, milk, you are unable to take it. Indeed, you are milk, even now” (“1 Cor 3:2). After the Protestant reformation, Catholics began to focus on the kerygma, in an official, doctrinal, sacramental and moral way, to “answer the question how close we are to this Jesus – to embrace those things which distinguish us from Protestantism.” Only since the 20th century cat-

Carole Brown
Director
Office of Vocations Evangelization

Joe of the Gospel.” He writes, “This first proclamation is called the kerygma. It is the heart’s beginning and can then be for- meld by the Church in any number of important things. It is in a qualitatively sense because it is the precursor of all proclamation, in which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one message which we must announce one way after another. This message of catechesis, at every level and moment of our lives, in the kerygma the kerygma gives way to a supposedly more “solid” formation, in this case, solid, profound, secure, meaningful and profound. The kerygma is in that initial procla-

“One thing that evangelical churches do ex-

According to Pope Francis, “ … the kerygma must be understood as an expression of the personal experience of God in my life taken root. My God in my life took root.”

The core message of the Gospel is called the “kerygma” (kera-y-

Sooner Catholic November 30, 2014  5

Meet Our Sisters

Sister Elizabeth Kebos, CND

What community do you belong to? Do you belong to the Congregation of Notre Dame of Montreal?

What is your ministry in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City?

I am proud to work at Catholic Charities, a Catholic social service agency for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. I primarily serve in the area of adoption and foster care. My role includes making referrals to adoption agencies, connecting families with birth parents and matching parents and children. I also assist parents and birth parents with their needs. I primarily work with families adopting domestically and internationally, and also recently began helping with the process of adoption from Russia and China. I enjoy seeing the many successes that happen due to the hard work of everyone who is involved in this process. I believe that children deserve the best possible start in life and feel blessed to be able to play a small role in making this happen.

Sister Maria Guadalupe

I am a member of the Congregation of Notre Dame of St. Joseph in Oklahoma City. My assignment as a member of this congregation is to help with marketing and development for the Congregation of Notre Dame of St. Joseph. I spend time going around visiting the congregations, helping them with event planning, and working to promote the work of the Congregation. I also help to maintain the website, which is important because it is a way to connect with people and share the work of the Congregation.

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Encounter with God’s call at Conception Seminary

By Rev. Stephen V. Hamilton

For the Sooner Catholic

For many years, the Office of Vocations in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has supported a trip to the “Encounter with God’s Call” weekend retreat at Conception Seminary in Missouri. This trip is for young men considering the priesthood. The retreat is organized by the seminarians of the seminary, with our own college seminarians studying. The seminary offers this retreat twice each year, in the spring and in the fall. This fall, we had a full response with 18 young men from around the archdiocese attending, making it the second-largest diocesan group. Young men attending with our group represented 14 different parishes and both of Oklahoma City’s Catholic high schools.

Visit us online at www.soonercatholic.org

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Advent Penance Service, St. John Nepomuk, Yukon, at 5 p.m.

Dinner: Christmas with the King Parish Crusaders. "A Very Giving Christmas, contact www.catholiccharitiesok.org or call (405) 878-5309.

Advent Penance Service, St. John Nepomuk, Yukon, at 5 p.m.

For information, Mass schedules and building hours, contact your parish or call the Catholic church nearest you through the church directory and map at www.archokc.org.

November

Advent Senior Adult Luncheon and Christmas Bingo, noon, Christ the King Parish Center, Yukon.

Penance Rite at Christ the King, OKC, 6:30 p.m.

Penance Rite at St. Francis of Assisi, OKC, 6:30 p.m.

6:30 p.m. Rosary (Noerra to Our Guadalupe of Guadalupe), St. Peter, Woodward.

Assumption Catholic Church second annual Christmas Bazaar is in Glidden Hall, 8 and Hickory, Duncan. Fri. day, Dec. 6, 4-6 p.m.; Dec. 7, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. St. Nicholas Parish, Woodward, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Drop off children at REE and come steal! Will accept cash, credit and checks. The funds raised will be distributed to the building fund, food bank and St. Vincent de Paul.

St. Nicholas Day

Giving Sunday at Christ the King Parish Cen- ter, O. 5 p.m. Shop for dinner at 5:30 p.m. (Ma- ma’s meadled, homemeade mashed potatoes, green beans, dinner rolls)

Christmas card donors are asked to go online to catholiccharitiesok.org to sign up for the items they wish to buy. Items needed include toys, clothes, school items and toiletries. A complete list of needed items is available on the project’s webpage. Catholic Charities also accepts cash donations and gift cards to help pay for gift packages.

For more information about A Very Giving Christmas, contact Catholic Charities Office of Mission Advance ment at (405) 523-3009 or lgodman@catholiccharitie sok.org.

The best Christmas gift, gift, after all, is a gift to your heart this holiday season.
Catholic Foundation announces 2014 Educational Grants

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma this month announced a record 48 educational grants in support of education-related projects at parishes, schools and religious education programs throughout the Archdiocese of OKC. The grants totaled more than $89,000.

“The Catholic Foundation’s Endowment ensures that the educational grant program will be funded annually for years to come,” said Karen Rieger, president of the Catholic Foundation.

Many of the CFO grants support technology improvements in the classrooms with a special emphasis on STEM projects: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Youth programs at parishes are supported by helping their students attend the Steubenville Youth Conference and other retreats during the year.

The Catholic Foundation fulfills its mission to provide grants for educational resources to Catholic educational programs throughout the archdiocese. Whether textbooks or programs at parish classrooms with a special emphasis on “STEM” projects: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

Youth programs at parishes are supported by helping their students attend the Steubenville Youth Conference and other retreats during the year.


Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund

Do you want to help Catholic schools in the Diocese of Oklahoma City by making a tax credit donation? And receive an Oklahoma Tax Credit? Our Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund helps build a brighter future for students in the Diocese of Oklahoma City by making a tax credit donation...and receive an Oklahoma Tax Credit!

Qualified Students Get Needed Scholarship Funds

- Funds contributed to the Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund in this calendar year will fund scholarships for students in Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City during the following school year.
- Scholarships will be awarded solely on the basis of financial need (family household income and size of family) and requirements of the state tax law.

Support Your Favorite Catholic School and Support Catholic Education

- Up to 75% of your gift will be earmarked for scholarships at a specific Catholic school in the Archdiocese. You can support schools throughout the diocese.
- The remaining 25% of your gift will go into an undesignated fund that schools will share, which will make ALL of the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese stronger.

Donors Get Valuable Tax Credits

For every $2 that you donate to the Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund, you will get up to $1 a state tax credit.
- You will also get to deduct the charitable contribution on your federal and state taxes.
- It’s easy — the more you give, the more tax credit you receive and the more you can save on taxes.
- Although contributions in all amounts are appreciated, the contribution limits are set to receive the maximum tax credit.
- Individual taxpayers will be eligible for a tax credit on a maximum donation of $2,000.
- Married couples filing a joint tax return will be eligible for a tax credit on a maximum donation of $4,000.
- Legal business entities (including limited and general partnerships, corporations and S corporations) limited liability companies will be eligible for a tax credit on a maximum donation of $20,000.

Here’s an example to demonstrate the effect of the tax credit for a married couple in the 33% federal tax bracket filing a joint tax return:

Donation to: Any 501(c)(3) Charity
Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund

Gift Amount: $4,000
Federal Deduction: $1,290
State Deduction: $220
OK State Income Tax Credit: None
Estimated Net Cost to Donor: $2,880

*Consult your financial advisor for specific tax advice.

$380

For example, a married couple filing a joint tax return in the 33% federal tax bracket would be eligible for a $4,000 donation to the Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund. The tax credit they would receive would be $1,290 on the federal level and $220 on the state level, resulting in a net cost to them of $2,880.

Catholic Schools

Opportunity Scholarship Donor Form

Parenting children and youth in the Catholic Faith is a vital task for the Church. History has taught that without teachers to prepare the young and adult faithful, the Church’s mission would be impossible. This is the primary reason for the Catholic Schools Opportunity Scholarship Fund.

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“Catholic Churches Big and Small” introduction for children

Book Review: Prepare to be amazed

By J.E. Helm
For the Sister Catholic

“Nothing Short of a Miracle: God’s Healing Power in Modern America” by J.E. Helm is a captivating work that explores the extraordinary healings that have occurred in recent years, many of which are attributed to the intercession of saints. The book is divided into two parts: the first part tells the stories of the miracles that have taken place, and the second part explains the significance of these events.

The miracles described in the book include healings that have taken place in hospitals, homes, and even in the workplace. Many of these healings have occurred in the presence of a saint’s relic or image, and some have been witnessed by multiple people. The miracles range from physical healings to emotional and spiritual healings.

The author, J.E. Helm, provides a clear and concise explanation of the Catholic Church’s process for declaring someone a saint. He also discusses the role of saints in our lives and the importance of their intercession.

Overall, “Nothing Short of a Miracle” is a well-researched and thought-provoking book that will inspire readers to trust in the power of prayer and the intercession of the saints. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the miracles attributed to the saints of the Catholic Church.

Catholic News Service movie ratings

“Birdman or (The Unexpected Value of Ignorance)” (2014) — R (restricted) for language, some suggestive sex, brief nudity.

“Catholic Churches Big and Small” introduction for children

By Anamaria Scalpena Biddick
For the Sister Catholic

The beauty of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., or a simple country church attract those who enter, introducing them to the grandeur of God. Stefan Salinas’s book, “Catholic Churches Big and Small” (Catholic Press, $15.95), introduces even the youngest child to the varied beauty of Catholic parishes with illustrations that will even the youngest child to the varied beauty of Catholic parishes with illustrations that will

The Oklahoma Alliance for Liturgy and the Arts, in conjunction with the Kemp Concert Series, is seeking 168 choristers to form a choir that will present a concert on the evening of April 19, 2015, in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the bombing of the Oklahoma Federal Building. The title of the event is “We Rise to Bless You Still: Oklahoma City Remembers April 19, 1995.”

The choir will be directed by international-award winning conductor Dr. Anton Armstrong, director of choral studies at St. Olaf’s College in Minnesota. The mission was at St. Teresa’s Cemetery, Oklahoma City, the near place to theiet places. The choir was directed by the Bishop McLaughlin, the retired president of St. Gregory’s. “Hearing a concert such as this one will be a powerful moment in our lives,” said D. B. Brockway, said. “Not only will this performance bring us closer together as a community, but it will also serve as a reminder of the importance of unity in our nation’s growing aviation.”

On Nov. 11, Catholic songwriters, artists and author Tori Harris was live in concert at the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City’s Redrock Center at St. Gregory’s University. The concert was a night of pure music and modern worship and pro-life content.

Tori Harris is part of a wave of young artists who are committed to communicating the richness of the Catholic faith through their music. Harris is a testament to the power of love and forgiveness.

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En el sedimentón de su adoración advierte una de las temporadas más ricas del año. Las oraciones y letras de la Missa, así como el Altar y los tabernáculos de las Horas nos invitan a una reflexión tranquila que alimente nuestro sentido de adoración, nuestra misa tras misa para recitar por el Rey que ha venido.

Advierto que es también una temporada con rituales y tradiciones memorables para el luchar. Encender cada vela de la Corona de Adviento puede ser la ocasión para recitar un salmo del antiguo testamento.

La anticipación y alegría del niño al abrir cada estrella o puerta de un calendario de Adviento nos recuerda por qué el Reino de Dios pertenece a los que hacen como niños pequeños.

Por eso, y teniendo en cuenta que el tiempo de Adviento se caracteriza por la espera tranquila y la reflexión profunda, comento en este espacio acerca de dos acciones que nos ayudarán a madurar en este tiempo: el Navideño y la recaudación de fondos en toda la Diócesis de Seattle.

Todos los miembros del Subcomité de la Diócesis de Seattle y presidente del Subcomité, Archbishop Elizondo, obispo auxiliar de la Diócesis de Seattle y president de la USCCB, nos invita a la misa el 12 de diciembre a las 4:30 p.m. para servir como invitados a la celebración de la Virgen de Guadalupe. El papa Juan Pablo II invitó a la celebración anual de la Virgen de Guadalupe en todas sus necesidades, enun-ciando el Evangelio, administrando los sacramentos, salvaguardando la vida de las familias mediante el sacrificio del matrimonio, res-kando en todas la comunidad cristiana por medio del santo sacrificio del altar, acompañan-do a todos la nueva espiritualidad desde la casa hasta la entrada en la eternidad.

Una de las acciones más emblemáticas de este tiempo es el Navideño. En los últimos años, más de 13 millones de personas han participado, y los donativos han crecido una increíble cantidad. El 12 de diciembre, en el segundo día de Adviento, debemos preparar la tierra de preparación para el nacimiento de Cristo.

El 12 de diciembre, celebremos la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe celebrada por primera vez en 1531 en las montañas de México. La Virgen María apareció en una finca próxima a la ciudad de Tepeyac, en el lugar donde hoy se encuentra la Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. En ese encuentro, la Virgen María, bendecida con la misión de ser madre del Salvador, le solicitó a los indígenas de la región que prepararan el suelo del nuevo santuario, el que debía ser la basílica de la Virgen María en México, y le pidió que recibieran a todos como hermanos.

El 12 de diciembre, celebramos la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. En el año próximo, el 12 de diciembre será el tercer día de Adviento, el cual nos recuerda que el nacimiento de Cristo es una realidad histórica e individual, que el nacimiento de Cristo nos invita a preparar el sitio para que el Señor entre en nuestra vida, en nuestra casa, en nuestras almas.

El 12 de diciembre, celebramos el nacimiento de Cristo y la venida del Señor en la historia de cuando el Padre y el Hijo creó el universo. El 12 de diciembre, celebramos el nacimiento de Cristo y la venida del Señor en la historia de cuando el Padre y el Hijo creó el universo. El 12 de diciembre, celebramos el nacimiento de Cristo y la venida del Señor en la historia de cuando el Padre y el Hijo creó el universo.

El 12 de diciembre, celebremos la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, en el segundo día de Adviento, y que la venida del Señor es la venida del Señor en la historia de cuando el Padre y el Hijo crearon el universo.

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Are you listening?

RADIOGRAPH REPORT: We had a very good response to the November Radiothon! We raised $81,000 in pledges and over $337,000 for a year.

Thank you to all our phone volunteers: Sally Cowley, Helen Meye, Dina Sudda, Tony Wangler, Maria Ruiz and Fred Pope. Your dedication and support made it all possible.

Thank you to all of our host sponsors that donated the prizes!

MOUNT BETHLEHEM: Are you attending the groundbreaking for the new addition to the Center of Family Love in Okarche.

Photo Diane Clay/Sooner Catholic.

14 November 30, 2014

Local

St. maize Catholic

December 7, 2014

Local

St. maize Catholic

Center of Family Love Bishop Slattery of Tulsa and Archbishop Cook at the groundbreaking for the new addition to the Center of Family Love in Okarche. Photo Diane Clay/Stoner Catholic.

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Center of Family Love Bishop Slattery of Tulsa and Archbishop Cook at the groundbreaking for the new addition to the Center of Family Love in Okarche. Photo Diane Clay/Stoner Catholic.
Local restaurateur and Christ the King parishioner Cathy Cummings wears many hats: business owner, wife, mother and voice for the underprivileged. The effervescent mother of five has a heart for serving others, but for Cummings the service doesn’t stop in her restaurant—it extends deep into the community. Helping the poor and being an advocate for people who don’t feel like they have a voice is part of her Catholic faith.

When she was a child, her father was sent to prison for 14 years. “It was tough for my mother,” Cummings said. “I’ve tried to live by the golden rule my entire life—do unto others as you would have done unto you. And in return, I have the loyalty and respect of my employees,” Cummings said.

Cummings, the youngest of five children, was raised in Kansas City, Mo., mostly by her mother. Although the circumstances of her life were less than desirable, she leaned on her Catholic faith and used it as a formula for success.

When she was a child, her father was sent to prison twice; however, there were many blessings for which to be thankful. The parish Cummings attended with her family allowed her and her siblings to attend Catholic school for free. She expressed her sincere gratitude for the opportunity to be given as a child. “These kinds of situations almost always have a tragic ending. I owe so many thanks to the priests and nuns for the Catholic schooling I received.”

Providing the same Catholic education for her own children was a priority for Cummings. “You get more than an education in Catholic schools; you learn to become morally responsible. Having a Catholic education really reinforces your values,” she said.

Catholics, she credits their combined faith with helping create a successful marriage and family. “It really helps when your spouse is the same faith. It puts you on the same page as far as raising children, and your faith grows in your family.”

Cummings is the owner of two restaurants located next door to each other in Oklahoma City—Vito’s Ristorante, and a new seafood concept called Land and Sea, which is slated to open in early December.

Working closely with her husband, Sean, the two have been extremely successful in their endeavor. “That much business is more than just a plan on paper—it is deeply influenced by her Catholic faith, as she strives to treat each employee like a family member,” said Sean Cummings, who occasionally volunteers as a greeter at Christ the King, also has been involved in the parish’s mission trip to Peru. All three of her daughters have been on the mission trip at least once. Cummings expressed her excitement about learning that her children wanted to support the mission, and praised them for working hard to earn the money to attend.

“My mother was a fantastic believer in the true power of God. She lived and breathed the beatitudes on a daily basis, and she instilled this in me as well.”

In the spirit of service, Cummings recently wrapped up a tireless and intense campaign for lieutenant governor of Oklahoma. Although she did not win, Cummings expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to run for office. Her first political attempt garnered more than 258,000 votes. Despite the loss, Cummings still intends to be an advocate for single mothers, the underprivileged and the hungry in Oklahoma. As for plans to make another attempt at a political office, she’s leaving herself open, but says she definitely feels like she is being guided. “We’ll see which direction God wants me to go. I can’t wait to see what will happen next!”

Even on her busiest days, Cummings always makes time for prayer and to thank God. Often at the end of the day, she will use the quiet time before bed to give thanks for all her blessings, or to pray the rosary until she falls asleep. “My connection with God is my deep gratitude. I just have so much to be thankful for.”

Sally Linhart is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Oklahoma couples celebrate marriage anniversaries

By Anamaría Scaperlanda Biddick

On Nov. 16, 59 couples and their families celebrated milestone anniversaries at the annual Anniversary Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Coakley. Attendees gathered during the first snow of the winter at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cathedral in Oklahoma City, where their long-lasting love and commitment was honored.

Couples commemorating 25, 40 or 50+ years were invited to the mass and reception. Though many of the 95 couples who responded to the invitation were unable to attend due to the weather, each came, as Archbishop Coakley said, “a sign of hope, a sacrament of God’s faithful love in the midst of the church, in the midst of the world.”

Between all the couples honored, there were 2,580 years of marriage. In this time, “love has endured, love has been put to the test,” the archbishop said. “Love has grown more pure as each comes to grips with their own imperfections and those of their spouse and decide, day after day, to renew that gift.”

This year’s record holders, Cass and Betty Teks of Chuck and Gerry Visina, each celebrated 62 years of marriage.

Pat and Sam Kearney, celebrating 59 years, brought up the gifts during the Mass, walking down the same aisle they did at their wedding in 1955. Long-time members of the parish, they met at Bishop John Carroll School when he was in third grade and she in second. They graduated from John Carroll High School in 1948 and 1949, when the school still included a high school, and went their separate ways for college before marrying. Later, their five kids also attended John Carroll School as did many of their grandchildren.

Bruce Matthynsens and Joanna Comacho, parishioners at Sacred Heart in Oklahoma City, celebrated 25 years. Matthynsens said the secret to their success is to, “Let the small stuff go and just keep loving each other.”

Comacho added, “Talk. Converse with each other every day.”

At Patty Konarak, both long-time parishioners of St. Francis, attended in support of their friends, despite the many years of marriage between them: they have only been married to each other for four years. Both raised their children at St. Francis parish, lived in the Gatewood neighborhood and attended the weekly church dances. More than a decade after each of their spouses’ deaths, they got to know each other on a trip. The Konarakis love continuing in the spirit of service, Cummings expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to run for office. Her first political campaign garnered more than 258,000 votes. Despite the loss, Cummings still intends to be an advocate for single mothers, the underprivileged and the hungry in Oklahoma. As for plans to make another attempt at a political office, she’s leaving herself open, but says she definitely feels like she is being guided. “We’ll see which direction God wants me to go. I can’t wait to see what will happen next!”

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These witnesses, Archbishop Coakley concluded, “Remind us of hope, now more than ever, when married love is so deeply misunderstood, undervalued, and cast aside, with the willingness to begin again, to give, and to make sacrifices.”