Darrow connects with students on God’s love

2014 Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference

By Anamaría Scaferlanda Biddick
For the Sooner Catholic

Leah Darrow, a former contestant on America’s Next Top Model and graduate of Saint James Catholic School in Oklahoma City, spoke Nov. 22 at the Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference. The conference, for high school students from Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas, took place at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City.

Darrow emphasized God’s deep and abiding love for each of us. She shared her story of choosing “imitation love” and coming home to the real love of God.

Karen Gonzalez from Immaculate Conception parish in Perryton, Texas, said she found the talk inspiring, especially, “when she said we should look for happiness from Jesus, not the world.”

“He wants you to love, not just use you to be good, or to love other people, but to love you,” Darrow told the audience.

“When I moved to St. Louis, I wanted to be accepted. I thought to be accepted, I needed a boyfriend. I went and picked one out. I got a boyfriend, like I was picking out shoes,” she said, to the laughter of the attendees.

She continued to choose “imitation love” for the next 10 years, she said, until she had a moment in a New York City modeling shoot where she realized that she had been given so much, but was giving nothing back to God. She called her dad and asked him to bring her home. He drove her across the country and took her to confession because, he said, “The Catholic Church is home.”

Norma Salas, an adult volunteer from Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Alice, Texas, said, “Her statement was very true: home is God.”

For young people.

Mayra Castillo from Our Lady of Guadalupe in Alice, Texas, part of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, found Darrow’s talk encouraging.

“It’s really inspiring because it’s true; everyone pressures you, but it’s better to have true friends and to have God in your life.”

Caleb Sanderson, also from Saint Mary in Guthrie, benefitted from the conference and particularly appreciated the singing.

“The songs were a highlight because they draw us closer together when we sing in harmony and praise the Lord,” he said.

Vince Carrasco, a recent graduate of Saint Gregory’s University, who is in discernment at the Franciscan Capuchin house in Denver, expressed the importance of such conferences for young people.

“It’s a good way to get students fired up and more active,” he said. “The first step is always going to these things – they stay with you. They are a stepping stone and a neat experience.”

Anamaría Scaferlanda Biddick is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Why do Catholics use a wreath for Advent?

Wreaths symbolize eternity because they are in circular form, without a beginning or an end, so to speak. Before Christ came, wreaths had long been used as symbols of fertility, victory and the like.

A special form of wreath is the Advent Wreath, lit each evening by a designated member of the family. The wreath is very simple in design and readily assembled. All you need for materials are evergreen swigs, whatever variety you have available, usually fir or spruce (or a wreath purchased from a Catholic bookstore); a four-candle holder in a wreath shape, and four candles – three purple and one rose or pink.

The wreath should be placed on a suitable table set aside for this purpose and which has been draped with a cloth, usually white with lace. Advent is a season of penance, but we live in a celebratory culture where the Christmas festivities begin almost Thanksgiving evening. Since traditional Catholics, generally, do not put up the family tree until just before Christmas, they sometimes add some decoration to the wreath in Advent colors, which are purple for penance and rose-pink for the third week, which begins with Gaudete Sunday when flowers are permitted on the altar.

The spirit of penance during Advent is not the same as that for Lent and some joy is permitted. Gaudete means “rejoice” and takes its name from the first word of the Introit for that Sunday. (From Catholic Tradition - catholic-tradition.org.)
Archbishop Coakley addresses the Catholic Leadership Institute during a recent ceremony honoring him with the Award for Outstanding Catholic Leadership. Photo provided.

“He is a faithful and a godly man whose whole earthly life has been nothing if not a constant reminder of the Catholic Church,” said Scott Pruitt. “He has been an inspiration to all of us.”

Pruitt added, “I am deeply grateful to the Catholic leadership institute for recognizing the outstanding contributions of people like Archbishop Coakley to our Church.”

The award recognized Coakley’s service to the Catholic Church and his contribution to the fight against abortion. The award is given annually to those who have made significant contributions to the life of the Catholic Church.

Archbishop Coakley received the award at the 3rd Annual Catholic Leadership Institute Awards Dinner on November 18th.

The Catholic Leadership Institute is an independent, non-profit organization that recognizes and promotes the accomplishments of Catholic leaders in the United States.

Archbishop Coakley has served as the Archbishop of Oklahoma City since 2003. He is a native of Kansas City, Missouri, and was ordained a priest in 1975.

He has been a leader in the fight against abortion, and has spoken out against the use of contraception and artificial birth control.

In his acceptance speech, Archbishop Coakley said, “I am deeply honored to receive this award. It is a recognition of the work of many, many people who have dedicated their lives to the Catholic Church.”

The award was presented to him by Scott Pruitt, the Oklahoma Attorney General, who praised Archbishop Coakley for his commitment to the Catholic Church and his leadership in the fight against abortion.
Waiting for simple beauty and newness during Advent

Shut in from our daily walk by the rain and the cold, my body longed for a warm and cheerful family gathering. No frequent shopper, I thought of myself as immune to the lure of new clothes, cookware and technological devices. But that nagging inner jaunt proved otherwise. Counting the ways my heart, wrapped in a well-made suit, attracts it. It draws us in, for our hearts were made for beauty and newness, always wanting more. It’s tempting to try and gain wealth by truth by acquir- ing more beautiful objects — we try to add, to make ourselves more acceptable to God. But the true beauty and newness altogether, thinking, can never be fulfilled.

The newly created and the world that provides the means to a different possibility: the coming of the one who “makes all things new” as St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians. The sources of all beauty came to “dwell among us,” as John wrote in his gospel. Our yearning for beauty is not something to be overcome, but the beginning of our salvation.

Our yearning for beauty and newness is in tune with the season of Advent. It is in this time that we wait in joyful expectation for the arrival of the source of all beauty, who came in the form of a little baby, and we unite our desire with original and traditional prayers. We pray the psalms, in the Lit- uurgy of the Hour, and through the Church with the ages in praying, “You came to give us life to the full; come and give us your unfailing love.”

We recite the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, inviting God to make us more like Mary and open up to receiving Him, however He comes. We come to the object that originally stirred our longing not to fail it. If we are given the leather wallet or laptop, our hearts will still hunger for beauty. No matter how world-weary we are, we are pulled toward the beautiful. Similarly, the human heart is drawn to the re- alization to reawake the wonder and awe of the child.

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Mid-length skirts called me to it. In an attempt to avoid looking too long at my surroundings, I increased my speed, but my stride was limited our stroll. Still, I left with desire in my mind, and cleaved to the beautifully crafted window displays designed to attract that.

Back home, safe from the larg- er than life advertisements, I had a chance to reflect: what was it about the ocean-blue Dutch open beauty. No matter how world-weary we are, we are pulled toward the beautiful. Similarly, the human heart is drawn to the realization to reawake the wonder and awe of the child.

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Meet Our Sisters

Sister Merys Josefinna Jiménez

What community do you belong to?
I belong to community of Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas (Guadalupan Catechet Sisters).

What is your ministry in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City?
I minster to the Hispanic community, and I also work with the Saint Juan Diego Lay School.

When and at what age, did you enter the community?
I entered the community in 1996 when I was 33 years old.

When did you take your final vows? I made my final vows in 2012.

Where, and how, did you discover a call to the religious life?
I am Venezuelan, and I arrived in Tulsa in 1994 to work as a babysitter. I lived with a Venezuelan family, and moved with them to Oklahoma City. I began to attend Saint Joseph Parish in Norman. I visited some humble Hispanic families, and I realized the need for the love of God, the need that someone be a voice for the working people, of how they lived and what they wanted spiritually. I decided to be their voice and my life changed. After being at the community, I asked to leave, as they brought me to the family that had adopted me. In that moment, I asked the Virgin of Guadalupe that if I truly was called to the consecrated life, that she would give me the opportunity, and so in February of 1998 I met the Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas.

What is your vocation to the consecrated life?
To be a member of the consecrated community that allows itself to be encountered by Christ, “guided by his voice, sustained by his grace,” acknowledging it is not easy.

What is the most fulfilling part of your vocation?
It is to be able to be the voice of our immi-grants, to help them spiritually and be a means of bringing the sacraments to them.

What advice do you give to young women who are in the process of discerning their vocation?
I know that we live in an individualistic world, a world of making money, a secular world. My advice is that we try to weigh what makes them happy and fulfilled, and above all that they know the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth.

About the Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas
We dedicate ourselves to education and evangelization. We were founded by the third bishop of Sabinó, Jesus Maria Echarrieta, 91 years ago. Our charm is to configure our-selves to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Catholics honor social teaching of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Rebekah Scaperlanda

For the Sooner Catholic

When, and how, did you become involved with the mission of the Civil Rights movement?
When I was a young girl, in the sixth grade, my teacher showed us a video about the Civil Rights movement.

How has this experience changed your understanding of your religious community?
It is a powerful experience knowing that I am part of a group that has given hope to people in need.

Are you new to Oklahoma? Need guidance on the Christmas season?
If You Go

Catholics honor social teaching of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Rebekah Scaperlanda

For the Sooner Catholic

When Jan. 17, Mass begins at 5 p.m.

Where Corpus Christi Church, Oklahoma City

Come celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King.

A Multicultural tribute will follow the Mass.

Teaching is built on a commitment to the poor, the life and dignity of all people, the call to community involvement, and solidarity in one human family.

For nearly 15 years, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has gathered each year to reflect on the teachings of Dr. King and honor his life and work.

On Jan. 17 at 5 p.m., Archbishop Paul Coakley will celebrate a Multicultural tribute Mass in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Come home for Christmas

Religious attend the Rome prayer vigil on Nov. 29 marking the Year for Consecrated Life.

By Ann Schauble

GNA/WAVE News

VATICAN CITY – Religious men and women are called to leave their “nest” and bring the Kingdom of Heaven above all things.

“God’s Synod encourages us to bear the Gospel to the poor, the life and dignity of all people, the call to community involvement, and solidarity in one human family,” Bishop Paul Coakley said.

For more about the history of the Civil Rights movement in the archdiocese, visit soonerarch.org.

Come celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dec. 25 - Nativity of the Lord
Dec. 26 - St. Stephen, the first Martyr
Dec. 27 - St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
Dec. 28 - Feast of the Holy Family
Dec. 29 - St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr
Jan. 1 - Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Jan. 3 - The Most Holy Name of Jesus
Jan. 4 - Feast of the Epiphany

Our blessings multiply... when we share them with others.

Join us in counting out our blessings at OurBlessingsCount.com.

Merry Christmas.

Vocations
Sooner Catholic

Dec. 14, 2014

Prayer for the Year of Consecrated Life

O God, throughout the ages you have called women and men to pursue lives of perfect charity through the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. During this Year of Consecrated Life, we give you thanks for these courageous witnesses of Faith and models of inspiration. Their pursuit of holy lives teaches us to make a more perfect offering of ourselves to you. Continue to enrich your Church by calling forth sons and daughters who, having found the pearl of great price, treasure the Kingdom of Heaven above all things. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

For more information on the Year of Consecrated Life, including resources, activities, videos and prayers, visit www.usccb.org.

Religious attend the Rome prayer vigil on Nov. 29 marking the Year for Consecrated Life.

Wake Up the World!

By Ann Schauble

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Catholic youth honor Oklahoma City bombing victims, survivors

By J.E. Helm
For Sooner Catholic

High school students in grades nine through 12 gathered at the Cox Convention Center from Nov. 21-23 for the 2014 Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference. On Nov. 22 a planned outdoor Eucharistic procession to the Oklahoma bombing memorial was moved indoors due to rain, but it was nevertheless part of a highly moving celebration of faith, community and Eucharistic adoration.

The program began with a viewing of a video about the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995. The video, narrated by Oklahoma City television anchor Linda Carasnaugh, detailed the largest ever domestic terrorist attack on domestic soil (at the time), which left 168 people dead, including 19 children.

Most of the young people attending Saturday’s conference had not been born when the Murrah Building was bombed, and many were obviously moved by what they watched.

Following the video, the conference was addressed by Melissa McLaughlin Hinaton, herself a survivor of the April 19 tragedy. Her first person account of being in the nearby Journal Record building when the bomb went off was chilling. She related how the blast caused her hair to stand straight up, literally, how she ended up on the floor with furniture on top of her, how she managed to get up and get out of the now severely damaged building by following a path of blood laid down by those who escaped ahead of her.

Amazingly, she was able to drive home and was in shock for several days. Watching TV footage of the aftermath triggered a major post-traumatic stress episode. “If you have ever experienced sadness, difficulty or despair, multiply that by a thousand,” she told the audience, and they might know what she felt. She entered a period of profound spiritual darkness. Searching for help, Houston’s mother took her to see a priest, who told her that it was alright if she could not find her faith. “I have faith enough for both of us,” he said.

Following the priest’s advice, Houston began to attend Mass each Sunday, and four years after the bombing tragedy, she was Confirmed in Faith and joined the Catholic Church.

Following Houston’s talk, the students joined a Eucharistic Procession, moving from the second floor conference hall, down to and around the first floor, and back upstairs.

In all, the procession lasted about 25 minutes, with participants singing “Jesus, Remember Me” as they walked along.

The procession and adoration was led by Archbishop Paul Coakley. A youth choir comprised of members from various diocesan parishes led the singing in the conference hall, accompanied only by handbells.

After the Divine Praises, selected conference attendees came forward to lay a single white carnation in front of the Monstrance. As the flowers were being placed, the

Acknowledgments

By J.E. Helm
For Sooner Catholic

From Nov. 21-23, over 1,500 teens from Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas gathered in Oklahoma City to celebrate their Catholic faith. Above, students sing along with one of the performers. At left, Archbishop Coakley gives his homily at the closing Mass. Photo Cara Koenig.

Ten friends from Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas gathered in Oklahoma City to celebrate their Catholic faith. Above, students sing along with one of the performers. At left, Archbishop Coakley gives his homily at the closing Mass. Photo Cara Koenig.

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By J.E. Helm
For Sooner Catholic

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Sooner Catholic
By Ted King
For the Sooner Catholic
Every Christmas, the 1944 movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” airs on television. The movie achieved critical acclaim at the time of its release, but did poorly at the box office. It wasn’t until the copy-right for the film lapsed in the mid-1970s that a whole new generation was introduced to this great movie.

Another film from that time worth rediscovery is the 1949 movie “Come to the Stable,” a great movie to see in the Christmas season. It is about a couple of nuns who came from France to the fictitious town of Bethlehem, Conn., in order to build a hospital. It is based on a story by Catholic convert Clare Boyd Lucey, who was an employee of Congress from Connecticut and later ambassador to Italy.

“Come to the Stable” was critically acclaimed at the time of its release in 1949 with Oscar nominations for best actor, best supporting actress, best writing, best singing, and best score.

Part Two of the book is titled “The Stories,” and it contains 10 chapters that are the narratives of some of those saved by Father Bergoglio. The book calls the unknown. The fate of many people remains a mystery, and anyone knows his other contacts, and this was the reason for his death. The book also contains information that was useful in plumbing the stories of those in need.

Unfortunately, the local bishop tells us, Father Bergoglio knew that “churches were no longer places of refuge: the kidnappers had gotten to those who were refugees, who were afraid, or who openly supported the regime.” These were difficult and terrifyingly dangerous times. In the confused aftermath of the war, Father Bergoglio needed to know anyone he contacted was safe and that another would give someone a ride. Father Bergoglio eventually planned and organized the unification’s move from Argentina to Brazil, on to Uruguay, eventually to Europe and safety.

Other chapters in this section detail the stories of people who were part of the movement, an activist priest and many more. There are stories of intrigue, with Father Bergoglio hiding as many as 20 “students” at the Jesuits’ house. There is the heart wrenching story of a young father that Father Bergoglio managed to free from the police while at the same time keeping his son’s young wife safe. Father Bergoglio was not without his detractors, however. When Father Bergoglio was accused of being a sympathizer with the military junta, as some priests unfortunately were. There are tales of these changes vehemently. Still, the book’s author in Part Three reports on the findings of Amnesty International and includes as part of the story the personal experience of the author and his family, who had been imprisoned in Argentina for many years.

In a similar vein, the Jesuits in Argentina. He had been appointed president of the Jesuits in Argentina’s military dictatorship which began in 1976 and lasted for forty years.”

Part One of “Bergoglio’s List” sets the stage for the stories that follow. The book calls the unknown. In the terrible reign of Argentina’s military dictatorship which began in that country in 1976 and lasted for nine years.

The book is named to recall the heroine of Oscar Schindler, who was known as a small book with a big impact. Just 207 pages cover the cover, the book narrates how Father Bergoglio, a Jesuit from Argentina, saved approximately 100 people during the terrible reign of Argentina’s military dictatorship which began in that country in 1976 and lasted for nine years.

The book is named to recall the heroine of Oscar Schindler, who was saved from the Nazis during World War II, and whose story is depicted in Steven Spielberg’s film “Schindler’s List.”

The entire cast was excellent. Elsa Lancaster played Miss Potts, an artist who paints religious pictures. In the first scene, Miss Potts is painting a live Nativity scene. It was a postcard of one of her works titled “Come to the Stable” that led the nuns to Berlin, Conn. Bob Mason’s brother, Anthony, was played by Dooley Wilson, who was Sam in “I’m going to try to keep mine,” she said. By the way, he was a Catholic.

and endearing – truly a gem to be discovered. The entire cast was excellent. Elsa Lancaster played Miss Potts, an artist who paints religious pictures. In the first scene, Miss Potts is painting a live Nativity scene. It was a postcard of one of her works titled “Come to the Stable” that led the nuns to Berlin, Conn. Bob Mason’s brother, Anthony, was played by Dooley Wilson, who was Sam in “I’m going to try to keep mine,” she said. By the way, he was a Catholic.

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Será llamado Príncipe de la Paz

Por Cindy Wooln

El papa llama Parlamento Europeo a rejuvenecer ‘abuela’ Europa

Estraburgo, Francia – Siendo nieto de inmigrantes europeos a Argentina de 77 años, el papa Francisco dijo que Europa ha dado el “paso decisivo” para valorar los derechos del continente y recuperar un sentido de responsabilidad por el bien común para rejuvenecer la vida espiritual de un “pueblo que ha abierto sus puertas a todos los que necesitan darles un hogar”. "En muchos lugares encontramos una impresión general de cansancio y envejecimiento. Europa que ahora es ‘abuela’, no es fuerte y vibrante”, él dijo, el 25 de noviembre. "Debemos traer de nuevo a Europa los valores judocrísticos y los ideales humanistas que en el pasado impulso del imperialismo. Pero la unidad habrá sido poco que hablamos muy bien de estas tareas y no todos" y porque "las ausencias de los hombres de nuestra época", él dijo, "provenían de Dios, confiaban en la mirada de la iglesia mayor y que el mundo no puede ser un lugar sin Dios, el hombre y el ser humano en el pasado.

En el Parlamento Europeo fue san Pablo en 1968, la misma época que después de la muerte de Berlín y marco el principio del final de un Europa y de la lucha por un nuevo orden social y democrático y este comunitario. El papa Francisco dijo antes del parlamento que la “epoca de inmigración” ha determinado la lucha por la democracia y la fe, la conquista de más y menos protagonistas en un mundo que frecuentemente la considera con indiferencia, desconfianza y, a veces, "no se puede tolerar". Las democracias del continente, dijo el papa, "no se puede permitir que colapsen bajo el peso de las presiones multidimensionales que no son universales, que las debilidades y las conquistas del continente".

El papa Francisco preguntó al parlamento que la "guerra en el corazón de miles de personas, se ve en nuestras ciudades en Europa. Las democracias del continente deben luchar por su futuro", dijo el papa Francisco. "Debemos traer de nuevo a Europa los valores judocrísticos y los ideales humanistas que en el pasado impulsaron el imperialismo. Pero la unidad habrá sido poco que hablamos muy bien de estas tareas y no todos" y porque "las ausencias de los hombres de nuestra época", él dijo, "provenían de Dios, confiaban en la mirada de la iglesia mayor y que el mundo no puede ser un lugar sin Dios, el hombre y el ser humano en el pasado.

Se llama doy mi paz (Jn 14, 27)

El predicador de la casa papal ofrece su primera reflexión de Adviento

Por Pedro A. Meeus, OP, MRE

Directora de Servicio de Noticias

El padre Capuchino Raniero Cantalamessa, predicador de la Casa Papal, vuelve a este año a su tema predilecto de la reflexión de Adviento. Este año el tema de su primera predicción ha sido el tema más importante en 1400 años: que el primer niño nos ha nacido en el mundo y nos ha traído la paz, "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11). El Padre escogido de Dios: "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11). El Padre escogido de Dios: "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11).

¿Dónde está esa paz hoy? Ciertamente, el "no se puede tolerar" que colapsen bajo el peso de las presiones multidimensionales que no son universales, que las debilidades y las conquistas del continente. Las democracias del continente deben luchar por su futuro", dijo el papa Francisco. "Debemos traer de nuevo a Europa los valores judocrísticos y los ideales humanistas que en el pasado impulsaron el imperialismo. Pero la unidad habrá sido poco que hablamos muy bien de estas tareas y no todos" y porque "las ausencias de los hombres de nuestra época", él dijo, "provenían de Dios, "El "padre escogido de Dios" es el tema de esta predicción de Adviento. Este año el tema de su primera predicción ha sido el tema más importante en 1400 años: que el primer niño nos ha nacido en el mundo y nos ha traído la paz, "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11). El Padre escogido de Dios: "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11). El Padre escogido de Dios: "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11). El Padre escogido de Dios: "Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo se nos ha dado" (Lc 2, 11).

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Birth Choice baby shower
Birth Choice of Norman, 457 W Gray, is host- ing a Christmas party, baby shower and open house on Saturday, Dec. 20, from Noon to 2 p.m. There will be an opportunity to learn about the functions and services of the new ultrasound machine (which was donated by the Knights of Columbus, OKC) and to answer questions. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided. Consider a donation of diapers, wipes, formula, lotions, shampoos, baby clothes, etc.

Native American Catholic Outreach
Archbishop Coakley recently named Native American Catholic Outreach. The goal is to establish kinship-sharing Native Catholic communities and to share the story of the life of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha and to follow her example of a life lived in Christ. All people who are interested are encouraged to be members of the Circle. Contact Deacon Ray Carlson at (405) 752-6210. Interested persons may also contact the Rev. Tim Mabe at (405) 944-2625.

Help families through hunger ministry
Come live the Gospel and experience the joy of being a part of St. Charles Borromeo’s hunger ministry, the Dorothy Day Center. Thursday and Friday evenings, Dec. 18 and 19, 6 to 8 p.m., Second Order for Saturday delivery. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 9 a.m. vegetables for low-income families of the Dorothy Day Center. Learn about how to make a household. A five-minute presentation will be followed by an hour of packing, before an hour of delivery. Groups of five or more may participate.

Catholic radio through the archdiocese
Catholic radio through the archdiocese

Sooner Catholic: The Catholic Foundation
The Catholic Foundation

The Catholic Foundation

Don’t let Dec. 31 sneak up on you
With this year’s challenges and accomplishments still fresh in your mind, now is the time to review and update your estate plans. To help you in this process, here is a checklist of estate planning actions you let you go go over as you end the year:
1. Revisit your current will and trust. Should there be any changes to your family as a result of changes in your life, such as births or deaths, or more
2. Take inventory and make a written record of the contents of your safe deposit box. Give a copy to a trusted family member.
3. Review the beneficiary designations for your life insurance and retirement plans to make sure your beneficiary is still the one you desire.
4. Make sure your durable power of attorney for health care and living will is current.
5. Be sure you are comfortable with the guardian named in your will.
6. Finalize charitable contributions by Dec. 31. Are you thinking about special gifts for family and friends, remember that making charitable gifts in your will can be a heartwarming experience that also offers tax benefits.

Grants manager
The Catholic Foundation seeks a grants manager. This full-time position supports the granting programs of the foundation, including communications, data maintenance, donor relations, scholarship coordination, and more. Send resume to bsemtner@archokc.org or call (405) 878-5300.

Music director
St. Charles Borromeo Church in OKC seeks a music director. Duties include preparing accompaniment for English liturgies. A music director degree required as well as knowledge of Catholic liturgy, along with excellent organ, piano and vocal skills. Bilingual plus. Send resume to Rev. Tim Mabe, St. Charles Borromeo Church, 5024 N Grove Ave., OKC, 73122 or e-mail Timmabe@sstcokc.org.

Maintenance supervisor

Strict knowledge of Word, Excel, Access, donor relations, scheduling and communications. Send resume to mschacht@archokc.org.

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Okarche’s Center of Family Love celebrates expansion

By Sally Linhart
For the Sooner Catholic

On Nov. 21, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new intermediate care facility at the Center of Family Love in Okarche. The new building, which will house an additional 16 beds, is expected to be complete by January 2016.

Founded in 1981 by the Knights of Columbus, the CFL is a not-for-profit organization that provides lifetime care for developmentally and intellectually disabled adults from all areas of Oklahoma.

The CFL is divided into three areas:
1. Group homes for residents who are more independent;
2. Intermediate care facilities for those with more personal needs;
3. And a geriatric center for aging residents.

Ranging in age from 18 to 86, residents with all types of disabilities – including autism, neurological disease, Down syndrome and traumatic brain injury - live and work at the center. The addition of space will allow the CFL, which is already at capacity, to accept 16 more disabled adults.

Executive Director Debbie Espinosa described the CFL as a place where residents really take pride in their accomplishments. “This is a place where people thrive – not just survive. We are able to offer our residents opportunities that they wouldn’t have otherwise.”

“We want to give them the best life we possibly can,” Espinosa said. “We are a Catholic organization and we want that to show through what we do, by living our social teachings of life and dignity of the human person.”

The mission of the CFL aims to promote the dignity of human life, and provide a place for the mentally and physically disabled to live the teachings of the Catholic Church.

“We want to give them the best life we possibly can,” Espinosa said. “We are a Catholic organization and we want that to show through what we do, by living our social teachings of life and dignity of the human person.”

Expressing overwhelming gratitude toward the Knights of Columbus for bringing the idea to fruition, Development Director Marsha Smith reiterated the importance of the dignity of human life.

“We use the teachings of the Catholic Church as a guideline for what we do here. Our residents have the chance to use their abilities, and they are grateful for the opportunity to work,” Smith said. “They are so proud of the things they accomplish!”

A small chapel on campus provides residents a quiet place to worship and pray.

In order to provide the best care possible for residents, the CFL relies on private donors to keep the center operational. In addition to monetary donations, volunteers are always needed to help maintain the property through painting, lawn care and general maintenance, and to provide assistance.

For more information on the Center of Family Love, to donate or to volunteer, go to www.cflinc.org or call (405) 263-4658.