VATICAN CITY – “When you pray before your Nativity scene with your parents, ask Baby Jesus to help us all love God and our neighbor,” Pope Francis told children as he blessed the figurines of the Christ Child they will lay in their crèche this Christmas.

Gaudete Sunday is the third Sunday of Advent in the liturgical calendar of the Western Church. The day takes its name from the Latin word Gaudete (“Rejoice”), the first word of the introit of the day’s Mass, taken from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians:

“Rejoice in the the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:4-6).

In his greetings after the Angelus, Pope Francis said: “Today my first greeting is reserved for all the children and young people of Rome who have come for the traditional ‘bambinelli’ blessing, organized by parish oratories and Catholic schools.”

St. Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first Nativity scene on Christ- mas Eve in the year 1223, inside a cave in Greccio, Italy. It is believed he was first inspired with this idea while on pilgrimage in the Holy Land, after visiting the humble stable in a Bethlehem cave that marks the historical place of Christ’s birth. It is thought that this event deepened his devotion to the Child Jesus who, though He was God, was born into the world in poverty, humility, and silence.

Mass, taken from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians:

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St. Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first Nativity scene in his town:

“I want to do something that will recall the memory of that Child who was born in Bethlehem, to see with bodily eyes the inconveniences of his infancy, how he lay in the manger, and how the ox and ass stood by.”

Pope Francis made a surprise visit to Greccio earlier this year, to pray at the site of the world’s crèche ahead of the Feast of the Epiphany.

On Friday, as the Vatican illuminated it’s 2016 Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square, the pope reflected on the importance of keeping a crèche in one’s home. He said:

“Nativity scenes in churches, homes and in many public places are an invitation to make room in our lives and society for God. ... Let us be drawn, with a child-like spirit, to the Nativity scene, for there we come to understand God’s goodness and contemplate his mercy, which became flesh in order to make our gaze more tender.”

At the Sunday Angelus, Pope Francis also asked children to remember him in their prayers to Baby Jesus this Christmas, “as I remember you,” he said.

He then concluded: “One thing I would like to say to the children and young people: We want to hear you sing! Arrivederci and have a nice lunch! Sing!”

Diane Montagna is Rome correspondent for Aleteia’s English edition.

The saint would later tell a friend why he desired to create the first Nativity scene in his town:

“Nativity scenes in churches, homes and in many public places are an invitation to make room in our lives and society for God... Let us be drawn, with a child-like spirit, to the Nativity scene, for there we come to understand God’s goodness and contemplate his mercy, which became flesh in order to make our gaze more tender.”

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Feast days of the Christmas Season

The Nativity scene is pictured in St. Peter’s Square during a Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Vatican Dec. 9. Photo Paul Haring/CNS

continued on Page 9
Christmas celebrations will renew in each of us a profound experience of the Sunday of the year. I will offer Mass for your intentions. Let us pray that our through the sequence of beautiful feasts to come! The Christmas season is just beginning! It is unfolding and revealing its gifts for those who seek the true meaning of Christmas, however, the time the presents are unwrapped and the sales after Christmas have run.

Evangelist (Dec. 27) and The Holy Innocents (Dec. 28) are just a few of the is offered to all: give us a vision of the mystery of God’s (Jan. 9) unfold for us the mystery of God’s mercy-made-fl esh, so that we might savor more deeply its so that we might bring us life and salvation to wish each of you a very blessed Christmas season.

As I write this message, we are drawing very near to the Our secular culture will have grown weary of its version of Christmas by The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day), the Feast of the Holy Family (Dec. 25), Saint John the First Martyr (Dec. 26), Saint Stephen, the is offered to all: give us a vision of the mystery of God’s (Jan. 9) unfold for us the mystery of God’s mercy-made-fl esh, so that we might savor more deeply its so that we might bring us life and salvation to wish each of you a very blessed Christmas season.

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Companions for the journey

All of us learn from our friends and family. We get tips on restaurants, art, how to give provisions or best places to get this and that. I just want to request a friend for her special cucumbers recipe and I am looking at colorful origami instructions in a CRS colleague taught me to make. Beyond gaining knowledge and skills, I am struck by how much people touch our lives, our intellect, at times helping us grow as a human being as or as a person.

At a dinner with a classmate I had not seen for more than 40 years, I told her that I would like to pick up Spanish in my retirement, not as much to be fluent, but to be able to sing along at bilingual Masses. She shared that she had learned Spanish in her Hispanic and Mexican heritage. She, her husband, and her grandchildren encourage her daughter-in-law to keep up her Spanish. She shared that her grandson does not yet know how to communicate with his grandparents. She taught me what it means to be able to relate to her grandson to encourage his dual heritage. She also taught me about her grandson and the importance of his language. She encouraged him to be able to relate to her through her language.

Sooner Catholic
4 December 25, 2016
The Sooner Catholic

The newly baptized bore candles and sang to a congregation of their families, clergy, vowed religious, catechists and lay faithful at a bilingual ceremony.

The newly baptized are part of the Eastern Church; this brings great joy to the people of God, people of God and members of the Church; this brings great joy to heaven. For the celebration of our Lord and spread the Good News of God, people of God and members of the Church have brought 300 more Christian converts to our community.

During the Thanksgiving season, we have approved for use in the liturgy the Revised Grail Psalter, which the U.S. bishops’ Committee onliturgy, work, silence, communal meals and communal recreation drew him to the Missouri Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn., and was ordained to the priesthood in 1977. He did his doctoral studies in sacred Scripture at Saint Paul University in Ottawa and returned to Conception Abbey to teach courses in Old Testament and midrash.

The newly baptized are part of the Eastern Church in communion with Rome and with the Eastern Church and its Pontifical Liturgical Institute. All of this means resignation as Conception Abbey’s abbot, a position he has held for more than 20 years. The community life with its prayer times, liturgy, work, silence, communal meals and communal recreation drew him to the Missouri Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn., and was ordained to the priesthood in 1977. He did his doctoral studies in sacred Scripture at Saint Paul University in Ottawa and returned to Conception Abbey to teach courses in Old Testament and midrash.

Bishop McGuinness receives Westerman Grant

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School has received a $9,700 grant from The Westminster Foundation to purchase new equipment for the art program. Art teacher Steve McConnell has been instructing McGuinness students in the world of fine arts for 42 years. More than 200 students take classes each year. The grant provides for a new kiln, three pottery wheels, a pin mill (a machine for mixing and working with clay) and six new easels.

Bishop Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo, President and Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Charities Services for Oklahoma (CCSO). The foun-}

Bishop McGuinness art teacher Steve McConnell supervises students during a demonstration. The newly baptized are part of the Eastern Church; this brings great joy to heaven. All of that means resigning as Conception Abbey’s abbot, a position he has held for more than 20 years. The community life with its prayer times, liturgy, work, silence, communal meals and communal recreation drew him to the Missouri Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn., and was ordained to the priesthood in 1977. He did his doctoral studies in sacred Scripture at Saint Paul University in Ottawa and returned to Conception Abbey to teach courses in Old Testament and midrash.

Bishop Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo, President and Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Charities Services for Oklahoma (CCSO). The foundation of financial support to educational institutions with an emphasis on Catholic education is a federated board-based organization that promote family unity and values, and programs that provide assistance to the poor and abused. Since 2000, the foundation has provided more than $5.4 million in grant funding to more than 240 organizations across the United States.

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The Catholic Difference

The persecution of Professor Esolen

George Weigel
Ethics and Public Policy Center

By J. E. Helm
The Sooner Catholic

Book Review

Just in time for Christmas

Prayer service to commemorate Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels Us

The Oklahoma Alliance for Liturgy and the Arts will present a prayer service to commemorate the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Sunday, Jan. 22, at 4 p.m. in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and the Church of the Nazarene, 4400 North May Avenue. All are invited.

The service will include music, prayer, scripture and presentations by two speakers: Rev. Floyd Schoenhofer, Bishop Emeritus of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and Bishop Diane DiKeuss, R.S.M., director of the Pastoralcare Program of the Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

This year marks the 110th anniversary of the Week of Prayer, which began in 1908. The Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as well as the Jewish movement known as the “Bnei Brith of Christ,” began the celebration of the Three Days that the Jews call the Holy week. The three days were only three gifts.

The Oklahoma Alliance for Liturgy and the Arts is presenting this service in confirmation of the week’s historic mission and to continue the celebration of Christian unity.

John Michael Talbot visits St. Greg's

Guitarist John Michael Talbot spent an evening of “Sacred and Sacred Song” at St. Gregory’s Cathedral in Shawnee to close the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Talbot is a Catholic singer-songwriter, guitarist, author, television presenter and founder of a monastic community known as the Brothers and Sisters of Charity. For more information about his music or to contact his ministry, go online to https://johnmichaeltalbot.com.

Cloistered nun earns doctorate in aerospace engineering

Catholic News Agency/EWTN

NEW DELHI, INDIA – A cloistered nun in India came out of her convent for an extraordinary reason: to attend a graduation ceremony for her doctorate in aerospace engineering.

“I had joined the religious order after my final oral exam last year, and this was the first time I came out after that. The rules of our order forbade women from going out of the convent, but I was given special permission to attend the ceremony,” the nun, a student of the Holy Face told Matters India.

The 32-year-old nun lives in a cloistered convent in the city of Allahabad. In 2012, the holy See had lifted the ban on nuns pursuing higher education.

She spent an evening of “Spoken Word and Music” at Shawnee to close the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

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The Christmas season has a somber day—Dec. 28. It is the feast day of the Holy Innocents, commemorating the slaughter of male children age 2 and younger on the orders of King Herod, who wanted to know where this newborn king was so that he could honor the child Jesus as well.

In addition to Christmas Day, the feast days of the Christmas Season include several other feast days. Saint Stephen, the first martyr, is Dec. 26 (Acts 7:54-58). His execution by stoning was met with approval by Saul of Tarsus, who hunts Christians to persecution. One of the miracles in the early Church was the conversion of Saul, who became the Apostle Paul.

Holy Innocents

The feast day of the Holy Innocents is Dec. 28, when we honor male children age 2 or younger who were slaughtered at the order of King Herod, who wanted to eliminate the child Jesus as a rival king (Matthew 2:16-18). Today, the feast day of the Holy Innocents also is a reminder of the slaughter of innocent children by slaughter.

The great joy of Christmas time is that the word, who is God, became flesh and dwells among us (John 1:14) and is in us, body, blood, soul and divinity, through the Holy Eucharist.

Don’t miss St. John’s Bible exhibit at OKCMOA

Exhibit ends Jan. 8

The exhibit includes 70 selected folios from The Saint John’s Bible as well as other historical illuminated manuscripts such as a Book of Hours, Quran pages and Torah scrolls. “Sacred Words” also includes a selection of original, unbound illuminated manuscript folios on calfskin vellum from The Saint John’s Bible as well as sketches, drawings, inks and tools used to create the manuscript.

Church remembers Holy Innocents on feast day

By Ted King

The Sooner Catholic

The Christmas season has a somber day—Dec. 28. It is the feast day of the Holy Innocents, commemorating the slaughter of male children age 2 and younger on the orders of King Herod.

Herod was informed that magi from the East were looking for the newborn king, because he was afraid of the child Jesus being a rival king (Matthew 2:11). He became furious. He ordered the massacre of male children age 2 and younger who were slaughtered at the order of King Herod, who wanted to eliminate the child Jesus as a rival king (Matthew 2:16-18). The last Sunday of Christmas time is on Dec. 30. The Church began this feast day in the 1600s to honor the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The feast day of Saint Stephen, the first martyr, is Dec. 26 (Acts 7:54-58). His execution by stoning was met with approval by Saul of Tarsus, who hunts Christians to persecution. One of the miracles in the early Church was the conversion of Saul, who became the Apostle Paul.

Christmas Calendar 2016-17

CHRISTMAS SEASON BEGINS DECEMBER 25

Saint Stephen

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Ted King is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

SUNDAY

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED WORDS OF JESUS

TUESDAY

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED WORDS OF JESUS

Wednesday

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED WORDS OF JESUS

THURSDAY

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED WORDS OF JESUS

FRI

SAT

December 25

Today is the birth day of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Join us in the Solemn Christmas Eve Mass at 5 p.m. in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, as Pope Francis proclaims the birth of our Lord.

Today, we remember St. Stephen, a devout and faithful apostle of Jesus Christ. Please join us in the Solemnity of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Mass at 5 p.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Today, we remember St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr whose courageous witness and exemplary courage have inspired generations of faithful Christians. Please join us in the Solemnity of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Mass at 5 p.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Today, we commemorate the Holy Innocents who were so cruelly sacrificed by King Herod. Please join us in the Solemnity of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Mass at 5 p.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

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Contagious faith
A straight path for the Lord

This year, we were struck forcefully by the oft-repeated Advent antiphon: “Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight his path.” I hear it every year, but this year it struck me new, in a way, as possibly a very appropriate statement for parishes, and not just at Christmas time. Part of the reason that it impacted me so was that the new evangelization in the parish is exactly that: a straight, clear path of discipleship that we need to be following.

Consider this scenario: imagine you know someone who was thinking about returning to the Church after some time away. What would you do to help them return? Almost without fail, you would answer this: “Locate a parish.” When I ask what the possibilities for “involvement” are, the answers are: they can volunteer to help in the office, sing in the choir, be on a committee or serve as a catechist, a lector or an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. They can help organize the parish, the RCIA or children’s liturgy, or even living communion to the sick. They can also support Catholic charities or join a daily or even be on the building committee. Get involved, we tell them. But involvement is not the same as discipleship, and in fact, can be a lack of genuine discipleship. A person’s life in the diocese of Boysaint has it all right. I’ve heard it’s in a word of the Church for those, and even so can ask we people to think of themselves as she would be able to relate to someone and ask this: “Let’s find involvement around us more?”

My concern is that when a Church wishes to exist for this single end: that each person may be able to find Christ, so that Christ may walk with the person of path the life. If that describes the mission of the parish in a nutshell, then we do well to ask ourselves whether the parish of Jesus and to grow in relationship with him, every every year. Volunteer with clearly marked paths of discipleship, a shaft of a very partial and to step by step to put Jesus at the center of his or her life, and to grow in the love of Christ and his discipleship of a? A disciple: is exactly that: a just a really committed person. When we ask people to themselves about their faith, they’ll somehow find themselves to someone and say, “But look, I’m involved around us more?”

“We let make it not just our Advent antiphon, but our New Year’s resolution. For the way of the Lord, make straight his path!”

Carole Brown
Director of New Evangelization

When we look at the child in the manger, we are looking right back at us. We are looking at the Christian disciples of Jesus Christ, becoming more aware of the presence of God present in this child, who declares himself to have a Godly wish, really want to share this Good News with you. We are looking at this child? He is telling us all that is perfect and holy in the Lord.

Every disciple needs to make a proclamation of faith. It says: “In a Relationship” because with Jesus, there is no waste, and his actions. It is a truth that is never out of date because it is for us. Let’s make it not just our Advent antiphon, but our New Year’s resolution as well. Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his path!”

When looking at the manger, we want to share this Good News with you. We are looking at this child? He is telling us all that is perfect and holy in the Lord.

Job 3:24

Job's Boxes

Maintenance
Corpus Christi Catholic Church has an opening for a maintenance position. Contact (405) 236-4301. More to return to the parish at 1085 N.E. 15, OKC 73117.

Center of Family Love
Direct dial internal and external operations for the Intermediate Care Facility/Residential Intermediary Care Facility. Open position to facilitate care to residents. Oversee all personnel management duties associated with the clinical license, including the quality management, dietary and housekeeping to ensure efficient, functional and financial productivity that comply with state and local requirements. Must complete a fiscal responsibility for the organization. Must possess current Oklahoma Nursing Home Administrator’s license. Submit resume to office@dioceseoftulsa.org.

Director of evangelization and catechesis
The executive director of evangelization and catechesis is responsible for developing, overseeing and supporting faith formation and discipleship efforts in the archdiocese. The successful candidate will have a minimum of five years’ experience working within diocesan religious education structures or similar experience preferred, an advanced degree in theology, catechesis, education or related field, and must be an active Catholic in good standing with the Church. The successful candidate will assist with the Church in faithfully and responsibly communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the mission, values, and needs of our diocese, the Catholic Church. To apply, submit a resume to tenderm@archokc.org.

Principal - Muskogee
St. Joseph Catholic School in Muskogee is seeking a principal for the 2017-2018 school year. Principal- Catholic in good standing with the Church, master’s degree, five years teaching experience. Send a resume with detailed professional experience to jim.poholman@diosesus.com.

Principal - Muskogee
Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Muskogee, OK, is seeking a principal to coordinate efforts of the parish school and their Catholic school. To apply, send your resume with detailed professional experience to office@dioceseoftulsa.org.

Children’s ministry helpers
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Job openings

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Summer Camp
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Summer Camp has begun registration for the summer of 2017. You may download the registration form from our website at Under the Young & Adult Office to pay in full. New and retuning campers are encouraged to register as early as possible. We’ll expect many sessions to fill up quickly.

Pedro A. Moreno, C.M.
Director, Office of Hispanic Ministry

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is a diocese of the Catholic Church in the United States. It serves the people of Oklahoma. P.O. Box 32810
Oklahoma City, OK 73109 Phone: (405)622-2010 Fax: (405)622-2010

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St. Joseph Catholic School in Muskogee is seeking a principal for the 2017-2018 school year. Principal- Catholic in good standing with the Church, master’s degree, five years teaching experience. Send a resume with detailed professional experience to jim.poholman@diosesus.com.

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Cristo Rey OKC nombra a Alfredo Melchor Jr. como director de admisiones

La Presidenta de Cristo Rey OKC, Renee Porter dijo que: “La pasión por la educación y el compromiso con la diversidad que tiene Melchor lo hicieron ideal para este papel en la escuela.”

“Estamos ansiosos de que él lleve a cabo su visión sentida y efectiva en la unidad de la comunidad. Alfredo está listo para trabajar con la comunidad y ayudarnos a recibir un cuerpo estudiantil diverso y talentoso.”

Porter dijo que: “Estamos emocionados de poder compartir con los estudiantes para el éxito en la universidad. Como parte del programa completo de Cristo Rey de Estudiant-Choque corporativo, los estudiantes trabajan una vez por semana en un ambiente profesional y a la vez ganarse la mayor parte de su colegio.”

Alfredo Melchor Jr.

Melchor dijo: “Estamos extremadamente emocionados de que el equipo de padres se den cuenta de que esta comunidad está en el pesebre de Dios y que el amor en el pesebre y tu corazón, serán tocados por su vida y compartirán esa vida, la compartirán. Que tus corazones sean tocados por su vida y compártanla con todos.”

Sinceramente suyo en Cristo;

Cristo Rey Oklahoma City Cathol- ic High School anunció que Alfredo Melchor Jr. será el primer director de admisiones de la escuela.

Antes de incorporarse a Cristo Rey OKC, Melchor fue reclutador y Coordinador de Proyección a la comunidad Hispánica en Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City. En OSU-OKC, Melchor reclutó a estudiantes hispánicos de 27 pre-paratorias en el área de Oklahoma City. Durante su tiempo allí, las inscripciones de estudiantes hispánicos en OSU-OKC crecieron año tras año.

Melchor también trabajó como asistente de medios para eventos en el NBA-USA y USA. Tour al igual que como intérprete para el Departamento de Salud de la Ciudad y el Condado de Okla- homa.

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**Rory for life**

The Rory for Life will be in- 
due during the winter, instead of 
meeting at Norman’s abortion 
center. Join every Sunday (except 
Christmas and New Year’s Day) 
at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel at St. 
Thomas More in Norman, 100 
Stinson St. Contact Connie Lang 
at jaclang@ocns.org or (405) 249- 
1041.

**Rother Heritage Gallery exhibit opens**

The Heritage Gallery at the Cath- 
olic Pastoral Center, 7501 North- 
west Expressway, is now open. 
The exhibit features items from 
Servant of God Father Stanley 
Rother, including his cassock, 
letters and photos, and items found 
in his room in Guatemala after 
his murder. The free exhibit is 
on weekdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Fra. Janocha and Grover to lead pilgrimage to Fatima**

Fr. William Janocha and Fr. 
Daniel Grover will lead a pilgrim- 
age to Fatima, Santiago de Com- 
postela, and more. Sites include 
Lisbon, Fatima, Santiago de Com- 
opostela, Brigid, Cliffs of Moher, O’Brien’s 
Tomb and Cathedral, Giant’s 
Causeway, Titanic Museum 
in Belfast, Glendalough, Lake 
Corrib Cruise, Trinity College, 
Galway University, Kilkena- 
mall Church, St. John’s Cathedral, 
Holy Well St of St. Bridg, 
Cliffs of Moher, O’Brien’s 
Tower, Rock of Cashel, 
Chromac- 
ory, Blarney Castle, the 
Burren, Downpatrick Cathedral, 
Inch Abbey, and more. Mass, 
breakfast, dinner daily, 4-star ho- 
Tomb and Cathedral, Giant’s 
ian, roundtrip air from OKC, 
meals, roundtrip air from OKC, 
and good sportsmanship that also 
extraordinary year. It challenged 
participants’ knowledge of the 
mystery of God’s plan to grow 
sustainably.

**Schooling for hearing-impaired students**

The Hearing Loss Association of 
America Central Oklahoma Chap- 
er (HLAOCO) announced the 
2017 scholarship program. There 
will be two scholarships of $1,000 
each, awarded to students enrolled 
for the fall 2017 school year. Applic- 
ants must have hearing loss and 
be achieving higher education in 
the fall. There is no age limit, 
but the student must plan to attend 
an Oklahoma higher learning 
institution. Applications available 
before the Hearing-filters Room, 5100 
N. Brookline, Ste. A, OKC, or on- 
line at www.oklahomahla.org. 
Deadline is April 3.

**Calendar**

- December 25: Christmas Day, Feast of the Nativity of the Lord
- Feast of St. Stephen
- Feast of St. John
- Feast of the Holy Innocents
- Feast of St. Thomas Becket
- Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus Mary and Joseph
- New Year’s Eve

**Are You Listening?**

By Sally Crowe Nash

Near the close of 2015, my 
husband, John Dinsmore, 
spared by God, despite being 
murdered by a lone gunman. 
Our love for him lived on. A 
aparallel comes to mind in the 
world of Catholic radio. 
Also in 2016, the death of EWTN 
founder, Mother Angelica, 
casted the world of Catholic 
radio. Our prayers about the future 
of Catholic radio in Oklahoma led 
us to realize we could no longer 
distribute content in an unau- 
thorized format due to trademark 
and copyright issues. We began 
applying for grants, and took steps to broaden 
our thinking and approaches. 

**OKC 2016 Christmas Pilgrimage**

The pilgrimage on December 
25 will be held at St Greg- 
ory’s University on March 25. 
The OKC pilgrimage is in improve 
to participate in the jubilee with pilgrimage 
ocm@oklahomachurch.org.

**Spiritual discernment**

The importance of spiritual 
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special presentation given 
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Francis de Sales Chapel at the 
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St. Philip Neri names family life center for Fr. Fuller

Archbishop Coakley joined Father Timothy Fuller, former pastors Father Jack Feehily and Father Charles Murphy, Principal Brenda Tener, students, staff, benefactors and residents in November to dedicate and bless the new family life center at Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church and School. On Dec. 4, the center was officially named in honor of Father Fuller.

During the dedication ceremony, the procession was led by the Knights of Columbus and the school choir performed “God Bless America.” Wade Moore, president of the Midwest City Chamber of Commerce, made a proclamation on behalf of the city chamber.

Archbishop Coakley extended his words of congratulations and praised Saint Philip Neri for “fostering an education in faith and extending parish life,” with the new 24,000-square-foot building.

“This family life center highlights the faith and the mission of Saint Philip Neri in Midwest City,” he said. Father Fuller added that the project would not have been possible without the foresight of the prior pastors who were able to accumulate the surrounding properties to build the family life center. Housed inside the family life center is a full-size gymnasium, four meeting rooms, industrial-sized kitchen and concession stand.

“Saint Philip Neri has been blessed with so many good and faithful people,” Principal Tener said. “Even though buildings come and go, our hope is that our students have the foundation to become good and faithful people as well.”

Archbishop blesses new icon of Our Lady at Catholic Charities

Archbishop Coakley joined clergy, Catholic Charities’ staff and visitors to dedicate and bless the new icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Chapel at Catholic Charities in Oklahoma City.

The icon was commissioned by Archbishop Coakley and created by renowned Oklahoma iconographer Janet Jaime. Jaime also created the icon of Mother Teresa that hangs on the opposite wall in the chapel.

Each icon created by Jaime requires three months to complete with the artist working several hours a day, seven days a week. The process uses egg tempera, a technique used in the Byzantine era, and powder ground from natural rocks, minerals and plants instead of paint.

Once the birch wood is sanded and prepped with a special glue, calcium carbonate and marble dust, Jaime uses a mixture that includes egg yolk and vinegar to mix the colors. The rocks are ground to a powder form and include pigments of burnt bone, azurite, French ochre and sankir.

Contact Catholic Charities to view the artwork. Mass is celebrated at 11 a.m. every Friday in the chapel, 1232 N. Classen Blvd., OKC. Check the holiday schedule.