WASHINGTON, D.C. — Religious freedom advocates throughout the country are voicing disappointment at suggested changes to the federal contraception mandate aimed at resolving freedom of conscience concerns.

“Today's proposed rule does nothing to protect the religious liberty of millions of Americans,” said Kyle Duncan, general counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

Duncan was one of numerous critics who raised concerns over a Feb. 1 announcement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The department said that it intends to revise the mandate, which requires employers to offer health insurance plans covering contraception, sterilization and drugs that may cause early abortions.

The mandate — which is currently the subject of lawsuits filed by more than 100 plaintiffs nationwide — initially included a narrow exemption that applied only to nonprofit religious groups that exist to inculcate religious beliefs and both serve and employ primarily members of their own faith.

The proposed revisions would drop those requirements, simplifying the

Groups Say Mandate Changes Not Enough

continued on Page 3

Catholics Prepare for Lenten Season of Faith

continued on Page 3

Who must fast?
All Catholics who are between the ages of 18 and 59. The obligation ceases when one begins his/her 60th year.

Who must abstain?
All Catholics who are 14 years and older.

What does fasting mean?
The observance of fasting means that those obliged may take only one full meal on the day of fast. Two lighter meals (not equal to another full meal) are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to

continued on Page 3

The Lenten obligation, as determined for Catholics in the United States by our bishops, requires that fasting be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The law of abstinence from meat is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 13.

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continued on Page 3
Retrouvaille is a Lifeline for Struggling Marriages

A few weeks ago I issued a Call to Prayer throughout the Archdiocese inviting people to pray for a greater respect for life, the strengthening and protection of marriage, and a defense of religious liberty. I would like to focus here on marriage.

The Catholic Church has a great interest in the promotion of strong and healthy marriages based upon God’s plan for marriage and the family. The family is the most basic cell of the Church. It is the domestic Church. It is also the fundamental building block for human society and civilization. For these and for many other reasons we take marriage very seriously. We require couples preparing for marriage to participate in marriage preparation programs that help equip them for a healthy and holy married life.

We continue to provide various opportunities for marriage enrichment, including training in Natural Family Planning and programs such as Marriage Encounter. But when marriages falter, where can couples turn? When couples struggle with the challenges of living out their marriage covenant, they still need our support.

Good support through marriage and family counseling is available through the St. Joseph Counseling Center at Catholic Charities. As part of our commitment to support marriage and families, we are establishing in the Archdiocese a program to help couples whose marriages are unraveling, or who have already experienced separation and divorce but want to try again. The need for such a program is evident. In our society, up to half of all first-time marriages are ending in divorce. A significantly higher percentage of second marriages end the same way."

"But when marriages falter, where can couples turn? When couples struggle with the challenges of living out their marriage covenant, they still need our support. Good support through marriage and family counseling is available through the St. Joseph Counseling Center at Catholic Charities. As part of our commitment to support marriage and families, we are establishing in the Archdiocese a program to help couples whose marriages are unraveling, or who have already experienced separation and divorce but want to try again. The need for such a program is evident. In our society, up to half of all first-time marriages are ending in divorce. A significantly higher percentage of second marriages end the same way."

Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar

The following events are part of Archbishop Coakley’s official calendar.

February 10 — TET Mass and Celebration, Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 11:45 a.m.
February 12 — Finance Council Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 2 p.m.
February 12 — Catholic Relief Services Committee Teleconference, 3 p.m.
February 13 — School Mass at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School, 9:40 a.m.
February 14 — Envisioning Leadership Team Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 10 a.m.
February 15 — Mass and Blessing of Chapel at St. Anthony Shawnee Hospital, 12 noon
February 16 — Mass at Catholic Men’s Conference, 4:30 p.m.
February 17 — Rites of Election, Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 2, 4:30 and 7 p.m.
February 18 - February 19 — Visit Seminarians at St. Meinrad School of Theology
February 20 — Priests Council Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 9:30 a.m.
February 20 — Mass at Catholic Pastoral Center Chapel, 11:30 a.m.
February 20 — Annual Meeting of Cemetery Board, Catholic Pastoral Center, 2 p.m.
February 21 — School Mass and Classroom Visits, St. Philip Neri School, Midwest City, 9 a.m.
February 22 — Catholic Foundation Board Meeting, St. Francis Xavier Church, Enid, 1 p.m.
February 22 — Blessing of Holy Innocents Chapel, Oklahoma City, 7 p.m.
February 24 — Confirmation, St. Anthony of Padua Church, Okc, 10:30 a.m.
Mandate continued from Page 1

A definition of a “religious employer” to be any nonprofit organization that fits into Internal Revenue Code, Section 6033(a)(3)(A)(i) or (iii), which “refers to churches, their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches, as well as to the exclusively religious activities of any religious order.”

This “would primarily include churches, other houses of worship and their affiliated organizations,” the administration said, giving the examples of parochial schools or soup kitchens run by a church or mosque.

Religious organizations that do not meet these qualifications would not be given an exemption. Instead, these nonprofit groups would be given an “accommodation,” by which their employees will receive the free contraception coverage “through separate individual health insurance policies” provided automatically by the organizations’ health insurance issuers.

In the case of self-insured organizations, a third-party administrator would work with a health insurance issuer to provide this coverage.

According to the federal government, this coverage can be provided free of charge because the “tremendous health benefits” of contraception will lower the overall health-care costs for women using it.

The suggested health mandate changes, issued in an 80-page document, are complex and require additional analysis to determine their implication for specific organizations, officials said. However, legal experts initially expressed concern that the proposals do not fully address the religious liberty issues at stake.

“We’re doubtful that anyone who wasn’t already covered by the exemption would now be covered,” Duncan explained in a conference call. He added that “the administration has said itself that the (changes made to the call. He added that “the administration has already covered by the exemption would now fully address the religious liberty issues at silence us,” he observed. “Our government should not be picking winners and losers when it comes to preserving our most cherished religious liberties.”

George Mason University law professor Helen Alvaré explained that the expansion added to the exemption “is as small as the government could make it.”

Alvaré helped found “Women Speak for Themselves,” a diverse group of women who object to political figures claiming to speak on behalf of all women in promoting the mandate.

“These new regulations are very long and very convoluted and very intent on exempting the fewest folks possible,” she said in a statement.

In addition, Alvaré noted that the suggested changes would completely fail to protect non-religious organizations, individuals and for-profit businesses, adding that this fact is particularly “disturbing.”

“In America, the right of religious freedom extends to all,” she said.

Today’s announcement is a veiled attempt by the Obama administration to silence us. The religious entities able to ‘opt-out’ are still a minority of those affected,” he observed. “Our government should not be picking winners and losers when it comes to preserving our most cherished religious liberties.”

Matt Smith, President
Catholic Advocate

Non-religious groups also objected to the announcement, arguing that the government’s solution failed to protect their freedom of conscience.

Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the Susan B. Anthony List, a group that promotes pro-life politicians, argued that the proposal unfairly excludes organizations that do not identify with a certain religion.

“(T)here must be no religious ‘test’ by the government as to who, and what type of entities, are entitled to a conscience,” she said in a statement.

“We demand respect for non-religious entities such as the Susan B. Anthony List that recognize the taking of human life is the antithesis of health care,” she said.

Many groups — including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — said they are awaiting a full legal analysis of the proposed changes before they issue a comment.

“We welcome the opportunity to study the proposed regulations closely,” said Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Lenten continued from Page 1

one’s needs. Eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

What does abstinence mean?
The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat; Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.

Other voluntary acts of self-denial are encouraged for Catholics during this penitential season.

Can anyone be dispensed or excused from the fast and/or abstinence of Lent?
Individuals with just cause may be dispensed by a priest. Those who are ill or have a similar serious reason are excused from the observance of fast and abstinence.

Catholics are reminded that they should not lightly excuse themselves from this obligation and if they do so, they then need to compensate with prayer and other voluntary acts of penance.

February

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<tr>
<th>Parish Lenten Penance Rite</th>
<th>Thursday, Feb. 21 at 7:30 p.m., Faith in Christ, the Eucharist as Food of Love.</th>
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<tr>
<td>St. Mary Parish, Ponca City, Lenten Mission, Feb. 17, 18 and 19 at 7 p.m. with Father Kevin Bterrman.</td>
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<td>Epiphany Parish, Oklahoma City, Lenten Mission, Feb. 24, 25 and 26 with Father Boyer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Oklahoma City, Lenten Mission, Feb. 25 and 26 and Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. each evening with Father Jim Goins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christ the King Parish, Oklahoma City, Penance Service, Wednesday, Feb. 27 at 7 p.m.</td>
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<td>St. Patrick Parish, Oklahoma City, Penance Service, Feb. 20 at 6 p.m.</td>
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March

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Enid, Penance Service, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m.</td>
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<td>St. John Nepomuk Parish, Yukon, Penance Service, Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>St John the Baptist Parish, Edmond, Penance Service, March 4 at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Epiphany Parish, Oklahoma City, Penance Service, March 10 at 5 p.m.</td>
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<td>St. Mark, Norman, Lenten Mission, March 10, 11 and 12. Guest preacher Brendan Moss, OSB (St. Meinrad).</td>
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<td>St. Francis of Assisi Church, Oklahoma City, Lenten Penance Rite, Tuesday, March 12 at 7 p.m.</td>
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<td>St. Peter Parish, Woodward, Penance Service, March 13 at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>St. Monica Parish, Edmond, Penance Service, March 15 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Ann Church, Elgin, Penance Service, March 18 at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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O’Connor — Catholic Charities Lives the Faith

By Ray Dyer

Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Six months before 168 people lost their lives to a terrorist’s bomb, Catholic Charities moved from its office a few blocks from the downtown Murrah Federal Building to its new home on Classen Boulevard. Tim O’Connor calls that move a “turning point” for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

O’Connor officially stepped down from his position as executive director for Catholic Charities earlier this month. After a few months of getting acquainted with the organization and the community it serves, his successor, Patrick Raglow, has scrapped the “interim” label and has assumed the role of executive director of the Catholic Charities ministry.

O’Connor spent 28 years leading Catholic Charities. When he started in 1984, it was a ministry that he held on about $400,000. Today, it’s a multi-faceted organization that last year topped $2 million in donor support.

When Archbishop Charles Salatka hired O’Connor in 1984 to lead Catholic Charities, its focus was mainly on adoption and refugee services. Those areas are still highly regarded but today there is considerably more.

Catholic Charities now focuses on serving the homeless, especially women and children, and is heavily involved in responding to long-term needs for those impacted by disasters such as fires and tornadoes.

Under O’Connor’s watch, Catholic Charities expanded into housing for senior adults and families living in less than moderate incomes. Faith Community Nursing is a ministry that now provides care to those in need in a number of parishes throughout the Archdiocese, and Catholic Charities today operates offices in Clinton, Enid, Lawton and Guymon as well as Oklahoma City.

Transitional housing for those working to assimilate back into the community and the workforce is supported by Catholic Charities as is the Saint Joseph Counseling Center that addresses individual and family concerns.

Immigrants to Oklahoma turn to Catholic Charities for an array of assistance, including legal services. And under O’Connor, Catholic Charities has developed a strong voice in areas of social action, legislative advocacy and education all rooted in Catholic Social Teaching.

But it was April 19, 1995, that O’Connor never views as Catholic Charities on a new course. Oklahomans know the day well. Timothy McVeigh filled a truck with fertilizer and exploded it in front of the Murrah Federal Building, killing 168 people, including 19 children enrolled in an onsite day care.

“I think after the bombing, people perceived Catholic Charities in a different way,” O’Connor said. He said through the grace of God, Catholic Charities had just its move from downtown Oklahoma City to its new home on Classen, a little over a mile from the Murrah Building.

“If we had still been downtown, we would not have been able to function,” O’Connor said. “The streets of the offices were closed for days after the bombing.”

Daily Oklahoman Publisher to be Honorary Ambassador at Green Tie Gala

By Greg Horton

For the Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Christopher Reen, publisher of the Daily Oklahoman, will be the honorary ambassador at this year’s Green Tie Gala on Friday, March 8. The gala is held annually to raise support for Catholic Charities of Oklahoma City’s homeless services. Specifically, the funds raised support the ministries of the Sanctuary Women’s Development Center in Oklahoma City and The Holy Family Home in Midwest City.

Reen said he was happy to be a part of the gala because he believes in the ministry of Catholic Charities and the two ministries that benefit from the evening. As part of the evening’s events, Reen will be offering a few words about Catholic Charities’ ministry.

“I want to focus on the importance of Catholic Charities’ ideal that they serve any and all needy people in our community,” Reen said. “They uphold the Benedictine ideal of helping without prejudice.”

Reen’s family moved to the metro nine years ago when he was offered a position at the Oklahoman. Two years later, he was promoted to president and publisher. His family attends St. John the Baptist Church in Edmond.

“We moved here from upstate New York, and we really caught this city at the right time,” he said. “We didn’t have any real opinion about Oklahoma City at the time, but as we transitioned here, we could feel the momentum.”

Reen said he looks forward to helping support two vital ministries to women and children. “Both these ministries help women and children who have been in circumstances like homelessness and domestic violence,” he said. “Catholic Charities helps them get on a path to prosperity, while supporting their basic human rights.”

Sanctuary Women’s Center began in April 2009 when Our Lady of Guadalupe Church near Stockyard City was converted into a pilot project of Catholic Charities. The ministry focuses on women and children, trying to assist them from homelessness or transitional housing to permanent housing. Additionally, according to Catholic Charities, the ministry seeks “to provide social services to homeless and at-risk women and their children including resource referral and assistance accessing services such as day care and Early Head Start, vocational and employment development, solution-focused advocacy and self-efficacy group.”

The Holy Family Home in Midwest City provides temporary residence and homelessness and community-based services to women and children. The new program was launched in 2012 utilizing a wholistic approach to allow residents to work with professional staff, setting goals regarding job training, employment, education, income and personal growth to create their own program that will lead them to independence.

The Green Tie Gala is tasked with raising the $800,000 required to fully fund these two ministries. Toward that end, the gala includes an auction, featuring a signed Kevin Durant jersey, a signed Russell Westbrook jersey, court-seat for an upcoming Thunder game, clothing from Mr. Ocey’s, a dinner for 18 with Father Rick Stansberry at The Petroleum Club, and a weekend getaway to Bison Bluff Ranch. A video presentation will be shown prior to Reen’s speech, featuring the work of Sanctuary and The Holy Family Home. Reen said he will also touch on the importance of a strong Catholic community, reflecting on his upbringing in a devout Catholic family and Catholic schools in New York.

The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at The Sherrin Hilton. More information is available at Catholic Charities of Oklahoma City’s website, or by calling (405) 523-3900.

Following the bombing, workers with Catholic Charities sprang into action. O’Connor said Archbishop Eusebius Beltran approved purchasing an array of services for those killed in the bombing, alleviating that burden for the families who were devastated by the violent action.

Besides gathering the death certificates, Catholic Charities also stayed connected to the families. Counseling was offered as well as long-term assistance. Parishies impacted by the bomb received a great deal of compassion from Catholic Charities.

“Saint John’s in Edmond lost eight parishioners,” O’Connor said. Another segment of the community, the Vietnamese, were deeply impacted by the bombing. This growing population had fled a war-torn country only to see violence on a massive scale follow them to their new home.

“Our reaction to the bombing caused the perception of Catholic Charities to change, both in the community as well as the Church,” O’Connor said.

O’Connor said he is proud of the “ecumenical work” done during his 28 years with Catholic Charities. “I think we’ve built a lot of bridges as we came together as faith-based organizations.”

He’s also proud that readers of The Oklahoman newspaper last year named Catholic Charities the winner of the Readers Choice Award. While not opposed to government support, O’Connor said he is moved by the fact Catholic Charities is able to do what it does with virtually all local funding, meaning its support comes from those who believe in what it does.

In O’Connor’s words, Catholic Charities lives the Faith.
Catholic women from across Oklahoma will have the opportunity to view a relic from a future saint at their upcoming conference. A lack of hair from Blessed Teresa of Calcutta will be available for veneration at the Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference on March 2. The keynote speaker will also talk about her experiences working with Mother Teresa.

In 1993, Pope John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa, who died in 1997. The process leading up to the beatification has been the shortest in modern history. Less than two years after Mother Teresa’s death, the Pope waived the normal five-year waiting period and allowed the immediate opening of her canonization cause. The seventh annual Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference will be held on Saturday, March 2 at the Meridian Conference Center at 1-40 and Meridian in Oklahoma City.

The conference will include a morning Mass with Archbishop Paul Coakley, Adoration, Reconciliation, and a vendor area. Four general sessions and two new breakout sessions for teens, featuring nationally and locally known speakers, have been scheduled, and vendors have contracted to set up booths selling books, clothing and religious items. Through Feb. 18, the registration fee is $50, and $30 for students, and includes a box lunch and drink. After Feb. 18, the registration fee is $60, and will be accepted as space permits. Registrations can be submitted on the conference website using PayPal, or by mailing in a registration form available on the website or in parish offices.

Author and national speaker Susan Conroy will give two presentations: Mother Teresa’s Lessons of Love and Sacramental Sanctity. As an idealistic young volunteer, author Susan Conroy spent a summer serving in one of Mother Teresa’s orphanages and in the Home for the Dying. This is an account you won’t soon forget, told with simple and loving directness by an eyewitness.

The End of the Present World and the Mysteries of the Future Life

This is the book that so greatly influenced the life and spirituality of St. Therese, “the greatest saint of modern times.” Learn more about Susan at www.susanconroy.com.

Dr. Mary Martin, practicing in Oklahoma City, is one of the nation’s few NFP-only obstetrician-gynecologists.

Barefoot, Pregnant and Stupid: What Catholicism Actually Teaches about Women’s Health Care

How can a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist make a living without resorting to birth control pills for the treatment of ectopic pregnancy, or acne or painful menstrual cramps? Come listen as Dr. Martin relates her poignant and humorous faith conversion to one of the fewer than 50 ob/gyn physicians in North America who practices in full compliance with Catholic doctrine.

Learn more about Dr. Martin at www.marymartinmd.com.

Mary Poirier and her family travel throughout the country supervising the church through missions, retreats, conferences and concerts.

Family Intimacy, Sin and Redemption: A Testimony of HOPE

Mary shares her life testimony of struggle, triumph, loss and redemption. From childhood memories highlighting the importance of family intimacy to the devastating effects of sin and the healing power of the sacraments.

Learn more about Mary at www.prayerbreaks.org.

Speakers and topics for the teen sessions are:

Dr. Mary Martin

The “Pill” is not the answer to painful periods and other health concerns. Learn how an informed Catholic young woman should approach her doctor.

Lorryn McGarry

Lorryn McGarry lives in Edmond and has worked in teen ministries and as a Birth Choice counselor. 10 Life-Altering Steps to Finding Your Soulmate

Lorryn will walk you through practical and concrete steps to not only discern God’s Will for your life, but to also increase your chances of attracting the kind of man you have always dreamed of. For registration and more information, call (405) 396-6299, email gwoc@OCCConference.com, or visit the conference website at www.OCCConference.com.

Lenten Ladies Prayer Retreat Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — A Women’s Prayer Retreat will be held Saturday, Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. James the Greater Catholic Church, 4201 S. McKinley Ave.

All ladies are invited to attend this Lenten Prayer retreat. There is no charge to attend this retreat and no reservations are required. A soup and salad lunch will be provided by the Meridian Conference Center at 4:30 p.m. St. James the Greater Parish and the St. James Altar Society will serve the lunch. Desserts will be served courtesy of the Central Region Council of Catholic Women. Contact Jodie Ford at 831-8340 for any questions about the retreat.

This event is sponsored by St. James Altar Society and the Central Region Council of Catholic Women.

Women’s Conference to Feature Mother Teresa’s Lessons of Love

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma is accepting applications for college scholarships for the 2013-2014 academic year. All forms and required information must be submitted to the Foundation Office no later than Tuesday, April 2, 2013, in order to be considered. You can obtain an application from your pastor or Director of Religious Education, or you may download an application from the Foundation website at www.cfook.org.

Each year the Catholic Foundation awards college scholarships to an estimated 70 students from throughout the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The scholarship recipients are determined based on financial need, academic achievement and service to church and community. The recipient must be a full-time student and a permanent resident of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Scholarships are renewed for all recipients for four years of undergraduate study as long as the student maintains a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Scholarship committee chairman Alan Aneshansley, from Clinton’s St. Mary Church and Catholic Foundation Board member, commented, “Catholic Foundation is offering Catholic college students a $1,500 per year scholarship for up to four years of undergraduate study. This is a $6,000 value. Catholic students have received scholarships from the Foundation for over 40 years. The Foundation is proud of its record of giving back to the parishes throughout the Archdiocese in support of this wonderful education program.” While all scholarships are awarded regardless of the college or university chosen by the applicant, students attending a Catholic university receive double the Catholic Foundation award of $1,500. Additionally, St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee matches the Catholic Foundation scholarships for students attending this Catholic institution.

In addition to scholarships awarded from the Catholic Foundation Endowment Fund, special scholarships are awarded to students through several named funds at the Foundation. These include the Bob Little Pastoral Music Scholarship (for pastoral music majors); the C.W. and Frances Aneshansley Scholarship (for students from St. Mary Church, Clinton); the Amelia Davis and Elizabeth Davis Scholarship (for students from Enid, Okarche, El Reno); the Evelyn and Katherine Hau Scholarship (for students from Enid and Okarche); the Dr. and Mrs. Francis Duffy Scholarship (for students attending St. Gregory’s University); the P.B. Connelly Medical Scholarship (for a student attending the OU School of Medicine); and the Helen Hall Nursing Scholarship (for a student enrolled in a nursing school or program).

If you have any questions, please contact the Catholic Foundation office at (405) 721-4115.
Hoopsters Bring Hope to Oklahoma City Families

By Rex Hogan

For the Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Because of basketball players at the state’s four Catholic high schools, Oklahoma City Catholic Charities clients are staying warmer, are keeping cleaner and their babies are staying more comfortable.

The two-day Hoops 4 Hope tournament ended Jan. 19 at the Mount St. Mary gym. Athletes and students from Tulsa Casicia Hall and Bishop Kelley, and Oklahoma City Bishop McGuinness and Mount St. Mary donated clothes such as hats, gloves and scarves, soap and detergents, diapers, personal hygiene items, food and money for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

This was the second year the charity tournament featuring the four Catholic high schools was held. Last year, the teams played in Tulsa and gave donations to Tulsa Catholic Charities.

Will Banowsky, director of development for Oklahoma City Catholic Charities, said the tournament brought in “a U-Haul full of items.

“We’re still sorting through everything. We know we have 700 pairs of socks. We got a lot of diapers and laundry detergent. It’s just phenomenal,” Banowsky said.

Catholic Charities also received a $5,000 check.

“These things are going to help our clients for months and it’s really cut down on our expenses. I can’t really express in words what kind of a blessing this is,” he said.

The athletes started the tournament by attending Mass at Sacred Heart Church. Tulsa Bishop Edward J. Slattery delivered the homily.

“It’s ingrained in us to be the best. From an early age we hear, ‘Be a winner,’” Bishop Slattery said, “This event is about blessing. God has given you the gift of athletic ability. You should say to yourself, Dear Lord, I’m going to do my best, to use the talent you’ve given me.”

You should take away an increased consciousness that the call of a Christian, as Jesus said, is to take care of others first,” he said. The message wasn’t lost on Casicia Hall senior forward Jaime Rahilly. It was her father, Casicia Hall boys basketball coach Brian Rahilly, who helped start the first charity tournament last year.

“It’s more than just a basketball game. It’s us using our talents to give back,” she said.

“It’s schools from Tulsa and Oklahoma City coming together as one community and helping people who are not as fortunate as we are,” Rahilly said.

Mount St. Mary senior forward Dylan Murray said the bishop’s message is clear.

“This is showing how kids as competitive as us can come together and donate for a really good cause,” he said.

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Spring Parish Faith and Ministry Formation In-Service Series Offered

The spring Parish Faith and Ministry Formation presentations will include a three-part Parish Office Staff In-Service series, Lenten Reflections in English and Spanish and Training for Liturgical Ministers.

Training to support parish office staff will be offered on three Thursdays, Feb. 21, March 21 and April 24 from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Topics will include the role of staff in parish ministry, best practices for church office operations, healthy boundaries and strengthening communication skills.

Lenten reflections will explore the topics of “Forgiveness” on Saturday, March 2, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. in Spanish, and Sunday, March 3, 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in English.

A presentation on “Losses: What Do I Say?” will be held on Thursday, March 7, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Skills and responses will be discussed that show support, love and compassion when dealing with loss and tragedy.

“Using Rituals for the Healing Process” will be held on Thursday, March 14, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Rituals that have been used to promote healing and how to incorporate them into our lives will be discussed.

Communion Minister and Lector Training will be held on Saturday, March 9 in English to parishioners who would like to strengthen their skills and knowledge of these liturgical ministries. The training for Communion Ministers will be from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and for Lectors from 10:30 a.m. until noon.

More information will be available in the Sooner Catholic and on the Archdiocesan website. This series is offered by the Parish Outreach and Program Development Office at Catholic Charities and by the Archdiocesan Pastoral Ministry Office.

For more details, call Catholic Charities at (405) 521-3003 or the Pastoral Ministry Office at (405) 721-4208.
Jesus did not come to seek the consent of men, but to give testimony to the truth. The true prophet does not obey anyone other than God and places himself at the service of truth, ready to pay in person, he added from the window of the Apostolic Palace.

He explained that love and truth are "two names for the same reality" and "two names of God. The pontiff added that the Sunday liturgy echoes the words of St. Paul. "Love does not boast, it is not puffed up with pride, it is not disrespectful, it does not seek its own interests and does not get angry," said Pope Benedict. "It does not take into account wrongdoings but rejoices with the wrongdoer, does not rejoice over a wrong suffered, does not rejoice over a wrongdoer, but he calmly passes through the angry people and leaves," said Pope Benedict.

"This way also he is able to represent him and serve him in others," he said. He talked about the Sunday reading in which Jesus reads a passage of the Old Testament at a synagogue.

Jesus said that "no prophet is accepted in his own country" and named two miracles performed by the prophets Elijah and Elisha. "At that point the reaction was unanimous as all rose to honor him down and to try to throw him off a cliff, but he calmly passes through the angry people and leaves," said Pope Benedict. "Why did Jesus want to cause this failure?" he asked. "But this is precisely the point: Jesus did not come to seek the consent of men, but to give testimony to the truth."
By Ray Dyer
Sooner Catholic

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Hannah Whitman has attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C., for 12 consecutive years.

She’s 18.

A student at St. Gregory’s University, Whitman joined some 225 other Oklahoma Catholics on a cross-country bus journey to our nation’s capital. On Jan. 25 they joined with more than 500,000 others, who like them, made their way to Washington for one purpose, to be a voice for the voiceless, the unborn who since 1973 have lost their lives to abortion.

This was the 40th anniversary of the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that made abortion on demand the law of the land. Since that time, an estimated 55 million lives have been lost to abortion. It’s a number that has not gone unnoticed by the under 30 generation.

“History” of the March generates a sense of purpose, to be a voice for the voiceless, the unborn who since 1973 have lost their lives to abortion.

Prior to the March, students were looking the street and applauded, with some cheering wildly as the pro-lifers turned away.

At one point along the way, graphic images of aborted babies were shown on a large screen. An organization that believes the public mind-set will not change completely until people understand the violence that is involved in abortion was responsible for the display. Some marchers stared at the images, while others could not and turned away.

For student Ashley Dale, this was her fifth time to take part in the March for Life. She said the event is a way for young people from around the nation to come together. Realizing they are all united in the pro-life effort empowers them to push for change, she said.

Laura Rusko said this was her first time to take part in the March for Life. She said coming to understand the “history” of the March generates a desire to “help spread the word.”

Vincent Carrasco, a St. Greg’s student, put it this way.

“This is my third year going on the National March for Life and every year I come I always get something different out of it. It really is amazing to be a part of something that you know will help the faces of other people. It is comforting to know that we are not alone in this fight and that there are people out there that are willing to stand up with you and be the voice for those who can’t speak for themselves.”

Oklahoma Catholics Join National March for Life

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For the 40th time a group of people gathered on the Mall in Washington to protest the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision of 1973 legalizing abortion. It was a cold day in D.C. with temperatures hovering around 25 with added snow in the afternoon. The crowd numbered in the hundreds of thousands and they marched from their gathering just above the Washington Monument, facing the Capitol, to the Supreme Court building. It was an expression of the right of the people to gather and petition their government for redress of their grievances. In this case it was for redress of the 55,000,000 lives that have been taken since the inception of legalized abortion in the United States.

As we walked, the one question kept pounding through our heads: Is it worth it? We have gathered now for 40 years, are we doing the right thing? Of course the answer keeps coming down to a simple proposition: What else are we to do? At this point there is no other pathway forward that is clearer than this.

We can, of course, work through the political system to change this aspect of our collective political lives. But the growing body of law surrounding this Court decision makes any political accomplishment less and less likely. It also contributes to a growing disillusionment with the political process.

The Catholic Church in its abortion position has been delivered over to the major political party that opposes abortion. But in the full-throated Catholic support of this position, the leaders of the party have ignored other Catholic positions on the dignity of human life in a variety of issues from capital punishment to torture to the extent that we have been embarrassed. We have become a political pawn in a game much larger than ours. Political solutions, at this point, seem far distant and frankly distasteful.

But to cease working for such a solution is just as unpalatable. If we do not bring political pressure, we acquiesce in a barbaric practice that embarrasses us all in civil society. Even liberal European societies are red-faced at our unrestrained abortion laws that make it legal to take the life of a child in utero virtually up to the moment of delivery. To make no noise, to decide not to capitalize on our political voice is to cede the day to those who in their political ascendency are quite happy to keep the status murderously quo.

We can never forget that millions and millions of citizens have never been born due to the presumptions that produced this policy. Shrugging our shoulders is not an option.

Of course we have to reach out to serve those most in need. Our policies for child-raising, adoption, medical care, motherhood and job participation have to be congruent with our concern for the health and well-being of children. We can never tire in our support of those programs and possibilities that help out parents and their children, no matter the circumstances or the situations of the parents. At the same time, it is not sufficient simply to subsume our citizenry in personal charity and forget our responsibility as a people of laws. We have to redress this savagery in our midst or else we risk becoming savages ourselves.

So we march. It is indefinite, it is uncertain, it is an expression of weakness and not of strength, but it is an expression that matters. And as our presence grows on the Mall, then our conviction is strengthened that some day this barbarous practice must end. At least we can remember, as we stamp our feet and struggle to stay warm, that we are drawn together in our opposition. If we can celebrate no other success we know we are not alone. And the beginning of success is to grow a community of those who care. When our community of conviction grows large enough and loud enough, then the seed we nurture now will grow and flower.

Two other things will have to happen. The first is that we will have to convince the country that we love those who are damaged by this violence. We are not out to change their minds, we are on the Mall because we want to rescue the lost. When the country can celebrate that they have been found in the midst of their being lost, then we will have begun to bring about change.

The other is when economists, demographers and businessmen begin talking about the price of our choices, then we’ll be in a position to effect change. These voices will be cold and distant but they will be effective. That’s when individuals will begin to see something beyond the decision to abort, when there is another future to contemplate.

We make our case now based on what God wants and we quote Scripture, appeal to reason and address morality. But God can speak and realize His will just as effectively through the tax roles, the future of Social Security and profit and loss statements.

When the voice of God becomes clear there, the future of this law will be in question. We have to have the faith to persevere and celebrate the truth even there.

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On the March

Above, twin sisters Emily and Margo Borders, daughters of Chris and Elizabeth Borders, St. John the Baptist, Edmond, met up in Washington, D.C. to participate in the 40th Annual Walk for Life. Emily is a freshman at Marquette University and Margo is a freshman at Boston College. Both took an overnight bus trip to attend the event. Despite the cold, snowy weather, they said it was “very powerful.” (Photo/courtesy). At right, top to bottom, Anthony Keiser, left, poses with students who rode St. Gregory’s University bus to the National March for Life; pro-life parents bundled up their young to take part in the March; and a couple of cold Oklahomans take part in the March for Life. (Photos/ Aliki Dyer)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A lack of faith in God can damage marriage, even to the point of affecting its validity, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“Faith in God, sustained by divine grace, is therefore a very important element for living in mutual dedication and conjugal fidelity,” he said.

The Pope said he was not suggesting there was a simple, automatic link "between the lack of faith and the invalidity of marriage.

Rather, he hoped “to draw attention to how such a lack may, although not necessarily, also hurt the goods of marriage,” given that referring to God’s plan “is inherent in the covenant of marriage.”

The Pope made his comments Jan. 26 during a meeting with members of the Roman Rota, a Vatican-based tribunal that deals mainly with marriage cases.

The current crisis of faith has brought with it a state of crisis for the Christian vision of marriage as an indissoluble bond between a man and a woman, the Pope said.

“The indissoluble covenant between man and woman does not require, for the purpose of sacramentality, the personal faith of those to be married,” he said. "What is required, as the minimum condition, is the intention of doing what the church does” when it declares a marriage is a sacrament.

While the question of intent should not be confused with the question of the individuals’ personal faith, “it is not always possible to completely separate them,” he said.

The Pope quoted Blessed John Paul II’s speech to the Vatican court in 2003 in which he said, “an attitude on the part of these getting married that does not take into account the supernatural dimension of marriage can render it null and void only if it undermines its validity on the natural level on which the sacramental sign itself takes place.”

“The Catholic Church has always recognized marriages between the non-baptized that become a Christian sacrament through the baptism of the spouses,” and it does not doubt “the validity of the marriage of a Catholic with a non-baptized person if it is celebrated with the necessary dispensation,” the late Pope had said.

Pope Benedict said such considerations need further reflection, especially in a secularized culture that puts little faith in a person’s ability to make a lifelong commitment and fosters an incorrect understanding of freedom and fulfillment.

Humanity is incapable of achieving what is truly good without God, the Pope said, and refusing God’s invitation “leads to a deep imbalance in all human relationships,” including marriage.

While faith in God is “a very important” part of a marriage lived with commitment and loyalty, it does not mean that “loyalty and other (conjugal) properties are not possible in natural marriage between non-baptized” spouses, who still receive the graces that come from God.

It’s not the first time Pope Benedict has called for a closer reflection on the impact of an absence of faith in determining marriage annulments.

During an unscripted question-and-answer session with priests in northern Italy in 2005, the Pope noted the problem of people who married in the church not because they were believers but because they wanted a traditional ceremony.

He said that when he was prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he asked several bishops conferences and experts to study the problem, which in effect was “a sacrament celebrated without faith.”
**Obituary**

**John A. Coakley Jr.**

John A. Coakley Jr., 94, formerly of Overland Park, Kan., died Jan. 30 at St. Ann’s Home in Oklahoma City. John was born Nov. 5, 1918, in City Island, N.Y. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II and served during the Korean Conflict.

He was preceded in death by Mary, his wife of 44 years; and by his parents, John and Edna; his brothers, James and Richard; and a sister, Edna Grady.

He is survived by his second wife, Stella Bisbee Coakley of Overland Park, Kan.; sons, John III of Merriam, Kan., and Paul (Archbishop of Oklahoma City); as well as by a daughter, Chris Berry of Tablequeah.

He is also survived by a brother, Robert of Dulles, Va.; and by grandsons, John IV and Brandon Berry, as well as by a granddaughter, Sophia Berry.

John was a lifelong Catholic and a Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus. He spent his working life in the retail business, most recently as the owner of The Sacristie in Overland Park.

A Vigil was held on Sunday, Feb. 3 at Our Lady’s Cathedral in Oklahoma City. Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Feb. 5. Funeral arrangements were handled by Smith & Berry.

Memorial offerings may be sent to the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City for the education of seminarians.

**Catholic Charities Helps Human Trafficking Victims**

By Rex Hogan

**For the Sooner Catholic**

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma City is the crossroads for victims — including teenagers — who are being driven all over the United States and forced to work as sex slaves.

That’s why Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is working to assist the victims of the human trafficking trade.

Because of its location in the United States as an intersection of major interstate highways, Oklahoma City sees an unusual number — mostly females — of sex trade victims being driven through the state. Sometimes they are forced to work the streets of Oklahoma City and sometimes they are on their way to larger cities.

Catholic Charities was among the dozens of nonprofit and law enforcement agencies — all members of the Oklahoma Human Trafficking Task Force — that sponsored a candlelight vigil Jan. 25 at the state Capitol.

Tim O’Connor, who retired Feb. 1 as Catholic Charities executive director, said the organization has a long history of helping victims of human trafficking.

“We do a lot of work in the area of human trafficking involving immigration issues,” O’Connor said. “Then we can access them to case management of other programs we have.”

**Obituary**

**Sister Frances Eugenie**

Sister Frances Eugenie (Florence Brewster Harding), Discalced Carmelite Nun, died peacefully Jan. 8, 2013, at home in the Carmelite Monastery in Piedmont. She was born May 29, 1917, in Commerce Island, N.Y. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II and served during the Korean Conflict.

She was gifted with a listening, understanding heart. She lived up to her title of Our Lady of Hope.

She is survived by her parents, John and Edna; her brothers, Jim and John Patrick; and many nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews; and all her Sisters in the Community of Carmelites of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus at Villa Teresa Convent.

She was educated by the Mercy Sisters at Bishop John Carroll School and Catholic High (now called Bishop McGuinness High School). After graduation she answered God’s call and entered the religious community of the Carmelite Sisters, where she received the religious name of Sister Mary Mark of Our Lady of Hope.

While as a Carmelite, she taught many colleges and finally graduated University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond.

Affectately known as Sister M&M, she taught in Oklahoma for 25½ years at St. Patrick (Sand Springs), St. Charles Borromeo, Villa Teresa and St. Philip Neri (all in Oklahoma City), and eight years in California, (Our Lady of Guadalupe (Hermosa Beach), and Queen of Angels (Riverside). She also served as director of Our Holy Child School in Moore for two years and as the Carmelite Vocation Director for two years.

She was gifted with a listening, understanding, loving heart. She lived up to her title of Our Lady of Hope. She gave hope and love to everyone she knew and knew no stranger! She was never known to be or speak unkindly to anyone.

As an educator she was outstanding. Besides being popular with every staff and a blessing to parents, she was full of good sense, humor and respect for each of her students. No child left her class without learning to read! Her experiences would fill a book and be a best-seller!

The doctors, staff and residents of Grace Living Center in Bethany were so grateful for her presence in their lives. Grateful and enduring thanks go to her former doctors, nurses, caregivers and the staff at Grace Living Center and the Good Shepherd Hospice during the last few years. And blessings be on her many visitors who cheered her and whom she cheered.

**Obituary**

**Sister Mary Mark McGuire**

Sister Mary Mark McGuire, member of the Carmelite Sisters of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus, was taken up to the Lord on the first Friday of February, 2013.

She was born, baptized and raised in Oklahoma City. Her parents are Clara Ann; brothers, Ernie, Jim and John Patrick; and many nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews; and all her Sisters in the Community of Carmelites of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus at Villa Teresa Convent.

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Hace unas semanas emitió un Llamado a la Oración a través de la Arquidiócesis invitando a la gente a orar por un mayor respeto por la vida, la fortaleza de los matrimonios y la promoción del amor de la libertad religiosa. Me gustaría enfocarme aquí en el matrimonio.

La Iglesia Católica tiene un gran interés en la promoción de matrimonios fuertes y saludables, basados sobre el plan de Dios para el matrimonio y la familia. La familia es la célula más básica de la Iglesia. Es la Iglesia do-méstica. También es la piedra angular sobre la cual se construye la sociedad humana y la civilización. Por estas y otras muchas razones tomamos muy en serio el matrimonio. Requerimos que aquellas parejas que se preparen para el matrimonio participen en programas de preparación matrimonial que les ayuden a equiparlos para una vida matrimonial saludable y santa.

Seguimos ofreciendo diversas oportunidades para el enriquecimiento del matrimonio y la vida familiar, desde el descubrimiento de la vida humana hasta el misterio de la unión sacramental. Un buen apoyo a través de la fe que nos une es la promoción de matrimonios para todos los cristianos y, en particular, para los que se casan por primera vez.

En la fe somos llamados a acoger el mandamiento que Jesús nos dio a amar al prójimo y a servirlo (cf. Mt 22,39). De aquí deriva la necesidad de una educación moral que nos enseñe a amar a nuestro prójimo como Jesús amó a los demás. De esta forma, el amor al prójimo ya no sea un mandamiento abstracto, sino que se convierta en un acto de amor genuino que parta el pan de la Palabra de Dios, el evangelio, al mundo que lo acoge. Un amor que se manifieste plenamente en el servicio de los demás.

En una cultura de consumismo, donde el amor a nuestro prójimo puede parecer sólo una plegaria, es necesario hacer un esfuerzo por hacer que el amor a nuestro prójimo sea un acto de amor genuino que parta el pan de la Palabra de Dios, el evangelio, al mundo que lo acoge. Un amor que se manifieste plenamente en el servicio de los demás.

En el campo de la formación de las generaciones jóvenes, la Iglesia Católica tiene un gran interés en promover la educación integral del joven, en la medida en que este se forme para el servicio de los demás. En este sentido, es necesario que el joven se forme en el amor al prójimo, que se manifieste en un acto de amor genuino que parta el pan de la Palabra de Dios, el evangelio, al mundo que lo acoge. Un amor que se manifieste plenamente en el servicio de los demás.

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Cortes Enseñanzas de Apologetica Católica No 9

Emprendido ya el recorrido por la selva espesa de la doctrina protestante, desde hace quince días. Nos mueve seguir profundizando al respecto, no para hablar de él o para criticarlo, sino para hablar de cómo dicha doctrina ha separado de la Iglesia Católica; sino para clarificar su postura doctrinal sustentada en dos principios: Sola Scriptura y Sola Gracia. Como quiera que dicha postura no disgusta a nuestra iglesia, hemos de hacer aclaraciones en la última entrega de este periódico, no solo a los que se contradicen. Veámos en el número anterior de Sooner, como los protestantes interpretan lo referente al bautismo de niños. Como la Biblia no dice textualmente “hay que bautizar niños” entonces según ellos no se pueden bautizar, y del mismo modo se contrae la ablución, el agua de bautismo. Por eso, veámos también que siguiendo su lógica textual, la Biblia tampoco dice de manera literal y expresa que “hay que bautizar niños ni tampoco que se pueden bautizar los adultos.” Así entonces, como no dice lo uno ni lo otro, entonces, ¿Cuál sería el criterio de interpretación, pues vemos que con SOLO BIBLIA no se llega a un acuerdo; los luteranos bautizan niños; los bautistas no bautizan niños y ambos son protestantes y tienen la misma Biblia? Por lo tanto, tiene que haber otro criterio u otra manera de dar solución en este aparente conflicto interpretativo.

Pues bien, aquí es donde aparece la Tradición y su Magisterio, que enseña y explica como la Iglesia Católica ha entendido y enseñado este aspecto sobre si se bautizan niños o no. Permítame el lector, ilustrarlo e introducirlo en los criterios teológicos que de una manera básica para afirmar que, se DEBEN BAUTIZAR LOS NIÑOS, así la Biblia no lo exprese textualmente.

Daremos en principio que dentro del protestantismo hay una fuerte corriente cuyo origen histórico se encuentra en el movimiento anabaptista del siglo XVI que niega la validez del bautismo de los niños. Expliquemos entonces porque la doctrina de la invalidez del bautismo de niños no se basa en la Biblia. Para entender la Biblia hay que tener claro el concepto de alianza. Dios establece una alianza con cada época. Desde Abraham hasta la venida de Cristo, Dios había mostrado su presencia que quería a los dioses que el reino de los cielos. Para entender la Biblia se necesita que Dios hubiera dicho que los dioses fueran excluidos de la alianza; de hecho se observa que Jesucristo dio la citación en este sentido de alianza, cuando Pedro acabo su sermón en Pentecostés, llamo a todos a aceptar a Cristo, entrando en la Nueva Alianza: “Arrepentíos y bautítase en el nombre de Jesus, para remisión de pecados, y recibiréis el don del Espíritu Santo.” (Hechos 2,38-39). Es decir, Dios quería que los dioses estuvieran en alianza con Él y puesto que en el Nuevo Testamento solo figura el bautismo como signo para entrar en la Nueva Alianza, ¿por qué no deberían ser bautizados los niños de los creyentes? Así pues no nos debemos extrañar que la Iglesia ha querido y ha practicado el bautismo de los niños desde que la Iglesia Histórica se ha separado de la Iglesia Católica. Vemos como los hermanos protestantes al no tener la Tradición y el Magisterio que enseña cómo interpretar la Biblia, discuten solo con la Biblia y la interpretación privada y textual, con la Sagrada Escritura, trayendo consigo inexactitudes, errores, equivocaciones. Todo ello hace en primer lugar, que se aparte más de la verdad de Cristo, que se aparten más entre ellos como protestantes y naturalmente obtuvieron que la relación con la Ideología Católica, sea cada vez más contradictoria.

Conclusion: Cuando venga un hermano separado, con Biblia en mano y le pregunto como suelen hacer; “¿Dónde dice la Biblia que se debe bautizar los niños?” Entonces usted le contesta y donde dice la Biblia que no se pueden bautizar? Hermano católico como ya está ilustrado sabrá que responder; no porque ya conozca algunos textos bíblicos que le respaldaran la respuesta, (Artículo de Sooner Católica que hace quince días) sino por la base de entender y los criterios que se tienen acerca de niños. La Alianza de Dios con nosotros, desde el Antiguo Testamento hasta el Nuevo.

El Padre Raúl Sánchez, original de Bogotá, Colombia, recientemente en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City es Pastor Asociado en la Parroquia San Juan Bautista de Oklahoma. El Padre Raúl Sánchez es abogado en Derecho y Relaciones de la Universidad de la Gran Colombia, de su país. Y es Licenciado en Teología de la Universidad Mayor de Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Raúl Sánchez

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La obligación de Cuaresma, según lo determinado para los católicos en los Estados Unidos por nuestros obispos, requiere que se observe el ayuno el Miércoles de Ceniza y Viernes de Cuaresma. La ley de la abstinencia debe ser observada el Miércoles de Ceniza y todos los Viernes de Cuaresma.

¿Quién debe abstenerse? ¿Quién debe ayunar? ¿Qué significa la abstinencia? ¿Qué implica la obligación de Cuaresma, según lo determinado para los católicos en los Estados Unidos? Como católicos, tenemos que responder a estas preguntas, y hacer de nuestro ayuno, una afirmación de nuestra fe y compromiso con la vida de Cristo. Cuaresma no es solo un periodo de penitencia, sino una oportunidad para acercarnos más a Cristo y a la comunidad de creyentes.

El ayuno es una forma de esforzarnos por vivir nuestra fe. Es un signo de nuestra quehacer religioso, y nos ayuda a estar más cerca de Dios. La abstinencia de carne durante Cuaresma es una forma de demostrar nuestra fe y compromiso con la vida de Cristo. Es un momento para recordar que somos seguidores de Cristo y que nuestra vida debe ser un testimonio de nuestra fe.

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Youth See Despair, Need for Action for Those Faced With Poverty

By Steve Gust
For the Sooner Catholic
EDMOND — For part of one night, more than 100 youth at St. Eugene Catholic Church youth group got a taste of what it might be like to be poor, and they didn’t like it one bit.

A “poverty simulation” was held at the church Jan. 30, and the teens quickly learned about some of the challenges faced daily by thousands of people right here in Oklahoma County.

The program is sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, a state agency that also sees too many real life struggles by people trying to carve out an existence with too many bills and not enough income.

The agency uses the “poverty simulation” to heighten the awareness and understanding of the day-to-day poverty they say 11.8 percent of Oklahomans experience.

Rebekah Zahn-Pittser, a program planner for the Department of Commerce, said the simulation is a great way to help everyone see what it’s like to be poor.

While some of the students enjoyed the drill, Zahn-Pittser made the objective clear.

“You can’t change the status quo, you can’t change the system,” she told the students before it started. She also asked how many students had had at least one meal the day before or slept somewhere warm. All raised their hands.

“There was a goal she wanted each to share after it was over,” she said.

“We should all be motivated to help those in need,” she said.

Dean Hoffhines, a teacher at Edmond St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School, also volunteered for the role of teacher at the simulation.

“We had to deal with some situations where the students would get into trouble,” he said. “One brought a gun where the students would get in and they were going to sell wedding rings, cameras, televisions or other goods at the pawn station.

While being interviewed, two young women with “I’m hungry” signs on them approached Hoffhines and asked if he would be interested in purchasing illegal narcotics.

“We’re poor. We need money,” they said.

Hoffhines declined the purchase and directed them to the mock social service agency.

The most popular stations during the drill, as they are in real life, were at the quick loan and pawn shops. Students would try to sell wedding rings, cameras, televisions or other goods at the pawn station. The items were represented by photographs. One of the pawn store owners, Damian Rodriguez, was frugal with the sellers.

“I got a million of these cameras here, I just can’t give you that much for it,” he said.

In real life, Rodriguez is a business owner and poverty is an issue that alarms him.

“I read where 18 percent of people in Oklahoma County are living in poverty,” he said. “It’s tragic. It really is.”

Zahn-Pittser has seen it firsthand also.

“Last week I had a mother of five call me,” she said. “Her husband had left and she had been evicted. She needed help.”

Otto Nieman, father of one of the youth, also had heard stories.

“I knew a woman with a baby, who was married to a drug abuser,” he said. “She would pray not to get an unexpected bill, like a blowout tire, because she just couldn’t afford any unforeseen expense.”

At the end of the evening, Zahn-Pittser asked students how many had bettered themselves during the exercise. Less than 10 hands went up.

She asked how many had ended up with “hungry” signs after not being able to afford groceries. About half answered affirmatively.

Some of the students also had comments.

“People should be doing something about this,” one young man said.

“There are people living in tents and having no food. It’s not right.”

Another student didn’t look forward to growing up.

“Being poor is just terrible,” she said.
Health-Care Openings
apply in person between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday following noon Mass, Saturday following 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.

10 Annual Men’s Conference at the Embassy Suites Convention Center. The day begins at 9 a.m. and concludes with Mass celebrated by Archbishop Oakley at 4:30 p.m. Special sessions are planned for teens and registration can be made at www.Catholicmen.net.

16 The Lay Missionaries of Charity, the Secular (LAY) Order of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish, Edmond, on the first and third Saturday of each month with Mass at 7:30 a.m. in the chapel. For more information, contact Tony Harreldon at (405) 341-2199, or tnmoklahoma@sbcglobal.net.

16 The Community of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus, Oklahoma Community and Province of St. Therese, meets at Little Flower Church, OKC, from 12 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Katherine Payne, (405) 210-4826, or Betty Sharp, (405) 408-4275.

17-25 Monthly Novena to The Infant Jesus. Nine days of novenas to Infant Jesus of Prague monthly. During these nine days, the novena prayers will be as follows: Monday-Friday following noon Mass, Saturday following 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.

17 The Secular Franciscan Order of St. Francis Fraternity meets at 1:15 p.m. at St. Anthony’s Hospital Chapel. For more information, call Jim Disbrow at 830-8688.

17 Lenten Mission at St. Mary Parish, Ponca City, at 7 p.m. with Father Kevin Ratterman.


20 Penance Service at St. Patrick Parish, Oklahoma City, 6 p.m.

22-27 Lenten Mission at Christ the King Parish with the Apostles of the Interior Life.

24-26 Lenten Mission at Epiphany Parish, Oklahoma City, with Father Boyer.

Jobs Box
Health-Care Openings
The Center of Family Love has employment opportunities for an Assistant Director of Nursing, Certified Dietary Manager and Direct Care Staff (paid training offered for Direct Care positions). If interested, email your resume to HIL@cfiloc.org or apply in person between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday at 635 W. Texas Ave. in Okarche.

FEBRUARY
10 Charismatic Healing Mass, 5:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 3901 S.W. 29th St., Oklahoma City. For more information call the church office at (405) 685-4806.

12 Catholic War Veterans (of any war/conflict) will meet the second Tuesday of each month in the community room of St. Ann Retirement Center at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Father M. Price Oswalt at (405) 567-3404.

13 Ash Wednesday
13 Catholic War Veterans USA.
Oklahoma Memorial Post 168 will hold their monthly meeting at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Pedro A. Moreno. See Faith in Christ: Gift and Response at (405) 739-0036 or by email at OklaPost168@cox.net.

13 Center located at 3900 SE 29th St. in the Sunnylane Family Reception Hall at (405) 739-0036 or by email at OklaPost168@cox.net.

16-21 Holy Angels Lenten Mission, Faith in Christ: Gift and Response with speaker Pedro A. Moreno. See the web page for full description.

Did you know?
You can follow the Archdiocese on Facebook and Twitter! Find the links to our pages on the Archdiocesan web page at www.archokc.org. Look for the logos at the foot of each page.

For a full calendar and up-to-date jobs box, visit soonercatholic.org or use this QR Code with your smart phone.

Agents Wanted
Full time agent positions available. To learn more, call Kevin Pierce at 405-514-7660.

To watch an agent in action, scan here...
## Opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration

### Oklahoma City...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Adoration Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacred Heart Church</td>
<td>2706 S. Shartel Avenue, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help</td>
<td>3214 N. Lako, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>1st Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Pastoral Center Chapel</td>
<td>7501 N. Expressway, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>Monday, 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ the King Church</td>
<td>8805 Dorset Drive, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>Monday, 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Epiphany of the Lord</td>
<td>7336 W. Britton Road, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>TUESDAY, 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Angels Church</td>
<td>317 N. Blackwelder, Oklahoma City</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outside Oklahoma City...</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Saint Joseph Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALTUS</td>
<td>Prince of Peace Church</td>
<td>3rd Tuesday, 4 p.m. - 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANADARKO</td>
<td>Saint Patrick Church</td>
<td>Monday, 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARDMORE</td>
<td>Saint Mary Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACKWELL</td>
<td>Saint Joseph Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHANDLER</td>
<td>Our Lady of Sorrows Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHICKASHA</td>
<td>Holy Name of Jesus Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDMOND</td>
<td>Saint Damion of Molokai Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDMOND</td>
<td>Saint John the Baptist Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL RENO</td>
<td>St. Katharine Drexel Retirement Center</td>
<td>Monday, 11 a.m. - Noon; 11 a.m. - Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELGIN</td>
<td>Saint Ann Church</td>
<td>2nd Monday, 6:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENID</td>
<td>Saint Francis Xavier Church</td>
<td>Holy Hour for Vocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>GUYMON</td>
<td>Saint Peter Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, following Mass at 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HARRAH</td>
<td>Saint Teresa of Avila Church</td>
<td>Sunday, 2:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>KINGFISHER</td>
<td>Saints Peter and Paul Church</td>
<td>Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAWTON</td>
<td>Blessed Sacrament Church</td>
<td>Friday, 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. (followed by Benediction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWTON</td>
<td>Holy Family Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MADILL</td>
<td>Holy Cross Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>McLoud</td>
<td>Saint Vincent DePaul Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, following Mass at 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIDWEST CITY</td>
<td>Saint Philip Neri Church</td>
<td>Thursday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOORE</td>
<td>Saint Andrew Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORMAN</td>
<td>Saint Joseph Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONCA</td>
<td>Church of Saint Mary</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PONCA</td>
<td>Saint Mark the Evangelist Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEMINOLE</td>
<td>Immaculate Conception Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHAWNEE</td>
<td>St. Benedict Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STERLING</td>
<td>Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONAWA</td>
<td>Saint Joseph Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YUKON</td>
<td>Saint John Nepomuk Church</td>
<td>1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

707 E. Ponca Avenue

### Outside Oklahoma City...

1st Friday, Mass 8:30 a.m., Adoration 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (followed by Benediction)

## Parishioners kneel before the Eucharist. (CNS photo/J.D. Long-Garcia, Catholic Sun)