OKLAHOMA CITY — Laura Rudkins traveled from Hobart with her daughter, Amy, and several of her 33 grandchildren to hear Father Frank Pavone address the Rose Day audience that crammed inside the House and Senate chambers at the Oklahoma state Capitol. She was not disappointed in what she heard and witnessed.

“Father Pavone was so wonderful,” Rudkins said. “He makes people understand.” A parishioner at Saint Peter and Paul Parish in Hobart, she and her daughter said the trip to Oklahoma City was worth every bit of the effort. “Father’s message was very powerful,” said Amy Rudkins. This was their first time to attend Rose Day and both agreed the event is making a difference in promoting pro-life legislation in the state. Longtime observers of the event said it was the first time they could remember the audience filling the House chamber and spilling over into the Senate chamber.

Prior to Father Pavone’s address, dozens of lawmakers from both parties gathered in the House chamber waiting their turn to be introduced to the overflow audience. Pro-life supporters were busy making note of those politicians, who by their presence, appeared to indicate they would indeed vote pro-life on future issues, especially those abortion-related.

Father Pavone, the national director of Priests for Life, spent two days in Oklahoma, visiting with Catholic high school students in Tulsa and Oklahoma City and addressing an audience of about 70 that gathered at the Catholic Pastoral Center the evening before the Feb. 6 Rose Day.

Father Pavone told his listeners the abortion industry in the United States does not lose sleep over proposed laws that would limit or restrict abortion. Instead, the greatest fear for groups such as Planned Parenthood is the day will come when there are no doctors willing to perform abortions.

“In the past 10 to 12 years, half the stand-alone abortion clinics in the United States have closed,” Father Pavone told the Rose Day audience. He said fewer and fewer doctors are willing to take part in abortion. The reason, Father Pavone said, is “people have grown tired of killing. This is why you never hear of a pro-life person converting to pro-choice. It doesn’t happen,” Father Pavone said.

Frequently, however, he said, those once strongly in favor of abortion become pro-life advocates.

continued on page 10
The Good News

Cathedral of Our Lady
February 10, 2008

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In the Name of Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior, I welcome all of you to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. It is a great joy to see so many of you gathered here for this Rite of Election.

Whether you are a catechumen or a candidate, whether you are a sponsor, a godparent or an instructor, whether you are a priest, deacon or layperson, you have come here today because you believe in Jesus and all that He has revealed and taught us. This is precisely what the Catholic Church is about. It is about Jesus who is our Lord and Savior. Truly the Catholic Church is a community of believers in Jesus. We believe that He established this Church and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, He continues to watch over it and to protect it. The Church is the Body of Christ and we are His members!

In my years as priest and bishop, I have on numerous occasions visited various prisons. On one such recent visit, I was being led to the inmates when I overhead a policewoman say, “I want to meet the archbishop.” Hearing that, I turned toward her, extended my hand and said:

“I am Archbishop Beltran.” I don’t know why she really wanted to meet me since her surprising response was: “I’m not a Catholic and I don’t go to church.” My reply was: “Well, you should go to church and find out what our Catholic faith is all about. You will be pleasantly surprised at what you discover!”

To you who are here today, I do not have to urge you to look into the Church. You have already done that. But, as your archbishop, I do need to remind you and to challenge you. When you become a Catholic, you must accept this gift of faith humbly, sincerely and gratefully. You must also commit yourself to live and practice our Catholic faith fully and completely because you will be a member of the Mystical Body of Christ.

The beautiful Gospel that was just proclaimed gives us a visible image to help us appreciate the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. Jesus said:

“Jesus is the Christ, He is the Lord. He is the One and only Savior of the world. It is He who offers us new life through the holy Catholic Church which He established. Thus to become a member of the Catholic Church is radically different than joining any other group, society or institution. This is the uniqueness of the holy Catholic Church. While the Church is a community, an organization, a visible society, at the same time, it is, in the revealed plan of God, the Mystical Body of Christ.

When human beings first sinned, we rejected the plan that God had established for us. We were like branches cut off the vine. There was no hope for us for, without God, we can do nothing. But Almighty God, who is good and gracious, looked upon us with love. He said, “I will send My Son and He will save you.” This promise of salvation was the Good News that suffering humanity could depend upon in its daily struggles against evil.

This was the hope that faithful, loving people nourished for generations and even centuries. Then, at the appointed time, the angels proclaimed the Good News anew: “Behold, this day a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.”

Jesus is the Christ, He is the Lord. He is the One and only Savior of the world. It is He who has fathomed this concept, we can accept it because God has revealed this to us. Moreover, this teaching is not contradictory as there must be a primary mover or cause of all else that exists. Jesus explains this to us in many ways when He uses absolutes and says: “I am the Way. I am the Truth. I am the Life.” He simplified it when He says: “I am the Vine,” then shows us how we relate to Him — “You are the branches.”

The human being is made in the Image and Likeness of God but we are not God. We are His creatures. We depend totally upon God as Jesus says: “Without Me, you can do nothing.”

When human beings first sinned, we rejected the plan that God had established for us. We were like branches cut off the vine. There was no hope for us for, without God, we can do nothing. But Almighty God, who is good and gracious, looked upon us with love. He said, “I will send My Son and He will save you.” This promise of salvation was the Good News that suffering humanity could depend upon in its daily struggles against evil.

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May God who has begun this good work in you, bring it to fulfillment.

Sooner Catholic

... Rite of Election

Archbishop Beltran greeted 266 catechumens and 426 candidates during three separate Rite of Election ceremonies held Feb. 10 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City. The catechumens and candidates, who came from throughout the archdiocese, are scheduled to be welcomed into the Church at Easter.

Photo/Sooner Catholic.
Prayer for the Success of the ADF

O’ Lord, our God, create in us a heart opened to Your love. Expand our hearts to accept the unlimited love You give us. May we not reject this gift so freely given!

Gracious God, overwhelmed by Your love, may we be moved to change our priorities, placing You and our trust in You at the center of our lives.

Loving God, may the goodness and love You so generously lavish on us, grow to a deep gratitude in our hearts, so strong in its thanksgiving, that sharing freely of our unique gifts becomes the norm and pattern of our lives.

O’ my God, help us realize that these gifts rendered to Your family bring meaningful fulfillment, making our lives worthwhile and bearing generous fruits in others.

Dear God, may our gifts motivate those around us to also accept Your love into their hearts — creating a community of faith, caring for Your family and committing us to share our spiritual and material gifts as an outward sign of Your love! Amen

If you want to make a gift over time, consider the following:

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ARCHDIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND
APPEAL 2008 GIFT FORM

Please Print Clearly (or type or mark clearly):

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Oklahoma City, OK 73123

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Justice and Jesus

Christ Calls All, Left and Right, to Open Hearts to the Least Among Us

Jesus and justice — rarely do we bring them together as the gospels do.

Somehow we find it hard to bring together the Jesus who is so uncompromising in the area of private prayer and integrity, who says we delude ourselves if we think we are following him but are not praying or keeping the commandments, with the Jesus who tells us unequivocally that at the last judgment there will only be one test as to whether we will go to heaven or not, namely, how we responded to the poor during our lifetime. The Jesus who invites us into personal piety and church doctrine is the same Jesus who tells us that nobody will get to heaven but are not praying or keeping the commandments, with the Jesus who invites us into personal piety and church doctrine.

As a result, we are beginning to find more common ground because both sides are moving to higher ground. That is a very hopeful development which, after the deep political and ecclesial divisions of the past years, is opening up some wonderful new possibilities. What possibilities? Let me have Wallis speak for himself:

Given these new developments, how both the Left and Right have awakened more deeply to a new reality ... it is possible to call for personal responsibility and social responsibility at the same time. It is possible to preserve the environment and turn back the threats against our fragile planet while also promoting the kind of economic growth that can lift people out of poverty. It is possible to love one’s country while admitting its mistakes, holding it to higher standards, and insisting that God’s blessings are not only bestowed on one nation. It is possible to take the reality of evil and the existence of enemies very seriously, but also to see the ‘logs in our own eye’ and prefer the skills of conflict resolution and the requirements of justice to the habit of war. All these things are indeed possible, and could unite the best in instincts of principled conservatism and progressive liberalism while balancing values of both freedom and community.

Given all of this, he suggests that it is possible too to be pro-life, to believe that abortion is always a moral tragedy, without isolating those who are making desperate choices, just as it is possible to be strongly pro-family, defend the sanctity of marriage, without denigrating those whose lives are different. And perhaps most important of all, it is possible then to let a passionate commitment to faith and justice not lead to sectarian warfare but to respectful dialogue and action for both Jesus and justice beyond just our own church, our own political party and our own ideology.

To that end, Wallis suggests seven principles of engagement for Christian political involvement in the world: 1. God hates injustice. 2. The kingdom of God is a new order. 3. The church is an alternative community. 4. The kingdom of God transforms the world by addressing the specifics of injustice. 5. The church is the conscience of the state, holding it accountable for upholding justice and restraining its violence. 6. Take a global perspective. 7. Seek the common good.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He can be contacted through his Web site, www.ronrolheiser.com.
When Ideology Corrupts Science and Medicine

Some physicians and researchers fail to see the important role of ethics and religion in the world of medical science. Others are clearly ready to sideline religion altogether when it comes to discussing the moral values that should guide the conduct of science and scientists.

Recently I came across some published remarks by Professor Richard Sloan of Columbia University dealing with the relationship between medicine and religion. He notes that even though abortion is a "perfectly legal procedure," some physicians withhold information about the practice from their patients, claiming their decision is justified by their religious beliefs. He goes on to express his dis-pleasure that some states have enacted conscience clauses, "to permit such religiously motivated malpractice." He even states that in some parts of the country, patients may have "no alternative to physicians who think that their primary obligation is to honor their religious convictions rather than act in the best interests of their patients."

His remarks expose a real tension between those who believe modern health care should be guided by the values of an ethically-informed conscience, and those who believe that it should be driven by various ideologies. One ideology widely encountered in the field of medicine today promotes the direct taking of human life through abortion, euthanasia and embryo research, and neglects longstanding codes of medical ethics that insist that the first duty of the physician and the researcher is to "do no harm."

When a physician directly takes the life of another human being, he is, in fact, committing medical malpractice, and acting directly against his central healing mission as a doctor. Abortion, by its very nature, can never be compatible with promoting human dignity. It never respects the human person. It is invariably at odds with the best interests of patients. As a component of a broader anti-life ideology, it represents a corrosive force in hospital clinics, research laboratories and other institutions of higher learning. When ideology begins to shun sound ethical thinking rooted in religion, we need to be very concerned.

I remember a story my father once told about the corrosive power of ideology, something he had wit-

...
Eucharistic Prayer: The Transformation of Bread and Wine

By Father Tom Margevicius

Now that the bread and wine — the fruit of our lives — are at a dignified place on the altar, the assembly stands and begins a dialogue with the priest that’s difficult to translate:

“The Lord be with you.”

“And also with you” (literally, “and with your spirit”).

So far, so good. “Sursum corda,” the Latin says next. This has no verb and means literally, “upward hearts.” Is the priest telling the people to “lift up your hearts,” as our missal has it, or is he saying hearts are already there? Or both? The Latin is ambiguous, and has always been way back to at least A.D. 200.

I mention the ambiguity for two reasons.

First, you may have heard that a new translation of the Mass is in the works, which might be finished by the end of 2009. It will be closer to the original Latin than the current missal.

You may wonder, “What’s taking so long? How hard is it for experts to do a translation?” Well, harder than it seems. Our present text has been criticized because the translation was done too hastily in the 1960s and the changes happened too rapidly. The U.S. bishops don’t want to repeat that haste.

Secondly, a theological point: Liturgy is multivalent, meaning it can be understood in many ways. Prayer is ultimately the language of lovers — us and God — and how does one pin down love?

I ask my students, “What’s the meaning of a kiss?” It depends on who does it, to whom, when, how, etc. The symbolic language of liturgy also cannot be confined. Though theology tries to articulate it (remember “lex orandi, lex credendi” — “the law of believing, is the law of praying”), we can never fully understand it.

The language of prayer is more poetic than scientific; it moves the heart even more than the mind, which bows in awe before the miracle of the Eucharist.

Theologians use the word “transubstantiation” for this miracle. This means a change of substance: bread and wine become Jesus’ true body and blood.

This word relies on ancient Greek philosophical categories, “substance” and “accidents.” Substance means the “what” a thing is — a chair, a song, a loaf of bread — and accidents means how the “what” appears: hard or soft, heavy, light, chewy, etc.

After eucharistic transubstantiation the accidents remain: bread and wine appear the same as before. But they are not bread and wine anymore: their substance is now the body and blood of Jesus Christ himself. As he told his followers, “My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.”

Though our minds can’t fully grasp the change, we can trace the outline of the prayer. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal lists seven basic parts of all eucharistic prayers.

— Thanksgiving, including the dialogue and the preface in which the church thanks God the Father for the salvation wrought in Christ.

— Acclamation, when the church joins the angelic and heavenly hosts in crying out, “Holy! Holy! Holy!”

— Epiclesis, a Greek word meaning “calling down.” The priest asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon the gifts to change them; and later he calls the Spirit down on the assembly, to change us so we also become the body of Christ.

“You are what you eat” is St. Augustine’s phrase that originally means “eat healthy and you’ll be healthy;” it connects the church and the Eucharist, both as the body of Christ.

— Words of institution. The priest repeats Jesus’ own words at the Last Supper. Note that the priest is not “play-acting.” He does not pretend to be Jesus and treat the assembly as apostles, telling them, “Take this, all of you...” Instead, these words are still part of a prayer addressed to the Father.

— Anamnesis, another Greek word, means “making memory.”

— Intercessions occur in various places and usually mention the pope and local bishop by name, as well as saints, our beloved dead and “any others for whom we now pray.”

— Doxology is the closing part when we give the Father all glory and honor through the Son in the Spirit. The assembly responds with the Great Amen: Let it be so! Let our lives be all for the glory of God. Such is a fitting way to end all prayers, and the great eucharistic prayer is the most excellent prayer of all.

Father Tom Margevicius is instructor of liturgical theology at St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity in St. Paul.

CFO Scholarship Deadline Approaching

The application deadline for a college scholarship from the Catholic Foundation is Friday, April 4, 2008. The Catholic Foundation offers numerous scholarships for private and public colleges and universities, as well as specific medical, nursing and musical scholarships.

While application packets are available at parish offices, the Catholic Foundation has added the ability to print an application packet directly from its Web site. Interested individuals can log on to www.cfook.org and on the Scholarship Recipients page, click on the For a 2008-2009 Scholarship Application Packet link. The eight-page application packet can then be printed directly from your home or office computer.

For additional information, contact the Catholic Foundation office at (405) 721-4115 or administrative assistant Toby Boothe at boothe-@catharchdioceseokc.org via e-mail.
St. Patrick's Day Ball To Benefit Catholic Charities

OKLAHOMA CITY — Tickets are now on sale for the 2008 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal Ball which will be held Saturday evening, March 8, at the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club, said Toby Booth, co-chair of the event. Proceeds from the ball will benefit Catholic Charities Homeless Services.

No tickets will be sold at the door. To purchase tickets or corporate sponsorships, contact Jane Moon at (405) 526-2319 before Feb. 25.

Artist Lucille “Lou” Flanagan Ackerman, 2008 St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal, will be recognized at the event. The charity ball will feature dinner, a live and silent auction and an evening of dancing to music by Classic Swing Big Band.

The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Individual tickets for the ball are $125 per person. Individual tables and corporate tables are also available. Corporate sponsorships include a table for 10 and promotion on the Web site, program, posters and media publicity. Corporate sponsorships are Emerald Isle, $10,000; Gold Sponsor, $5,000; Crystal Sponsor, $2,500; and Linen Sponsor, $1,250.

The lead corporate sponsorship is Emerald Isle Sponsor — Teleflora and Meinders Foundation.

Crystal Sponsors include Ray and Lou Ackerman; American Fidelity Foundation; AT&T Oklahoma; Louise and Clayton Bennett; Chesapeake Energy Corporation; Durham Supply Inc.; First American Bank; Fremont Exploration, Inc.; Kelley & Kelley, P.C.; Love's Travel Stops and Country Stores Inc.; and LSB Industries Inc.; Mercy Health Center; Meyer Architecture Plus, LLC; Michael and Patricia Milligan; MidFirst Bank; Oklahoma City University; The Oklahoman; Mark and Manda Ruffin; SSM Health Care of Oklahoma (St. Anthony and Bone & Joint Hospitals); United Way of Central Oklahoma; and Union Bank/Rose Rock Bank.

Linen sponsors include Cox Oklahoma; Chris and Marie Engel; First National Bank of Oklahoma; Bill and Kris Frankfort; Jones Public Relations Inc.; Lippert Bros. Inc.; Oklahoma Natural Gas Company; Presbyterian Health Foundation; and Kevin and Patty Trosper.

The ball is held each year to raise money for Catholic Charities and to recognize the St. Patrick’s Day Parade Grand Marshal. The parade will be held Saturday, March 15 in downtown Oklahoma City.

For more information on the St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal Ball, go to www.catholiccharitiesok.org

Lou Ackerman Grand Marshal for St. Pat’s Events

OKLAHOMA CITY — Lucille “Lou” Flanagan Ackerman is being honored as the 2008 St. Patrick’s Day Parade Grand Marshal. She will be recognized at both the St. Patrick’s Day Grand Marshal Ball on March 8 and at the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in downtown Oklahoma City on March 15.

“It is an honor and privilege to be chosen as this year’s grand marshal,” said Ackerman. “I think it is one of the nicest things that has ever happened to me. I am very proud of my Irish heritage. On my first visit to Ireland several years ago, I fell in love with the country, my ancestry and the people.”

Born in Oklahoma City, the middle child of seven, Ackerman attended elementary school at Rosary Catholic School. She graduated from Classen High School and attended Rosary College in Chicago for two years.

Her dream of becoming a professional artist began when she was a child studying under Oklahoma City’s Nan Sheets. However, her plan to enroll in the Chicago Art Institute to pursue an art career was interrupted when she married Ray Ackerman in 1948. For the next 20 years, Ray and Lou devoted their time to raising six children.

When her last child started grade school in 1966, Lou began to pursue her love for painting, studying under Joan LaRue, Marilyn Bendell, Daniel Gerhartz, David Lessel and William Reece. Her oil and watercolor paintings grace St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City University, and many homes in Oklahoma City. She rarely turns down a request to donate one of her paintings to a charity auction.

One of her latest paintings of the Blessed Mother titled “Maid of Lesser Years” will be auctioned at the St. Patrick’s Day Grand Marshal Ball on March 8 at Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club.

From 1975 to 1995, Lou contributed her time and talent weekly to teach painting to senior women at the Salvation Army facility at Western Oaks Christian Church.

In 2004, the Oklahoma Health Center Foundation selected Lou and Ray as Oklahoma Living Treasures for Tomorrow. Their life is featured in Ray’s biography “Old Man River” by Bob Burke with Joan Gilmore.

Lou and Ray reside in Oklahoma City. They are both active members of St. Eugene Catholic Church.

The evening of the ball, five of the Ackerman’s children and spouses will be in attendance to support Lou and Catholic Charities. Tickets are still available for the fundraising event to be held Saturday evening, March 8 at the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club. Table sponsorships are also available. Deadline for purchasing tickets is Feb. 29. The annual fundraiser will benefit Catholic Charities Homeless Services in Oklahoma City.

Calling All Alumni

Villa Teresa School is looking for former students (summer or regular session) to celebrate with us 75 years of service. Call (232-4286) and give us a current address if you're not receiving our newsletters. You may also register as an alumni on our Web site, www.villateresaschool.com.
By Monica Knudsen  
For the Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Dorothy Day Center has a new Web site. The center is an all-volunteer food-sharing ministry, part of the parish social ministry program of St. Charles Borromeo. Since its founding three years ago, 32,000 persons, including 13,000 children, have received emergency food assistance. This is accomplished with a team of more than 100 people from all walks of life and faith giving their time and talents.

The Web site can be found at www.thedorothydaycenter.com.

As the ministry grows, a Web site is necessary to provide quick updates about volunteer times and opportunities, the mission, ways to donate and other questions. Volunteer director Marcus Evans said, “It’s a communication tool ... I get questions constantly about volunteer dates, how do I donate and what does the center do?” Unlike people, the Web site can be on duty 24/7 to provide the answers.

It can also reach a worldwide audience. Some clients learn they are eligible for food assistance by using computers in the public library. Potential donors, who would otherwise never know of the Oklahoma City ministry, can read about it in faraway places. Persons who wish to volunteer can find information about dates, times and opportunities listed for the entire year.

An added benefit is an aid in spiritual growth. For example, a link called “The Rosary” tells how to pray the rosary, its history, and words of the prayers.

Mike Nikkel, an Oklahoma City firefighter with computer expertise, created the site. He designed the Web pages. Chris Newsom, who is also a Dorothy Day Center volunteer, provided additional computer help and developed the Web-based database. Nikkel trained Evans to maintain the pages and add content.

Because Dorothy Day believed in justice and charity, the site contains links to papal encyclicals on social justice, the tenets of Catholic social teaching, information on Dorothy Day, her associate, Peter Maurin, and the Catholic Worker Movement. Students, teachers, writers, researchers and interested readers will find full-text documents here.

Dorothy Day advocated that everyone, regardless of income level, should do their own best to live simply and unselfishly. To that end, a link called Gardening and Sustainable living provides tips on being good stewards of the environment. Learn how to build a raised bed, low-maintenance organic garden just like the St. Charles Community Garden.

If you have a baby, don’t miss mother of nine, Tresa Evans’ article on “Adventures in Cloth Diapering.”

Click on “Recipes” and find simple but tasty ways to stretch a small grocery budget, including how to make dishes using food pantry groceries and commodities.

Perhaps helping out once in awhile is of interest. The link “Volunteers” has a list of jobs and time commitments. Check “All Scheduled Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities” for a complete 2008 schedule. Under this link are monthly dates to deliver groceries, or unload the Regional Food Bank truck and stock the warehouse shelves. Helpers are always needed for these two important, ongoing functions.

Upcoming features will include a message board, more recipes, articles and church documents. Content will change so visit the site often. To contribute articles or ideas, contact thedorothydaycenter@msn.com.

Ministry Helps Bring Light Back Into Life

By Amelia Sioas  
For the Sooner Catholic

Branded with a scarlet letter. Every time I looked in the mirror, spoke to friends or went to Mass, it was as though I were wearing a scarlet letter on my chest, it read “D” for divorced.

After a 10-year marriage, I found myself alone and hurting. Everywhere I turned, I saw marriages that were thriving, and I felt like a complete failure. By getting a divorce, I had failed my marriage commitment. The scars from the marriage, separation and divorce were keeping me from being the person God had intended. I felt alone and abandoned.

During my separation and divorce, I felt the eyes of the congregation upon me when attending Mass. The stigma of being divorced was overwhelming. At times, I felt that the parishioners only saw that scarlet letter “D” when I arrived at church. I wandered around in misery for months until someone suggested Beginning Experience to me. I had no idea that the Catholic Church offered such a program.

Beginning Experience, or BE, is a weekend program for widowed, separated or divorced people. I wondered what separated and divorced people had in common with those who were widowed. I soon found out we had much in common. We all had experienced a loss, either by death or by divorce. Beginning Experience is a program run by people who have suffered that loss and found themselves serving in this much-needed field of ministry.

As the weekend approached, I was apprehensive as to what I would be getting myself into. I was not sure that I was ready to share myself and my failures with complete strangers. The weekend started with all my fears checked perfectly in place. However, as I arrived at the Pastoral Center on Friday night, all I saw were warm, smiling faces. I was told to just trust the process of the weekend.

The BE program removes you from all distractions, and teaches you about the grieving process. It tries to help you find out where you are in the process and shows you a way forward. It even provides an opportunity for closure, if you are ready. The facilitators are very careful not to give advice or tell you how you should be feeling; instead, they lead you on the path to find your own answers, while sharing their personal stories. Listening to others was helpful, as it made me aware of things I had not considered.

This program is intense, but is set in a loving and supportive environment. There are no promises that the weekend will bring you through the entire grief process, but it will bring you closer to acceptance, closure and peace. This program is designed by and for Catholics, but it is open to all faiths.

I trusted in this process, and am happy to say that it has changed my life for the best.

I trusted in this process, and am happy to say that it has changed my life for the best. I no longer feel like I was wearing that scarlet letter “D.” I invite you, or anyone you may know who is separated, divorced or widowed, to this “weekend away, for a lifetime of change.”

The next Beginning Experience weekend will be held at the Catholic Pastoral Center Feb. 28 through March 2.

For more information, call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-5651, go to beofokc.com or by e-mail, info@beofokc.com.

Holy Family Knights Respond to Need in Iraq

By Monica Knudsen  
For the Sooner Catholic

A 36-inch handmade crucifix was presented to Father Zavala, an El Salvadorian Catholic priest, by U.S. Army Capt. Francisco Jaume, an adviser to the Iraqi military at a multi-national outpost at Camp Delta, Iraq.

Capt. Jaume is a member of Knights of Columbus Holy Family Council No. 11909 in Lawton where his regular duty station is at Fort Still Army Base.

Troops from El Salvador, Poland and the United States are stationed at the outpost. Father Zavala celebrates Mass in all three languages in a converted barracks that now serves as their chapel.

When Capt. Jaume found there was no crucifix in the chapel, he contacted his home Council No. 11909 to see if there was an interest in providing one as a special project for the current year. The council responded immediately by approving, special ordering and having the crucifix shipped directly to the outpost in Iraq.
Saint Ann Retirement Center Celebrates Sixth Anniversary

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic
OKLAHOMA CITY — In January, Saint Ann Retirement Center celebrated its sixth anniversary. Coincidentally, the new executive director of the Archdiocesan owned and operated retirement center celebrated his sixth-month anniversary on the job. And with near full capacity, it appears the retirement center and the new director have taken to one another quite well. One reason may be they share the same Catholic philosophy of caring for people. A veteran administrator in senior living, Sid Espinosa said a retirement center should have three key ingredients before a family considers allowing their senior loved one to move in. 

“The retirement center should be a Christian setting,” Espinosa said. “It should be operated by its owners, not by a management firm, and finally, it must have a chapel. Actually, the chapel should be at the top of the list,” he said.

Saint Ann Retirement Center meets all three criteria and then some. Father Price Grimes celebrates daily Mass for residents in the Saint Joachim Chapel. He knows the residents by their first names and has provided them with great compassion, understanding, and spiritual direction. 

Depending on their needs, residents can choose to live either independently or with the services of assisted living. Another positive at Saint Ann occurred about a year ago when Archbishop Beltran named Richard Amend to the position of Mission and Community Relations director. Amend came to Saint Ann Retirement Center from Christ the King Church in Oklahoma City where he served a number of years as director of Senior Adult Ministry. Amend has a master’s in adult education with an emphasis in gerontology.

“I’ve always had a love for senior adults,” Amend said. “You learn so much from their wisdom when you work with them day in and day out.”

The spirituality of Saint Ann is not limited to the chapel. Espinosa said community prayer before meals is embraced by the residents. And Bible study is held weekly for Protestants. Amend said Protestants make up more than 40 percent of the resident population.

“This is what’s so wonderful about a Catholic owned and operated center,” Espinosa said. “We can say and do things in a spiritual manner. That’s not always the case in other places.”

Most people find their way to Saint Ann Retirement Center either by word of mouth or by doctor referral. No advertising is done other than an occasional promotion in the Sooner Catholic and some parish bulletins.

Espinosa said Saint Ann Retirement Center has only four one-bedroom apartments available at the present. He attributes the low vacancy to a quality staff and the comfort residents have in knowing the center is owned and operated by the Church. 

“It’s got success written all over it,” Espinosa said, referring to the public’s reception to Catholic owned and operated senior adult living.

Catholic School Presents Alumni Award

OKLAHOMA CITY — Christ the King Catholic School’s first Distinguished Alumni Award was presented by Father Rick Stansberry to Gayle Lucas Semtner on Jan. 27 at Mass. A reception honoring Semtner followed in the Church Atrium.

“She has definitely put her Catholic education into use in the way she lives her life,” said Father Stansberry. The Distinguished Alumni Award is given to an alumnus of Christ the King Catholic School who has given of their time and talents to the community and school.

Semtner attended Christ the King Catholic School from 1959 to 1966 and then graduated from Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Oklahoma and her graduate degree in education from the University of Central Oklahoma.

Semtner has been a dedicated community volunteer in the areas of arts, education and health care. She has served on numerous boards including Christ the King Catholic School, Arts Council of Oklahoma City, Leadership Oklahoma City, YWCA, St. Anthony Foundation, Omniplex and Junior League of Oklahoma City. She was appointed by the governor to serve on the Oklahoma Arts Council.

During Semtner’s tenure as director of Religious Education at Christ the King Catholic Church, the parish developed many new programs for both adults and children including Cafe Light and Ladies of Grace. Although she has retired from her position, she continues as co-director of Ladies of Grace.

Semtner believes “Catholic education is for the whole student. It includes talking about God and faith, praying daily, learning a sense of serving community, challenging academics and accepting each as an individual.”

Rosary Honors Distinguished Alumni

OKLAHOMA CITY — Rosary Catholic School has named Louis Lyon as its 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award winner. This award is presented annually to a Rosary School graduate who has demonstrated continued commitment and support to the community.

Lyon graduated from Rosary Catholic School in 1981. After leaving Rosary School, he received a bachelor’s of science from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and his master’s degree from the University of Oklahoma. He is currently working in the field of information technology. Lyon and his family have been active in the development of the school’s computer lab, HASA, and the annual auction fundraising event.

Lyon was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award at St. Francis Catholic Church on Jan. 27.
Edmond Parish Gives Thanks to Those Who Help Community

By Steve Gust

EDMOND — The folks who do a lot of the heavy lifting for the poor and needy were again honored by Edmond’s St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

The tradition, called the Samaritan Award dinner, marked its 17th year as more than a dozen groups were thanked and recognized Jan. 24 by staff and the Social Ministry Board of St. John’s.

Before the evening was over, attendees were also treated to a meal, served with help from eighth-grade students at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School. They also heard about the spiritual journey of Richard Klinge, now the current legal advocate for Catholic Charities. At one time he was a major player in national legal settings — settling multimillion-dollar lawsuits. An attorney since 1974, he also is a past member of the Edmond School Board.

Relating his own experience of service, he told the more than 100 in attendance about a religious awakening he had three years ago.

“I was a cradle Catholic and attended Catholic schools and Mass every Sunday” he said. “Yet I had a hard time living Monday, what I had heard on Sunday.”

That changed when he attended a 30-week program called Just Faith.

“That’s when he came face to face with his “faith vs. the real world.”

During his studies, he delved further into the Bible, or as he said, the “source document” for Catholic teachings.

Slowly he began to realize a lesson that many of the present nonprofit groups were living each day — “life is about others.”

At the end of the 30-week session he had seen a noticeable change in his life, he said.

“I might have looked the same on the outside, but inside I was a completely different person,” he said.

From there, he saw an advertisement in The Sooner Catholic seeking a legal advocate for Catholic Charities. Convinced divine forces were moving him in that direction, he applied and accepted the job last summer. He’s thrown himself into causes for groups and people who don’t always have the greatest legal and political clout in society.

“I’ve worked with 2,000 to 3,000 undocumented workers,” he said, recalling the challenges facing immigrants with Oklahoma’s new law. He’s also speaking out in behalf of the home-less and hopes to continue to empower the poor and middle class.

“The Holy Spirit led me to this point,” he said. “I am learning to think of myself less and putting what I hear on Sunday into action on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and every day of the week.”

From there it was time for St. John’s to give special recognition to groups. In the past, one group had been singled out for an honor and a check.

This year two $500 grants were given and the Samaritan Award winner received $2,000.

Awarded grants were Citizens Caring for Children and Breakfast on Boulevard. Each received $500. Rose Harper accepted for Citizens Caring for Children—a group providing mentoring, personal items, birthday parties, back-to-school supplies and Christmas gifts to foster children.

Breakfast on Boulevard, at First Christian Church, was represented by Mickey Stufflebean. His group offers a hot breakfast five days a week and sack lunches to anyone.

The Samaritan Award was won by the HOPE Center. Their ongoing mission is helping needy with food, clothing, household items and financial assistance for rent/Utilities.

Receiving the plaque and check was executive director Chris Sperry. “I am honored and privileged to receive this,” she said. “St. John’s has always been helpful to us with donations and volunteers.” She noted hundreds of families in the Edmond area benefited monthly by the HOPE Center. She also thanked longtime HOPE leader Julie Wilson.

The crowd heard brief remarks and prayer from St. John’s pastor, Father John Metzinger, Deacon John Morris, Deacon Gary Peterson and Social Ministries chair Bob Excellente.

Other groups honored and thanked were A Chance to Change Foundation, Birth Choice of Oklahoma Inc., Coffee Creek Riding Center, Edmond Family Counseling Inc., Edmond Mobile Meals, Faith Works of the Inner City, Habitat for Humanity, Mustard Seed Development Corp., Oklahoma Lawyers for Children, Oklahoma United Methodist Circle of Care Inc./Child SHARE, Sister BJ’s Pantry and UR Special Ministries Inc.

Each group gives hundreds, perhaps thousands, of hours of service to help improve and help the community.

Also recognized were St. John’s staff members Barbara Meiser, Marsha Hoeger and Father Dan Letourneau.

Libby Medina, Inasee Bennett, Susan Bennett and others were also thanked for their help in putting on the event, which began in 1991 under former St. John’s pastor, the late Father John Petuskey.

Irish Academic Team Among State’s Best

The Academic Team at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School placed third at the state tournament held at Redlands Community College in El Reno Feb. 2. The team entered the tourna-ment play. Team members this year were Devin Luxner, Erin Smith, John Scimeca, Yunho Kim, Zach Yokell, Hugh Maguire, Karla Thompson, Tommy Labarthe, Frank Mass, Aaron Sawheb, Tanya Watts, Cindy Gillies and Emma Rupert. Coaches are McGuinness physics teacher Nicky Goff and chemistry teacher Julia Anderson.
Pro-Life Oklahoma

continued from page 1

“You don’t grow tired of saving lives,” Father Pavone said. “You grow tired of killing.”

Some of the most vocal and inspirational advocates for the pro-life movement are those women and men who have experienced the devastation caused by their own abortion. Father Pavone said post abortion ministries such as Rachel's Vineyard, which teaches women and men to understand and accept the depth and healing power of God's love and forgiveness, are making a great difference. For years, Father Pavone said, abortion advocates have “told us to listen to the voices of women. Are they now going to tell us not to listen to the voices of the women?” Father Pavone described as a “tidal wave” the women and men who have found healing through ministries such as Rachel's Vineyard and who are now sweeping over and washing away the desperate efforts of the abortion industry with their deeply personal and deeply honest testimonies. He said the youth of America represent another “tidal wave” to the abortion industry. “They look around and they know that abortion could have been them,” he said, referring to those who have been born in the 35 years since the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973. The unborn prior to the infamous Supreme Court ruling were protected in their mother’s wombs, Father Pavone said. Those born after were not. “Roe v. Wade is a personal insult to the young people,” he said. “Planned Parenthood says every child should be a wanted child,” Father Pavone said. What this means, he said is “your value as a human being comes from someone else.” Young people do not appreciate this.

At the Catholic Pastoral Center gathering, Father Pavone said the Church must be willing to speak out clearly about the evil of abortion as well as compassionately to those who are suffering from it. He told the story of Dr. Bernard Nathanson, one of the original founders of the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws, known as NARAL. Father Pavone said Nathanson admitted the pro-abortion movement he was instrumental in helping to create would have never found success had “the Church been strong and unified” in its opposition. Nathanson said abortion proponents “stole the issue from the Church.” After years of performing abortions, Nathanson underwent a spiritual conversion. He would eventually convert to Catholicism and work tirelessly in the pro-life movement.

Father Pavone called priests who refuse to address the issue of abortion from the pulpit misguided in thinking their silence is helpful. “Silence is painful, too,” Father Pavone said. He said women and men suffering from abortion could only begin to heal when they deal openly and honestly with what has occurred. “The culture of death will not get its way,” Father Pavone said. “Not when the clergy and the rest of the Church unites and stands in confident strength and tells the culture of death ‘you have no place here, be gone, our Lord Jesus Christ has conquered your kingdom.’

Proposed Pro-Life Legislation

— HB 3144 and SB 1971 — Providing a woman an ultrasound of her unborn child, which she may view prior to undergoing an abortion.

— HB 2814 — Fostering respect for babies with disabilities by disallowing wrongful-life lawsuits that claim a baby would have been better off being aborted.

— HB 3059 — Ensuring that a mother’s consent to an abortion be truly voluntary and safeguarding against coerced abortions.

— HB 2771 and SB 1874 — Regulating the use of the dangerous chemical abortion pill RU-486, which is used when the unborn child is about 2 months old.
If you’ve ever written to a pro-abortion politician about the right to life, you’ve probably received a form letter that utilizes one of several worn-out arguments. Let’s review how we answer them.

1. “I respect your views, but I have to represent all the people.”
   Our response: That’s what we’re trying to say to you. If you neglect the unborn, you are not representing all the people. Roe vs. Wade excludes them from protection; we demand that they be included. A public servant cannot legitimately ignore an entire segment of the public that is being destroyed.

2. “I’m personally opposed to abortion, but can’t impose my views on others.”
   Our response: This is not a matter of views, but of violence. The law is supposed to protect human life despite the views of those who would destroy it.

3. “The government should not be involved in such a personal decision as abortion.”
   Our response: The government got “too involved” in abortion when it claimed to have the authority to deprive some human beings of their right to life. The Declaration of Independence asserts that government exists to secure the rights already bestowed by the Creator. Moreover, when somebody’s “choice” destroys somebody else’s life, that choice is no longer merely a personal, private matter.

4. “Legislators should not be practicing medicine.”
   Our response: We’re not asking you to practice medicine, but to prevent the abuse of medicine. The practice of medicine is regulated by all kinds of laws that protect the lives of patients. All we ask is that the unborn be included in that protection.

5. “Abortion is the law of the land.”
   Our response: The “law of the land” can be changed, just as it was changed regarding slavery and segregation. Leadership means seeing the injustices that others miss, and inspiring people to utilize the methods the law permits to make necessary changes.

6. “I support women’s rights and health.”
   Our response: That is precisely why you should examine the evidence, which is more plentiful than ever, that abortion is destructive of women’s health, and listen to the growing voices of those who have been harmed by abortion. That is also why you should examine how the abortion industry, through unregulated and dangerous clinics, continues to deceive and exploit women.

7. “Abortion is just one of many issues; I embrace a consistent ethic of life.”
   Our response: The foundation of a house is only one of many parts of the house, but it is essential in order to build the other parts. That is why the Catholic bishops have repeatedly asserted that among the many interrelated issues within a consistent ethic, abortion deserves “urgent attention and priority.” (Pastoral Plan, 2001).

8. “My office does not involve any decision-making about abortion.”
   Our response: Your position on abortion says a lot about your character and world view. If you cannot stand up for the smallest of children, how will you stand up for the rest of us?

9. “Let’s just agree to disagree.”
   Our response: We have the greatest respect for those who disagree with us. But when victims are oppressed, we don’t sit back and “agree to disagree” with the oppressor. Rather, we intervene to save the victim. Abortion is not about beliefs; it’s about bloodshed. Those who need protection need it despite the disagreement of others.

Finally, always use the best response to all the arguments: I vote!
Friends Travel Road Together From Elementary to Military

EDMOND — As youngsters, Charlie Woner, Stephen Jason and Shannon Kranich attended Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School together. All three are members of Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church and all three are embarking on careers dedicated to serving their nation.

Midshipmen Charlie Woner attended Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School and graduated in 2005. He is in his third year at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. Woner is majoring in political science, and he also helps manage the Navy tennis team and enjoys the travel time that is an added perk. This semester he is the assistant operations officer for the 12th Company. In his spare time he loves to run and has competed in a few marathons.

Cadet Stephen Jason also attended Bishop McGuinness High School and graduated in 2005. He is in his second year at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point located 50 miles north of New York City on the Hudson River.

Jason is majoring in engineering psychology and studying Arabic. He is a defensive back for the Black Knights football team. This semester he is a team leader for a first-year cadet and recently pledged the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

Cadet Shannon Kranich attended Edmond North High School and also graduated in 2005. Kranich is in her third year at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. She is majoring in physics and is also the secretary for the Catholic choir and has traveled many places with the choir. This semester she is an element leader for the squadron.

Angels of Life Come to Us Daily

A great many of us have a tendency to take each day for granted. For the most part, we get up and do the same things that we did the day before and the day before that. It is a routine we fall into. Then life jumps up and bites you. An unforeseen happening causes our lives to change and requires us to adjust to how we live it.

This past December, my wife, Ann, was diagnosed with cancer. I cannot describe the shock we felt. After several tests, she started her first chemo treatment the last week of January. We are encouraged about her chances to whip this disease as cancer treatment has greatly improved over these past few years. But we do humbly ask for your prayers. Chemo does better with prayer.

The treatment center, which is located at the Mercy Hospital campus, has over 17 treatment stations and is alive with activity. Everyone is upbeat, not a negative voice could be heard. I thought, how blessed we are to have these “Angels of Life” taking care of us. I also thought about those in our prison systems. To be diagnosed with any serious illness must be a terrifying experience. I do not believe that the level of prison medical expertise is comparable to that available in our major hospitals and treatment centers. Tragically, this is one of the dark aspects of prison life. It is truly part of the punishment.

As for our fight to end the death penalty in Oklahoma, why is it our legislators continue to use state-sanctioned killing to show that killing is wrong? Pray that they come to realize that life itself can be extremely difficult, to say the least. None of us will escape death and the final judgment. Let God take those convicted of terrible crimes when and how He sees fit. Rather than the death penalty, give the convicted life without parole. Wouldn’t we all be better by doing this?

Jim Fowler has fought to end the death penalty in Oklahoma for years. His son Mark was executed by the state of Oklahoma for his role in the deaths of three people during a grocery store robbery. A few years later, the man convicted of killing his mother was awaiting execution on Oklahoma’s death row when DNA evidence proved he was not the killer. Since then, Fowler has dedicated himself to ending capital punishment in our state. He argues life without parole follows with Church teaching on the issue. Jim can be reached at jo2bears@cox.net.
Holy Trinity Students

“Light the Way for Those in Need”

OKARCHE — On Feb. 1, Holy Trinity students in the second through eighth grade traveled to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City where they spent time packing non-perishable food for distribution throughout Oklahoma. The students were broken into two groups and each was charged with a different task. Halfway through the groups switched and worked the other job. One group spent time sorting “bulk” oatmeal packets into smaller boxes for easier distribution by the Food Bank. The other group helped an emergency food assistance program of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma called Food 4 Kids. Food 4 Kids is designed especially for elementary age children. Chronically hungry children identified by school personnel receive a backpack filled with non-perishable, child-friendly food for over the weekend or a school holiday. Started as a pilot program in 2003, the Regional Food Bank now serves more than 7,000 children in 202 schools in 34 counties. At the end of the service time, Holy Trinity students had packed 144 cases of oatmeal weighing 2,304 pounds and 227 cases containing 1,362 Food 4 Kids bags weighing 4,086 pounds. In all, 6,390 pounds of food was worked, which is equivalent to 4,915 meals. Holy Trinity students are doing their part to make a difference in their community.

Letters

Still Sinking?

Father Ron Rolheiser, in his Jan. 20 column, uses “golden age” as a normative term for the years past, when Christians may have tended to turn their back on the problems of “racism, sexism and dogmatic intolerance.” Commenting on the “high-lighted moral sensitivity” of today’s “secularized liberal culture,” he notes that our current “moral sensitivity” includes “glaring blind spots ... abortion, end-of-life issues, church, family values and sexuality.” Father Rolheiser suggests that Christianity “can be compared to a time-released moral-capsule that is dissolving slowly in history.” He uses the country of Holland to exemplify Christian “good news,” that being: “care of the poor ... highest status for women ... and high tolerance.” He notes that these “major moral achievements” are made “inside of a culture that is at the same time regressing morally in terms of its acceptance of abortion, euthanasia, prostitution, pornography and drugs.”

His Christianity as a moral time capsule analogy, when applied to Holland, doesn’t seem to fit very well; the old analogy of nicely arranging the deck chairs on a sinking ship seems more appropriate. If we call it “secular liberal culture” or “high tolerance,” that being: “care of the poor ... highest status for women ... and high tolerance.”

Richard Koenig
Ponca City

Across Oklahoma

Father Frank DeSiano Coming

OKLAHOMA CITY — Father Frank DeSiano will address “Growing in Faith: Living and Exercising Discipleship and God’s Call to Evangelize” at St. Eugene Catholic Church. His presentations will begin at 7 p.m. on Feb. 25-27 the presentation will be in English. The Feb. 28-March 1 presentations will be in Spanish. Father DeSiano serves as first consultor to the Paulist Order based in New York City, and has focused on evangelism as a priority in his pastoral ministries and his work as an author. He contributed to “Go and Make Disciples — A Plan and Strategy for Evangelization in the United States.” For more information, call 751-7115.

Taste of Sacred Heart

EL RENO — Tickets to the 11th annual Taste of Sacred Heart to be held from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on March 8 are on sale now. Taste of Sacred Heart is Sacred Heart Catholic School’s major fundraiser for the year, providing one-third of the annual operating budget. The theme for this year’s event is “Hollywood — What’s Your Dream?,” and includes dinner, live and silent auctions, music and dancing. Tickets are $25 and can be purchased at Ross Seed Company, My Sister’s Closet and Sacred Heart Catholic School. For more information, call the school office at 262-2284.

Becoming a Healing Presence

PIEDMONT — On Feb. 23 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., join Pat Ahern, Benedictine Oblate. Learn to open yourself to inner hospitality and receive another person into your hearts; extend yourselves in personal concern and be changed by the encounter. It’s all about health, healing and wholeness. Come to the Red Plains Monastery Library, southwest of Piedmont. Call 373-4739 to register. Fee: Mail in $35 to reserve your place. Bring a sack lunch.

Discernment Retreat

OKLAHOMA CITY — This discernment retreat weekend will consist of prayerful reflection and guidance for your journey in understanding God’s call in the Church today. This retreat designed especially for single Catholic women, ages 18-45, will be conducted by the Sisters of Mercy at Our Lady of Mercy Retreat Center in Oklahoma City March 7-9. For more information, call 634-1696.

Lenten Day of Reflection

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Office of Worship and Spiritual Life is offering a Lenten Day of Reflection titled Walking Together in Mystery. The presenter will be Sister Mary Kevin Rooney, ASC, March 15 at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Cost for the day is $15 which includes lunch and refreshments. To register or for more information, call the Office of Worship and Spiritual Life at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 158.

Health Fair Planned

OKLAHOMA CITY — Saint Ann Retirement Center will host a health fair and open house from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 26. Representatives from various health-related organizations will be on hand to discuss health issues and the services they provide. Tours will be provided of the Saint Ann Retirement Center and healthy snacks will be provided. For more information, call Saint Ann Retirement Center at 721-0747.

Sexual Assault Awareness Conference

OKLAHOMA CITY — Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Conference for Youth and Parents on April 19. Ben Atherton-Zeman, a nationally known and popular actor, comedian, feminist and husband, will present a one-man play: “Voices of Men,” www.voicesofmen.org, to educate youth about the epidemic of violence in dating. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Other workshops include Internet Safety; Cell Phone Safety; Suicide: How to Recognize, Question and Prevent; and more. For more information, contact the Family Life Office at (405) 721-5651.
The Holy See and Islam: The Diplomatic Dance Continues

The Catholic Difference

By George Weigel

proposed discussing in the December 2006 Curial address.

On Nov. 11, 2007, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Holy See's Secretary of State, wrote to one of the “138,” the Jordanian prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal, accepting the call to a deepened conversation, suggesting that a representative delegation of the “138” come to Rome to meet with the pope, and proposing three topics for dialogue: “effective respect for the dignity of every human person; “objective awareness of the other’s religion”; and “a common commitment to promoting mutual respect and acceptance among the younger generation.” In an authoritative commentary on Bertone’s letter, Father Samir Ghanil Samir, an Egyptian Jesuit and Vatican adviser on Islamic affairs, noted that the cardinal’s letter to the prince had tried to get the conversation back on the track proposed by the pope the previous December: religious freedom and the separation of religious and political authority in the state. Father Samir also noted that several signatories among the “138” had indicated that they were not much interested in discussing those topics.

Last Dec. 12, Prince Ghazi wrote to Cardinal Bertone, accepting the invitation to a meeting in Rome (which will likely take place in March). At the same time, the prince offered some constraints about the subject, suggesting that the primary focus of dialogue should be the “intrinsic” questions raised by “A Common Word Between Us and You” (i.e., the two great commandments). At some future point, the prince suggested, “extrinsic” questions could be addressed. A close reading of the prince’s letter suggests that his “extrinsic” questions are what the pope has gently but persistently insisted be the primary questions for today’s conversation: the natural moral law that can be known by reason; religious freedom, other human rights and the natural moral law; religious freedom; civil equality between men and women; the separation of religious and political authority in the state.

There is a considerable gap here. The pope has made clear what the objectives of the dialogue should be; Benedict’s conviction is based on the Catholic Church’s 19th and 20th century experience of wrestling with the question of religious freedom and other challenges posed to religion by the modern state. The “138,” as represented by the Jordanian prince, keeps trying to change the subject. The exchanges are polite, but the gap is unmistakable. And the gap is not accidental.

For as I discuss in Faith, Reason, and the War Against Jihadism (Doubleday), it is precisely the issues the pope identified in his December 2006 Curial address that are at the root of the conflict between jihadist Islam and the rest of the world (including reformist elements within Islam).

Can the gap between what the pope proposes as a dialogue agenda and what the “138” have proposed be bridged at the March meeting in Rome? The answer to that question will be the measure of the meeting’s success.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. Weigel’s column is distributed by the Denver Catholic Register, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Denver. Phone: 303-715-3215.

Priest Gives Brutal, Honest Account of Concentration Camp

By Rachelle Linner

Courtesy of Catholic News Service

To understand a period as complex as World War II and the Holocaust, we need to read both trained historians and ordinary men and women. Historians provide a broad overview and an understanding of context but it is only individuals who can communicate the intimate details of what it is like to endure the suffering of mind, body and soul that is the reality of war. Personal narratives can elicit the empathy and identification that move the reader to compassion and insight. The two books under consideration, while not among the central Holocaust narratives, are important in fleshing out our knowledge of those terrible years.

Luxembourgish Father Jean Bernard (1907-1994) was a prisoner in the Dachau concentration camp from May 1941 to August 1942. “Priestblock 25487” was originally published in a newspaper series in 1945 and was loosely adapted into the acclaimed 2004 German film, “The Ninth Day.”

Father Bernard’s factual narrative is direct and explicit reportage and as such it gives a brutally honest recitation of what it was like to endure the clergy barracks of Dachau. It is difficult to imagine how people managed to endure these depths of misery: physical and emotional torture, starvation, disease, unceasing cold, hard physical labor and merciless guards.

Moreover, conditions could, and often did, change radically. At the whim of sadistic guards and the camp commandant, rations were cut and prisoners were assigned to more dangerous or useless work details, or forced to undergo collective punishment exercises.

Father Bernard does not offer theological reflections on his experience but in a luminous passage he describes participating in his first Mass at Dachau. “Hoc est corpus meum: I look at the two bits of bread in my hand, and as the one for whom we are suffering all this comes into our midst, as in their hearts hundreds of priests join their offering with that of the Savior, tears roll down my cheeks. It becomes a single offering that certainly creates nectaries between heaven and earth.”

It is because of his suffering that Father Bernard has the right to call on us not to forget, but to forgive. “We must forgive while remaining conscious of the full horror of what occurred, not only because nothing constructive can be built on a foundation of hatred ... but above all for the sake of him who commands and urges us to forgive, and before whom we, victims and executioners alike, are all poor debtors in need of mercy.”

Raymond-Raoul Lambert’s “Diary of a Witness,” published in association with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, offers the reader an opportunity to understand the thoughts and struggles of a controversial leader of France’s Jewish community. From 1941 until his arrest in August 1943, Lambert was the director of the General Union of the Jews of France, an organization that was established by the Vichy government. Lambert’s role was fraught with difficulty, requiring as it did work with both French and German officials.

Although it is an essential document for students of Vichy France, “Diary of a Witness” is a difficult book for the general reader. Many of Lambert’s entries, his organization’s activities seem arcane and his references to French political and literary figures are without salience.

Some of these problems are alleviated by the excellent notes and introduction of its editor, Richard I. Cohen, a professor of French Jewish studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Cohen clarifies the complicated internal politics of the General Union of the Jews of France and identifies the legal, military and historic issues referenced in Lambert’s diary.

In a July 1941 entry, Lambert describes conditions in an internment camp for foreigners in France, more than half of whom are Jewish. “In the midst of the catastrophe shaking the world, how many individual tragedies there are, what vast undeserved suffering!” he wrote. Lambert’s struggle to reconcile his Jewish and French identities deserves to be included in the reservoir of suffering that was Nazi Europe.

Lambert was a complex and flawed man who was asked to take on grave responsibilities. His decisions have been, and will be, judged by history; but readers of this book will emerge with respect for his courage in wrestling with the idolatry of loyalty as the reality of the Vichy regime undermines the “humane culture” of France.

Linner, a freelance writer and reviewer, lives in Boston.
Author Wades Through Medical Choices for Catholics


Janet E. Smith and Dr. Christopher Kaczor, Ph.D., pose 57 questions about life issues that many people may want to ask Catholic ethicists and moral theologians about. They cover cloning, in vitro fertilization, stem cell research, euthanasia, sterilization and more. This book is a great help in reaching an understanding about what the Catholic Church teaches about life and medical issues. The authors quote Scripture, Church Fathers and various Church documents like the Catechism of the Catholic Church and various encyclicals and other such sources from Pope John Paul II and other popes. The authors are also straightforward in telling the reader that the Church has not reached a conclusion on what it teaches about a certain issue.

There are seven chapters: Chapter 1 is on fundamentals which is an introduction to life issues. This chapter discusses the value of human life, conscience and what that means. Church teachings and acceptance or denial of them, what prudential judgment is, what is the principle of double effect, and other topics. Chapter 2 is on beginning of life issues. This chapter discusses abortion, when does life begin, is it moral to have an abortion if the unborn child is handicapped, which ways of treating ectopic pregnancies are moral, and other issues. Chapter 3 is on reproductive technologies. This chapter discusses which reproductive technologies are moral, cloning, adopting a frozen embryo, are ovarian transplants morally permissible and other questions. Chapter 4 is on contraception, sterilization and natural family planning. This chapter examines what the Catholic Church teaches on contraception, what is Natural Family Planning, can contraception be used for medical purposes, is vaccine for the human papillomavirus (HPV) moral, is sterilization moral at any time, and other issues. Chapter 5 is on end of life issues and examines the immorality of euthanasia, mercy killing, right to life, suffering, suicide, supplying food and water, a person in a vegetative state, when is a person dead, what is the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, and other topics. Chapter 6 is on cooperation with evil. This chapter informs and discusses what we and medical professionals should not do to cooperate with evil. This involves: Is it moral to assist in an abortion, is it moral for pharmacists to fill contraceptive prescriptions, is it moral to remove a healthy breast to prevent breast cancer, and reporting immoral practices to a bishop of a Catholic hospital.

Chapter 7 is on the 10 commandments for health-care professionals and patients. There is a very helpful bibliography of books, journals and Web sites. Then there are endnotes and an index. This book is highly recommended to those interested in Catholic moral teaching on life and medical issues.


Dr. Christopher Kaczor (Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame) studied as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Cologne in Germany and is the director of the University Honors Program and faculty member in the School of Philosophy at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He is the author of Proportionalism and the Natural Law Tradition (2002) and The Edge of Life: Human Dignity and Contemporary Bioethics (2005).

Brother Benet Exton is a Benedictine Monk at Saint Gregory's Abbey in Shawnee. Among other duties, he serves as the librarian and writes book reviews regularly for several Catholic publications, including the Sooner Catholic.

Relying on God Causes Expectations to Fade

As we rely less on others to have our needs met, the more empowered, peaceful and serene our lives can be. We can experience freedom and happiness as we let go of others doing and thinking the way we want and we can feel more empowered by meeting our own needs. Yes, there is that song with the lyrics, “People who need people are the luckiest people in the world” and I don’t question the need for healthy, loving relationships.

However, the fewer needs we have that are dependent on others, the healthier we are. Indications of excessive needs are: having high expectations of others; needing to control, please and take care of others; and easily feeling frustrated, hurt and angered by others.

The more we expect others to meet our needs, the more we set ourselves up to be hurt and disappointed. Often times when we don’t make the bed, don’t make all As and Bs, don’t anticipate our needs, play golf when we want them at home with us, don’t support us with the kids, don’t pay more attention to us, etc., we feel hurt, rejected, frustrated, angry and upset.

Changing expectations to preferences can help us avoid these hurtful and frustrated feelings. Preferences imply a willingness to be accepting and if things go our way, that’s nice ... if not, well, that’s OK too. We can seek other alternatives and resolve situations in other ways. Replacing expectations with preferences empowers us to be responsible for ourselves. After all, God is with us and together will see ourselves through whatever we are experiencing.

The less we feel hurt, frustrated, angered, etc., by others, the fewer resentments we will have and the more content and peaceful we will feel. Yes, I sometimes still feel disregarded and angry when someone cuts me off in traffic, however, as I realize that this is about them and not me, is not a reflection of the person I am, then I can settle down, turn to God and experience peace, calm and serenity. This new way of taking responsibility for ourselves, not taking things personally, requires a willingness to think differently about the actions of others and a realization that those actions truly are about them and not about us.

Controlling, pleasing and taking care of others oftentimes is about coping with our childhood wounds and having our needs met through others. As we attempt to control others, we may get our way and/or feel empowered. As we please and take care of others and they seem to think well of us, we feel better about ourselves. These are inappropriate ways of meeting our own needs.

As we realize we are truly powerless over what others do for or think about us, we can let go of pleasing, controlling and taking care of them. Instead, we can find other ways to take care of and be responsible for ourselves and to heal our childhood wounds. Our job is to love them and realize that what they are doing and saying is about them and is not about us. We don’t have to have our needs met through them. Rather, we can work on letting go, asserting ourselves and focus on what is God’s will for us.

And, speaking of God, there’s the key. As we focus on God’s will for us and strive to carry out that will, being loving to God within, to ourselves and to others, we will find joy and happiness. Being with God is so healing for no longer do we need to control, please and take care of others. We can let go and let God take responsibility for meeting our own needs and experience a new freedom and a new happiness.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Joe Froehle has years of experience in marital, individual and family counseling. He serves in the Counseling Center at St. John the Baptist, Edmond. He can be reached at (405) 359-8539 or by e-mail at jfroehle@uwbell.net.
Buenas Noticias...

...Rito de Elección

Jesús es el Cristo. Él es el Señor. Él es el Único Salvador del mundo. Él nos ofrece vida a través de la Iglesia Católica, la cual estableció.

El Señor Jesús es el Cristo. Él es el Único Salvador del mundo. Él nos ofrece vida a través de la Iglesia Católica, la cual estableció. Convertirse en un miembro de la Iglesia Católica es radicalmente diferente de distinguir un cierto grupo, sociedad o institución. Éste es lo que hace única la Santa Iglesia Católica.

Mientras la Iglesia es una comunidad, una organización, una sociedad visible, al mismo tiempo, es en la revelación, el plan de Dios, el Cuerpo Místico de Cristo.

La Iglesia está divinamente establecida, sustentada y dirigida. Verá más el finamiento y la sabiduría de esta Iglesia.

Por lo tanto, cuando por inspección de Dios, respondemos a su invitación y nos unimos a la Iglesia, nos convertimos no sólo en miembros de un miembro de una comunidad sino también en miembros del Cuerpo Místico de Cristo.

Esta nueva e íntima relación con Jesucristo es una comunión, una venida a estar juntos para que realmente compartamos su vida y su amor. Es a través de la unidad con Cristo que recibimos la plenitud de nuestra naturaleza humana.

Estimados hermanos y hermanas, les bendigo por responder la invitación de Jesús. Cuíden para que sean devotos, activos y puedan tener vida eterna.

Que Dios, quien comenzó este buen trabajo en ustedes, les traiga cumplimiento.

El observador permanente Migliore interviene ante la ONU

La Santa Sede pide dar voz a los pobres en las decisiones económicas

NUEVA YORK (GEMINOS).—La Santa Sede pide dar voz a los pobres en los procesos de decisión en el campo económico y asegurado el valor de una sociedad dispone del trabajo y la atención que recibe a sus miembros más débiles.

Es este el mensaje expresado el pasado 7 de diciembre en Nueva York por el arzobispo Celantino Migliore, arzobispo de Florencia y observador permanente ante Naciones Unidas, al intervenir en la 46 sesión de la Comisión para el Desarrollo Social.

La Santa Sede, dijo el arzobispo, subraya que las necesidades de los que tienen menos recurso deben ser priorizadas en las decisiones de los líderes del sector financiero y que, con respecto a los estudios internacionales, debemos considerar una tribuna a los pobres porque muy a menudo no tienen voz en la búsqueda de soluciones a problemas que los afectan incluso más de cerca.

La propuesta del observador permanente se dirige a «un ambiente y estructuras que permitan a la gente ser parte activa en el proceso de toma de decisiones». Si la globalización ha abierto las puertas a la productividad económica para muchos gobiernos, denunció, «sus inconvenientes siguen afectando de modo desproporcionado a los miembros más débiles de nuestra sociedad».

Por otro lado, la propuesta de los gobiernos a este desafío debe guiarse por el principio moral para que una sociedad mundial sea rentable por lo que hacen quienes tienen responsabilidad ante las necesidades de los miembros más débiles, sobre todo de los más necesitados. Una sociedad válida es aquella en la que todos se benefician del bien común y ninguno es dejado fuera de la preocupaciones generales y las políticas económicas que ayudan a los trabajadores de baja renta a vivir dignamente deberán ser una prioridad de toda sociedad que quiera merecer el adjetivo trascendente.

Para la buena marcha del aparato social, añadió el arzobispo, es prioritaria la promoción del plano emprego y el trabajo digno para todos.

La delegación vatican, explicó, subraya en especial dos aspectos de la cuestión laboral: el hecho de que la falta de plan implica y de trabajo digno, y la pobreza y la desigualdad social consiguientes colocan la dignidad humana y que «es posible ganar la confianza de la gente solo si es la escucha y se tienen en cuenta conscientemente sus necesidades».

«Los cada vez más rápidos círculos periódicos de crecimiento y de creación de trabajo por un lado y de recepción y pérdida del trabajo por otro, perturban las relaciones y los mecanismos financieros y comerciales», observó. En un contexto económico de este tipo, la Comisión para el Desarrollo Social de la ONU «debe reatar la necesidad de métodos eficaces para defender a las familias de baja renta y a los trabajadores del colapso financiero».

Así, así, concluyó el arzobispo, la función de la Iglesia Católica, a conjunto de justicia y de solidaridad, pero también una medida financieramente justa para estimular las economías nacionales y el comercio internacional.

Para sacar a la gente a la escucha, se necesita que las medidas tomadas por las economías más desarrolladas no lleguen a empeorar la situación de las que están en vías de desarrollo.
Dignificamos nuestras acciones cuando servimos a Cristo

Cree el liderazgo laico para el Ministerio Hispano en San Eugenio

La señora Gloria Fantazis confía lo saborear producido en Oklahoma.

Por Mauro Yanes
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Desde el año 1990 la parroquia San Eugenio ha experimentado cambios muy positivos en la dirección del Ministerio Hispano. Recientemente bajo la supervisión y dirección pastoral del Padre Joseph Jacobs, fue designada en la dirección del Ministerio Hispano, la señora Gloria Fantazis, quien es oriunda de Cuba. Ella nos relata su estrecha relación con la Iglesia Católica, diciéndonos: “Soy de Cuba cuando era una niña de 11 años de edad y mi familia exited mucho haber tenido que salir de Cuba por el totalitarismo. Mi familia cuando salió de Cuba pensó que nuestro estilo sería algo temporal. Pero como van tan bien, aquí estoy yo y 500 de cubanos”.

La señora Gloria Fantazis nunca estuvo desconectada de su cultura. Cuando vivió en Cuba estudió en el Colegio Sagrado Corazón de Santiago de Cuba, diríamos lo siguiente: “Un año que llegamos a los Estados Unidos, mi padre me puso en la escuela pública y así me gusto, por lo que mis padres consiguieron que me becaran en el Colegio Sagrado Corazón de Saint Charles en Missouri. Después estudié en la Universidad Católica Marymount en Arlington, Virginia, donde obtuve mi grado de asociado y luego en la Universidad George Mason, allí mismo en Virginia, para luego concluir mis estudios con mi maestría en literatura española en Middlebury, Massachussets. Ahora por designio de Dios vengo a servir en el en la parroquia San Eugenio”.

La señora Gloria Fantazis está convencida de la necesidad de crear una comunidad más unida y más justa. Ella cree que para alcanzar esto debemos conocer más y ayudarnos mutuamente para dar testimonio de vida. Al respecto ella resalta: “Cuando llegué aquí nos sorprendió que en las parroquias dominadas había entre 300 y 700 personas y no se conocían entre sí”.

Por lo tanto, la señora Fantazis se propuso apoyar al Padre Jacobs en las nuevas directrices pastorales del Ministerio Hispano de San Eugenio y asistir a una actividad de dinámica de entrevistas donde concienció a muchas personas y entre esas personas estaba la señora Lourdes Cruz, quien nos dijo: “Bajo la supervisión de Gloria, se busca que el Ministerio Hispano se vea como un ministerio separado de la parroquia. Creo que ella cuenta con mucho talento y todos vamos ayudando aquí para incrementar nuestras fuerzas, tanto en cosas nuevas y cosas que ya se habían hecho bien, por parte de las menores que trabajan aquí. Ahora, como la Señora tiene el compromiso de seguir lo bueno que ya existe y hacer mejor lo que viene”. Así, entonces, en consulta con los hispanos de esta parroquia se procede a reorganizar algunas actividades.

La señora Fantazis dijo al respecto: “No haymos nada nuevo sino más bien reorganizar un poco mejor e incluir a más gente en todo. No queremos que haya un sólo grupo que haga todo. Todos debemos de participar de una forma más activa en la parroquia. Yo deseo construir un verdadero puente entre las dos culturas porque creo que es muy fácil criticar de lado y lado cuando no se conocen las cosas y muchas veces esto trae malos entre personas y culturas”.

La parroquia San Eugenio cumple 50 años y realizará diversas actividades donde se incluirán actividades culturales bilingües. Así lo dijo la señora Gloria Fantazis, quien expresó: “El pasado mes de diciembre, no esperábamos a tantos gente diversa en el día de la Virgen de Guadalupe. Vimos más de mil personas que reafirman la capacidad del gimnasio, salió bien porque trabajamos en equipo. Deseo que nos ayudemos más y que trabajemos como voluntarios en la mayor medida posible. Debemos enriquecer lo que nos ha dejado la Hermana Ana Eva Suarez, la unidad”.

Una novedad con la que cuenta la parroquia San Eugenio es que para todas actividades que hagan los hispanos Católicos allí se hace un mantel gratis, incluso para todas las Misas dominicales en español.

Finalmente, la señora Gloria Fantazis y la señora Lourdes Cruz hacen una invitación para que todos los católicos hispanohablantes asistan a la misa en español del Padre Frank DeSiano, quien viene desde Nueva York con el tema de ‘Creer, Ver y Compartir en la Fe’. Este evento se realizará a las siete de la noche el próximo martes.

Para más información, llamar a la señora Gloria Fantazis por el teléfono (405) 722-7115.

Iglesia San Pedro y Oficina de Vida familiar ofrecen talleres educativos en español

La adolescencia es una etapa de la vida que requiere mucho apoyo

Por Mauro Yanes
Sooner Catholic

WOODWARD — Uno de los desafíos más grandes que enfrentamos en estos tiempos son condicionar el Evangelio en la juventud actual.

La adolescencia es una etapa muy importante en el desarrollo humano y también es una etapa en la que los hijos demandan mucha atención por parte de los padres. En la adolescencia se dan valores tan valiosas a la moda, a la música y a la forma de vestir. Los estudiantes de la parroquia San Pedro y la Oficina Arquidiocesana de Vida Familiar buscan aportar ideas, técnicas y estrategias que conduzcan a una buena relación entre padres e hijos. La mayor parte de las dificultades entre padres e hijos surgen de la lucha que se establece por disponer de poder y control. Los padres deben saber cómo ganar esta guerra cuando sea necesario de modo que puedan otorgar poder a sus hijos cuando sea más aconsejable. Por esta razón y muchas más, los padres necesitan disponer de tiempo para sentirse tranquilamente analizar las dificultades de sus hijos para decidir qué hacer y estos talleres son una buena oportunidad.

Los talleres se efectúan en las siguientes fechas: el 17 de febrero se hablará sobre el crecimiento en los adolescentes, el 2 de marzo se abordará el tema de la sexualidad en los adolescentes, el 30 de marzo se analizará sobre la comunicación con los adolescentes, el 6 de abril se hará una conversación sobre los adolescentes en la Iglesia, el 20 de abril se hablará sobre la escuela y el problema del drogadicción, el 27 de abril se analizará sobre los adolescentes y el problema de drogas. Para más información pueden contactar directamente a la parroquia San Pedro al teléfono (580) 296-5905.
Accountant
Archdiocesan Business Office is seeking a degreed accountant, Great Plains Software experience a plus. Interested candidates can fax a letter of interest, resume and references to David Johnson at (405) 709-2711 or by mail to P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123.

Youth Ministry Coordinator
Holy Spirit Church, Mustang, a friendly, growing parish, seeks a full-time, experienced, practicing Catholic as a youth coordinator. DRE for grades 9-12, Coordinator of Confirmation program and Whole Community Catechesis team member. Bachelor’s degree in theology or religious education, or CMD certification or desire to obtain same required. Mail resume, references and letter of interest to Father Jim, Holy Spirit Church, P.O. Box 246, Mustang, Okla. 73064.

Elementary School Principal
St. James School in Oklahoma City is seeking a principal who will be a faith leader as well as academic leader for the school. St. James has pre-K through eighth grade and enrolls approximately 190 students. Applicant must: 1) be a practicing Catholic; 2) have a master’s degree in educational administration or a related field or be working toward such a degree; 3) have a minimum of three years teaching experience, preferably in a Catholic school. Salary is based on qualifications and experience. Position available June 1, 2008. For an application, contact Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, call (405) 721-4202, or contact mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Elementary School Principal
St. Mary’s School in Ponca City is seeking a principal who will be a faith leader as well as academic leader for the school. St. Mary’s has preschool through eighth grade and enrolls approximately 150 students. Applicant must: 1) be a practicing Catholic; 2) have a master’s degree in educational administration or a related field or be working toward such a degree; 3) have a minimum of three years teaching experience, preferably in a Catholic school. Salary is based on qualifications and experience. Position available June 1, 2008. For an application, contact Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, call (405) 721-4202, or contact mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Catholic School Secretary
St. Eugene Catholic School is seeking a full-time secretary. The successful candidate must possess excellent verbal and written skills in English (Spanish skills would be an asset), the ability to use Microsoft Word, Outlook and other basic computer programs, and the ability to multi-task while interacting positively with students, parents, teachers and guests. Salary is dependent on education, experience and relevant job skills. To apply, send resume to Principal Suzette Williams, 2400 W. Hefner, Oklahoma City 73120, or e-mail at SWilliams@stegenes.org.

Teacher Needed
Volunteer English teacher needed for the Father Rother Parochial School in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala. Transportation room and board provided. For more information, contact Father Tony Taylor at (405) 517-2303.

Maintenance Employee
Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is looking for a Maintenance Department employee. Resume and references should be mailed to L.D. McGowin, Maintenance Director, 801 NW 50th St., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73118. Any questions may be directed to 424-6638 Ext. 241.

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

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

Director of Campus Ministry
St. Gregory’s University, a small Catholic and Benedictine liberal arts college, is seeking qualified applicants to serve as Director of Campus Ministry. Responsibilities include oversight of a comprehensive campus ministry program (as articulated in the USCCB’s Empowered By The Spirit), coordination of student liturgies, implementation of ongoing catechetical and faith formation activities, coordination of service and mission trip opportunities for students, and direction of fall and spring retreats. The Director of Campus Ministry also serves as the consultant/supervisor for the Buckley Team, a student-led retreat ministry to area parishes and high schools. The successful candidate should have a bachelor’s degree in theology or pastoral ministry, 5 years of pastoral experience and relevant job skills.

V.P. of Institutional Advancement
St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee invites nominations and applications for the position of vice president of Institutional Advancement. The vice president reports directly to the president and will be responsible for the planning and direction of all philanthropic initiatives for the university. The vice president will plan and lead all advancement initiatives to capitalize on the university’s success story, engage a broad range of constituents and grow the endowment. The vice president will work closely with staff, senior administrators and board members to identify short- and long-term priorities for fundraising and manage a portfolio of major gift prospects. The university is currently in the silent phase of a major capital campaign. A master’s degree is preferred. It is strongly preferred that this individual be a practicing Catholic with knowledge of Benedictine spirituality. Electronic applications are preferred, and should include a cover letter and resume. Nominations, expressions of interest or requests for the complete position specifications may be sent directly to the university: Shingi Goto, Executive Vice President, St. Gregory’s University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee 74804, or s-goto@stgregorys.edu, (405) 875-5435.

Groundskeeper needed
National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague has an opening for a groundskeeper/facilities maintenance person. Responsibilities include: maintain the Shrine grounds including trees, shrubs, grass, sidewalks, parking lots; snow removal; painting; general handyman and other duties as needed. Must be physically able to lift at least 60 pounds and willing to work outdoors in all weather conditions. Some weekend and evening hours may be required. Salary commensurate with experience. To apply, send resume to National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague, P.O. Box 488, Prague, Okla. 74864, or e-mail shrine_ip@hotmail.com

Bilingual Receptionist
Catholic Charities is seeking a bilingual receptionist for the Immigration Assistance Program. Successful candidate must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills in both English and Spanish, the ability to use Microsoft Word, Outlook and other basic computer programs, and the ability to interact in a positive way with clients, volunteers and donors. Salary is dependent on education, experience and relevant job skills. Bilingual candidates preferred. Resumes and salary history should be sent to: Human Resources, Catholic Charities, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106, or e-mail to nlargent@catholiccharities-ok.org.

Full-time Bilingual Counselor
Catholic Charities/St. Joseph’s Counseling Center is seeking a full-time bilingual (Spanish) licensed counselor to provide professional counseling and related services to individuals, couples and families. Services will be provided in the St. Joseph’s Counseling Center at Catholic Charities and at selected parishes within the community. Submit a cover letter and resume to Human Resources, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharities-ok.org.
Catholic Schools Compete at McGuinness Science Fair

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School recently hosted the 2008 Middle School Science Fair. The event is held annually at Bishop McGuinness and gives middle school students a chance to compete among their peers in a high school environment. Middle schools competing included All Saints, Bishop John Carroll, Christ the King, Holy Trinity, Rosary, Sacred Heart, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Eugene, St. John Nepomuk, St. Phillip Neri, Sts. Peter and Paul, Trinity and Westminster.

Top Five Schools
1st All Saints
2nd Christ the King
3rd Rosary
4th St. John Nepomuk
5th St. Phillip Neri

Category Winners
Animal Science:
1st: Mikayla Linneman, All Saints
2nd: Kennedy Logan, St. Phillip Neri
3rd: Sam Marino, Preston Coleman, Christ the King

Behavioral Science:
1st: Maddie Scott, Rosary
2nd: Saleena Chaudry, St. Eugene
3rd: Brian Lively, All Saints

Biochemistry:
1st: Idalia Mora, Sacred Heart
2nd: Randall Rodriguez, All Saints
3rd: Gunner Gipae, Rosary

Cell and Molecular Bio:
1st: Allison Bordy, St. John Nepomuk
2nd: Jose Camboarelli, All Saints

Chemistry:
1st: Ramie Jester, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
2nd: Allison Cameron, St. Eugene
3rd: Ian Patterson, Shiloh Johnson, Christ the King

Computer Science:
1st: Lucas Schuermann, All Saints

Earth Science:
1st: Rachel Strouhal, All Saints
2nd: Jaci Bollenbach, Sts. Peter and Paul
3rd: Elijah Petty, Holy Trinity

Engineering:
1st: Zach Schuermann, All Saints
2nd: Patrick Flannigan, Rosary
3rd: Matthew Webber, St. Bishop Carroll

Environmental Science:
1st: Victoria Rauch, All Saints
2nd: Trevor Ford, Westminster
3rd: Kellie Burnett, St. Phillip Neri

Mathematics:
1st: Lea Ann Winterstein, St. Phillip Neri
2nd: Kody Bollenbach, Sts. Peter and Paul
3rd: Sesily Monday, Rosary

Medicine and Health:
1st: Gabie Palma, St. John Nepomuk
2nd: Sam McGuire, Christ the King
3rd: Catherine Lewis, Bishop John Carroll

Microbiology:
1st: Andrew May, Rosary
2nd: Jack Downs, Brent Gievey, Christ the King
3rd: Shelby Wilhelm, Michelle Lundry, Christ the King

Physics and Astronomy:
1st: Melissa Doan, St. Phillip Neri
2nd: Darby Heard, St. John Nepomuk
3rd: James Reeves, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Plant Sciences:
1st: Abbey Smith, Christ the King
2nd: Josh Waters, Christ the King
3rd: Madison Splitt, All Saints

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Secret Ingredient

Women of Our Lady of Rosary in Binger Combine Indian Taco Recipe, Love of Parish To Cook Up an Annual Success

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

BINGER — When this small Caddo County community held its first town-wide garage sale some 20 years ago, the women’s group from Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church netted a grand total of $15. Not much to show for a whole lot of work. While there doesn’t appear to be a true consensus concerning which member of the group suggested that Indian tacos be sold the following year, all are in agreement the idea must have been heaven sent. How else does one explain going from $15 in year one to making $1,400 in year two? And in some years, the Indian tacos have approached the $2,000 mark.

According to the handful of Catholic women involved in the effort, the secret to their success is in the fry bread. Mary Rose Hamilton, a member of Our Lady of the Rosary, is a three-time winner of the national fry bread cooking championships held in Anadarko.

“People come from all over for these Indian tacos,” said Vince Gonzalez, a parishioner at Our Lady’s and one of the strongest supporters of the women’s group. “I tell you, if it weren’t for these few women, there wouldn’t be a Catholic Church in Binger,” he said. “They do everything for the Church and they do it with great love,” he said as tears gather in his eyes. Gonzalez is not exaggerating. A laundry list of church improvements is credited to the women’s group. And most of the funding for these items has been generated through the sale of the Indian tacos.

“We bought a new door for the church,” said Ginny Dennison, the retired military drill sergeant who now serves as cashier for the Indian taco sale. Other group members chimed in, clicking off improvement after improvement: There’s the new roof; the new cushions for the pews; the new windows; the new shed out back; and don’t forget the scholarships for graduating seniors, as well as sending the altar servers to Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Youth Camp in the summer. The women’s group also helped the former priest at Our Lady’s, Father Mario, twice travel to his home in India when his mother was ill. They’ve also purchased new vestments for the priests and given money to tornado victims throughout Oklahoma. All this from a mission church.

“Well, if we didn’t do it, who would,” said Ellie Lynn, who fellow group members credit for perfectly topping the Indian taco with her homemade salsa. “We have some very generous people who attend Our Lady of the Rosary and several of them are sitting right here,” said Leon Leal.

No officers are elected by the women’s group. No one needs to give direction because, as Mary Howell said, “Everyone just seems to know where they fit. The job just gets done.”

That spirit seems to run throughout the small church community. Gonzalez said David and Kim Warren have helped revitalize the RE program on Sunday after 8 a.m. Mass. As many as a dozen children are now attending. “We used to only have three or four,” he said.

Binger will hold its annual town-wide garage sale the first Saturday in April. The community will swell in population that day as people come from all over hunting for unusual bargains. If you plan to buy one of the Indian tacos made by the women’s group at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, you’d better get there early. The line often stretches out the door of the parish center and all the way to the road.

If you go
What: Indian Tacos
When: April 5
Where: Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church in Binger

For more information or to ensure an order, call (580) 515-5821.

Members of the women’s group and supporters are back row, Vince Gonzalez, Debbie Lopez, Ellie Lynn, Mary Howell and Leon Leal.