Ash Wednesday is February 25

Franky Lefthand receives blessed ashes at Sacred Heart, El Reno.

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

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

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

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

What does abstinence mean?
The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat. Voluntary abstinence refers to refraining from lawful pleasures in a spirit of penance.

Can anyone be dispensed or excused from fast and/or abstinence?
Individuals with just cause may be dispensed by a priest. Those who are ill or have a similar serious reason are excused from the observance of fast and abstinence. Catholics are reminded that they should not lightly excuse themselves from this obligation. If they do so, they then need to compensate with prayer and other voluntary penance.

FOCA
By Most Reverend Eusebius J. Beltran Archbishop of Oklahoma City

The federal Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) is a radical attempt to enshrine abortion on demand and into American law. If it were ever passed and became the law, it would be bad law because it is unjust and would trample on the consciences of people.

For several decades, various new versions of FOCA have been introduced in Congress. Fortunately, none has passed. All pending bills expire at the end of each two-year congressional session. Therefore, FOCA would have to be reintroduced and come out of committee for it to become an actual threat.

I want to thank the many people of our Archdiocese who have actively lobbied against the reintroduction of FOCA. Should it ever be reintroduced, we would be facing a serious challenge to our faith belief and right living. Therefore, we must all work tirelessly for its defeat. FOCA is an evil bill and would cause tremendous harm to the right to life movement and the respect for life which all human beings should cherish.

The election of President Barack Obama gives the proponents of FOCA new energy. Therefore, we must be vigilant and prepared to resist any “resurrection” of FOCA. However, in

continued on page 7
The Good News

... Archbishop Beltran Calls Catholic People to Conversion and Renewal

The liturgical season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2009. It is a penitential season which the Church observes throughout the world. Therefore, all Catholic people are given this opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Easter. Archbishop Beltran invites Catholics of the Archdiocese to conversion and renewal. Therefore, to help us do so, the following regulations are to be observed in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City during this sacred penitential season of Lent.

Abstinence — Catholics 14 years of age or older must abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent. It is only on the other Fridays of the year that abstinence may be substituted by another form of penance.

Fasting — Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 (inclusive) are required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. There is a limit of one full meal and no food between meals on those days. Two smaller meals are permitted as needed to maintain one’s strength.

Sacrament of Penance — All the faithful who have reached the age of reason are bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year. Lent is a good time to fulfill this precept of the Church. Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion without previously having been to sacramental confession. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1457)

Holy Communion — Catholics who have received their first Holy Communion are obliged to make a worthy reception of Holy Communion at least once a year during the Lenten or Easter seasons. In the United States, this reception of Holy Communion may take place from the First Sunday of Lent, March 1, 2009, through Trinity Sunday, June 7, 2009.

Other Lenten Observances — Each weekday of Lent is also an obligatory day of penance. Some recommendations include participation in daily Mass, increased prayer or spiritual study, self-imposed fasting or abstinence, works of charity and participation in traditional Lenten devotions (parish missions, Stations of the Cross, rosary).

The proper context for all Lenten discipline is the conversion of our hearts. As the Catechism states, however, “interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance.” These penances help us to redirect our whole life to God and away from sin and the evil we have committed. (1430-1439)

As we celebrate our Lenten penitential practices, may we experience this conversion of heart and be strengthened in our faith in God’s mercy. May our discipline, through God’s grace, lead us to full participation in the eternal Easter.

... Catholic Men’s Conference – In the Father’s Footsteps

Young men — old men — all men — Come! Join me for a special day in the presence of God. I invite you to come with me to the 13th annual Catholic Men’s Conference here in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The conference will be held next Saturday, Feb. 28 at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. Registration will open at 8 a.m. and the program will begin with prayer at 9 a.m. The conference will end with the celebration of a Mass for the First Sunday of Lent from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The timing of this men’s conference is especially opportune. It will follow just a few days after Ash Wednesday. As mentioned above, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent. Lent is the principal penitential time of the entire year. It is a call to conversion, to repentance and to spiritual renewal. There could be no better way to begin this Lenten Season of Repentance than by participating in this year’s Catholic Men’s Conference.

The call to repentance and renewal is the ongoing invitation of Jesus to us. From original sin until this very moment, God calls and urges us to repent of our sins and to accept the new life He offers us in love. This call of God is repeated throughout the Sacred Scriptures and frequently by the Church itself. We are so blessed to have God assure us of His love and care for each one of us!

The agenda for the Men’s Conference builds upon the call Christ gives each of us to repent of our sins. There will be several dynamic presentations of our Catholic faith, private and communal prayer times, an opportunity for confession and the celebration of the Eucharist. In addition, the interaction and fellowship of other Catholic men strengthens our families and the Church of Oklahoma and builds up the personal relationships each of us should have with the Lord.

Catholic men of Oklahoma, my brothers in the Lord, please hear my invitation and come to our men’s conference next Saturday, Feb. 28. Join with me and your other brothers in Christ from throughout Oklahoma and we gather at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School for a day of grace and blessings. I look forward to greeting you personally and praying with you and for you. Come and pray for me and for your families and your loved ones. God bless all of you!
Tips Offered to Help Families Answer Assisted Living Questions

By Richard Amend
For the Sooner Catholic

Many perspective residents ask me the question, “What is the difference between Independent Living and Assisted Living?” I usually respond with, “Independent Living residents can still provide for all their personal needs, whereas Assisted Living residents receive services to meet personal needs in ways that continue to promote their independence. At Saint Ann’s, we like to call Assisted Living, Independent Living with some assistance.”

In most cases, Assisted Living communities have a nurse on staff assisting residents in setting up their individualized care plan. The administrator usually works as a team player in this process along with CNAs (Certified Nurses Assistants) and CMAs (Certified Medical Assistants).

Residents at Saint Ann’s Assisted Living reside in apartments that include the following:

* Kitchenette with refrigerator and microwave
* Walk-in showers with built-in, fold-down seats
* Enhanced cable television
* Emergency response system and individual pendants
* Weekly housekeeping and linen service

Assistance in their personal care can include the following:

* Medication Administration
* Bathing Assistance
* Dressing Assistance
* Daily Cognitive Reminders
* Escort Service to Meals and Activities
* Transportation

The Consumer Consortium on Assisted Living (CCAL) is a non-profit education and advocacy organization dedicated solely to the needs, rights and protection of Assisted Living consumers and their loved ones. They suggest 10 tips for choosing an Assisted Living Community.

1. Make an accurate and honest assessment of your physical, financial, mental and lifestyle needs.
2. Visit as many facilities as you can to get a sense of the choices in your area.
3. Narrow down your selection to the top two or three choices, and return to those facilities and ask lots of questions.
4. Ask to review a copy of the Resident Agreement (facility contract).
5. Ask to review the licensing or certification inspection report.
6. Call the Long Term Care Ombudsman program and ask if there are complaints about the facilities you are interested in. Contact the Elder Care Locator at 1-800-677-1116 or www.elder-care.gov to find your local ombudsman who are advocates for assisted living and nursing home residents.
7. Make an unannounced visit to the facilities you are interested in. Talk with the residents and their family members about the facility.
8. Ask what conditions or circumstances may result in the need to relocate or move to another facility.
9. Ask what the baseline fee is and what services are included in that fee. Ask about additional charges for services/products.
10. Choose the facility that comes closest to your needs.

Source: Consumer Consortium on Assisted Living, www.ccal.org

Saint Ann Assisted Living is owned and operated by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and is located at 7501 W. Britton Road in Oklahoma City. We are blessed with a beautiful chapel where Mass is celebrated on a daily basis. We have a few openings in Assisted Living. We look forward to showing you our beautiful community. Please call Richard Amend at 721-0747, Mission Director at Saint Ann Retirement and Assisted Living Community for further information.
St. Patrick’s Parade chairwoman Paula Jones said the role of grand marshal is granted each year to someone of Irish descent who has demonstrated positive civic and charitable contributions in Oklahoma. Hupfeld has served on numerous boards and commissions in Oklahoma including the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce board of directors and chairman of the board of United Way.

Tickets for the ball are $125 per person. Corporate sponsorships, which include seating at the event, also are available. Sponsorship levels are Emerald Isle for $10,000; Gold, $5,000; Crystal, $2,500; and Linen, $1,500. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Those interested in ordering tickets or sponsorships may contact Catholic Charities Development Director Jane Moon at (405) 523-3000.

Catholic Charities offers Faith Community Nursing Courses

Catholic Charities Faith Community Nursing Resource Center is offering an opportunity for registered nurses to integrate their healthcare experience and their personal faith. A Faith Community Nurse Basic Preparation Course is planned for May 14-16 and June 2-4, 2009, in Oklahoma City. Participants must attend both weekends.

“This is the 11th year of offering the course for registered nurses,” said Marilyn Seiler, faculty coordinator and manager of the Faith Community Nursing Resource Center. “Many nurses gain personal and emotional satisfaction from Faith Community Nursing. Not only do they feel they have answered a calling to a ministry, but they continue to learn through their clients and their congregation. By combining faith, knowledge, compassion and professionalism, Faith Community Nurses become a bridge between the challenges of medicine and the solidity of their faith.”

One nurse who recently completed the basic preparation course expressed her experience this way. “The course and reflective process has changed the way that I provide patient care now and changed my outlook on patients who are in situations of losing their independence. I am more sensitive to a person’s need for independence and don’t automatically do tasks for them. I am now able to provide more thorough, wholistic care and concentrate on providing for independence and higher needs. Experiences like this are very beneficial to everybody because it provides progression and improves quality of intervention. In the future, I will be able to intervene more effectively and in a timelier manner.”

According to Seiler, Faith Community Nurses not only improve their professional and spiritual lives, they also aid members of a church congregation in coping with various health conditions as well as answering questions they may have about their health. They provide assistance with health promotion, offer referral and advocacy, make home, hospital and nursing home visits, coordinate volunteers and assist with parishioners’ spirituality. “The overall goal of each Faith Community Nurse is to improve wellness in body, mind and spirit of congregation members and to continue the healing ministry of the church.”

Catholic Charities program is an educational partner with the International Parish Nurse Resource Center in St. Louis and uses the standard curriculum that was developed by that organization. The course meets published requirements for basic Faith Community Nurse Education by the American Nurses Association. Catholic Charities is approved as a provider of continuing nursing education by the Kansas State Board of Nursing. This course offering is approved for 34 contact hours. Kansas State Board of Nursing Provider Number is SP1098-0710.

The course is open to registered nurses of all faith traditions. The course will include faculty members who are local Faith Community Nurses and community leaders with expertise in theology, ethics, legal, counseling, community resources and education. The course structure will consist of lectures, discussion, class activities and some independent study. Class highlights will include history of Faith Community Nursing, church culture and leadership, standards of practice, documentation of practice, health promotion and self-care, grief and loss issues, ethics, spirituality of all ages, family dynamics, emotional wellness and spiritual wellness. The course will conclude with a dedication service.

“What began in the early 1990s with two part-time nurses hired by Saint Francis Hospital in Tulsa and assigned to St. Mary’s Catholic Parish,” Seiler said, “has evolved into a statewide training and resource center for more than 200 nurses representing approximately 15 denominations.” The statewide training program began in 1999 and has trained over 160 nurses.

Registration is limited to 20 participants for the course. Tuition, which includes all materials, meals and lodging for the entire course, is $625. A $50 non-refundable deposit is required by April 15 when registration closes.

If you are interested in more information, call Marilyn Seiler, Faith Community Resource Center manager, at (405) 523-3006 or e-mail mseiler@catholiccharitiesok.org.

Nurses who would like more information on the Faith Community Nurse basic preparation course or churches interested in introducing this program may call (405) 523-3006 or visit the Web site at www.fcaok.org/Downloads.html for brochure and registration forms.
African Bishops Say Poverty Stems From Corruption

YAOUNDE, Cameroon (Zenit.org). — Bishops of the central African region denounced corruption in their countries as one of the causes of poverty.

L'Osservatore Romano reported that the prelates of the Association of Episcopal Conferences of Central Africa Region (ACERAC), including representatives from Gabon, Congo, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea, issued this statement on poverty in their countries.

In the report, the bishops denounced the increase in corruption through the exploitation of energy sources such as oil, and they underlined “the need for greater transparency in economic activities.” The exploitation of a nation’s natural resources should happen under the observance of environmental and social laws, so that human rights and the welfare of the population are respected, affirmed the prelates.

They stated, “If the riches from the soil and subsoil contrast with the misery of the people, this happens because of corruption, which obstructs the functioning of our government and our economy, of our investments, of our educational system and health.”

The bishops asked for “a review of existing illegitimate contracts and, above all, of those not yet signed, so that our communities are not impoverished by the activities of dishonest exploiters.”

The association already publicly denounced the corruption in this region of Africa in 2002. After a meeting in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, they published a pastoral letter in which they stated that, despite the abundance of oil, “the inhabitants of Central Africa are among the poorest of the earth.”

Also in these days, the Kenyan bishops conference launched a five-year strategic plan to overcome the shortage caused by drought and rising food prices, reported Fides.

The workshop will include presentations about the role of advocacy in politics, an overview of the legislative process, current legislative issues, and the gospel connection to political advocacy. “Participation in public life is a moral obligation as taught by the Church,” said Sister Koorie. “The Commission for Justice and Human Development is working with Catholic Charities to provide these opportunities for Catholics to interact with their state leaders.” The Commission for Justice and Human Development works in the Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to promote justice and peace.

Catholic Justice Day Set at Capitol

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Commission for Justice and Human Development is sponsoring “Catholics Living Justice Day,” a citizen legislative advocacy event on Tuesday, March 17.

“Catholics are encouraged to come to the Capitol to learn about advocacy, and the current legislative session,” said Sister Diane Koorie, chair of the commission. “Participants are encouraged to invite their legislators to join them for lunch. It will be a wonderful way for parishioners to learn how Catholic Social Teaching can make a difference in the lives of their fellow Oklahomans.”

A “Faith In Politics” workshop will begin at 9 a.m. followed by a luncheon program at 11 a.m. Lunch will be provided for parishioners and their legislators. Participants should make reservations for themselves and their legislators by March 13 by calling (405) 523-3003 or e-mailing bvanpool@catholiccharitiesok.org. Assistance to find your legislators’ name is available at www.capitolconnect.com and click on Legislator Search on left side.

The workshop will include presentations about the role of advocacy in politics, an overview of the legislative process, current legislative issues, and the gospel connection to political advocacy. “Participation in public life is a moral obligation as taught by the Church,” said Sister Koorie. “The Commission for Justice and Human Development is working with Catholic Charities to provide these opportunities for Catholics to interact with their state leaders.” The Commission for Justice and Human Development works in the Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to promote justice and peace.

SGU announces “Cavalier Premiere” dates

St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee has announced four dates for its preview day, Cavalier Premiere. Students from across the state and region are invited to learn more about Oklahoma’s only Catholic university.

SGU has several activities slated for its preview days, which will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. on all four days.

Call 1-888-STGREGS or e-mail cavalier-premiere@stgregorys.edu to reserve a spot.

Mission to Address Spirituality for Healthy Life

OKLAHOMA CITY — “Christian Spirituality for a Healthy Life” is the topic for the upcoming Parish Mission at St. Eugene’s Catholic Church. The mission will be presented by Father Kevin Joyce, executive director of SpiritSite, the Catholic Spirituality Center for the Diocese of San Jose, Calif.

The Parish Mission, which is designed for busy people, is focused on helping parishioners put God first in their lives.

Father Kevin will present ways of Christian prayer and meditation to help deepen one’s intimacy with God; combat stress and increase energy; counteract unhealthy habits and addictions; and promote more loving relationships.

The seminar will be presented in English on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, March 2, 3 and 4 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. It will be held in Spanish on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 5, 6 and 7 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Donations to support the continuing efforts of SpiritSite are welcome.
Mercy Opens Doors for Students with Annual Career Fair Event

OKLAHOMA CITY — More than 600 high school students explored health care careers recently at Mercy. The popular Mercy Health Career Exploration Day, now in its seventh year, gives area students a chance to learn about a wide variety of job opportunities.

“Students often think that a career in health care is limited to being a doctor or a nurse, but there are so many opportunities in health care today,” said Kerri Beasley, RN, Mercy recruitment coordinator.

“This event isn’t a lecture or some boring intro into health care; this is an exciting hands-on experience for students to see what they would get to do in a health care career. We don’t just tell them about it, they get to see it up close.”

Students couldn’t agree more.

“We had the opportunity to feel a pig’s lung, practice giving a shot and even take part in a mock Code Blue,” said Mustang’s Caitlin Prinzo, 16, a junior at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School.

“This has been a real eye-opener of all the things you can do with a health care career.”

Whether it was actual hands-on experience or getting a chance to talk to real-life health care professionals, the career day provides students with lots of information.

Studies have shown that the level of health care awareness among youth today is low. In order to educate students, Mercy extended invitations to local high schools. Students from the following high schools attended: Bishop McGuinness, Chandler, Crescent, El Reno, Emerson, Guthrie, Mount St. Mary’s, Putnam City, Putnam City North and Yukon. Also in attendance: Canadian Valley Technology Center, Chisholm Trail Technology Center, Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center, Francis Tuttle Technology Center and High Plains Technology Center.

Students not only received lots of information but also talked one-on-one with a radiology tech, pharmacist, nurse, respiratory therapist, nutritionist, lab technician and many more professionals.

“Students also talked with representatives from local institutions that provide health care education including Francis Tuttle, Oklahoma State University/OKC, Southern Nazarene University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, University of Central Oklahoma and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

For more information on career opportunities at Mercy, go to www.mercyok.net or www.mercycareers.net.

“I always thought the medical field was only about doctors and nurses, but there are so many more fields to go into,” said a student at Mercy career day.

Students also talked with representatives from local institutions that provide health care education including Francis Tuttle, Oklahoma State University/OKC, Southern Nazarene University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, University of Central Oklahoma and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

For more information on career opportunities at Mercy, go to www.mercyok.net or www.mercycareers.net.

“I always thought the medical field was only about doctors and nurses, but there are so many more fields to go into,” said a student at Mercy career day.

Mercy Health Center, the first magnet hospital in Oklahoma, is a member of Mercy Health System of Oklahoma and the Sisters of Mercy Health System. Magnet-designated facilities report higher patient satisfaction rates, deliver better patient outcomes, provide more nursing care at the bedside of patients and consistently outperform non-magnet organizations.

HARRAH — Harrah resident Evelyn Saxton traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in the annual March for Life, which took place Jan. 22. The March for Life is held each year in the nation’s capitol to protest the 1973 United States Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade legalizing abortion. An estimated 200,000 people attended this year’s march.

Evelyn is a national leader for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. She is one of nine national directors, and it is her responsibility to oversee Catholic Daughters activities in Oklahoma, Iowa, Indiana and South Carolina.

“It was wonderful to march with other Catholic Daughters, fellow national leaders and thousands of people past the Capitol building to the steps of the Supreme Court to express our pro-life views,” Evelyn said. “It was inspiring to see so many young people travel to the city by bus and express their commitment to life. This March showed that the pro-life movement is very much alive in our country.”

Evelyn is a member of Catholic Daughters Court Christ the King #1586 in Harrah. The Court is affiliated with St. Teresa of Avila Parish, also in Harrah, where Evelyn worships.

Evelyn became a Catholic Daughter 39 years ago. Her mother was regent (leader) of Court St. Cecelia #1523 and wanted Evelyn to share in Catholic Daughters activities. Evelyn drove 30 miles each way to monthly meetings until she later joined Court Christ the King, which was much closer to home.

For more information about the Catholic Daughters, visit www.catholicdaughters.org, call national executive director Peggy O’Brien at 212-877-3041, or e-mail Peggy at cdaofnatl@aol.com.

Who Are the Catholic Daughters

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) is one of the oldest and largest organizations of Catholic women in the Americas. Catholic Daughters donate to charities, administer scholarship programs and in general strive “to be helping hands where there is pain, poverty, sorrow or sickness.”

The CDA motto is “Unity and Charity.”

The CDA was formed over 100 years ago and today numbers 85,000 dues-paying members in more than 1,400 courts (local chapters) in 45 states across the country, and in Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Guam and the Virgin Islands.

Catholic Daughters enjoy each other’s company at meetings and work hard for their parishes and communities.

Deeply spiritual, together they share faith, love of God and a distinctly feminine spirituality alluded to by Pope John Paul II when he spoke of the necessity of “feminine genius” in today’s world.

FOCA

continued from page 1

In the meantime, other grave evil actions were looming and have now become a reality. I am referring to the administrative actions of the president. He has already reversed the ban on federal funding of embryonic stem cell research and repealed the Hyde amendment. In reversing the Mexico City Policy which allows our government to use United States tax dollars to support abortion overseas, the president acts with impunity. There was no fanfare or news media present for the signing of those executive orders.

This was a marked contrast to signings of other executive orders earlier in the week. If that was an attempt to keep opposition from arising, it certainly worked as there was minimal news coverage of these tragic actions.

These decisions of our president deal a harsh blow not only to us as Catholics but to all people across the world who are dedicated to the pro-life cause and conscientiously oppose abortion.

The American bishops remind us that an extreme proposal like FOCA would overturn hundreds of pro-life laws at once. We are equally concerned that such laws may be overturned one at a time during Congress’ appropriations process.

Our voices are needed now more than ever to guard against the erosion of current pro-life measures and to keep abortion from becoming a federal entitlement.

Abortion advocates are newly energized because Congress has the most pro-abortions members in many, many years. It is a difficult but necessary battle we wage. We need God’s help and His Grace. Therefore, while we are voicing our concerns to our legislators, let us also remember to voice our concerns to Our Lord. Millions and millions of pro-life postcards are great, but adding millions and millions of pro-life prayers is even better.

If every one of us pledged to pray daily for the protection of unborn children and the defeat of the radical abortion agenda and to live out those prayers with our actions, we really could bring our nation to embrace a Culture of Life.

For more information, visit: usccb.org/prolife.
Rose Day 2009
Catholic Moms Credited With Planting Rose Day

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Tony Lauinger, chairman of Oklahomans for Life Inc., stood before an overflow audience at the Oklahoma state Capitol on Feb. 4, and challenged those attending the annual Rose Day event to keep one thing in mind.

“Let us never lose sight of what is our great consolation and source of encouragement in this struggle,” Lauinger said. “It is not that God is on our side in this battle, but, rather, that we are on God’s side in defending that most precious little masterpiece of His creation, the innocent unborn child.”

Powerful words, but protecting the lives of the unborn in a nation that kills an estimated 1 million a year through abortion needs powerful words. Also needed are courageous people, such as Joan Naylor, who Lauinger introduced as the “founder of Rose Day” in Oklahoma.

Each year, thousands of Oklahomans, many of them Catholics, travel to the state Capitol where they hand out roses to elected lawmakers, asking them to remember the unborn when considering life issues. The message has been presented 35 times at the Capitol and Naylor has seen them all.

Naylor and Ruth McFarland are the two “Catholic moms” the Oklahoma pro-life community says planted the seeds in 1974 for what today is the state’s largest and most public pro-life effort: Rose Day. The event was created in response to the 1973 Supreme Court ruling known as Roe vs. Wade. That ruling made abortion on demand the law of the land in the United States, stripping away the individual rights of each state to decide the issue.

In 1974, Naylor, an Oklahoma City Catholic, said she and McFarland, who died three years ago, wanted to travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National March for Life. That was not possible. Instead, they pooled their money, bought 149 roses and headed to the state Capitol where they delivered one to each member of the House and Senate. They attached a note to each rose urging legislators to “defend the unborn child.”

Naylor remembers the early days of the pro-life struggle. She said the ’73 decision from the Supreme Court seemed to come “out of the blue.”

Naylor credits the Catholic community with starting the pro-life effort. But with only 4.5 percent of Oklahoma being Catholic, they knew they needed more muscle.

“I don’t think any of us expected it,” she said. “I think that even the Church didn’t expect it.”

Her fear is the current administration in Washington, D.C., will erode the gains made in the efforts to protect the unborn. One of the first executive orders issued by President Obama was to reverse the “Mexico City” law, making it legal for U.S. taxpayer money to help fund abortions overseas. Naylor prays the Supreme Court will eventually overturn Roe vs. Wade or at least return the decision-making power to the states.

Naylor remembers the early days of the pro-life struggle. She said the ’73 decision from the Supreme Court seemed to come “out of the blue.”

Josiah Howell shows his belief on his T-shirt at Rose Day.

Tony Lauinger and Rep. Pam Peterson welcome Joan Naylor to the podium at the recent Rose Day event.

Naylor credits the Catholic community with starting the pro-life effort. But with only 4.5 percent of Oklahoma being Catholic, they knew they needed more muscle.

“The Baptists were a little late in coming and I think they would admit that,” she said. But once the Baptist General Convention got behind the Rose Day effort, attendance increased dramatically. “They held a pro-life rally at the Capitol and 20,000 people showed up,” Naylor said.

Naylor said while the Catholic Church has been at the forefront of the pro-life effort, she believes the Church must be more outspoken, especially when it comes to national leaders who profess to be Catholic, but then support pro-abortion laws and issues.

Over the years she said she’s seen the media, even at the local level, turn away from covering pro-life efforts.

“They have their agenda,” Naylor said, referring to state and national media. “If Rose Day was an event to promote homosexuality, it would be on the front page of the newspaper and every television station would be there.”

“One person with courage make a majority,” said Tony Lauinger, quoting Andrew Jackson, as he wrapped up his introduction of Joan Naylor, the little Catholic stay-at-home mom, who with her friend, helped create Rose Day.
OKLAHOMA CITY — Jane Brennan said she took her first alcoholic drink when she was 10 years old. She liked the way the booze numbed her and for a while gave her an escape from the ugly feelings, the feelings created by the fact two family members had been sexually molesting her for years.

With this opening statement, Brennan had the complete attention of the hundreds of people who packed the House chambers at the Oklahoma state Capitol. They were there Feb. 4 for the 35th annual Rose Day event, a day dedicated to bringing the pro-life message to Oklahoma lawmakers.

For the next 30 minutes, Brennan chronicled her life and the devastation created by her choices that included drugs, alcohol, promiscuity and abortion. She then explained how the healing power of Jesus Christ and the roots of her Catholic faith helped restore her to forgiveness, sobriety and peace.

An author and speaker, Brennan goes about the country describing how she once fought with every ounce of energy to push what she called the “false feminist agenda.” She now is a force for truth and healing.

The following is a portion of her story that she delivered at Rose Day.

More of her story can be found at www.motherhoodinterrupted.com.

“During my junior year in college, after much promiscuity, drinking and drug use, the inevitable happened. I was pregnant. My first reaction was one of total fear. What was I to do? Everyone around me said, ‘Get an abortion.’

In fact, abortion was well publicized around campus, socially acceptable and easily obtained. My boyfriend was not concerned at all about “my problem.” So I decided abortion was my only choice.

When I arrived at the clinic, I had to see a staff counselor before anything else. She was very nice and seemed genuinely concerned about me. The whole procedure will be very easy and then you can just go on with your life,” she said. This was the first lie that was told to me. She continued, telling me that I wasn’t carrying a baby, just a “clump of cells” — a second lie, which I didn’t realize until many years later.

The procedure was extremely painful and I almost passed out. As for “getting on with my life,” that consisted of more drug use, promiscuity, drinking and now a new problem: depression. Life just seemed to be more difficult. I couldn’t see a way out.

Around this time, I began to get involved with the feminist movement. I was drawn to their message of claiming that women should have full control over their bodies. As a result of early childhood sexual abuse, I never felt I had control over anything, least of all my body. Feminism gave me a voice and for the first time in my life, I felt empowered and confident. Also, the message these women conveyed about abortion being a women’s right justified my decision to fix my earlier “problem.” I became a very militant, anti-Catholic feminist. Any chance I got to rant, rave and champion feminist positions, I took it! I even went so far with my new-found “cause” as to have a second abortion. After all, I thought, it’s my right. I became a member of NOW, NARAL and even volunteered at Planned Parenthood helping young girls procure abortions and birth control.

It wasn’t until many years later when my husband wanted a divorce as a result of all my feminist leanings, which were contrary to keeping our marriage intact, that I began to question the belief system I had bought into. I began to do some research into these groups and found a lot of hypocrisy.

After doing my research, I decided to go to a Catholic church, a place that was very contrary to feminist ideals. After all, religion was invented just to keep women down, I had believed.

As I walked through the doors of the church, a feeling of peace settled over me. A peace I had not known until this point; a peace that could not be found in drugs, drinking, promiscuity or feminism. I finally found what my heart had been aching for all along: Jesus Christ.

Through the compassion and love of Jesus Christ, I realized that the children I had aborted were indeed life, and not just a “clump of cells.” The anger that I feel toward that counselor’s deception is often overwhelming.

As painful as it is, I tell my story to help other women have the courage to speak out. After hearing my story, hopefully other post-abortion women suffering in silence will come forward with their own stories. Then the grim reality of how abortion shatters lives will be heard, and soon abortion will not be thought of as a clinical procedure or a fundamental right but the tragedy it is.”

Jane Brennan, MS, a former member of NOW and Planned Parenthood, has devoted her private counseling practice, Hope for the Journey, to offering post-abortive women a safe place to reconcile unresolved grief and loss. In 2005, Brennan received the Pro-Vitae (For Life) award from the Archdiocese of Denver, an award given to those who have shown tremendous support for pro-life issues. Brennan has also published several pieces regarding abortion’s aftermath on various websites. Just recently she compiled a book of women’s abortion stories called Motherhood Interrupted: Stories of Healing and Hope after Abortion. “I share my story because I want to help end the secret shame of women suffering from post-abortion trauma.”

Jane is the Silent No More Awareness Campaign regional coordinator and she volunteers with the Alternatives Pregnancy Center. She resides in Colorado with her husband, Kyle and four daughters.
Birth Choice Gala Set for March 28

On March 28, Birth Choice of Oklahoma Inc. will host its annual Life of the Party gala event. The evening will include dinner, an auction and dancing with the band “The Mystery Dates.” The venue this year will be the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club. Some of the auction items are a weekend getaway at Grand Lake, a Las Vegas trip, gourmet dinners and fine jewelry.

Birth Choice is also very pleased to announce their guest speaker will be former volunteer Kathleen Eaton. Eaton now serves as president, CEO and founder of Birth Choice Health Clinics in Santa Ana, Calif.

A personal experience with abortion as a single mother in 1981, and the shame that surrounded it, introduced Kathleen to Birth Choice. After realizing that her pre-abortion counsel with a nationally prominent family-planning organization did not involve at least a discussion of choosing life for her unborn child, she decided to dedicate her life to preventing other young mothers from making the same mistake. It was at that time that she gave her aborted baby a name — Toby — that would figure prominently in the growth of the organization.

Kathleen started volunteering at Birth Choice in Oklahoma City later that year. Four years later in 1985, she used a move to Orange County, Calif., as an opportunity to reopen an existing Birth Choice in Mission Viejo. Little did she know that this one small office was the embryo of what was to become a network of Birth Choice Health Clinics serving thousands of young women annually.

For more information on the Birth Choice Life of the Party or to make reservations, contact Development Director Jan O’Neill at (405) 606-8426 or e-mail her at joneill@birthchoice.org.

Mount St. Mary students shared their Rose Day pro-life message with their voices as well as their T-shirts. Sooner Catholic Photos/Cara Koenig

Mount St. Mary High School had 71 students choose to attend Rose Day — Students attending were: Daniel Cartwright, Joon Kim, Joe Naugle, Jarid Kerwin, McKenzie Housh, Trevor Grose, Juanita Williams, Cody Woodward, Devon Hastings, James Peake, Jacque Kennedy, Clayton Cromer, Rebecca Denny, Jennifer Zapata, David Crall, Lucy Fitzmorris, Anna Anthony, Ashley Robinson, Victoria Vasquez, TJ Krug, Brittanie Forsyth, Josh Babb, Nathaniel Martinez, Megan Nash, Leigha Pierce, Madi Alexander, Sonia Quiones, Allison Hopper, Mikey Mollman, Becca Bernstein, Max Marcott, Kumari Brown, Taylor Vallee, Andrew Parker, Hallie Olstad, Ashlee Lutrell, Brook Dean, Sarah Bennett, Steve Seaman, Kevin Cartwright, Nico Arias, Madison Crawford, Josh Gonshor, Liz Cain, Bryce Williams, Maribel Pantoja, Andrew Lott, Sydney Miller, Lacy Lutrell, Zelina Estrada, Ana Angeles, Beth Phillips, Whitney Tener, Alyssa Grossen, Emily Allen, Sarah Wylie, Lizzie Dudinski, Mary Lueckowski, Israel Contreras, Conner Keupen, Jacque Wilson, Steven Nguyen, Toby Rives, Tyler Garling, David Lim, Maddie Griffin, Dani Derr, Eli Brown, Jessica Masciote, Kylie Vardman, Lorena Martinez and Macy Zaragosa.

Olivia Satterthwaite, 2 years old, was the youngest volunteer at Rose Day.
Verbal Engineering Used to Sway Nation’s Public Conscience

Over the years, a number of unjust laws have come to be replaced by more just ones. Laws overturning the practice of slavery, for example, were a significant step forward in promoting justice and basic human rights in society. Yet in very recent times, unjust and immoral laws have, with increasing frequency, come to replace sound and reasonable ones, particularly in the area of sexual morality, bioethics and the protection of human life.

Whenever longstanding laws are reversed, and practices come to be sanctioned that were formerly forbidden, it behooves us to examine whether such momentous legal shifts are morally coherent or not.

Concerns about moral coherence have always influenced the crafting of new laws, as they did in 1879 when the state of Connecticut enacted strong legislation outlawing contraception, specified as the use of “any drug, medicinal article or instrument for the purpose of preventing conception.”

This law, like the anti-contraception laws of various other states, was in effect for nearly 90 years before it was reversed in 1965. It codified the longstanding dictate of the public conscience that contraception was harmful to society because it promoted promiscuity, adultery and other evils.

It relied on the nearly universal sensibility that children should be seen as a help and a blessing to society, and that, as Joseph Sobran puts it, “a healthy society, however tolerant at the margins, must be based on the perception that sex is essentially procreative, with its proper locus in a loving family.”

Such a view had been remarkably deeply engrained in Western society for millennia, and interestingly, until as late as the 1930s, all Protestant denominations agreed with Catholic teaching condemning contraception.

Not until the 1930 Lambeth Conference did the Anglican Church, swayed by growing societal pressure, announce that contraception would be allowed in some circumstances. Soon after, the Anglican Church yielded entirely, allowing contraception across the board.

Since then, every major Protestant denomination has followed suit, even though their founders, including Luther, Calvin and Wesley, had all unhesitatingly condemned contraception, and insisted that it violated the right order of sexuality and marriage. Today, it is only the Catholic Church which teaches this traditional view.

How is it that modern times have seen such a striking reversal of this ancient view of the moral unacceptability of contraception? How is it that our age continues to witness a seemingly endless stream of legislative activity that promotes contraception through exorbitant government funding initiatives in nearly every major country of the world, with American taxpayers providing, for example, more than $260 million of Planned Parenthood’s total income for 2004? Can something almost universally decried as an evil in the past suddenly become a good, or is such a legislative reversal not indicative of a significant misuse of law, and of a collective loss of conscience on an unprecedented scale?

Whenever widespread social engineering of this magnitude occurs, it is invariably preceded by skillful verbal engineering. The late Msgr. William Smith observed that the argument about contraception was basically over as soon as modern society accepted the deceptive phrase, “birth control” into its vocabulary. “Imagine if we had called it, ‘life prevention’,” he once remarked. The great Gilbert Keith Chesterton put it this way: “They insist on talking about Birth Control when they mean less birth and no control,” and again: “Birth Control is a name given to a succession of different expedients by which it is possible to filch the pleasure belonging to a natural process while violently and un-naturally thwarting the process itself.”

Fast on the heels of such seismic cultural shifts over contraception was even more radical legislation permitting abortion-on-demand. Since the early 1970s, such legislation has effectively enabled the surgical killing of 1 billion human beings worldwide who were living in the peaceful environment of a womb.

Mother Teresa always encouraged everyone to smile even in the face of horrible situations like working with people living and dying in extreme poverty and illness. It is hard to explain how one could smile and be happy while spiritually one is enduring the dark night. She was strong in her faith even in the dark night. She had her moments of doubt and wonder, but did not give in to them.

This is a small book which should not be quickly read, but pondered on. This book is highly recommended to those interested in Mother Teresa and the dark night of the soul.

Brother Benet Exton is a Benedictine Monk at St. Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee.

Small Book Reveals a Great Truth About Blessed Mother Teresa


In 2007, the 10th anniversary year of Mother Teresa of Calcutta’s death, it was revealed that she endured what is called the “dark night of the soul.” Some people called her a fake and that she had misled people for years. Father Paul Murray’s little book shows how wrong they are. He shows that she endured what several other saints like St. John of the Cross and St. Therese had undergone. Mother Teresa suffered this spiritual darkness for most of her life, but kept her faith amidst this suffering. Murray had several personal contacts with Mother Teresa and discusses these and other aspects of the spirituality of the dark night of the soul.

Murray discusses what the dark night of the soul is and how it affects people in different ways. At times Mother Teresa had periods of consolation during her long period of darkness. As Murray says, her spiritual directors and confessors helped her to make sure she did not give in to the temptation of doubt. This dark night was a major test of her faith after having enjoyed some time of personal time with God in the early days of her mission. As Murray says, quoting St. John of the Cross, this dark night of the soul was a sign of God’s presence which is bestowed on special and holy people or saints. In the past those who had received this “gift” only had it for a short time because their lives were short or for some other reason. In Mother Teresa’s case it was for most of her life. She must have had strong faith to have endured this.

As Murray points out, some have compared the dark night to depression, when in fact they are different. He goes into this a bit to clarify things.

By Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

By Brother Benet Exton

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., www.ncbcenter.org
Buenas Noticias...
El Arzobispo Beltrán hace un llamado al pueblo Católico a la Renovación y Conversión

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:
La temporada de liturgia de la Cuaresma comienza con el Miércoles de Ceniza, que cae este año el 25 de febrero. Es una temporada de penitencia que la Iglesia observa a través del mundo.

Por lo tanto, a todos los Católicos se nos ofrece la oportunidad de preparar nuestras mentes y corazones para la celebración de la Semana Santa.

El Arzobispo Beltrán invita a todos los Católicos de la Arquidiócesis a convertirse y renovarse.

Por lo que para ayudarnos a lograr esto deben ser observadas las siguientes regulaciones en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City durante esta temporada sagrada de penitencia de la Cuaresma.

Abstención — Los Católicos mayores de catorce años de edad deben abstenerse de comer carne el Miércoles de Ceniza, Viernes Santo y todos los viernes de Cuaresma.

Es sólo en los otros viernes del año que la abstención puede ser sustituida por otra forma de penitencia.

Las penitencias nos ayudan a re direccionar nuestra vida entera a Dios y lejos de la maldad y los pecados que hayamos cometido.

Ayuno — Los Católicos entre las edades de dieciocho y cincuenta y nueve (inclusive) se les requiere ayunar el Miércoles de Ceniza y el Viernes Santo. Existe la limitación de una comida completa y no comer entre comidas en esos días. Dos pequeñas comidas están permitidas cuando se necesiten para mantenerse fuerte.

Penitencia — Todos los creyentes quienes han alcanzado uso de razón tienen la fiel obligación de confesar sus pecados graves al menos una vez al año.

La Cuaresma es un buen tiempo para cumplir con ese precepto de la Iglesia. Cualquiera que esté consciente de haber cometido un pecado mortal no debe recibir la Santa Comunión, sin previamente haber cumplido con el Sacramento de la Confesión. (Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica 1457)

Santa Comunión — Los Católicos que hayan recibido la Santa Comunión, están obligados a recibir de una manera sincera la Santa Comunión, al menos una vez al año durante la Cuaresma y la temprana de Semana Santa.

En los Estados Unidos, este honesto recibimiento de la Santa Comunión toma lugar desde el primer domingo de Cuaresma, primero de marzo del 2009, hasta el Domingo de la Santísima Trinidad, el 7 de junio del 2009.

Otras Observancias — Cada día de semana de Cuaresma, es también día de penitencia. Algunas recomendaciones incluyen participación en la Misa diariamente, incremento de la oración o estudio espiritual, imposición propia del ayuno o abstención, trabajos de caridad y participación en las tradicionales devociones de Cuaresma (misiones parroquiales, Viacrucis, rosario).

El contexto apropiado para toda la disciplina de la Cuaresma es la conversión de nuestros corazones. Como el Catecismo establece, “la conversión interior impulsa a la expresión de esta actitud mediante signos visibles, gestos y obras de penitencia”. Las penitencias nos ayudan a re direccionar nuestra vida entera a Dios y lejos de la maldad y los pecados que hayamos cometido. (Catecismo 1430-1439)

Mientras sigamos celebrando las prácticas penitenciales de nuestra Cuaresma, podremos experimentar la conversión de nuestro corazón y fortalecer nuestra fe en la misericordia de Dios. Puede nuestra disciplina, a través de la gracia de Dios, guiarnos a la participación total en la Pascua eterna.

...Conferencia para Hombres Católicos — Siguiendo los Pasos del Señor

Mis queridos Hermanos en Cristo:
Hombres jóvenes — hombres viejos — todos los hombres Vengan! Acompáñenme para compartir un día especial en la presencia de Dios.

Yo los invito a que vengan conmigo a la decima tercera Conferencia Anual de Hombres Católicos aquí en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City.

La conferencia se efectuará, el próximo sábado 28 de febrero en la escuela preparatoria Obispo McGuinness. A las 8:00 de la mañana se abrirán las inscripciones y el programa comenzará con una oración a las 9:00 a.m. La conferencia terminará con la celebración de la misa por el Primer Domingo de Cuaresma de 4:30 a 5:30 p.m.

El momento de esta conferencia de hombres es especialmente oportuno. Se llevará a cabo unos días después del Miércoles de Ceniza. Como ya mencioné, el Miércoles de Ceniza es el comienzo de la temporada de liturgia de la Cuaresma. La Cuaresma es el tiempo principal de penitencia de todo el año.

Es una llamada para la conversión, el arrepentimiento y para la renovación espiritual. No podría haber una mejor forma de comenzar esta temporada de Cuaresma y de arrepentimiento de nuestros pecados que participando en esta Conferencia Anual de Hombres Católicos.

La llamada al arrepentimiento y la renovación es una invitación continua que Jesús nos hace. Desde el pecado original hasta este preciso momento, Dios nos llama y nos urge a que nos arrepintamos por nuestros pecados y para que aceptemos la nueva vida que Él nos ofrece en su amor. Esta llamada de Dios, está repetida a través de las Santas Escrituras y frecuentemente por la Iglesia misma. ¡Estamos tan bendecidos de tener a Dios asegurándonos su amor y su cuidado a cada uno de nosotros!

La agenda de la Conferencia de Hombres, se construye a través de la llamada que Cristo nos hace a cada uno de nosotros para arrepentirnos de nuestros pecados.

Habrá varias presentaciones dinámicas de nuestra fe con momentos de meditación y oración en privado y en comunidad, también habrá oportunidad para la confesión y la celebración de la Eucaristía.

Asimismo, la interacción y amistad con otros hombres católicos fortalece nuestras familias y a la iglesia de Oklahoma y construye la relación personal que cada uno de nosotros debe tener con el Señor.

Hombres católicos de Oklahoma, mis hermanos en el Señor, por favor escuchen mi invitación y vengan a nuestra conferencia para hombres el próximo sábado, 28 de febrero.

Compartan conmigo y mis otros hermanos en Cristo de toda Oklahoma. Nos reuniremos en la Escuela Preparatoria Obispo McGuinness para celebrar un día de gracia y bendiciones.

Yo estaré recibiéndolos personalmente y rezando con ustedes y por ustedes. Vengan y recen junto a mí, por sus familias y por sus personas queridas. ¡Dios los bendiga a todos!
Reflexión, aceptación y búsqueda del perdón
La concordia se traduce en la demostración constante del amor de Dios al prójimo

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — El trabajo mancomunado de la comunidad inmigrante Católica de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City está logrando, bajo la voluntad de Dios, una integración cultural y espiritual en el entorno social secular de Oklahoma.

A través de numerosas estrategias de integración se está llegando a fortalecer la armonía de convivencia tan deseada por los preceptos de nuestra Iglesia. Esa concordia se traduce en la demostración constante del amor de Dios al prójimo, en la paz y la justicia, la igualdad de oportunidades y sobre todo respeto mutuo para una mejor coexistencia.

La tensión vivida en la comunidad inmigrante en los últimos dos años en Oklahoma por razones de diferente índole han permitido que ésta reflexione y se concientice sobre los debates sinceros acerca de la realidad del fenómeno migratorio en Oklahoma. La Iglesia Católica ha estado alerta y sigue velando porque se respeta la dignidad de todo ser humano sin importar su raza, condición legal, situación económica, sexo, edad y origen.

Ahora bien, hay un tema que debe fortalecerse y es el de la aceptación de la diversidad como factor de integración y encuentro entre culturas. En este sentido, los inmigrantes deben estar conscientes que para llegar a un estado de convivencia plena y sana se debe dejar a un lado los odios y resentimientos. El bien debe prevalecer sobre el mal. El perdón debe estar presente como signo ejemplar de buenos propósitos. Se viene al mundo a proclamar la Buena Nueva, se viene al mundo a ser feliz bajo los preceptos de Cristo.

Venimos a estas tierras como inmigrantes porque ese fue el plan de Dios.

La Cuaresma está por comenzar, es tiempo de reflexión y de perdonar como buscar ser perdona-

dos por los pecados perpetrados. Una de las metas que la comunidad inmigrante debe plantearse este año, es la búsqueda de la paz y solidaridad. Cómo se hace ésto, sencillamente pregonando el amor de Dios que tanto escuchamos en el Evangelio y en la doctrina Católica.

Sin embargo, se debe dar el ejemplo bajo el libre albedrío y limpiar la conciencia para purificar el alma y sobre todo pedirle a Dios que perdona los pecados que hemos cometido.

La búsqueda de la paz y la justicia se encuentra cuando nos encontramos nosotros mismos frente al Señor y sinceramente se le pide perdón a Dios por los pecados cometidos. Ningún esfuerzo de integración se hará posible sin el arrepentimiento, el perdón y la demostración de amor al prójimo.

Tiempo de reflexión. Tiempo de escuchar a Dios y seguir las directrices del Arzobispo Beltrán para encontrar una verdadera renovación y conversión de nuestra alma y nuestro espíritu.

Iniciadas actividades del Instituto Cultural Hispano en la parroquia San José en Norman
La Diversidad es un tesoro y regalo de Dios en la vida de la Iglesia

La alegría de aprender todos los aspectos de la cultura hispana. Dr. Robert Lauer, uno de los profesores. Padre Menasco y la Dra. María Ruiz.
Jobs Box

St. Philip Neri School Seeking a Principal

St. Philip Neri School in Midwest City is seeking a principal for the 2009-2010 school year. St. Philip Neri, a school of approximately 220 students, enrolls Pre-K (3-year-olds) through eighth grade. The school is accredited by the Oklahoma Conference of Catholic School Accreditation Association, which is recognized by the state of Oklahoma. A candidate must be a practicing Catholic with at least three years of teaching experience, preferably in a Catholic school. Applicant should have a master’s degree in educational administration or a related field. The position is available on July 1, 2009, but the interview process will begin as soon as possible. An application may be obtained from Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, or call (405) 721-4202 or e-mail inquiries to mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Elementary Principal Position Available

Holy Trinity Catholic School is a 3-year-old to eighth-grade school located in Okarche. Holy Trinity enrolls around 90 students with a professional staff of 15, and is fully accredited by the Oklahoma Conference of Catholic School Accreditation Association, which is recognized by the state of Oklahoma. Candidates for principal must be willing to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the school as well as assist in developing long-range goals for the school. Excellent communication skills and enthusiasm for developing and maintaining a top grade academic and religious-oriented school are a must. Candidate must be a practicing Catholic and hold a master’s degree in educational administration or related field and a minimum of three years educational experience. Position is available for the 2009-2010 school year. An application may be obtained from Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, call (405) 721-4202 or e-mail mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Executive Director

Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Oklahoma Archdiocesan Council Board has a part-time position open for an executive director. Understands, interprets and applies rules/policies of the society. Coordinate and manage the day-to-day operation. Assist the board in performance of their various roles. Serve as a mentor and monitor for conference presidents to ensure the maintenance of effective local organizations consistent with the Rules of the Society. Is an active member of their Catholic Parish. Possess excellent verbal, written and computer skills. Mail resume to St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, 3031 NW 23rd St., Oklahoma City 73107, or e-mail stvincentokc@gmail.com.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Oklahoma City is accepting applications for a dynamic youth-young adult minister. Full-time position with benefits. Send or drop by an application with curricula vitae and references to “Youth Minister Search Committee,” St. Francis of Assisi Parish, 1901 N.W. 18th St., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106.

Health Clinic Coordinator

A part-time position for a health clinic coordinator is available for the Good Samaritan Health Clinic. Responsibilities include overseeing the operation and management of a free health clinic, coordinate and supervise volunteer personnel and patient appointments, and maintenance and storage of confidential medical records. The applicant must have office management experience, proficient computer skills, excellent written and verbal communication skills and experience working in a medical clinic and fluency in Spanish is preferred. For more information, visit good-samaritanofedmond.com. Please submit résumé to GSHC@cox.net.

Volunteers

The Good Samaritan Health Clinic needs volunteer physicians, nurses, dieticians, social workers, Spanish translators and receptionists from 9 a.m. until noon on Saturdays beginning Feb. 14. Volunteering will be less than once per month. The application process and other clinic information is on the clinic Web site good-samaritanofedmond.com. The state of Oklahoma has the largest rate of uninsured residents in the nation and about 8,000 to 21,000 live in Edmond.

Elementary School Principal

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Rogers, Ark., is seeking applications for the position of principal for its elementary school. St. Vincent de Paul is a pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade school with 360 students. It is located in beautiful northwest Arkansas in one of the fastest growing communities in Arkansas and the nation.

The candidate must have demonstrated leadership ability in past or present educational assignments and must be a practicing Catholic actively committed to developing a faith community. Preferred qualifications include three or more years of teaching administration experience within a Catholic school setting and a master’s degree or its equivalent in educational administration. Interested persons should send a letter of interest and resume with the names of references to Dr. George V. Schaefer, St. Vincent de Paul School, 1315 W. Cypress, Rogers, Ark. 72758.

For a complete and up-to-date list, go to catharchdioceseokc.org and click on job listings.

Sacred Heart Catholic School, Oklahoma City, has an opening for an after-school director effective immediately. The hours for this part-time position are 3:15 to 5:45 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. The number of students ranges from 15 to 20 each day. Please call 634-5673.

Teaching Positions 2009-2010

Sacred Heart Catholic School, Oklahoma City, is accepting applications for teaching positions for the 2009-2010 school year. SHCS is a PK4 through eighth-grade school. Call the school office at (405) 634-5673 for an application or send a resume to Joana Camacho, SHCS, 2700 S. Shartel Ave., Oklahoma City 73109.

Long-Term Substitute

Sacred Heart Catholic School, Oklahoma City, is accepting applications for two long-term substitutes for maternity leaves. The first is for a middle school language arts teacher, certification required. The second position is for a part-time music teacher, certification not required. Call the school office at (405) 634-5673 for an application or send a resume to Joana Camacho, SHCS, 2700 S. Shartel Ave., Oklahoma City 73109.

Assistant Professor (English)

St. Gregory’s University, a Catholic and Benedictine liberal arts community, seeks qualified applicants for a full-time, tenure-track position in English, beginning August 2009. Ph.D. in English (by August of 2009) is required. A specialization in English composition/rhetoric and/or secondary English education is highly desirable. We are committed to excellence in undergraduate teaching and the ideal candidate will demonstrate that value. The successful candidate will teach English Composition I and II (a common core requirement) and upper-level English courses (including young adult literature, children’s literature and teaching writing/literature). Candidates must be supportive of and willing to contribute to the Catholic and Benedictine identity of the university. Send letter of application, vita, transcript, statement of teaching philosophy and three letters of recommendation to the attention of Father Robert A. Busch, Ph.D., Dean, College of Arts and Sciences. Application materials may be sent electronically to hr@stgregorys.edu or via mail service to Human Resources Department, St. Gregory’s University, 1900 W. MacArthur Drive, Shawnee, Okla. 74804. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Youth Minister Opening

St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Oklahoma City is accepting applications for a dynamic youth-young adult minister. Full-time position with
Calendar

**FEBRUARY**

22 Pilgrimage Sunday, 10:45 a.m. Anointing of the Sick, 11 a.m. Mass, noon lunch, 1 p.m. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Prayer of the Chaplet of the Infant Jesus and the Litany of the Infant Jesus. Nat'l Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague is located at St. Wenceslaus Church, SH-99 7 miles N. I-40 or 20 miles S. I-44 at Stroud exit, Prague, (405) 567-3080.

25 Ash Wednesday — Fast and Abstinence

25 Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western, every Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to noon. The Rosary is said every weekday at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome.

25 All-Day Adoration, every Wednesday at St. Eugene Church, 2400 W. Hefner Road. Mass at 6:30 a.m., Exposition of Eucharist at 7 a.m., Confessions from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Anointing of Sick at 3 p.m. Adoration all day and devotions conclude with multi-lingual evening prayer and benediction at 7:30 p.m. Contacts: Barbara Curcio, 755-9163, O en Espanol, Gloria Pantazis, 751-7115.

26 Theology on Tap series at the Belle Isle Brewery in OKC. All young adults of the archdiocese are invited. They meet in the downstairs bar at 8 p.m. and the speaker will begin at 8:30 p.m. Contact Willy Fontanet at 417-5802 for more information.

26 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Epiphany Parish chapel, every Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and daily (M,T,W,F) from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. All are welcome. Epiphany is located at 7336 W. Britton Road, Oklahoma City 73132.

28 “In The Father’s Footsteps” Annual Men’s Conference at Bishop McGuinness High School. Join men of all ages in this wonderful day of learning, reflection, fellowship, reconciliation and celebration of the Eucharist with Archbishop Beltran. We will have four speakers who will cover all aspects of being “Men of Honor.” All conference activities and lunch are included in the fee. Register today online at www.catholicmen.net.

28 Retreat: A Lenten Experience with Jesus, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mary Beth Niehaus, OSB. A Lenten journey with Jesus through the Seven Last Words and a contemporaneous prayer of the Stations of the Cross. Place: Library of Red Plains Spirituality Center. Call (405) 373-0804 to register. Fee: $25 ($10 deposit). Bring a sack lunch.

28 Mass in Tagalog. St. Paul the Apostle Catholic in Del City will celebrate Mass in Tagalog (Filipino) at 7 p.m. every Saturday. A potluck dinner will occasionally follow Mass. All are welcome.

**MARCH**

6-8 Beginning Experience Weekend. This is a ministry to help cope with the traumatic experiences of losing a loved one through separation, divorce or death. For more information, call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944 or Diane Grim at (405) 528-6252.

7 St. Patrick’s Grand Marshal Ball to be held at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel. Contact Jane Moon at (405) 526-2319 or jmoom@catholiccharitiesok.org for details.

For a full calendar of events, go to catharchdioceseokc.org

Letter

Justice, not Justice-ism

The false and exaggerated social justice ideology afflicting many American parishes and dioceses may have begun to attract the corrective gaze of the Church. A number of faithful bishops publicly lament the election of a pro-abortion Obama elected, and we have seen a gradual reawakening to the pre-eminence of abortion over lesser and morally very different issues such as the death penalty, material poverty and just war.

It is, I think, to be anticipated that “peace and justice” efforts will from here on be more closely scrutinized, as will all Catholic social agencies, to see to what extent their efforts harmonize with Catholic doctrine and remain genuinely apostolic.

Even more, there is speculation that the real reason that the release of the pope’s upcoming social encyclical has been thrice delayed is Rome’s recognition of the need not merely to promote the Church’s social doctrine — something always important and relevant — but even more urgently to purify that teaching and protect it from its chief American enemy; i.e., corrupted social justice ideology, or “social justicism.”

The “JustFaith” lust for political action and imprudent zeal for tangible “here and now” elimination of poverty; the obsession with purely material and economic injustice with its Marxist echoes; the incessant calls for the eradication of the death penalty when what is claimed is that it is the destruction of the innocent; the painfully apparent absence of any passion in, or stomach for, anti-abortion advocacy; the universal criticism of all wars no matter the justification; the transmutation of the Church’s universal mission of saving souls into the narrowly truncated and false mission of correcting temporal injustices; and the misleading and exaggerated attention given to immigration issues as if these complex issues are the most pressing and clearcut moral issues in the Church today and as if they represent moral issues already clarified by the magisterium, are all symptoms of this already too-prevalent disease in the Church.

So when the pope recently appeared to stress the precedence of the moral and spiritual forms of poverty “over and above” merely material poverty (http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=15033), this was truly a welcome development.

Perhaps many “Catholic” social and health-care institutions will now begin to truly have something to fear. The days of Catholic charities and agencies quietly winking at immoral practices such as contraception in opposition to Catholic faith — the institutional form of a double life — are nearly over. A social justice ideology divorcing faith from sexual morality is corrupt and damaging.

Perhaps our own most fundamental moral poverty as American Catholics is not to see Humanae Vitae as a kind of primordial social encyclical, as it describes the minimal demands of justice protecting the most basic social institution — marriage.

Dominic M. Pedulla MD, FACC
St. John the Baptist Parish
Edmond
Bishop John Carroll
Students Celebrate Tet

The students and faculty at Bishop John Carroll School celebrated Tet on Friday, Jan. 23.

Tet Nguyen Dan, more commonly known by its shortened name, Tet, is the most important and popular holiday and festival in Vietnam. It is the Vietnamese New Year which is based on the Lunar calendar, a lunisolar calendar. The name Tet Nguyen Dan is Sino-Vietnamese for Feast of the First Morning.

Tet is celebrated on the same day as Chinese New Year, though exceptions arise due to the one-hour time difference between Hanoi and Beijing. It takes place from the first day of the first month of the Chinese calendar (around late January or early February) until at least the third day. Tet shares many of the same customs of its Chinese counterpart. Many Vietnamese prepare for Tet by cooking special holiday foods and cleaning the house. There are a lot of customs practiced during Tet, like visiting a person’s house on the first day of the new year, wishing New Year’s greetings, giving lucky money to children and old people and opening a shop.