For Michael Scaperlanda, career choices have always been a bit of a surprise – an unexpected adventure with rewards far beyond expectations. So, when the opportunity arose to become the 16th president of Saint Gregory’s University, a small Catholic liberal arts college east of Oklahoma City, the 56-year-old lawyer and professor took another leap of faith.

“God has graced me with experiences and gifts, and all of those things are coming together,” Scaperlanda said. “I care about Catholic education, I care about Saint Gregory’s and I care about Oklahoma. I knew this could be a great Catholic institution – it had the bones with the strategic plan – and now we have to put flesh on it.”

Scaperlanda became president on May 16, 2016, just a few weeks after the resignation of former president Greg Main, who left the post due to health reasons. Scaperlanda’s official inauguration will be March 21 in the Don and Jenetta Sumner Field House on the SGU campus in Shawnee with Mass celebrated that morning in the Abbey church by Archbishop Coakley.

“This will be a celebration of the university,” he said. “Earning a degree at Saint Gregory’s is not just a four-year investment, it’s a launching pad for 60 or 70 years of life. We’re serious about getting the word out.”

For Lent, the middle school students at Sacred Heart Catholic School in El Reno will present “Living Stations of the Cross” every Friday.

“Profound and moving prayer exercises that we do. We have everyone involved from 3 year olds to senior citizens. The middle school students dress in costume and the stations are held in a circle in the school gym,” said Shannon Statton, Sacred Heart principal.

Sacred Heart parish is just as active for the Lenten season. This year will be the 42nd year for Catholic Relief Services Operation Rice Bowl, in which the parish and school will participate.

After the stations provided by students each Friday, the parish will offer a free meatless meal that is open to the public.

“This program has continued to grow in popularity,” said Holly Eaton, public relations director. Contact (405) 262-2284 or Holly@aigok.com.

Charles Albert is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
Archbishop Coakley's Calendar

March 5 – Bites of Election, 2 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, OKC
March 6 – Spring Clergy Days, Catholic Pastoral Center
March 7 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
March 8 – School Mass and classroom visit, 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Rev. Charles Bonhomme, CPC
March 9 – Archdiocesan School Board meeting, 7:30 a.m., CPC
March 9 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
March 10 – Lunch with leaders from Mercy Health Center, 11:30 a.m., CPC
March 11 – Confirmation, 2 p.m., St. Peter, Goshen
March 11 – Confirmation, 6 p.m., Sacred Heart, Edmond
March 14 – Department directors meeting, 10 a.m., CPC
March 14 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
March 14 – Finance Council meeting, 2 p.m., CPC
March 14 – ACCW Women of Achievement Mass and luncheon, 11 a.m., St. James the Greater, OKC
March 18 – Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. Joseph, Norman
March 19 – Mass for Sollemity of St. Joseph, 10 a.m., St. Joseph Old Cathedral, OKC

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton teacher recognizes dedication, passion

By Judy Hilovsky

This year, judges selected the Teacher of the Year among the 16 categories. Winners were honored at an awards dinner and banquet in downtown Oklahoma City. “I am honored to receive this award and to represent the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton,” Wade said. “I consider it an honor to work with young people and truly believe that they deserve the absolute best and I am thankful to be a part of their journey!”

Wade graduated from the College of Advanced Studies and earned a bachelor’s degree in music education from the University of Oklahoma. He is earning his master’s degree in education, with an emphasis on educational leaders and administration at Southern Nazarene University.

Chesapeake, a part-time substitute teacher at St. John Vianney School in Edmond, was honored as a NextGen Under 30 recipient.

Powe was honored as a NextGen Under 30 award winner, nominated March last year. “I saw the sheer number of hours he puts into an educational purpose,” Wade said. “He has also a long-term vision. He is getting his master’s degree to open doors down the road, so he can work in administration. He is just so passionate about the mission of the school.”

Black and Indian Mission collection bolsters programs in archdiocese

In 2018, the U.S. Catholic Bishops established a charity to support the mission work among African-American, American Indian and Alaska Native persons. The charity organized a national collection for this purpose. The Black and Indian Mission Office is part of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The mission collection helps parishes to operate schools, establish parish-based catechetical programs, support teachers, encourage vocations to priesthood, assist with financial needs and other missionary needs. The generosity of the Catholic faithful enables the Black and Indian Mission Office to build the Body of Christ in dioceses throughout the country.

This year, the annual Black and Indian Mission Collection in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is March 11-12. It is held the second weekend in March, and comes during Lent, which is a time to concentrate on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The collection is the only one of its kind during this time of year.

The mission collection continues to be well supported. In 2017, the collection received $1.3 million. Another $560,000 was raised through other fund-raising efforts, bringing the total funds raised to $1.86 million.

The mission collection helps continue the work of the Black and Indian Mission Office. The mission office provides school supplies, religious education class materials, and Christmas pageant items for the Saint Patrick religious education program. The mission office also allows the archdiocese to establish the...
Archdiocesan deacon receives “wonderful gift”

By Steve Gust
Editor, Sooner Catholic

When deacons in the archdio-

cese learned one of their own

was in need, they came through

and made life easier for Deacon

Santos Hernandez and his wife,

Margarita. The result was a remodeled

bathroom in Deacon Hernandez’s home

that can accommodate his wheel-

chair in Deacon Hernandez’s home.

The contractor had remodeled the

bathroom to allow for a wheelchair

access, lowering a sinking sink. They

also added bracing under the

home to support the heavy weight

of Deacon Hernandez’s stairlift.

Deacon Kelly and Margarita

provided him “a new lease on

life,” he said.

“Morgan and dad have been so

united, the kind acts, and the thoughtfulness,” said the

Hernandez’s daughter, Victoria.

Deacon Hernandez, 68, was an active deacon at Oklahoma

City’s Holy Angels parish. That changed in December 2015.

A stroke sent him to the hospi-

tal, and from there on the road of recovery. During this time,

Victoria Hernandez worked at the time

at the state Department of Health along with Jeff Kel-

ly, a deacon at St. Joseph in Hennessey. He knew

the contractor who could work on the home to accommodate Deacon Hernandez’s needs.

The contractor agreed to do the work.

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$5,000, which was less than other bids, but

still a lot for the family to handle.

That’s when the archdiocese’s director of

the Permanent Diaconate, Max Schwarz, got in-

volved. He learned of Deacon Hernandez’s need

and arranged for the deacons working

in the archdiocese to help.

Before long, deacons exceeded their goal

and an extra $500 was given for the family’s medi-

cal expenses.

“I’m very proud of the deacons,” Deacon

Schwarz said. “They more than came through.”

After three weeks of work, the

Hernandez family saw the remodeled bathroom ready

for Christmas. The family was amazed that the work had

transcended the laborious task to allow for a wheelchair

access, lowering a sinking sink. They also added bracing

under the home to support the heavy weight of the deacon.

This new bathroom was important to them.

“Not going cut — i.e., ac-

cess — is key,” he says.

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A Millennial Journey in Faith

“God fulfills the deepest desires of our heart”

By Dana Attocknie
Most Reverend
Archbishop of Oklahoma City

“From dust you came, to dust you shall return,” are familiar

words to many, but are often ignored or minimized. From the

beginning of time, this has been a reminder of our mortality and

hope.

The certainty of Christ present opens up certainty for

the future, “he writes in his book

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mortality and hope.

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How does the Catholic Church resolve new bioethical questions?

A number of years ago, I participated in a bioethics workshop for high school students on embryonic stem cell research that focused on the work of Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., a research scientist working on chimeras. He had met the pope and afterward, during a subsequent interview, I had given his blessing to the project. I reminded him that it’s quite common for the pope to offer general encouragement and blessing to those whose work he thinks wouldn’t be the same thing as sanctioning new and morally controversial techniques in the biosciences. As a rule, the Catholic Church does not address important bioethical questions in that way, through chance encounters or discussion within the Church. However, in the course of unpacking new scientific developments and their moral questions, even if they produce firm and well-defined positions that the Catholic Church holds, the Church may reflect on them. After the debate, the Episcopalian told me how he thought Catholics should consider themselves fortunate to have such an authoritative reference point in the Church and an opportunity for genuine human advancement or can lead to acts and policies that undermine human dignity.

The U.S. Bishops in a recent document summed it up this way: “In consultation with medical professionals, Church leaders review new developments, judge them according to the principles of right reason and the ultimate standard of revealed truth, and offer authoritative teaching and guidance about the moral and pastoral responsibilities entailed by the Catholic faith.” When the Church does not have the resources to provide this information, the Church may encourage others to do so. For example, the Pope’s Advisory Group on the Ethics of Biotechnology (AEGEB) or the Pontifical Academy for Life can offer guidance and information. Even today, certain bioethical controversies remain under active discussion within the Church such that it is possible that warnings and guidelines principles when they do moral dilemmas in the biosciences.

Even this slow and deliberative process, I think it’s fair to say that the Church is still quite far ahead of the curve. By the time of the successful cloning of Dolly the sheep in July of 1996, the Catholic Church had already been reflecting on the question of human cloning for many years, and had written a number of highly influential addresses on the topic. In 1995, Dolly, that human cloning would be “morally unacceptable.” In his 1995 “Do not confuse it with deliberative moral, and discernment. These scientific developments can either be an opportunity for genuine human advancement or can lead to acts and policies that undermine human dignity.”

“New medical discoveries and technological developments challenge us to careful moral reflection and Church teaching. These scientific developments can either be an opportunity for genuine human advancement or can lead to acts and policies that undermine human dignity.”

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The Sooner Catholic

Theta Chi Omega sorority volunteers at Ronald McDonald House

SHAWNEE — Students from the Theta Chi Omega sorority at Saint Gregory’s University traveled to Oklahoma City on Feb. 12 to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Ruby Arroyo, Dylee Ellis, Mackenzie Palmer, Alexa Dugas, Faith Cugleton and Reagan Creditt formed a team with other volunteers to help serve breakfast at the Ronald McDonald House, preparing a meal for families to enjoy. “Not everyone has a family that can come to visit, so we have this little boy who has vision problems, but was every eager to see everyone,” Ellis said. “It’s nice to show us all of his dance moves. I’m blessed to have had a chance to work with the Ronald McDonald House and would do it again in a heartbeat!”

The Ronald McDonald House Charities provides a “home-away-from-home” for families who travel for treatment for their seriously ill or critically injured children. The families are able to stay in the houses to little for cost, making it easier to be close to the hospital.

Founded in 1987, Saint Gregory’s University is Oklahoma’s oldest institution of higher learning and only Catholic university. With campuses in Shawnee and Tulsa, Saint Gregory’s has always been home to a rich tradition of service and education programs. Go online to stgregorys.edu.

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“Helpless is the word,” he writes. “You feel completely cut off from everything and everyone who might conceivably help you.”

Again and again, with acutely honest introspection, Ciszak turns to his faith. Revelled even by other prisoners because he was a priest, he remembers that Christ had told him, “If they despoiled me, they will despise you.”

He writes that in Lubliniska, “he learned to purify my prayer and to remove from it the element of self-seeking. I learned to pray for my interlocutor.”

“Lubliniska, in many ways, was a school of prayer for me,” he said.

His interrogators wanted him to sign a confession they had written for him by misrepresenting what he had said while being questioned. Finally, a guard shouted at him, “Do you realize, your stupid American, the seriousness of this final procedure? … Either you will sign the document … or you’ll be dead before noon.”

Ciszak wrote, “If they despised me, they did not understand what I was. They despised me because I was a priest, because I was a priest, because I was a priest.”

His story continues with the prison sentence of 15 years of hard labor in Siberian prison camps and then several more years of increasing scrutiny by authorities after he is released. This book is a keystone for everyone who would follow Christ. In his last two pages, Father Ciszak said “Who I have tried to show in the pages of this book is how faith has affected my life and sustained me in all I experienced.” He tells us that “every moment of our life has a purpose, that every action of ours … has a dignity and a worth beyond understanding.”

Finally, in 1963, the United States and Soviet Union governments traded Father Ciszak and an American student for two Soviet spies. He returned to the United States; returned to teaching and writing; returned to a life of priestly ministry. He left this world in 1984. The process of his canonization has begun, and he has been declared a Servant of God. J.E. Helm is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

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This will be Scaperlanda’s first opportunity to lead a community to lead a college, he comes from an academic background, serving in numerous academic and leadership roles at the University of Oklahoma and the University of Texas at Austin. He has served as a professor.

After transferring from Northern Illinois University, Scaperlanda earned a bachelor’s degree in economics at the University of Texas where he met his wife Maria Ruth at the Catholic student center. Following law school at Texas, he clerked for the chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court and practiced law in Washington D.C. and Austin. He and Maria raised four children and now have eight grandchildren.

Scaperlanda said, “I’m very blessed. My kids have kept me young and my students have kept me relevant. It was rare for our children to go to someone else’s house for dinner. Everyone was always welcome at our table.”

Along with Maria, an award-winning author who recently penned the biography on Servant of God Father Stanley Rother, Michael Scaperlanda co-authored “The Journey: A Guide for the Modern Pilgrim.” A nationally known scholar in immigration law and Catholic legal theory, Scaperlanda also wrote “Immigration Law: A Primer” and “Recovering Self-Evident Truths: Catholic Perspectives on American Law.”

Scaperlanda has served on Saint Gregory’s board of directors, as a scholar in residence at the Father Stanley Rother Hispanic Cultural Institute, tute of Oklahoma City and Norman, and taught in OU’s Visines of America Summer Institute for high school teachers and OU’s Warrior-Scholar Project for veterans enrolling in college. He is a past member of the Oklahoma Advocacy Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Oklahoma Bar Association’s Legal Ethics Committee.

His focus now is to strengthen the Catholic Benedictine liberal arts core at Saint Gregory’s. He wants to build the value of education received at BGU from employability and practical skills to building a framework to live a joyful life in service to others.

“We want them to be the pillars of our community; to be the luminous stars in whatever context their profession then choose,”

to help guide the decision, the Scaperlandas asked their children to join them in praying a novena.

“Maria and I asked God for guidance. A lot of our—work friends and family were waiting,” Scaperlanda said. “Sometimes when we put on this earth to do things we never expected.”

Diane Clay is editor of the Sooner Catholic.

Religious education teacher shines faith, strength

Cerebral palsy hasn’t slowed Church commitment

By Judy Hilovsky

The Sooner Catholic

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. — Romans 5:3-5

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Catholic Foundation Bobbie Dean Little pastoral music, fine arts grants announced

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma and the Bobbie Dean Little Trust recently awarded $28,000 in grants to 30 parishes and schools in the archdiocese.

This is the third year for the grant program after establishing a Pastoral Music and Fine Arts Endowment at the foundation last year. The grant program was established to award grants from the endowment to promote and celebrate performing arts in parishes and schools throughout the archdiocese.

The Pastoral Music and Fine Arts Endowment was established to provide funds for performing arts and to promote and celebrate performing and visual arts throughout the archdiocese. The grant program was established to award grants from the endowment to promote and celebrate performing arts in parishes and schools throughout the archdiocese.

The grants may be used for any program or project that promotes and celebrates performing arts. A select committee of Catholic professionals evaluates all grant applications and recommends awards to the foundation's board of directors.

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Sister Loretta Gegen, A.S.C.

Sister Loretta Gegen, A.S.C., died Feb. 25 at the Adorers’ Wichita, Kan., home. She was born in 1928 in Kansas City, Mo., and joined the Adorers March 8, 1954. She earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Mount Saint Scholastica College in Atchison, Kan., in 1954, and a master’s degree in education from Our Lady of Mount Mary, Kansas City, in 1961. She taught for 35 years and served as a principal for 10 years.

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Lanzarte a lo más Profundo
Llevar las cargas de los demás

Recordemos la herencia bíblica del sufriente Job. Cuando los tres amigos de Job hablan de los sufrimientos de su amigo, salieron a visitarlo. Pero cuando un cuarto amigo apareció, se sentaron en tierra durante siete y ocho noches con el padre de la fe, y hablaron de la palabra de Dios. Porque vieron cuán grande fue su sufrimiento.

Cuarenta veces, ante el sufrimiento y la angustia, hacemos que las palabras adecuadas para consolar y mostrar nuestra compasión por los demás. A veces, hasta que estamos presentes es suficiente. Sin duda es un día en el que tantas personas son necesitadas. Simplemente la voluntad de estar con ellos en su dolor, nuestra solidaridad con ellos y que se asegure que no están llevando una carga nunca fue tan necesaria como en el momento presente.

Hoy en día, más que nunca, necesitamos convocar a todos los miembros del Cuerpo de Cristo para que juntos ayudemos a aquellos que están en cualquier situaciones de sufrimiento a nivel personal y a nivel social. Cada uno de nosotros como obispos, continuaremos a trabajar juntos en nombre de Jesús.

Como arzobispo, pido a todas nuestras parroquias que por una razón inmediata y compasión, que las parroquias de nuestro país sean recetadas con caridad y refugio que estamos experimentando en nuestro país. Nunca debemos olvidar que cada vida es un espejo de una nación de inmigrantes. Damos la bienvenida al extranjero. Esto es parte del espíritu de “específicamente americano” del que todos podemos ser orgullosos.

Estamos promoviendo los servicios de nuestras Cardillas Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City. Cardillas Católicas ofrecen asesoramiento y servicios legales a las inmigrantes y parroquias que buscan respuestas y orientación, así como a las familias ayudadas por la separación de sus seres queridos. Con respeto y, en el caso de no ser ciudadanos, para federalmente para justicia para los inmigrantes y sus familias. Es una ayuda que proporcionamos en primer lugar, sin embargo, continuamos a acompañar nuestras hermanos y hermanas en nuestras parroquias.

Hoy, más que nunca, necesitamos que los cristianos en el mundo se unan en oración y dejan que Dios inspire a todos nuestros miembros de inmigración roto, causado por la separación de las familias. Esta situación acontece tanto en Estados Unidos como de México. Los obispos, sacerdotes, religiosas y demás miembros de la Iglesia católica en el mundo están con los demás en su sufrimiento demuestra de nuestras fraternidad. Ellos son nuestras parroquias en la diócesis de Brownsville, Texas, y en todo el territorio de Estados Unidos.

Comunicado de los Obispos de la frontera entre Texas y la frontera norte de México

Luego de la visita de Papa Francisco a México el 24 de febrero del 2016, es una clara manifestación del amor de Jesús a los pobres y los huérfanos. Muchos han sufrido explotación, explotación y abuso en la explotación de la separación y deportación de la familia y las comunidades. Esto los hace aún más vulnerables a la explotación y los daños que causan a las personas vulnerables. En primer lugar, sin embargo, continuamos a acompañar nuestras hermanas y hermanos en nuestras parroquias.

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The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma

CORNERSTONE

Planning for taxes is just one of many important considerations when reviewing long-range financial plans. The ease and convenience of planning to donate to others upon your death is a primary concern. Another could be the inability of one's spouse, minor children or property to be distributed to them because of age, incapacity or other factors. Or, another concern might be privacy of the terms of the financial plan. A donor has reasons to consider formulating a revocable "living" trust during your lifetime. Trusts are a widely used estate planning tools. A listing of charitable gifts that can be distributed of probate, is an easy way to distribute assets at your death and is in private that the distribution of assets under the terms of the trust is not subject to the publicity given to wills in probate proceedings. Since a living trust is revocable, it has no income tax consequences during your lifetime; no separate tax return is filed and the income trust income is reported under your social security number. You also can use trusts and other estate planning tools to arrange for special gifts that will benefit your charitable interests after your death needs and the needs of your loved ones have been met.

For more information, contact the foundation office at:
The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma
4001 N.W. 18, Suite 201
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
(405) 724-1121 or 800-800-1121
(405) 724-1120 or 800-724-1120
www.catholicfoundationok.org

northern oklahoma chapter

Exploring Oklahoma's Catholic history
Group tour day April 19 of Ma-
son’s (OK) historic town.noon
lunch with the Monsks of St. Greg-
ya€™s Church and tour sacred heart
Mission. Day ends with a wine-
tasting at a honeybee rescue.
For more info, call 684-720-0461.

Catholic Men’s Conferences
2017
The third annual Catholic Men’s
Conference is set for April 14. The
conference will be held at Embassy
Suites Hotel, Norman, OK. The con-
ference fee is $75 and can be called
at (405) 510-1163. Tickets
are also available at the weekend
March 4 and 6 and $69 after March 6, college – $39, or call (405) 501-1165. Nightly specials are available for those staying overnight.

Black and Indian Mission collection
On May 12, a special collection for
the USCBI/Black and Indian
Mission Office will take place throughout
the archdiocese. The goal is to receive
more than 95 percent of the funds collected through annual and special grants for evangelization in our archdi-
cocese. During this Lenten season, please give generously to this very important ministry.

Lenten organ recital series
St. Mary of Mt. Carmel, 2001 N.W.
18, OKC, will host its second Lenten
Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. Mother Mary of Mt. Carmel, 2001 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. Mother Mary of Mt. Carmel, 2001 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. Mother Mary of Mt. Carmel, 2001 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m. St. Francis of Assisi, 1901 N.W. 18, OKC, will host its second Lenten Organ Recital Series, beginning the first Sunday during Lent at 2 p.m.

World Language Day
Hosted by the World Language
Department at Mount St. Mary
Catholic High School. Everyone
welcome. The event is come-and-go
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. March 30 at the
catholic high school. Contact
Danieal Wilson, dwilson@msmhs.org

Beginning Experience Weekend
There is help for the heartache of
separation, divorce, and widoe-
hood. Trained team members who
have suffered the loss of a loved
one share their experiences and
lead participants throughout the
weekend March 31 - April 2 at the
Catholic Pastoral Center. Contact
the Office of Family Life, (405) 724-1124
or call 877-586-6482.

St. Thomas More golf scramble
The St. Thomas More University
ladies’ golf tournament will be held April
24 at The Trails Golf Club.
Ch 1151 ppp 100 agen-
sor. Contact Glenn Dishy (405) 637-5405, golfbuddyok-at
mav.com.

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Honoring the saints: March feast days

By Ted King
The Sooner Catholic

These feast days are for the first part of March. The feast days for the last part of March will be in the next issue.

Saint Katharine Drexel
March 3 was the feast day for Saint Katharine Drexel who made a significant impact on Catholic education in Oklahoma. She was born in 1858 in Philadelphia to a wealthy banking family that helped poor and religious charities. On a family trip west in 1884, she visited Indian reservations and became concerned about the plight of American Indians. As a result of that trip, the Drexel family funded missions to help. In 1887, she and her sisters met Pope Leo XIII in Rome, and Katharine asked him to send missionaries to serve American Indians and African-Americans. In 1891, she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for American Indian and African American students. She died at age 96 on March 3, 1955. She was canonized in 2000 by Saint John Paul II.

Saint Casimir
March 4 is the feast day of Saint Casimir (1458–1484), a son of Casimir III, king of Poland. Despite his noble birth, Casimir lived an austere life. He wore a hair shirt, slept on the floor and had an extraordinarily intense devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He died in his 20s of a lung infection. He was canonized in 1521 and is the patron of Lithuania.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity
March 7 is the feast day of Saints Perpetua and Felicity, who were third century Roman martyrs. Vibia Perpetua was a wife of her noble birth, Casimir lived an austere life. He wore a hair shirt, slept on the floor and had an extraordinarily intense devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He died in his 20s of a lung infection. He was canonized in 1521 and is the patron of Lithuania.

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and Felicity was a slave and mother. Perpetua kept a diary of her persecution in prison before they were executed in 203 in Carthage, which is modern day Tunisia.

Saint John of God
March 8 is the feast day of Saint John of God. He was born João Duarte Cidade in Portugal on March 8, 1495. He was a soldier who fought in wars for Spain against France and for Hungary against the Turks. In 1537, he heard a sermon by John of Avila and reacted to the sermon by running into the street, screaming and tearing at his hair, and was placed in an insane asylum. John of Avila came to see him and encouraged him to focus on helping the poor rather than dwell on his individual hardship and guilt. When Cidade was released from the asylum, he set out to help the poor. He founded the Order of Hospitaliers to care for the sick and poor, which became the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God, now operating in 53 countries and in more than 300 hospitals. He died in 1550 and was canonized in 1690.

Saint Frances of Rome
March 9 is the feast day of Saint Frances of Rome. Frances was born in 1384 to a wealthy family in Rome. When she was 11, she asked her parents for permission to join a convent. Her parents refused, they had arranged a marriage for her, which took place two years later. As a wife, Frances was unhappy. Frances and her husband had three children. In 1408 and 1410 Frances’s family was persecuted for their support for the pope. Her husband was stabbed by the invaders, but recovered with Frances’s care. She turned part of the family home into a hospital to care for those harmed by the invasion. Three years later, a pestilence claimed the life of her oldest son, and a year later her son appeared to Frances in a vision, warning that his sister, Frances’s daughter, would die soon and that she would be guided by an angel for the rest of her life. Her daughter died at 16. After her husband’s death, she founded the Oblates of Mary under the Rule of Saint Benedict and organized other women in charitable works. She died on March 9, 1440, and was canonized in 1608.

Saint Patrick
March 17 is the feast day of Saint Patrick. He was born around 389 in Britain to Roman parents. The Roman Empire was in decline, forcing the Roman authorities to evacuate to Britain. Around 406, Patrick was abducted by barbarians and taken to Ireland to work as a slave. During his captivity, Patrick grew in his faith. Six years after his capture, he had a vision in a dream, encouraging him to escape and return to his home, and he did. Later, he had a vision in a dream, encouraging him to return to Ireland and preach the Gospel to the pagan Irish. The church he established in Northern Ireland is the principal Catholic Church in Ireland. Patrick died in 461 and is the patron of Ireland. March 17 is a holy day of obligation in Ireland.

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem
March 18 is the feast day of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386). He was the bishop of Jerusalem and opposed the heresy of Arius, who had affirmed that the Son of God did not always exist, but was created by God the Father. For this opposition, he was removed three times from his episcopate in Jerusalem by Arians within the Church, but he persevered in his defense of the faith against heresy and was declared a doctor of the Church in 1882.

Ted King is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Rocket Robotics
Rocket Robotics from Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School had a great showing recently at the Oklahoma State Robotics Competition. Atomic Shock (MSM boys team) was seeded 7th out of 36 teams, representing three states, and the Rocketettes (MSM girls team) was seeded 1st.

The Rocketettes won in the finals by 10 points. The Rocketettes also won the highest award given – the Inspire Award. The girls team is now the Oklahoma and Arkansas state champion.

The girls team will be competing at the Super Regionals in Georgia next month with 72 teams from 22 states for a chance to compete at the World Championships in Houston in April.