Pope Benedict XVI meets March 16 with Bishop Anthony B. Taylor of Little Rock, Ark., Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City and Bishop Edward J. Slattery of Tulsa during a visit to the Vatican. Bishops from Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas were making their Ad Limina visits to the Vatican to report on the status of their dioceses. An in-depth interview with Archbishop Coakley conducted by a reporter in Rome can be found on Page 7, along with more photos of the Archbishop’s time there. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano - March 16, 2012)
Promising News

Among the many joys and splendid memories of my recently concluded Ad Limina visit, there is one which offers the hope of truly lasting and far-reaching effects. More on this below!

First, I want to thank you for your prayers for the Ad Limina trip. It was a grace-filled experience. As expected, during our pilgrimage to the threshold of the tomb of the apostles we (the bishops of Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas) conducted an intense round of meetings with various dicasteries of the Roman Curia. This was the necessary business portion of the visit. The spiritual dimension of the pilgrimage included time for prayer and Masses at the major basilicas of the Eternal City.

One of the most precious personal experiences was a private meeting with Pope Benedict XVI, accompanied by the other two Bishops of the Province of Oklahoma City: Bishop Slattery of Tulsa and Bishop Taylor of Little Rock. We discussed with the Holy Father the pastoral situation in each of our dioceses as well as our common concerns and challenges. I assured him of the prayers and the support of the faithful of the Archdiocese.

After concluding the full course of events, I scheduled an additional appointment at the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to express my support for the Church in America and to the Holy Father. It is the Pope who makes the ultimate judgment regarding martyrdom. If the Holy Father affirms that Father Rother died as a martyr, then permission will be granted for his beatification immediately.

We have come to an important moment in this process. It is very important that we increase our prayers for Father Rother’s beatification and canonization. If Father Rother is judged to have died as a martyr, a miracle obtained through his intercession will not be required for his canonization. However, a miracle obtained after his beatification will be necessary in order for him to be canonized as a saint.

The beatification and canonization of Father Rother would be a great blessing for the whole Church, particularly for the Church in America and Guatemala. The Blessed and the Saints are reminders that we are all called to holiness of life. Holiness is possible. Our vocation is to become saints. The evidence of holiness is the most compelling witness in the work of the New Evangelization and the renewal of faith. I am firmly convinced that the Lord desires to grant this gift to the Church. Our part is to pray with confidence and perseverance for the beatification and canonization of the Servant of God, Father Stanley Rother.

Let us pray for the Canonization of Father Stanley Rother

Heavenly Father, source of all holiness, in every generation you raise up men and women heroic in love and service. You have blessed your Church with the life of Stanley Rother, priest, missionary, and martyr. Through his prayer, his preaching, his presence, and his pastoral love, you revealed Your love and Your presence with us as Shepherd. If it be your will, may he be proclaimed as martyr and saint, living now in your presence and interceding for us all.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

“Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch.”

Luke 5:4

Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar

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

April 1 - Palm Sunday Mass, Our Lady’s Cathedral, 10 a.m.
April 3 - Chrism Mass, Our Lady’s Cathedral, 6 p.m.
April 5 - Holy Thursday Liturgy, Our Lady’s Cathedral, 7 p.m.
April 6 - Good Friday Liturgy, Our Lady’s Cathedral, 7 p.m.
April 7 - Good Friday Liturgy, Our Lady’s Cathedral, 8:30 p.m.
April 10 - Department Heads Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 10 a.m.
April 10 - Finance Council Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 2 p.m.
April 11 - Personnel Board Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 1 p.m.
April 13 - Confirmation, St. John the Baptist Church, Edmond, 7 p.m.
April 14 - ACCW Mass and Luncheon, St. John Nepomuk Church, Yukon, 11 a.m.
April 14 - Confirmation, St. Francis Church, Sulphur, 5:30 p.m.
April 15 - Confirmation, Holy Spirit Church, Mustang, 10:30 a.m.
April 15 - Scout Awards Mass, Catholic Pastoral Center Chapel, 4 p.m.
Faith Community Part of Effort to Help Returning Vets

OKLAHOMA CITY — What happens when a U.S. serviceman or woman returns from deployment? What happens after they return from Afghanistan or Iraq?

What support do the families of service men and women receive during the deployment? And how much support does the veteran receive once he or she returns home?

The Archdiocesan Office of Family Life is partnering with Army OneSource (AOS), the Oklahoma National Guard and other groups to address these concerns.

“Day of Awareness” will be held April 14 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Veterans, their families and others who work with veterans are invited to attend. Those interested in participating in “Day of Awareness” should RSVP to the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944 by April 10.

Catholic Charities, Mercy Community Outreach and the Mental Health Association of Central Oklahoma are also taking part in this effort.

Paula McBride, AOS community support coordinator for Oklahoma and Arkansas, said not only do veterans need support when they return home from deployment, but so do their families.

AOS is a Secretary of the Army initiative that seeks to provide community support and to deliver services to soldiers and their families regardless of geographic location. McBride said there are AOS Community Support Coordinators throughout the United States whose job it is to raise awareness among the private sector about the unique challenges of military life, including the growing demand for behavioral health, financial, legal and faith-based services.

“Over 1.6 million men and women have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom to date,” McBride said.

“In addition to physical injuries, soldiers are returning home with emotional and spiritual wounds that are harder to identify and more difficult to treat. Almost all soldiers suffer from some form of combat trauma, such as intense fear, panic or hyper-vigilance. Many also sustain spiritual injuries, such as questioning of their faith, altered sense of meaning in life, loss of previously held beliefs, and feelings of ineffectiveness, shame, despair, hopelessness and guilt, to name a few,” she said.

When McBride started putting together an event for veterans and families, one of the first persons she contacted was Mary Diane Steltenkamp, Director of Faith Community Nursing for Catholic Charities.

“When I listened to the needs and the resources needed, it was clear to me that more people in the faith community needed to become involved,” Steltenkamp said.

McBride said, “Silent injuries often manifest themselves in changes in behavior that include substance abuse, self-destructive or violent behavior, social withdrawal, unexplained anger and inability to maintain close relationships.

“In turn, family members often feel a sense of insecurity, loss and ineffectiveness, confusion about the changes in their returning loved ones, and feelings of rejection, despair, abandonment and hopelessness,” McBride said. “They, too, begin to question their faith and spiritual beliefs. Faith-based organizations play an important role in the spiritual and emotional healing of veterans and their families,” she said.

Prayers in a Time of War

Prayer of a Spouse for a Soldier

God of power and might, at every moment and in every place you are near to those who call upon your name in faith. In marriage you have blessed us with a share in your divine love. Look upon my husband/wife and keep him/her safe in your safeguarding, no matter where the road may lead. And when the battle is ended, bring him/her safely home to those who love him. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Prayer of a Parent for a Soldier

Father all-powerful and ever-loving God, from before we were born, your love has nurtured and sustained us. Hear my prayer for (Name), my son/daughter. Keep him/her safe in time of battle and faithful to you, day in and day out. Bring him/her safely home to those who love him/her. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

For the Safety of Soldiers

Almighty and eternal God, those who take refuge in you will be glad and forever will shout for joy. Protect these soldiers as they discharge their duties. Protect them with the shield of your strength and keep them safe from all evil and harm. May the power of your love enable them to return home in safety, that with all who love them, they may ever praise you for your loving care. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

For Deceased Veterans

O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, look kindly on your departed veterans who gave their lives in the service of their country. Grant that through the passion, death and resurrection of your Son that they may share in the joy of your heavenly kingdom and rejoice in you with your saints forever. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Divine Mercy Sunday

What is Divine Mercy Sunday?

Jesus told St. Faustina that this Feast of Mercy would be a very special day when “all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened.” (Diary 699). Our Lord made a great promise to all those souls who would go to Confession and then receive Him in Holy Communion on the Feast of Mercy, on the Sunday after Easter, which is now called Divine Mercy Sunday throughout the Catholic Church.

Jesus promised that “the soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain the complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.” (Diary 699). He went on to say, “I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy.” (Diary 1109).

Saint Francis

OKLAHOMA CITY — Saint Francis Church, 1901 N.W. 18th, will host a celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday on April 15. The prayer service will be from 3 to 4 p.m. Dr. Mary Martin, OB/GYN, will speak on God’s Mercy and the HHS Mandate. The special intention for the Rosary this year will be for religious liberty. For more information, call Theresa at (405) 816-2727.

St. Joseph Old Cathedral

OKLAHOMA CITY — Chaplet of the Divine Mercy with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Sunday, April 15, 2 to 3 p.m. Confessions at 1 p.m. at St. Joseph Old Cathedral, 307 N.W. 4th St., Oklahoma City.

Saint Charles Borromeo

OKLAHOMA CITY — Divine Mercy Holy Hour will be celebrated from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on April 15 at Saint Charles Borromeo Church, 5024 N. Grove Ave. The Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet and prayers will be followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at the closing. A Divine Mercy Novena begins on Good Friday and concludes on Divine Mercy Sunday.

Saint John the Baptist

EDMOND — Come publicly venerate Divine Mercy with us at Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond, Sunday, April 15 at 3 p.m. We will celebrate a Holy Hour with Adoration. Bring your family and friends and help spread the word! For more information, call (405) 359-0578.

Across Oklahoma

School Fiesta April 28

OKLAHOMA CITY — St. Charles Borromeo School is hosting the “La Fiesta Borromeo” auction on April 28 from 6 to 11 p.m. at 5000 N. Grove. Produced by school volunteers, it has become an annual tradition for this small school to host the northwest Oklahoma City community for an evening of fun. Enjoy authentic Mexican cuisine of chips and queso, salsa bar, rice and beans, tamales, cheese enchiladas, guacamole, shrimp cocktail, jalapeño wrapped in bacon and Ensalada de macaroni. There will be a live auction, live music performed by “Mariachi Lopez,” a DJ, dance floor, open bar and plenty of items to bid on. Cost is $40 which includes dinner, drinks and dance. For additional information, contact Elizabeth Black at (405) 535-7077.

Coalition Annual Dinner Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Oklahoma Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty will hold its annual dinner at the Conner Center, located at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Avenue. The dinner is set for 6:30 p.m. April 21. The Coalition is committed to the abolition of the death penalty in Oklahoma. Bishop-elect Edward J. Weisenburger will receive the Lifetime Abolitionist Award for his outstanding support of work toward repealing the death penalty in Oklahoma. Weisenburger has supported the Coalition work through presentations and hosting of the annual dinner. The keynote speaker will be Richard Deiter, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center. The Center is a nonprofit organization serving the public and the media with analysis and information on issues concerning the death penalty.

Tickets are $40 with a student rate of $15. Tickets can be ordered online at okcadp.org, by emailing okcadp@gmail.com, or by calling 948-1645. Reservations should be made by April 13. Also, tables of eight guests are available for reservation.

Scholarship Fund Created in Bishop-Elect’s Honor

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop John Carroll School students will benefit from a scholarship fund established by a central Oklahoma Knights of Columbus assembly honoring Bishop-elect Edward Weisenburgur.

Pat Determan, the Chief Justice Kane Assembly 848 faithful navigator, made the announcement to conclude the assembly’s anniversary banquet Feb. 20.

Monsignor Weisenburgur, V.G., currently serves as The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help pastor in Oklahoma City. Bishop John Carroll School is affiliated with his parish. On May 1, Monsignor Weisenberger will assume duties as Bishop of the Diocese of Salina, Kan.

“We approached the monsignor about establishing a scholarship fund in his name. He said if such a fund were to be established, he most wanted to assist students in need with tuition at John Carroll,” Determan said.

“This fund is in honor of and in recognition of the spiritual leadership of Bishop Weisenburger.”

Determan announced a $1,000 contribution from K of C Assembly 848 to initiate funding of the Bishop Edward Weisenburgur Scholarship Fund. Bishop-elect Weisenburger serves as Assembly 848 faithful friar, equivalent to chaplain rank.

Anyone desiring to contribute to the scholarship fund should contact Connie Diotte, BJCS principal, by telephone at (405) 525-0956 or email: cdiotte@bjes.org.
Tourney Sponsors Sought

Sponsors are being sought for the Catholic Foundation’s 11th Annual Golf Classic presented by GMX Resources Inc. Since its inception, the Golf Classic has raised over $300,000 for the Catholic Schools Endowment Fund at the Archdiocese. Last year the Classic netted just over $75,000 with one-half of the proceeds going directly to the 21 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese and the other half going to the Endowment Fund. The Golf Classic will be held at Gaillardia Country Club on Monday, June 4, with both a morning and afternoon start.

Most Reverend Paul Coakley and the Catholic Foundation board of directors invite all Catholics in the Archdiocese to support the 2012 event. As the Archbishop said in his vision for Catholic Schools, “Why Catholic Schools?” forming children and youth in the Catholic faith is a vital task for the Church if we are going to keep faith with this missionary mandate. Handing on the Catholic faith to young people is an essential part of the Church’s mission to evangelize. Our Catholic schools, by virtue of the instruction, formation and witness that they provide, are a privileged place of evangelization. The reason we invest and sacrifice so much in support of our Catholic schools is for the sake of this missionary mandate. It is for the sake of evangelization.


Sponsor levels include Flight Sponsor ($5,000), Awards Dinner Sponsor ($3,500), Goodie Bag Sponsor ($2,800), Double Eagle Sponsor ($2,200), Team Hole Sponsor ($1,500), Premium Hole Sponsor ($500) and Hole Sponsor ($300). You can also support the Golf Classic with in-kind donations for goodie bags or auction items. For more information, please contact the Catholic Foundation at (405) 721-4115 or the website at www.cfook.org.

Way of the Cross

NORMAN — Each year, St. Thomas More University Parish leads Catholics and anyone desiring to accompany us through the Way of the Cross in order to remember, reflect and pray about Christ’s amazing love and sacrifice. This is a special opportunity open to everyone. We have had this event for several years and it is always a beautiful way to show the faith of the Catholic community in a solemn and pious way. We will begin at 3 p.m. April 6 at St. Thomas More University Parish and continue through the beautiful campus of OU. The event is expected to last until 5 p.m.

The Catholic Foundation

CORNERSTONE

Trusts

Planning for taxes is just one of many important considerations when reviewing long-range financial plans. Another concern may be the inability of one or more heirs to manage property left to them because of age, incapacity or other factors.

To address these concerns, trusts are one of the oldest and most widely used estate planning tools. A living trust avoids the cost of probate, is an easy way to distribute assets at your death and is private in 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 even filed and all trust income is reported under your Social Security number. You can also use trusts and other estate planning tools to arrange for special gifts that will benefit your charitable interests only after your needs and the needs of your loved ones have been met.

For more information on Planned Giving, contact:

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma, Inc.
P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, OK 73123
(405)721-4115 ■ www.cfook.org ■ bs emotner@archokc.org

Please Remember the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in Your Estate Plans
Bishops Tackle Mandate With Strong Statement

The Administrative Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, gathered for its March 2012 meeting, is strongly unified and intensely focused in its opposition to the various threats to religious freedom in our day. In our role as Bishops, we approach this question prayerfully and as pastors — concerned not only with the protection of the Church’s own institutions, but with the care of the souls of the individual faithful, and with the common good.

To address the broader range of religious liberty issues, we look forward to the upcoming publication of “A Statement on Religious Liberty,” a document of the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty. This document reflects on the history of religious liberty in our great Nation; surveys the current range of threats to this foundational principle; and states clearly the resolve of the Bishops to act strongly, in concert with our fellow citizens, in its defense.

One particular religious freedom issue demands our immediate attention: the now finalized rule of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that would force virtually all private health plans nationwide to provide coverage of sterilization and contraception — including abortifacient drugs — subject to an exemption for “religious employers” that is arbitrarily narrow; and to an unspecified and dubious future “accommodation” for other religious organizations that are denied the exemption.

We begin, first, with thanks to all who have stood firmly with us in our vigorous opposition to this unjust and illegal mandate: to our brother bishops; to our clergy and religious; to our Catholic faithful; to the wonderful array of Catholic groups and institutions that enliven our civil society; to our ecumenical and interfaith allies; to women and men of all religions (or none at all); to legal scholars; and to civic leaders. It is your enthusiastic unity in defense of religious freedom that has made such a dramatic and positive impact in this historic public debate. With your continued help, we will not be divided, and we will continue forward as one.

Second, we wish to clarify what this debate is — and is not — about. This is not about access to contraception, which is ubiquitous and inexpensive, even when it is not provided by the Church’s hand and with the Church’s funds. This is not about the religious freedom of Catholics only, but also of those who recognize that their cherished beliefs may be next on the block. This is not about the Bishops somehow “banning contraception,” when the U.S. Supreme Court took that issue off the table two generations ago. Indeed, this is not about the Church wanting to force anybody to do anything; it is instead about the federal government forcing the Church — consisting of its faithful and all but a few of its institutions — to act against Church teachings. This is not a matter of opposition to universal health care, which has been a concern of the Bishops Conference since 1919, virtually at its founding. This is not a fight we want or asked for, but one forced upon us by the government on its own timing. Finally, this is not a Republican or Democratic, a conservative or liberal issue; it is an American issue.

So what is it about?

An unwarranted government definition of religion. The mandate includes an extremely narrow definition of what HHS deems a “religious employer” deserving exemption — employers who, among other things, must hire and serve primarily those of their own faith. We are deeply concerned about this new definition of who we are as people of faith and what constitutes our ministry. The introduction of this unprecedented definition of faith communities and their ministries has precipitated this struggle for religious freedom.

Government has no place defining religion and religious ministry.

HHS thus creates and enforces a new distinction — alien both to our Catholic tradition and to federal law — between our houses of worship and our great ministries of service to our neighbors, namely, the poor, the homeless, the sick, the students in our schools and universities, and others in need, of any faith community or none. Cf. Deus Caritas Est, Nos. 20-33. We are commanded both to love and to serve the Lord. Laws that protect our freedom to comply with one of these commands but not the other are nothing to celebrate.

Indeed, this is not about the Church wanting to force anybody to do anything contrary to its own beliefs. “Dignitatis Humanae, No. 2. A mandate to act against our teachings. The exemption is not merely a government foray into internal Church governance, where government has no legal competence or authority, disturbing though that may be. This error in theory has grave consequences in principle and practice. Those deemed by HHS not to be “religious employers” will be forced by government to violate their own teachings within their very own institutions. This is not only an injustice in itself, but it also undermines the effective proclamation of those teachings to the faithful and to the world. For decades, the Bishops have led the fight against such government incursions on conscience, particularly in the area of health care. Far from making us waver in this longstanding commitment, the unprecedented magnitude of this latest threat has only strengthened our resolve to maintain that consistent view.

A violation of personal civil rights. The HHS mandate creates still a third class, those with no conscience protection at all: individuals who, in their daily lives, strive constantly to act in accordance with their faith and moral values. They, too, face a government mandate to aid in providing “services” contrary to those values — whether in their sponsoring of, and payment for, insurance as employers; their payment of insurance premiums as employees; or as insurers themselves — without even the semblance of an exemption. This, too, is unprecedented in federal law, which has long been generous in protecting the rights of individuals not to act against their religious beliefs or moral convictions.

We have consistently supported these rights, particularly in the area of protecting the dignity of all human life, and we continue to do so.

Third, we want to indicate our next steps. We will continue our vigorous efforts at education and public advocacy on the principles of religious liberty and their application in this case (and others). We will continue to accept any invitation to dialogue with the Executive Branch to protect the religious freedom that is rightly ours. We will continue to pursue legislation to restore the same level of religious freedom we have enjoyed until just recently. And we will continue to explore our options for relief from the courts, under the U.S. Constitution and other federal laws that protect religious freedom. All of these efforts will proceed concurrently, and in a manner that is mutually reinforcing.

Most importantly of all, we call upon the Catholic faithful, and all people of faith, throughout our country to join us in prayer and penance for our leaders and for the complete protection of our First Freedom — religious liberty — which is not only protected in the laws and customs of our great nation, but rooted in the teachings of our great Tradition. Prayer is the ultimate source of our strength — for without God, we can do nothing, but with God, all things are possible.
Archbishop Coakley Gives Broad Interview During Ad Limina Visit

By Ann Schenible

ROME — United States bishops and archbishops of Region X were in Rome this past week for their Ad Limina pilgrimage. Included among them were those from the province of Oklahoma City.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley was among those who met with the Holy Father this past week. A native of Kansas, he has served as Archbishop of Oklahoma City since Feb. 11, 2011.

The Archbishop recently spoke with ZENIT about his Ad Limina visit to Rome, the pastoral concerns of the Oklahoma City Archdiocese, and the issue of religious freedom in the United States.

ZENIT: Could you speak about your meeting with the Holy Father, and some of the issues that were discussed?

Archbishop Coakley: I was privileged on the second day of the Ad Limina visit to have an audience with the Holy Father. We met as the province of Oklahoma City, so I met with Bishop Anthony Taylor of Little Rock, and Bishop Edward Slattery, the Bishop of Tulsa, the Suffragan Sees of the province of Oklahoma City. It was very nice — since we’re a small province it was simply the three of us sitting comfortably across the table from the Holy Father, and very personal, very warm exchange, very fraternal.

I provided an overview for the Holy Father, just some general comments on the pastoral life within the province, and I spoke particularly about our clergy, I spoke about vocations, I spoke about trends within the province of Oklahoma City. Then the other two bishops each addressed different pastoral perspectives, including immigration, which is a very real concern and challenge in our province, as it is in much of the United States. And one of the bishops spoke about Catholic Charities. So we tried to give the Holy Father a perspective on the uniqueness of our situation in the province of Oklahoma City. And he was very interested, he acknowledged points and probed a little bit more deeply in some areas. He was very interested in things pertaining to the liturgy and Catholic Charities, and very sensitive to the challenge which migrants are facing all over the world, but in particular in the United States.

ZENIT: You mentioned speaking to the Holy Father about the clergy and the state of vocations. Could you comment on the state of vocations in Oklahoma City?

Archbishop Coakley: We’re very fortunate, very blessed in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The number of seminarians is increasing. The number of young men expressing interest in seminary and applying for seminary has been increasing steadily. That’s very encouraging to all of us. It’s very encouraging to our priestly morale within the Archdiocese. That’s one of the things that I find most consoling and encouraging myself (I’m still relatively new to the Archdiocese), to see that is a very positive trend within the Church in Oklahoma.

Archbishop Coakley: You also spoke about the issue of immigration. What do you think that the Holy Father’s Apostolic Journey to Mexico and Cuba will mean for the immigrant population in Oklahoma?

Archbishop Coakley: Many of our immigrants in Oklahoma come from Mexico and Central America, so I am certain that they will be following with great interest the Holy Father’s pastoral visit to Mexico and Cuba. I’m certain that they will find it a source of consolation and encouragement. I’m sure, too, they will be awaiting the messages that he will deliver.

There are so many challenges that the Holy Father is going to have to address. Obviously, one of the things that is of most concern to many of our immigrants from Mexico is the violence in Mexico that has unfortunately driven so many of them to seek safety, security, a better life in the United States. I’m sure they will be very hopeful, and praying that the Holy Father’s visit will be that of an ambassador of peace to help bring some stability and quelling of the violence to that beautiful Catholic country.

ZENIT: What is the role of Catholic Charities in Oklahoma City?

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Archbishop

Archbishop Coakley: We have very strong Catholic Charities agencies in our province, but also in Tulsa and in Little Rock. We try to develop our approach in Catholic Charities based upon the principles that the Holy Father laid out in his first Encyclical and subsequent encyclicals, particularly in Deus Caritas Est, seeing the work of Catholic Charities as a work of evangelization, and bringing the love of Christ to bear upon all whom we serve and remembering that it is not because those who may come to us are Catholic that we serve them but because we are Catholic, and that we have a duty to serve, to allow the love of Christ to be expressed in our care, concern, for the needy, for the marginalized, for the poor, for the least of our brothers and sisters.

ZENIT: Religious liberty has become a very significant concern throughout the United States. What are the concerns of the American Bishops, and what actions are being considered for the future?

Archbishop Coakley: I can speak for myself certainly, and I think to a great extent to the mind of many of the bishops that we’re very concerned about the prospects that this HHS Mandate proposes. It is truly a grave threat and intrusion on the rights of conscience and religious liberty in the United States. We are committed to resisting it, to taking every possible approach to see that it is rescinded to limit the harm that can possibly be done through it. Obviously, through the bishops conference, we have been continuing to seek avenues of recourse through the administration at the highest levels, but also in the legislature, and ultimately I think in the courts. There are possible ways of approaching this situation. We will not leave any of them untested and untried.

One of the things that we have been trying to do is inform our Catholic people, and build consensus and coalitions among all peoples of faith, and all people of good will. This is not a Catholic issue, and this is not merely about contraception. Contraception is widely available already — not saying that is a good thing, of course. This is really about the government’s imposing an obligation that is in violation of the religious freedom of Catholics at this point, and if the government is willing to trample the conscience rights and religious liberty rights of Catholics in this instance, that’s a very dangerous precedent for other Churches, other believers, other peoples of conscience. Whereas we are very concerned that the Church continues to teach about the dignity of life and the transmission of life, and the illicitness of artificial birth control, that’s really not the focus of our concern at this particular moment — that’s an ongoing concern, an ongoing pastoral challenge that we face. But this is a particular kind of threat that we have to deal with.

ZENIT: What should the faithful be considering as they approach the upcoming presidential elections?

Archbishop Coakley: I hope that Catholics will really take time to study the issues, and perhaps even prior to studying the issues to really form their consciences well. I’m afraid very often Catholics have simply voted a party line. Neither of our major political parties adequately express our Catholic social teaching, and our Catholic concerns.

There are some very important issues that we are facing in the upcoming election: the religious liberty issues are very important; the defense of marriage and promotion of marriage; the protection of human life from conception to its natural end, particularly the most vulnerable, the unborn. We have a rich history of social teaching and moral teaching that touches on all of these areas. We have something to offer to our society. Those are among the very important issues. Obviously issues of poverty in our country, the economy, migration, immigration — these are all very important issues. It’s going to be a telling campaign season and election cycle, and there’s a lot at stake.
beautiful spring day that greeted the walkers. Baltazor prayed the Rosary asking for what he always asks, that lives are saved.

“I prayed that this walk would help save the life of an unborn child,” Baltazor said. “If this walk can help save one life, then that’s great, because that one life saved will lead to another life being saved.”

Prior to the walk, Archbishop Paul Coakley celebrated Mass at Corpus Christi Church, a mile or so northeast of the Capitol building. In his homily, the Archbishop said it was fitting that the Walk for Life OKC should be held on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. The Feast celebrates the incarnation of Christ in the womb of our Blessed Mother Mary.

“The Eternal Son of God humbled himself by taking on human flesh so he could redeem our sinful humanity,” the Archbishop said. He said the “mystery of our salvation began at conception” when Mary said yes to God.

Following Mass, pro-life Catholics and others gathered in the parking lot of the church. Rep. Rebecca Hamilton, D-Oklahoma City, addressed the crowd as did Baltazor and Kevin Calvey of Oklahomans for Life Inc.

Several members of the media were on hand to cover the event. Archbishop Coakley was interviewed by reporters from both print and television.

Led by four young girls carrying a Walk for Life banner, the group headed off for the state Capitol. Along the way many walkers prayed out loud. Signs promoting life, especially protection for the unborn and support for Senate Bill 1433, known as the Personhood Act were numerous. The bill would make it state policy to recognize the scientific fact that life begins at conception, and to establish the value that all human life deserves to be protected.

“Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death,” dozens prayed in unison reciting the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary as they walked. One woman stepped out onto the upstairs balcony at a house on NE 17th St. and loudly cheered and applauded as the walkers passed by. Closer to the Capitol several motorists honked their horns while others shouted words of encouragement.

Nancy Carriger took part in the walk, pushing little Henry, her grandson, along the route in a stroller.

“I’m not Catholic, but I agree with them,” Carriger said. She said life is a sacred gift from God and while she is not Catholic, her grandchildren are being raised in the Church.

At the Capitol, the group gathered on the east steps. They were led in song by Heidi and Glenn Nead, also of St. Teresa in Harrah.

Rep. Hamilton, a Catholic, knows she will be criticized by some in her political party for her public and unwavering support of pro-life issues. “Oh, I’ll hear about it,” she said. Archbishop Coakley said Hamilton demonstrates “tremendous courage” in her public pro-life positions. He also thanked the hundreds who took part in the effort for their willingness to do so in a public way.

The Archbishop said it was in 1977 on the steps of the state Capitol in Kansas when he first became aware “and convicted” of the fact that all life is sacred and must be protected. He said the journey to understanding this truth in our conscience “perhaps begins with prayer.”

He said “prayer is always the most important tool in our pro-life toolbox.”

Hamilton discussed a proclamation from Gov. Mary Fallin recognizing the Walk for Life OKC event and said the proclamation would be dedicated to the unborn, young children and the elderly. Hamilton said there are some who are pushing for a society that would allow parents to decide up to a year after their children are born whether they should be allowed to survive.

“I’m not making this stuff up,” Hamilton said.

Following the remarks, the walkers made their way inside the Capitol where they hoped to approach lawmakers asking them to support pro-life issues.
Photos from the WALK FOR LIFE

break Eagle egg - Jail
break Human egg - OK
Save Human egg - "Priceless"

DEFEND LIFE
Principal, Teacher Earn Catholic Education Honors

OKLAHOMA CITY — The principal at Saint Eugene Catholic School and one of her teachers will be honored during the National Catholic Education Association Convention.

Suzette Williams, principal of St. Eugene in Oklahoma City, will receive the 2012 Distinguished Principal Award from the NCEA. At the same time, Colleen Linke, fifth-grade teacher at St. Eugene, will be honored with the 2012 Distinguished Teacher Award.

The convention will be held April 11-13 in Boston.

“Mrs. Williams is an outstanding spiritual leader in her school,” said Sister Catherine Powers, Superintendent of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. “The students know that they are there to learn faith and knowledge, and they surely see that modeled by Suzette Williams and her faculty.”

With 23 years’ experience as a Catholic educator, Williams serves on several educational committees, including the Council of Commissioners for the Oklahoma Conference of Catholic Schools Accrediting Association. She also works with many community organizations, including the Tulsa Summer Youth Camp, Habitat for Humanity and CROP Hunger Walk.

“Each student brings unique gifts from God to every learning experience, and Christ calls on the parent and educator to enable students to reach their full potential,” Williams said in describing her educational philosophy.

Williams is one of 11 principals nationwide who have earned NCEA’s top award for principals this year.

Linke will also be honored at the awards ceremony.

“It is my passion to present engaging learning opportunities throughout the curriculum,” said Linke, a Catholic teacher for 20 years. “Jesus teaches that our everyday experiences are woven into our soul,” she said in describing her educational philosophy. “Therefore, by modeling a connection between spiritual events and learning experiences, a student will flourish as they are exploring God’s plan for them.”

A parent who endorsed Linke’s nomination for the award said, “Mrs. Linke made a change in my son’s life that was so significant, I feel it altered his destiny, that God put her in his life to guide his path.”

Linke is one of 12 teachers this year.

“Our Distinguished Teacher Award winners have demonstrated exceptional ability, dedication and results as Catholic educators,” said Christian Brother Robert Bimonte, executive director of the NCEA Department of Elementary Schools.

“They also have earned the high regard of the peers, students and parents they work with every day. In honoring these teachers, we acknowledge the outstanding teachers in all Catholic elementary schools.”

Pope Tells Young People to Pursue Christ Over Power

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI called on young people to not pursue power, money and prestige, but to find true joy in Christ and live a life of generous service to others.

In his message for World Youth Day 2012, he told the world’s young Catholics to start making the world a better, more just and humane place right now, even while they continue to pursue their studies, talents and interests.

Do not be content in giving the minimum, he said.

“The world needs men and women who are competent and generous, willing to be at the service of the common good,” the Pope said.

The Vatican and most dioceses around the world will mark World Youth Day on Palm Sunday, April 1. International celebrations of World Youth Day are normally held every two to three years.

In the message, released March 27 by the Vatican in English, Spanish, Italian and French, the Pope chose the theme from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always.”

“Joy is at the heart of the Christian experience,” the Pope said. “In a world marked by so much sorrow and anxiety, joy is an important witness to the beauty and reliability of the Christian faith.”

He told young people to recognize that the many temptations and false promises of modern-day culture veer people away from true and lasting happiness.

People are often pressured “to seek immediate goals, achievements and pleasures” as the dominant culture “fosters fickleness more than perseverance, hard work and fidelity to commitments,” he said.

“May your entire life be guided by a spirit of service and not by the pursuit of power, material success and money,” he said.

God loves his children so much, he sent his only son to be with them and gave people specific directions — the Ten Commandments — for following the right path in life, Pope Benedict said.

While the commandments may seem like just “a list of prohibitions and an obstacle to our freedom,” in light of Christ’s message, they are “a set of essential and valuable rules leading to a happy life,” he said.

“Christianity is sometimes depicted as a way of life that stifles our freedom and goes against our desires for happiness and joy,” he said.

Rather, faith in Christ, who is truly present for everyone, brings real joy, he said, because Christians recognize they are not alone and that Christ is always near, especially during times of great difficulty.

“Christian joy is not a flight from reality, but a supernatural power that helps us to deal with the challenges of daily life.”

The Pope told young people, “Learn to see how God is working in your lives and discover him hidden within the events of daily life,” to know that God will never abandon anyone, and know that God in his mercy always offers sinners the possibility of redemption.

“If the way Christians live at times appears dull and boring, you should be the first to show the joyful and happy side of faith,” he said, as he urged young people to share the good news of Christ with everyone.

Editor’s Note: The text of the Pope’s message in English is posted online at vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/youth/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20120315_youth_en.html. The text of the Pope’s message in Spanish is posted online at vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/youth/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20120315_youth_sp.html.
Debate Over Consequences of Pill Just Beginning

Mary Eberstadt is my friend, but I'll risk charges of special pleading and self-plagiarism by quoting my endorsement on the dust jacket of her new book, Adam and Eve after the Pill (Ignatius Press): “Mary Eberstadt is our premier analyst of American cultural foibles and follies, with a keen eye for oddities that illuminate just how strange the country's moral culture has become.” That strangeness is on full display in the ongoing controversy over the HHS Contraceptive Mandate — an exercise in raw governmental coercion depicted by much of the mainstream media (and, alas, by too many Catholics on the port side of the barque of Peter) as a battle between Enlightened Sexual Liberation and The Antediluvian Catholic Church. Anyone who thinks of this battle in those terms should spend a few evenings reading Adam and Eve after the Pill.

As the talismanic year 2000 approached, and like virtually every other talking head and scribe in the world, I was asked what I thought the history-changing scientific discoveries of the 20th century had been. And like the rest of the commentariat, I answered, “Splitting the atom (which unleashed atomic energy for good or ill) and unraveling the DNA double-helix (which launched the new genetics and the new biotechnology).”

Today, after a decade of pondering why the West is committing slow-motion demographic suicide through self-induced infertility, I would add a third answer: The invention of the oral contraceptive, “the Pill.”

With insight, verve and compassion, Adam and Eve after the Pill explores the results of what Mary Eberstadt bluntly describes as the “optional and intentional sterility in women” the Pill has made possible for three generations. A careful analysis of empirical studies, plus a close reading of literary sources, leads Eberstadt to conclude that the “human fallout of our post-Pill world” has been severe. How? “First, and contrary to conventional depiction, the sexual revolution (which the Pill made possible) has proved a disaster for many men and women; and second, its weight has fallen heaviest on the smallest and weakest shoulders in society, even as it has given extra strength to those already strongest and most predatory.”

Elite culture has been in comprehensive denial about this fallout, argues Eberstadt, a claim reinforced in February by the lynch mob that attacked the Susan G. Komen foundation for daring to hold Planned Parenthood to account for monies Komen had donated to PP (chief guardian of the flame of the sexual revolution) and which PP had misused. Such public quarrels, however, touch the surface of the cultural implosion that followed widespread use of the Pill. Weaving her way through the social sciences and literature with equal dexterity, Mary Eberstadt digs deeper and describes the human costs of the sexual revolution: the “pervasive themes of anger and loss that underlie much of today's writing on romance”; the “new and problematic phase of prolonged adolescence through which many men now go”; the social and personal psychological harm caused by the availability of pornography on a historically unprecedented scale; the “assault unleashed from the 1960s onward on the taboo against sexual seduction or exploitation of the young”; and the “ferral rates of date rapes, hookups and binge drinking now documented on many campuses” (the direct result of a sexual revolution that has “empowered and largely exonerated predatory men as never before”).

Adam and Eve after the Pill also explores the cultural weirdness that has followed the Pill's inversion of classic western and Judaic-Christian values. In a particularly insightful chapter, Eberstadt analyzes the food taboos that have replaced discarded sexual taboos. The book ends with a telling, ironic, judgment on the long-term impact of the 1968 encyclical Humanae Vitae: “one of the most reviled documents of modern times, the Catholic Church's reiteration of traditional Christian moral teaching, would also turn out to be the most prophetic in its understanding of the nature of the changes that the (sexual) revolution would ring in.”

Contrary to what you read in the papers, the “birth control debate” isn’t over. It's just beginning.

Weigel's column is distributed by the Denver Catholic Register, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese.

USCCB Sees Setback in Recent Court Ruling

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON (CNS) — Religiously based restrictions on reproductive health services for victims of human trafficking cannot be imposed by the Department of Health and Human Services, a federal judge has ruled. By delegating to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops the decision on which services to offer or not offer to trafficking victims, HHS violated the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, Judge Richard G. Stearns ruled March 23 in the case filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in federal court in Massachusetts.

A USCCB spokeswoman called the ruling a disappointment March 26. “The decision seems to ignore the right of free expression of one’s religious beliefs,” said Mercy Sister Mary Ann Walsh, USCCB director of media relations. “It’s very likely that we would appeal,” she said.

Jennifer Dalven, director of the ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project, welcomed Stearns’ decision. “We all have the right to our own religious beliefs, but under the Constitution an organization can’t use federal funds to impose those beliefs on others,” Dalven told Catholic News Service March 27.

The government was wrong to authorize the USCCB to deliver only those services it deemed appropriate under Catholic teaching, she added. “In this case, the court said that an organization administering a taxpayer-funded program to help human trafficking victims can’t deny this vulnerable population critical health services based on the organization’s religious beliefs,” Dalven said.

The ACLU filed the lawsuit in 2009 after learning that HHS officials allowed the USCCB, through its Migration and Refugee Services Department, to limit the scope of case management services provided under a five-year contract to assist trafficking victims. First signed in 2006, the contract permitted the USCCB to restrict offering specific reproductive health services — such as abortion, providing contraceptives and sterilization — on religious grounds even though the government’s original request for proposals to administer the program did not impose any such restrictions.

Stearns agreed with the ACLU’s contention that HHS violated its constitutional obligations by delegating discretion to the USCCB on which services would or would not be provided to trafficking victims. The judge said in his ruling that the argument by HHS attorneys that department officials used “customary and neutral principles” without any religious motivation resulted in restrictions that ran contrary to the Constitution. “To insist that the government respect the separation of church and state is not to discriminate against religion,” Stearns said in his decision. “Indeed, it promotes a respect for religion by refusing to single out any creed for official favor at the expense of all others.”

He said the Constitution “mandates that the government remain secular, rather than affiliate itself with religious beliefs or institutions, precisely in order to avoid discriminating among citizens on the basis of their religious faith.” Stearns said in a footnote to his ruling that the case “is not about government forcing a religious institution to act contrary to its most fundamental beliefs. No one is arguing that the USCCB can be mandated by government to provide abortion of contraceptive services or be discriminated against for its refusal to do so. Rather, this case is about the limits of the government’s ability to delegate to a religious institution the right to use taxpayer money to impose its beliefs on others (who may or may not share them),” Stearns said.
Pope Asks Our Lady of Charity to Embrace Cuba

EL Cobre, Cuba (CNS) — Entrusting people to Mary’s maternal care is a normal Catholic practice, but when Pope Benedict XVI prayed that Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre would wrap her golden mantle around the people of Cuba, it was particularly poignant.

For 400 years, Cubans — believers and nonbelievers alike — have brought their sorrows and joys before the little statue of Mary, and even Cuba’s communist rulers have claimed her as a cultural icon of the Cuban struggle for freedom and equality.

When Pope Benedict visited the Virgin’s shrine March 27, he joined the thousands of pilgrims marking the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the statue, and he echoed the prayers of many of them for a future marked by less poverty and greater freedom.

“I have entrusted to the mother of God the future of your country, advancing along the ways of renewal and hope, for the greater good of all Cubans,” he said.

With only Cuban bishops and priests, his Vatican entourage and a choir present inside the shrine of La Caridad, as the image is known, Pope Benedict first knelt in prayer before the Eucharist, then he stood and recited the special prayer that the Cuban bishops composed for the fourth-centenary celebrations.

He went up to the statue, lit a candle and stood in silent prayer for several minutes while a choir sang the “Salve Regina,” or “Hail, Holy Queen.”

Hundreds of pilgrims and visitors waited outside for a glimpse of the Pope and a few words from him.

Leaving the shrine, the Pope stood on the steps and told the crowd that the Virgin’s “presence in this town of El Cobre is a gift of heaven for all Cubans.”

On an island where families have been divided by exile, emigration and imprisonment, the Pope assured the people that while inside he prayed to Mary “for the needs of all who suffer, of those who are deprived of freedom, for those who are separated from their loved ones or who are undergoing times of difficulty.”

He said he prayed for Cuba’s young people that “they may be authentic friends of Christ and not succumb to things which bring sadness in their wake.”

Pope Benedict prayed for families who live their faith and transmit it to their children and, especially, for the families “who offer their homes as mission centers for the celebration of Mass” in a country where the government restricts the building of new churches and where there is a severe shortage of priests.

The Pope told the people to follow Mary’s example and build their lives “on the firm rock which is Jesus Christ, to work for justice, to be servants of charity and to persevere in the midst of trials.”

“May nothing or no one take from you your inner joy, which is so characteristic of the Cuban soul,” he said, before leaving the shrine to the rhythmic clapping and cheers of the crowd.
Calendar

APRIL
1 Palm Sunday

The Secular Franciscan Order of St. Claire Fraternity meets at 1:15 p.m. the first Sunday of the month at St. Thomas More Church in Norman in the library. All are welcome. If you would like to learn how Francis lived, plan to attend one of our meetings. For more information, call Alice at (405) 473-7680.

1 Penance Service, St. Andrew Parish, Moore, 5 p.m.

5 Holy Thursday

6 Good Friday

6 The Way of the Cross at St. Thomas More University Parish, Norman, 3 to 5 p.m.

6 There will be no First Friday Sacred Heart Mass at the Catholic Pastoral Center.

8 Easter-Holy Day of Obligation

10 Catholic War Veterans (of any war/conflict) will meet the second

Tuesday of each month in the community room of St. Ann Retirement Center at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Father M. Price Oswalt at (405) 567-3404.

11 Catholic War Veterans USA. Oklahoma Memorial Post 168 will hold their monthly meeting at 7 p.m. in the Sunnyleane Family Reception Center, 3900 SE 29th St. in Del City, every second Wednesday. For more information, contact Ken at (405) 739-0036 or by email at OklaPost168@cox.net.

14 The Benedictine Oblates of Red Plains Monastery will meet from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. in Room 125 at the Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway in Oklahoma City. For more information, contact Jenny Fenner, (405) 721-0832, or email jenfen@cox.net, or Sandy Poe, (580) 421 6554, or email sandra-poe@ymail.com.

14 “Stepping Into Marriage With Children.” Too often we assume that second marriages need little or no preparation, but 60 percent of second marriages end in divorce. SIMWC is a Marriage Preparation class to be held at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway in Oklahoma City. Sign-in begins at 8:45 with the first session beginning promptly at 9 a.m. The cost of the day is $40 per couple. You may download the registration form from our website: http://archokc.org/office-of-family-life/home. For inquiries and or questions, call (405) 721-8944.

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

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

Jobs Box

Part-Time Executive Assistant

The Base Chapel at Tinker Air Force is seeking an executive assistant to the Wing Chaplain. This individual will be responsible for all communications in and out of the chaplain’s office, and insure the smooth flow of information to all chapel staff. The Statement of Work, explaining this part-time position for 25 hours a week and necessary qualifications, is available at the Base Chapel weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Interested applicants should contact the Tinker Chapel at (405) 734-2111 to pick up a Statement of Work. Submit résumé and bid by April 10. Qualified applicants will be invited to interview April 11-13.

Part-Time Ministry Center Director

The Tinker Air Force Base Chapel seeks a new director for the Latte’ Lounge (Airmen Ministry Center). The director of this center will be responsible for coordination of volunteers and operation of the Center of Hospitality for all assigned airmen. The Statement of Work, explaining this part-time position for 25 hours a week and necessary qualifications, is available at the Base Chapel weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Interested applicants should contact the Chapel at (405) 734-2111 to pick up a Statement of Work. Submit résumé and bid by April 10. Qualified applicants will be invited to interview April 11-13.

LPN, Direct Care & Residential Staff

The Center of Family Love has openings for Licensed Practical Nurses, Direct Care Staff and Residential Staff. Paid training is offered for the Direct Care and Residential positions. Night (3-11 p.m.), overnight (11 p.m. to 7 a.m.) and weekend double shifts currently available with health and wellness benefits starting the first of the month following just 90 days of employment. Apply in person at the corner of 6th & Texas Avenue in Okarche, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, or email a resume to HR@cflinc.org.

Handyman

St. Gregory’s Abbey is looking for a handyman. Skills needed in carpentry, plumbing and electrical work. This position is for 40 hours per week. St. Gregory’s Abbey is located at 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. If interested, contact Marria L. Brydon, PHR, at (405) 878-5416.

Teacher Openings

Sacred Heart Catholic School in El Reno has two teaching positions open for the 2012-2013 school year. Applicants must hold a current Oklahoma Teaching Certificate and must be committed to providing academic excellence in a Christian environment. Please send resumes to Principal Shannon Statton at 210 S. Evans, El Reno, Okla. 73036, or fax to (405) 262-3818.

Behavioral Interventionists

Good Shepherd Catholic School at Mercy is in need of several Behavioral Interventionists. A Behavioral Interventionist is an individual who works one-on-one with children with disabilities to provide academic and behavioral support for children on the autistic spectrum. The position is part time and hours are negotiable. The school is in session from Monday-Friday (8 a.m. to 4 p.m). If you are a very patient person and experienced/interested in working with children with disabilities, contact Dr. Kearns, Principal, at (405) 752-2264. The school is located at 13404 N. Meridian, Oklahoma City.
Catholic Charities Celebrates Sanctuary Ministry

OKLAHOMA CITY — Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma celebrated its annual Green Tie Gala March 10. The colorful event was held at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. Proceeds from the event help support the Sanctuary Women’s Development Center, a ministry created by Catholic Charities and one that has drawn wide community support.

Patrick T. Rooney, chairman and CEO of First National Bank of Oklahoma, was honored at the event. He was selected as the Grand Marshal for this year’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade, held March 17 in downtown Oklahoma City.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley addressed the audience, describing the work done by Sanctuary Women’s Development Center as “deeply moving.” The Archbishop praised the “rich association and ecumenical partnerships” that have been created through the ministry of the Sanctuary. His comments were supported by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Edward J. Konieczny, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma, and Baptist minister Scott Allen, who offered comments in support of the Catholic Charities ministry at the Sanctuary.

Another indication of how widely the community supports this effort was evidenced by the fact television news personality Geri Bond served as master of ceremonies. Bond is a member of the Mayflower Congregational Church in Oklahoma City.

Amy Hampton, director of the Sanctuary Women’s Development Center, told the audience their support of the ministry has made a great difference in the lives of many women and children who arrive at the Sanctuary with basically “nowhere else to turn.”

The audience was shown a powerful video that contained testimonies from two women who said the Sanctuary has helped them get back on their feet. Both women were left homeless after losing their families and struggling with gambling addictions.

The Sanctuary Women’s Development Center, last fiscal year, was able to serve 871 women and children and move 72 households into permanent housing.

The Green Tie Gala helped provide the financial support for much of this effort.

Deacon Dennis Frazier of St. Charles Borromeo marched as Ireland’s first bishop and patron saint, St. Patrick.

Left: Lil Ross, Judy Love and LaDonna Meinders at the Green Tie Gala. Bottom: The Irish Color Guard on parade. At left, holding the flag of Ireland is Tim O’Connor, Catholic Charities executive director.
Catholics Take Justice Issues to State Capitol

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Father Bill Pruett welcomed the more than three dozen people attending the Catholics Living Justice Day at the state Capitol March 20 by reminding them what Saint Paul had to say about faith and politics. “Saint Paul reminds us in Chapter 13 of his Letter to the Romans that in the end, our faith and our politics cannot be fully separated,” Father Pruett said. In the audience were a number of Oklahoma lawmakers as well as representatives from several parishes, Catholic Charities and two other priests, Father Tim Luschen and Father Joseph Kolb, retired.

“The abiding principle in all Catholic social teaching is our need to seek the common good,” Father Pruett said. “The common good must extend to all persons who live in our society.”

Richard Klinge, director of Advocacy, Outreach and Legal Services for Catholic Charities, pointed to several pieces of proposed legislation either being supported or opposed by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The bills supported involved sanctity of life issues, while the bill opposed by the Church is related to immigration.

Deacon Larry Sousa asked what role or responsibility do priests have to address justice issues from the pulpit. Sister Diane Koorie, RSM, said the responsibility to pursue justice is not only left to the priest, but to all Catholics. She said “we have different areas of talent and expertise” and suggested it’s up to all Catholics to use those talents and abilities to promote the common good.

Summary of Bill HB 2381 — A new law and if enacted would prohibit long-distance web cam abortions by requiring that when RU-486 (mifepristone) or any other drug or chemical is used for the purpose of performing or inducing an abortion, the physician who is prescribing, dispensing or otherwise providing the drug or chemical shall be physically present, in person, in the same room as the patient when the drug or chemical is first provided to the patient. Civil remedies and criminal penalties are created for a violation of the proposed bill.

Status of Bill. HB 2381 passed the House on March 5, 2012, by a vote of 81-7. The bill is now in the Senate and as of 3/15/12 is awaiting assignment to a committee(s). Rep. Cockroft is the author and Sen. David is the Senate sponsor.

Position of Archdiocese. The Archdiocese supports the passage of HB 2381 as it exists as of 3/5/11.

Action to take. Contact your representative and encourage him or her to support HB 2381.

Summary of Bill SB 1274 — A new law and if enacted would create the “Heartbeat Informed Consent Act,” which mandates that prior to giving informed consent to having an abortion, a provider must make the embryonic or fetal heartbeat audible for the pregnant woman to hear. The Senate author is Sen. Newberry and the House sponsor is Rep. Peterson.

Status of Bill. SB 1274 passed the Senate on March 6, 2012, by a vote of 34-8. The bill is now in the House and as of 3/15/12 is awaiting assignment to a committee(s).

Position of Archdiocese. The Archdiocese supports the passage of SB 1274 as it exists as of 3/7/12.

Action to take. Contact your representative and encourage him or her to support SB 1274.

Summary and Status of Bill SB 1624 — A new law and if enacted would deny resident college tuition to undocumented students who wish to attend a state college or university. The Senate author is Sen. Sparks and the House sponsor is Rep. Virgin. SB 1624 passed the Senate on March 15, 2012, by a vote of 38-1. The bill is now in the House and as of 3/15/12 is awaiting assignment to a committee(s).

Position of Archdiocese. The Archdiocese opposes the passage of SB 1624 as it exists as of 3/15/12.

Action to take. Contact your representative and encourage him or her to oppose SB 1624.

For the full handout for What Does Catholic Moral And Social Teaching Say On This Issue? and the Talking points, visit the Sooner Catholic website at www.soonercatholic.org.