More than two dozen Catholic legislators, staff and clergy joined Archbishop Coakley and Bishop Konderla at the first-ever Oklahoma Catholic Legislators Caucus on March 29 at the State Capitol.

The luncheon was sponsored by the new Catholic Conference of Oklahoma, which provides legislative representation to the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Diocese of Tulsa. The event featured national speaker and family law expert, Helen Alvare.

Alvare spoke to lawmakers about how Catholic social teaching relates to many of the issues being debated this year during the legislative session, including religious freedom and the family.

“The human person is a gifted giver. Everybody has different gifts,” said Alvare, a professor at Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University in Virginia. “We bring different gifts to the table. Diversity is itself a gift, and this is part of the solidarity of Catholic social teaching.”

She encouraged legislators from both parties to focus less on their ideological differences and more on their individual and collective gifts and expertise to find solutions.

“Tremendous program” for vocations and the Alabama missions.

Bishops host first Oklahoma Catholic Legislators Caucus

Before returning to seminary after Christmas break, Joseph Beltran pulled a piece of paper from a desk in his parents’ Pennsylvania home and wrote a note to his younger brother. It was the name of the bishop of Savannah, Ga., and his address.

His younger brother, Eusebius – a high school senior at the time – was steadfast in his plan to go to seminary and study for a diocese in Alabama. He was interested in the “tremendous program” for vocations and the Alabama missions.

“My brother was smart not to push me. He just left the note. When he was gone, I looked at the bishop’s name and I thought ‘Well, it won’t hurt to write him.’ So, I wrote a letter to the bishop and the bishop accepted me and sent me to seminary!”

Joseph’s younger brother Archbishop Emeritus Eusebius Joseph Beltran will celebrate his 58th anniversary of ordination in May and 40 years as a bishop on April 20.

“It has been a long time, but it sure has continued on page 16

Archbishop Beltran celebrates 40th anniversary as bishop

Archbishop Beltran

By Diane Clay
The Sooner Catholic

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She encouraged legislators from both parties to focus less on their ideological differences and more on their individual and collective gifts and expertise to find solutions.

“There is so much we could bring to one another. A single mother in poverty needs things from the left and the right. She needs to be responsible for creating a family structure for her children and she also needs to have a neighborhood where there’s a fair chance at education, where there’s not an over-incarceration of the men, etc. continued on page 7

continued on page 16
Put Out Into the Deep
Lake Toba

A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep

“The shepherd cannot run at the first sign of danger. Those of us who have become familiar with the life and witness of Blessed Stanley Rother immediately recognize those words. They were his words when his life was in danger, he made the conscious decision to remain with his flock. He laid down his life. Blessed Stanley made his own the words of Jesus that we bear in the Gospel for Good Shepherd Sunday.

“I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.” He was no “fired man” who “sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away.” Each year on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, the Church observes Good Shepherd Sunday when we hear the Gospel proclaimed that describes characteristics of the Good Shepherd: fidelity, love unto death, a caring for the flock, concern for the wandering and the lost. It is a portrait of Jesus. It is a reminder of who priests are called to embody as icons of what priests are called to be.

We know that it is difficult to be a shepherd. It is difficult to care for the flock and, at times, we may feel our own weakness and limitations. We are witnesses to hope and prophets of his justice. The fruitfulness of our priestly ministry is directly related to our being united with Jesus who lays down his life for his sheep. Like the grain of wheat that must die before it can produce a rich harvest, our lives also must be patterned on this paschal mystery.

The parish of Saint James the Apostle in Santiago Atitlan where Blessed Stanley Rother served had not had a single priestly vocation in more than 400 years. Since his death there have been nine priests ordained from that parish and at least seven seminarians are currently in formation.

I pray that through the faithful witness of priests such as Blessed Stanley and others that young men will be inspired to offer their lives in service to the Church as priests for our archdiocese. This year, we already have had a nearly unprecedented number of calls and application requests for seminary. Please pray for good shepherds. Pray for our priests and seminarians and for an abundant harvest of vocations for the Church in Oklahoma.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City

One Church, Many Disciples pilot parishes exceed campaign goals

Beginning in October, 10 parishes in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City were the first to participate in the One Church, Many Disciples capital campaign. The campaign – the first of its kind in the archdiocese – set out with a challenging goal of raising $60 million to build upon Blessed Stanley Rother’s and to support various shared ministries.

These pilot parishes, located as far north as Enid and as far south as Purcell, were asked to participate in the first group – wave 1 – of parishes to test the campaign plan in a variety of situations. The parishes included a mix of urban, suburban and rural parishes, and several parishes with Spanish-speaking communities.

So far, the 10 pilot parishes have raised more than $10 million toward their combined goals, totaling $8.5 million. Together with the lead gifts of Archbishop Coakley and his committee, and early results from Wave 2 parishes, the campaign already has raised $36 million – 39 percent of its overall goal! The excitement and momentum that the campaign has generated should be encouraging to pastors and laity of the parishes that have yet to begin their campaigns. As this is the first campaign of its size and scope in the archdiocese, it was to be expected that some would feel apprehensive prior to the start of Wave 1.

Father Stephen Hamilton, pastor of Wave 1 pilot parish Saint Monica in Edmond, remembers his nervousness at the beginning.

“It really seemed like a lot at the beginning,” Father Hamilton said. “I was not very comfortable with the idea of being a fundraiser. I had no idea how I was going to reach our goal of nearly $1.9 million.”

Father Hamilton quickly settled into the role, however, as families in the parish responded generously. Saint Monica exceeded its goal and has raised more than $2 million.

“The campaign was not a hard sell,” Father Hamilton said.

“People were very excited about the different aspects of the campaign, and the fact that our parish would be getting money back was very exciting for me as a pastor. While I was nervous about asking for gifts, everyone seemed interested and supportive because they really valued the work,” Father Hamilton said.

Saint Monica was joined by nine other Wave 1 pilot parishes, each of which have exceeded their goals. Parishes receive 20 percent of their parishioners’ gifts up to goal and 50 percent of gifts over goal to fund local parish needs.

The campaign’s early success bodes well for the 98 parishes and missions yet to complete their campaigns, including 29 parishes in Wave 2, which underway, and about 30 each in Waves 3 and 4, beginning in August 2018, and Wave 4 starting in January 2019.

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One Church, Many Disciples pilot parishes exceed campaign goals

One Church, Many Disciples

www.onechurchmanydisciples.org

April 15, 2018
Sooner Catholic

April 14, 2018
Sooner Catholic

One Church, Many Disciples pilot parishes exceed campaign goals

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

April 15, 2018

– Confirmation, 6 p.m., St. Francis Xavier, Enid
– Confirmation, 7 p.m., St. Mark, Norman
– Catholic Advocacy Day, 8 a.m., Oklahoma State Capitol

April 14, 2018

– Senior staff meeting, 2 p.m., CPC
– Assembly of Catholic Professionals luncheon, 11 a.m., Downtown Petroleum Club, OKC
– Greeting and opening prayer for Safe Environment in-service, 9:30 a.m., CPC

April 13, 2018

– Presbyteral Council meeting, 9:30 a.m., CPC
– Mystagogy Mass, 4 p.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, Catholic Pastoral Center

April 12, 2018

– Opening prayer for Digital Church Conference, 9 a.m., CPC
– Catholic Charities Board meeting, 11:30 a.m., Sanctuary Women’s Development Center, OKC

April 11, 2018

– Catholic Charities Board meeting, 11:30 a.m., Sanctuary Women’s Development Center, OKC
– Catholic Advocacy Day, 8 a.m., Oklahoma State Capitol
– Confirmation, 7 p.m., St. Mark, Norman

April 10, 2018

– Senior staff meeting, 2 p.m., CPC
– Presbyterian Council meeting, 9:30 a.m., CPC
– Confirmation, 11 a.m., St. Joseph, Ada
– Confirmation, 6 p.m., St. Catherine of Sienna, Paula Valley

One Church, Many Disciples

www.onechurchmanydisciples.org

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Sooner Catholic

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April 15, 2018
Sooner Catholic
Priest Assignments 2018
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Effective July 3, unless otherwise noted.

Retirement
Rev. Thomas Dowdell
Residence: To be announced

Rev. Christopher Broshar
St. Peter, Guymon
(St. Francis Cabrini, Beaver; Church of the Good Shepherd, Boise City; Sacred Heart, Hooker)

Rev. Philip Louis
St. Matthew, Elk City (effective June 1)

Rev. George Popius
Residence: St. James the Greater, Oklahoma City

Rev. Mark Mason
St. Francis Xavier, Enid (St. Gregory the Great, Enid; St. Michael, Golley)

Pastor
Rev. Joseph Irwin
St. Joseph, Norman (effective July 12)

Rev. John Paul Lewis
St. Peter, Guymon (St. Francis Cabrini, Beaver; Church of the Good Shepherd, Boise City; Sacred Heart, Hooker)

Rev. Kevin Ratterman
St. Mary, Ardmore

Rev. Lance Warren
Sacred Heart, El Reno (St. Joseph, Union City)

Rev. Michael Wheelahan
Holy Name of Jesus, Chickasha (St. Peter, Lindsey)

Rev. Prabhakar Kalivela
Epiphany of the Lord, Oklahoma City

Rev. Ling Rui
St. Francis of Assisi, Oklahoma City

Rev. Maccario Martínez, O.S.B.
Blessed Sacrament, Lawton

Rev. Rajesh Nattam
St. Peter, Woodward (St. Joseph, Buffalo; Sacred Heart, Morrilton; Holy Name, Shattuck)

Rev. Anthony Ram
St. John the Baptist, Edmond (effective Aug. 31)

Rev. Scott Boeckman
Chaplain, Conception Seminary College, Conception, Mo.

Rev. Joseph Irwin
Vicar for Parishes

Rev. Timothy Fuller
Director of Seminarians

Special Assignment
Rev. Scott Boeckman
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Rev. Joseph Irwin
Vicar for Parishes

Rev. Anthony Ram
St. John the Baptist, Edmond (effective Aug. 31)

Grace Living Centers to bring experience, continued Catholic tradition to St. Ann Nursing Home

OKLAHOMA CITY – Archbishop Paul S. Coakley announced April 2 an agreement to sell Saint Ann Nursing Home to SA Operations, which will be managed by Grace Living Centers. The agreement does not include Saint Ann Retirement Center or assisted living.

The agreement provides specialized skilled care for residents and families while maintaining its Catholic identity. Subject to regulatory approval, Grace Living Centers will take over management of the nursing home on April 17 with final transfer upon completion of the current transition.

“We are excited to share our family’s 42 years of experience and compassion, Grace Living Centers is a much better positioned to operate St. Ann,” Greiner said.

Greiner and his family have been a part of Saint Ann’s growth since his father served on Saint Ann’s board of directors in the 1980s. “We have a long relationship with Saint Ann. As practicing Catholics and former board members and advisors of Saint Ann, we have remained active and involved in this community for over 40 years,” Greiner said. “I am excited to share our family’s 42 years of experience and compassion with the residents and families at Saint Ann, and to further the legacy of outstanding care.”

Greiner said the name of the nursing home will remain Saint Ann and its Catholic identity maintained, including celebrating Mass and other prayer services in the chapel.

“The agreement was shared with residents, employees and families. For more information on Grace Living Centers, go online to www.gracelivingcenters.com.”

“Women Speak for Themselves” conference addresses pro-life feminism

By Blanca Tedrow
The Sooner Catholic

Senior girls from both Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School and Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School in Oklahoma City were invited March 29 to “Women Speak for Themselves,” a conference featuring Helen Alvare, an anti-abortion activist.

Alvare set out to offer the girls useful, reasonable thoughts regarding what topics are typically viewed as controversial topics that she says are “not usually treated as reasonably or discussed very peacefully.”

Alvare aimed to teach the students ways to think about such topics, particularly through a Catholic lens.

In addition to being a professor of law at Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University, Alvare has a master’s degree in Systematic Theology. She worked for the U.S. Catholic bishops as an attorney, including having written many of their briefs for the U.S. Supreme Court.

The most persuasive of these briefs, she believes, centered on the abortion issues that were both pro-life and pro-woman.

The intermingling of these two stances is what she believes, centered on the abortion issues that led them to abort their children.

“Sexual expression without any connection to kids, and without a marital commitment, (was) like the ‘highest good for women,’ she said.

“Someone,” she added, when politicians or interest groups, or Planned Parenthood, stands out in this regard, it’s almost like a contradiction equals women’s freedom, abortion equals women’s freedom.

“What does this do to the woman?” she posited. “Not only women, but poor women.”

Alvare told the audience she eventually got tired of some women in Washington or Planned Parenthood claiming they speak for all of us, and formed her own group, “Women Speak for Themselves.”

“They are ‘The Man,’” she said. “Planned Parenthood is the new Man. ‘Tell you what I think, telling you what all women think.’

Alvare says “Women Speak for Themselves” as a training tool for women who have a voice and want to know how to use it effectively. She brings women into Washington and gives them media training and then sends them home with their own news release.

“If you don’t agree with them, let me show you how to make your arguments, she urges.

Alvare said she trains anybody from artists and dancers to obstetricians, judges and high school principals – all women, to understand the current immobilization of women to speak about things from their perspective, from a #MeToo perspective, and then go back to their locale and do it.

When Alvare asked if there were any questions, many students raised their hands. The students wondered if abortion would be morally acceptable in cases of rape. They asked if Alvare knew any women who were happy they had an abortion.

“We are women and we don’t hate men, we love them, we love children, but we have to speak for ourselves about what we want and need here in the context of it’s good to choose sexual sanity, it’s good to choose life.”

Asked what she believes can help bridge the gap between pro-life and pro-choice feminists, “women for human rights,” she answered.

“Women have always had a unique voice in the human rights space, women have always had, what Saint John Paul II called, the capacity for the other. We do, and, we know we do. We recognize that truth.”


Blanca Tedrow is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

The Sooner Catholic is supported through the Annual Catholic Appeal.

November 24, 2017

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Blanca Tedrow is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
By Charles Albert
The Sooner Catholic

ADA - When a beloved Ada teacher, Alice Garber, passed away, her husband, John Garber, wanted to honor the memory of his wife. Alice and John Garber were active members of Saint Joseph in Ada and involved with youth activities. The Garbers thought students should be inspired to excel and then be rewarded for their excellence. After Alice passed, John came up with a plan. In December 2014, Garber offered more than 100 eighth-graders a chance for an all-expense-trip to London if they excelled in their studies. The Garbers thought students should be involved with youth activities. The Garbers thought students should be involved with youth activities. The Garbers thought students should be involved with youth activities. The Garbers thought students should be involved with youth activities.

“This was the best way I could ever honor the memory of my wife,” Garber said. “Travel is the best classroom.” He paid for the students’ flights, hotels, meals and sightseeing. Students had a packed itinerary.

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“It's amazing how big Westminster Abbey was. The view from the London Eye was incredible. To see all those buildings from the 12th century and 16th century and all the modern buildings mixed in. It was incredible not to see a single blade of grass,” student Tanner Gilliam said. “After being on that trip, I would like to major in aviation, so I can travel and see the real world.”

Other activities the students visited were the Tower of London, the wax museum, the Natural History Museum, and the show Women in Black.

John Garber’s goal for the students is to excel in the classroom and for them to make great life choices.

“I think many people are surprised that Catholic social teaching even deals with these issues because they think that sex, marriage, family is a private matter. But, I think Catholic social teaching on the family can account for our current moment better than other systems. The left and the right have to work together to help the adults at the front door and not forget the children at the back door.,” said Garber.

Girber’s goal is for the students to excel in the classroom and for them to make great life choices.

April 14, 2018 Sooner Catholic

Holiness is for everybody

A first look at Gaudete et Exsultate

This past week the Vatican offered an impressive news conference on the release of Pope Francis’ last apostolic exhortation, Gaudete et Exsultate. “Rejoice and be Glad.” The theme of this letter is the call to holiness in today’s world.

Are we ready to respond generously to the Lord’s call to holiness?

The 2018 World Day of Prayer for Vocations will be observed Sunday, April 22, also known as “Good Shepherd Sunday.” The purpose of this day is to publicly fulfill the Lord’s instruction to “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest” (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).

We pray that young men and women hear and respond generously to the Lord’s call to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life, societies of apostolic life or secular institutes.

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Find resources to promote a culture of vocations at www.woccl.org/vocations.

By Brian Hackett
vocations@archokc.org

National speaker and family law expert, Helen Alvarez speaks at the first-ever Oklahoma Catholic Legislators Caucus on March 29 at the State Capitol. Photo: Diane Clay/Sooner Catholic.

Bishops host first Oklahoma Catholic Legislators Caucus

From the Archives …

Archbishop Coady at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Oklahoma City for Birth Choice’s annual “Life of the Party” gala, Photos by Jan Petay.

Life of the Party gala

On March 24, hundreds of supporters joined Archbishop Coady at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Oklahoma City for Birth Choice’s annual “Life of the Party” gala, Photos by Jan Petay.

April 14, 2018 Sooner Catholic

Bishops host first Oklahoma Catholic Legislators Caucus

From the Archives …

Archbishop Coady at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Oklahoma City for Birth Choice’s annual “Life of the Party” gala, Photos by Jan Petay.
HOLY WEEK
ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY
God speaks in the silence of creation

In addition to this vital opportunity to simply walk with God, we had the time of our lives walking in the woods with the crunch of frost beneath our feet and the neon orange tinge of the dark, wet earth in the late afternoon sun. The quiet ambiance of the trees serenaded me into a meditative way, preparing me to hear God in the simplicity of Eucharistic Adoration.

It is in creation that many people first know God. As a child, the splendor of the wildflowers and trees dancing in the afternoon sun brightened my religious awareness, stirring me to the depths of my being. The question “Who created this?” was made present in my soul, not quite formulated into a thought.

Sofia Caviedes’s book “The Religious Potential of the Child,” is filled with stories of young children for whom creation is central to their relationship with God. One story in particular stuck out. A little girl grew up in an atheistic household, yet she knew God through the whispers of the trees, the very existence of creation. One day, she heard the word, “God,” and asked her father what it meant. He explained God as a concept for foolish, uneducated people who think God created the world. His daughter responded with a sharpAwareness of God’s presence.”

We have brought our tulips and cherry blossoms, growing their velvety leaves gracefully down and sideward—blossoms. The promise of purple and white flowers delighting image tigers that grow in familiar spots, while a bright red robin sings in the garden. The near silence of cre- ation speaks through the earthly awakening of spring.

In the “Power of Silence,” Cardinal Robert Sarah writes of the way God speaks through creation.

He writes, “Creation itself is a silent word of God. The wonder of nature displays before our eyes the manifold riches of a Father who is ceaselessly present among men. That divine speech is not audible to ears that are too human, nevertheless, it is the most profound of all speech of all. The sun, the moon and the stars are absolutely silent to our ears, but they are a word and a message essential to our earthly existence.”

In his first fall, my husband and I attended a Silent Eucharistic Retreat at the Spiritual Life Center in the Diocese of Wichita. The retreat offered the occasion to bask in the physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist, drawing nearer to Him through the physical, spiritual, and mystical presence of His body.

A Millennial Journey in Faith

By John Mulder

NEW YORK – In the long history of the Church, perhaps on partnership has been more fruitless, and no collaboration has been as fruitless as Paul the Apostle and his disciple, Saint Luke.

In 2014’s “God’s Not Dead,” benefits $6.4 million from the 27 books of the New Testament, and Luke accompanied Paul on some of the journeys during which the Apostle sowed the seeds of faith across the Roman Empire.

So, the idea of a film depicting a theological discussion between two live-action figures remains a daunting prospect. With the drama “Paul, Apostle of Christ” (Sony), however, only part of that potential is realized. Writer-director Andrew Hyatt’s somewhat flawed script fashions out the bare bones available to us from the canonical sources with infelizable human details. But, it unequivocally presents a clear and, indeed, whole passages of Scripture as deriving from Paul’s apostolic conversation.

It’s a concordance on love preserved in the 13th chapter of First Corin- thians, and familiar to wedding guests every- where.

The story gets off to a sufficiently dramatic start. In the wake of the Great Fire of Rome in A.D. 64 – which the Emperor Nero notoriously blamed on the followers of Jesus – Christians are absolutely silent to our ears, but they are a word and a message essential to our earthly existence.
El buen pastor da su vida por sus ovejas

Por Deuckman
Catholic News Service

SANTA TECLA, El Salvador – Le- cionario Chacón, quien sirvió en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma, murió el 8 de marzo, dejando un legado que aún perdura.

Chacón sirvió en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma durante 40 años, donde fue rector de la parroquia de la Santisima Trinidad en Oklahoma City.

Chacón nació el 1 de enero de 1938 en el estado de El Salvador. Se licenció en Teología en la Universidad de San Salvador y fue ordenado sacerdote en 1961.

En 1963, Chacón fue llamado a servir en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma como rector de la parroquia de la Santisima Trinidad. Allí pasó 40 años de su vida, dedicada al servicio de la Iglesia.

Chacón fue conocido por su dedicación a la formación de líderes cristianos y su compromiso con la promoción de la paz y la justicia.

Aunque Chacón murió el 8 de marzo, su legado perdura a través de la educación que dio y los principios que siguió en su servicio.

Por el legado de Chacón, la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma ha tenido una amplia influencia en la vida de muchas personas, inspirándolas a servir a Dios y a sus próximos de manera profunda.

Chacón fue un ejemplo de cómo uno puede seguir el ejemplo del Buen Pastor y dar su vida por sus ovejas, siguiendo el llamado del Señor a servir a aquellos que necesitan ayuda.

In memoriam, por el legado de Chacón, continuará buscando a aquellos que necesitan ser un buen pastor.
Golf Tournament to benefit cancer research
- 17th annual golf classic begins May 21 at Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club. Proceeds are for charitable services.
- St. Francis in Oklahoma City on the third Tuesday of the month. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Cost is $10, all games 18 and older. All proceeds benefit cancer research.
- Suicide grief support group, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., St. Barbara's, 1910 N.W. 16, OKC. For those who have lost a loved one to suicide. Contact Potato Lang at potato.lang@gmail.com for more information.
- May 21 - May 22: Suicide prevention. May 21 is a trip from Edmond to Subiaco, Ark. Lunch and tour included at Winderlea's Winery and Winemaker's Park; visit St. Mary's Abbey; arrive at Subiaco County House Abbey Retreat Center. May 22 is a trip from Subiaco to Fort Smith Abbey. 
- Contact Lynn Sandoval at lynn.sandoval@mercy.net, (405) 752-3866. Speaker is Sr. Maria of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Kempen, OK.
- Suicide prevention: Depression, Section 3866. Speaker is Sr. Maria of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Kempen, OK. Contact Lynn Sandoval at lynn.sandoval@mercy.net, (405) 752-3866. Speaker is Sr. Maria of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Kempen, OK.
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gone fast." Archbishop Beltran served 18 years as a parish pastor in Georgia, including a memorable stint in inner-city Atlanta where he and other clergy routinely met with the father of the future Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to discuss the needs of the community and the struggles of the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement. Archbishop Beltran's involvement in the movement culminated with a trip in 1965 to Selma, Ala., with three other young priests to march alongside Rev. King as they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge in support of voting rights for black Americans.

In 1978, his bishop at the time received a telephone call from the papal nuncio letting them know that then-Monsignor Beltran was to become a bishop for the Diocese of Tulsa. He had only been to Oklahoma once in Elk City while traveling along Interstate 40. "I was absolutely shocked. I was surprised. I never had thought of becoming a bishop," he said.

He was ordained at Holy Family Cathedral in Tulsa on April 20, 1978. During his 15 years in Tulsa, he became known for his concern for Catholic Charities, for Tulsa, he became known for his happy and glad to be a bishop. "I was told I was to become a bishop. I was told I was to become a bishop and I accepted it, and from then on I've been very happy and glad to be a bishop."

He was ordained at Holy Family Cathedral in Tulsa on April 20, 1978. During his 15 years in Tulsa, he became known for his concern for Catholic Charities, for Catholic schools and for vocations for lay people in ministry. In each of these areas he developed innovative programs and extended the Church’s reach throughout eastern Oklahoma.

In 1992, while at a bishops meeting in Washington D.C., he was approached by the papal nuncio during a break. "He came up to me and poked me on the chest and said, 'The Holy Father wants you to move.' I looked at him and said 'What?'" The Holy Father, he wants you to move. And, so my next question was simply 'That's fine. Where does he want me to move to?' He said, 'Oklahoma City.' I said, 'What do you mean Oklahoma City?'

They set the date the next day and then had to change it to accommodate the inauguration of President Bill Clinton. On Jan. 22, 1993, at the Civic Center Music Hall, Archbishop Beltran was installed as the third archbishop of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

He served the diocese for 18 years before retiring in 2011. "I loved everything (about being bishop). I enjoy life very much, but I really enjoyed three things. First, would be the ordination of priests, the second would be the Chrism Mass, which is a follow-up from the ordination so to speak, and the third thing were the confirmations in the parishes," he said.

"Confirmation is more than just a ceremony. I met with the kids, I talked to the kids, I visited with them. Then, we'd have the ceremony, which itself is very beautiful, and then the reception, which brings them all back together. It is just the interaction with the kids and their families. You don't usually get that type of opportunity with the kids. At schools, you just go one classroom to the other, but here you have them captivated. Overall, the kids were very good. Occasionally, I had a rowdy bunch that I could settle easily with my stern look."

The biggest challenge, he said, was the decreasing number of priests and religious. Even that challenge, though, led to the positive infusion of gifted and committed lay people in ministry positions.

As he approaches 40 years as a bishop, Archbishop Beltran remains active in the Church in Oklahoma and is grateful for his call to the priesthood and for the thousands of parishioners he served.

"The priesthood has been a gift. It's a gift to the person who becomes a priest and that gift is given not just to that person, but to the Church. A priest ministers in the name of the person of Jesus and that's why it's such a gift. He cannot claim it on his own. He must be called, he must become prayerful, he must become close to the Lord, close to Jesus," he said.

Archbishop Beltran, who turned age 83 in August, isn’t worried about his legacy or how his time as bishop might be viewed.

"If you did the best job you could and you passed it on, then it’s gone. That’s why I’m not afraid of death because death is a part of life. It’s the direction the Lord placed us here."

Diane Clay is editor of the Sooner Catholic.

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Presented by Fr. Charles Buckley, O.S.B. - April 8, 2018

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Taking a look at a practical approach to responding to the “universal call to contemplation.”

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Is this the life to which God is calling you to seek him?

**Come and See**

April 20-22, 2018

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