“I have been through 14 years of therapy and anti-depressants. I’ve confessed my abortion hundreds of times. Just when I thought I could take the pain no longer, I found Rachel’s Vineyard. This weekend literally saved my life.”

A Rachel’s Vineyard participant

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

I wrote a column many years ago about the evil of abortion. I wrote in the El Reno Tribune that one day because of abortion, our culture would be compared to Hitler’s Nazi Germany in that both destroyed millions of innocent lives. That Sunday at Mass, the late Father Phillip Wilkemeyer praised my column, calling it an act of courage. I was a little embarrassed, but admittedly pleased by the positive attention.

Years later I became the editor for the Sooner Catholic newspaper. In this new position I had the opportunity to meet Susan Lepak. Through the Archdiocesan Office of Family Life, Susan served as coordinator for a program known as Rachel’s Vineyard. I would learn that Rachel’s Vineyard is a healing ministry dedicated to women and men who suffer from the devastation created by abortion. I learned that these people, millions of them, suffer greatly and they mostly suffer in silence. They suffer because they hate what they have done and many times they hate themselves. This self-loathing often manifests itself in various forms of destructive behaviors including drug and alcohol abuse as well as eating disorders. It was actually through working with women who suffer from eating disorders that the founder of Rachel’s Vineyard, Dr. Teresa Burke, discovered the link between abortion and this self-destructive behavior.

After learning about Rachel’s Vineyard and how it helps those who suffer, I felt very ashamed of how I had treated people in that “courageous” column I had written years earlier. I wrote another column about abortion, this time apologizing for casting the first stone.

Susan Lepak no longer is the coordinator for Rachel’s Vineyard, health issues forced her to leave the ministry she loved. But the Lord provides and for that reason, Joanne Forgue and Donna Rockwell are now coordinating Rachel’s Vineyard for the Office of Family Life. Joanne serves as Site Leader for Rachel’s Vineyard, while Donna will serve as Team Leader during the upcoming retreats.

Both women attend Saint Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Oklahoma City and both women have a heart for the women and men who are suffering from the pain of abortion. They share stories.

The next Rachel’s Vineyard retreat will be June 18-21 in Oklahoma City. The weekend is totally confidential. Not even the meeting place is made public. Women and men who are suffering from the pain of abortion are free to gather with others who are experiencing the same pain. They share stories.

Many say they felt forced to have an abortion by a husband or boyfriend. Others say family pressure led to their decision to end the life of their child.

For more information, call (405) 623-3844 or e-mail rachelsvineyardokc@gmail.com. The Web site is www.rachelsvineyard.org.

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Bishops’ Expert Offers Tips to Help Protect Children

WASHINGTON — The Catholic bishops’ expert on preventing clergy abuse of minors, Teresa Kettelkamp, offered 10 tips for child safely to mark Child Abuse Prevention Month.

During April, child protection staff in dioceses nationwide re-examine and publicize efforts for child protection. This has been a keen effort of the church since 2002, when the U.S. bishops adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, in response to clergy sexual abuse of children.

Kettelkamp, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Secretariat for Children and Young People, developed the list after reviewing what the Catholic Church has learned in facing the clergy sexual abuse problem. The 10 points follow.

Sexual molestation is about the victim. Many people are affected when a priest abuses a minor, but the individual most impacted is the victim who has suffered a violation of trust that can affect his or her entire life. The

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Vineyard

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who suffer in silence from the pain caused by abortion.

Donna knows firsthand how deep and painful that suffering can be and how it can penetrate a person's mind, body and soul. Some 25 years ago she aborted her child. For years she carried the guilt and pain of that decision. Her own experience with Rachel's Vineyard helped her accept what she had done and it also helped her accept that Christ loves her, forgives her and wants her to spend eternal life with Him. Rachel's Vineyard also helped her find her way into the Catholic Church.

"To me, this is what the Church needs to be about," said Joanne. "Rachel's Vineyard is about reaching people where they are hurting. There are so many souls out there hurting, abortion has created so many terrible problems in our society."

Rachel's Vineyard does not condemn, it does, however, require honesty. A person must admit what they have done and they must ask for forgiveness. When these actions occur, it opens the door for the healing power of Christ's love to flow over them.

Rachel's Vineyard, said Donna, essentially leads a participant through a re-enactment of the Passion of Jesus Christ. She said the experience is about guilt, suffering, pain and finally the overwhelming glory of love and forgiveness.

"The wonderful thing about Rachel's Vineyard is you learn you don't have to carry this burden by yourself," she said. "You realize Christ has been with you and your child the entire time."

Priests are needed

We live in a culture that is expert at disguising sin as freedom. That's why, the Rachel's Vineyard coordinators say, it is very helpful when priests are willing to address abortion, as uncomfortable as the issue can be. Many of the women and men attending Mass have themselves had abortions or been involved with someone who has. With an estimated 50 million abortions in the United States since it was legalized by the Supreme Court in 1973, it's unlikely that many families have not been victimized by the legal act of abortion. Considering the Rachel's Vineyard ministry is now operating in 18 countries, it's likely that statement could apply to the entire world.

"The truth sets us free," Joanne Forgue said. She said Father Don Wolf is working with Rachel's Vineyard, but more priests are needed. The well-known Father Frank Pavone, founder of Priests for Life, serves as chaplain for the national Rachel's Vineyard effort. Father Pavone is a tireless worker in the fight against abortion, but his involvement in Rachel's Vineyard demonstrates he's also a major proponent of God's love and forgiveness.

"We're all sinners," Joanne said. "Jesus didn't condemn the sinner. He taught through action and with forgiveness and healing."

Father Phil Donohoe, before he retired, would tell Catholics attending Mass they must first admit what they have done where abortion is concerned. "You have to admit you have killed your child," Father Donohoe would say to the faithful seated in the pews. "Only after you've done this can the healing and forgiveness begin."

"It's the best thing that ever happened to me. It is totally inspired by God and I am so grateful to have been brought so intensely from the pain into the light. This is not a human endeavor. Only God can do this."

Another participant in Rachel's Vineyard.
Spring Break for Irish Students a Life Lesson

By Scott Noll
For The Sooner Catholic

Not many 16-year-old American high school students get the chance to go on trips like the one I attended two weeks ago. I endured an estimated 10 hours of delightful flight, not to mention about eight hours of lay-over (one way). I also experienced temperatures upwards of 90 degrees with no air conditioning. I slept on a mattress with a mosquito net around me that probably still has an indentation where I slept to this day. I underwent a few not so pleasant visits to the lavatory due to sickness. The first sign that reminded me that I wasn’t home was the distinct smell of goat right after I got off the plane. I have had many people ask me about my trip and I would recommend it to anyone.

The mission trip I went on was set up by St. John’s Catholic Church in Edmond but financed individually. We traveled to Piura, Peru, during spring break. Many of the students who went were from Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School, but some were from public school as well. The 2010 crew consisted of Meghan Carr, Katie Cooley, Megan Culpepper, Madison Epps, Christian Heffron, Philip and Russell Kim, Scott Noll, Ryan and Rebecca Quick (our devoted leader), Stephanie Roy, Maddie Smith, Marcy Wallace and Catherine McClernon. I think I can speak for all of us when saying that this was an educational and fun trip that adds a chapter or two in someone’s life. It is well worth all of the “behind the scenes” work.

Compared to what I saw in Peru, we, the people of the United States often find ourselves whining because we have an unusual quantity of work or school work, we don’t get our way, or we simply have to do something that we do not find desirable. In many cases, this seems like the right thing to do because that’s the way we feel and think that others should know about it. There are also times when church may be just another event, crammed into our busy schedule that must be attended because it’s the “right thing to do.” One thing that I learned from this trip was the obvious, yet commonly overlooked fact that the luxuries and comforts we have in America do not exist everywhere throughout the world. I also learned that Peru is not just a shaded section on a map, inhabited by spitting llamas and impoverished people that my mom tells me to pray for. Peru is a country of people who are made just like us, who have needs just like us, who feel pain just like us, who face difficulties just like us, who become hungry and thirsty just like us, but do not act just like us.

“They are happy for what they have while we are sad for what we don’t have,” as one missionary put it. I challenge anyone to swallow those words with a tall glass of thought and a side order of sincerity.

Despite the many inconveniences, the Oklahoma missionaries worked diligently to offer their services. Some of us helped build a house and school, others helped deliver school supplies, kitchen ware, food packets and clothes. Some taught a few children how to play baseball, an almost unknown sport to them. Some others visited orphans and the elderly. We attended Mass every day we were there.

One thing that really touched me was how well-mannered these people were, despite their difficult and often repulsive living conditions and little amount of material goods. At one point, we took some children to see their first movie, “Alice in Wonderland” (an unforgettable experience). We were to take two children with us, one for each hand. Somehow, I ended up with five. The first thing everyone got when we went to the movie was a tall soda. I did not consider the diminutive size of the thirsty boys and overestimated the capacity at which they could withstand. Consequently, about halfway through the movie, some of the boys began to squirm and talk amongst themselves. I didn’t think much of it at first. Later, one of them said something to me in Spanish. I thought it would be a good time for me to use my pocket-sized English to Spanish translator that I had been carrying all week. I quickly pulled it out and began searching for the word bathroom because I had a hunch as to what the boy was trying to say. Just when I thought I was close, the movie screen would go to a dark scene, making my search much more difficult. Finally, the movie allowed me just enough light to read the four-letter word, baño. As this word rolled off the tip of my tongue, it was quickly acknowledged with a very enthusiastic “Sí!” The problem was solved. Later, I realized how well-mannered the boys were as they patiently endured my search. There were many other instances that support the natural respect that they had for us.

Another thing that really spoke to me was how the Peruvian people had so little yet they seemed to share a natural smile. I know they were genuine because they were not only present on the faces of the adults, but also on the dirty, shoeless faces of the children.

I was taken aback when I was at Mass and saw how many people didn’t receive the Eucharist. My guess would be because they respect it so much, they refused to take it most likely due to the fact that they feel that they have sinned and are unworthy. Father Joe Uhen, pastor at Santisimo Sacramento Parish in Piura, is a Bishop McGuinness 1976 graduate and the head of the missionary organization. He stated how the Peruvian society was religious, while the American society was secular. An example of this difference is in Peru, people schedule events and activities around religious ceremonies, while in America, people schedule religious ceremonies around their events and activities.

My family sponsors a Peruvian family by donating a small amount of money every month. The family has two boys; one is my age and another is younger. The mother is unemployed and the father picks up trash for a living. I got to meet them and see what they called “a home.” It was constructed of mainly bamboo, cardboard and sheet metal. It was an eye-opening experience. The kitchen held a few pots and pans that would be immediately thrown away at my house. Walter, the youngest boy, slept on a cardboard mattress. I had brought them many small gifts, in hope of making them smile. One of the last times I met with them, they offered me a few small gifts as well. Among these gifts they gave was a necklace that I wear to this day.

We have been called missionaries, and I believe rightly so, by definition. After all, we did travel almost 3,000 miles on our spring break to give to the poor, feed the hungry and assist the ailing. But I think, it is not us who deserve this title. Throughout the duration of this trip, our eyes have been widen, for we have seen what it is like to have next to nothing and still possess happiness and good etiquette. Many Peruvians have nothing, yet they give what they have and always put God first. In a way, I think that the people of Peru deserve the title of a “missionary” because they have come into our thoughts and changed us all for the better. They have given us glasses to see through the haze of selfishness and the materialistic world that we live in. They are the Peruvian missionaries.

Edited by Sandy Cunningham
St. Greg’s SIFE Team Shines In Competition

SHAWNEE — The St. Gregory’s University Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) team finished first runner-up at the Dallas SIFE USA Regional Competition. The event was one of 12 SIFE USA Regional Competitions being held across the United States in March and April.

As part of the competition, the St. Gregory’s University group presented a report of its year-long community outreach projects to a panel of business leaders. The team finished first runner-up in League 5, which included Redlands Community College, Southwestern Adventist University and Collin County Community College.

“There were some tough teams there, so we were happy with how we finished,” said SGU SIFE project manager Mario Ayala. “Next year, we’d like to take it a step further and win regionals so we can go to nationals. We want to take those projects that we were successful with this year and expand them and also come up with new projects.”

During this academic year, the St. Gregory’s SIFE team organized a number of projects, including presentations on credit literacy, character development, professional etiquette and working with Shawnee charity Labor of Love on finding jobs for the homeless. Through its “Dress for Success” fashion show, the team instructed their fellow students on knowing the proper attire to wear in a professional atmosphere and for interviews.

SIFE is an international non-profit organization with more than 42,000 active students in 40 countries. The organization works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilize university students to make a difference in their communities while developing the skills to become socially responsible business leaders.

Tips Offered

Continued from Page 2

abuser, the family of the abused and the parish community are all affected by this sin and crime, but the primary person of concern must be the victim.

No one has the right to have access to children. If people wish to volunteer for the church, for example, in a parish or school, they must follow diocesan guidelines on background checks, safe environment training, policies and procedures and codes of conduct. No one, no matter who they are, has an automatic right to be around children or young people who are in the care of the church without proper screening and without following the rules.

Common sense is not all that common. It is naive to presume that people automatically know boundaries, so organizations and families have to spell them out. For example, no youth minister, cleric or other adult leader should be in a child’s bedroom, alone with the child.

Child sexual abuse can be prevented. Awareness that child sexual abuse exists and can exist anywhere is a start. It is then critical to build safety barriers around children and young people to keep them from harm. These barriers come in the form of protective guardians, codes of conduct, background evaluations, policies and procedures and safety training programs.

The residual effects of having been abused can last a lifetime. Those who have been abused seldom “just get over it.” The sense of violation goes deep into a person’s psyche and feelings of anger, shame, hurt and betrayal can build long after the abuse has taken place. Some have even described the feeling as if it has “scarred their soul.”

Feeling heard leads toward healing. Relief from hurt and anger often comes when one feels heard, when one’s pain and concerns are taken seriously, and a victim/survivor’s appropriate sense of rage and indignation are acknowledged. Not being acknowledged contributes to a victim’s sense of being invisible, unimportant and unworthy; they are in some way “revictimized.”

You cannot always predict who will be an abuser. Experience shows that most abuse is at the hands of someone who has gained the trust of a victim/survivor and his/her family. Most abuse also occurs in the family setting. Sometimes the “nicest person in the world” is an abuser, and this “niceness” enables a false sense of trust to be created between abuser and abused.

There are behavioral warning signs of child abusers. Training and education help adults recognize grooming techniques that are precursors to abuse. Some abusers isolate a potential victim by giving him or her undue attention or lavish gifts. Another common grooming technique is to allow young people to participate in activities which their parents or guardians would not approve, such as watching pornography, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and excessive touching, which includes wrestling and tickling. It is also critical to be wary of age-inappropriate relationships, seen, for example, in the adult who is more comfortable with children than fellow adults. Parishes can set up rules to guide interaction between adults and children.

People can be taught to identify grooming behavior — which are the actions which abusers take to project the image that they are kind, generous, caring people, while their intent is to lure a minor into an inappropriate relationship. An abuser may develop a relationship with the family to increase his credibility. Abusers might show attention to the child by talking to him/her, being friendly, sharing alcohol with a minor and giving the child “status” by insinuating that the child is their favorite or “special person.” Offenders can be patient and may “groom” their victim, his or her family or community for years.

Background checks work. Background checks in churches, schools and other organizations keep predators away from children both because they scare off some predators and because they uncover past actions which should ban an adult from working or volunteering with children. If an adult has had difficulty with some boundaries that society sets, such as not driving while intoxicated or not disturbing the public peace, he or she may have difficulties with other boundaries, such as not hurting a child. Never forget that offenders lie.

Basic Course Work for Faith Community Nursing To Be Offered

Catholic Charities will offer the Basic Preparation Course for Faith Community Nurses the weekends of Sept. 30, Oct. 1 and 2 and Oct. 14-16, 2010. The weekend course will be held at Our Lady of the Lake Lodge in Guthrie.

Participants must attend both weekends to complete the course. The course, revised in 2009, includes local faith community nurses and community leaders with expertise in theology, ethics, counseling, community resources and education. This program is approved for 34 contact hours by the Kansas State Board of Nursing.

Faith Community Nursing is a recognized specialty practice for registered nurses, which combines professional nursing and health ministry. This is an independent nursing practice which does not involve “hands-on” health care. Instead, the nurse performs roles of educator, referral agent, advocate, personal health counselor, developer of support groups, coordinator of volunteers and integrator of faith and health. The nurse performs all duties with a special emphasis on the intentional care of the spirit. The spiritual aspect is key to this nursing.

The course is open to registered nurses of all faith traditions. Registration is limited to 15 persons.

Cost is $675 which includes tuition, materials, CEUs, meals, lodging and first year membership with FCNAOK. Registration closes September 2010.

For more information, contact Mary Diane Steltenkamp, Director of Faith Community Nursing at Catholic Charities, (405) 523-3000, or e-mail mdsteltenkamp@catholiccharitiesok.org.
Latin Club Offers ‘Dress for Success’ Support

During the month of April, students from Jonnie Larson’s Latin class at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School will be sponsoring a service project in support of the “Dress for Success” program. This organization provides professional clothing to underprivileged women that are seeking to establish a career or return to the workplace. The hope is to foster economic independence that allows for long-term self-sufficiency. Women are referred to the organization from non-profit or government agencies including homeless and domestic violence shelters, job training programs and educational institutions.

The Latin Club has not participated in a service project before. However, Larson would like to see it develop into an annual event. “I have seen such enthusiasm and willingness from the students,” she said. “This is an opportunity for them to give back to the community while assisting in such a beneficial and worthwhile cause.”

Students involved are Nick Joyce, Tommy Labarthe, Elizabeth VanHorn, Connor Tharp, David Murray, Angelina Stancampiano, Jonathan Gardocki and Kristy Davis.

They will be collecting clothing throughout the month of April. Acceptable attire includes new or nearly-new, clean items such as blouses, blazers, jackets and professional shoes, as well as new pantyhose. Items not accepted are casual clothes, jewelry, belts, or men’s clothing. The Latin Club will have a donation site in Larson’s classroom at Bishop McGuinness or donations may be left at the McGuinness front office. For more information, please contact Jonnie Larson at jlarson@bmchs.org or 842-6638 Ext. 315.

Annual CFO Golf Tourney Set for June 7

The Catholic Foundation’s Ninth Annual Golf Classic presented by GMX Resources Inc. will be held this year at Twin Hills Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City on Monday, June 7, 2010, with a 12 noon shotgun start. Event chairman and CFO board member Ray Haefele said, “The Golf Classic was established to benefit Catholic education with net proceeds going to the Catholic School Endowment Fund, to ultimately support and improve the quality of Catholic education in the Archdiocese. The Perry Maxwell-designed Twin Hills is an excellent venue and we continue to pledge to keep the Golf Classic a special event with fun and fellowship for all.”

New to the Golf Classic this year are three special flights: the Schools Flight, the Mixed Foundation Flight and the Women’s Flight. The Schools Flight is the most exciting because teams are designated by their school to participate and only one team from each school is eligible to compete. The winner of this heads-up competition between school teams will win a $2,500 Catholic Foundation grant for their school along with the Archbishop’s Traveling Trophy that the winning school will keep for the year. The traditional Mixed Foundation Flight will be available to all golfers, and a new Women’s Flight will allow all-women teams to compete for their own prizes. Rick Jones Buick GMC is sponsoring a hole-in-one competition and a golfer could potentially win a new 2010 GMC Terrain. A silent auction, wine and cheese gathering and awards dinner will culminate an exciting day.

Visit www.cfook.org for a golf tournament registration form, or call The Catholic Foundation at 721-4115 for more information.

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

Please Remember the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in Your Estate Plans
In Brief

St. James to Host Bingo April 29

Bingo at St. James Catholic Church, 41st and S. McKinley Avenue in Oklahoma City, will be held April 29 in the gym. Food and beverages reasonably priced will be served at 5:45 p.m. Bingo begins at 6:30 p.m. All games including two blackouts are $10. Door prizes and special recognition for all players born in April. A HDTV flat screen television will be given away in October 2010. Each time you play you get an entry ticket into the TV drawing. Come on down and make it a party.

St. Joseph’s Bingo Set to Resume Play

Bingo will resume at St. Joseph’s, Norman, in the gym, second Friday of every month. The dates are:


A light dinner is served at 6:30 p.m., first session begins at 7 p.m., second session at 8:30. Each session is $5, blackouts are $1 each, no limit. On Friday, May 14 we will celebrate our sixth anniversary with a drawing for a 22-inch TV grand prize.

Parish to Host Celebration of Nurses

The first week of May has traditionally been marked as a time to honor the nurses in our community. On Wednesday, May 12, Mercy Health Center, St. Anthony Hospital and Catholic Charities will sponsor an evening of appreciation for our many nurses. Mass will be celebrated beginning at 5:30 p.m. at St. Monica Church, 2001 N. Western Avenue, Edmond. Dinner will follow in the parish hall. Though the evening is free, reservations are required by calling Mercy Community Outreach, 936-5226. Deadline for registrations is Friday, April 30.

Safe Environment Workshop April 29

OKLAHOMA CITY — The annual Safe Environment Facilitators Workshop will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 29 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway.

Jennifer Goodrich, Safe Environment coordinator for the Archdiocese, said the program will focus on expansion of suggested policies and procedures concerning the utilization of technology. Goodrich said “best practices” in this area will be reviewed and a live presentation on how to use social networking to benefit Safe Environment coordinators will be made. Cyberbullying will also be discussed.

The day will include Mass at 11:30 a.m. and lunch is optional for $7.

For more information, contact the Safe Environment Office at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 150.

Open House Planned at Retirement Center

St. Ann Retirement and Assisted Living Community is proud to announce our “Grand Theater” opening soon. We have scheduled a grand opening on Wednesday, May 19 from 10:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. The agenda for the day is as follows:

- 10:30 a.m. — Ribbon Cutting/Blessing/
  Welcome, with music featuring Jill Justice, harpist 1 p.m. — On Stage Entertainment
  Refreshments will be served throughout the day with a slide presentation of the building of the theater. We invite you to join in the festivities. It is a come-and-go event. For more information, please call Richard Amend, Mission Director, at 721-0747.

Yukon Students Offer Support to Infants

Mrs. Cox’s fifth-grade class at St. John Nepomuk Catholic School in Yukon led a school-wide Lenten service project encouraging the students at St. John to donate diapers and formula to the Infant Crisis Center of Oklahoma City. The class delivered the items to the center and spent the afternoon working and volunteering at the center preparing the kits that are given to families.

As of the close of the drive, students had contributed 5,578 fluid ounces of baby formula, which will feed 46 babies for one month, and more than 4,361 diapers.

St. Eugene’s Seminar to Focus on Dementia

The St. Eugene’s Financial Education Committee is sponsoring a seminar on May 10 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Those interested in learning about dementia, its effect on your family and what you can do now to avoid problems later, should benefit from this event. You will learn how to spot early signs of dementia, and what you can do to financially prepare for dementia. Dementia, long-term care insurance and estate planning will be discussed. No product sales will occur at this educational seminar. For questions or to reserve your seat, call Chris Matteson at (405) 314-4608.

SGU Student to Host Health Fair April 19

SHAWNEE — St. Gregory’s University senior Graciela Rojas will host a health fair April 19 from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Rockwood Center’s Great Room on the SGU campus. The fair, Rojas’ senior project, will feature booths from several health-related organizations in the Shawnee area. The event is free and open to the public.

“The purpose of the health fair is to inform college students about the importance of taking care of themselves,” said Rojas, who is majoring in fitness and health. “When you’re a college student, it’s easy to forget about your health, so hopefully this will create some awareness. This event will also give me experience with promoting health in the community.”

Rojas said some organizations have donated their services for the event. Included in those services are sugar tests, blood pressure checks and body composition measurements. She said those attending the fair will have the opportunity to receive gift certificates from local vendors.

St. Gregory’s University is an authentically Roman Catholic university. It provides a liberal arts curriculum and professional programs to students in Shawnee and Tulsa. Founded in 1875, it is Oklahoma’s oldest institution of higher learning. Further information regarding St. Gregory’s University can be found at www.stgregorys.edu or by calling 1-888-STREGES.

Villa Teresa School Celebration April 24

Villa Teresa Catholic School will host its annual Spring Soiree (dinner/auction) at Remington Park on Saturday, April 24 from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The auction celebrates 76 years of educational service. Tickets can be purchased for $30 per person. Child care is provided at Villa Teresa School. There will be a silent and live auction and items can be viewed on http://villateresaspring-soiree.shutterfly.com. Please call 232-4286 if you are interested in coming.
Father Pudota Rayanna washes the feet of the faithful on Holy Thursday. Father Rayanna is associate pastor at Sacred Heart, Oklahoma City. Right center, Father Thomas O’Toole of Saint Mary Church in Ardmore celebrates Easter Vigil Mass as the Church gains new members. Above right, students at All Saints School in Norman, Alex Lopez portraying Christ and Madison Splitt as Veronica, take part in the Good Friday re-enactment of the crucifixion of Christ. At far right, Mikey Isaacs at Saint Joseph Church in Norman celebrates at the Easter Vigil. Norman photos courtesy of Teresa Bragg.
The pro-life movement recently suffered a discouraging setback during efforts to provide life-affirming health care to millions of uninsured Americans. The Catholic bishops and others fought hard for many months to retain conscience rights and the longstanding ban against federal funding of elective abortions. The final health care reform law, passed narrowly against the bishops' opposition, fails to meet these widely supported, fundamental moral requirements.

If not changed, the law will, for the first time in over 30 years, subsidize abortions throughout the nine months of pregnancy — for any reason — and force Americans to be complicit in the direct taking of innocent life. Many who conscientiously object to abortion will be forced to pay for others' abortions through their insurance premiums or taxes.

No amount of good in the new law will ever justify the moral evil of facilitating the destruction of precious human life. Not “precious” in just a poetic, pastel, feel-good sense as in the popular “Precious Moments” figurines, and not “precious” like works of art that command a lot of money, but “precious” in the ultimate sense: being of such inestimable value that it cannot be put on a scale and traded off for other goods — even other goods honoring the dignity of the human person. God creates persons to live eternally and so we cannot and must not be put on a cost-benefit scale. The deliberate destruction of innocent human life at its most defenseless stage is never, under any circumstances, justifiable.

The debate over how best to improve and expand health care services to all should never have hinged on the issue of abortion funding. Abortion is not health care, because killing is not healing. Inclusion of abortion was a huge and ultimately tragic obstacle to authentic reform that would honor all principles of Catholic social teaching.

The bishops repeatedly called for principled reform that puts the needs of the poor and the unborn first. Commenting on the proposed bill, Cardinal Francis George, as president of the bishops conference, called abortion funding “too high a price” for much-needed reform. The Catholic faithful and our pro-life friends agreed. Since the debate began, over a million e-mails were sent to Congress through www.usccb.org/action alone. Unfortunately, despite our prayers, countless phone calls, faxes and letters, our voices were not heeded by those in power.

What do we do now? As a movement, we are bruised but not broken. Our hope in the Resurrection is real as we seek the grace to regroup and unite in efforts to protect all human life from conception to natural death. We will work to fix the serious problems in the new health care law. The Hyde Amendment, which bans federal abortion funding through the appropriations process, must be defended. States are also exploring legislation to exclude abortion from new health coverage within their borders.

Abortion rates go up when the government funds abortions. So we need to work twice as hard to reduce the number of abortions, help pregnant women feel free to choose life, educate the public on the physical and emotional consequences of abortion, and share God's mercy with those women and men who have an abortion in their past. Finally, we must recommit ourselves to prayer for our nation, that those in authority will use their power to defend the defenseless: unborn children and all who are vulnerable at any stage of life.

Deirdre A. McQuade is assistant director for Policy & Communications at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. For more information on the bishops pro-life activities, please visit www.usccb.org/prolife.
In recent years, some medical practitioners have suggested that death from dehydration may not be such an unpleasant way for patients to die. This conclusion, however, remains rather doubtful. Thirst and appetite are very primal drives, and anyone who has ever done a voluntary fast knows well the discomfort that arises from even a single day of fasting. Thus, we ought to consistently maintain a presumption in favor of providing nutrition and hydration to patients in our care, using all reasonable and effective (or “proportionate”) means at our disposal to nourish and hydrate such patients, whether by spoon-feeding or by tube feeding.

The intense pains of dehydration and starvation have been graphically described by patients who were previously in a so-called “vegetative state” and had their feeding tubes withdrawn.

Kate Adamson, who was in a vegetative state due to a stroke and later came out of it, recounted her experience in an article she wrote:

I was half listening to a talk radio broadcast about a 40-year-old woman in Florida, Terri Schiavo, who was going to be starved to death. This woman had been disconnected from her feeding tube. She was without food for eight days. Suddenly the broadcasters had my full attention. When I was paralyzed, I, too, had a feeding tube disconnected for eight days and I knew what that felt like. Her husband had been saying that being starved was a relatively painless way to go. I nearly shouted at the radio dial, “That is not true. That is a lie. You ought to try it!”

When Adamson was interviewed on The O’Reilly Factor, she provided further details:

When the feeding tube was turned off for eight days, I thought I was going insane. I was screaming out in my mind, “Don’t you know I need to eat?” I just wanted something. The fact that I had nothing, the hunger pains overrode every thought I had.

O’Reilly: So you were feeling pain when they removed your tube?

Adamson: Yes. Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. To say that — especially when Michael [Schiavo] on national TV mentioned last week that it’s a pretty painless thing to have the feeding tube removed — it is the exact opposite. It was sheer torture, Bill.

Elsewhere, she described the obsessive thirst she felt when her feeding tube was removed:

I craved anything to drink. Anything. I obsessively visualized drinking from a huge bottle of orange Gatorade. And I hate orange Gatorade.

When patients with dementia are brought to the hospital because they can no longer swallow, some physicians will be aggressively persuading the family not to give an IV or put in a G-tube. Patients in a vegetative state are clearly a “voiceless” population of humans, unable to advocate for themselves. Another voiceless group includes patients facing dementia. Because individuals with dementia are apparently “out of it,” they may also be unable to communicate coherently regarding any discomfort or pain they may experience. The assumption may be too facilely made by health care professionals that because people are demented, they no longer can truly experience suffering, pain, hunger or thirst.

When patients with dementia are brought to the hospital because they can no longer swallow, some physicians will be aggressively persuading the family not to give an IV or put in a G-tube. They may suggest that it will only prolong the person’s death, forcing him or her to live a “low quality of life.” In one such scenario that I am aware of, a physician indicated to the family that if an IV were given, the patient would likely perk back up and live for perhaps another year or two, but, he continued, what would be the point? In a different case, another physician stated that the cause of death would indeed be dehydration and not the patient’s disease, but he still advocated declining an IV so the patient would die. Decisions like these, when assisted hydration would be non-burdensome and effective, are sometimes termed “passive euthanasia.”

When someone dies from dehydration, of course, it is not always an example of passive euthanasia. In some instances, tube feeding will be ineffectical or cause significant complications like vomiting or chronic infections. In these circumstances, declining assisted nutrition or hydration may be a reasonable choice, not with an intention of ending life, but acknowledging that unduly burdensome or ineffective treatments may be legitimately refused.

This hearkens back to statements by both Pope John Paul II in 2004 and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2007 which noted that the administration of food and water (whether by natural or artificial means) to a patient in a “vegetative state” is morally obligatory except when they cannot be assimilated by the patient’s body or cannot be administered to the patient without causing significant physical discomfort. Recognizing that dehydration is a painful way to die serves as a helpful starting point to assist family members in addressing the nutrition and hydration needs of their loved ones who may find themselves in compromised states or approaching the end of life.

Planned Parenthood Exposed By Undercover Video

MILWAUKEE, Wis., (CNA/EWTN News) — A new undercover video from pro-life investigators shows medically inaccurate abortion counseling at a Milwaukee Planned Parenthood clinic. A staffer tells a woman six to eight weeks pregnant that her baby has “no arms, no legs, no heart no head, no brain.”

The video of the taxpayer-funded clinic was released by Live Action.

Claiming that images of abortions are fabricated, the staffer says that an unborn child at six to eight weeks has no “identifiable parts” and is just “fetal matter.”

The staffer also emphasizes the difficulties of adoption and urges the woman to obtain an abortion as soon as possible.

Wisconsin law reportedly requires women to receive medically accurate information before obtaining an abortion.

Live Action president Lila Rose charged that the new footage confirms deceptive practices at Planned Parenthood.

“Planned Parenthood has an abortion-first mentality that is driven both by ideology and the desire for money,” Rose commented. “Since women will often choose against abortion if they learn the scientific facts about the unborn child inside the womb, Planned Parenthood distorts basic facts in an attempt to perform more abortions.”

In December the pro-life group released a video taken at an Appleton, Wis., abortion clinic in which another counselor gives incorrect information. The group has called its effort to document deceptive abortion counseling the Rosa Acuna Project.

Live Action has also staged investigations exposing abortion clinics which do not report suspected cases of statutory rape as required by state law.

The group’s Web site is http://liveaction.org.
...Un momento para Orar

Muy Reverendo Rev. Bl. Wenceslao Beltrán Arzobispo Metropolitano de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City

Sam Miller, quien es un prominente hombre de negocios que practica el judaísmo en Cleveland. El señor Sam Miller no profesa la fe Católica y sigue así...

¿Por qué se enseñan los periodistas en el colegio de los más importantes de los Estados Unidos, de nombre Iglesia Católica?

¿Sabía usted que la Iglesia Católica educa a 2.6 millones de estudiantes cada día, a un costo para la Iglesia de 10 mil millones de dólares y ahorrándole al mismo tiempo a los americanos que pagan impuestos 18 mil millones de dólares?

De estos estudiantes el 92% logró terminar sus estudios con el apoyo del dinero de todos los católicos. La Iglesia cuenta con 230 Colleges y Universidades en los Estados Unidos con un reclutamiento de 700,000 estudiantes.

La Iglesia Católica tiene un sistema de hospitales de 637 que funcionan sin fines de lucro en los cuales se atienden a un de cada cinco personas, (no sólo Católicos) en Estados Unidos.

La prensa es venética

Pero la prensa está ensañada tratando de denigrar totalmente y de cualquier manera a la Iglesia Católica en este país. Han culpado a la Iglesia Católica de la enfermedad de la pedofilia, lo que es igual e irresponsable que injular el adulterio sobre la institución del matrimonio.

¿Dónde están los periodistas que escriben sobre los abusos de los clérigos cuando son miembros de la Iglesia católica? ¿Dónde están los periodistas que escriben sobre los abusos de los clérigos que son miembros de las otras iglesias cristianas? ¿Dónde están los periodistas que escriben sobre los abusos de los clérigos que son miembros de las otras iglesias cristianas?

Mientras que solo el 1.7% del clero Católico han sido encontrados culpables de pedofilia, 10% de los ministros protestantes han sido encontrados culpables de pedofilia. Esto no es un problema de los católicos.

La mayoría de los sacerdotes son felices

Un estudio acerca de los sacerdotes Americanos mostró que la mayoría se encuentran felices desempeñando su sacerdocio y encuentran que era mejor de lo que esperaban, si les presentaran de nuevo la alternativa volverían a escoger ser sacerdotes, con todo y esta campaña detestable que la Iglesia Católica ha estado recibiendo.

La Iglesia Católica está sometida por heridas auto-infligidas. La agonia que los Católicos han sufrido no es necesariamente culpa de la Iglesia. Ustedes han sido damnificados por un pequeño número de sacerdotes desviados, quienes ahora probablemente han sido arrancados. Caminen con sus hombros rectos y su frente en alto. Siéntanse miembros orgullosos de ser miembros de la agencia no gubernamental más importante en los Estados Unidos.

Y luego recuerden lo que dijo el profeta Jeremías: "Permanezcan en los caminos, y busquen y preguntan por las rutas ancestrales, donde se encuentra el bien y caminen por ellas, y encontrarán descanso a sus almas". Defiendan su fe con orgullo y reverencia y comprendan lo que su religión hace por todas las demás religiones. Siéntanse orgullosos de ser Católicos.

La Iglesia Católica es una institución sagrada que los laicos defenderemos

Por Mauro Vanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Con gran asombro como periodista que profesó la fe Católica, me tocó visitar recientemente a Venezuela, allí la Iglesia Católica está siendo atacada, al punto que los sacerdotes en los funerales son hostigados y un entierro de un ser querido es perturbado por gente de mal que odia a la Iglesia Católica. Esta tendencia de odio hacia la Iglesia Católica no pasa solamente en los Estados Unidos, es una campaña orquestada y organizada mundialmente en contra de nuestra Iglesia.

Por lo que todos debemos hacer más que nunca demostrar nuestro apoyo y nuestra fe a nuestra Iglesia Católica, debemos demostrar que estamos unidos, tanto en oración como en acción pacífica, porque sólo así podremos superar esta guerra del mal que no desea otra cosa sino debilitar a nuestra Iglesia y nuestra fe. Llegó la hora de defendernos del mal, con la paz y la fortaleza de Dios bajo los principios de nuestro Catecismo y el Evangelio. Estamos siendo invitados por Dios para que en estos momentos de turbulencias nos unamos en oración y pidamos por la paz para que cese la hostilidad y el rencor en contra de nuestra fe.

No podemos permitir que esos ataques a la Iglesia Católica traten de afectar a nuestra máxima autoridad en la Iglesia, nuestro Santo Padre, el Papa Benedicto XVI. Atacar al Papa y tratar de desmoralizarlo es tratar de amilanar la crédibilidad de nuestra Iglesia Católica,

Pidamos por el Papa y la paz.
Se pronuncia el director del CESNUR

Adelante otro bulo: la carta de 1985 del Cardenal Ratzinger

Por Massimo Introvigne
(Contro studi sulle nuove religioni)

ROMA, (ZENITAL) — El nuevo bulo americano lanzado por la Associated Press contra el Papa. Incluso los medios más hostiles, presionados por los expertos en derecho canónico, han dado marcha atrás. Pero con la consigna del "calumnia, calumnia, que algo quede", a los usuarios más distraídos de los medios de comunicación les quedarán en la cabeza sólo los titulares según los cuales el actual Pontífice en 1985 "protegió a un cura pedófilo".

Para comprender el significado de la carta del 6 de noviembre de 1985 del Cardenal Ratzinger a monseñor John Stephen Cummings (y no "Cummings"), Obispo de Oakland (California) es oportuna alguna sencilla noción de derecho canónico. La pérdida del estado clerical puede suceder (a) por pena comunada por el derecho canónico por delitos particularmente graves; o también (b) por petición del propio sacerdote. Un sacerdote acusado o incluso condenado por pedofilia puede por tanto perder el estado clerical (a) con pena por su delito o también (b) a petición suya, que el cura pedófilo puede tener interés en solicitar por diversos motivos, por ejemplo para escapar de la vigilancia de la Iglesia (la del Estado quizás sea más blanda, como atestiguan muchos casos) o también porque quiere casarse. En el primer caso se castiga al cura pedófilo. En el segundo caso se le hace un favor.

La pena por el delito de pedofilia - el castigo - hasta 2001 era aplicada por cada Diócesis; la competencia pasó a la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe en 2001. El examen de las peticiones de dispensa del estado clerical - el favor - en cambio ya en 1985 era competencia de la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe.

En 1985 Stephen Miller Kiesle, sacerdote acusado de abusos a menores, es parte en dos procedimientos diversos. El primero tiene que ver con la investigación canónica susceptable de llevar a la dimisión del estado clerical de Kiesle como pena por los abusos cometidos. Esta investigación es de estricta competencia de la Congregación de la Diócesis. La Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe ni tiene que ver ni se ocupa de ello. El segundo y distinto procedimiento tiene que ver con la petición del propio Kiesle de una dispensa del estado clerical. Esta petición llega a la mesa de la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe la cual, por una presión que tiene valor de reglamento, de hecho concede la dispensa a quien no haya cumplido los cuatro años. Kiesle tiene treinta y ocho y el Obispo Cummings piensa que la Congregación que ha dado una excepción para que, acogiendo la petición de Kiesle de ser reducido al estado laical a petición suya, Roma sanciona a la diócesis de Oakland del apto de tener que proseguir en la investigación penal por los abusos "investigación que, precisamente, en 1985 - antes de las modificaciones procesales de 2001 - era de estricta competencia de la diócesis y sobre la que la Congregación dirigida por el cardenal Ratzinger no podía intervenir", si la Congregación hubiese aceptado la petición de Kiesle no habría "castigado" al sacerdote, sino que le habría hecho un favor: de hecho Kiesle quedaría dado el sacerdocio porque quería casarse. Es muy importante destacar la acogida de una petición de dispensa del estado clerical, un beneficio que dirigió por el bien de la Iglesia se debe respetar. Si Roma le ha concedido una dispensa al sacerdote, no permite acoger su petición de dispensa del estado clerical. "Considerando el bien universal de la Iglesia" - lo que evidentemente no significa "para evitar escándalos" (del caso de abusos sexuales atribuidos a Kiesle se había hablado ampliamente en California, y el escándalo ya se había producido) sino "para no creer en un procedente que abriría la puerta a muchas otras peticiones de dispensa de sacerdotes de menos de cuatro años" - el Cardenal Ratzinger explica al obispo que se deberá esperar prudentemente, como siempre sucede en el caso de peticiones de sacerdotes que no han cumplido el cuadragésimo año de edad. Mientras tanto la diócesis de Oakland podrá naturalmente proseguir la diversa investigación penal susceptible de llevar a Kiesle a la dimisión del estado clerical o a petición suya si como pena por los abusos cometidos. Mientras la diócesis de Oakland seguirá investigando a Kiesle - y le excluirá de las actividades del ministerio - en 1987 el sacerdote cumplió cuarenta años.

En este punto, como es habitual, la Congregación acoge su petición de reducción al estado laical. Kiesle deja el ejercicio del ministerio sacerdotal y se casa. Es bien conocido que las autoridades de la policía como personalidad perturbada y sospechosa de abusos a menores.

Las andanzas de Kiesle posteriores a 1987 evidentemente no implican ninguna responsabilidad de la Iglesia, sino sólo de los tribunales civiles y de la policía.

Si ha llevado a cabo nuevos abusos, la culpa no es de la Iglesia - que Kiesle había abandonado y que ya no tenía ninguna potestad para vigilarle - sino de las autoridades civiles. Como habría rechazado la petición de un cura sospechoso de pedofilia, el cual pretendía casarse, presentada como petición de un favor en su interés equivalva a "proteger a un cura pedófilo", es algo que quizás debería explicarnos la Associated Press.

La Santa Sede publica una guía sobre el procedimiento en casos de abusos

VATICANO (ZENITAL) — La Santa Sede ofrece una Guía en la web para comprender los procedimientos básicos para la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe ante casos de denuncias por abusos sexuales. Así lo informa Radio Vaticana: "no es un nuevo documento, sino un resumen de los procedimientos operativos ya definidos, que puede ser de ayuda para laicos y no canónicos" a la hora de comprender la actuación de la Congregación.

Los procedimientos se resumen, explica la emisora pontificia, "al Motu Proprio Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela (MP SST) del 30 de abril de 2001 y al Código de Derecho Canónico de 1983. Este procedimiento, que está en vigor desde 2001, comienza cuando una diócesis indica sobre la sospecha de abusos sexuales por parte de un religioso. Cuando la sospecha resulta verosímil, el caso se traslada a la Congregación. "El Obispo local transmite toda la información necesaria, a la Congregación y expresa su propia opinión sobre los procedimientos a seguir y las medidas a adoptar en breve y a largo plazo. Siempre debe tomarse según las disposiciones del derecho civil en relación con la denuncia de esos crímenes por las autoridades civiles". Desde la fase preliminar y hasta la conclusión del caso, el obispo puede tomar medidas preventivas.

"En realidad, al Obispo se le confiere siempre el poder de tutelar a los niños limitando las actividades de cualquier sacerdote de su diócesis", se "antes, durante o después del procedimiento". Respecto al procedimiento, la Congregación estudia el caso y pide, si es necesario, informaciones suplementarias. La Congregación "puede autorizar al obispo local a instruir un procedimiento penal judicial ante un tribunal eclesiástico local". También puede autorizar a instruir un proceso penal administrativo. Para apurar las sentencias emitidas por un tribunal eclesiástico, el sacerdote debe hacerlo ante la Congregación, cuya sentencia será inapelable. Ambos procedimientos - judicial y administrativo - pueden comportar un cierto número de penas canónicas, incluyendo la dimisión del estado clerical. En casos de especial gravedad, en abusos de menores o cuando las pruebas sean "aplantables", la Congregación puede llevar esto directamente al Papa, pidiéndole que emita un decreto, que será inapelable, de dimisión del estado clerical. También se presentan al Papa los casos de sacerdotes que, conscientes de los crímenes cometidos, pidan ser dispuestos. En el caso de que el sacerdote acusado haya admitido sus crímenes y haya aceptado llevar una vida de oración y penitencia, la Congregación autoriza al Obispo a emitir un decreto que prohíba o limite el ministerio público del sacerdote. Si este decreto es violado, cabe la dimisión del estado clerical."
Jobs Box

Mount St. Mary Catholic High School (Oklahoma City) is currently seeking qualified candidates in the following coaching fields for the 2010-2011 school year: cross country, boys basketball assistant, track, football assistant with offensive line and/or receivers experience, and soccer assistant. Teaching fields are chemistry with experience in AP and Pre-AP, social studies and physical education. Applicants can fax letter of interest, resume and copy of teaching certificate to Talita DeNegri at (405) 631-9209 or by e-mail to tdenegri@mountstmary.org. EOE

Youth - Young Adult Minister

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

Teacher Openings

Villa Teresa Catholic School has an opening in Learning Center for 3-year-olds. The applicant must have an early childhood certification. This position is a 12-month commitment. Please send resume to Sister Veronica Higgins and call for an interview (232-4286).

Part-Time Organist Needed

St. Philip Neri Catholic Church is in need of an organist to play for our 5 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass. Must meet with cantor at 4:30 for brief rehearsal. The candidate must be a proficient sightreader and possess a level of playing skill to confidently lead an attendance of 300 in the singing of hymns, psalm and other liturgical music. Knowledge of the Catholic liturgy is preferable but not required. Submit a resume and be prepared to play a work of your choice to demonstrate your skill. Contact Bernard Jones at 737-4476 Ext. 123 or bernard_jones@me.com to arrange an interview/audition. - SPN has a Rogers Trillium 958 three manual organ.

LPN/RN Openings

The Center of Family Love in Okarche has immediate openings for the following: LPN/RN - Daytime hours Monday through Friday. Administrator's license a plus. Must have excellent organizational, administrative and management skills. To apply, call 263-4658, fax 263-4718, e-mail alemke@cflinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche, Okla. 73762. EOE

Francois Boda is the boys and girls soccer head coach at Mount St. Mary Catholic High School. Francois is also a business and language teacher at MSM. He has a unique background, having worked in the business world for many years, so that one day he could retire and fulfill his dream of teaching. He is also an avid athlete who pushes students to their limits through his coaching, but also through the example he sets through his own actions. Boda returned from the World Masters Championship in Kamloops, British Columbia, on March 5, where he competed for Team U.S.A. While in the championship, Francois won the bronze medal in the 60-meter dash and took fourth place in the 200-meter dash. Coach Boda would have competed in a third event, but chose to return home early so he could coach at his MSM soccer team’s scrimmages. Francois returning home early is a perfect illustration of the kind of teacher, coach, but most of all example, he is to the Mount St. Mary community. Francois says that he continues to run and compete because he knows it inspires the students to push for more in life. Mount St. Mary Catholic High School is very thankful to have Francois as a role model for its Rocket community.
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<th>APRIL</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>18 Pilgrimage Sunday,</strong> Mass begins at 11 a.m. and includes blessing of the sick and blessing of the children, noon lunch, 1 p.m. Novena prayers to Infant Jesus of Prague, Litany of the Infant Jesus and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague is located in St. Wenceslaus Church at 304 Jim Thorpe Blvd. in Prague. From I-40, take exit 200 north 7 miles on SH 99/377; or from I-44, take Stroud exit south 18 miles on SH 99/377. (405) 567-3080 or shrineofinfantjesus.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>18 The Community of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus</strong> - Oklahoma Community and Province of St. Therese meets at St. Joseph Carmelite Monastery in Piedmont from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call Susan Staudt at (405) 282-6624 or Sister Silvia Negrete at (405) 232-7926.</td>
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<td><strong>18 The Secular Franciscan Order of St. Francis Fraternity</strong> meets at 1:15 p.m. at St. Anthony’s Hospital Chapel. For more information, call Jim Disbrow at 830-8688.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>18 After offering monthly Taize Prayer</strong> for seven years, the Benedictine Sisters of Red Plains Spirituality Center will be hosting their final service on Sunday, April 18 at 6:30 p.m. You are welcome to join us for this evening of singing, readings and quiet reflection. Please call (405) 373-4565 if you plan to attend.</td>
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<td><strong>20 Eucharistic Adoration</strong> at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western, every Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to noon. All are welcome.</td>
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<td><strong>22 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</strong> at Epiphany Parish, in the chapel every Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and daily (M,T,W,F) from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. All are welcome. Epiphany is located at 7336 W. Britton Road, Oklahoma City 73132.</td>
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<td><strong>22 RCIA Coordinators discussion group</strong> will take place at 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church in Oklahoma City. To RSVP, contact Rosa Zapata at (405) 634-2458, or at <a href="mailto:sacredheartrosamz@cox.net">sacredheartrosamz@cox.net</a>. For more information, contact Judy Reilly, pastoral associate, at (405) 722-2110 Ext 125 or <a href="mailto:jreilly@epiphanyokc.com">jreilly@epiphanyokc.com</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>23 Catholic Adult Singles ages 35-60.</strong> Let’s go to the Jazz Lab in Edmond! The band playing is “Souled Out.” Cost is $12, you pay at the door. We will meet at 7 p.m. to eat dinner there. RSVP to Mary at <a href="mailto:marylacher@consultant.com">marylacher@consultant.com</a> or call her at 401-4105 so tickets can be reserved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24 EASTER PRAYER RETREAT,</strong> from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with Joanne Yankauskis, OSB. Immerse yourself in the Easter Mysteries during this season of Mystagogia. Place: Library at Red Plains Spirituality Center. Call (405) 373-0804 to register. Fee: $35 ($10 deposit). Bring a sack lunch.</td>
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## Fr. Mitch Pacwa to Speak On Discerning God’s Will at Christ The King

**What is God calling you to do?** How do you interpret whether or not He may be sending you a sign? How do you listen to what God is trying to tell you? Learn more about “Discernment: Identifying God's Will in Daily Life” at Christ the King’s Spring Retreat, April 30-May 1, 2010.

On Friday evening at 7 p.m. we will gather in the Church for the first of three talks by Father Mitch Pacwa, S.J., president of Ignatius Productions. His informative and entertaining presentation offers guidelines for a deeper understanding of God’s will, from vocationial discernment to everyday decisions, and offers suggestions about how we can help our children discern God’s will for their lives.

Saturday morning, Father Pacwa will begin the day with Mass at 9 a.m. (does not fulfill Sunday Obligation). All are welcome. The Spring Retreat will continue with Father Pacwa’s second talk at 10:30 a.m. We will break for lunch at noon, after the Angelus and a meal-time prayer. There will be a presentation of Father Pacwa’s Reformation Project during the lunch hour. Participants may order a box lunch for $10. Registration for the retreat is appreciated but not required (unless ordering a box lunch).

After lunch, we will gather for Father Pacwa’s third and final talk at 1:30 p.m. The day will conclude with a short “meet and greet” at 2:30 and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 3 p.m. Watch your Sunday bulletins for more details.

Father Pacwa received his B.A. in philosophy and theology from the University of Detroit, summa cum laude. He was ordained a Catholic priest in 1976 with the Society of Jesus, continuing his studies with a master of divinity and S.T.B. from the Jesuit School of Theology of Loyola University, magna cum laude. At Vanderbilt University, he received his master of arts, Ph.D., in Old Testament.

Father Pacwa has taught at the high school, university and seminary levels. Being a well-known biblical scholar, he has lectured at hundreds of conferences and churches around the world and has appeared and hosted international radio and television programs. He is best known for his appearances on EWTN.

Father Pacwa is fluent in 12 languages and has a unique understanding of the peoples and cultures of the Middle East. Father's extensive travels throughout the Middle East, Europe and the Holy Land have inspired him to write the “Holy Land Prayer Book,” which has been published by his own apostolate, Ignatius Productions, and can be used as a prayer book guide for any pilgrim traveling to the Holy Land. Father Pacwa also has the privilege of being bi-ritual, which means he can also celebrate the Maronite Mass of the Eastern Catholic Church.

To register for our Spring Retreat with Father Mitch Pacwa, contact Cindy Rice at 843-4766 or cindy@ckokc.org. You may also register online by visiting the Formation page of the parish Web site at www.ckokc.org.
And the Waving
Wheat...

Rother Farm Provides Seed for St. Charles Community Garden

By Monica Knudsen
For The Sooner Catholic

The wheat harvest was central to young Stanley Rother's life when he was growing up on his family's farm in Okarche. His brother, Tom, remembers Stan as a talented helping hand, who was entrusted with running the farm's combine at an early age. As a priest and missionary, Father Stanley Rother took that formative experience with him to Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, and taught the Tzutuhil Mayan Indians who lived there to grow wheat.

Last fall, Tom Rother and his wife, Marty, who still work the family's farm, generously donated winter wheat and alfalfa seeds to the St. Charles Community Garden. The Rothers and Father Stan's cousins, Harold and Carolyn Wittrock, were present at St. Charles Borromeo on Sept. 8 for a celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, which is also the traditional day for the liturgical blessing of seeds. The seeds were blessed during the Mass, and planted in raised beds in mid-September. The wheat will be harvested in June.

The wheat has grown to a height of about 1 foot as of early April. It survived the severe winter weather and now provides a small spot of bright green in the emerging spring landscape.

The harvest will be used for bouquets for classes at St. Charles School as a visible reminder of Father Rother's life and sacrifice, for altar arrangements, and for Holy Communion bread. A sign in the garden tells of Father Rother's life and death. He was murdered on July 28, 1981, after serving as a parish priest for 13 years in a time of civil war in Guatemala. His Cause for Canonization was formally commissioned in 2006.

Besides the wheat, volunteers who work the garden will grow produce to add to the non-perishable groceries provided by the Dorothy Day Center. The all-volunteer St. Charles ministry provides emergency food aid for about 1,000 people per month. A little less than half of those are children.

The garden bounty is also available to anyone who might like fresh vegetables for their own table. Our garden is an oasis; a place to rest and pray as well. Comfortable chairs are available for visitors. A box next to the compost bin contains prayer materials. In mid-summer, it is a peaceful place to observe butterflies and hummingbirds visiting the flowers and feeders.

The St. Charles Community Garden is located next to the Dorothy Day Center on State Street, one block south of NW 50th and one block east of Grove, on the southeast corner of the church property.