Recently, the Oklahoma House and Senate passed an important and essential pro-life bill, SB 714. SB 714 prohibits state agencies from performing or assisting in abortions and provides that it is unlawful for any funds received or controlled by the state to be used to encourage a woman to have an abortion. The bill now awaits the governor’s signature. Gov. Henry’s signature on SB 714 is crucial in providing a moral leadership that recognizes and, moreover, affirms the inviolability of human life.

As bishops, we write to remind the governor and the faithful of the sacredness of all human life. Pope Benedict XVI recently noted that the duty to respect the dignity of each human being means that the person cannot be disposed of at will. Respect for the right to life at every stage firmly establishes that all life is a gift. During his pontificate, Pope John Paul II challenged us to preach the liberating message of Jesus Christ, the words of life. He encouraged us to use our prophetic witness as an urgent and essential service, not just to the Catholic community but also to the whole human family. Pope John Paul reminded us that this message of the sanctity of life is to be proclaimed and avowed with dauntless fidelity to the people of every age and culture.

Belief in the dignity of the human person provides a necessary foundation for a moral vision for society. We must not only preach the value and inviolability of human life, however, we must affirmatively act to ensure that all life is protected, including that of the unborn. Now is the time to protect the unborn. We urge Gov. Henry to sign SB 714 into law affirming, celebrating and embracing the life and dignity of all God’s children.

The Catholic hospitals in the state of Oklahoma, namely Saint Francis Hospital and Saint John Medical Center with headquarters in Tulsa and Mercy Health Center and Saint Anthony Hospital with headquarters in Oklahoma City, concur with this statement.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This letter was faxed to Gov. Brad Henry on April 14. Archbishop Beltran and Bishop Slattery sent the letter encouraging the governor to sign Senate Bill 714. On April 18, Gov. Henry vetoed SB 714.
The Good News

O

n the First Sunday of Lent, the Cathedral of Our Lady was overflowing with people for three separate services for the Rite of Election. Included in those crowds were about 245 catechumens and another 385 candidates. This meant that more than 600 people were preparing then to enter the Church at the Easter Vigil services throughout our Archdiocese. Almost all those who were at the Rite of Election have now been baptized and/or celebrated Confirmation and received Holy Communion.

I happily welcome all who joined the Church this Easter and I remind you of the special Mass I have scheduled for you, your families and friends here at the Catholic Pastoral Center at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 29.

It is a real blessing that so many people have found their way into full membership in our Catholic Church. To each of you, I extend congratulations and encouragement to live the fullness of our Catholic faith. Don’t ever lose the zeal and enthusiasm you now possess. God has called you, blessed you and received you into the Church. Now it is up to each of you to bring to perfection this good work the Lord has begun in you.

The importance of a vibrant RCIA program in every parish is much more than an option. Since, through the RCIA, people are led into the Church or RCIA, people are led into the Church or have already begun their RCIA schedule for next year. Others should do so real soon. Intellectually, psychologically and spiritually, human beings need the better part of a year for the immediate preparation to enter the Catholic Church. No one should take such an important step unless they are adequately prepared and convinced of the Church’s teachings and demands. No one can ever join the Church unless they do so freely and with conviction.

Evangelization is the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus. Every Catholic person, having received and accepted the Good News, is now obliged to live it and to share it. With that grave obligation in mind, I wish to extend a happy challenge to every Catholic person of this Archdiocese. I challenge you personally to invite someone who is not now an active member of the Catholic Church to come and enroll in your parish’s RCIA program! Then, instead of counting new members in the hundreds for next year’s Easter Vigil, we could be counting in the thousands.

In extending this challenge, I am not focusing on numbers. Rather, I wish to emphasize the reality of the truth and value of our Catholic faith. If we believe that Jesus is Lord and that He established the Church, then we should want to bring family, friends and associates to share in this Good News. If we are grateful to God for the gift of faith, then we should desire to offer this same gift to others. If we believe in the truth of the Catholic Church and find our liturgical practices to be meaningful, we certainly would want to share this with others. In a spirit of gratitude and faith and with great joy, let each of us give some serious thought to this opportunity to evangelize, to share the Good News of Jesus with others, to bring others to come to know, love and serve the Lord.

Call your parish office soon to get the schedule for the next RCIA sessions. Broach the subject with your family members and friends. Volunteer to attend with your invited guests so they will feel more welcome and encouraged. Then, someday, when you stand before the Lord, you will hear Him say: “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

... An Easter Challenge!

Evangelization is the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus. Every Catholic person, having received and accepted the Good News, is now obliged to live it and to share it.

2007 Clergy Assignments

Effective June 19, 2007
Pastors
Reverend Timothy M. Fuller, Saint Philip Neri Church, Midwest City
Reverend James A. Goin, Holy Name Church, Chickasha
Reverend Kirk S. Larkin, Holy Family Church, Lawton
Reverend B.D. Lawrence, Sacred Heart Church, Alva; Saint Cornelius Church, Cherokee; Our Mother of Mercy Church, Waynoka
Reverend Prabhakar Kalivea, Saint Helen Church, Frederick; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Grandfield; Saint Patrick Church, Walters
Reverend Charles R. Murphy, Saint Francis Church, OKC
Reverend Madineni Prakash, Saint Ann Church, Elgin; Mother of Sorrows Church, Apache; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Sterling
Reverend Richard D. Stansberry, Christ the King Church, OKC

Associate Pastor
Reverend Chinnapareddy Konkala, Saint Mary Church, Ponca City

Retirement
Reverend Donald C. Moore, residence at Saint Ann Nursing Home
Reverend Charles H. Schettler, residence at Saint Francis Church
Reverend Elmer C. Schwarz, residence at Catholic Pastoral Center

Special Assignment
Reverend Richard D. Stansberry, Judicial Vicar, Archdiocesan Tribunal

Sabbatical
Reverend Joseph R. Ross (seven months)

Effective July 2, 2007
Pastor
Reverend Michael Nguyen, Saint Anthony Church, Okoene; Saint Ann Church, Fairview; Saint Thomas Church, Seiling

Effective January 15, 2008
Pastor
Reverend Joseph R. Ross, Blessed Sacrament Church, Lawton

Retirement
Reverend James D.M. Stafford, residence, Blessed Sacrament Church

The Good News

The newspaper is not responsible for unsolicited material.

Copyright © 2007 Sooner Catholic

Subscription rate: $20 per year for all who are not members of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Periodical postage paid at Oklahoma City, OK 73125.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Sooner Catholic, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, OK 73123.

Visit us online through the Archdiocesan Web Page at www.catharchdioceseokc.org.

The Sooner Catholic is published biweekly except for once in July and twice in December by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

The Sooner Catholic is supported through the Archdiocesan Development Fund

Most Reverend Eusebius J. Beltran Archbishop of Oklahoma City

Publisher
Ray Dyer

Editor
Sean Dyer

Manager
Cara Koenig

Technology/Photography
Mauro Yanez

Hispanic Editor
Eileen Dugan

Staff Writer
Geraldine Hardin

Office
7501 Northwest Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
(405) 721-1810 Fax: (405) 721-5210
e-mail: rdyer@catharchdioceseokc.org
Mailing Address
P.O. Box 32180
Oklahoma City, OK 73123
Let’s Set the Record Straight on Abortion Bill

I wish to respond to Dr. Eli Reshef’s op-ed piece printed April 14 on Page 10 of The Oklahoman titled “Henry Should Veto SB 714.”

With all due respect to my colleague Dr. Reshef, his emotional editorial regarding Senate Bill 714 is full of factual errors and does not reflect the views of the entire membership of the Oklahoma Ob/Gyn Society, nor the Oklahoma State Medical Association.

1. Pregnant women will not be forced to carry children against their will. Abortion is still available through private providers in the state of Oklahoma. The bill seeks to terminate the pregnancy of a female known to be pregnant” (p. 3, line 14). This makes it crystal clear that the use of birth control or the “morning-after pill” would not be defined as abortion. Nor does the bill redefine miscarriage or when life begins.

6. The underprivileged, especially American Indians, blacks and Latinos, who have a genetically higher risk of diabetes, per Dr. Reshef, have prenatal care available to them at much less cost than the underinsured and uninsured who also have risk of diabetes, hypertension and substance abuse. Simply having such conditions does not mean that a child conceived will be affected and require termination.

Medicaid already pays for abortions only to save the life of the mother, or of the “morning-after pill.” In fact, it amends our statutory definition of abortion to say “intentionally to terminate the pregnancy of a female known to be pregnant” (p. 3, line 14). This makes it crystal clear that the use of birth control or the “morning-after pill” would not be defined as abortion. Nor does the bill redefine miscarriage or when life begins.

Pro-Life Supporters See ‘Ray of Hope’ in High Court Ruling

NEW YORK (Zenit.org) — Catholic dioceses and organizations welcomed what many are calling the pro-life movement’s first significant victory in the nation’s highest court in 34 years.

On April 18, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a 5-4 decision to uphold a federal ban on partial birth abortion.

California bishops hailed the decision, calling it a “ray of hope […] for the nation and for all of us striving to promote respect for life, including life of the unborn.”

“It has been over 34 years since the U.S. Supreme Court created the constitutional right to abortion-on-demand, thereby invalidating all existing state laws which banned or curtailed the practice,” the bishops explained. “In 2003, Congress passed an act which banned the ‘partial birth’ abortion procedure — resulting in lawsuits by abortion proponents challenging its constitutionality in the federal district courts.

“Although the ban was ruled unconstitutional in all the lower court decisions, the U.S. Supreme Court’s Gonzales vs. Carhart reverses all of those decisions, and affirms the constitutionality of the federal Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.”

President George Bush also praised the decision. “The Supreme Court’s decision is an affirmation of the progress we have made over the past six years in protecting human dignity and upholding the sanctity of life,” Bush said. “We will continue to work for the day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law.”

Sane and sound

“The Supreme Court decision is important for two different reasons,” said Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver. “First, it’s a sane and sound ruling on its own merits. Second, if it implies better court reasoning on abortion and related issues in the future, that’s good news for the whole effort to protect human life.”

Bishop Victor Galeone, moderator for the Respect Life Committee of the Florida Catholic Conference, lauded the decision, saying that the “court recognized the truth long proclaimed
Parish Leads Way in Help for Domestic Violence

Organizers Plan to Implement Program Throughout Archdiocese

ELK CITY — Saint Matthew’s is the first Catholic parish in the archdiocese to begin developing a program designed to battle domestic violence.

Safe Place Faith Community, sponsored by the Office of Family Life, began March 24 at Saint Matthew. The Office of Family Life, along with the state Attorney General’s Office Special Victims Unit and the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, are coordinating and implementing this new first responder program, based on the U.S. bishops document, “When I Call for Help.” The plan is to develop the program throughout the archdiocese.

Father Carl Janocha, pastor at Saint Matthew, said the parish is “on fire” to get this program started in Elk City.

“There is a mortal sin infecting society today,” he said, referring to domestic violence. “It is a mortal sin against God and God’s creation. It affects women, men and children. We all must take a part in a ministry to put an end to this mortal sin aimed at society.”

The parishioners responded by attending training to become first responders in domestic violence situations. With the training, they will be able to offer assistance, a listening ear, encouragement and referrals to agencies within the community to assist victims, offer help for those who abuse and educate to help prevention.

Kimberli Motley from the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is the new volunteer coordinator for the program. She has worked in the past with domestic violence programs in Tennessee and was a spokeswoman for United Way and Tennessee Valley Authority and Rural Tennessee School Systems. She also has been a court-appointed special advocate in severe child abuse cases in Oklahoma.

Trainings are scheduled throughout the archdiocese. The next training will be June 2 at Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond. All parishes and other faith communities are invited.

Maker’s Mark

Never Underestimate Your True Value in This World

“Antiques Roadshow” catches ordinary people in an endearing position: their nerve-racking television debut. They tend to be talkative and made-up, dressed in coral, spattered in rouge and framed in fluffed-up curls.

Then an appraiser delivers the news that they’re richer than they thought they were. Substantially richer.

The poised persons they were trying to project snaps, giving way to a Macaulay Culkin face and homespun expressions such as “Oh my lanta” or “Egads!”

Some can’t fathom the dollar value, repeating “You’re kidding!” in a stunned daze. Others focus on one fact to navigate through their shock. For one man, that was the handle of his sword, which, evidently, was made of rhinoceros horn. “The most amazing thing is the rhinoceros!” he exclaimed. “I thought that was plastic!”

Now in its 11th season, PBS’ “Roadshow” is currently being filmed in Omaha, which should be fertile ground for granny curls and “my lantas.” It’s one of a few reality TV shows that stimulates rather than saps brain cells. It’s packed with obscure tidbits.

“This artist always painted a blue bird in the upper right corner of his landscapes. This is the only one with a crow in the corner, which increases its value.”

Anything can be rendered fascinating and valuable on “Roadshow.” An ashtray. A pocket watch. A pillowcase. You never know how it was stitched — or who drooled on it.

Once I watched an ugly mahogany chair yield an astonishing appraisal. Its back was unusually long and skinny. But the bottom bore the letters RX, “the maker’s mark,” the appraiser said, and the maker was a famous artist.

That phrase lingered in my mind long after I turned off the TV: “the maker’s mark.”

We each bear the maker’s mark, and our maker is the most famous artist of all time. In six days, he created Niagara Falls and the Grand Canyon. And the original “Starry Night” that Van Gogh later ripped off.

We are each unique, a limited edition, one out of one. You know what that does to the value of the art.

It’s important that we keep

continued on page 15
Language of ‘Love Thy Neighbor’

Mount Programs Help Build Bridges to a Better Future

By Eileen Dugan
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — For the past three years, Mount Saint Mary High School has reached out into its surrounding neighborhood and provided English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for those whose native language is not English. The oldest high school in Oklahoma is also offering General Education Development (GED) classes for those who have not yet graduated from high school. And for the past year, MSM has also been providing citizenship classes.

“The response to the ESL classes has been great! In the last year, we have had a 143 percent increase in enrollment. In the three years of the program, we have taught well over 1,200 students. In last January’s ESL class, we had 163 students enrolled,” said Beatriz Meyer, coordinator of the program.

“The ESL classes are composed of mostly Spanish speakers because the community that surrounds Mount Saint Mary High School is Spanish, and the goal of the program is to serve the surrounding neighborhood,” Meyer said.

Although a minimal fee is charged for the ESL and citizenship classes, the bulk of the cost for the program is paid for with donations from the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine’s Legacy and various organizations and foundations like the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

“Originally, we did not charge for the classes, but now we charge a nominal fee. The money brought in from the student fees helps with attendance, people have an investment in the classes, and it helps defray the cost of the copies used in the classrooms,” Meyer said.

Seven bilingual, English/Spanish, teachers lead the ESL classes. Four different levels of English as a Second Language are offered: Basic I, Basic II, Intermediate and Advanced.

“Anybody can take the classes. Most people come from the neighborhood and Oklahoma City, but we have people coming from Edmond, Yukon, Midwest City and as far away as Purcell,” Meyer said. “There is no age limit. We have had children as young as 10 attend. We also have people in their senior years. We don’t ask them how old they are.”

The ESL classes taught at the Mount are mainly conversational.

Those who do not know what level English class they should take can choose to take an evaluation test to help them decide, but the test is strictly optional. It is not necessary to take a test to enter an ESL class at MSM. Many students start with the easiest class, Basic English I, and work their way through to the more difficult courses.

“If the students want to, they can take a test before beginning an ESL class and then take a self-evaluation at the end of the course to see how much they have improved. They can also take the same class over again, if they choose, for they are not only learning a language, we want them to be confident to speak it,” Meyer said.

ESL classes are given at MSM every eight weeks. The most recent class began on April 3 and ends May 24. A second class will begin June 5 and go through July 26.

GED classes are open to anybody 16 years of age or older who has dropped out of high school. The classes are individually designed and focus on the student’s weakest subjects so they can learn the material they do not know and pass the GED test. According to Meyer, “It does not matter how long a person has been out of high school. Some people in the class are in their 30s and 40s.”

GED classes are scheduled during the regular school year from September to May. New students can join the class at any time.

Although GED classes are free, it costs $45 to take the GED test. The schedule for taking the GED test is available from the Adult Learning Center, where the test is administered.

Road to Citizenship

Anyone who is eligible to become a U.S. citizen may take citizenship classes at MSM. These citizenship classes at the Mount are fairly new. They started in May 2006.

To become a citizen, after fulfilling several other requirements, a person must have an interview with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (formerly the INS) and pass the citizenship test. The citizenship classes at the Mount focus on teaching the answers to the questions on this test. The most recent class began April 4 and will go through May 23.

“There are 96 civics questions on the citizenship test. Things like ‘What color is the American flag?’ Who elects the president of the United States?’ ‘What makes up Congress?’” Meyer said.

The citizenship test is given orally by an immigration officer to those desiring to become citizens during their citizenship interviews. It is up to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) when this interview occurs. The USCIS sends letters to eligible persons informing them of the date and time of their interviews.

“The cost of becoming a citizen is now $400, but the price is going up in

continued on page 6
Guest Column
By Charles E. Rice

operation return to sender

Are Raids Justified?

Well, Yes and No

I

n “Operation Return to Sender,” ICE (Immigration
and Customs Enforcement) is deporting thousands of illegals
caught in raids, including 1,300
workers arrested at Swift meat-
packing plants in six states. Of 424
deported from Miami in January, 131
had criminal convictions. The raids
also netted many non-criminal
parents of small children.

Are the raids justified? Yes. And
no.

1. The government has a duty to
regain control of its borders and
impose reasonable criteria for
admission. “The Church in America,”
said John Paul II, “must [defend]
against any unjust restriction the
natural right of ... persons to move
freely within their own nation and
from one nation to another.”

“Governments,” he said, “must
regulate the migratory flows with
full respect for the dignity of the
persons and for their families’ needs,
mindful of the requirements of the
host societies.”

Nevertheless, “illegal immigra-
tion,” said John Paul, “should be
prevented [and it is] essential to
combat ... criminal activities which
exploit illegal immigrants.” If a steel
fence is the most practical means to
secure the border, it ought to be
built, for the safety of Border Patrol
agents as well as immigrants. Those
agents, who confront the heavily
armed drug gangs which, according
to ICE, are “ravaging border
communities in South Texas,” are
persons with dignity equal to that of
immigrants.

2. At least 11 million illegals are
in this country. Efforts should focus
on deporting those involved in gang
or other criminal activities. In 2005,
26,000 were deported under the
concededly inadequate “aggravated
felony” standard of federal law.

Undocumented immigrants, how-
ever, who are otherwise law-abiding
should not be deported. Many
originally entered legally and over-
stayed or otherwise became illegal.

Many live with minor children,
including “anchor babies,” who are
citizens because they met the 14th
Amendment’s criterion that “persons
born ... in the United States” are
citizens.

To expel millions of otherwise
law-abiding illegals would be unjust
and repugnant as well as an
administrative nightmare. Other
considerations are raised by the
failure of the government to secure
the borders, especially but not ex-
clusively with respect to the Mexican
border. For the past two decades, the
notorious failure of the government
to enforce the border has implicitly
invited people to cross it illegally.

Enforcement personnel at the border
have been undermanned and
hampered by the failure of successive
presidents, with congressional
acquiescence or complicity, to provide
them with the means to enforce the
law. That dereliction of duty benefits
employers who seek cheap labor with
the medical and other needs of the
laborers shifted to the taxpayers.

Every person has a right, in the
words of Pope John XXIII, “to enter a
country in which he hopes to provide
more fittingly for himself and his
dependents.” While that right is
subject to restriction, it would be
unjust to treat as criminals or to
deport those otherwise law-abiding
persons who accepted an implied
invitation to enter. They are
invitees. Congress ought to enable
them to regularize their status as
residents and perhaps as citizens.

3. We brought this problem upon
ourselves through the refusal of non-
Hispanic whites, and to a lesser
extent blacks, to reproduce them-

selves. The U.S. fertility rate is 2.07.

The replacement level is 2.1 at which
a population would replenish itself.
We are almost there only because of the
Hispanics whose rate is 2.9; blacks are at 2.2 and non-Hispanic
whites are 1.8. Since 1973, more than
45 million persons who would have
been citizens at birth have been
killed by surgical abortion, not
including the uncountable numbers
killed by chemical and other abortifa-
cients. The endemic practice of
contraception multiplies the
shortage. As University of California
professor Franz Shurman put it,
“America needs the South’s babies ...
American civilization wants sex, but
does not want children.”

4. One cause of this problem is
neoliberalism, described by John
Paul II as “a system ... based on a
market as its only parameters,
[which] considers profit and the law
without regard to justice or the
security needs, but also regularize
immigration law. We respect those
who have the difficult job of
enforcing it. We do not encourage or
help anyone to break the law. ... Americans have a right to solvent
public institutions, secure borders
and orderly regulation of
immigration ... We ... need ... reform
that will address our economic and
security needs, but also regularize
the status of the many decent
undocumented immigrants who help
our society to grow.”

Rice is a professor emeritus and
is on the Notre Dame Law School
faculty. He can be reached at (574)
633-4415 or at rice.1@nd.edu

Mount

continued from page 5

June,” Meyer said. If someone fails his or her
citizenship interview, he or she may take the
citizenship test a second time, but the person must
wait six months to do so. There is no additional
fee. The original $400 covers one or two citizenship
tests, as well as fingerprinting.

“Those who have taken the citizenship test are
told at the interview whether or not they have
passed. They have two chances. If they fail the test
both times, they must pay an additional $400 [or
whatever the charge is at the time] and start the
whole process over again,” Meyer said.

How to Enroll

All ESL, GED and citizenship classes given at
the Mount are taught in the evenings at the high
school, located at 2801 S. Shartel Avenue, Oklahoma
City. GED classes are free and take place from
September through May. The GED test, however,
costs $45 each time it is taken. ESL classes cost $20
for each eight-week class, and citizenship classes are
$40 per eight-week session.

During these evening classes, child care is free
for one to three children in the same family who are
seven years of age or younger. Those families
desiring child care for more than three children will
be charged $1 per visit for each additional child.

ESL classes meet from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays. GED classes meet from 6 p.m.
to 9 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays while
citizenship classes meet from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Wednesdays.

For more information, call Beatriz Meyer at
(405) 602-3146 Ext. 208.
Catholics and Lutherans Continue Their Dialogue

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Round XI met March 15-18 at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C., for its fourth meeting to discuss “The Hope of Eternal Life.” The Lutheran and Roman Catholic co-chairs described the meeting as constructive and precise, helpful to both Christian traditions as they search for greater mutual understanding through the dialogue.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) chose the topic at the end of Round X in 2004, to examine issues related to the Christian’s life beyond death.

The conversation stems from principles of life after death developed in the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification,” which the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church signed Oct. 31, 1999, in Augsburg, Germany. Dialogue members are considering such issues as purgatory, indulgences and masses and prayers for the dead.

The Most Rev. Richard J. Sklba, auxiliary bishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and the Rev. Lowell G. Almen, ELCA secretary, serve as co-chairs of the U.S. dialogue. In addition to members of the ELCA and the Roman Catholic Church, the dialogue includes two participants from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

“The most recent meeting of the dialogue represented another constructive step in exploring the topic, ‘The Hope of Eternal Life,’ from Lutheran and Roman Catholic perspectives,” Father Almen said.

“Members of the team in this meeting undertook the initial development of an outline that will guide further discussion and the possible content of a report to the churches.”

The “long road” of ecumenical dialogue requires commitment, he said, adding that much work remains for present dialogue team members and for those who will follow.

“Each small step for greater mutual understanding is important, however, as we strive for salutary ways to reflect more clearly the unity that we have been granted as baptized sisters and brothers in Christ,” he added.

The careful precision brought to this past meeting of the dialogue by the members of each delegation and their knowledge of history have been a great blessing for all of us,” Bishop Sklba said. “Simply tracing the unfolding practices which have marked our respective Lutheran or Catholic prayers on the occasion of the death of a believer has brought light to our conversation.”

“In the United States, the practice of ‘in memoriam’ was a great blessing for all of us,” Bishop Sklba added. “It is a very helpful practice that we both are in the process of adopting.”

While Catholics might place great emphasis on our communal membership in the body of Christ, the Church, we both trust in God’s saving mercy in Christ,” Bishop Sklba said.

“Our tagline has become ‘Investing in the Future of Our Faith,’ and for present dialogue team members and our scholarship and grant programs are returning a record amount to our Catholic students and educational programs.”

The Catholic Foundation will award more than $80,000 in college scholarships this spring and plans to distribute $75,000 in grants in the fall. The foundation also contributes $75,000 in grants in the fiscal year.

“The solution to our confessional differences on interim states like purgatory depends to a large degree on deepening our grasp of the common Christian profession of the ‘communion of saints,’” added Father Massa.

Dialogue participants attended a Roman Catholic liturgy at Saint Joseph Catholic Church and a Lutheran liturgy at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, both in Columbia. Next meeting of the dialogue is scheduled for Oct. 11-14 at Saint Paul College in Washington, D.C.

Foundation Names Board Members

The Catholic Foundation recently welcomed seven new members to its board of directors. The new directors will serve two three-year terms and participate in committee work assisting the Catholic Foundation executive director with Finance and Investments, Marketing and Development, Strategic Planning, Scholarships and Grants.

Joining the Catholic Foundation are Rev. Rex Arnold of Saint Mary Catholic Church in Clinton; Ray Haefele of Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond; Carol Hopper of Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Mustang; Dr. Charles Lawrence of Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church in Edin; Susan Moran of Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; Doug Oliver of Saint Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; and Leonard Taron of Saint Benedict Catholic Church in Shawnee.

And with the death of Catholic Foundation President Rev. James Knight, Phillip Brockhaus of Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Norman will fulfill the balance of Knight’s term as president as well as those responsibilities during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Ralph Fredrickson of Saint Monica Catholic Church in Edmond is currently serving as president-elect.

“Our executive committee and board of directors continue to strengthen the mission of the Catholic Foundation,” said Tom Caso, executive director. “Through their efforts, the Catholic Foundation’s finances and investments are sound, and we fulfill this objective by giving back to the Catholic community through scholarships, grants and investments in other Catholic education focused endeavors,” Caso said. “We are truly blessed with the many talented men and women who serve on the Catholic Foundation board of directors.”

continued on page 15

American Catholics Today: New Realities of Their Faith and Their Church


The Roman Catholic Church in the United States ranks after Brazil, Mexico and possibly after Italy with the most percentage of Catholics in the population. There are around 64 million Catholics in the United States, which is the largest denomination in this country.

The Catholic Church in the United States is a bit unique in that it exists in the richest country in the world and the only superpower. The Catholic Church is somewhat powerful in this country, especially in areas of the country where there are many Catholics. Five of the Supreme Court justices including the chief justice himself are Roman Catholics, which is the largest number of Catholics on this court in history. A Catholic ran for president in 2004 and other Catholics are running for president already for the 2008 election.

“American Catholics Today” is the report of the survey and research that William V. D’Antonio, James D. Davidson, Dean R. Hoge
ELGIN — The early history of services for the Catholic people of Elgin dates back before the time they had their own church. Priests from Chickasha, Lawton, Apache and Sterling took the responsibility of serving these faithful people who dreamed of having a parish of their own. According to the Elgin Bicentennial History Book published in 1976, the first Mass in Elgin was held at the D.E. McAnaw home (a two-story white frame home located near the Elgin turnpike exit, formerly the home of longtime parishioner Anna Ryan (now deceased). Elgin was under the direction of the Apache priest from 1907 to 1910. In 1910, Elgin Catholics collected enough funds to purchase a two-room frame building (Elgin's first schoolhouse), moved it to southwest Elgin and named it Saint Anthony's Church. Elgin was declared a mission parish of Sterling in 1914.

When it was decided that a new church should be built, pledges were sought and several thousand dollars were raised. It was also decided that each farmer would donate a calf each year and other parishioners would donate around the equivalent of the price of a calf. In November 1946, construction of a new church building was begun. The majority of the work to build the church was provided by the dedicated parishioners themselves. The only paid labor was for the bricklaying and the electrical work. All the men were responsible for one day a week of labor. Those who couldn’t or were unable for some reason hired someone in their place for $5 a day. The sum of $5,000 was donated by the Catholic Extension Society, provided that the church be renamed Saint Ann in memory of the donor, Anna A. Becker. The new church was dedicated May 11, 1948.

Sometime later, new pews were purchased from the state penitentiary at McAlester (made by prisoners). In the 1970s, stained glass windows replaced the original glazed windows. The old church was used as a parish hall until the current parish hall was built in 1967. A new rectory (to replace the rectory at Sterling) was dedicated on June 14, 1998, at which time the church of Saint Ann became the main church and Sterling was declared a mission parish of Elgin.

Memories of the construction of Saint Ann were provided by Leo Koetter, a longtime parishioner. Parishioners of Saint Ann will be celebrating the church’s centennial on June 10. Many fund-raisers have been held during the past year to make this a very special occasion. Former Saint Ann parishioners who have not yet submitted their names and addresses for invitations to this special occasion can send updated information to Rev. Kumar, P.O. Box 10, Elgin, Okla. 73538 or e-mail bradyelgin@aol.com.

Father Maria J. Kumar, pastor of Saint Ann Parish in Elgin, said all are invited to celebrate in the centennial celebration on June 10. A social time will begin at 2 p.m. Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Beltran at 4 p.m. Eight members of Saint Ann Parish are scheduled to be confirmed by the archbishop during the Mass, Father Kumar said. A celebration dinner will follow Mass.
Stepping Out
McGuinness Dance Students Put Their Talents on Display During Concert

OKLAHOMA CITY — The dance program at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School presented the Spring Music Concert in mid-April. The program hosts a diversified group of talented performers. Part of the Fine Arts Department, it was established 30 years ago and has become part of the curriculum as a fine arts or physical education credit.

Fran Barton has served as program director for 22 years. Barton has written lyrics and choreographed numerous routines over the years, and this year’s concert was the last for her, as she is stepping down after this year.

There are more than 50 students involved in the various dance classes. The program features numerous dance ensembles including Dance I, II and III, DanceVisions and ballroom dancing. Students must audition for DanceVisions. It is comprised of mostly girls. For the past couple of years, they have featured boys in the dance routines. Regulars this year were Patrick Chong and Thomas Hochla. In addition, several McGuinness male athletes performed in this year’s program with DanceVisions members dancing to “Hey Ya.” The boys were Towns Holmboe, Jared Lester, Nick Hudacko, Joseph Krenger and Stephen Perry.

Featured in this year’s program were the ballroom dance class doing a salsa routine and DanceVisions performing a dance from the Dream Scene of “Oklahoma” to commemorate the centennial. Also performing was Whitney Kemp, McGuinness ’03 alum and aspiring country and western singer, Whitney performed “Real Chicks Drive Pickups” written by Barton with music provided by her husband, Craig. The finale focused on all the great things that have happened at Bishop McGuinness this year and is titled “Looking Back but Going Higher.” The music was “Whenever You Remember” by Carrie Underwood and “Higher Ground” by the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Tryouts for the 2007-08 DanceVisions team will be held May 8.

For more information, contact Barton at (405) 842-6638 Ext. 252 or e-mail bartonx252@mcguinness.k12.ok.us.

Parachute Team to Perform at McGuinness

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School welcomes the U.S. Navy Parachute Team, the Leap Frogs, at 10 a.m. June 1 at Clement Pribil Stadium on the McGuinness campus.

The Leap Frog team will perform aeronautical maneuvers and jumps reaching speeds of 120 mph. Parachute jumpers will leap out of an aircraft 12,500 feet high and free fall several thousand feet before deploying their parachutes. The parachutes trigger the opening of the main blue-and-gold canopies which is displayed to the audience as the team flies in formation.

The public is welcome. Leap Frog team members will be available after the performance for autographs and pictures. Admission is free, and the concession stand will be open.

Group Sees Reality of Pet Overpopulation

OKLAHOMA CITY — Last fall, Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School students and faculty formed a group called the Saint Francis Society, named after the patron saint of animals. The group is dedicated to animal welfare and education. Members help with adoption outreach, fund-raising and educating other students about animal issues.

They recently arranged for a tour of the Oklahoma City Animal Shelter to see firsthand the effects of pet overpopulation in Oklahoma City. The tour was led by Rita Hoch, president of PAL-OK, a fairly new group dedicated to helping homeless and unwanted animals, and Gayl Leichner, longtime animal shelter volunteer. The group toured areas where animals are available for adoption, and saw holding areas for stray cats, dogs and rabbits. They also visited the barn where abandoned or abused livestock are housed. For many, this was their first visit to a municipal animal shelter.

continued on page 15
Parishes Honor Their

Above, Patti Keeley holds up one of the handmade quilts auctioned at the Women of Achievement Banquet. At right, 5-year-old Kathryn Cline entertains the audience with her violin.

Sooner Catholic • April 29, 2007

Parishes Honor Their

“Transcending the established norms of His own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way He honored the dignity which women have always possessed according to God’s plan and His love. May Mary, Queen of Love, watch over women and their mission in service of humanity, of peace, of the spread of God’s Kingdom.” — Pope John Paul II

OKLAHOMA CITY — Archbishop Beltran told the hundreds of women attending the April 14 Mass prior to the annual Women of Achievement Banquet, they, along with all members of the Catholic faith, are called to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

“Jesus loves all people and wants all people to be saved,” Archbishop Beltran said. He said the disciples who followed Christ had “achieved great love for Jesus” and said we too must work to achieve the same kind of love.

The archbishop said Pope Paul VI in an encyclical offered three steps to help the faithful on their journey to living a Christ-filled life.

The late pontiff said the first step is to “live the fullness of the Catholic faith.” Archbishop Beltran said this is done by being kind, generous to the poor and forgiving.

The second step offered by Pope Paul VI is to “invite other people to the Catholic faith.” The church is concerned about all humanity,” Archbishop Beltran said. He said for that reason, he and Bishop Slattery of the Diocese of Tulsa had faxed a letter to Gov. Brad Henry urging the governor to sign SB 714, a proposed law that could greatly help promote the culture of life in Oklahoma by providing greater protection for the unborn.

Finally, Archbishop Beltran said Pope Paul VI called on Catholics to “extend the Church to all areas of our culture and society.” He said this is the call and work of every believer.

Celebrated at Saint Eugene Church, the Mass was concelebrated by Father Joseph Jacobi, pastor of Saint Eugene, Father Joseph Kolb, spiritual moderator for the ACCW, and Father Daniel Letourneau, associate pastor of Saint John the Baptist Church in Edmond.

Following Mass the Central Region of the Council of Catholic Women held their annual Women of Achievement Banquet. One of the highlights of the banquet was a quilt raffle featuring several handmade quilts. All money raised by the raffle will go to help support the work of Sister Sponsa Beltran. A Benedictine, Sister Sponsa has for years operated a home and medical clinic for orphaned and abandoned children in Liberia, Africa. She does this even though she is legally blind and wheelchair-bound. Archbishop Beltran thanked the women for the generous support of his sister. He thanked them also for their willingness to accept an annual project in support of the Church. This year, the organization is supplying crucifixes that Archbishop Beltran will present to each candidate for Confirmation.

The following are the recipients of this year’s recognition as Women of Achievement:

Pat Cline, Saint Charles
Pat Cline has been an active, enthusiastic and cheerful member of the Catholic Woman’s Activities Club. She was baptized and became a member of Saint Charles on Easter Sunday, 2001.

Cheryl is an Oblate of the Sisters of Benedict at Red Plains Monastery and a recent graduate of the master’s program in Pastoral Ministry from the Aquinas Institute of Theology. She teaches English Language Learners at U.S. Grant, is active on her Parish Pastoral Council and Altar Society and is editor of the parish newsletter.

Mary Frances Offutt, Saint Joseph (Norman)
Mary was baptized as an infant and later married Dale Offutt at Saint Joseph Church. They have one son, three daughters, five grand-children and one great-grandchild. She is a graduate of Moore High School, where she participated in Band and 4-H Club, and is active in the Moore Alumni.

Debbie Altebaumer, Our Lady of Sorrows
Debbie has almost single-handedly raised funds so that the youth of that parish could attend Catholic Youth Camp. She attended Cursillo in 2003 and still faithfully attends Cursillo.

Pat Bourgeois, Saint John the Baptist
Pat and her husband, Murphy moved to Edmond with their three children in 1993. She is a member of the Women’s Society, a volunteer for Senior Services Board, Keenagers, Cooks Night Out and is a co-coordinator for the Saint John’s Time Out Program, which offers respite for caregivers and a fun-filled afternoon for Edmond senior citizens.

Mary Latta, Saint Eugene
Mary has been an active member at Saint Eugene since 1983. She does everything from Girl Scout leader to Vacation bible school teacher. She serves on the Board of the Altar Society and Parish Council and is a Community Life Commission member.

continued on page 11
Women of Achievement

continued from page 10

Wilma Duty, Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Wilma has been an active member of Altar Society, Saint Jude’s Circle, PTO, First Communion, funeral dinners and RCIA as well as Girl and Boy Scouts.

Susan Lepak, Saint Thomas More

Susan is associate director of the Office of Family Life. She has worked in crisis pregnancy ministry, including Rachel’s Vineyard, Project Gabriel and other outreach involving human sexuality, such as abstinence programs, a retreat for victims of sexual abuse and pro-life issues. Susan is working to become a certified health care ethicist through the National Catholic Bioethics Center.

Pam Burnside, Saint Monica

A charter member of Saint Monica, Pam has served in nearly all areas of parish life, including Parish Council as well as most committees. Pam works with our sister parish, developing and organizing their summer academy program. She also volunteers with Breakfast on Boulevard, Ronald McDonald House and other agencies.

Becky Hardin, Saint Francis of Assisi

Becky Hardin is married to Bill Hardin, and they will soon celebrate their 25th anniversary. They have two children, Holly and Chris. They have inspired their children with Christian values by participating in church and community activities as a family.

Lucy Cooper, Saint James the Greater

For the past 23 years, Lucy has worked tirelessly to help others less fortunate than her. If her car didn’t start, she would walk to Saint James to help the people. Humble, dedicated and modest are the best words to describe Lucy, church members say.

Mary K. Wittrock, Saint Charles Borromeo

Mary has been a member of Saint Charles for 15 years and is involved in many organizations. Through her willingness to share her faith, she has brought many new members to the Catholic Church.

Helga Kastl, Saint John Nepomuk

Helga Kastl has been a parishioner of Saint John Nepomuk for 24 years. She is known to be very caring and giving, always ready to help when needed. She is very devoted to both her family and to her church.

Linda Kringlen, Our Lady Fatima

Linda works on all church, Catholic Daughters and Knights of Columbus fundraisers with her husband, Mark. Both excellent cooks, they chaired the 2006 bazaar, spaghetti dinner and Lenten fish dinners.

Nancy Menz, Saint Joseph (Union City)

Nancy is the wife of Deacon Lloyd Menz and the mother of Elizabeth Menz. She teaches second grade at Sacred Heart Catholic School in El Reno. Nancy serves as a lector, substitute religious education teacher and volunteers at Sister BJ’s Pantry.

Mary Fahy, Epiphany of the Lord

Mary has been a member of Epiphany since 1980 and works at the Pastoral Center. She is earning a master's degree in pastoral ministry and has completed the Deacon Formation Program. Mary serves on the board of directors of the Southwest Liturgical Conference and Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions.

Chris Thomas, Saint Mark the Evangelist

Chris is president of the Women of Saint Mark. She has revitalized many of the parish’s service and adult fellowship programs and initiated several successful “firsts” such as Breakfast with Santa and Saint’s Saturday. She has three children and six grandchildren.

Sharon Shepherd, Saint Patrick

Sharon has been an active member of Saint Patrick since 1978. She has been involved in several parish ministries, including Eucharistic and hospitality minister, and leads parishioners in praying the Rosary before Mass on Sunday. Sharon is president of the Saint Patrick Women’s Group and serves in a leadership position for the parish’s capital campaign.

Thyrene Martin, Saint Philip Neri

Thyrene converted to Catholicism at Saint Philip Neri and has been tireless in her service to the parish ever since. She is everyone’s friend and everyone is in awe of the many things she accomplishes in her quiet, unassuming way. Thyrene’s giving of herself is truly genuine and saintly.

Dolores McLaren, Saint Teresa of Avila

Dolores has lived a life of service to God, Saint Teresa’s Church and to her family and community. She freely gives her talents to the Harrah Senior Citizens Center, Catholic Daughters, Altar Society, Parish Council and funeral dinners. She is an avid traveler and loving mother and grandmother.
Council of Catholic Women Offering $500 Scholarship

The Oklahoma City Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women funds a $500 scholarship to high school seniors of its affiliated organizations.

To qualify, a student must maintain a 2.5 grade point average or better and/or pass a college entry exam, show record of community and parish volunteer service as well as show financial need.

For an application, contact Elizabeth Julum, 1430 W. Hillcrest Drive, Mustang, Okla. 73064-2413, call (405) 376-1729 or e-mail aloetteokc@mac.com

Applications must be received by May 15.

Golf Tourney to Raise Money for Holy Spirit’s Building Fund

MUSTANG — Holy Spirit Parish is holding its first-ever golf tournament to benefit the parish building fund.

The tournament will be held June 16 at Westbury Country Club in Yukon. The shotgun start will begin at 8 a.m. Cost to enter is $65 per person. Entry deadline is June 8. Sponsorship opportunities begin at $200.

For more information or for a tournament brochure, contact Bryan Estabrooks at (405) 376-6344 or bryanestabrooks@cox.net

Dear Fellow Oklahoma Catholics,

We are asking for your support.

As you know, each year the Sooner Catholic asks you to consider contributing $20 to help support the archdiocesan newspaper. And each year you come through in grand fashion. Many of you actually send more than the $20 to help those Oklahoma Catholics who can’t afford to contribute, but still need and want the Sooner Catholic. This says a great deal about the Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

The Sooner Catholic publishes 26 issues per year, sent to approximately 35,000 addresses. This is done with an annual budget of about $450,000. Of that, approximately $160,000 comes from your direct contributions. The remainder comes from the Archdiocesan Development Fund which also receives your generous support.

The Sooner Catholic department is responsible for the Archdiocesan Web site. This past year we’ve introduced pod casts to the Web site and we plan to have more of these conversations with Catholic leaders available in the future.

Thank you for the generous support you have provided the Sooner Catholic and thank you especially for your prayers.

Sincerely
Ray Dyer, Editor
Letting Go Harder Than It Sounds

Letting go is a wonderful way of experiencing relief, calmness and peace in otherwise stressful, anxiety-producing situations. Letting go allows us to focus on being loving, expressing gratitude for our blessings and living less anxious and less stressful lives.

However, letting go seems to go against our nature as we hang on, even though we continue to experience anxiety, grief, hurt, frustration and resentments. We have been brought up to believe that we must fight for what we want and that giving up or surrendering is a sign of weakness. We are convinced that high expectations of ourselves and our family members lead to success; that letting go means they win and we lose; and that to forgive means there is something wrong with us and others will run over us.

Softening or balancing these beliefs and values is difficult. We resist letting go of thinking we are in control of others and situations; of insisting they treat us with respect; of wanting what we want and wanting it now; of demanding they admit their wrongs and apologize to us; and of thinking if we struggle long and hard enough, eventually things will work out our way.

Letting go is difficult when we feel hurt, angry and self-pity; when we are afraid of what others think of us; and when we believe we must please them, seek their approval and protect them. Letting go is also difficult when we have resentments and anger for past hurts; when we believe we must be right and do most things perfectly; or believe our job is to protect our children from natural consequences and/or expect them to “work up to their potential.”

Letting go, however, allows us to acknowledge that oftentimes we are not and do not have to be in control, that we cannot please nor take care of everyone, that we are not perfect nor always right, and that our expectations may be excessive. Letting go enables us to be more accepting of ourselves and others.

Letting go allows us to be more tolerant of and less judgmental of others, to be less critical of and more accepting of others, and to be less blaming of others and more accepting of our own errors.

Letting go of excessive expectations of our children allows us to be more understanding and accepting of who they are while modeling unconditional love. Letting go provides an environment where we as loving parents can help our children be responsible and self-reliant. Letting go allows our children to fail and experience disappointments and negative consequences while we are there to love and encourage them.

Letting go allows us to not regret the past, to understand the past is part of our story, and to use the past to learn and to gain wisdom for living today. Letting go of what they will think of us enables us to express and to honor who we are without their approval. Letting go allows us to fear less and to love more.

As we consider and explore letting go, we may experience an internal struggle regarding our values, beliefs and what is best for our families. We might wonder what are God’s hopes for us, what is loving and what brings internal peace. We may still not know the answer. However, it is in the seeking that Christ within will prevail.

Joe Froehle has over 16 years experience in marital, individual and family counseling. He serves in the Counseling Center at St. John the Baptist, Edmond. He can be reached at (405) 359-8539 or by e-mail at jfroehle@swbell.net.

Joyce Clark describes the progress being made on Saint Katharine Drexel Retirement Center during an information session held at Redlands Community College. Clark, development consultant to the project, said the $5 million assisted living center is scheduled to open in early June. The 49-unit retirement center at 301 W. Wade in El Reno is a joint effort by Sacred Heart Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. For more information about Saint Katharine Drexel, call Clark at (405) 262-2920.
### High Court — continued from page 3

by both science and the Church that the child in the womb is a living human organism."

"At last, our most vulnerable brothers and sisters will be protected from the harming and unnecessary procedure known as partial birth abortion," he said.

In October 2003, Congress passed the ban by votes of 281-142 in the House of Representatives and 64-34 in the Senate. Bush signed it into law the following month.

**Not a constitutional right**

Court challenges kept the ban from being put into effect, but the April 18 ruling that the partial birth abortion procedure does not deny a woman’s so-called constitutional right to abortion meant a victory for prolifers.

Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, the world’s largest Catholic lay organization, said: “The Supreme Court decision in Gonzales vs. Carhart is a major milestone in the battle to end the destruction of innocent human life in America.”

Kilburn underlined, “Finally, after nearly a decade of court battles, the way has been cleared to implement the bipartisan judgment of Congress that partial birth abortion is brutal and inhumane, and must be prohibited.”

“We also strongly agree with Justice Thomas, who wrote a short, separate concurring opinion reiterating his view that the court’s abortion jurisprudence, including Casey and Roe v. Wade, has no basis in the Constitution.”

President and chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center, Richard Thompson, agreed: “This Supreme Court decision may very well signal the willingness of the court under Chief Justice Roberts to revisit its infamous Roe vs. Wade decision and end legalized abortion in this country.”

### Letter

**Sanctity of All Life**

This past January many of us had the opportunity to attend the Sanctity of Life Mass celebrated by Archbishop Beltran at Our Lady’s Cathedral in Oklahoma City. As expected, the main topic of the day was the abortion. We have heard that as many as 4,000 abortions take place daily in the United States. This figure is staggering. I will never be able to understand how a woman can knowingly kill her own child.

What about the doctors who perform these abortions? Are they killers as well? Or in the case of a car accident, the driver of one car hits the car of a pregnant woman and as a result the unborn child is killed. Is the driver of the car guilty of manslaughter? It is our understanding that the driver of the car can be charged with manslaughter. But the abortion, since society doesn’t view it as a crime, is the death penalty society’s legal means of killing the unwanted.

Abortion and the death penalty diminish our respect for all human life and ultimately we are nothing but killers ourselves.

The issues of abortion and the death penalty have been shown to be popular vote getters for some politicians.

We have a Christian choice to both abortion and the death penalty. Thousands of people stand in line to adopt children who may not be wanted.

As for the death penalty, we have the penalty of life which not only saves our tax dollars but takes us out of the business of killing.

Why don’t we have more respect for the sanctity of life and save human life whenever possible.

**Jim and Ann Fowler**

**Saint Charles Parish**

**Oklahoma City**

### Suicide Bombers, Abortion Both Terrorism In Today’s World

**VATICAN CITY (Zenit.org) —**

Abortion and euthanasia are examples of “terrorism with a human face,” and, together with suicide bombers, are the scourge of contemporary society, says a Vatican official.

Archbishop Angelo Amato, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, made this statement on Monday during a talk on “The Problem of Evil: Philosophical and Theological Reflections.”

His address formed part of the International Seminar for Catholic Civil Aviation Chaplains and Chaplaincy Members, taking place in Rome and sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers.

“Reading the daily pages, or using Internet, TV or radio — every day we see a perverse film about evil, which is ‘filmed’ in every part of the world with scenery and backdrops ever more cruel, as we see in the thousands of provocations of international terrorism,” explained Archbishop Amato.

He continued: “Besides the abominable terrorism of suicide bombers, which is ever-present in the media, there is the so-called terrorism with a human face, which is also a daily occurrence and just as repugnant, which continues to be propagated by the media, manipulating traditional language with expressions that hide the tragic reality of the facts.”

As an example, the 68-year-old prelate mentioned that abortion is referred to as “the voluntary interruption of pregnancy” instead of “the killing of a defenseless human being.”

Euthanasia is defined merely as “death with dignity,” he observed.

Archbishop Amato also mentioned the decisions of national legislatures that promote “laws contrary to the human being.”

Evil today “is not only the action of single individuals or identifiable groups, but comes from dark centers, the laboratories of false opinions, from anonymous powers that hammer away at our minds with false messages, judging behavior in tune with the Gospels as ridiculous and out of date,” he lamented.

“We cannot close the libraries of evil nor can we destroy its collection of videos that are reproduced like lethal terrorism of suicide bombers, along with the laboratories of false opinions, from anonymous powers that hammer away at our minds with false messages, judging behavior in tune with the Gospels as ridiculous and out of date,”

He lamented.

We cannot close the libraries of evil nor can we destroy its collection of videos that are reproduced like lethal terrorism of suicide bombers, along with the laboratories of false opinions, from anonymous powers that hammer away at our minds with false messages, judging behavior in tune with the Gospels as ridiculous and out of date,” he lamented.

“We cannot close the libraries of evil nor can we destroy its collection of videos that are reproduced like lethal terrorism of suicide bombers, along with the laboratories of false opinions, from anonymous powers that hammer away at our minds with false messages, judging behavior in tune with the Gospels as ridiculous and out of date,” he lamented.
The body of each chapter is made up of statistical data and explanations. There are many charts and tables throughout the book.

Chapter 2's topic is Catholic identity. The surveys show how Catholics identify themselves and others as being Catholic. This varies from generation to generation.

A historical overview of Catholic history in the United States is given. Chapter 3's topic is American Catholics' commitment to the institutional Church. This chapter shows that American Catholics vary in the support of the Church according to generation. The two main topics that all agree on is that if one is to be a Catholic, one has to believe in the resurrection of Jesus and the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Helping the poor and devotion to Mary score high too on the surveys. Acceptance of Church teachings varies too according to generational group. Chapter 4's topic is on the sacraments. The surveys say that American Catholics receive baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist but they do not go to confession as often as they used to. This chapter also gives a historical overview of reception of the sacraments.

Chapter 5's topic is about problems the new American like the sexual abuse scandals, priest and religious shortage and participation of the lay in the ministry. Chapter 6's topic is on authority and those who hold it. The surveys show that American Catholics have lost confidence in the bishops and others, especially in light of the sexual abuse scandals. Many Catholics ignore Church teachings and still consider themselves as Catholics.

Chapter 7's topic is on Church leadership and lay involvement. The surveys show that the American Catholic laity wants to be more involved in the governance of the Church on all levels. Many want to help the clergy to do their ministry by relieving them from having to take care of temporal issues. Chapter 8's topic is religion and politics. The survey shows that Catholics are involved in all political parties in the United States. Many Catholics are involved in the pro-life movement while other Catholics are involved in the pro-choice movement. The survey shows that 39 percent identify themselves as Republicans, 42 percent identify themselves as Democrats and 19 percent said they were independents. Chapter 9 is a conclusion and summary of the survey.

Appendix A is on Catholic education. Appendix B is on Hispanic Catholics which is a growing group in the United States. Appendix C is the 2005 Gallup survey. Then there is a bibliography and an index.

Dean R. Hoge (Ph.D. 1970 from Harvard), is a professor emeritus of sociology. He is a fellow at the Life Cycle Institute at the Catholic University of America. He has authored several books.

Mary L. Gautier (Ph.D. 1995 from Louisiana State University), is a senior research associate at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. She has authored two books and also edits The CARA Report.

“American Catholics Today” will be of interest to those involved in Church leadership and those interested in what Catholics think about various topics. This book is highly recommended to them.

Brother Benet Exton is a Benedictine Monk at Saint Gregory's Abbey in Shawnee. Among other duties, he serves as the librarian there and writes book reviews regularly for several Catholic publications, including the Sooner Catholic.

Christina Capacci is a graduate student at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. E-mail her at christinacap@gmail.com.

When a person gets the death penalty, at least they get a trial.

When people don’t neuter and spay their pets, they are possibly dooming many animals.”
Buenas Noticias...

...Un desafío en la Pascua para cada uno de ustedes

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas de Cristo:

El primer domingo de Cuaresma, en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro, se celebró el Rito de Elección con un lleno total, tanto que hubo que celebrar tres servicios durante ese día. Se esti-
mó que habría treinta y ocho y cincuenta y siete asistentes y cinco ciento y cincuenta y cinco asistentes, más las pers-
onas que asistieron.

Por lo que se puede deducir que había más de veinte perso-

nas presentes en la Iglesia para la cele-
bración de Vigilia en la Catedral.

Casi todos los que participa-

ron en el Rito de Elección son perso-

nas que ahora recibieron el bautismo o se han confirmado y han recibido la Santa Comunión.

Estoy muy feliz de dar la bienveni-
da a todas aquellas personas que quieren unirse a nuestra Iglesia en esta Pascua, por lo tanto, deseo recor-
darles que todos ustedes, sus familiares, al igual que sus amigos, están invitados a una Misa muy especial que se cele-

brará en el Centro Pastoral Católico, el próximo domingo 5 de abril a las cuatro de la tarde. La gente que

encuentra su camino y lo sigue en la Iglesia Católica, está recibiendo una verdadera bendición. Le doy a cada uno de ustedes una felicitación y el aliento a que vivan plenamente nues-

tra fe Católica. Nunca pierdan el

entusiasmo que tienen con su fe. Dios los ha llamado a cada uno de ustedes. Dios los bendice y les da una acogida en la Iglesia a cada uno de ustedes. Ahora está en cada uno de ustedes la perfe-
ción del trabajo que el Señor ha comenzado en ustedes. Las cla-

ses de iniciación católica (RCIA) que se ofrecen en cada parroquia son más importantes

que una mera opción. Con las clases de RCIA o de iniciación al Catolicismo, muchas personas se recomi-
den para en la Ilesia y un sentido espiritual en la práctica de nuestra religión, por lo que estas clases son un componente esencial en el trabajo de evangeliza-

ción de nuestra Iglesia.

La evangelización es una seria obliga-

ción de la Iglesia, por lo tanto, cada persona adulta tiene la responsabili-

dad de formar parte de esa misión. Algunas personas ya comienzan sus clases de RCIA para tratar a más

personas a la Iglesia el próximo año. Y otras parroquias están por comenzar las clases. Todo ser humano requie-

re de una preparación intelectual, inten
tológica y espiritualem-
Retablos y pinturas son una expresión cultural de fe

Las piezas artísticas reflejan el amor a Jesús, María y Santos de la Iglesia

Por Mauro Yanez

Oklahoma City — Pinturas de Fe es el nombre de una exposición que se presenta hasta el domingo 29 de abril en el Museo Nacional del Vaquero. Esta exposición artística nos recuerda que los retablos, los cuales son imágenes pintadas en piezas planas de madera, son imágenes que nos muestran a los Santos de la Iglesia Católica para que nos ayudasen a nuestra devoción y devoción.

La historia de los retablos se remonta a la conquista, cuando las misiones Católicas proclamaron la única y verdadera fe en Cristo. Fue así como apareció el arte popular de los retablos y pinturas como expresión de fe. Muchos de los retablos y pinturas que decoran las paredes de nuestras casas son retablos y pinturas que decoran los interiores de nuestras casas.
Summer Camp Help Needed
Saint Eugene Summer Camp is looking for part-time help for its summer camp program. Starting May 28 through Aug. 3 (Monday-Friday) from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.). Need someone who is good with children, responsible and energetic. Must be willing to complete Safe Environment Training and be at least 18 years of age. If interested, call Angela Liddiard or Mary Beth Arwood at 751-7115 Ext. 118.

Truck Driver/Warehouse Worker
St. Vincent dePaul Thrift Stores Inc. of OKC is seeking full-time combination truck driver and warehouse worker for local thrift stores. Must be 25-65 years old, with clean driving record, no accident history during past three years. Position requires lifting furniture and have a college degree or two years of experience in the field. Must have at least five years management experience and be a practicing Roman Catholic. Bilingual applicants are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to applicants with a J.D. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106. EOE

Executive Director
The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is accepting resumes for a certified residential care administrator for Saint Ann Retirement Center. The position requires five years experience operating a senior living community with a proven track record. We are seeking someone who has excellent communication, team-building and managerial skills. Full paid benefits program. Salary is based on experience. Send resumes and personal references to David Johnson, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123 or fax to (405) 721-5210.

Elementary Teacher Openings
Holy Trinity Catholic School in Okarche is accepting applications for elementary and early childhood teachers for the 2007-08 school year. Submit resume and copy of teaching certificate to Mary Jane Wittrock, P.O. Box 485, Okarche 73762, fax (405) 263-9753 or e-mail mjwittrock@holytrinity-ok.org.

Elementary Teacher Openings
Saint Mary's School, Ponca City, is accepting applications for employment for the 2007-2008 school year. Openings include early childhood teacher, part-time pre-algebra/algae teacher and part-time vocal music teacher. Early childhood certification or subject endorsements required. If interested, send resume and copy of teaching certificate to Shirley Zink at 415 S. Seventh, Ponca City 74601 or call (580) 765-4387 for more information.

First-Grade Teacher
Villa Teresa Catholic School is accepting applications for a first-grade teacher. Candidate must be certified by the state of Oklahoma and possess a degree in early childhood or elementary education. Also available is an opening for a teacher for 3-year-olds. An associate degree or CDA is required. Send resumes to Sister Veronica Higgins, 1216 Classen Drive, Oklahoma City 73103, or call for an interview, 232-4286.

Teacher Sought
Sacred Heart Catholic School in El Reno is accepting applications for a combined fifth- and sixth-grade teacher. Oklahoma elementary certification. Strong math skills desired. Submit applications to Sacred Heart Catholic School, 210 S. Evans, El Reno, Okla. 73036, fax (405) 262-2284, attention Shannon Statton.

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
All Saints Catholic School in Norman is seeking a full-time pre-kindergarten teacher for the 2007-08 school year. Applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in early childhood education. Mail resumes attention to Leslie Schmitt, Principal, at 4001 36th Avenue, N.W., Norman, Okla. 73072, or fax to (405) 447-7227.

High School Chemistry/Biology
Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School has an opening for a state certified chemistry/biology teacher for the 2007-08 school year. Send a resume with references to the attention of David Morton, Principal, 801 NW 50th St., Oklahoma City 73118.

High School Coaches/Teachers
Mount St. Mary Catholic HS (Oklahoma City) is accepting applications for the following positions for the 2007-2008 school year: assistant football coach and girls basketball coach, math, science, French and Spanish. Send resume, letter of interest, copy of teaching certificate and references to Talita DeNegri, Mount St. Mary HS, 2801 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73109. Can also be faxed to (405) 631-9299. For more information or questions, call (405) 631-8865 or contact DeNegri at tdenegri@mountstmary.org.

Cafeteria Manager
Mount St. Mary High School in Oklahoma City is seeking a full-time cafeteria manager for the 2007-2008 school year. Applicant must be familiar with the DHS Commodities Distribution and U.S. Federal Food Program. For more information, contact Talita DeNegri at 631-8865.

ESL Instructor
Mount St. Mary High School Community Outreach Program is looking for an (ESL) English as a Second Language instructor. Experience in teaching/training preferred but not required. Must be fluent in Spanish. Background check required. For more information, contact Beatriz Meyer at (405) 602-3146 Ext. 208 or (405) 361-9796. Call to make an appointment. Mount St. Mary High School Community Outreach Program, 2801 S. Shartel Ave., Oklahoma City 73109.

Administrative Assistant
Catholic Charities seeks a bilingual administrative assistant for a new position in the Family Support Services Office. Computer proficiency, including word processing, database management and Excel, organizational skills and ability to multi-task, excellent typing skills, positive communication skills and the ability to relate to and professionally interact with staff, volunteers and the public. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106 or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org. EOE

Associate Director - Advocacy, Outreach and Legal Services
Catholic Charities seeks a non-profit leader with experience in legislative advocacy, parish outreach and education and legal services in the field of immigration. Must have at least five years management experience and be a practicing Roman Catholic. Bilingual applicants are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to applicants with a J.D. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106. EOE

Associate Director of Mission Advancement
Catholic Charities seeks an experienced non-profit leader for associate director of Mission Advancement. This new position will increase those engaged in the mission of Catholic Charities, as demonstrated through financial support in the community. Successful candidate should possess a bachelor’s degree and five years experience in fund development as well as a deep commitment to Catholic Charities core mission and an ability to model these values in relationship with colleagues, partners and constituents. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., OKC 73106 or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org, EOE

Immigration Attorney
Catholic Charities seeks an attorney to work with clients in the Immigration Assistance Program. Applicants must have a J.D. and be licensed to practice in the state of Oklahoma. Bilingual applicants are encouraged to apply. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City 73106. EOE

Music Director
St. Eugene Church, Oklahoma City, seeks full-time music director to direct traditional, contemporary and children’s choirs and supervise cantors. Organ and piano skills necessary. Bilingual skills preferred. Degree in music with experience directing music in a parish setting. Competitive salary and benefits. Send resume with three professional references to Rev. Joseph Jacobi, St. Eugene Church, 2400 W. Hefner Road, OKC 73120, fax (405) 751-8722, phone (405) 751-7115, e-mail mbrown@stegenes.org.
**Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 Mass for the Newly Entered into the Church at 4 p.m. with Archbishop Beltran at the Catholic Pastoral Center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western. Every Tuesday after 8:30 a.m. Mass from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Rosary is said every weekday at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Holy Family Home Mass, 10 a.m., Holy Family Home, 6821 Eddie Drive, Midwest City, (405) 523-3000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 First Friday Adoration at Holy Name of Jesus in Chickasha. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. followed by Benediction. This is open to all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Sculpting a Bust of Christ, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sculptor and professional grief counselor Bob Willis will lead this workshop. Mail in your check to reserve your place. Bring a sack lunch. Call 373-4739 to register. Come to the red art barn at Red Plains Monastery. Limit 15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 anger, Conflict and Forgiveness, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This spiritual approach helps you to identify unresolved anger and conflicts that affect your relationships. Presenter: Sister Marie Ballmann, OSB, at Red Plains Monastery. Fee: Mail in $35 to reserve your place. Call 373-4739 to register. Bring a sack lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 SEAS 15th Annual Golf Tournament. Shotgun start at 1:30 p.m., four-person scramble at the Kickingbird Golf Course. Entry fee is $75. Deadline for entry is May 5. Call Susan at 348-5364 or drop by the Saint Elizabeth school office for registration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12 Engagement Encounter Weekend. To register, contact the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 The Benedictine Oblates of Red Plains Monastery will meet from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. They join the Community for Vespers, followed by a potluck dinner. For more information, contact Sister Eunice at 373-4565 or <a href="mailto:osbokc@ionet.net">osbokc@ionet.net</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-25 Monthly Novena to the Infant Jesus, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Natl' Shrine of the Infant Jesus, St. Wenceslaus Church, SH-99 7 miles N. I-40 or 20 miles S. I-44 at Stroud exit, Prague, (405) 567-3080.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Freeing the Artist Within: Meditation and Watercolor, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Glenda Day will lead this session. Fee: $45, all materials provided. Mail in your check to reserve your place. Bring a sack lunch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Restoring American Values**

**Church Leaders Urge Farm Bill Reform**

WASHINGTON — As Congress begins the work of reauthorizing the U.S. farm bill, more than a dozen churches and faith-based organizations have come together as the Religious Working Group on the Farm Bill to urge major changes in U.S. agricultural policy aimed at reducing hunger and poverty, and promoting the livelihood of farmers and rural communities in the United States and around the world.

“Passing a new farm bill is an important opportunity to reshape our agricultural policies to build a more just framework that better serves rural communities and vulnerable farmers in the U.S., overcomes hunger here and abroad, and helps poor farmers and their families in developing countries,” said Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn, chairman of the U.S. Catholic Bishops Domestic Policy Committee.

The Religious Working Group on the Farm Bill, which includes Christian denominations and major faith-based organizations, has developed a statement of legislative principles for farm-bill reform (see below). Members of the group currently are in the process of visiting congressional offices and sharing those principles.

“As people of faith who are also constituents, we must let our members of Congress know that we support broad reforms in the farm bill,” said Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World. “We are advocating for farm policy that strengthens our rural communities and better supports farmers of modest means, people trying to put food on the table in the United States, and struggling farmers in developing countries.”

Members of the Religious Working Group support a farm bill that strengthens investment in communities in rural America; ensures all Americans an adequate and nutritious diet; provides better and more targeted support for U.S. farm families of modest means; and conserves the land for present and future generations. Group members also are urging Congress to address the negative impact that current U.S. agricultural and trade policies have on people living in impoverished countries around the world.

“Over the past decade, the U.S. government has made unprecedented, bipartisan commitments to address the deadly poverty that kills one person every three seconds in our world,” said the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church. “Reforming U.S. agricultural policy to help farmers in poor countries sell their crops is a way to follow through on that moral commitment while also improving the financial livelihoods of farmers in our own country.”

The Religious Working Group also urges critical reforms to address poverty and human need in the United States through initiatives like the Food Stamp Program, the nation’s first line of defense against hunger.

“Our nation’s lawmakers have a historic opportunity in 2007 to pass a farm bill. Let us work together for a bill that strengthens the livelihood of rural communities, helps lift people out of hunger and poverty, and safeguards the integrity of God’s creation for generations to come,” said Rev. Mark S. Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The faith communities represented in the group believe 2007 represents a critical moment in U.S. agricultural policy, and will be working with congregations throughout the country to carry the voice of reform to the halls of Congress.

“Farming ought to be regarded as a sacred calling to take care of the land and to bring forth the food and fiber that sustains the community. The time is now to advocate for a dramatic reform of U.S. agricultural policy so that rural communities in the United States and in the developing world can survive and prosper,” said Rev. John L. McCullough, executive director and CEO of Church World Service.
OKLAHOMA CITY — Students from Mount Saint Mary High School took an exciting “field trip” recently with a visit to our nation’s capital. Students in the Mount’s American history classes and those preparing for government classes as seniors visited Washington, D.C., and the surrounding area March 15-19. Students making the trip were senior Skye Mellow and juniors, Amy Johnson, Elle DeNegri, Joe Nixon, Justin Sine, Peter Brunette, Mary Kate Tener, Wade Pierce, Veronica Andrade, Adam Wilkey, Melissa Lee, Daniel Foley, Blake Gunter, Tommy McKenzie, Abram Hernandez, Sarah Thornton, Tony Baker and Andy Adamson. Principal Talita DeNegri, Vice Principal Whitney Faires and teachers Leroy Cantrell and David Anderson accompanied the students.