“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” Luke 23:34

“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43


“Dear Woman, here is your son!” “Here is your mother!” John 19:26-27

“I am thirsty.” John 19:28

“It is finished!” John 19:30

The Seven Last “Words” of Jesus Christ from the cross are actually seven short phrases that Jesus uttered on Calvary.

Photo by Cara Koenig

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The Good News

... When Choice Violates Conscience

Somehow I missed the earlier news about Notre Dame University and its invitation to President Barack Obama to be the commencement speaker and to receive an honorary degree. On March 26, immediately upon discovering these facts, I dictated a letter of protest to Rev. John Jenkins, CSC, president of Notre Dame University. (My letter is printed on Page 3.)

No one can ever question my support and strong affirmation for Catholic school education. Why, therefore, would I write such a strong objection to the president of the United States speaking at Notre Dame University and receiving an honorary degree as several other previous presidents have done? There is only one reason. It is wrong! It is my conscientious conviction that the Notre Dame University invitation is totally contrary to the philosophy, the reason and the purpose of Catholic school education.

Catholic education is intended to lead us to God. Anything else that leads us away from God has no place in the scope of Catholic education. The Church has been entrusted with the mission of proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel and leading us to Jesus Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. One of the most fundamental teachings of the Church is that human beings are created in the Image and Likeness of God. Therefore, the value and dignity of the human person comes from God. This is the reason the Church teaches all human life is to be respected from conception to natural death.

A Catholic school or institution cannot deviate from this fundamental moral issue of the nature of a human being and the respect this intrinsic dignity demands. It is the clear and authentic teaching of the Church that abortion is objectively and always evil because it kills the child in its mother’s womb. Therefore, abortion cannot be permitted, condoned or excused. It would be inconsistent and wrong for a Catholic school to teach otherwise or to honor one who defies this truth about the nature of the human being.

President Barack Obama has made it clear that he promotes abortion. By word and by action, his first three months in office have constituted all-out assault on the unborn child. Singlehandedly, with the stroke of a pen, he removed the limited sanctions against abortion that were in place when he became president.

He has openly supported the Freedom of Choice Act which removes regulations on abortion. More recently he publicly announced that he will rescind the Conscience Rule, which currently protects the rights of pro-life doctors and nurses who refuse to participate in abortions or other killing procedures on religious or moral grounds.

The fundamental moral issue of the dignity and right to life of human beings underlies all of Catholic education. Therefore, to invite someone to be a commencement speaker who by word and deed has already openly promoted abortion and arrogantly defied the faith of millions of Americans is wrong, unjust and scandalous. The president’s words and actions contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church. He deserves no place on the commencement platform of a Catholic university.

In addition, if Notre Dame University bestows an honorary law degree on the president, the university will ratify the stance he has taken against the clear teachings of the Catholic faith. Here again, unless the administration of the University of Notre Dame comes to its senses and rescinds its invitation and planned honors for the abortion president, it will lose its credibility and its soul.

It is my conscientious conviction that the Notre Dame University invitation is totally contrary to the philosophy, the reason and the purpose of Catholic school education.

Seminary Burses

A $200 donation was made to the
**Father Joseph Beltran** Seminary
Burse by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Cebulski.

A $200 donation was made to the
**Father Joseph Beltran** Seminary
Burse by an anonymous donor.

A $100 donation was made to the
**Father Stephen Bird** Seminary
Burse by an anonymous donor.

A $100 donation was made to the
**Father Gerald Ucker** Seminary
Burse by Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Calumet.

A $1,328 donation was made to the
**Father Stanley Rother** Seminary
Burse by an anonymous donor.

A $1,328 donation was made to the
**Father Stanley Rother** Seminary
Burse by Mrs. Elizabeth Ruyle.

A $1,100 donation was made to the
**Father Stanley Rother** Seminary
Burse in memory of Father Alan Loth.

A $15 donation was made to the
**Father Stephen Bird** Seminary
Burse by an anonymous donor.

A $50 donation was made to the
**Father Joseph Beltran** Seminary
Burse by an anonymous donor.
Bishop to Skip Notre Dame Graduation Over Invitation to Obama

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (Zenit.org) — For the first time in 25 years, the bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend will not attend the University of Notre Dame’s graduation ceremony.

In a statement on the diocese’s Web site, Bishop John D’Arcy revealed his decision to not attend this year’s commencement, at which President Barack Obama will speak and receive an honorary degree.

He said his move isn’t an attack on anyone, but rather a gesture done in defense of the truth of human life.

Father John Jenkins, president of Notre Dame, informed the bishop Friday that Obama had accepted an invitation to speak at the university’s spring commencement. Bishop D’Arcy noted that this was the first he had heard that such an invitation had been extended.

“President Obama,” he said, “has recently reaffirmed, and has now placed in public policy, his long-stated unwillingness to hold human life as sacred. While claiming to separate politics from science, he has in fact separated science from ethics and has brought the American government, for the first time in history, into supporting direct destruction of innocent human life.”

Bishop D’Arcy noted that he made his decision “after much prayer,” and that he wishes “no disrespect to our president.

“I have always revered the office of the presidency,” he said. “But a bishop must teach the Catholic faith in season and out of season; and he teaches not only by his words — but by his actions.

“My decision is not an attack on anyone, but is in defense of the truth about human life,” he added.

Quoting a 2004 statement of the U.S. Bishops, Bishop D’Arcy said, “The Catholic community and Catholic institutions should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions.”

“Indeed, the measure of any Catholic institution is not only what it stands for, but also what it will not stand for,” the bishop noted.

Honor for Glendon

Bishop D’Arcy noted that Notre Dame will also honor Mary Ann Glendon, former U.S. ambassador to the Holy, at this year’s graduation ceremony. She will be presented with the university’s Laetare Medal.

The medal has been awarded annually since 1883 to a Catholic “whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the church and enriched the heritage of humanity.”

The bishop said he has spoken with Glendon, and he encouraged her to accept the award, “and take the opportunity such an award gives her to teach.”

“Even as I continue to ponder in prayer these events, which many have found shocking, so must Notre Dame,” concluded Bishop D’Arcy. “Indeed, as a Catholic university, Notre Dame must ask itself, if by this decision it has chosen prestige over truth.”

Notre Dame Professor Calls for Faithful to Pray During Obama Address

By Charles E. Rice

Notre Dame is not a public utility. It has no commitment to honor at its capstone ceremony every politician whom the political process deposits in the Oval Office. Nor is there an unbroken custom that, if a president is invited, it must be in his first year.

Our leaders had to know that their invitation to President Obama would imply a general commendation of the man and his policies. In the conflicts over those policies, our leaders have committed, in perception but also in fact, the name and prestige of Notre Dame to the side that is hostile to the imperatives of faith and reason affirmed by the Catholic Church. Our leaders are not only dismissive but also contemptuous toward the Church. The first thing Bishop D’Arcy knew about it was when he was told that Obama had accepted the invitation.

President Obama is a relentless advocate of unrestricted abortion, including the Freedom of Choice Act, which would abrogate all state laws restricting abortion. On his fourth day in office, he overturned the Mexico City Policy that forbade organizations receiving federal funds to perform or promote abortions in other countries. He has restored to the UN Population Fund the funding that President Bush had stopped because of the fund’s support for forced abortions. Obama opposes continued federal funding for pro-life pregnancy help centers. He opposes the Hyde Amendment, which denies public funding for most abortions. At the other end of life, the stimulus package forewarns the rationing of health care for the elderly and unproductive. “The Obama Administration,” said Cardinal Francis George, “intends to remove a … rule for the Department of Health and Human Services [HHS] that protects doctors, nurses and others … who have objections in conscience to … abortion and other killing procedures … [S]uch … would be the first step in moving our country from democracy to despotism.” Not surprisingly, Obama’s nominee for Secretary of HHS, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, a Catholic, has continued on page 15
Catholics Converge on State Capitol to Discuss Faith and Advocacy

By Rex Hogan
For The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Politics does make a difference in a person’s life. And those with strong faith-based convictions have the responsibility to get involved in politics.

On March 17, the sixth annual Catholic Living Justice Day was held at the state Capitol. About 35 people attended the event, which was sponsored by the Oklahoma City Archdiocese Commission for Justice and Human Development.

Richard Klinge, social advocate for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, said Catholics should understand they have a responsibility to themselves and their church concerning public policy.

“The purpose (of Catholic Living Justice Day) is to make people aware that we have rich Catholic social teachings that we really have to live our lives by. We have to share those social teachings and we have to encourage people to act on those social teachings. "Advocacy can be on one simple bill or on complex issues, but we need to get involved and know the signs of the times and issues of the day because they do have an effect on what we believe as Catholics.”

Sister Diane Koorie, chair of the Commission for Justice and Human Development, said the event is designed to show Catholics how to voice their faith.

“One of the purposes is to understand legislative advocacy and to show how our faithful can go about it,” she said. “In the past five years we had held a breakfast at Catholic Charities, but we thought it was a good idea to hold it this year at the Capitol,” she said.

The two main speakers were David Blatt, of the independent Oklahoma Policy Institute, and Klinge.

Also talking to the group was Father Paul Gallatin, Pastor Emeritus of St. Charles Church of Oklahoma City, who talked about politics in church history.

Klinge said churches can play an important part in the legislative process. He said that was shown when a bill was introduced that many thought was an interference between church and state.

“Some 15 leaders of various denominations showed up and met with some 40 legislators and we were able to get the bill pulled,” he said.

He said the Catholic Church has voiced its opposition to the so-called “English Only” bill, because it is viewed as delaying the assimilation of mainly the Hispanic population.

Klinge said Catholics should pick out issues that are important to their parishes such as domestic violence, pro-life and health care.

Blatt said faith-based advocates can play an important role in Oklahoma with helping the poor and needy. He said according to the state Department of Human Services, a record number of Oklahomans are now on the food stamp program.

“About 445,000 are now receiving food stamp benefits, that’s about one in every 10 Oklahomans,” he said. He said social organizations in the state are reporting record numbers of people are asking for help.

“The state is facing a tough economy and the state is facing a budget shortfall. This is a vital time for advocacy. We need people like you out there trying to make the case about the need for our most vulnerable citizens. We need to make legislators understand that families are suffering and to understand the importance of safety net programs that work along with what families can do for themselves and what philanthropic and social organizations can do,” he said.

Blatt said most legislators are not career politicians and depend on those outside the Legislature “to let them know what's going on.”

He said if advocates for the needy don’t lobby, all the information legislators receive will be from “registered, professional lobbyists who represent businesses, and chambers of commerce. Lawmakers need to hear from lobbyists like you,” he said.

Blatt said HB 1804, the immigration reform bill to which the Catholic Church voiced opposition, passed the Legislature last year because “there was a disconnect between the advocates in favor of more restrictive immigration laws and those who were opponents of more restrictive laws.

“Frankly, a lot of folks like you who cared about this bill did not make your voices heard, did not really get up and talk to legislators,” he said.

Sister Diane said this was the first time that the Commission held Justice Day at the Capitol.

“We thought it was a good idea to hold it this year at the Capitol,” Sister Diane said. “From the response we received, everyone liked the idea, although we do plan some changes for next year,” she said.
Kairos Outside Helps Those with Imprisoned Loved Ones Find Peace

By Ammanda McCabe
The Sooner Catholic

The informational pamphlet for Kairos states, “The purpose of Kairos is the building of strong Christian communities within the environment of correctional institutions. This is done through the impact of small, share and prayer groups of residents in the institutions.” But there is also another group, Kairos Outside, which reaches out to groups sometimes forgotten — women associated with those incarcerated, such as spouses, friends and family members.

Marita Ringwald, a parishioner at Holy Name in Chickasha, has been involved with Kairos Outside for almost two years, after her son was incarcerated. She feels “blessed” to be a part of the group and to help out whenever needed.

“Twice a year a three-day retreat is sponsored by Kairos Outside for these women,” she said. “The hope is to reach out to those who have felt totally alone in the struggle of dealing with a loved one in prison. When one member of a family is imprisoned, all the members suffer. As a Christian nondenominational group, we let all members suffer. As a Christian denominational group, we let all those who come to retreat know that Jesus loves them unconditionally and He is there for them whenever needed.

“Twice a year a three-day retreat is sponsored by Kairos Outside for these women,” she said. “The hope is to reach out to those who have felt totally alone in the struggle of dealing with a loved one in prison. When one member of a family is imprisoned, all the members suffer. As a Christian nondenominational group, we let all those who come to retreat know that Jesus loves them unconditionally and He is there for them whenever needed.

It took her awhile to attend one of the retreats after her son, who was part of the Kairos Inside program, urged her to look into it.

“I didn’t know what to expect!” Ringwald said. “Once I made the decision to attend, I found an environment that is totally nurturing. I have found a ministry in which I can be nourished as well as becoming a welcoming hand extended in love to someone else who needs this help more than I ever did. It is beautiful to see what happens in just three days! With loving care, prayer, and building of hope, these women leave with a smile and a group of friends that will always be there for them. They also learn that they, too, can extend a hand and do the same for someone else.”

Reaching out to help others, to make the lives of others a little better and brighter, showing compassion to others and themselves, is a big goal of Kairos Outside.

“As women and mothers, we always think we could have done something to have changed the life of our imprisoned family,” Ringwald said. “If only we had done something another way at some part of their lives. Through Kairos Outside, we place our fears, hurts and insecurity in the hands of God, and allow Him to work through us, bringing healing into our own lives.”

Angelica Nizza has been involved with Kairos Outside Western Oklahoma for three years as spiritual director on retreats, and currently serves on the Advisory Council as clergy coordinator. She says that two spiritual directors are required for each retreat, from two different Christian denominations.

“We are the prayer support and work together to make sure we form a team community willing to listen and love, love in our common Christian faith, all who God sends our way. Our message is simple — you are loved, God has always loved you and wants to be in a relationship with you. Liberty and forgiveness are available to all prisoners through Jesus Christ.”

“Not everyone is called to active participation in the ministry,” Nizza said. “But we accept financial support, prayer support, in-kind donations of food or facilities, as well as assistance behind the scenes by ‘angels’ during the weekend.”

The important ministry of Kairos Outside is non-profit and entirely dependent on donations to continue their work. The women pay nothing to attend the retreats. “Everything is paid for them during that weekend,” Ringwald said, when asked what their greatest needs are. “We even drive them there if necessary. We depend on donations, we raffle quilts, do fundraisers (right now we are collecting old cell phones). Prayer support is also solicited for the retreat weekend coming in late May! We know we have the support of prayer working for us out there. The readers may also know of someone they would like to recommend for a retreat, and can lead them in our direction.”

Donations can be sent to Kairos Outside Western Oklahoma, P.O. Box 30073, Edmond Okla. 73003.

Kairos Outside is a non-profit, support ministry for women whose lives have been in some way impacted by incarceration of their loved one. Retreat weekends are held twice a year. Hundreds of women have been hosted on weekends held in Oklahoma since the first retreat in 1999.

The next Kairos will be held on May 29-31, 2009, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Friday and ending around 5 p.m. Sunday. Location to be announced.

Team members consist of men and women (men are the kitchen/prayer team) who are required to attend team meetings. “Angels” help with the immediate needs of the weekend, such as transportation, behind the scenes work, etc., and are not required to attend team meetings. They are, however, required to complete applications and be scheduled for their duties.

How can you help?

- Consider being an Angel on a future team.
- Participate in the prayer vigil.
- Provide colored logos for the weekend.
- Provide financial support. (There is no charge to guests, and the cost is $150 each).
- Attend Las Mananitas at 5:30 a.m. on Sunday morning and wake up the guests with song and flow- ers.
- Attend closing at 2:30 p.m. Sunday afternoon (You do not complete applications to attend these two)

For more information, call Nancy Decker at (405) 348-5290, or e-mail Sammy at 1951@aol.com.

Oklahoma Catholics Respond In Generous Way to ADF Appeal

As of March 25, more than 9,500 individuals or families have accepted God’s “Burning Love” through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and given or pledged more than 90 percent of this year’s ADF request. This has resulted in $2,718,096.00 pledged with $1,284,561.00 paid. More good news is that new pledges or payments are still being received daily.

Sharing and participation are a main component of this Appeal. As our faith grows, the sharing of ourselves in so many different ways will increase. At this time only 25 percent of the members of this Archdiocese have chosen this opportunity to participate in the ministries and activities of the parish and the archdiocese. Donations to this year’s ADF Appeal will be accepted throughout the year. Pledges or payments may be made through the parish office or the ADF Office at the Catholic Pastoral Center. The Holy Spirit is talking, are we listening?

On behalf of the Archdiocese and all those who will benefit directly from their generosity, a special thank you to all current and future donors. We pray that their example motivates us all to live with God ever more in our lives.
Father Brown Celebrates 60 Years of Priestly Ministry

By Alex Lee
For The Sooner Catholic

SHAWNEE — The Rev. Matthew J. Brown, O.S.B., recently reached a milestone few have accomplished.

Father Brown, a Benedictine monk at St. Gregory's Abbey, celebrated his 60th anniversary of ordination into the priesthood on March 22 with the Benedictine community, friends and family members. Special guests were the Most Rev. Eusebius J. Beltran, archbishop of Oklahoma City, and the Most Rev. Edward Slattery, bishop of Tulsa.

The diamond jubilee celebration was held in the afternoon and commenced with a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Beltran, and assisted by Deacon James Conway, Father Brown's cousin, of Marlow, at the packed abbey church.

During the celebration, Archbishop Beltran commended Father Brown's many years of ministry and service to the people of Oklahoma and California. Abbot Reverend Lawrence Stasyszen, O.S.B., also thanked Father Brown for his dedication and contributions to the Benedictine community.

Father Brown's birth name was Joseph Patrick. He was born March 16, 1922, in Fletcher to Joseph and Ann Brown. He grew up in a house built by his grandfather in the early 1900s. He was baptized in Elgin and attended Fletcher Public Schools for 12 years.

Father Brown said that as a child, his parents always maintained a religious atmosphere at home. He recollected that he had two aunts who were in the convent. “They prayed that some day I'd become a priest and suggested I say a prayer for vocational grace every day,” said Father Brown.

The religious and Catholic upbringing, along with the daily prayer for vocational grace, eventually bore fruit. Not only did Father Brown become a priest, but his sister, Eugenia, is also a Benedictine nun at St. Joseph's Convent in Tulsa.

After graduating from high school in 1940, Father Brown attended St. Gregory's College in Shawnee. While at St. Gregory's, he was intrigued by the monastic lifestyle of the Benedictine monks at the abbey. He was also impressed with the witnesses they gave both on campus and at the abbey. He graduated in 1942 and joined St. Gregory's Abbey as a novice, where he received the name Matthew. Father Brown made his profession of vows on July 11, 1943.

After completion of the novitate, Father Brown studied philosophy and theology with some of the professors from Europe at St. Gregory's. He was ordained on March 19, 1949.

Shortly after his ordination, Father Brown was assigned to pastoral work at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in East Los Angeles, Calif., where he stayed for nine years.

He returned to St. Gregory's Abbey in 1958 and served in many different capacities for the next 11 years. He was appointed Brother Master with the responsibility of overseeing the lay brothers as they joined the Abbey. In addition, Father Brown also was in charge of the food service and maintenance of the college and abbey. Other positions he held included subprior at the abbey and working at the business office.

While at the Abbey, Father Brown also served as pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Church in McLoud for seven years.

In 1969, he was assigned to Our Lady of Lourdes in Los Angeles as an associate pastor. The following year he was made pastor when Father Robert Dodson, O.S.B, then pastor, was chosen as abbot of St. Gregory's Abbey in Shawnee.

Father Brown enjoyed pastoral ministry. He recalled that the large parish in Los Angeles kept him busy. He said that with the help of three associate pastors, they ministered to 2,700 families and operated a grade school with an enrollment of about 960.

“I'd hear 100 confessions every week and perform baptisms every other week,” Father Brown said. “One time, I had 14 baptisms at one time!”

Many parishioners said Father Brown regarded his enthusiasm in bringing people into the Catholic Church as one of the most rewarding aspects of his vocation as a priest. He was also instrumental in recruiting a number of students from Los Angeles to come to St. Gregory's College and join the Benedictine community.

His dedication to pastoral ministry continued when he was appointed pastor of St. Benedict Parish in Shawnee in the summer of 1976, with the newly ordained Rev. Bernard O'Rourke, O.S.B., as his assistant.

After three years at St. Benedict Church, he was assigned pastor of St. Stephen Church in Holdenville of the Tulsa Diocese with St. Joseph Church in Wewoka as a mission. Father Brown served in Holdenville for 19 years. While at Holdenville, he also celebrated a weekly Mass at the John H. Lilley Correction Center for nine years.

Father Brown's unyielding desire to provide pastoral care to the people was evident when on Jan. 1, 1998, at the age of 75, he accepted the assignment of pastor of Sacred Heart Church of Konawa, with missions of St. Joseph Church in Wewoka and St. Mary Church in Wanette.

Sacred Heart Church was special to Father Brown and the Benedictine monks because of its historical connection with the Benedictine community and its proximity to the historical site of the original monastery complex founded by the early Benedictines when they first arrived in Indian Territory in 1875.

Father Brown recalled that when he first met the secretary of Sacred Heart and told her that he was 75, she said: “Well, you ought to be good for another 10 years!” The secretary's casual remark turned out to be a prophetic statement, for Father Brown remained pastor there for more than 10 years until summer of 2008, at which time he returned to St. Gregory's Abbey to reside.

A reception was held in honor of Father Brown at the SGU cafeteria after the celebratory Mass. This was followed by Vespers at the abbey church.

Following Vespers, a festive dinner was served at the abbey dining hall for Father Brown's family, friends, relatives and specially invited guests.

Bishop Slattery led the invocation before dinner and thanked Father Brown for his unswerving dedication and for the many people that he has brought to the Paschal Mystery.

During the dinner, Abbott Stasyszen read an apostolic blessing from the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI and presented a special rosary personally blessed by the pope to Father Brown in honor of his diamond jubilee celebration.

In commemoration of his 60th anniversary as a priest, Father Brown celebrated a special Mass at his birth parish, St. Ann Church in Elgin, on Sunday, March 29 for his family, friends and parishioners of St. Ann Church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Sterling and Mother of Sorrows Church in Apache.
Fighting Child Abuse: It Only Takes a Minute to Make a Difference

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time when everyone is asked to reflect on finding solutions to the national disgrace of child abuse and neglect. According to Oklahoma Department of Human Services (ODHS) statistics, in 2007 in Oklahoma alone, there were more than 13,100 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect. April is also a time to reflect on the work of our Parish Safe Environment facilitators and other dedicated Archdiocesan personnel and volunteers. Their efforts have made a big difference for the children of our archdiocese.

In recognition and honor of these dedicated men and women, on March 25, Jennifer Goodrich, Archdiocesan Safe Environment coordinator and a group of volunteers from the Catholic Pastoral Center participated in the Build a Blue Ribbon Tree program. They tied blue ribbons on the Survivor Tree located at the CPC. The blue ribbon is the international sign for child abuse prevention and a reminder that all of us have a responsibility to help keep children safe.

Our CPC Survivor Tree is a seedling from the elm tree that survived the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing on April 19, 1995. This seemed a fitting way to honor facilitators and volunteers who, during the period from July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008, alone, held over 500 safe environment trainings throughout the archdiocese. Through their efforts, over 9,000 active archdiocesan employees and volunteers have completed the Safe Environment protocol. During the same 12-month period, an estimated 15,357 children in parish and school religious education classes received age-specific “safe child” instruction. The Archdiocesan Blue Ribbon Tree will be registered on the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) “Tree Registry.” It is not too late to Build a Blue Ribbon Tree in your parish or school. A “Tree Registry” form is available to print from the OSDH Web site at http://fsp.health-ok.gov. To participate, trees must be completed and registered before April 14, 2009.

On Tuesday, April 14, Goodrich will represent the archdiocese at the annual Child Abuse Prevention Day at the state Capitol. This event, open to all, will feature speakers and a power point video of registered Blue Ribbon Trees. Various agencies and faith-based groups will have materials available. Attendance is a good way to show support for efforts to prevent child abuse and to find an opportunity for volunteering. For more information, call OSDH Family Support and Prevention Service at (405) 271-7611 or Goodrich at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 150.

On April 23, the annual Parish Facilitator Workshop will be held at the Catholic Pastoral Center. The annual workshop is open to all personnel and volunteers working with youth and children. In addition to updates on the on-site audit for compliance with the USCCB’s “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,” the workshop will feature a presentation by a representative from the FBI on Internet safety, as well as guidelines and discussion on using technology responsibly in ministry. Please contact your parish facilitator or Goodrich for information. The workshop is free; however, there is a nominal fee of $6.50 for lunch. Advanced registration is encouraged in order to ensure adequate space and materials. Pre-registration for lunch is mandatory.

Everyone can contribute to keeping our children safe by encouraging a child, encouraging a catechist, supporting child abuse prevention activities in your parish or school and volunteering.

It only takes a minute....

Do you have a minute?

OKC Memorial Foundation to Honor Irish Priest for Peace Efforts

By Ammanda McCabe
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation’s Reflections of Hope Award was established in 2005 to “honor a living person ... whose conduct exemplifies in an extraordinary fashion two core beliefs of the foundation: that hope can survive and blossom amidst the tragedy and chaos of political violence and that, even in environments marred by such violence, peaceful, non-violent approaches provide the best answers to human problems.”

This year’s recipient is Father Alec Reid, who is being honored for his life’s work in the peace process in Northern Ireland. Father Reid was born in Nenagh County, Tipperary, and was professed as a Redemptorist in 1950, with ordination as a priest seven years later. For the next four years he gave parish missions in Limerick, Dundalk and Galway, before moving to Clonard monastery in Belfast, at the intersection of the Nationalist Catholic Community and the Protestant Shankill Road, where he spent the next 40 years.

In 1988 he became an icon of the Troubles, when a photographer snapped a famous photo of him delivering the Last Rites to a dying British soldier. Father Reid went on to facilitate a series of meetings between Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams and Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume, in an effort to establish a “Pan-Nationalist front” to enable a move toward renouncing violence in favor of peaceful negotiation. He then acted as their contact person with the Irish government in Dublin up to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. He also oversaw the disarming process.

Gerry Adams has said, “We would not even have the possibility of a peace process if it wasn’t for the unstinting, patient, diligent work of Father Reid.”

More recently, Father Reid has been involved in peace efforts in the Basque region of Spain. In 2003 he was awarded the Sabino Arana World Mirror Prize in Bilbao, in recognition of his efforts at promoting peace and reconciliation. He was also made an honorary graduate and doctor of the university at the University of Ulster in 2008.

“I am honored to receive this award,” Father Reid said from Dublin. “I look forward to being in Oklahoma City to accept this award and am delighted to have the opportunity to see the memorial and museum.”

Father Alec Reid will be honored at a reception and dinner on April 19. For more information, call the National Memorial Foundation at (405) 235-3313.
Fallin Tells Mount Students They Will Lead Nation to Truth

MSM Sophomore Organizes Pro-Life Rally at School

By Ray Dyer
The Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — TJ Krug identifies himself in e-mail correspondence as Pro-Life Affairs Director, Mount St. Mary High School. What TJ doesn’t mention is, he is a sophomore at the south Oklahoma City Catholic high school. That alone should tell you the Mount is a different kind of high school and Krug is a special kind of high school student.

On March 27, Krug organized a pro-life assembly for Mount St. Mary students, faculty and parents. His keynote speaker was Congresswoman Mary Fallin, an announced candidate for governor in Oklahoma’s next gubernatorial race and an ardent pro-life politician.

Other faith and community leaders attending the event were Sister Catherine Powers, Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Tony Lauinger, chairman for Oklahomans for Life Inc., Barbara Chishko, Ruth Blakely and Jan O’Neil of Birth Choice of Oklahoma Inc., and outgoing Warr Acres Mayor Marietta Tardibono.

Also, Elaine Naugle, coordinator of the 40 Days for Life effort for Oklahoma City, state Rep. Mike Christian and Father Joe Arledge, pastor of Sacred Heart Church.

Fallin heaped praise on Krug and his fellow students at Mount St. Mary. She said the pro-life actions demonstrated by TJ and the Mount student body gives her “great hope for the future of America.

“God will honor your work, in fact, He already has,” Fallin said to the Mount student body.

Fallin called “life” our nation’s most important issue, and said it is “under attack in Washington, D.C.” She said it will be up to the young people to help set the nation on the right course.

Fallin called the Obama administration the most “aggressive” in terms of pushing a pro-abortion agenda. She said each year between 1.2 million and 1.6 million babies are killed through abortion. That means about 50 million lives have been destroyed since the Supreme Court ruled abortion on demand was legal in 1973, Fallin said, the year she graduated from high school.

Tardibono led a prayer asking for those who work in the abortion clinic in her community to have a conversion of their hearts and minds.
The Only Choice

Mount Student Reads Top Essay

By James Biscone
Mount St. Mary Student

The only choice. The mind that would have cured AIDS. The strength that would have stopped genocide.

The hands that would have blessed thousands. The eyes that would have seen the truth. The voice that would have spoken above the crowds in His name. These are only a few of the possibilities of the lives that have been taken through abortion. As a Catholic, my beliefs are very strong against the mere idea of an abortion. But one's faith shouldn't have to be the deciding factor in such a case. I am pro-life because I am a human being. I believe that we get only one life. We get one chance on Earth. That one chance is not only to make the most of it, but to decide our fate for eternity. To think that humans have the right to take another human's life in a world that is much bigger than one's self is crazy! To walk outside and see the sunrise and still doubt there is a God is a sad state of mind to live in. I'm pro-life not only because of my faith but because I am so small. Walking the halls and seeing all the different faces is all I need to know that I cannot make or take human life on my own. That decision is up to the one that gave us the second chance in this great place.

“I created life — I can take it.” “It's not murder.” “It's mine — I'll do as I please.” We have all heard these lines before when discussing abortion. Although it's been proven that life is formed from the moment of conception, many adolescents continue to kill innocent life. Take a step back and think for just a moment. Think about our life. We live maybe 80 years on Earth. Compared to the billions of years that Earth has been around, our time is extremely minute. We are currently one of billions, in a large sense, one of trillions. Now think about nature. Vision the streams, the lakes, the endless oceans, the mountains, the snow, the rocks and the sandy beaches. Vision the bunnies, the birds, the horses, the apes and the lions. Wow. We have been given a small time in a magnificent place! To think that humans have the right to take another human's life in a world that is much bigger than one's self is crazy! To walk outside and see the sunrise and still doubt there is a God is a sad state of mind to live in. I'm pro-life not only because of my faith but because I am so small. Walking the halls and seeing all the different

Day of Silence
Mount St. Mary’s March 27, 2009

Heavenly Father, we are thankful for the life which you have bestowed upon us, your adopted children in Jesus Christ. You have watched over and preserved us all the days of our lives. We ask you to hear our prayers for those who are tossed by life's storms.

For the unmarried mother and the teen mother, for the unwanted pregnancies that the parents decide to safeguard human life and not destroy it, for the father who is not yet a husband, for the old man and the very sick woman, for those who would care for them and for their families and friends, for all caregivers and medical practitioners to be consistent with the ethic of upholding life from the beginning of conception to our natural end. Please hear our prayers for the man or woman on death row, and for all who have sent them there. Bless them, guide them, and gently lead them to you by ways which are sure and smooth. We ask this through Christ our Lord as we pray the prayer that Christ has taught us:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the unborn, pray for us.

This prayer was offered by Father Joe Arledge, pastor, Sacred Heart Church.
Death Swallowed Up by Easter Harvest of Life-Giving Grace

My grandfather passed away when I was 9. He was an Iowa farmer, and on one December afternoon, he climbed to the top of a grain bin on the family farm. It was something he always did when the temperature was below freezing. He'd take a wrench and break the crust that formed on the top of the corn so that the drier could work more efficiently. Something went wrong that day. Whether he had a stroke and fell in or simply lost his balance, we never knew. He suffocated in the grain bin, surrounded by the year's harvest.

I remember standing with my family at the funeral home a day or two later and seeing his body. All I could think about were the stories of Jesus raising people from the dead. I prayed, even now, you can bring him back to us, Jesus. And I watched his lifeless body for any sign of a miracle. But the miracle didn't happen.

I still remember my childlike faith when a loved one passes into eternity. I still pray, you could do it, Lord. You could raise this one I love. But this prayer means something even more profound. It isn't merely a prayer for the restoration of a physical body. It is a prayer for the eternal soul. In your mercy, I trust that you will raise this one I love.

I don't expect my loved one to sit up and start talking to me (like I did as a child). Instead, I think of Easter promises.

It is odd — and fitting at the same time — that my grandfather died in a grain bin full of harvested corn. Our Lord told his disciples, unless a grain falls to the earth and dies, it cannot bear fruit.

If we are honest, we know that some of the greatest spiritual growth has come after the death of one we love. We understand Easter more fully when we encounter loss.

We realize more deeply that fruit comes from death. A crop is harvested so that the next one can be planted. Not just a replacement, not just having something new to take our mind off the old. No, it is life coming out of death.

We see it all around us as winter gives way to spring. We see it when we consider the Saints, and we witness their powerful intercession.

I've lost many family members since that December of 1973. But I think the death that revealed this reality the most was the death of our beloved John Paul II.

We forget, sometimes, that there is a promise with the death of a holy one. We sort through the harvested crop and find the good seed. With God's help, we plant that seed, tend it, and watch it grow.

Death is swallowed up in victory.

How long has it been since you asked a loved one to intercede for you? How long has it been since you implored our beloved John Paul II to help with the new harvest? How long has it been since you knelt and said the words, even now you can raise him, Jesus. And then you went into the fields and got busy rather than sit down and dwell on the loss?

We are not meant to hold the seed in our hands and grieve forever. We are meant to get on with planting.

There are souls in need of intercession. There are saints ready to intercede. And Our Lord has promised us a great harvest.

You can find previous CBG articles at catholicbygrace.blogspot.com.

Registration Under Way for Catholic Summer Camp

Registration is under way for Catholic Summer Camp at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp.

Any youth who has finished the third grade through the 12th grade is eligible to attend the camp and non-Catholic friends are welcome.

“At camp our emphasis is on developing faith and making new friends while having a lot of fun,” said Nancy Housh, director of the Archdiocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp provides all kinds of summer activities, including crafts, hiking, swimming (inground pool), fishing, water sports, volleyball, softball, canoeing, archery, talent show, soccer, campfires, drama and more.

Campers arrive Sunday evening between 5 and 6:30. The week ends the following Friday with checkout at 4 p.m. Cost for the camp is $250 per person and includes lodging, meals, snacks, camp T-shirt and insurance.

For more information, contact the Youth Office at (405) 721-9220 or e-mail to aguillotte@catharchdiocese.okc.org, or go to www.catharchdiocese.okc.org and click on the Summer Camp button.

2009 Camp Registration Form

Name: _____________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: ______________________________________________________________________

Home: ___________________________ Office: ___________________________

Cell: ___________________________ E-mail: ___________________________

Parent/Guardian: ____________________________________________________________________

Parish: ______________________________________________________________________________

School: ______________________________________________________________________________

Grade (2006-2007) ______ Age: ______ Male/Female

First time camper: Yes No

Adult T-shirt size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Please circle camp week of your choice:

Camp 1 - June 7-12 - Grades 6-7
Camp 5 - July 5-10 - Grades 4-5
Camp 2 - June 14-19 - Grades 4-5
Camp 6 - July 12-17 - Grades 7-8
Camp 3 - June 21-26 - Grades 5-6
Camp 7 - July 19-24 - Grades 9-12
Camp 4 - June 28- July 3 - Grades 7-9

Send registration and $100 deposit to: Catholic Youth & Young Adult Office, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73123
(Make checks payable to the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City)
Letters

Column One-Sided

I am very concerned about the misinformation about the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine, Gardasil, contained in the piece by Mary Beth Bonacci in your last issue. This vaccine is recommended as safe and effective by the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control, the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. None of the 27 deaths reported after 20 million doses of vaccine have been linked to the vaccine itself, and most reactions have been minor.

HPV is a very common infection. At least half of sexually active adults will become infected during their lifetimes. Cervical cancer is less common since effective screening with pap smears became available, but HPV infections cause abnormal pap smears and other diseases that must be evaluated and treated. Even a young woman who remains a virgin until marriage can be exposed to HPV from her husband, unless he also has remained abstinent.

I agree that we should present abstinence and responsible living to our youth and adults, but please offer a good balance of information about this medical breakthrough — a vaccine against cancer. Every woman should make her own decisions about her medical care based on accurate information. The information Ms. Bonacci presented was very biased and incomplete.

Dana Stone, M.D.
Oklahoma City
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church

JustFaith for All

As a post-abortive Catholic woman (a woman who has aborted the will of God), I would like to defend the Church in regards to Dr. Pedulla’s letter in the 02/22/09 issue. I am thankful that Dr. Pedulla has the gift to serve in areas of abortion. We are all called to serve with our many talents and gifts. Each member is a part of the body of Christ. The parts are not greater; one part completes the other (Lumen Gentium: Constitution of the Church from Vat. 2, Ch.4, Art.32). We all make up the body of God. We all are to serve, as one, in the healing of this wounded world.

JustFaith is a community committed to both faith and justice and we are educated in the teachings of our Catholic faith. We are learning that there is power in numbers and education. Lust for justice should be on the hearts and agenda of every Catholic living in a life of luxury. We see the need for community building that will extend globally. I will speak for all JustFaith participants, who have spent over 100 hours in small faith building communities, we know that abortion is a great sin and needs action. We also know that you cannot cure the evil of abortion when a woman is hungry and can’t feed her kids. Life needs to be protected and cherished on every dimension, even the guilty. You have to feed a woman first and then open to hear her wounds and truths, then the Spirit of Christ will dwell.

This is where the body comes in as one. Some of us are called to feed the poor. Actually, Jesus called us all to feed the poor, first. He feeds us first. We know him and grow spiritually in the breaking of bread; He is the Christ of justice for all the afflicted sinners. How can women not choose abortion when she has no faith in God, health insurance, education, or is addicted to drugs? There’s an egoism that pollutes many in thinking that it is only one issue that we are to serve. We are to do it all daily. One should not sleep until all are fed globally and abortion is non-existent. We sit in our American spaces when a child from a third world country dies from starvation and curable diseases. The JustFaith community thinks and prays for them daily. JustFaith is a spiritual journey of our connectedness to each part of creation. The need to serve the community is what we learn on the journey of the JustFaith experience. We also learn to listen, with the Holy Spirit as a guide, to our fellow parishes and be open to each other’s stories.

We are faced with the sin of starvation daily, but many cannot see past our judgments and glutton living, to just feed the poor. It was really simple to Jesus. He gave everything to the poor and afflicted. We are to do the same thing.

To heal the wounds of abortion, you must know the stories of the aborted. Many of the stories are stories of a deep hunger and hope that only Christ can feed. Sit and talk with a woman in a situation that is so despairing that you cannot sleep at night because the pain she is suffering is so great you can’t bear to hear it yourself.

We have to continue to pray for one another and not judge one another as a Catholic community. God, who has fatherly concern for everyone, has willed that all men should constitute one family and treat one another in a Spirit of brotherhood. (Gaudium et Spes: The Church today, Ch.4, Art.24) One should remember all justice issues are tied together because creation is now. We are to live out the mission of the living Church daily in our lives. Because of our slavery to daily living, the holocaust of abortion and poverty stays in the back of many peoples lives. In this new millennium, God is calling us all to listen to the Spirit. We have the constitutions of the Church and our faith to make a new world. We are the Church in the world. As Catholics we believe that diversity is the masterpiece of God.

Shannon Scott, St. Charles Borromeo
JustFaith graduate and community organizer

Across Oklahoma

Abbey to Host Retreat

SHAWNEE — Monastic Experience for the Triduum: for single men ages 21 to 45. Join the monks of St. Gregory’s Abbey to prepare for Easter. April 8-11. Contact Father Charles Buckley, O.S.B., for details, cjbuckley@stgregorys.edu.

Catholic Women Invited

OKLAHOMA CITY — Patti Keeley, president of Central Region Council of Catholic Women, invites all of our women to come join us April 21. We will meet in the basement of the Pastoral Center. Registration opens at 9 a.m. and the meeting convenes at 9:30 a.m. Our speaker will be Rev. Thomas Boyer, pastor of St. Mark Catholic Church. He will speak of the “Four Great Women of the Western Church.” Mass will be celebrated at 11:30 a.m. Lunch follows at the Pastoral Center. Lunch and program is $7.50. RSVP to your church contact by April 17 or call Jeanne at 341-4396.

Parish to Host Bingo

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bingo at St. James Catholic Church, 41st and South McKinley Ave., will be held April 23 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. An HDTV flat screen television will be given away Oct. 22. Each time you play, you get an entry ticket into the TV drawing.

Marriage Encounter Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — Marriage Encounter Weekend. Take the first step toward a remarkable journey with your spouse. The next weekend in Oklahoma City is June 12-14. For more information, contact Dan or Jean Forgue. Jean’s cell, (405) 760-0390, or Dan’s cell, (405) 760-0349, or by e-mail: partspeople@att.net.
Buenas Noticias...

Cuando la escogencia viola la conciencia

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:

De alguna manera me perdí la noticia sobre lo que pasa en la Universidad “Notre Dame” sobre una invitación que le hicieron al Presidente de los Estados Unidos Barack Obama para que hablara como invitado especial y recibiera una mención honrosa. El 26 de marzo, inmediatamente que descubrí ese hecho, le escribi una carta de protesta al Reverendo John Jenkins, CSC, quien es presidente de esa universidad.

Nadie puede negar mi fuerte apoyo a la educación Católica. Pero muchos de ustedes se preguntarán porque hice esa carta con tan semejante objeción porque el Presidente de los Estados Unidos hable en la Universidad Católica “Notre Dame” y recibió un grado honorífico como lo han recibido otros presidentes. La única razón es que es un error. Es mi consciencia que la invitación hecha al Presidente a la Universidad “Notre Dame” es totalmente contraria a la filosofía y propósito de la educación Católica.

La educación Católica lo que intenta es dirigirnos a Dios. Cualquier cosa que nos aleje de Dios no tiene lugar y espacio en la educación Católica. A la Iglesia le ha sido confiada la misión de proclamar la Buena Nueva del evangelio y acercarnos a Dios, quien es el camino, la Verdad y la Vida. Una de las enseñanzas fundamentales de la Iglesia es que los seres humanos somos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Por lo tanto, el valor y la dignidad de la persona humana viene dado por Dios. Esta es la razón de la enseñanza de la Iglesia sobre la vida humana, la cual debe ser respetada desde el momento de la concepción hasta su muerte natural.

Una escuela o institución Católica no puede desviarse de este principio fundamental de moral y respeto, por intrínsecas dignidad y respeto de la vida del ser humano. Es claro que la enseñanza de la Iglesia sobre el aborto es objetiva y siempre considerará que el aborto es un acto diabólico porque mata a niños dentro de vientre de la madre. Por cada, el aborto no puede ser permitido y debe ser condenado y nunca excusado.

Sería muy inconsistente y equivocado que una escuela Católica enseñe o deshonre la verdad sobre la naturaleza del ser humano.

El Presidente Barack Obama ha hecho comentarios que claramente apoyan el aborto. Por sus palabras y acciones durante sus primeros tres meses de gobierno ha perpetrado un asalto sobre los niños por nacer. Con su puño y letra, ha renovado las sanciones que limitaban el aborto antes que tomaran posesión de su presidencia. Él ha apoyado abiertamente la propuesta de ley de escogencia, conocida en inglés como “Freedom of Choice Act”, la cual remueve las regulaciones sobre el aborto. Más aún, recientemente y públicamente anunció que desechará la Regla de Conciencia, la cual se refiere al derecho que tienen los médicos y enfermeras por convicciones morales y religiosas de negarse a ejecutar y participar en un aborto u otro procedimiento que atente contra la vida humana. El asunto moral sobre el respeto a la dignidad y el derecho a la vida del ser humano es prioridad en la educación Católica.

Por lo tanto, invitar a alguien para que con sus palabras promueva el aborto y de una manera arrogante desafía a más de millones de americanos es equivocado, injusto y escandaloso. Las palabras del Presidente de los Estados Unidos y sus acciones contradicen las enseñanzas de la Iglesia Católica. El no merece estar allí en una ceremonia de una Universidad Católica.

Además, la Universidad “Notre Dame” al otorgar un grado honorífico en leyes al actual Presidente de los Estados Unidos, ratificaría la posición del Presidente de los Estados Unidos que va en contra de las enseñanzas de la fe Católica.

Cuando la administración de la Universidad “Notre Dame” elija a los honores al Presidente Obama perderá su credibilidad y su alma.

Misa Crismal el 7 de abril en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — El 7 de abril, a las siete de la tarde, celebraremos la Misa de Crisma en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro. En esta misa nuestro Arzobispo Eusebio Beltrán presidirá junto a los presbíteros de las diferentes parroquias de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City.

Allí, se manifestará una expresión de la comunión que existe entre los sacerdotes y el Arzobispo. Esa misa representa también la fiesta de la fidelidad sacerdotal, porque es la renovación de una gozosa y total fidelidad a Dios a la Iglesia y al pueblo de Dios. En la Misa de Crisma se hace la bendición de los óleos y la consagración del Santo Crisma, a través de los cuales se seguirá construyendo la unidad Arquidiocesana.

Todos los hispanos católicos estamos invitados a tan importante celebración litúrgica. Honremos a nuestro Señor ese día con nuestra presencia.

Oremos juntos para encontrar la paz que estos momentos difíciles nos exiguen.

Es mandato de Dios buscar la paz y la reconciliación para alcanzar el perdón de nuestros pecados. Nuestra presencia ahora más que nunca es de suma importancia en la Iglesia.
Encuentro personal con Jesús que hace el pueblo hispano

Misa dominical en español en la Iglesia San Francisco de Asís

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — La Santa Misa es fuente y prioridad para los creyentes que profesan la fe Católica. No hay duda que el incremento de las misas dominicales en español que se efectúan en las diferentes parroquias de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City representan la confianza en Dios depositada por la feligresía inmigrante de origen hispano.

Los feligreses hispanoparlantes de San Francisco de Asís dan las gracias a Dios por tener la oportunidad de tener la celebración litúrgica en español y así evitar cualquier confusión entre aquellos que están acostumbrados a la misa en el idioma español.

Al respecto, Israel Ramírez, quien es un católico inmigrante oriundio de México, nos dijo: “Mi esposa y yo éramos miembros del Sagrado Corazón hace más de un año y ahora asistimos en el norte de Oklahoma City a la misa de la parroquia de San Francisco de Asís que ofrece misa todos los domingos a la una y media de la tarde. Me gusta mucho el templo porque es muy bonito, es todo de mármol, también me gusta porque tiene un órgano de tubos nuevo que se escucha muy bien en toda la estructura del templo, lo que da mucha inspiración. Además la comunidad de esta parroquia es muy acogedora, se siente uno en familia e igualmente no hay tanta gente. Me gusta que hay cantos en latín como el santo, el gloria y algunos otros, pues eso nos hace sentir más unidos a la comunidad americana y mexicana, por cierto nuestro coro no todos habla español pero canta en español y latín muy bien, lo que está muy bueno”.

La Iglesia Católica toma en consideración al pueblo al que se dirige, utilizando su lenguaje, su cultura y sus necesidades, lo cual permite una verdadera armonía entre sus fieles y un entendimiento claro del mensaje de Cristo.

Finalmente, Israel Ramírez nos dijo que la parroquia San Francisco de Asís ha incrementado su feligresía hispana de una manera grandiosa porque la comunidad de San Francisco de Asís abre sus brazos para recibirlos.

Para más información sobre dónde está ubicada esta parroquia y cómo hacerse miembro de ésta, pueden llamar al teléfono: (405) 528-0485 o ingresar a su página electrónica: www.stfrancisokc.com.

La presidirá Padre Raúl Sánchez en el auditorio de la escuela “Bishop McGuinness”

Conferencia busca vigorizar la vida cristiana de nuestra feligresía

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Ahora más que nunca, los feligreses deben buscar alejarse del pensamiento profano. Bajo las actuales circunstancias, muchos han tomado el camino del pesimismo por considerar la realidad inescrutable. El que no está bien arraigado en la fe cómodamente piensa que ha llegado el momento de adaptarse a la concepción profana de la vida. Esta actitud desviada se manifiesta en el campo filosófico y cotidiano, lo que hace desviar los aspectos de la rectitud moral.

Debemos buscar una mejor comprensión del concepto de la vida bajo la luz de Cristo y el poder del Espíritu Santo para la sanación de nuestras almas. No podemos dejar que se promueva o distorsione la vida cristiana.

Así entonces, el Padre Raúl Sánchez, quien vino desde Colombia para estar entre nosotros por un tiempo como misionero, nos deleitará con sus prédicas sobre cómo encontrar la paz entre nosotros y alejarnos de toda tentación de vivir la vida de una forma pagana.

La conferencia está pautada para el 18 y 19 de abril y comenzará a las ocho y media de la mañana hasta las cuatro de la tarde. Para más información pueden llamar a la oficina del Ministerio Hispano por el teléfono: (405) 728-3561.
Jobs Box

Bookkeeper/Payroll

The Carmelite Sisters at Villa Teresa have an opening for a full charge bookkeeper-payroll position. This position is full time and provides a great benefit package that includes health, dental, life and long-term disability insurance, 10 days sick leave and two personal days. In addition, one week of vacation and a donation to a 403b retirement account after one year. Send your resume to Marilyn Ketch at 1300 Classen Drive, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73103, fax to (405) 236-3170 or contact her at (405) 232-7926 Ext. 103.

Part-Time Cafeteria Worker

Bishop McGuinness High School cafeteria has a part-time job available starting immediately. The hours are 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Contact Marguerite Claybaugh, cafeteria manager, at (405) 842-6656 Ext. 257 or e-mail her at mclaybaugh@bmchs.org.

Part-Time Music Teacher

Bishop John Carroll School has an opening for the 2009-2010 school year for a part-time music teacher. BJCS is a pre-K through eighth-grade school. Call the school office at (405) 525-0956 for an application or send resume to Connie Diotte, 1100 NW 32nd St., Oklahoma City 73118.

Long-Term Substitute

Sacred Heart Catholic School in OKC is accepting applications for a long-term substitute for a maternity leave. The position is for a middle school language arts teacher, certification required. Call the school office at (405) 634-5673 for an application or send a resume to Joana Camacho, SHCS, 2700 S. Shartel Ave., Oklahoma City 73109.

Teaching Positions 2009-2010

Villa Teresa Catholic School in Oklahoma City is accepting applications for teaching positions in the summer and fall 2009-2010 school year. For the summer, we need a water safety instructor for the swimming program. For fall, positions for fourth grade and an additional second grade are needed. A long-term substitute is also needed for first grade for the first nine weeks of school next fall. Please call the school office (232-4286) for an interview and send resume to Sister Veronica Higgins, 1216 Classen Drive, Oklahoma City 73103.

St. Philip Neri School Seeking a Principal

St. Philip Neri School in Midwest City is seeking a principal for the 2009-2010 school year. St. Philip Neri, a school of approximately 220 students, enrolls pre-K (3-year-olds) through eighth grade. The school is accredited by the Oklahoma Conference of Catholic School Accreditation Association, which is recognized by the state of Oklahoma. A candidate must be a practicing Catholic with at least three years of teaching experience, preferably in a Catholic school. Applicant should have a master's degree in educational administration or a related field. The position is available July 1, 2009, but the interview process will begin as soon as possible. An application may be obtained from Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, call (405) 721-4202 or e-mail inquires to mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Elementary Principal Position Available

Holy Trinity Catholic School is a 3-year-old to eighth-grade school located in Okarche. Holy Trinity enrolls around 90 students with a professional staff of 15, and is fully accredited by the Oklahoma Conference of Catholic School Accreditation Association, which is recognized by the state of Oklahoma. Candidates for principal must be willing to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the school as well assist in developing long-range goals for the school. Excellent communication skills and enthusiasm for developing and maintaining a top grade academic and religious-oriented school are a must. Candidate must be a practicing Catholic and hold a master's degree in educational administration or related field and a minimum of three years educational experience. Position is available for the 2009-2010 school year. An application may be obtained from Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City 73123, call (405) 721-4202 or e-mail mdubey@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Center of Family Love Openings

The Center of Family Love in Okarche has immediate openings for the following: LPNs - Full-time shifts available. DCTs - Certified is great, if not, we will train. Shifts available are 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Dietary aide - Help prepare meals following recipes and menus. Full-time hours available. Housekeeper and laundry aide - Full-time days available, must be able to lift 25 pounds. Maintenance worker - Painting, drywall and general mechanical experience preferred. Full-time hours available. To apply, call 263-4658, fax 263-4718, e-mail alemke@cflinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche 73762. EOE

Executive Director

St. Vincent de Paul Society Oklahoma Archdiocesan Council Board has a part-time position open for an executive director. Understands, interprets and applies rules/policies of the society. Coordinate and manage the day-to-day operation. Assist the board in performance of their various roles. Serve as a mentor and monitor for conference presidents to ensure the maintenance of effective local organizations consistent with the Rules of the Society. Is an active member of their Catholic Parish. Possess excellent verbal, written and computer skills. Mail your resume to St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, 3031 NW 23rd St., OKC 73107, or e-mail stvincentokc@gmail.com.

Teaching Positions 2009-2010

Sacred Heart Catholic School in Oklahoma City is accepting applications for teaching positions for the 2009-2010 school year. SHCS is a PK4 through eighth-grade school. Call the school office at (405) 634-5673 for an application or send a resume to Joana Camacho, SHCS, 2700 S. Shartel Ave., Oklahoma City 73109.

Volunteers

The Good Samaritan Health Clinic needs volunteer physicians, nurses, dieticians, social workers, Spanish translators and receptionists from 9 a.m. until noon on Saturdays. Volunteering will be less than once per month. The application process and other clinic information is on the clinic Web site, goodsamaritanofedmond.com. The state of Oklahoma has the largest rate of uninsured residents in the nation and about 8,000 to 21,000 live in Edmond.

Assistant Professor (English)

St. Gregory’s University, a Catholic and Benedictine liberal arts community with over 130 years of educational excellence, seeks qualified and enthusiastic applicants for a full-time, tenure-track position in English, beginning August 2009. Ph.D. in English (by August of 2009) is required. A specialization in English composition/rhetoric and/or secondary English education is highly desirable. We are committed to excellence in undergraduate teaching and the ideal candidate will demonstrate that value. The successful candidate will teach English Composition I and II (a common core requirement) and upper-level English courses (including young adult literature, children’s literature and teaching writing/literature). Candidates must be supportive of and willing to contribute to the Catholic and Benedictine identity of the university. Send letter of application, vita, transcripts, statement of teaching philosophy and three letters of recommendation to the attention of Father Robert A. Busch, Ph.D., Dean, College of Arts and Sciences. Application materials may be sent electronically to hr@stgregorys.edu or via mail service to Human Resources Department, St. Gregory’s University, 1900 W. MacArthur Drive, Shawnee, Okla. 74804. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

For a full Jobs Box listing, go to catharchdioceseokc.org and click on Job Listings
Calendar

APRIL

5 Palm Sunday

5 Lenten Penance Rite at St. Andrew in Moore at 5 p.m.

7 Chrism Mass at Our Lady’s Cathedral, 6 p.m.

9 Holy Thursday

10 Good Friday, Fast and Abstinence

10 Start of the Personal Novena, for Divine Mercy Sunday. For more information, call Warren at 715-0776.

11 The Benedictine Oblates of Red Plains Monastery will meet from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, contact Sister Eunice at 373-4565 or osbokc@ionet.net.

12 Easter Sunday - Holy Day of Obligation

14-May 12 Catholic Coming Home program at St. Charles Parish in Oklahoma City, each Tuesday from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Kastner room.

17-25 Monthly Novena to the Infant Jesus, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, Nat’l Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Saint Wenceslaus Church, SH-99 7 miles N. I-40 or 20 miles S. I-44 at Stroud exit, Prague, (405) 567-3080.

18 Villa Teresa Catholic School Open House from 2 to 4 p.m.

18 A Day of Reflection for women to discern their vocation, whether it be a vocation to the single, married or religious life. Single Catholic women 18 and older are invited to St. Eugene Church in Weatherford (704 N. Bryan) for this day of discernment led by Sister Joanne Yankauskis, OSB. There is no cost and lunch is provided. Reservations are required by April 13 to Sister Joanne at redplains@mountosb.org.

18 Stepping Into Marriage with Children. Issues highlighted in the program are communication, step-family structures, former spouses, sexuality, spirituality. For more information or to register, call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

19 Divine Mercy Sunday

19 Divine Mercy celebration at St. John the Baptist in Edmond at 3 p.m. There will be an hour of Eucharist Adoration with the Chaplet and the Rosary said aloud. For more information, call Warren at 715-0776.

19 Divine Mercy Holy Hour at St. Charles Borromeo at NW 50th and Grove in Oklahoma City at 3 p.m. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Rosary and other prayers will be followed by Benediction. Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available. For information, call 720-8942.

Notre Dame Professor

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a strongly pro-abortion record, including persistent vetoes of restrictions on late-term abortions. The abolition of conscience protection could spell the end of Catholic hospitals and drive Catholics out of much of the medical profession. That prospect raises our leaders’ honoring of Obama to a new level of scandal and even betrayal.

The definitive “life” issue arises from Obama’s authorization of HHS “to fund and conduct human embryonic stem cell research.” (ESCR). Adult stem cells, derived from bone marrow and other sources, have been used successfully in relieving various injuries and medical conditions. Embryonic stem cells have never successfully treated a human patient for anything. But federal funding would make ESCR a profitable, if useless, industry.

No moral problems arise in the use of adult stem cells. But every embryo is a living human being. To remove the stem cells kills that embryo. It is, in moral terms, a murder.

ESCR can be performed on embryos left over from in vitro fertilization. The excuse that “they are going to die anyway” does not justify intentionally killing them any more than it would justify involuntary lethal experiments on condemned criminals.

ESCR can also be performed on embryos created by cloning. In cloning, the nucleus of a somatic cell, which is any cell of the body other than a sperm or egg cell, is inserted into an egg (ovum) cell from which the egg cell’s nucleus has been removed. The egg is then electrically stimulated to react as if it had been fertilized by a sperm cell. The result is a one-cell zygote which divides and develops. For the first eight weeks it is called an embryo. The cloned embryo is genetically identical to the donor of the somatic cell.

Cloning can be reproductive, in which the embryo is implanted in a woman’s womb and carried to term, or therapeutic, in which the embryo is killed by removal of the stem cells for use in research. Both types are condemned by Catholic teaching. See Dignitas Personae (2008), nos. 28-30.

“[W]e will ensure,” Obama said, “that our government never opens the door to the use of cloning for human reproduction. It is dangerous, profoundly wrong, and has no place in our society, or any society.” He opened the door for the worse evil of therapeutic cloning. The Dickey Amendment, which has denied funds for “creation of a human embryo ... for research purposes” or for “research in which a human embryo is destroyed,” is being removed. So the Obama administration will fund the creation of new human beings by cloning for the purpose of killing them and using their stem cells for research. The experiments performed by Nazi doctors on concentration camp prisoners were unimaginative and primitive by comparison. Our leaders ought not to act like the “good Germans,” who were submissive to their Fuhrer, by conferring Notre Dame’s highest honors on the perpetrator of such an atrocity.

Apart from the “life” issues, our leaders were reckless to commit Notre Dame to Obama in the face of mounting and well-grounded opposition to other Obama policies, including his fiscal deficits and such a stunning expansion of executive power and of federal control over private entities and states that it amounts to a constitutional coup. Unmentioned in the background are the pending lawsuits — not yet decided on the merits by the Supreme Court — that raise serious questions as to Obama’s eligibility for the office.

Our leaders act in what they think is the best interest of Notre Dame. But that is no excuse. The invitation should be withdrawn. It implies no personal animosity to suggest that Father Jenkins and the other fellows and trustees responsible for this fiasco should resign or be removed.

What would be a proper response? On-site demonstrations would be counterproductive. You can petition or write to our leaders. But the appeal should be made instead to a higher authority. An alumnus has suggested that students, faculty, staff and friends of Notre Dame ought to — and we will — pray a continuous Rosary of reparation at the Grotto during the time of commencement, from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 17. This would not interfere with commencement, which is on the other side of campus. It would not be a demonstration or protest. No signs, marches or disruption. Just peaceful prayer, in silence or aloud, by individuals and families. If you can’t make it to the Grotto, pray the Rosary during that time wherever you are. Incidentally, Professor Mary Ann Glendon, the Laetare Medal recipient, would make a better use of her time at the Grotto than as a warm-up or wind-up act at commencement.

Parking is limited, but you can park off campus and walk to the Grotto. There should be no objection by Notre Dame officials to students, faculty, staff and friends of Notre Dame peacefully going to the Grotto to pray. It makes no difference how many show up. The objective is simply a union of prayer to make reparation and to petition Notre Dame, Our Lady, for Notre Dame, our University.

Professor Emeritus Rice is on the law school faculty. He may be reached at rice.I@nd.edu and 574-633-4415.
Residents of the Center of Family Love in Okarche attended a rally recently at the state Capitol. Shown front row from left are Drew Thompson, Dwayne Gritz, Cassie Pinter, Rodney Nusz, Brent Butler and Katrina Noble; back row, Melissa Kester and Ashley Lawson.

OKARCHE — Residents from the Center of Family Love celebrated Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month during March.

“This is a time when our organization focuses on encouraging the public to better understand the individuals we serve,” said Jim O’Brien, executive director. “We encourage people to learn more about the 128 people in this community who have developmental disabilities.”

O’Brien said people with developmental disabilities impact the community in a positive way on a daily basis.

“We know how valuable people with disabilities are to their communities,” he said. “Our goal is to help people understand when they see someone with a disability, to realize there’s more there than meets the eye. Instead of focusing on the disability, we want to encourage everyone to focus on abilities and talents.”

The Center of Family Love, 6th and Texas in Okarche, will team with the Lions Club of Okarche to host an open house at the garden center/gift shop from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 4. For more information, call Rhonda Hardin at 263-4658.