Guatemalan Catholics are heirs of a martyred church, bishop says

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY – Guatemalan bishops thanked Pope Francis for recognizing the martyrdom of Father Stanley Rother of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the first martyr born in the United States.

Eighteen prelates from Guatemala met with the pope May 22 during their “ad limina” visit, presenting him with an embroidered image of the slain American priest.

Bishop Gonzalo de Villa Vasquez of Solola-Chimaltenango, the diocese where Father Rother lived, worked and died, said the priest who is to be beatified in September is one of many priests and laity in the country who gave their lives for Christ during the country’s brutal 1960-1996 civil war.

“That was the reason for this conversation, because we are the heirs of a martyred church,” Bishop de Villa told Catholic News Service.

The bishop said he was moved by the pope’s affection and concern for the people of Guatemala, a closeness shared by Father Rother, who served as a missionary to the indigenous people of Santiago Atitlan until his murder on July 28, 1981.

Father Rother, he said, was a man who was “very close to the people,” seen not only in learning the local Mayan Tz’utujil language, but also in translating the New Testament into their native tongue.

Parishioners in Santiago Atitlan grew close to Father Rother as well. Finding it difficult to pronounce or translate his first name, the locals affectionately called him by their translation of his middle name: “Padre Apla’s” (“Father Francis”).

However, it was his willingness to lay down his life for his parishioners that “defines him most,” Bishop de Villa said.

Priests and religious in Guatemala were targeted when government forces cracked down on leftist rebels supported by the

continued on page 18

Father’s Day

Deacons’ lives of service inspire sons to become priests

In honor of Father’s Day on June 18, here are grateful words of four archdiocesan priests whose fathers are deacons

By Brianna Osborne
The Sooner Catholic

Father John Paul Lewis and Deacon Paul Lewis

My dad has always been my biggest hero, so his vocation to the diaconate has had a tremendous influence on my own.

When he was ordained it was a big moment for me, because it took this desire that I had to be a priest, and made it into a concrete idea. Seeing him lay down his life in service to others and to the Church showed me what I wanted to do. I am convinced that I probably wouldn’t be a priest today had I not seen my dad give himself in service to the Church as a deacon.

My parents always have been willing to help me along the way to ordination, and they were the first to tell me how proud and grateful they were to have a son with a vocation to the priesthood.

I am so grateful for my dad’s example, and for the kind of deacon he is, serving the people of the Church.

Father Joseph P. Schwarz and Deacon Max Schwarz

The primary way my father has influenced me is by first being a loving husband to my mother and father to us boys.

I am truly blessed that my father is a man of prayer and made us go to Mass every Sunday growing up. His vocation to the diaconate is not a very big influence compared to his being a father and a man of God.

It is nice to be able to talk a little shop with him.

My father supported me in the best way possible by letting it be my vocation and letting me discern the call of God on my own. He supported me through prayer and by being someone to talk to whenever I needed it.

continued on page 20
National conversation on Pope Francis’s call to reflect together

The phenomena of globalization and instantaneous communication present both challenges and opportunities. Changing demographics and massive movements of people within our own country and around the world are resulting in more and more people who are excluded, invisible or living on the peripheries of society. A “throw away culture” that treats people as things or commodities has eroded respect for life and the dignity of human persons.

These are just some of the elements of the changing landscape that we will identify and reflect upon as part of the process at the convocation. Of course, participants will strategize new pastoral responses to these challenges as well.

Changing the situation requires a call to missionary discipleship. The Holy Spirit, transform our hearts and enable us to enter into the perfect communion that you share with the Father and the Son.

Mary, Star of the New Evangelization, pray for us.

Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar

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

June 11 – Confirmation, 10 a.m., Holy Cross, Midwest
June 13-16 – U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Spring General Meeting, Indianapolis
June 17 – Mass for 50th anniversary of Charismatic Renewal, 11 a.m., Sacred Heart, OKC
June 17 – The Center of Family Love Gift of Love Gala, 6 p.m., National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, OKC
June 18 – Confirmation, 11:15 a.m., St. Helen, Frederick
June 20 – Presbyteral Council meeting, 9:30 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
June 20 – MC, Mass, 11:30 a.m., Sacred Sales Chapel, CPC
June 21 – Keynote speaker for Presbyteral Assembly, Rochester, Minn.
June 22 – Rector Basilian Spiritualities, 8 p.m., Holy Name, Sapulpa
June 23 – Holy Hour and dinner with priests of the archdiocese, 5 p.m., CPC
June 24 – Priesthood ordination, 10 a.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, OKC
June 25 – Mass and groundbreaking ceremony, 11 a.m., St. Francis of Assisi, OKC

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

Find more news on the website

By Sooner Catholic Staff

Additional coverage of Church and archdiocesan news and events, only on www.soonercatholic.org.

To send photos, event information or story ideas, e-mail tips@archokc.org.

Deacon Kelly Edwards will be ordained a priest at 10 a.m. June 24 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Reception following at the Corner Center. Admission and reception is open to the public.

Bingo will be held at St. James, 51st and 8th. June 25.

Jubilee Mass and groundbreaking ceremony, 11 a.m., St. Francis of Assisi, OKC

Preparations for the archdiocese.

Jubilee Mass and groundbreaking ceremony, 11 a.m., St. Francis of Assisi, OKC

Find out more about us by visiting our website.

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Annual Catholic Appeal passes $3 million

The 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has raised more than $3.2 million toward the overall goal of $3.5 million.

The appeal goal was met due to the combined efforts of parishes in all 108 parishes and mission churches of the archdiocese.

Proceeds from the 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal serve as the single, largest source of income to make possible the shared ministries of the Church throughout the archdiocese.

Twenty-seven parishes have made their goal, while others have exceeded it by 5 percent or more. All gifts are gratefully accepted at archokc.org/appeal.

Bishops, Rother family celebrate new Fr. Rother building

OKARCHE – Archbishop Coakley joined Archbishop Emeritus Robert, Bishop Rother’s family and parishioners of the Holy Trinity Catholic Church on May 28 to dedicate and bless the new Father Stanley Rother Administrative Building.

The building was blessed in recognition of Father Rother, who will be beatified Sept. 23 in Oklahoma City. Father Rother is the first recognized U.S. martyr and will be the first U.S. priest to be beatified – the last step before beatification.

Following a reading by Father Rother’s sister, Sontee Martin, Bishop Weisenburger, Archbishop Coakley and Archbishop Betancourt blessed Fr. Rother building.

A.S.C., the three bishops cut the red ribbon stretched across the front of the entrance to the building.

The bishops, priests, deacons and Knights of Columbus processed across the street to the church for Mass where each bishop spoke about the parish community in Okarche and Fr. Rother’s examples of love, faith and devotion.

Bishop Weisenburger reminded those in attendance that while Father Rother’s life ended too soon to be a priest and to serve the Mayan people of Santiago Atital, Guatemala, at the cost of his life, we are all called to “year” to what God has planned for us and to live lives of saintly.

Father John Peter Sweeney, pastor of Holy Trinity, added, “We are so grateful for the support and participation of our bishops, clergy, parishioners and Father Rother’s family in the celebration of one of our – Stanley Rother. We will continue to follow Father Stan’s courageous witness of God’s love and the Good News of the Gospel as we prepare for his beatification.”

For more information on the Beatification Mass, go online to staleyrother.org.

Annual Catholic Appeal 2017

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Go Make Disciples

Archbishop Stan’s courageous witness

God our Father,

You guide everything in wisdom and love.

Accept the offerings we offer for our nation.

In your goodness, watch over those in authority so that people everywhere may enjoy freedom, security and peace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

“God’s light is within each of us and it is up to us to bring the light of Christ to others.”

Archbishop Coakley chose the theme of this year’s appeal “God’s Light Shines Through Us” to articulate that God is within each of us and it is up to us to bring the light of Christ to others.

“1 am continually delighted and humbled by the generosity of the people of the archdiocese,” Archbishop Coakley said.

Proceeds from the 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal make possible important ministry across the archdiocese, including faith formation, religious education, youth, young adult and campus ministry. Hispanic ministry and a variety of other ministries.

The Annual Catholic Appeal is the single, largest source of income to make possible the shared ministries of the Church throughout the archdiocese.

Twenty-seven parishes have made their goal, while others have exceeded it by 5 percent or more. Work continues to achieve the 2017 appeal goal, and all gifts are gratefully accepted at archokc.org/appeal.

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

“Enflame the hearts of our bishops, priests, deacons and the entire faith community,”

Bishop O’Brien reminded those attending the beatification mass to continue to pray for Father Rother and now for the archdiocese.

Archinteresis: Archbishop Coakley

Since early May, Archbishop Coakley has been holding an annual series of convocation events across the United States.

The National Conversation on the Joy of the Gospel will be held in Orlando from June 21-24. All events are open to the public.

The following events are being held.

June 17 – Annual Catholic Appeal Mass, 9 a.m., Holy Trinity, Okarche
June 18 – Confirmation, 11:15 a.m., St. Helen, Frederick
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June 20 – Coincident Council meeting, 9:30 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
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Archbishop Paul S. Coakley
Sanctity and the imperfections in our daily lives
Grace is the primary essential element

As I was going through my immense library of pictures, one stood out and has become the origin of this reflection. I was looking at a picture of the great martyr from Poland, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M. Conv.

I immediately identified with him through his photograph. This saint was a regular person. This saint, through this picture showed me dedication to a cause and some imperfections. I am referring to his desk. Saint Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M. Conv., had a very messy desk! So much for the connection between cleanliness and godliness.

So many wonderful virtues and such a dedicated life; so many beautiful writings and so many acts of sacrificial love; so many examples of Christ-centeredness; and I am attracted to his desk etiquette.

For those who are unfamiliar with this great saint from the last great war, Saint Maximilian Kolbe was a Polish Conventual Franciscan friar and his life came to an end in the German death camp of Auschwitz during World War II. Someone else was to be punished with death and he offered the German military his own life instead. He was martyred.

An important aspect of his ministry was how he promoted devotion and consecration to the Immaculate Virgin Mary. He is sometimes referred to as the Apostle of Consecration to Mary. The origin of love of Mary had much to do with a vision he had of her when he was only 12. Here is a quote from his writings regarding that supernatural event:

“That night I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me. Then, she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of the crowns. The white one meant that I should purse- vore in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both.”

One year later, he joined the Conventual Franciscans with his brother. By the end of his religious studies, he had earned two doctorate degrees and was eager to put them to work. Ordained a priest in 1938, Kolbe became a publisher. His primary publication was titled, “Scutare Nipo- kalose” (Befriend the Immaculate). In addition to the publishing, he also founded memorials in both Japan and India, but returned to Poland in 1936. Five years later, he would be killed at Auschwitz.

Such a life filled, with thousands of points for reflection on spirituality and holiness, and I am stuck on his messy desk. Why? Well, I can assure you that he has a lot more to do with the fact that I have a messy desk too! So much for the connection between cleanliness and godliness.

What brings me hope, what brings me joy, is the unedited photograph that it contains an important kernel of truth – we can live a life filled with imperfections! We have character traits that drive our spouses and children crazy, we can have personality traits that drive our co-workers to tears, we can even have a very messy desk, but still be faithful disciples giving witness to others of personal sanctity.

Imperfections do not impede holiness. This is not an excuse to give up trying to deal with these imperfections, just a clear sign that you can still become a saint in spite of them. Sanctity and imperfections in daily life. This is how we live...Saint Maximilian Kolbe, patron saint of messy desks, pray for us.

Check out our new app!

Please download the archdiocesan Smart Phone App at archokc.org/app. The App is available for both Apple and Android Devices. The app is free and includes an interactive map of parishes and schools along with prayers, information on vocations, and the latest Sooner Catholic newspaper. In addition you can live stream Oklahoma Catholic Radio anywhere in the world.
SHAWNEE – Saint Gregory’s University celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2017 on May 6 in the Don and Jenetta Sumner Fieldhouse on the Saint Gregory’s campus in Shawnee, conferring 182 associate, bachelor’s or master’s degrees to students from both the Shawnee and Tulsa campuses. President Michael A. Scaperlanda was excited to congratulate the graduating class on their accomplishments. “We are so proud of what our students have accomplished throughout their time at Saint Gregory’s. We, as a campus community, are excited to see what the future holds for each of our graduates as they begin this next chapter in their lives,” he said. “Our graduates are tremendous examples of academic achievement and have found a deeper understanding of what it means to live joy-filled lives in service to others.”

After being conferred with an honorary doctorate of humane letters, commencement speaker Ralph C. Wood, theology and literature professor at Baylor University, addressed the Class of 2017. “It’s a steep uphill road. We will stumble, we will stray from the way, we will get lost, we will even collapse in exhaustion,” Wood said. “Yet, we will fare joyfully forward. So, it is that today you ... are commencing on a new way as pilgrims and wayfarers.”

As part of the ceremony, Mary Ann Stevens, associate professor in the Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, was honored for her many years of devoted service to SGU with a conferral of professor emeritus. Thomas “Austin” Stone was the student speaker. Founded in 1875, Saint Gregory’s University is Oklahoma’s oldest institution of higher learning and only Catholic university. SGU offers a liberal arts education rooted in the Benedictine tradition of cultivating the whole person – mind, body and spirit. With campuses in Shawnee and Tulsa, SGU features both traditional and adult degree programs. Visit stgregorys.edu.

Graduates of the archdiocese’s Pastoral Ministry Program celebrate with Archbishop Coakley after Mass at the St. Francis de Sales Chapel at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Photo Cara Koenig/Sooner Catholic.

SGU President Greg Main

D. Gregory Main, former president of Saint Gregory’s University, died peacefully at home on June 4, surrounded by loving family. He was 74.

Husband, father, exemplary public servant, accomplished executive and beloved friend, Main distinguished himself throughout his life. Above all, he considered his highest achievements to be the love and esteem of family and friends, and his steadfast commitment to his Catholic faith.

He served as president of SGU from 2011-2016 where he established a Catholic nursing program, a partnership with the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and several bold initiatives. His 40 years of economic development experience included tenures as president and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and i2E, Inc. of Oklahoma City; Secretary of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce; Chisholm Private Capital Partners of OKC; deputy director of the Michigan Department of Commerce, and executive director of the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission.

Extensive community involvement included board and leadership roles with Oklahoma Academy for State Goals, Oklahoma Venture Forum, Science Museum of Oklahoma, Creative Oklahoma and Saint Eugene Catholic Church.

Born to Barbara and Western Main in Belding, Mich., on Nov. 1, 1942, he grew up in Lansing, graduating summa cum laude from Michigan State University in 1970 with a degree in urban planning. He completed extensive training and post graduate studies in a variety of management specialties and received an honorary doctoral degree from SGU.

Main is survived by his devoted wife of 53 years, Barbara, and their children, Todd Main (Theresa Amato), Jennifer (Gary) Berwick, Adam Main, Katie (Josh) Fry and Elisabeth Main; his brother Tim (Martha) Main of Madison, Wisc., and sister, Michelle (Ted) Holmberg of Lansing.

Funeral service was held on June 7 at Saint Eugene with burial in Lansing, Mich.

Memorials may be directed to The Children’s Center Rehabilitation Hospital, Oklahoma Academy for State Goals and Saint Eugene Catholic Church.
BISHOP MCGUINNESS CLASS OF 2017
Contagious Faith

If you knew the gift

A few weeks ago, I found myself sitting beside the well where Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman, as told in John 4. Their encounter was one of those odd “divine appointments” that Jesus安排s sometimes.

She was doing an entirely routine household chore when he suddenly broke through the silence and surprised her. She was on her daily water collection routine when he asked her for a drink. His real motivation was not dying of thirst, he wasn’t as thirsty for water as he was thirsty for her love.

Such a candid observation reveals Jesus’ true motivations for initiating this conversation ought to provoke some wonder. Observe the careful courtship dance. He asks her, “Would you like a drink?” After all. [Not that she was someone who observed the rules with any great devotion], Jesus’ reply is mysterious. “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is …”

“If you knew the gift of God …” The implication, of course, is that she did not “know the gift of God.” She was not irrelevant. She knew some theology as their dialogue indicates. But, she did not actually know the gift. Not yet. And, not knowing the gift had led her into all kinds of destructive behavior, earning her the reputation that cautioned against showing her face in town when the other women might be around; other women whose husbands and brothers and cousins had perhaps taken advantage of the fact that she didn’t think she had a gift worth protecting.

“I am he, the one who is speaking to you.” How destructive our choices can be. When we do not know The Gift, Jesus Christ. And, yet, how often our practice of our religion can suggest that it doesn’t really matter whether we know or not. We make jokes about people who act like they can have a personal relationship with Jesus, i.e. “Jesus and me.” In doing so, we are killing people. “Hey, be a Catholic where you can be another anonymous face in the crowd to God.” But, here’s this; it matters to him, and it should matter to us. Doing religious routines is not enough. If you know him, you should want your friends to know him. If you don’t know him, you should admit it and take steps to get to know him. This is the object of our faith, “to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3, first line of the Catechism). It matters!

Pope Francis wrote in “Joy of the Gospel,” “But, this conviction has to be sustained by our own constantly renewed experience of seeing Christ’s friendship and his message. It is impossible to preserve in a fervent evangelization unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it, and not the same thing to contemplate him, to worship him, to find out peace in him, as not to.”

“It is not the same thing to try to build the world with his Gospel as to try to do so by our own light. We know well that with Jesus, life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. Thus is why we evangelize.”

“A true missionary, who never ceases to be a disciple, knows that Jesus talks with him, speaks to him, breathes with him, works with him.” Pope Francis, “Joy of the Gospel”

School is accepting applications for a Head girls’ basketball and assistant girls’ basketball coach for the 2017-18 school year. Head coach must have the ability to oversee the entire girls’ basketball program for grades 9-12 and be involved in the Catholic Grade School Activities Association (CGSAA). These are part-time positions at this time.

Applications must have completed or be in the process of completing a college degree and have experience as a head coach, high school level. Send resume, cover letter and three references to (405) 631-8865 or e-mail to tseidel@kansascatholic.org.

To see more job openings, go online to www.catholicjobline.com.

From the Archives …

S tandy Francis Rother served Mass frequently as a child. Fr. Rother’s spirituality was formed in an atmosphere of family prayer and involvement in his home parish. Every evening after dinner, the family knelt to recite the Rosary. Their parish, Holy Trinity in the German-American community of Okarche, was the center of their life in faith. His pastor, the colorful and sometimes stern Monsignor Zumwalt Stehr, was an inspiration to young Stanley as he discerned his vocation. Monsignor Stehr’s love of children also was a hallmark of Fr. Rother’s priesthood.
1917 fue un año trascendental en muchos aspectos. El mundo ya estaba en guerra y los Estados Unidos estaban entrando en la lucha en el conflicto que hoy conocemos como Primera Guerra Mundial. Hizo una resolución en Rusia y el comunismo estaba ganando terreno en ese orgulloso país. Nuestra Señora apareció a tres niñas pastores en Fatima, Portugal, invitándolas a rezar el Rosario para la paz.

En agosto de 1917, obispos americanos y representantes de 68 diócesis, 27 organizaciones católicas y la prensa católica se reunieron en Washington, DC para coordinar esfuerzos en respuesta a los considerables desafíos de aquellos tiempos. Esa reunión en Washington resultó en la organización que conocemos como la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB).

Como lo hicieron hace 100 años, los obispos de los Estados Unidos están invitiendo a muchos líderes, organizaciones y apoyadores a participar en un evento llamado “Convocatoria de Líderes Católicos de 2017”.

Recientemente, el Papa Francisco llamó a reflexionar juntos sobre la espiritualidad y la santidad personal, vidas llenas de la gracia de Dios. Las imperfecciones no impiden la santidad. Esto no es una excusa para renunciar a tratar de hacer frente a estas imperfecciones, sólo requiere señalar claramente de que no estás bajo el poder de esas imperfecciones de la vida diaria. La santidad y las imperfecciones en la vida diaria pueden ir tomadas de la mano. Esta es una buena noticia llena de esperanzas. No creo que esto llegue a ser oficial, pero lo diré de todos modos... San Maximiliano Kolbe, patrono de los escritorios desordenados, ruega por nosotros.

Oración Para La Convocatoria De Líderes Católicos De 2017

O no Espíritu Santo, tú que prime-
ros recordaste en nuestros corazo-
nes la alegría del Evangelio, re-
manosa a monjitas que viven en la ac-
tualidad. Nos lleva como a las que saysa del la con-
ciencia, la reflexión para la vida y la d

Oración para el éxito de este evento

La gracia es un elemento principal y esencial. Podemos tener problemas de personalidad que llevan a nuestros compañeros de trabajo y a los iguales; incluso podemos tener un escritor muy desordenado, pero todavía podemos ser disciplinados fielmente un testimonio a los demás con nuestra santidad personal, vivas llenas de la gracia de Dios. Las imperfecciones no impiden la santidad. Esto no es una excusa para renunciar a tratar de hacer frente a estas imperfecciones, sólo requiere señalar claramente de que no estás bajo el poder de esas imperfecciones de la vida diaria. La santidad y las imperfecciones en la vida diaria pueden ir tomadas de la mano. Esta es una buena noticia llena de esperanzas. No creo que esto llegue a ser oficial, pero lo diré de todos modos... San Maximiliano Kolbe, patrono de los escritorios desordenados, ruega por nosotros.

La apertura de la Convocatoria de Líderes Católicos de 2017

A mediados de 2017, la Oficina de Ministerio Hispano divulgó una alerta con una serie de medidas de personalidad que llevan a nuestros feligreses a la santidad personal, vivas llenas de la gracia de Dios. Las imperfecciones no impiden la santidad. Esto no es una excusa para renunciar a tratar de hacer frente a estas imperfecciones, sólo requiere señalar claramente de que no estás bajo el poder de esas imperfecciones de la vida diaria. La santidad y las imperfecciones en la vida diaria pueden ir tomadas de la mano. Esta es una buena noticia llena de esperanzas. No creo que esto llegue a ser oficial, pero lo diré de todos modos... San Maximiliano Kolbe, patrono de los escritorios desordenados, ruega por nosotros.

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Celebrate June feast days

By Ted King
The Sooner Catholic

Solemnity of the Holy Trinity
Sunday, June 11, is the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, also known as Trinity Sunday. It is the Sunday we celebrate the reality of the Trinity: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Saint Anthony of Padua
Tuesday, June 13, is the feast day of Saint Anthony of Padua (1195-1231), who was a Portuguese Franciscan born in Lisbon to a noble family and was a contemporary of Saint Francis of Assisi. He had a vast knowledge of the Bible and a great talent for preaching. Most of his ministry was in Padua, Italy. He was regarded as a wonder worker by many, among whom was Saint Francis de Sales, who asserted Anthony had the power of finding lost articles, and many Catholics pray to him to find something that is lost. He died on June 13, 1231, and was canonized a saint the next year. In 1946, Pope Pius XII declared him a doctor of the Church.

Most Holy Body of Christ
Sunday, June 18, is the feast day of the Most Holy Body of Christ, also known as Corpus Christi. There is a procession that takes place with the priest holding the monstrance containing the Eucharist. This tradition began by Saint Juliana of Liege, Belgium (1192-1258), a nun who was devoted to the veneration of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1264, Pope Urban IV issued a decree creating Corpus Christi as a feast day throughout the Church.

Saint Romuald
Monday, June 19, is the feast day of Saint Romuald (950-1027), who was born to a noble family and was a contemporary of Saint Paulinus of Nola. He was active in France to an illustrious Roman family. He became a Roman senator and later converted to Christianity and became Bishop of Nola in modern day Italy. He died on June 22, 1027.

Saint Aloysius Gonzaga
Wednesday, June 21, is the feast day of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga (1568-1591), who was born in Italy to an aristocratic family. When he was young, he felt a call to the religious life. His father objected and then he wanted his son to become a soldier. Aloysius eventually prevailed over his father’s and other family members’ objections and entered the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, in 1585 and relinquished his inheritance of the family wealth. On June 21, 1591, Aloysius died a victim of the plague that swept through Rome that year. He was only 23. Pope Benedict XIII canonized him a saint in 1726 and three years later declared him patron of young students. In 1926, Pope Pius XI declared him patron of all Christian youth.

Saint Paulinus of Nola, Saint Thomas More, Saint John Fisher
Thursday, June 22, is the feast day of three saints: Saint Paulinus of Nola, Saint Thomas More and Saint John Fisher. Saint Paulinus (354-431) was a poet and writer who was born in France to an illustrious Roman family. He became a Roman senator and later converted to Christianity and became Bishop of Nola in modern day Italy. He died on June 22, 431. Saint Thomas More (1478-1535) was an Oxford-educated lawyer and member of Parliament. He considered the religious life, but chose family life and the law. He authored the book “Utopia,” a work of satire still read to this day. In 1529, King Henry VIII appointed him Lord Chancellor, and his time in that post was severely tested. In 1532, Henry declared himself head of the Church in England, severing ties with Rome as a result of his divorce from the Spanish Catherine of Aragon and marriage to Anne Boleyn. Thomas More resigned his post. He refused to acknowledge Henry as head of the Church and was tried for treason, convicted and executed after saying from the scaffold he was, “the King’s good servant, but God’s first.”

Saint John Fisher (1469-1535) was the chancellor of the University of Cambridge. He became the Bishop of Rochester, and he, too, like Thomas More, refused to acknowledge King Henry’s divorce and re-marriage and declaration of himself as head of the Church in England. He too was executed for treason. Both Thomas More and Saint John Fisher were canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1935. Ironically, both of them are buried in the floor in the Anglican chapel at the Tower of London along with Anne Boleyn.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Friday, June 23, is the feast day of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Nativity of John the Baptist
Saturday, June 24, is the feast day of the Nativity of John the Baptist. His birthday is reported in Luke 1:57-66. Saint John the Baptist foretold the coming of Jesus and baptized Our Lord in the River Jordan.

Ted King is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

I remember being home from seminary and the phone ringing in the middle of the night because someone had just died. I heard him talk to a distraught family member briefly and saying he would be there in a couple of minutes. My dad was my first spiritual director. Dad periodically, there, we would go to church together. He's not just submissive to the Lord in bringing the Body of Christ to those not able to gather with the parish at weekend liturgies. And, his devotion to my mother during her long illness was a cross that he embraced with courage and great faith.

Father Christopher Brashears and Deacon Loren F. Luschen
Father Christopher Brashears and Deacon Loren F. Luschen are the former managing editor of the Sooner Catholic.

The ministry that has been his outreach to the elderly. For many years, he made weekly visits to the home-bound and to those in hospitals and nursing homes, bringing them the Eucharist. It seems to have brought him much satisfaction to serve the Lord in bringing the Body of Christ to those not able to gather with the parish at weekend liturgies. And, his devotion to my mother during her long illness was a cross that he embraced with courage and great faith.