Leading people to God

Deacon Daniel Grover to be ordained a priest

"Without the priest, the passion and death of Our Lord would be of no avail. It is the priest who continues the work of redemption here on earth. ... The priest is not a priest for himself - he is a priest for you."

Saint John Vianney, patron saint of priests

By Ted King
For the Sooner Catholic

Ann and Clyde Grover thought their son Daniel, the second oldest of their five children, was somewhat of a rabble-rouser and the least likely of their three sons to become a priest. His mother, a cradle Catholic, and his father, a convert Catholic, both of whom served in the U.S. Air Force, made their Catholic faith a cornerstone of their family life, which included saying the Rosary and attending Mass every Sunday. As Danny Grover said, "God was always going to be a part of our lives."

Grover grew up in three states and two foreign countries, and the family settled in Moore in 1996 when Clyde Grover retired. Grover attended Briarwood Elementary and Brink Junior High School in Moore and Bishop McGuinness High School in Oklahoma City.

In 2013, a tornado destroyed the Grovers' home and Briarwood Elementary. Today, his parents live in Midwest City. Clyde Grover is a newly-ordained permanent deacon and a teacher at Bishop McGuinness, and Ann Grover is the religious education secretary at Saint Andrew in Moore.

Deacon Grover prays at his 2014 diaconate ordination. Photo Cara Koenig.

Danny Grover said it was his parish youth group, which met for Bible study on Thursday nights, had dinner and spent time in communal prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, where "I really found God for the first time in my life."

However, after high school when he went to OU, Danny began to drift away from the Church and continued on page 6

Deacon Lance Warren to be ordained a priest

By Charles Albert
For the Sooner Catholic

"Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends."

It was this principle that built his foundation and started his path into the priesthood.

As a Methodist, and like many non-Catholics, Warren's first Catholic Mass was very confusing. He had many questions about Catholicism that his Catholic girlfriend at the time could not answer.

However, something drew him back and he started attending daily Mass by himself. He noticed that the priests - Father David Konderla and Father Mike Sis - always had a sense of peace they carried with them.

He was so inspired to learn more, he signed up for "Aggie Awakening." continued on page 6

"Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Deacon Warren carries the incense at this year's Chrism Mass. Photo Cara Koenig.

John 15:13. After four years in the Corps, his guiding principle became,
The future of marriage hangs in the balance

The recent media fascination with the “transition” of Bruce Jenner into Caitlyn has highlighted the tragic questions dealing with the very definition of marriage. What “marriage” could mean.

Our bodies matter. We don’t just have a woman are designed by God in relation to one another, and men and women are equal and different. Together they are created for a sacred bond of life-giving love. Marriage is the embrace designed by God for the next generation. While Jesus elevated Christian marriage to a sacrament, the complementarity of men and women, and deserves to be loved and raised by them. Cermonies that do this. Every child has a mother and father joined together in a stable marriage.

Who could have imagined that such common sense and rationality would clash with the justiciation of marriage unjustly dismissed by the courts.

It would change literally thousands of laws all at once. Marriage recognition by its nature remains the definition of marriage and religious liberty. We can become advocates for marriage and religious liberty.

In addition to the devastating effect that a redefinition of marriage would have on children, there are also major consequences for the common good of society and the natural meaning of marriage can be known in every culture and society. The essence of marriage is that a man and a woman are joined to each other for the purpose of procreation and the raising of children to be raised by both a mother and a father. Both. marriage is a moral order.

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What is VSED and why should it matter to us?

WEDDLE speaks in Oklahoma City
More than 300 parents gathered at a conference at the Pastoral Center on June 5 to hear experts explain how to have a personal relationship with Christ and form intentional relationships with their children. The conference was sponsored by the Oklahoma Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

"There are people out there waiting for us who want the message," said Edward Weddell, author of "Integrating Disciples: The Path to Deep and Abundant Faith in Jesus Christ." "There is a need for people to understand how to form a personal relationship with Christ and let that be the foundation for their lives."

For more information about New Evangelization and Weddell’s book, you can visit www.edwardweddell.com or call (405) 758-4000, Ext. 186.

The Sooner Catholic is supported through the Archdiocese Development Fund.

A few weeks ago, a Pew Research Group released a new Religious Landscape Survey, which measures trends in religious prac-
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Grover –
continued from page 1

his studies. “I didn’t go to class and didn’t go to Mass. I drifted away. I wanted to watch football and play video games, and I did that.” In the spring of 2005, he 1.3 GPA brought him back to reality and out of school. “God reaches you when you are at your lowest,” he realized, and he was resolved to be more serious about his life. After dropping out of OU, Grover took a job working for an environmental engineering company. “I had a lot of time on my hands, and I read the Harry Potter series in a week. Then, I decided to read the Bible, which I had never read before. I don’t read it like a regular book, though, a wise priest once told me.”

Grover went back to school, this time Oklahoma City Community College, where he attended from spring 2006 to spring 2007, studying logic, philosophy and world religions—subjects he later would take in the seminary. He also attended retreats, where a vocation to the priesthood was fostered. “I wanted to do something in the Church, and I always thought about the priesthood.”

He credits Father Phil Sexton, the chaplain at McGuinness, for encouraging his vocation; Father Jack Forsyth, the pastor of his home parish; and Archbishop Eusebius Beltran, who asked him, “Are you going into the seminary?”

In the fall of 2007, Danny Grover entered Conception Seminary College in northern Missouri and later went to Saint Meinrad School of Theology in southern Indiana. He is especially fond of the writings of Saint Augustine of Hippo, which he said “have opened up the faith for me.” He also is inspired by Augustus’s mother, Saint Monica, who prayed for her son’s conversion.

On June 27, along with two other deacons, Aaron Foxlee and Lance Warren, Deacon Danny Grover will be ordained Father Danny Grover and will become the associate pastor of Saint Joseph in Norman. He admittedly blends Crimson and Cream and is pleased about being back in Norman. Unlike the time he attended as a student, when God wasn’t at the forefront of his life, this time, he said, “I want to lead people to God.” Ted King is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Archbishop ordains new transitional deacon

To serve others with joy and love

By Diane Clay
The Sooner Catholic

Newly ordained deacon John Paul Lewis stood before the altar to receive congratulations from his fellow deacons, one-by-one. At the end of the line was his father, Deacon Paul Lewis, whose long embrace of his son welcomed him into the diaconal order. God willing, John Paul Lewis will be ordained a priest in June 2016. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley ordained Lewis to the transitional diaconate for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City on June 6 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help — the parish in which Lewis grew up. More than 100 of Lewis’s friends, fellow seminarians, high school classmates and his family, including his parents Deacon Paul and Rosemary Lewis, attended the ordination.

Lewis’s mother, Saint Monica, who prayed for her son’s conversion.

“We are called to be a disciple of the Lord, Jesus … not to be served, but to serve.”

Lewis asked parishioners to pray for him, especially for the intercession of The Blessed Mother — Our Lady of Perpetual Help — Saint John Vianney, Saint Benedict and Saint Patrick.

Diane Clay is editor of the Sooner Catholic.

Warren –
continued from page 1

The three-day intensive Catholic retreats are held each year and participants must clear a long waiting list. The three three-day intensive Catholic retreats are held each year and participants must clear a long waiting list. The three three-day intensive Catholic retreats are held each year and participants must clear a long waiting list. The three three-day intensive Catholic retreats are held each year and participants must clear a long waiting list. The three three-day intensive Catholic retreats are held each year and participants must clear a long waiting list.

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Congratulations Class of 2015

Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School
For information on admissions, applications, shadow visits and financial assistance, contact:

(405) 631-8865 Ext. 205
www.mountstmary.org
2801 S. Shartel Ave., OKC 73109
Admissions: dwilson@mountstmary.org

Photos Chris Porter.

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School
For information on admissions, tuition, financial aid, and placement test and enrollment deadlines contact:

(405) 842-6638
www.bmchs.org
801 NW 50, OKC 73118
Freshmen: lohara@bmchs.org
Sophomores/Juniors: rdamron@bmchs.org
Seniors: fredderek@bmchs.org

Photos Cara Koenig and Chris Porter.
Bishop McGuinness Class of 2015

Mount Saint Mary Class of 2015
Sacred Heart Konawa to celebrate 100th anniversary

By Tina Korbe Dzurisin

For the Sooner Catholic

One hundred years ago after Sacred Heart Church at Konawa was dedicated, the parish has grown into a thriving local Catholic community.

The dedication of Sacred Heart Church, known today as Sacred Heart Konawa, was the result of persistent efforts by a group of Catholics living in Konawa.

The parish was established on June 14, 1915, with the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy and the French Benedictine monks.

Today, Sacred Heart Konawa continues to serve as a place of worship and education for the local community.

If You Go

什么事: Centennial celebration of Sacred Heart Church, Konawa

when: Mass at 11 a.m., June 14, with potluck and tours to follow

where: Sacred Heart, 47943 Abbey Road, Konawa 74849

Why: To celebrate the history of Catholicism in Oklahoma, and honor the contributions of Sacred Heart founding families

Organizers hope descendants of parish founders will attend, including the Rhodd, Thorp, Tallbear, Bruno, O'Connor, Diester, Grove, Schmitt, McPherson and others. The event will also feature tours of the grounds following Mass.

Three baptismal fonts, confirmed, married or received First Communion at Sacred Heart, bring copies of photos from the event to send to semtner7@outlook.com.

Local artist Sharon Semtner repainted and refurbished the hydro bolt foot well as a statue of Mary. Local carpenter Mark Shoop and Jan Pasinski collaborated on a three-year renovation of the art glass windows. The parish also provided for the interior to be repainted and the carpet to be replaced.

Semtner has been instrumental in planning the upcoming centennial celebration.

My goal was just to focus on the history of the building of the church because some grandchildren still go to the same church their grandparents built,” she said.

Today instead, he said, parents will refrain from teaching their children about these things.

The pope said “education, and this is ‘very grave,’ if you go: to semtner7@outlook.com.

By Lauren Isreal

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Parents must not exclude themselves from their children’s lives and, despite what some “experts” may say, they must take an active role in their children’s education, said Pope Francis during his general audience in St. Peter’s Square.

It’s time for fathers and mothers to come out of their own “exile” — because they have existed exalted from their children’s education — and to fully assume again their educational role,” he said.

Continuing a series of talks about the family, the pope said its “essential characteristic” is its “natural vocation to educate children so that they grow in their own responsability for themselves and for others.”

But, faced with numerous experts who tell them how their children should be raised, many parents have withdrawn their involvement in their children’s education, and this is “very grave,” the pope said.

“Critical” intellectuals of all types have assumed parents in a thousand ways to defend the younger generation from the damages — real or imagined — of education in the family,” he said.

The result is a “divide between families and schools,” he said.

In trying to demonstrate how “things have changed,” the pope told a personal story about how he said a bad word to his fourth-grade teacher, who promptly called his mother. When his mother came to school the next day, she made him apologize to the teacher and then disciplined him when he got home.

Today instead, he said, parents will reprimand a teacher who tries to discipline their child.

In addition, he added, “parents by the new demands made by children” and the complexity of life, many parents are “paralyzed by the fear of making a mistake.”

Children must be accompanied and “grow without being discouraged, step by step,” he said.

“Wonderful” Christian parents “in full of human wisdom” demonstrate that good education in the family is “the spine of humanism,” he said.
By J.E. Helm

God on the inside
Building prison ministry in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Pope Francis has made a special visit to a prison ministry in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Pope Francis has made a special visit to a prison ministry in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

On April 2, the pope arrived at the Oklahoma County Jail, where he met with prisoners and offered Mass for them.

During his visit, Pope Francis delivered a homily on the parable of the prodigal son, emphasizing the importance of forgiveness and the welcoming embrace of God.

The pope also expressed his support for prisoners and their families, and encouraged them to trust in God's mercy and love.

In his remarks, Pope Francis emphasized the importance of extending God's mercy to those who are marginalized and excluded, and called for a culture of mercy and compassion.

The visit was part of the pope's ongoing efforts to extend the Church's embrace to all, regardless of their social status or background.

The Oklahoma County Jail is one of the largest in the United States, housing over 3,000 inmates at any given time.

The prison ministry, which is run by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, provides spiritual support and counseling to prisoners and their families.

The visit marks the second time Pope Francis has visited a prison ministry in the United States, following his visit to the San Quentin State Prison in California in 2015.
El futuro de matrimonio pende de un hilo

La fascinación reciente en los medios de comunicación con la transición de Bruce Jenner en Cavithun podría haber influido en el lector, pero una vez que este se inmiscuyera en el mundo social actual. En el centro de este debate, que es el núcleo de este artículo, está el matrimonio y el derecho a nacer.

La diferencia sexual es esencial para el matrimonio y la crianza de los hijos. Nuestros cuerpos y nuestras piezas son iguales, pero nuestras acciones y nuestras casas son diferentes. Juntos se crearon a imagen y semejanza del hombre y la mujer y han sido diseñados por Dios en relación uno con otro para formar una unión con tal que da a luz hijos. Las consecuencias de esta afirmación son evidentes.

Y si no hubiéramos abandonado el nacimiento, si se hubieran podido bañar en muchos días y, a pesar de ello, si la mujer no hubiera sido sujeta a un régimen de privaciones que las impide el libre ejercicio de su dignidad social y moral, se hubieran podido vigilar de tal manera que en la mujer se hubiera concretado lo que la santidad del matrimonio está en oposición a la naturaleza del hombre. 

No se puede jurar el nacimiento de la mujer como una cuestión de justicia. 

Al final del día, esta cuestión es una cuestión de justicia. 

Por Horacio Aracena, OFM, OP
Director del Movimiento No mug

El compromiso humanitario de la iglesia con inmigrantes

Por Rory Vavner
Catholic News Services

MCALLEN, Texas (CNS) – De las estancias en el lado contrario del murmurio político, dijo:

“Hablamos recibido amenazas de muerte, habíamos sido detenidos por la policía sin haber detenido a nadie, y habíamos escuchado historias sobre cómo los hechos de muchos cubanos se han convertido en motivo de miedo en nuestro país. No imaginamos que caería el muro entre los hermanos y hermanas que acep- tan reconciliarse en Cristo, el cual ha hecho de judíos y paganos un pueblo solo, dirigiendo el muro de enemistad que los separa. Sólo esta constante tensión hacia la reconciliación permite culmi- nar dignamente con el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo.

Un error común parece ser que los homosexuales pueden estar en contradicción con el trabajo de Cristo, pero el Éxodo 20:14 dice: “Lanzate a lo más Profundo...”

Cardenal Ortega dice que cubanos esperan al papa con “brazos abiertos”

La Oracuón que repetimos en esta misma oración del capítulo cuatro de los primeros recintos de la oración de la Eucaristía ha de comprometer a todos los participantes a una unión y no un acto de privada devociión. 

El arzobispo de McAllen y en otro que estuvo funcionando hace algunos meses en la catedral de la ciudad de McAllen, se ha reportado como, ropa, agua y leche como ayuda de los menores en esta ciudad. 

La Iglesia ha de renegar que su fuente inagotable en el don de la Eucaristía es también la fuente de la misericordia y el perdón. De esta toma de conciencia nos impulsa a denunciar las situaciones cuya causa implica a los más necesitados y a los más vulnerables. 

Los cristianos han proclamado desde el principio compartir sus bienes y ayudar a los pobres.

La oración que repetimos en esta misma oración del capítulo cuatro de los primeros recintos de la oración del Sacramento tiene un carácter en el don de la Eucaristía. 

Los cristianos han procurado en la historia de la iglesia unirse a los pobres en su necesidad buscando una respuesta contundente, pero siempre que en la Iglesia unirse a los pobres en su necesidad buscando una respuesta contundente, pero siempre que en la estructura de esta Iglesia. 

El compromiso humanitario de la iglesia con inmigrantes

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La Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City está organizando una peregrinación para que los niños de las familias hispanas puedan conocer de cerca a este santuario de la Caridad en la ciudad de McAllen. 

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El compromiso humanitario de la iglesia con inmigrantes

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El arzobispo de McAllen y en otro que estuvo funcionando hace algunos meses en la catedral de la ciudad de McAllen, se ha reportado como, ropa, agua y leche como ayuda de los menores en esta ciudad. 

La Iglesia ha de renegar que su fuente inagotable en el don de la Eucaristía es también la fuente de la misericordia y el perdón. De esta toma de conciencia nos impulsa a denunciar las situaciones cuya causa implica a los más necesitados y a los más vulnerables. 

Los cristianos han proclamado desde el principio compartir sus bienes y ayudar a los pobres.

La oración que repetimos en esta misma oración del capítulo cuatro de los primeros recintos de la oración del Sacramento tiene un carácter en el don de la Eucaristía. 

Los cristianos han procurado en la historia de la iglesia unirse a los pobres en su necesidad buscando una respuesta contundente, pero siempre que en la estructura de esta Iglesia.
I. International Dinner
St. Francis of Assisi invites you to celebrate the diversity of your parish community and support the Holy Family School Endowment Fund at the 11th annual international dinner, Saturday, June 20, at 6 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Enjoy cuisine from Germany, Italy, Vietnam, Mexico, Thailand, Cuba and Poland. Your $25 pass allows you to sample all foods, including desserts. Tickets are limited. Call Casinsi Le at (405) 570-5430.

II. Pilgrimage to World Meeting of Families, papal visit & Mass
The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is leading a pilgrimage to Philadelphia Sept. 22-28 to the World Meeting of Families Conference. Pope Francis will celebrate Mass on the 27th. Don’t miss this unique opportunity to renew your faith with Catholics from around the world, and to explore ways to strengthen the family. Cost is $1,845 (bchl. oc) and includes airfare, hotel, some meals, transportation to and from the conference, sight-seeing in historic Philadelphia and visits to various shrines. Apply by June 15. For more information visit online at www.archdoc.org. Deadline to register is June 30.

III. St. Gregory’s Abbey golf tournament
The 4th annual golf tournament will be held June 22 at Lincoln Park Golf Course, 401 N. P.E. Blvd. OKC. Register at www.monsok.org or by contacting Lynda Hail at (405) 878-5490. Registration and payment due by June 15.

Chad Judice Father’s Day event
Our Lady of Sorrows will be the site of a uniquely known motivational speaker and award-winning solutions provider for “Eli” and “Eli’s Reach,” whose central character is his second son, Eli, who was born with spina bifida. A special Father’s Day presentation will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., June 22, at Holy Family Lawton. Go online to www.chadjudice.com.

Beginning Experience
There is help for the heartache of separation, divorce and widowhood at a Beginning Experience Workshop. The workshop helps with the natural grief process and offers an opportunity, through God, for turning the pain of loss into positive growth. Those who have suffered the loss of a loved one share their experience as they lead participants through presentations, private reflections and small group sharing. The next Beginning Experience Workshop will be July 10-12 at the Catholic Pastoral Center. To register, call (405) 214-7944 or visit Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

Substance addiction ministry
The National Catholic Council on Addiction promotes healing, hope and reconciliation to those suffering with addiction and the impact of addiction on the family, society and the church. The ministry will provide education about addiction disease and refer those in need. Training for team members will be Saturday, July 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 North Expressway, OKC. To register or for more information, contact the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

Rosary School golf tournament
The St. Francis of Assisi/Rosary School 3rd annual golf tournament will be Aug. 15 at 8 a.m. at Lincoln Park East course. Team and individual slots are available. Register online at www.rosschoolgolf.com or by e-mail to rosschoolgolf@yahoo.com. Contact Matt Grinnell at (405) 923-7000. Sponsorships available.

Retrosurvey
Hope and healing for troubled, separated and divorced couples can be found at the OKC Retrosurvey Program Aug. 28-30 at Holy Family Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 North Expressway, OKC. Go online to www.retrosurvey.com or call (405) 443-3541. No group sharing.

KOC poker run returns
The Oklahoma Knights of Columbus along with the Oklahoma Knights-on-Bikes are sponsoring the 4th annual Center of Family Love “Love-StUN Poker-RUN” on Saturday, Aug. 29. All entrants pay an entry fee for each hand that is dealt (additional hands can be played by an individual for an additional fee). Driving the vehicle of their choice, the “Poker Run” will ride 120-125 miles with five stops. Proceeds help the Center of Family Love in Okarche.

IV. Calendar
17 Monthly Novena to the Immaculate Heart of Jesus continues. During these nine days, the novena prayers will be Monday-Friday following noon Mass, Saturday following 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass. For more information contact Fr. Jacobi, pastor of Holy Spirit in Mustang, will present “What makes others happy during this time which identifies us.” The cost is $30 per couple. Call (405) 314-4120 to register. No group sharing.

18 Bingo at St. James, 420 S. McKinley Ave., OKC. Food served at 5:45 p.m. Bingo at 6:30 p.m. All proceeds are $150. Door prizes and recognition for players who attend. Each player gets an entry for a large flat screen TV drawing in October. Contact Michael Zink at (405) 314-4120 for more information.

19 ACCE save the date
Archbishop Coakley will be the guest speaker during the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City’s Women’s luncheon on Sat., Sept. 19, at the Catholic Pastoral Center. He will discuss his involvement with the USCCB/Catholic Relief Services Board. Registration is $25. Contact Chris Thomas at theomachris@globalnet.com or (405) 306-5187.

20 Devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus – Thursdays at 6 p.m., to St. James Church, 4201 S. McKinley Ave. (405) 240-2527.

Part-time musician
St. Patrick in OKC is seeking a part-time musician to provide piano accompaniment for our Sat. evening and Sunday morning English Masses. Contact Fr. Thomas McSherry at (405) 420-2527 or info@stpatrickokc.com.

Grade teacher
St. Mary Catholic School, Guthrie, is seeking a third-grade teacher for the 2015-2016 school year. Interested applicants should hold a Bachelor of Education in music and Oklahoma certification. Send resume, letter and copy of teaching certificate to Jacque Cokely, assistant principal, at stmaryguthrie@cox.net or by mail to St. Mary Catholic School, 502 E. Warner, Guthrie, OK 73044. For teacher application packet at www.archdoc.org/myschools/libera dac_download/294-teacher-appli cation-packet.

Elementary and middle school teachers
The Catholic School of St. Eugene is seeking candidates for the following teaching positions for the 2015-2016 school year: MS math, MS literature and fourth grade elementary. Applicants should hold a Bachelor of education in education with Oklahoma certification. Applicants for the math position must be certified in intermediate or advanced/secondary math. Send resume, letter and copy of teaching certificate to Jay Luke, principal, and mail to OKC 73120 or e-mail principal@stegeneeskool.org.

Visit our online Jobs Box at www.archdoc.org/jobs-box.
Fortnight for Freedom: Pray for religious liberty

By Sally Linhart
For the Sooner Catholic

Every year from June 21 to July 4, Catholics join together in prayer, fasting and action to observe the Fortnight for Freedom, a two-week period spent focusing on preserving the religious liberties protected by the First Amendment.

This year marks the 4th annual observance of Fortnight for Freedom, beginning June 21 with Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. The event ends on July 4 with Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

The dates chosen for the observance of Fortnight for Freedom coincide with the feast days of Saints Thomas More and John Fisher, who were persecuted and died for bearing witness to their faith.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops initiated the campaign in 2012, and have called upon the laity in a movement of prayer and sacrifice for the protection of life, marriage and religious liberty. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness of religious freedoms, which are in constant danger in the United States and abroad as Christians continue to be persecuted for their faith.

The theme of this year’s event is “Freedom to Bear Witness.” It will focus on the freedom to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel. The USCCB offers an abundance of resources via their website (www.usccb.org), and encourages all Catholics to become educated on the different issues that affect our religious freedoms.

The Archdiocese’s Office of Communications will be sending a Fortnight for Freedom e-newsletter that includes prayers, saint biographies and articles relating to Fortnight for Freedom. Parishioners can subscribe at www.flocknote.com/archokc.

The ways in which individuals or families can participate in the event include fasting, celebrating Mass in honor of Saints Thomas More and John Fisher on their feast day (June 22), and by praying the Prayer for the Protection of Religious Liberty at the end of Mass. Simple daily reflections for each day of the Fortnight for Freedom also are available on the USCCB website.

Sally Linhart is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

The Eucharist is communal!

Celebrate it in our worship space, as we live it in the world

By Pedro A. Moreno, OP, MRE
Director of Hispanic Ministry

A common mistake of many Catholics is thinking, wrongly, that the Mass is only a personal encounter with my beloved Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ. “The others who happen to be present at this Mass are not that important,” some mistakenly think.

Many do not realize that “Body of Christ,” besides referring to the Body and Blood - Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present under the appearances of bread and wine in the Eucharist – also refers to the whole Church and all its members, rich and poor, healthy and sick, needy and satisfied, even those who are not as we are; all are already sharing in living communion with Christ in heavenly glory.

The Eucharist has strong social implications. Receiving the Eucharist is an act of common union and not an act of private union. The Eucharist makes us Church, strengthens us in our fellowship and intensively promotes solidarity with others, always starting with those with the greatest needs.

Pope Benedict XVI, in February 2007, spoke of this truth in his post-synodal apostolic exhortation “Sacramentum Caritatis” on the Eucharist as source and summit of the life and mission of the Church.

I would like to share some of his words from paragraphs 89, 90 and 91. Since the quotes are so extensive I will offer a few lines of each paragraph to help us remember the connection between our Eucharistic celebration and our commitment to live out the social doctrine of the Church. Here are the Pope’s words:

The immediate implications of the Eucharistic mystery

89. The union with Christ brought about by the Eucharist also brings a newness to our social relations: “this sacramental mysticism is social in character.” Indeed, “union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own.”

90. The relationship between the Eucharistic mystery and social commitment must be made explicit. The Eucharist is the sacrament of communion between brothers and sisters who allow themselves to be reconciled in Christ, who made of Jews and pagans one people, tearing down the wall of hostility that divided them. Only this constant impulse toward reconciliation enables us to partake worthily of the Body and Blood of Christ.

In the memorial of his sacrifice, the Lord strengthens our fraternal communion and, in a particular way, urges those in conflict to hasten their reconciliation by opening themselves to dialogue and a commitment to justice.

Certainly, the restoration of justice, reconciliation and forgiveness are the conditions for building true peace. The recognition of this fact leads to a determination to transform unjust structures and to restore respect for the dignity of all men and women, created in God’s image and likeness.

Through the concrete fulfillment of this responsibility, the Eucharist becomes in life what it signifies in its celebration. “I therefore urge all the faithful to be true promoters of peace and justice: “All who partake of the Eucharist must commit themselves to peacemaking in our world scarred by violence and war, and today in particular, by terrorism, economic corruption and sexual exploitation.”

The food of truth and human needs

91. We cannot remain passive before certain processes of globalization, which frequently increase the gap between the rich and the poor worldwide. We must denounce those who squander the earth’s riches, provoking inequalities that cry out to heaven (cf. Jas 5:4).

For example, it is impossible to remain silent before the “distressing images of huge camps throughout the world of displaced persons and refugees, who are living in makeshift conditions in order to escape a worse fate, yet are still in dire need.” Are these human beings not our brothers and sisters? Do their children not come into the world with the same legitimate expectations of happiness as other children?”

The Lord Jesus, the bread of eternal life, spurs us to be mindful of the situations of extreme poverty in which a great part of humanitiness still lives: these are situations for which human beings bear a clear and disquieting responsibility. ... The food of truth demands that we denounce inhuman situations in which people starve to death because of injustice and exploitation, and gives us renewed strength and courage to work tirelessly in the service of the civilization of love.

From the beginning, Christians were concerned to share their goods and to help the poor.

The Church’s social teaching

91. The mystery of the Eucharist inspires and impels us to work courageously within our world to bring about that renewal of relationships, which has its inexhaustible source in God’s gift.

The prayer that we repeat at every Mass: “Give us this day our daily bread,” obliges us to do everything necessary, in cooperation with international, state and private institutions, to end or at least reduce the scandal of hunger and malnutrition afflicting so many millions of people in our world, especially in developing countries.

In a particular way, the Christian laity, formed at the school of the Eucharist, is called to assume their specific political and social responsibilities.

The Archbishop of Oklahoma City initiated the campaign in 2012, and have called upon the laity in a movement of prayer and sacrifice for the protection of life, marriage and religious liberty. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness of religious freedoms, which are in constant danger in the United States and abroad as Christians continue to be persecuted for their faith.

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