America’s Hope

Burmese Refugee Gains U.S. Citizenship, Takes Name of Land He Loves

By Jane Moon
Catholic Charities

Seven years ago Pyi Oak had no way to make a living, no home, no family and no country. After a military takeover squelched hope of democracy in Burma and violence stripped him of his entire support system, including the mother of his baby boy, Pyi reached out for help. He finally found refuge in far-off Oklahoma with help from Catholic Charities.

Today, he not only has a job, a home and a country, but a new first name in honor of the Oklahomans who gave him and his now teen-age son a chance to live in freedom. On April 27, when Pyi was granted U.S. citizenship, he legally took the first name “Okla” out of love for the land and people he now considers family.

Okla Pyi Oak’s cherished freedom was long in coming. In 1975 during his second year in college, he was jailed for participating in a student protest against Burma’s socialist dictatorship. Upon his release four years later, Okla says, he remained committed to working toward a democratic government in Burma.

With the resignation of military dictator General Ne Win in 1988, Burma erupted in mass demonstrations favoring democratization, but the peaceful protests were violently suppressed. Thousands were killed as a new military junta came to power.

Military authorities began calling the country Myanmar instead of Burma. Okla escaped re-imprisonment and possible death by moving to camps along the Thai-Burmese border. There he joined supporters of Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy, a political party advocating non-violent change through civil disobedience.

Suu Kyi was put under house arrest and offered freedom only if she would leave the country, but she refused. Despite her detention, the NLD party won decisively in the 1990 elections with 82 percent of parliamentary seats, but the military nullified the election and refused to relinquish power.

Suu Kyi has remained imprisoned for most of the last 17 years and was awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize for her struggle.

“We wanted a diplomatic solution. We wanted democracy without violence,” Okla says, but the military threat loomed constantly.

In 1992 while living along the border, Okla, a Buddhist, married a Muslim woman named The Dar Soe, after his naturalization ceremony.

As air attacks became more frequent and conditions in the border camps worsened, Okla and Aye fled to Bangkok, Thailand, for safety. At a Bangkok refugee camp, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees helped Okla apply for permission to move to the United States. The process took two years.

It was in one such attack that Okla’s wife was killed. Tearfully, he recalls his heartache and worry for his baby’s safety. “Our son was only 10 months old. He had no mother, no food, no drink, no breast milk — only rice pudding and sugar to eat. I was so worried about his future.”

As air attacks became more frequent and conditions in the border camps worsened, Okla and Aye fled to Bangkok, Thailand, for safety. At a Bangkok refugee camp, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees helped Okla apply for permission to move to the United States. The process took two years.

Aye says he remembers few details about the violence and hardship of his early childhood, but he does recall landing in America for the first time and being met at the airport by workers from Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. He was 5 years old.

Continued on page 3
The Good News

“Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit!”

Each year I repeat this sacramental form more than 1,000 times during the so-called Confirmation season. Actually, Confirmation can and is administered throughout the year. However, the vast majority of our Confirmation celebrations take place during the Easter season, thus I am just completing them.

This year, I will have confirmed more than 1,000 young adults (high school students) at 52 different churches throughout our Archdiocese. The “classes” or groups ranged from two candidates at Sacred Heart Mangum to 108 at Saint John in Edmond. The majority of the classes are between 20 and 30.

An hour before the Confirmation ceremony I meet with the candidates. During that time I emphasize how very important Confirmation is in their lives, not because of what they are doing, nor what I do, although both their response and my action are important. The most important reality in Confirmation is what God does. It is God who marks us as His chosen persons. It is God who seals us with the gift of His Holy Spirit and the Spirit’s accompanying spiritual gifts for life.

During this preparatory time immediately before the ceremony, I focus the candidate’s attention on the accompanying spiritual gifts for life.

I end my homily by reminding the candidates that the anointing I will do with the Sacred Chrism is done in the form of a cross traced over each one’s forehead. The cross is made as a visible expression of the everlasting sign of our salvation.

Jesus came to save us from sin. Jesus came to bring us new life. Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. I then urge the candidates that they will never, never forget the sign of the cross I make over them. Through the cross we are all able to make our perpetual commitment to the Lord because the cross is Jesus’ sign of His perpetual love for us.

I tell the young people to always remember the cross on which Jesus died for us. To help them do this, I hold up a crucifix before them and inform them that after the Communion of the Mass, I will bless enough crucifixes so that each of them will receive a blessed crucifix to take home with them. I urge them to take that blessed crucifix with them wherever they go in life. I tell them to look at that crucifix gratefully and to learn to live by the cross as Jesus invites us: “Take up the Cross and follow Me.”

My experience in the 52 churches where I will have confirmed more than 1,000 young people this year has been most inspiring and reassuring. I know now that the next generation of Catholic leaders will be faithful and loyal because they are discerning God’s Will. With the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit they will discover that God offers us many gifts, graces and blessings through the Holy Catholic Church which He established for our salvation.

I wish also to express a word of sincere gratitude on behalf of all the young people who have been confirmed and have been presented with a blessed crucifix. All these crucifixes have been donated by the good women of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (ACCW). Thank you and God bless you.

A $100 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Saint James Parish, OKC.

A $10 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, OKC.

A $10 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by an anonymous donor.

A $250 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Saint Philip Neri Parish, Midwest City.

A $150 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Holy Cross Parish, Madill.

A $200 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Sacred Heart Parish, El Reno, in honor of Saint Katharine Drexel.

A $300 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, OKC.

A $100 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by Saint James Parish, OKC.

A $200 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse in memory of Maxine Harper.

A $200 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by Saint Benedict Parish, Shawnee.

A $200 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by the parents of Saint Andrew Dung-Lac Parish, OKC, Confirmation class.

The Sooner Catholic is supported through the Archdiocesan Development Fund.
Rural Oklahoma Suffers From Effects of U.S. Farm Policy

By Jim French

What do the African nations of Mali, Chad, Benin and Burkina Faso share with Jackson, Tillman and Cimarron counties in Oklahoma? They all have experienced the unintended consequences stemming from U.S. farm policy.

The U.S. Farm Bill is reauthorized approximately every five years. This omnibus legislation determines the policies which govern food and nutrition, commodity, conservation and rural development programs. These policies affect all Americans, because we all eat, and rely on our natural resources to provide clean water and air, healthy food and recreation. But some parts of the Farm Bill, such as commodity programs, have specific impacts on rural Oklahoma and rural West Africa.

U.S. farmers that grow a narrow range of crops, predominantly cotton, corn, rice, soybeans and wheat, are eligible for commodity payments. These subsidies are intended to create a safety net so that American farms can weather the ups and downs of the market. When the price at the elevator is less than the cost of production, our farmers receive money from the taxpayer to ensure that expenses are covered and, sometimes, profits enhanced.

In the case of some subsidies, checks are cut in relation to actual bushels produced and the amount of acres farmed — the more bushels and acres, the higher the check. That means that even in a falling market, the only incentive is to produce more and expand when possible. Expansion, of course, means fewer farms, less people and less business for rural communities.

A Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank study in March of 2005 summarized the overall impact of crop subsidies on rural America as follows: “Farm payments are not providing a strong boost to the rural economy in those counties that most depend on them. Job gains are weak and population growth is actually negative in most of the counties where farm payments are the biggest share of income.”

That is certainly the case for the majority of agricultural counties in western Oklahoma. For example, according to the Environmental Working Group subsidy database, Jackson and Tillman counties received some of the highest amounts of crop subsidies from 2003 to 2005. At the same time, U.S. Census Bureau shows that these same counties lost over 8 percent of their population since the 2000 census. Both also have poverty levels over 14 percent which is approximately 3 percent higher than the state average.

When one looks at the counties with the highest population losses — Harmon, Roger Mills and Cimarron, the same trend holds true. They are all in far western Oklahoma, all are dependent upon farm subsidies, and all have higher than average poverty rates.

And what does this have to do with Africa? When U.S. producers are encouraged to overproduce a crop like cotton and sell it at a price sometimes less than half the cost of production, farmers in the world’s poorest countries suffer.

Farmers in Mali or Chad do not receive subsidies, growing their crops without machinery or irrigation. Most struggle to survive on just a dollar a day. And they find themselves attempting to compete with cheap crops subsidized by Uncle Sam.

The end result there is pretty much as it is in the United States: rural people are displaced and migrating to cities where jobs may or may not exist. Poverty rates rise and hunger increases.

And instead of Africans having the ability to work at livelihoods that help them feed themselves, invest in water wells, schools and clinics, they often have to become dependent upon aid donated by other nations.

Reforming the 2007 farm bill can do much to reduce these negative consequences while still supporting American agriculture. A safety net is needed, but payments should be decoupled from production.

Incentives for public benefits like clean water and conservation should replace payments for more and more bushels. Farmers and rural residents should be given entrepreneurial opportunities to diversify crops and grow for new and emerging markets.

Oklahoma farmers rely on a global market and our current subsidies jeopardize that market because of their price-distorting effects. But more importantly, in order for our economy to grow and prosper, we need growing economies all around the world — whether in Boise City or Djibian, Mali.

— Jim French and farms and ranches in Reno County, Kan., and is the lead organizer for Oxfam America’s agriculture campaign. Oxfam America is an international development agency working on long-term solutions to poverty and hunger.

Refugee Gains U.S. Citizenship

continued from page 1

and ready to start kindergarten. With help from Catholic Charities, he was enrolled in Gatewood School and soon learned English. Now 13, Aye attends Dove Science Academy and says he hopes to become a medical doctor.

Catholic Charities Refugee and Resettlement Department provides housing, food, clothing, employment assistance and English instruction to refugees from foreign lands who have been victimized for religious, ethnic or political reasons. The program’s goal is to empower families to achieve self-sufficiency and full participation in the community. Last year, 80 new refugees from nine countries were assisted.

Within three weeks after Okla’s arrival in the United States, Catholic Charities helped him find a part-time job packing and loading newspapers at The Oklahoman. He took classes in English as a Second Language and after five months landed full-time work at Trinity Industries where he stayed for three years.

At one point, when Okla was between jobs, a social worker urged him to apply for unemployment compensation or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, but he declined. “I was a young, strong man. I could work,” he recalls. “I thought the aid should be saved for others.”

Okla now is employed in the sheet metal department at Jet Services, but also works as a part-time driver at Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities refugee case manager Maleeha Siddique, who originally came to the United States as a refugee from Afghanistan, says the agency depends on Okla to provide other refugee clients rides to English classes, grocery stores and various appointments.

“He is a real good person — always wanting to help,” Siddique says. “He gives new refugees rides and even teaches them to drive in his spare time.”

Okla says he identifies with newly arrived refugees and wants to ease their transition to American life. He says, “Catholic Charities is my family. We are all from different cultures, but we are one family. When I help them, it feels good.”

Last year, Okla took Aye back to Thailand for a month-long rendezvous with family members from Burma, many of whom he had not seen in 17 years. Such visits are rare and difficult to arrange because families of Burmese exiles are watched closely by the Myanmar government. Okla worries that the visits could put his loved ones in danger with military police.

The trip went well, however. Aye met his relatives for the first time. Okla got married again. His new wife, Methanth, is a Burmese Buddhist living in a refugee camp in Thailand. Although Methanth had to stay behind when Okla and Aye returned, she has applied for permission to join her new husband and stepson in Oklahoma.

Okla says he grieves that he is separated from his loved ones overseas, but until he is able to see them again, he’s Catholic Charities “family” and new U.S. citizenship will sustain him.

Aye says his father greatly respects Oklahoma and the American people. “Whatever happens, he will serve America for any reason,” Aye adds. “And he will defend it with his life.”
Have You Made Your Pledge Yet?

**ADF Appeal Update**

OKLAHOMA CITY — Current collections stand at $1,875,893.00 from pledges of $3,086,959.00 from only 28 percent (10,681) of the total archdiocesan membership. This number includes almost 3,000 new donors.

Fifty-six parishes or missions have reached or exceeded their financial targets and have contributed an additional $277,796.00 to this year’s appeal. Also, 30 parishes or missions have participation rates of over 40 percent of their members.

Seventy-two percent of the membership have not responded to this opportunity to support God’s work. We hope and pray that in their own way they have opened their hearts to God’s love and are responding to His love by helping to do His work through other opportunities as we know many have.

However, this opportunity to donate to this year’s ADF Appeal is still available to anyone who now finds that it is something they would like to do. Please just complete the form below and mail it to: Archdiocesan Development Fund Appeal, 7501 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City, Okla., 73132.

Saint Augustine has said, “Where your pleasure is, there your treasure is: Where your treasure, there your heart; where your heart, there your happiness.” May God be in your hearts every day in every way to fill your life with happiness.

ADF Staff

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**Providence Bishop Blasts Giuliani, Calls His Abortion Stance ‘Pathetic’**

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (Zenit.org) — Bishop Thomas Tobin blasted Republican presidential hopeful Rudy Giuliani in the Rhode Island Catholic newspaper, calling the former New York mayor’s position on abortion “pathetic and confusing” and “hypocritical.”

In a column, Bishop Tobin spoke out against the candidate’s positions, citing a speech Giuliani gave at Houston Baptist College.

Giuliani said he believes abortion is morally wrong but that the viewpoints of those who think it is right must also be respected.

Bishop Tobin wrote: “Rudy’s explanation is a classic expression of the position on abortion we’ve heard from weak-kneed politicians so frequently in recent years:

“I’m personally opposed to it but don’t want to impose my views on other people. The incongruity of that position has been exposed many times now. As I’ve asked previously, would we let any politician get away with the same pathetic cop-out on other issues: I’m personally opposed to ... racial discrimination, sexual abuse, prostitution, drug abuse, polygamy, incest ... but don’t want to impose my beliefs on others?”

The Providence bishop recalled that Catholics are “required to be pro-life” and said that “Rudy’s pre-posterous position is compounded by the fact that he professes to be a Catholic: [...] As a public official, Rudy Giuliani has a special obligation in that regard.”

The 59-year-old prelate cited a U.S. bishops document, which says that “if a Catholic in his or her personal or professional life were knowingly and obstinately to repudiate (the Church’s) definitive teaching on moral issues, he or she would seriously diminish his or her communion with the Church.”

The bishop recalled that Giuliani is not the only Catholic politician who strays from Church teaching.

“Rudy’s defection from the Catholic faith on this moral issue is not unique, of course,” Bishop Tobin lamented. “Catholic politicians of both parties, nationwide, have followed a similar path in abandoning the faith for the sake of political expediency.”

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**Beginning Experience**

**Weekend Helps Begin New Life of Hope**

By Evelyn Bailey

God is good. I have thought it and said it and meant it thousands of times. But when I awoke Easter Sunday two years ago to discover my husband had died in his sleep, that was not the first thought I had. It should have been. After praying for Bob and making those gut-wrenching calls to 911 and family members, it occurred to me that liturgically Easter Sunday is one of the most beautiful days of the year ... an appropriate day for someone who lived so honorably.

The following Sunday afternoon, when the last daughter had gone home, I remember thinking, “Now what?” The life I had known and loved was gone. I was alone. Absolutely alone for the first time in my life ... or so I thought and felt.

But God has graciously provided me with a strong faith and a wonderful family and caring friends who offer prayer and practical help. When my friend Carol called to say she was sending a Beginning Experience brochure, I was open to the possibility that it might be a good thing.

As I approached the Pastoral Center, I began to rethink my decision to spend the weekend with people I did not know. Not particularly outgoing by nature and feeling vulnerable because my emotions were all over the place, it took several times repeating, “My trust is in the name of the Lord” before I actually stopped the car, got my things and walked to the door. Truly kind people helped me get to the room I shared with a delightful young woman. I keep her in my prayers to this day. Looking back, I marvel at God’s handiwork. I have never met anyone whose losses are more like mine.

After the first session with team members and other participants, I was hooked. There is nothing quite like being with people who, as my granddaughter might say, “get me.” And I “got them” ... a whole room full of them. This was a safe place.

Start to finish, the weekend was more remarkable than I dared hope. And hope is a pivotal word. That’s what the weekend is all about. Moving into the future with a renewed sense of hope. Designed by professionals and presented by a team of caring people whose honesty encourages participants to dig deep during times of reflection, the program is a respecter of privacy and confidentiality. You share only what you wish to share in small group. That weekend gave me the direction, toward God, that I needed. It has made all the difference.

The next BE weekend will be July 21-23 at the Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City. If you or someone you know is dealing with the loss of a loved one through separation, divorce or death, please prayerfully consider contacting the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 108 for information.

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**Archdiocesan Annual Appeal 2007 Gift Form**

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But God has graciously provided me with a strong faith and a wonderful family and caring friends who offer prayer and practical help. When my friend Carol called to say she was sending a Beginning Experience brochure, I was open to the possibility that it might be a good thing.

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The pope discusses and quotes various theologians and Fathers of the Church when examining his topics of the period of Jesus’ life from his baptism to the Transfiguration. Many of the theologians he quotes are German and could be an incentive to investigate these theologians’ work since they made an impact on the pope. He does not agree with all of them, though. In fact, he refutes what some of them present. Some of the names of theologians he quotes are Rudolf Schnackenburg, Peter Stuhlmacher, Rudolf Pesch, Joachim Jeremias, Pierre Grelot, Jurgen Moltmann, Joachim Gnilka and many others. The pope quotes from various Church Fathers like Saint Augustine, Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Origen, Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Cyprian and others. He also brings in Jewish, Protestant and Orthodox authors to help bring out what he is saying about a topic he is discussing. He also refutes various philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx and others who deny Christianity’s benefit to the world. The pope also uses Scripture from Old and New Testaments in his discussions.

The pope in his foreword encourages others to enter into a discussion or dialogue with him on the life, works and ministry of Jesus Christ. He also states this book is not infallible and he is not writing this book as part of his office as pope. He states the book is his “personal search for the face of the Lord.” In the foreword he presents the history of the development of the understanding of the Scriptures through time, especially during modern times with the various developments of biblical studies like the historical-critical method. He also shows that the Second Vatican Council encourages Scripture scholars and theologians to investigate the Scriptures to help the Church to have a better understanding of what God is saying to us today. The introduction sets the stage from a Scripture point of view for the Gospels and the life of Jesus.

As stated above, this is the first in a series of volumes the pope hopes to write, but since he is 80 years old, he wanted to make sure what he has already prepared is published in case he cannot complete the set. That is why his first volume starts with the baptism of the Lord instead of the nativity narratives of Matthew and Luke. He hopes to complete his writings on that and have that volume published.

In Chapter 1, the pope discusses what baptism was and why Jesus had to be baptized. John the Baptist thought that Jesus should baptize him instead of him baptizing Jesus. Chapter 2 is concerned with the temptation of Jesus by the devil. The pope discusses what is going on, but also about all of the symbolism that is happening, too. Chapter 3 is on the Gospel of the Kingdom of God where the pope discusses what “kingdom” means. It has various meanings.

Chapter 4 is on the Sermon on the Mount. The pope examines the Sermon and its differences in Matthew compared to Luke. He examines the various beatitudes and what they mean based on other Scriptures and what Church Fathers and others comment as to their meaning. This chapter is very involved, but worth reading patiently. That is not a negative thing.

In Chapter 5 the pope examines the Lord’s Prayer petition by petition. There is much material here on this beloved prayer which most people pray at high speed without really thinking or reflecting on what they are praying. The pope encourages people to slow down a bit and realize what they are saying. His examination of this prayer is a wonderful meditation. Chapter 6 is on the calling of the Twelve Apostles, but it is also the calling of the 70 or 72 disciples. The pope shows that this is reflecting back to the 12 sons or tribes of Israel and the 70 elders who helped Moses during the Exodus journey in the desert. Chapter 7 is on the message of the parables. This is an extensive examination of what parables are and he examines a select few. He examines the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the Rich Man and Lazarus. These are great reflections.

In Chapter 8 the pope examines the principal images of John’s Gospel. Up to this point he has been examining the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and now he discusses the Gospel of John. He discusses the possible identity of the author. He agrees with the traditional view that the author is Saint John the Apostle. He then discusses the principal images in John: water, vine and wine, bread and the shepherd.

Chapter 9 is on Peter’s confession and the Transfiguration. Peter’s confession is in all three of the Synoptic Gospels and is in similar form in each. The pope also says that it is in John’s too, but in a different form. He shows the primacy of Peter amongst the Apostles from these verses, but also from other Scriptures, and he also examines Jesus’ remonstration with Peter about his view of what the messiah was to be; Peter and others of his time thought that the messiah would be a worldly king and only for Israel. The pope examines how Peter and the others came to realize who Jesus really was and that Jesus’ titles developed from teacher and rabbi to Lord and ultimately to Lord and God. The pope discusses when the Transfiguration happened in time. Was it during the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths or when? He shows that the Transfiguration was a theophany similar to the theophany on Mt. Sinai.

Chapter 10 is on the identity of Jesus. This is a wonderful reflection on the true identity of Jesus. The pope shows that the Apostles and the disciples slowly came to realize who Jesus is that he is the Son of God. The early Church had to grapple and define what this meant which led to the Nicene Creed. Many could not accept that Jesus is God and many people today only think of him as a good religious person, but they do not accept him as God. The publisher provides a glossary of terms with short definitions and there is a bibliography.

The pope refutes modern day fallacies throughout this book. He does it in connection with the topic he is discussing. He brings the reader along with him on his search for God. He shows that life has meaning and that there is an afterlife. He argues that Jesus is still with us and is concerned about us. He shows that Jesus is the Son of God and not a mere human or angel who came to save us from sin and who died on the cross. He shows that Jesus took on our very flesh at the Incarnation to be like us in everything but sin.

Many reviews have been written about the pope’s new book. This reviewer decided not to read them to avoid being influenced by what others have to say about this book. This book is highly recommended.

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

Sooner Catholic
Brother’s Review
By Brother Benet Exton, O.S.B.

Pope’s Book on Christ Not Meant as a Quick Read

Saint Mary School Expands

continued from page 1

be measured by what it has been through.

In 1933, in the midst of the Depression, the school closed its doors. The school opened again shortly after the end of World War II.

“The school hadn’t had a seventh grade since the 1980s. In the 1990s, there were 50 students and it was on the verge of closing. It was a challenge for the parish to keep it open,” Guthrie said.

“ar school as we are now 10 or 15 years later is a huge leap of faith,” She said.

When parents started talking about adding the eighth grade this year, the parish council set benchmarks for that to happen. Saint Mary’s Parish Council subsidizes the school by just over $100,000 a year.

“We surveyed the parents of the students now in school because we had to know if the parents were willing to cover the costs of opening a seventh grade this year and an eighth grade next year. “We currently have 12 students in the seventh grade and we needed 15 to cover the costs. We also needed parents who will have children in these two classes to commit to us for the next two years,” she said.

The parents said yes.

“Our Catholic parents and our non-Catholic parents wanted a Christian curriculum in this environment,” she said.

The parish sponsored an auction in April that raised $35,000 for the school.

“We needed $15,000 just to make changes to the facility and to buy furniture. The other funds will be used to pay for laptop computers and a computer lab,” Guthrie said.

“Our goal is to eventually have 20 students in each classroom,” she said.

Guthrie said 70 percent of students at the school are Catholic.
Navy Parachute Team Drops In On McGuinness

The U.S. Navy parachute team, the Leap Frogs, recently staged a performance at Bishop McGuinness Clement Pribil Stadium. The team performed aeronautical maneuvers and jumps reaching speeds of 120 mph. Over 250 people watched as 14 parachute jumpers leapt out of an aircraft and free fell several thousand feet before deploying their parachutes. One of the first jumpers landed carrying the McGuinness “Irish” flag with green smoke cascading from it.

After their performance, the Leap Frogs invited all youngsters to join them on the field to assist in packing up their parachutes and answer any questions. Later, they posed for pictures and signed autographs. Keeping the crowd entertained prior to the Leap Frogs demonstration was the U.S. Navy band.

The Leap Frogs team is comprised of the Navy’s best, the U.S. Navy SEAL and Special Warfare commandos. The 14 members are from one of the two Naval Special Warfare groups located on both coasts. Each member joins for a three-year tour. Upon completion they return to operational units.

Formed in 1969, the parachute team was officially commissioned in 1974 by the Chief of Naval Operations. Its mission is to demonstrate Navy excellence, support recruiting efforts and promote the Naval Special Warfare community throughout the United States.

Mount Saint Mary’s Awarded NCA Accreditation

OKLAHOMA CITY — Principal Talita DeNegri announced that Mount Saint Mary High School earned accreditation for the 2006-07 school year from the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI). The association recognized the school on April 3 at its annual awards luncheon held in Chicago.

To earn accreditation, schools must meet NCA CASI’s high standards, be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the school, and implement a continuous school improvement plan focused on increasing student performance. The accreditation process is voluntary and requires annual review.

“Accreditation demonstrates to our students, parents and community that we are focused on raising student achievement, providing a safe and enriching learning environment and maintaining an efficient and effective operation staffed by highly qualified educators,” said DeNegri. “NCA CASI accreditation is recognized across state lines, which not only eases the transfer process as students move from accredited school to accredited school, but also assures parents that the school is meeting regionally and nationally accepted standards for quality and successful professional practice.”

Accreditation provides an external mark of quality and a focus on continuous school improvement. Vice principal Whitney Faires, who leads the school’s improvement team, stated, “The real value of NCA CASI accreditation is the focus on improvement. The accreditation process focuses the school staff on analyzing student performance data, identifying areas of weakness and developing clear goals and plans for improvement. We regularly assess and measure our progress in all goal areas, and NCA CASI holds us accountable for demonstrating growth. The process keeps everyone in the building focused on raising student achievement.”

Parents and interested community members can learn more about NCA CASI accreditation at www.ncacasi.org.

Chew On This to Celebrate Feast

The Religious Education Board of Our Lady’s Cathedral will continue the Chew On This series at 6 p.m. on Saturday, June 30. Judy Reilly will give an appropriately timed presentation as we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady. The gathering will take place in the Connor Center at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Participants are encouraged to bring food to share, while beverages will be provided.

An avid study of Mary, Reilly is a longtime member of the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. She will give an overview of religious icons in general while delving deeper into the story behind this most famous of ladies.

Please join us in the Connor Center of Our Lady’s immediately following 5 p.m. Mass. Bring a friend, your favorite dish to share and enjoy fellowship with and a stimulating discussion on Our Lady.

Currently, two Chew On This speakers remain, each with very unique topics for the audience to digest during the course of the evenings.

Saturday, Aug. 18: Archbishop Beltran, “What it Means to be Catholic.”

If you have questions, contact Faith Reilly at 523-3057.
Adors of the Blood of Christ Celebrate Anniversaries

Several Adors of the Blood of Christ who ministered in Oklahoma celebrated 65 or more years as professed Adors at the Wichita Center in Wichita, Kan. The celebra-
tion took place May 20.

Sister Bernice Taylor was born in Canute and is celebrating 65 years as an Ador of the Blood of Christ.

Sister Nicolette Herman was born in Westphalia, Kan., and is celebrating 70 years as an Ador of the Blood of Christ.

Sister Floriana Vogeli was born in St. Marks, Kan., and is celebrating 70 years as an Ador of the Blood of Christ.

Sister Charlotte Rohr was born in Munjor, Kan., and is celebrating 75 years as an Ador of the Blood of Christ.

Catholic Daughters Honor State Chaplain

At the Oklahoma state convention for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Father Joe Michalichka was honored for his 27 years of service.

The Power of the Penny

OKLAHOMA CITY — Christ the King School adopted an elementary school in Piura, Peru, 12 years ago. During this time Christ the King has collected over $40,000, which has been used to build and purchase many things for the school.

The relationship between the two schools goes beyond donations and construction. Christ the King students exchange letters with the Peruvian students. They even decoupage two tables for Cristo el Rey's library, with photos and facts about Oklahoma and Christ the King.

The assistance from Christ the King has increased literacy rates and school attendance considerably in the village. The village has also seen a significant decrease in crime, and people are moving to the village just so their children can attend Cristo el Rey.

For more information, visit www.ckschool.com.
Eagle Scouts

Scouts From Christ the King Earn Highest Rank Possible

BRIAN R. KELLEY

Brian began his Scouting career with Pack 120 when he became a Cub Scout at Christ the King Catholic School in 1995. In Cub Scouts he earned the Parvuli Dei and Light of Christ awards. He also participated by regularly attending summer day camps and the George Thomas summer camp. He crossed over to the Boy Scouts of Troop 120 in 1999. While a Boy Scout, Brian has served as an assistant patrol leader, patrol leader and a member of the Leadership Patrol. He had an active role in the troop and camped out monthly as well as attending summer camps in Colorado and New Mexico. During his Scouting career, Brian earned 22 merit badges.

Brian’s Eagle Project consisted of planning, organizing and constructing a picnic table together with its concrete pad. The picnic table is located in the 3200 block of Wilshire at Kids Lake, locally known as the “duck pond” next to the parking lot. It will benefit the community by offering a pleasant place to sit and relax and/or eat since there are no other tables located at the park. Brian would like to thank Jeff Martin for guiding him during the process of his project and David Giasson for helping him plan and implement the project.

Brian is a graduate of Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. He started for the varsity Irish wrestling team all four years and two years for the varsity football team. He is a member of National Honor Society and Business Professionals of America. He is a member of Christ the King Church where he is an altar server. Brian will be attending the University of Oklahoma next fall and hopefully be having a lot of fun.

Brian’s parents are Jerry and Ellen Kelley.

FREDERICK MARTIN KEMPF

Martin became a Scout in 1996 when he joined the Tiger Cubs of Pack 120 at Christ the King School. Martin advanced through Cub Scouts earning the highest Cub award, Arrow of Light as well as the Catholic Scout Award, Light of Christ. In 2002, Martin crossed over into Boy Scouts. He served as quarter master, assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, instructor and was part of the Leadership Patrol. Martin’s love of monthly camping with his troop also took him to summer camps in Colorado and New Mexico. He earned 24 merit badges.

Martin’s Eagle Project involved designing, building and securing funding for the construction of two large outdoor benches for Cross and Crown Ministries, an inner-city mission for at-risk children and adults in Oklahoma City. The benches provide much-needed seating for children and adults and will be used for an outdoor learning and activity center. Martin would like to thank the many volunteers, donors and especially the guidance of K.C. Morissey for the successful completion of the project.

JARED ROMAN SMITH

Jared Smith became a Scout in 1995 with Pack 120 of Christ the King Catholic Church. Jared received the highest Cub Scout award, The Arrow of Light, along with the Parvili Dei Religious Award. Jared crossed into Troop 120 in 1999. He served as assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, chaplain’s aid and in the Leadership Corp. He earned 23 merit badges.

Jared’s Eagle Project consisted of building cubbies for the Boys and Girls Club. The cubbies are used to store the books, shoes and backpacks of children who attend the Boys and Girls Club. The cubbies were very useful for the boys and girls as they have a place to store their personal items and not lose them.

Jared graduated from Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. He started on the 2006 football state championship team and also played basketball and baseball. He is a member of Clancy Club, Spanish Club and the Ping Pong Club. Jared has accumulated over 230 service hours as a student at Bishop McGuinness High School and has gone on mission trips. He is a trip leader and will attend the University of Oklahoma and wants to be a petroleum engineer.

Jared’s parents are Bill and Jean Smith. He is a member of Christ the King Catholic Church. His brothers, Mark, Daniel and Brian, are also Eagle Scouts.

LUKE A. MARTIN

Luke Martin started his journey to becoming an Eagle Scout in 1997 when he became a Tiger Cub. He earned the required ranks in Cub Scouting, including the highest award, the Arrow of Light.

In 2001, he crossed over into Boy Scout Troop 120 of Christ the King School. He and the first and last patrol in Scouting would be Nighthawk. During his time as a Boy Scout, he served as a quarter master, an assistant patrol leader, a patrol leader, and is a member of the Leadership Patrol. In the past years he has earned 24 merit badges including first aid, swimming, personal management, personal fitness, family life, camping, citizenship in the community, citizenship in the nation, citizenship in the world, communications, lifesaving, environmental science, leatherwork, weather, dentistry, fishing, basketry, wood carving, wilderness survival, orienteering, nature, pottery, cooking and pioneering.


Luke is 16 years old, a graduate of Trinity School, and will be a junior at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. Luke has spent a lot of time doing community service and has been to Peru on a mission trip. Luke now works part time as a host at Belle Isle Restaurant.

Luke’s parents are Jeff and Jonice Martin. He is a member of Christ the King Catholic Church. Luke’s brothers, Tim and Ross, were also Eagle Scouts.

MATT J. GRAVES

Matt began his Scouting career in 1995 when he became a Tiger Cub in Pack 120 at Christ the King Catholic School. While a Cub Scout he earned the Light of Christ, Parvuli Dei and Cub Scout’s highest honor, the Arrow of Light. He then crossed over into Boy Scouts of Troop 120 in 1999. He has been an active Scout, attending summer camps in Colorado and New Mexico. While a Boy Scout he has served as patrol leader, assistant patrol leader, senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader and Leadership Patrol. During his time as a Boy Scout he has earned 23 merit badges.

Matt’s Eagle project involved planning, organizing and building two new snake exhibits at Martin Park Nature Center. The exhibits consisted of lowered viewing areas for children and a sleek new look. Matt would like to thank K.C. Morissey for his help in the completion of the project.

Matt is 17 and a graduate of Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. He was a three-year letterman and co-captain of the 2006 state champion football team. He was a member of National Honor Society, Latin Club and the Youth Services of Oklahoma County Teen Service Board while a student at McGuinness. He will attend the University of Oklahoma next fall.

Matt’s parents are Cody and Beth Graves. He is a member of Christ the King Catholic Church. Matt’s brother, Ben, is also an Eagle Scout.
Summer Institute Explores Catholic Roots in Our Western Civilization

WICHITA, Kan. — You may not read about it in history or civics class, but many of the rights, liberties and protections we enjoy today — and only aesthetically pleasing, they are reflective at night and contribute to the safety of the citizens of Nichols Hills.

William is an active member of Christ the King Church where he is an altar server and VBS volunteer. He is a member of the Peru missionary group and has enjoyed mission work during the summers of 2004 and 2005. He will return to Peru in August. He will be a senior at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School. He is a member of the bowling team and Key Club. He is also a member of the Chesapeake competitive rowing team in downtown Oklahoma City.

William’s parents are Rick and Patty Ruffin.

St. Eugene’s Newest Eagle Scout

Zachary Kelch began his Scouting career when he joined Troop 129 as a Tiger Cub in the first grade at Saint Eugene Catholic School. He continued with Troop 129, advancing to Cub Scouts and into Boy Scouts. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout at age 15 on May 11. He was awarded this prestigious award during his Eagle Scout Court of Honor at Saint Eugene Catholic Church.

Zachary has held many leadership positions, including assistant senior patrol leader, patrol leader, scribe and chaplain’s aide. He earned more than 31 merit badges during his career, and his favorite merit badge was rafting. He also earned the Light of Christ religious award and the Parvuli Dei religious award, and took part in numerous service projects.

Zachary’s Eagle Project included the construction of two outdoor benches for Saint Eugene Catholic Church. Zachary chose this project because he wanted to give something back to his parish. The benches were placed in a grassy, shaded area behind Saint Eugene Church. This area is a popular place for the church and school to have picnics and it is also a place where outdoor events are often held. People working in the church and school offices can use the benches during their lunch hour or take a break during the day. People who sit on the benches have a beautiful view of the prayer garden and will be comfortable in the shade.

Zachary will be a junior at Bishop McGuinness High School in the fall. He plays soccer and is a member of Key Club, National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, and is a school Presidential Ambassador. He has maintained a weighted grade point average of 4.4 while at Bishop McGuinness.

Zachary attends Saint Eugene Catholic Church and was an altar server for six years and is currently an usher. He is very active in the church youth group and attended Catholic Heart Work Camp and Steubenville Youth Conference last summer. This summer he was chosen to attend the Notre Dame Youth Leadership Conference and will also attend Steubenville Youth Conference.

Celebrating Human Tragedy in the City of Brotherly Love

PHILADELPHIA, June 13 Christian Newswire — The National Catholic Bioethics Center wishes to join its voice of concern for the city of Philadelphia with that of Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia. On June 7, the City Council voted to proclaim Philadelphia a “Pro-Choice City.” Some would say that this resolution confirms the tragic reality about this great city which is hailed as the “City of Brotherly Love.” According to statistics released from the Pennsylvania Department of Health for 2005, over 42.5 percent of all induced abortions in this country. Is it not a conflict of interest for government officials to be advocating for the works of the primary provider of a service? What would the outcry be if a resolution were passed by the City Council which had been crafted by a pro-life agency, even a non-sectarian one?

Philadelphia deserves much better. We are known as the “City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection.” There is nothing loving about the assault on human life that is abortion. It is a tragic violation of both our vulnerable sisters and their never to be born children.

The National Catholic Bioethics Center.
ELGIN — Saint Ann Parish celebrated two major events on June 10, the centennial anniversary of the Catholic faith in the community and the Confirmation of seven young Catholics.

Archbishop Beltran was the principal celebrant for a 4 p.m. Mass at Saint Ann. He was joined by 16 priests from throughout the Archdiocese who concelebrated Mass. Father Maria J. Kumar, pastor at Saint Ann for the past two years, said some 250 people took part in the celebration. The celebration included parishioners of Saint Ann as well as Catholics from Mother of Sorrows in Apache and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sterling; both are missions to Saint Ann. The Knights of Columbus served as Honor Guard for the Mass.

Former parishioners from as far as Oklahoma City and Chickasha joined in the celebration and Father Kumar said a few non-Catholics also took part in helping the parish celebrate its history.

Archbishop Beltran administered the sacrament of Confirmation to seven young Catholics. A covered-dish dinner was held following Mass.

Father Kumar was scheduled to return to his native India on June 19. He said he very much enjoyed his time in Oklahoma and especially his role as pastor at Saint Ann.

“The parishioners are wonderful people,” Father Kumar said. “There is great cooperation among them. I am very grateful to God for the love and concern I have received from the people here.”

Father Madineni Prakash assumed the duties of pastor at Saint Ann on June 19.

Archbishop Beltran confirmed seven young people at Saint Ann Parish in Elgin on June 10. Parishioners from Saint Ann, Mother of Sorrows in Apache and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sterling took part in the centennial celebration. Mass was celebrated by the archbishop with 16 priests concelebrating.
Reception Honors
Father Charles Schettler

A reception honoring Father Charles H. Schettler for his years of service to the Archdiocesan Tribunal was held at the Catholic Pastoral Center on June 12.

Father Schettler, ordained a Roman Catholic priest on Dec. 8, 1954, has served as judicial vicar for the Tribunal since 1973. Father Schettler is retiring and Father Richard Stansberry, who has served as adjutant judicial vicar for the Tribunal, will move into the judicial vicar position.

Father Schettler chatted with old friends at the reception, including Mona Cross, who worked with him in the Tribunal for more than 35 years.

“I feel like Peter at the Transfiguration,” Father Schettler said. Then taking from Matthew 17:4 he said, “Lord, it is good to be here.” A month ago Father Schettler underwent heart surgery at Saint Anthony Hospital. He told the reception audience his doctor indicated he was very lucky to be alive since the blockage in his heart was 99 percent.

“I could have died, but evidently the Lord still has plans for me,” Father Schettler said.

Father Stansberry called Father Schettler a wonderful mentor and said it would be “impossible to fill his shoes.

“I tried to get him to tell me how many cases he’s handled for the Tribunal over the years, but he wouldn’t,” said Father Stansberry. “We estimate it’s between 9,000 and 10,000.” Father Schettler has agreed to assist the archdiocesan office when necessary.

Father Schettler thanked Archbishop Beltran for his trust and support over the years. He was first appointed to the Tribunal in 1973 by Bishop Quinn and later served under Archbishop Salatka.

As for his years of service to the Tribunal, Father Schettler summed it up by saying, “We’ve done what we could and I hope what we’ve done is right. The rest of it is up to the Lord.”
Good Grief!
Father John Metzinger Celebrates 25 Years of Priesthood
By Eileen Dugan
The Sooner Catholic

EDMOND — Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy and Linus have a friend in Father John Robert Metzinger. For the past 25 years, Father Metzinger has used these and other Peanuts characters in his homilies to help deliver a spiritual message.

In return, Charles Schulz's Peanuts characters wished Father Metzinger well at the 25th anniversary celebration of his priesthood. Snoopy and the rest of the gang appeared on the back of the keepsake book Father received at the reception held in his honor.

Father Metzinger started using the Peanuts characters in his homilies when he first became a priest. "I became interested in the comic strip growing up. I preached a sermon using the Peanuts characters early in my priesthood, and it resonated with people. I realized that people across the board could relate to these characters. It worked that first time, and I've done it ever since. There are lots of life's lessons in Peanuts," he said.

But the story of Father John Metzinger predates his interest in Peanuts. He was born in Coffeyville, Kan., and attended 12 years of Catholic school. He graduated from McAuley High School in Joplin, Mo., where he was valedictorian of his class and a National Merit finalist. It was just after his graduation that he decided to become a priest.

"The bishop spoke to me at my graduation and asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a priest," Father said. "I said, 'Yes, when I was younger, but I'm going to go to the University of Missouri and study pre-law.'"

A couple of weeks later, as he was saying his prayers, it occurred to him that he should go to seminary. He talked with his parents, his pastor, the vocation director and his bishop; two months later, he was studying for the priesthood at Josephinum Pontifical College in Worthington, Ohio.

"The bishop's question was the trigger for this," Father Metzinger said, "but my parents and some priests I knew were also instrumental in it. Of course, God's grace was involved; ultimately, God gets all the credit."

After graduating from college, it was on to Saint Meinard School of Theology in Saint Meinard, Ind. On April 4, 1981, Father Metzinger was ordained a deacon, and on May 29, 1982, he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest.

Father describes his spirituality as "grounded in the prayer of the Church, the Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours." He credits books by Thomas Merton, John Powell and C.S. Lewis with deepening his faith. "I rely upon Mary's intercession daily," he said. "Sometimes, I pray the Rosary; at other times I say a 'Hail Mary' for the people who have asked me to pray for them."

Being still with God when there are so many distractions is difficult, Father Metzinger said. "The area I would like to grow the most, in the next 25 years, is just to be quiet with the Lord."

Anne Keef, assistant business manager at Saint John the Baptist Church in Edmond, Father's present parish, describes Father Metzinger as "a very caring person."

"The part I enjoy most about being a priest is celebrating the Eucharist, especially in communities that really participate, as Saint John's does so well. There are inexplicable moments during the Mass when we feel that God, indeed, is with us."

"He has a dry sense of humor and is very musical. I am in the choir, and on a rare occasion, we even get him to sing with us."

"In his sermons, Father often talks about Snoopy and Charlie Brown, and some people think this is silly, but those cartoons are much deeper than people realize," Keef said.

Several years into Father Metzinger's priesthood, he was sent to Norman to help start a new parish, the same one his parents, Robert and Mary Jane Metzinger, now attend, Saint Mark the Evangelist. The new congregation met in a Norman hotel until a church could be built. During his 11 years as pastor, besides building the church, Father was also instrumental in starting All Saints School, which serves all the Catholic parishes in Norman.

"My parents were my parishioners [at Saint Mark's], and that was a blessing for the three of us. My mom was sad when I was transferred to Saint John's because she would not see me as often," Father said.

For the past five years, Father Metzinger has been pastor of Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church. He was assigned to Saint John's to help with renovations to the parish church and school. Again, Father is building, or in this case, rebuilding a church and school.

"The most challenging times of my priesthood have been some of the administrative responsibilities, worrying about budgets and buildings," he said. "I'll be glad when the construction at Saint John's is done. Deacon Bill Coyle has been a big help to me with budgets and the other continued on page 19
Letters

Not Acceptable

My father was a disabled veteran who did not ever regret the sacrifices of suffering he made for my freedom. My son, Stephen is presently serving in Iraq with the Marines. My son, Timothy was asked to attend Boys State but when I inquired about his being able to attend Mass, we were refused. As a result I reimbursed our local American Legion because it was too late to get any refund.

The anti-Catholic sentiment is evident in our society on a daily basis. I was saddened to find this attitude in an organization like the American Legion. I just hope this will give other committed Catholic families a heads up to start instead of finding out late in the process as I did. Instead, Timothy went to summer camp with his Boy Scout troop where God and country still mean something.

Ellen Weigant
Immaculate Conception
Pawhuska

Pay Attention, Rudy

Our Catholic politicians who are running for president and those in Congress are putting their political ambitions above what their faith and what the Church teaches in regard to abortion and to the moral law.

I sometimes wonder how they can claim to be Catholic and still espouse those moral issues that are contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Rudy Giuliani, former mayor of New York, has said he personally opposes abortion, but that he would not impose his views on anyone else. That’s like saying I am against murder, but wouldn’t want to impose my views on anyone else. I was watching the Republican candidates on television, when Giuliani was asked about a Rhode Island Catholic bishop who criticized him for supporting abortion rights. As Giuliani was about to answer, a lightning strike interrupted the debate. Giuliani said that for someone who attended Catholic schools all of his life, this was a very frightening thing. He should have taken that as a sign that he had a problem with the good Lord.

Tom Waken
Saint Frances, Oklahoma City

Across Oklahoma

Cathedral Tour

OKLAHOMA CITY — The feast day for Our Lady of Perpetual Help is June 27. In honor of this miraculous icon, there will be two tours of the cathedral on that day — noon and 7 p.m. For more information, contact Faith Reilly at 523-3057 or freilly@cathedralokc.org. Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 Lake Avenue, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73118. The cathedral is located two blocks east of Classen Boulevard on NW 32nd Street.

Applications Sought

The Archdiocesan Commission for Justice and Human Development is accepting applications from parishes for “seed” grant monies ($500 to $1,000) for grass-roots projects which promote social justice. The funds must be applied for within Catholic social teaching, empowerment of those forgotten and dispossessed, and parish involvement. Some grants may be awarded at lower levels than requested. Applications are available by contacting Becky VanPool at Catholic Charities at 523-3059. Deadline for applications is July 1.

Healing Workshop Set

PIEDMONT — A Healing Heart workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to noon July 21. The workshop will feature Bob Willis, who is back for a repeat performance following a sell-out retreat in May. Willis uses the medium of clay in guiding persons to share the pain of loss. As a grief professional and a professional sculptor, Bob blends his experience with music and other grief materials as persons sculpt a unique and personal Healing Heart. Red Plains Monastery Red Art Barn. All materials are provided. Call 373-4739 to register. Fee: $70, non-refundable deposit of $20.

Mass in Tagalog

DEL CITY — Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church will celebrate Mass in Tagalog at 6 p.m. on June 26. A potluck dinner will follow. At 6 p.m. on July 7, the parish will host a general meeting for all Filipinos interested in being involved in future events. Contact Julie at 420-5818 for more information.

Parish to Host Dinner

OKLAHOMA CITY — Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, 1901 N.W. 18th St., is hosting its annual summer International Food Fest at 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 14 in the T. Phil Kierl Gymnasium. The proceeds from this benefit dinner will be used for grass-roots projects which promote social justice. The dinner will also celebrate the many cultures that blend together to make the strong, faithful community known as Saint Francis of Assisi Parish.

At the dinner, a surprise gift will be announced and tickets for an opportunity to win the prize will be sold at the food fest and for the next two weeks after all the Masses. The cost of a gift giveaway ticket is $1 each or six tickets for $5 and the proceeds will also be donated to Rosary School.

Dinner tickets will be sold for $20 each after all the Masses. Call Mary Lalli for ticket information, 947-2947, or Michelle McGannon at 947-0161 if you want to be a member of the Diplomatic Corps, a group of donors who sponsor the dinner.

Bingo Set

NORMAN — Friday night bingo at Saint Joseph’s Parish is scheduled as follows: July 13, Aug. 10, Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9 and Jan. 12 and Feb. 1, 2008. A light dinner is served at 6:30, first session of games at 7 p.m., second session at 8:30. $5 per session, no limit on blackout cards, group photo of all the winners.

A Parish Approach to Diabetes

OKLAHOMA CITY — Beginning Tuesday, June 26 at 6:30 p.m., Saint Francis Catholic Church will host a three-session educational program titled “A Parish Approach to Diabetes.” Statistics show that diabetes affects 17 million people in the United States with an estimated half of these going undiagnosed. There has been a rapid increase of diabetes over the past decade, especially among children. This program will offer information to better understand diabetes including information on the varied types of diabetes, risk factors and symptoms. There will be recommendations on how to control one’s blood glucose as well as suggested practices for healthy eating. Also added will be helpful tools on how to embrace the spiritual journey involved in living with a chronic condition.

The information will benefit anyone who is interested in learning more about diabetes, whether you have the condition or not.

This program is scheduled for three consecutive months — June 26, July 17 and Aug. 14 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall. One is strongly encouraged to attend all three sessions. Though there is no fee, registration is required by calling Catholic Charities at 523-3009. The program presenters are Glenda Bronson, RN, certified diabetes educator, and Diane Moore, registered dietician, both from Mercy Hospital. For more information call Mary Diane Steltenkamp RN, Parish Nurse, at Catholic Charities, 523-3009.
True Happiness There for the Taking if We Choose

We Promote Everything Else, Why Not Our Faith?

Counseling Corner

By Joe Froehle, LPC, ICADC

The film and this monk's comments moved me to writing about happiness.

Most of us desire happiness and have difficulty experiencing it. Happiness is all around us ... just as is the air we breathe and just as the sea is all around the fish that swim in it. Happiness is our natural state and is there for us to experience and to enjoy. We really don't have to do anything to be happy. We can just experience it. We can just be.

We have been fooled into thinking we need so much to be happy. But we don't. We don't need that big screen TV, or that SUV, or other material possessions to be happy. We don't need others to approve of us, recognize us, honor us, love us to be happy. We don't need success to be happy. We don't need promotion, that title, that prestigious award to be happy. We can even be experiencing depression, anxiety, financial stress and physical pain and yet be happy. Our spouses can be upset with us, our children misbehaving, our bosses angry, our employees discontented and yet we can be happy, in fact, we have a right to be happy in spite of what is happening around us.

Oftentimes we don't allow ourselves to be happy because of what others are experiencing, because we haven't met theirs or our own expectations of ourselves, because we are experiencing other negative feelings or events in our lives. However, in spite of these experiences of negative events, we can choose to be or allow ourselves to experience happiness.

Happiness is our natural state. We can nurture happiness by being aware of the good that is going on in our lives, of the things we can be grateful for and by having gratitude for these blessings in our lives. Having an attitude of gratitude contributes to happiness. Again, happiness is our natural state and comes to us not from adding something to our lives but by subtracting from our expectations and attachments. We can notice what we are expecting and what we are attached to and letting go, especially when these things distract from our happiness.

We can also encourage happiness by noticing and wondering about our attitude toward events occurring around us or what others are saying about us and/or doing. Oftentimes we allow what is happening around us to affect us in unnecessarily negative ways. If so, it would be good for us to observe and watch ourselves to better understand how our attitude is being negatively affected by things outside of ourselves. As we better understand, our attitude changes and we experience more happiness.

Because of their innocence and lack of programming, children experience greater happiness than do adults. Children do not have the fears, insecurities, anxieties that we adults have. And they have fewer expectations, attachments, problems, responsibilities, etc. It would be better if we were more like children in their simplicity, with fewer expectations about what others think of them, fewer needs for success and fewer attachments to material possessions, prestige and recognition.

The blind elderly monk has experienced a life full of happiness. Perhaps his blindness allowed him to shift from things outside of himself to an interior life where he spent much of his time in prayer and meditation, honoring Jesus his Savior and being grateful to God for his blessings. How can we more deeply experience our own happiness?

We can also encourage happiness by noticing and wondering about our attitude toward events occurring around us or what others are saying about us. Happiness is our natural state and comes to us not from adding something to our lives but by subtracting from our expectations and attachments. We can notice what we are expecting and what we are attached to and letting go, especially when these things distract from our happiness.

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Editor's Note: Denise Bossert is the mother of four children. She lives with her husband in New Melle, Mo., where she is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. She writes a monthly column for the St. Louis Review that traces her journey from Protestantism to Catholicism. Her columns will run from time to time in the Sooner Catholic.
Debating the Fate of the Embryo

The debate over embryonic stem cell research continues to escalate in our country, and remains a topic of significant public interest. Because of this growing public interest, I am often invited to participate in public debates on stem cell research and cloning. My sparring partners are usually other scientists, politicians or public policy experts. The debates are typically held at universities or colleges, and audiences generally have the opportunity to ask questions of both sides afterwards. Having participated in a number of these debates over the past few years, I’ve been surprised by how often certain arguments are trotted out with great solemnity as if they were obviously right and true, even though a casual observer can quickly recognize their notable flaws and inadequacies.

Recently I had the opportunity to debate a stem cell researcher at a gathering of physicians at the New York Academy of Medicine. Our discussion was cordial and civil, even though we clearly disagreed with each other’s positions. Not infrequently, such discussions tend to take the form of a dispute over the relative merits of the two major categories of stem cells: adult vs. embryonic (adult stem cell research does not require the destruction of young human embryos while embryonic stem cell research generally does). I did my best to avoid letting our discussion slip into a polemic about what might work best, about efficiency, even though this was one of the key arguments used by my opponent. He stressed how embryonic stem cells appear to have certain desirable characteristics, and may one day be able to work better than adult stem cells, and if cures end up being derived from embryonic stem cells in the future, then, in effect, it must be ethical to do such research and to destroy human embryos. This argument in one form or another has been put forward widely by the media, and has won over many Hollywood personalities, patient advocacy groups and Washington politicians.

In responding to this argument during our debate, I recounted a little story from when I traveled to the Philippines to give a lecture about the country, and I was struck by the difference between the two feed hovels made out of cardboard boxes, I noticed a boy, a street child, rummaging through piles of trash for food. His clothes were dirty, and he seemed quite frail. It looked like he did this on a daily basis in order to survive. As I watched him, the rhetorical thought flashed through my mind, patterned on the language of embryonic stem cell advocates: “...he’s so small, so insignificant: what if a cure for Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and diabetes could be developed to benefit all of suffering mankind, by promoting scientific research that depended on killing just a single little boy like him, who, after all, is living no better than an animal? He’s probably just going to die anyway in his difficult circumstances…”

After sharing this Philippine experience with my audience at the debate, I asked them a question: “Could a scientific research program like that ever be ethical?” The obvious answer to that question reminds us how ethics must always come before efficiency. Taking the lives of young humans (whether as little boys or little embryos) cannot be pronounced ethical simply because it might result in huge benefits to older, more powerful or more wealthy humans. The fact remains that objective moral limits constrain all areas of human endeavor, including the practice of the biological sciences. Whenever the siren-call of healing and progress is blaring in our ears, we are obliged to be particularly attentive to those absolute moral boundaries.

A second argument that comes up quite often in debates about the embryo is the so-called argument from wastage. The starting point for this argument is the medical observation that most pregnancies don’t survive and are flushed from a woman’s body. One well-known embryology textbook summarizes it this way: “The total loss of conceptuses from fertilization to birth is believed to be considerable, perhaps even as high as 50 percent to nearly 80 percent.” The fact that most embryos don’t survive is then taken and used as a justification for destroying embryos to get stem cells. As another opponent of mine once put it during a debate at Southern Methodist University in Texas, “If Mother Nature destroys so many embryos naturally, why should we be able to as well? Why get all worked up about using frozen embryos in research, when so many early embryos die naturally from miscarriages?” But the difference between a natural miscarriage and the intentional destruction of embryos is precisely the difference between the unfortunate case of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome vs. the unconscionable case of smothering an infant with a pillow. What Mother Nature does and what I freely choose to do as an acting person are two separate realities, not to be confused. To put it dramatically, the fact that Mother Nature sends tsunamis that claim the lives of thousands of victims doesn’t somehow make it OK for me to shoot a gun in a crowded stadium and claim thousands of victims of my own.

Another tactic that is sometimes used during debates about the human embryo is to try to dissipate the energy of the argument over many options. I participated in a debate at Rutgers University in New Jersey where one of my opponents suggested that if I am so concerned about protecting embryonic humans, then I need to be equally concerned about protecting older humans by doing everything in my power to stop various wars and armed conflicts around the world. In my reply to his argument, I stressed the significant differences between the decision to go after an enemy during an armed conflict, and the decision to go after human embryos for their stem cells. Embryonic humans are always absolutely innocent and helpless, and therefore can never be willfully and directly targeted. In wartime, however, the situation is clearly more complex because the parties involved are no longer innocent, and self-defense has always been recognized as a legitimate moral choice when unjust aggression arises.

The embryo debates are sure to intensify in the future, and we need to insist on careful and rationally supported arguments from all parties in the debate. Where vulnerable and defenseless human life is concerned, the stakes are much too high to allow specious and imprecise arguments to carry the day.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholeczyk, Ph.D., is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

Catholic Radio

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Buenas Noticias...

"Recibe por esta Señal, el Don del Espíritu Santo"

Crístovino para salvarlos del pecado. Jesús vino a traer vida nueva. El vino para que podamos tener una vida abundante.

Por lo que sí optan por el mal camino, entonces obtendrán malos resultados.

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas de Cristo:

Cada año repito esta forma sacramental más de mil veces durante todo lo que se llama la época de Confirmación. Actualmente, la Confirmación puede y se administra a lo largo de todo el año. Sin embargo, la inmensa mayoría de nuestras celebraciones de Confirmación tienen lugar en la Temporada de Pascua, por lo que las estoy completando.

Este año he confirmado a más de mil jóvenes adultos (estudiantes de preparatoria) en cuarenta y dos parroquias a lo largo de nuestra Arquidiócesis. Las "clases" o grupos van desde dos candidatos en la parroquia Sagrado Corazón de la ciudad de Magín hasta ciento ocho candidatos de la parroquia San Juan en la ciudad de Edmond. La mayoría de las clases oscilan entre veinte a treinta candidatos.

Uma hora antes de la ceremonia de Confirmación, yo me reúno con los candidatos. Durante ese tiempo les enfatizo cuán importante es la Confirmación en sus vidas, no por el hecho de lo que están haciendo, ni por lo que yo hago, aunque sus respuestas y mis acciones son importantes. Lo más trascendente en realidad de la Confirmación es que lo que Dios hace. Es Dios quien nos marca cómo seremos, nos entrega con qué manos sobre todos los candidatos unido por uno. Después recibe la unión del Crisma sobre sus manos y le dice las siguientes palabras: "Recibe por esta señal, el don del Espíritu Santo".

En las ceremonias de Confirmación de este año he tratado de apasionar a la gente joven con el sentido de responsabilidad. Así en mi homilía, les digo a ellos: "Ya ustedes no piensen como lo lo hacen los niños, quienes no tienen la capacidad de pensar lógicamente y tienen un juicio crítico. Ustedes, queridos candidatos, ya pueden reconocer lo que es bueno y lo que es malo por lo que ya pueden hacer opciones de vida y obtener resultados.

Cristo vino para salvarnos del pecado. Jesús vino a traer vida nueva. El vino para que podamos tener una vida abundante. Luego les recuerdo a los candidatos que la señal de la cruz que les hago sobre sus frentes no la deben olvidar. Porque es la señal de la cruz es el perpetuo compromiso con nuestro Señor y es el signo de Su eterno amor por nosotros.

Yo les di a los jóvenes que recuerden siempre que fue en la cruz que Cristo murió por todos nosotros. Para ayudarlos a que hagan ésto les presento la cruz de Cristo y les digo que después del servicio de comunión de la Misa, bendecirán unos crucifijos ante el altar, dándoles un crucifijo a quienes serán confirmados. Luego también que tomen esta cruz bendecida para que se la lleven a sus casas. Yo les ruego a los candidatos que se la lleven con sigilo por donde quieran que vayan y que valoren la cruz y vivan por ella como Jesús dijo: "Si algún quiere seguirme que se niegue a tomar con él el camino de su cruz de cada día y que me siga."

Mi experiencia en las cinco tantas y dos parroquias donde confirmé a más de mil jóvenes este año fue muy inspiradora y agradable. Sé que ahora la generación de Jóvenes Católicos será muy fuerte y la bendición de Cristo y de la bendición de Dios, los bendecirán que Dios nos ofrece paz, alegría, amor y vida eterna."

La Iglesia Católica de México confirmó su oposición a la eutanasia

Iniciativa de ley para introducir la eutanasia en la capital mexicana

MÉXICO, (ZENIT.org) — Una iniciativa de ley que contempla "la eutanasia pasiva" fue presentada por los diputados del Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) en el Distrito Federal.

El cardenal Rivera manifiesta su oposición, así como el "ensañamiento terapéutico".

Dicha iniciativa, como en el caso de la que propició la despenalización del aborto en la capital de México, ha sido acogida por otras corrientes políticas de la capital como una respuesta del gobierno local, de orientación laizal, al pensamiento católico que defiende la vida desde el momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

La iniciativa de Ley de Voluntad Anticipada para el Distrito Federal y de reformas y aiciones al Código Penal y a la Ley de Salud locales, permitiría a enfermos en fase terminal renunciar a todo tratamiento médico, o en caso de no estar en condiciones de decidir que un paciente en primer grado lo haga por ellos, para que no se prolongue de manera suya.

La Iglesia católica, en voz del cardenal Norbert Rivera Carrera, arzobispado primado de México, confirmó su oposición a la eutanasia, aun que dejó en claro que la Iglesia está en contra del llamado "ensañamiento terapéutico". Una cosa es la eutanasia..."dijo el purpurado..." y otra "el bien morir."

El cardenal Rivera Carrera indicó que la Iglesia católica está a favor de la vida, nunca a la muerte y no acepta la condonación de la muerte que muchos sufren, cualquiera que sea su situación, incluyendo un asesino o narcotraficante."

Se trataba de una referencia a la pena de muerte que puede enfrentar, si una corte federal estadounidense se lo determina así, el "capo" del "cartel" de las drogas de Tijuana, Francisco Javier Arellano Félix, capturado por Estados Unidos hace un año. En realidad, el Código Penal federal de México, en su artículo 212, establece una pena de uno a cinco años de prisión a quien preste auxilio o induzca a otro a morir; pero el castigo aumenta de cuatro a doce años a quien ejecute la muerte. También el Código penal mexicano penaliza la muerte de aquellos que sean enjugar o narcotraficantes.

Se trata de una referencia a la pena de muerte que puede enfrentar, si una corte federal estadounidense se lo determina así, el "capo" del "cartel" de las drogas de Tijuana, Francisco Javier Arellano Félix, capturado por Estados Unidos hace un año.
Una jornada que sirve de connivencia para las familias
La Parroquia de los Santos Ángeles celebró su popular verbena

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Con el inicio del verano, muchos comienzan a disfrutar de unas merecidas vacaciones. Para muchos, como es el caso de los estudiantes, son unos días que culminan todo un año de trabajo. En esta época del año, en muchas de nuestras parroquias de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, vamos a poder compartir las tradicionales verbenas, donde la alegría con todos nuestros miembros y vecinos es compartida con nuestra Iglesia Católica.

Tal es el caso de la tradicional verbena de los Santos Ángeles, conocida también como el carnaval de Holy Angels, la cual se efectúa recientemente con un rotundo éxito. La jornada familiar de recreación ha servido para recaudar fondos requeridos para el mejoramiento de las instalaciones de esa parroquia, que es predominantemente hispánica. La verbena de los Santos Ángeles a lo largo de los años, ha permitido brindar una oportunidad de esparcimiento familiar y se ha convertido en una fiesta caritativa, porque en ella se testimonian el trabajo voluntario y espíritu de colaboración de los feligreses católicos de nuestra Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City.

Han sido muchos los proyectos en nuestra comunidad católica, muchas las dificultades, pero al final, el testigo y la esperanza en Dios ha podido con muchos de los problemas y hoy podemos decir con satisfacción, que vemos hechos y que los proyectos que aún no se ven, se verán porque están ya conseguidos. A pesar de ello, queda mucho trabajo por hacer; muchas dificultades aún por superar; pero ese trabajo no se hace tan duro cuando hay resultados que avalan el esfuerzo. Por lo tanto, detrás de cada verbena hay un proyecto que se concreta para el bien de nuestra Iglesia Católica y su pueblo en Oklahoma. Gracias a Dios, hemos sido capaces de hacer de nuevo, un gran carnaval que es de todos. Con esta jornada, en los Santos Ángeles, sigamos incitando a nuestros jóvenes el espíritu de colaboración.

Análisis del padre Federico Lombardi
La emergencia educativa, la dificultad para trasmitir valores

VATICANO, (ZENIT.org) — Benedicto XVI considera que la actual emergencia educativa es en la dificultad cada vez mayor de transmitir los valores de la vida, explica el portavoz vaticano, el padre Federico Lombardi S.I. ha profundizado en el discurso que el Papa pronunció en la Basílica de San Juan de Letrán, el 11 de junio, al congreso eclesial de la diócesis de Roma, en el último editorial de “Octava Dies”, semanario producido por el “Centro Televisivo Vaticano”, del que es director. Sin embargo, Benedicto XVI habla de una gran emergencia educativa, es decir, de la dificultad cada vez mayor para transmitir los valores básicos de la existencia y de un recto comportamiento, y atribuye la causa a “una sociedad y una cultura que con demasiada frecuencia hacen del relativismo el propio credo”, constata. “La situación es tan grave que el Papa ve en nuestra civilización una tendencia en cierto sentido suicida y habla de un “extraño olvido de sí misma” que hoy la caracteriza”, añade el padre Lombardi, quien es también director de la Oficina de Prensa de la Santa Sede.

“Son palabras muy fuertes que van verdaderamente contra la corriente y que necesariamente han provocado críticas contra el Papa”, afirma Federico Lombardi S.I., explicando que el tema es “el envejecimiento de las instituciones y de la moral de la Iglesia”, al tiempo que resalta que el Papa está recurriendo a la “tradicional forma de enseñanza” como una opción viable en un mundo secularizado. El Papa, en su discurso, resalta que la responsabilidad ante el futuro de las futuras generaciones, no la tienen los jóvenes, sino los adultos, quienes deben ser quienes más contribuyan a formar el futuro de la sociedad, y que, en esta tarea, la Iglesia debe jugar un papel protagónico. “El mensaje es positivo –insiste–. No se trata de una crítica estéril, pues la Iglesia está comprometida hasta el fondo en poner fundamentos y presentar orientaciones sólidas para una educación integral, a partir de la relación viva con Jesucristo y en ofrecer a toda la sociedad su riquísima experiencia educativa”. 
Data Entry Specialist

The Office of the Archdiocesan Development Fund Appeal is seeking to fill the position of a full-time data entry specialist. Computer proficiency, including Microsoft Word, Excel and Access. Bilingual and experience with Blackbaud Software helpful but not required. Send resume to Archdiocesan Development Fund, P.O. Box 32180, OKC 73123 or e-mail tmmaxwell@catholiccharitiesokc.org.

Administrative Assistant

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma is seeking an administrative assistant for its foundation office at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Ideal candidate should possess a proficiency in Microsoft Word and Excel, have excellent organizational, administrative and communication skills. Send cover letter and resume to Catholic Foundation, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73123-0380.

Accountant

Catholic Charities of Oklahoma City seeks an accountant. Successful candidate must possess a bachelor's degree in accounting or a related field; 1-plus years experience preferably in a nonprofit setting; computer proficiency, including Excel, Word and Outlook; organizational skills and the ability to multi-task; excellent analytical skills; positive communication skills and the ability to relate to and professionally interact with staff, volunteers and the public. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., OKC 73106 or nlargent@catholiccharitiesokc.org.

Administrative Assistant:

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

Coordinator, Case Management

Catholic Charities seeks a licensed social worker with a clinical specialty to supervise the case management staff in our Family HOPE and Transitional Housing programs. This position supervises direct services to clients. Works with all programs to develop respectful relationships with persons served while helping the clients gain skills that will empower them to solve their own problems. Catholic Charities is an equal opportunity employer offering competitive benefits and a supportive work environment. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd, OKC, 73106 or nlargent@catholiccharitiesokc.org.

Kids Club Director

All Saints Catholic School in Norman is looking for a part-time Kids Club director to plan educational and recreational activities, supervise assistants, supervise children 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. daily, and full day care on selected school holidays. Knowledge of DHS day-care regulations a plus. Please send resumes to Principal Leslie Schmitt at 4001 36th Ave., N.W., Norman, Okla. 73072, or fax to (405) 447-7227.

First-Grade Teacher

St. Philip Neri School in Midwest City is accepting applications for a full-time first-grade teacher. Must be Oklahoma certified. Also accepting applications for a PE/health teacher. Submit resume to Bette J. Novak, 1121 Felix Place, Midwest City, Okla. 73110.

Part-Time Teacher Openings

St. John Nepomuk Catholic School in Yukon is accepting applications for a part-time vocal music teacher and part-time PE teacher for the 2007-2008 school year. Candidates must be certified by the state of Oklahoma. Interested applicants may send a resume and copy of teaching certificate to Diane Floyd at 600 Garth Brooks Blvd., Yukon 73099, or call (405) 354-2509 for more information.

Elementary Teacher Openings

St. Mary's Catholic School, Guthrie, is accepting applications for employment for the 2007-2008 school year. Candidates must be certified by the state of Oklahoma and possess a degree in early childhood or elementary education. Send resume and copy of teaching certificate to Sheila Whalen-Guthrie, 502 E. Warner, Guthrie 73044, or call (405) 282-2071 for more information.

Elementary Teacher Openings

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

Elementary Teacher Openings

St. Mary's School, Ponca City, is accepting applications for employment for the 2007-2008 school year. Openings include part-time science teacher and part-time pre-algebra/algebra teacher. Additional teaching responsibilities may be available to qualified applicants. Elementary certification and subject endorsements required. Contact Principal Shirley Zink at (580) 765-4387.

First-Grade Teacher

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

Teacher Sought

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

High School Coaches/Teachers

Mount St. Mary Catholic HS (Oklahoma City) is accepting applications for a part-time Spanish position for the 2007-2008 school year with some assistant coaching (football and/or basketball) experience preferred but not required. Send resume, letter of interest, copy of teaching certificate and references to Talita DeNegri, Mount St. Mary HS, 2801 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City 73109, fax (405) 631-9209. For more information, call (405) 631-8865 or e-mail tdenegri@mountstmary.org.

Cafeteria Manager

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

Music Director

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

DRE/Youth Minister

St. Joseph Parish in Muskogee is in need of a director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry to coordinate religious formation and activities for youth and adults. Must be a Catholic in good standing that enjoys working with young people. The position is full time. Formal education in theology preferred. Contact Father Bryan Brooks at (918) 687-1351 for more information.

Music Director

St. Joseph Parish in Muskogee is in need of a music director to lead a vocal choir and assist in planning liturgies throughout the liturgical year. Experience as an organist is helpful but not required. Contact Father Bryan Brooks at (918) 687-1351 for more information.

Film Captures Destruction of Migrant Church

Award-winning filmmaker, John Carlos Frey captures an enduring story of true faith and perseverance pitted against the fear and heated debate on immigration in his latest documentary film titled “The Invisible Chapel.” For over 20 years, a migrant chapel remained invisible to the wealthy residents of a San Diego neighborhood. The chapel, made of concrete, tile and wood complete with benches for seating, was nestled in a hidden canyon obscured from view by the cover of brush and trees. Every Sunday, parish volunteers provided humanitarian assistance and held a church service for over 100 impoverished agricultural, construction and service industry workers from Mexico.

Some nearby neighbors, along with the San Diego Minutemen and a San Diego radio talk show host, clashed with the mostly undocumented immigrant congregation. The ensuing conflict forced the migrants and volunteers out of their sacred space of 20 years and ultimately caused the destruction of their place of worship.

“The Invisible Chapel” is now available on DVD and is the follow-up film to John Carlos Frey’s 2006 expose of migrant living conditions in San Diego titled “The Invisible Mexicans of Deer Canyon.” For more information, go to www.invisible-chapel.com

Saint James the Greater 567-3080.

SH-99 7 miles N. I-40 or 20 miles S. is located in St. Wenceslaus Church, Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague.

30 The Knights of Columbus will host the Catholic Family Golf Tournament at the Bruhel Memorial Golf Course in Purcell. $75 entry fee, includes golf, one-half cart, range balls, lunch and beverages. First-, second- and third-place merchandise prizes and closest to the hole on all par 3’s prizes. So bring the family and come on down. This four-person scramble starting at 8 a.m. is for everyone.

30 Living With Imperfection: Ours and Others, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Who demands perfection? Is it God? Or is it you? Learn how to live lovingly with who you are. The effect on your relationships may surprise you. Presenter is Sister Melissa Anna Letts, OSB, at Red Plains Monastery. Call 373-4739 to register. Bring a sack lunch. Fee: Mail in $35 to reserve your place.

3 Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western every Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to noon. The Rosary is said every weekday at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome.

4 Holy Family Home Mass, 10 a.m., Holy Family Home, 6821 Eddie Drive, Midwest City, (405) 523-3000.

6 First Friday Adoration at St. Francis of Assisi in Oklahoma City. After the 8:30 a.m. Rosary School Mass there will be the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction at 5:30 p.m. This is open to all. St. Francis is located at 1910 NW 19th (just two blocks east of Penn) in Oklahoma City.

6 First Friday Adoration at Holy Name of Jesus in Chickasha. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. followed by Benediction. This is open to all. Holy Name of Jesus is located at 210 S 7th St. in Chickasha.

6 First Friday Sacred Heart Mass at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is at 5:30 p.m. with the Sacrament of Reconciliation available prior to Mass. Mass is at 7 p.m. Those wanting to learn more about First Friday Devotion and the practice of consecrating the family and home to the Sacred Heart of Jesus will find materials available after Mass. For more information, please call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944 or Diane Grim at (405) 528-6252.

14 The Benedictine Oblates of Red Plains Monastery will meet from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. They join the Community for Vespers, followed by a potluck dinner. For more information, contact Sister Eunice at 373-4565 or osbokc@ionet.net.

15 Taize Prayer, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Red Plains Monastery, 728 Richland Road SW, Piedmont. For more details, call 373-4565. Optional video on Taize prayer at 6 p.m.

15 The Community of the Secular Ordinaries of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus - Oklahoma Community and Province of St. Therese, meets at St. Joseph Carmelite Monastery in Piedmont from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call Janet Mildflet (405) 848-6275 or Deacon Jim Breaize (405) 377-9478.

23-27 St. Monica Music Camp, 8:30 a.m. to noon. The final performance is held on Saturday, July 28 after the 5:30 p.m. Mass. Music camp is open to second grade through high school, with a kindergarten and first-grade class available for children of full-time adult staffers. Nursery is available for those helping with camp.

28 Bingo at St. James Catholic Church, 4201 S. McKinley. Food and beverages, reasonably priced will be served at 6 p.m. Bingo begins at 6:30 p.m. All games including two blackouts $10. Door prizes and special recognition for all players born in June. All bingo players get an entry for a 27-inch flat screen TV to be given away at the October bingo. So come on down and make it a party.

30 Holy Name of Jesus in Chickasha.

Father Metzinger continued from page 12 administrative responsibilities.

"We can’t always do just the things we want to do or like to do. We need to do what needs to be done," Father said.

With a large, close-knit family of four brothers and one sister, Father Metzinger has been kept busy over the years officiating at the weddings of his siblings, and, more recently, at the baptisms and First Communions of his nieces and nephews. He also helped his mother and father celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at Saint John’s on Dec. 27, 2005.

Father Metzinger loves being a priest. "It is a wonderful way to serve the Lord," he said. "I have seen the many ways that God has touched the lives of people through me. That’s a great blessing.

"The part I enjoy most about being a priest is celebrating the Eucharist, especially in communities that really participate, as Saint John’s does so well. There are inexpressible moments during the Mass when we feel that God, indeed, is with us.

"Sometimes giving people Holy Communion when the choir is singing is a sublime moment.

"We are always surrounded by God’s grace, but sometimes we lose sight of that through the week. The Eucharist brings us back; it reminds us of where our strength can be found," Father Metzinger said.

Young men interested in becoming priests occasionally stop by Father’s office at Saint John’s. He advises them to pray about their decision and to talk about it with other people in the Church whose opinions they respect. If, after that, the priesthood still appeals to them, he suggests that they “contact the vocation director and give it a try.”

During the school year, Father enjoys saying Mass at the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton School, part of Saint John’s Parish. "The school is a vital part of the life of the parish. One of the highlights of my week is to celebrate Mass with the school-children.

"Children are the future of the Church, and it is a blessing to have a chance to interact with them as they grow not only in age but in grace and wisdom,” he said.

Like most Catholics, Father Metzinger has several favorite Scriptures. His favorite is John 15: 9-12, “As the Father loves me, so also I love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.”

“I love this Scripture,” he said, “because love is the measure of all things. The purpose of our lives is to welcome God’s love into our lives and share that love with others.”

Father also likes Matthew 11:28-30, which begins with the line, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” He often shares this Scripture with those needing strength in their lives. “This Scripture gives people hope,” he said.

Tuesday, May 29, 2007, was the 25th anniversary of Father John Robert Metzinger’s ordination. A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at Saint John’s by Father and many of his brother priests, followed by a reception in his honor.

"It was a wonderful evening,” Father Metzinger said. “I invited all the priests of the Archdiocese to celebrate with me. Not all of them were able to attend. I didn’t count how many were there, but someone told me that there were exactly 25 of my brother priests concelebrating with me. It was a stroke of grace!

“After 25 years, it’s time for reflecting and becoming aware of the countless people who have blessed my life and my ministry. Many of them were there that night,” Father said. “It was an evening to be grateful for my brother priests, the people from the parishes in which I served, and my family.”

In October of 1981, a few months before his ordination, Father Metzinger was interviewed by the Sooner Catholic. At that time, he said of his approaching priesthood, “I just want to share in people’s lives and help them to realize God loves them.”
The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc. has been busy awarding scholarships to students enrolled in higher education. Pictured here are some of the students who have received support from the Catholic Foundation.

Susan Murray of Christ the King, Oklahoma City, receives a Catholic Foundation Scholarship from board member Susie Nelson and Pastor Joseph Ross.

Teneille Reherman of Sts. Peter and Paul, Kingfisher, receives an Evelyn and Kathryn Hau Memorial Scholarship from executive director Tom Casso and Pastor Stephen Hamilton.

Merle Fuerte, Jacob Severin and Travis Schnaithman of Saint Gregory the Great, Enid, receive Amelia Davis/Elizabeth Lawrence Memorial Scholarships from Catholic Foundation board member Dr. Charles Lawrence and Pastor Lawrence Kowalski. Also pictured are Davis/Lawrence Memorial Scholarship trustees Andrew and David Lawrence. The Baptismal Font in the background was donated through the Evelyn and Kathryn Hau Memorial Fund.

Nathan Crossley, Daniel Crossley, Laura Himes, David Crossley and Shannon Meiwes of Holy Trinity, Okarche, receive Catholic Foundation Scholarships from board member Carol Hopper and Pastor Philip Louis. Laura Himes received an Evelyn and Kathryn Hau Memorial Scholarship.

Ann Nawotka of Our Lady of Fatima, Nicoma Park, receives a Catholic Foundation Scholarship from board member Ray Haefele.

Michael Henderson of Saint Michael, Meeker, receives a Catholic Foundation Scholarship from board member Susie Nelson. Also pictured is Michael’s uncle, Richard Amend.