Archbishop ordains Edwards a deacon
One step closer to the priesthood

Prayer for Priestly Vocations

Heavenly Father, fill the hearts and minds of men from our archdiocese with the power of the Holy Spirit, so that those you call to the priesthood may respond to your invitation with courage and generosity.

Give parents the faith, love and spirit of sacrifice that will inspire them to rejoice when a son of theirs discerns a call to the priesthood.

May the intercession of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Saint Joseph and Servant of God Father Stanley Rother help us to do your will and become good stewards of the gift of our vocation.

Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

 Christians don’t exclude, they welcome, pope says

By Junno Arocho Esteves, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY – Flanked by a group of refugees, Pope Francis appealed to Christians to care for and welcome those whom society often excludes.

"Today, I’m accompanied by these young men. Many people think they would have been better off if they had stayed in their homelands, but they were suffering so much there. They are our refugees, but many people consider them excluded. Please, they are our brothers," the pope said June 22 during his weekly general audience.

The group, holding a banner that stated “Refugees for a better future together,” caught the pope’s attention as he was making his way to the stage in Saint Peter’s Square. He signaled them to come forward and instructed aides to allow them to sit in the shade on the stage.

In his main talk, the pope discussed the Gospel story of the leper who begged Jesus to heal him.

"Everything this man – who was considered impure – says and does is an expression of his faith!" the pope said. "This faith is the strength that allowed him to break every convention and try to meet with Jesus and, kneeling before him, call him ‘Lord.’"

The leper’s plea, he continued, serves as a lesson to Christians that “when we present ourselves to Jesus, long speeches aren’t necessary” and that there is no place to feel safe other than with God and his infinite mercy.
Find more news on the website by Sooner Catholic Staff

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

Celebrate Fortnight for Freedom
Through July 4, receive daily e-mails with prayers and religious liberty news. Go online to www.flownote.com/archsite and subscribe to the Fortnight for Freedom list below.

Celebrate Fortnight for Freedom

July 11 – Thursday, July 4, 2 p.m., the Kenedy Catholic Campus Center, Oklahoma City

Thursday, July 4
7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. – Mass and breakfast with Archbishop Coakley
8 a.m. – President’s breakfast and talk with Archbishop Coakley
12:15 p.m. – Free family barbeque with Archbishop Coakley
8 p.m. – Fireworks with Archbishop Coakley

Then there’s still time to sign up for Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Summer Camp!
Camp 1 June 26–July 1
Camp 1 June 26 – July 1 2016
Camp 1 June 26–July 1
Camp 5 July 10–15
Camp 6 July 17–22
Camp 7 July 24–29

Catholic Social Teaching

We ask you to bless us

for the fifth consecutive summer, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has called for a Fortnight for Freedom to celebrate religious liberty as our first and fundamental freedom.

In this year of this annual observance

we have witnessed new challenges to religious liberty in the United States and continuing assaults on this freedom in many parts of the world.

We have seen violent persecution of Christians in Egypt and in parts of Africa.

Christians and men, women, and boys and girls are being imprisoned, tortured and martyred for no crime other than their faith in Jesus Christ.

Here in the United States, the threats are more subtle, more palpable.

It was the so-called “contraceptive mandate” imbedded in the Affordable Care Act that first brought into the open this assault on religious liberty.

That battle is still being fought in the courts. What is at stake is the ability of religious groups and persons of faith to practice their faith and to do so without govern-

ment punishment in the form of crippling fines and other restrictions.

During these past few years, the cultural tide and even the law of the land have rapidly shifted in favor of same sex cou-

ples, even to the point of equating same sex unions with the legal consequences for religious liberty that this sea change will have are still being worked out.

Now, the latest front where this battle is being waged is over gay marriage.

We ask you to bless us

for the sake of our children, our grandchildren and all who come after us –

this great land will always be “one nation, under God,” indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Archbishop Coakley’s Schedule

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

JUNE 26 – July 10
June 26 – Confirmation, 8:30 a.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary, Calumet
June 27 – St. John Vianney Spirit Center, 8 a.m., Catholic Radio Center
June 28 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
June 28 – 8 a.m., Bishop’s residence
June 29 – Ordination of Bishop-elect David Konderla, 2 p.m., Donald W. Reynolds Center Arena, Tulsa
July 10 – Anniversary Mass and luncheon, 10:30 a.m., St. Mark the Evangelist, Norman

Put On Into the Deep

Faith

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Street evangelization spreads Gospel in downtown OKC

By Madeline Hecker.

For the past two months, Joel deLoera and his team of evangelists at Saint Joseph Old Cathedral have reached out to hundreds of people on the corner of N.W. 5th and Harvey Avenue across from the bombing memorial in downtown Oklahoma City.

DeLoera, director of youth and young adult ministries at Saint Joseph, began Saint Joseph Street Evangelization in April and meets with the group every other Friday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. near the soon-to-be new West st. statue.

DeLoera has always been drawn to help those who are struggling to find God and their place in the community, “I decided to transition this passion into a new format and location, approaching Father Price Oswalt with the idea of street evangelization.” After months of prayer and preparation, the idea was approved and Saint Joseph Street Evangelization was established.

During street evangelization, the team sets up a booth stocked with five resources on the Catholic faith, including rosaries and informative books. Each team member carries out a specific duty. Some approach and talk with those passing by, others pray the rosary and some lead a music ministry.

Their overall goal is to spread the love of Christ and to pray for those who want to return to the Church. “Our group of evangelizers has heard several awesome testimonies in the short time we’ve been out doing this.”

The group encounters numerous visitors to the city since their location is close to the Oklahoma City bombing memorial. On busy days, the team encounters more than 100 people within the two-hour span. The goal of the team is to take their street evangelization to the next level.

“We are working on doing the street evangelization in other places and at different times in order to reach more people,” deLoera said. “We want to become more available so we can spread our mission.”

Madeline Hecker is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

On rare occasions, babies can be born with ambiguous genitalia, and parents and physicians must decide the sex of the person. Otherwise, a newborn is a little boy or a little girl. While testing for sex chromosome anomalies is invariably part of the newborn workup, the genetics alone may not always tell the whole story.

Both genetic and physiological factors like hormonal conditions in the womb can contribute to or explain primary and secondary sex characteristics and, unsurprisingly, disorders in our genes or in our uterus hormonal milieu can contribute to deflecting the development of our maleness or femaleness.

For the most part, our genetic sex (XX female or XY male) serves as the true guide to the best way of being an individual, though in rare situations, even the sex chromosomes themselves can have anomalies. For example, when somebody is born with Klinefelter Syndrome (XXY) they develop not only as a male due to the presence of the Y chromosome and its testosterone-producing influence, but also as a “feminized” male due to the presence of the additional X chromosome. In both cases, hormonal influences are at play, as in another disorder called Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH). The excessive production of adrenal androgens, usually because of virilizing disorders, is another example of situations in which a person is born with ambiguous genitalia, even though she also has ovaries, a vagina and uterus.

While the term “intersex” is sometimes used to describe situations in which an individual has non-standard genital anatomy, it typically has a broader range of meanings. Some have argued that a person has to be born with both ovarian and testicular tissue to count as being intersex, but “intersex” is an imprecise term that can describe a range of situations in which a person is born with an abnormal reproductive anatomy or an external sexual anatomy that is not in accord with the typical expectations for feminarness or maleness. Sometimes the suggestion is made that intersex individuals are, in fact, neither male nor female, but rather somewhere in between. This is misleading, even though it may not be popular to affirm the fact, people suffer from sexual development disorders in much the same way that they suffer from other developmental disorders, whether of the cardiac/circulatory system, of the nervous system, or in our uterus hormonal milieu can contribute to deflecting the development of our maleness or femaleness.

For the most part, our genetic sex (XX female or XY male) serves as the true guide to the best way of being a person, rather than of simply waiting for someone to tell us who we are.”

To live in an ordered way, with an ordered masculinity or femininity, is certainly one of the great challenges of our time, and we only can undertake this important task by insisting on the correspondence of our minds to reality– especially to the deeply inscribed reality of our unique embodiment as male or female.

Bioethics Center

Seeing through the intersex confusion

By Tadros Pachakhi.

The archdiocese’s newspaper won top awards this year from the Catholic Press Association and the National Catholic Biocethics Center.

Enlightened sexual nature as male or female. Willfully denying or acting against that given nature will contribute to other developmental disorders, whether of the cardiac/circulatory system, or the nervous system, or in our uterus hormonal milieu can contribute to deflecting the development of our maleness or femaleness.

This can be further complicated because of strong social pressures that contribute to the confusion by confusing a paradigm of complete malleability in human sexual behaviors that militates against an understanding of gender as “hard-wiring.”

The Sooner Catholic:

Best Column on Spiritual Life – 1st Place, Pedro Moreno

General Excellence - 3rd Place, Diane Clay, Brianna Osborne

Best Editorial – 3rd Place, Diane Clay

Best Photography - Honorable Mention, Theresa Bragg

Spanish Column on Spiritual Life – 1st Place, Pedro Moreno

Commentary

Father Tad Pachakhi
National Catholic Bioethics Center

A special congratulations to Maria Ruiz Scoperlanda who won the CPAs’ top honor, the Saint Francis of Assisi Award, for her contribution to the Sooner Catholic and her award-winning biography of Servant of God Father Stanley Rother.

To read the winning entries for this year’s awards, go online to www.soonercatholic.org.

St. Joseph Street Evangelization

Anyone interested in exploring the Catholic faith or for Catholics who desire to strengthen and deepen their Catholic faith but are unable to attend the street evan- gelizations on Friday afternoons can attend a Q&A with Fr. Price Oswalt on June 27 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Old Cathedral, 307 N.W. 4.

Contact: Joel de Loera
(405) 235-1463
jdeloera@sjocokc.org

Photos provided.

Making Sense of Bioethics

Brianna Osborne

Managing Editor

Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City

Diane Clay

Editor

Sooner Catholic

4 June 26, 2016

Around the Archdiocese

Sooner Catholic

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Tadros Pachakhi, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a past resident of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

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I had the privilege to deliver the commencement speeches at a few Catholic universities and colleges. Dulled by the fact that I knew what their commencement speeches were all about, I went into each of these ceremonies, I decided I would try to say something a little more message rich and hopefully partially memorable. This year, I focused on the inescapable starting points for all of our learning journeys: our "ABCs." Do you remember how your mom told you when you started school to pay attention to your teachers? For "A," let me revisit this concept here as attentiveness, particularly those attentiveness to people. Let us be in an environment with no-stop stimuli, and we will find that our constant beep for our response, how do we pay attention to people? Working on the assumption that we can multitask well, which science has debunked by sandwich the conversation with a gazillion between screens, tweets, texts, tests, anxiety. We may be hearing her update on the cancer treatment, but with new scanning incoming messages and thoughts wandering about whom we want to hang out with, and what we may miss. "B" is for bravery, or the bravery that we draw from, God’s power that we draw from, God’s power to love one another. The physics of self-centeredness is such that this is insufficient for our success. The reader could select "Getting Over Obstacles," "Holy Patience" or "Marriage and Three Fold Love." Some titles as pure Pope Francis, serious and light-hearted at the same time: "No Clock Watching at Mass" and "Definitely the Dead." Still other titles are intriguing such as "Heers in White Gloves and "Hume and Pravda From Isolation." Some chapter titles are warning, "Where It’s Forbidden To Pray" and "Martyrdom Isn’t a Thing of the Past." Beneath each title chapter is the date on which it was delivered and the scriptural reference that serves as the basis of his homily. In my book, the pope offers a few main points for consideration about the particular scriptural text. His approach is simple and earnest and draws in the reader. He tells the congregation that "God wants you," some people "may belong to the church but only have one foot in the door," and "We all have something [to report]." We all have something to report. "What is the fasting the Lord wants?" "Do I know the answer?" "B" stand for bravery, and "C" is for caring. This also can help with healing and recovery. "This also can help with healing and recovery." "This also can help with healing and recovery." 

Our Global Family

Building a faithful life of attentiveness, compassion,

By Judy Hilovsky

The parish-based Stephen Min-
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spirit of the person who just
told me her story is that same
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Here’s why, and here’s how we are
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God.

Bon Voyage.

Carolyne Y. Wos is the
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CFO Golf Classic supports Catholic education

By Pedro A. Moran, O.P.
Director, Office of Hispanic Ministry

A journey from hate to death or love to life: choose Reflecting on the Orlando Tragedy

By Pedro A. Moran, O.P.

On June 9, a decree establishing Saint Damien of Molokai as a parish in the archdiocese of Oklahoma City was publicly announced by Archbishop Coakley and Pastor Christopher Pelster. Although the church has been part of the archdiocese for six years, this decree grants the church official status as a parish in the archdiocese.

Saint Damien becomes archdiocese’s newest parish

By Sally Linhart

In one speech to another, or rather, in one place where there is no place of men and women, of babies not allowed to be born, of the poor whose lives are made difficult, of men and women who are victims of brutal violence, of the elderly and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.

Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel of life with honesty and love to the people of our time.

Pray for Orlando.

Evangeliun Vitae

Known as the ‘labor’ prayer, Saint Damien was born in Haiti in 1840. At age 26, he joined the Sacred Hearts and later went to Honolulu where he was ordained. He worked in missions for seven years until he volunteered to go to the Hawaiian Islands to serve the sick and suffering native Hawaiian peoples.

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Fourth grade teacher
Holy Trinity Catholic School in Okarche is accepting applications for a fourth grade teacher for the 2016-2017 school year. Applicants should hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in elementary education or a pending certification. Download a teacher application packet at www.archdioceseok.org.

Jobs Box
archdioceseok.org/multimedia/files/doc/download/204-teacher-application-packet. Send resume, cover letter and copy of teaching certificate to Tammy Jacobi at tjacobi@holytrinityok.org.

Children’s ministry helpers needed
The charismatic prayer meeting which meets every Thursday from 7 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center is developing a children’s ministry. We are looking for adults who enjoy helping children ages 4 to 9 learn more about their Catholic faith. We also need someone who can watch children for 2 to 3. A stipend is available. Contact Michelle Donahue at mjohnson@oakcatholic.org.

Social studies teacher
Mount St. Mary Catholic High School in Norman is accepting applications for a certified social studies teacher with Pre-AP experience preferred. Contact assignment 00007: Send letter of interest and Resume to Taalia De Negri, tdeNegri@mstmaryok.org or fax to (405) 631-9209.

Second grade teacher
St. Mary Catholic School in Guthrie is accepting applications for a second-grade teacher for the 2016-2017 school year. Applicants should hold a degree in elementary education with state teaching certificate. Send resume, cover letter and copy of certificate to Jacque Cook at principal@stmarysguthrie.org. Download application packet at www.archdioceseok.org/multimedia/files/doc/download/204-teacher-application-packet.

ELA/social studies middle school teacher
St. Mary Catholic School in Guthrie is accepting applications for a second-grade teacher for the 2016-2017 school year. Applicants should hold a degree in elementary education with state teaching certificate. Send resume, cover letter and copy of certificate to Jacque Cook at principal@stmarysguthrie.org. Download application packet at www.archdioceseok.org/multimedia/files/doc/download/204-teacher-application-packet.

Second grade teacher
St. Charles Borromeo in OKC is seeking a second grade teacher. Basic qualifications required, preferably in early childhood education, and state certification. Contact Todd Gungoll or Sandy Politte at (405) 779-0244 or principal@stcharlesok.org.

Kindergarten teachers
St. Eugene Catholic School is opening a new part-time kindergarten旧4-year-old and 6-year-old pre-kindergarten program. Seeking kindergarten teachers. Degree in education required. Preferred qualifications include state certification. Send resumes to: Jay Lustre-Seymour at principal@stjohnsnow.org or mail to St. Eugene, 2400 W. W. Hever Rd., OKC73120. Application at www.archdioceseok.org.

Early childhood teachers - Norman
All Saints in Norman has teaching positions open in early childhood education for the 2016-17 school year. Must have degree in education, be certified in Oklahoma, and experience preferred. Send resume and cover letter to Patricia Waite at dwaite@allsaintsnorman.org, or to All Saints Catholic School, 403 NE 8th Ave, Norman, Norman 73072. Applications available at www.archdioceseok.org.

To see more job openings, go online to usacatholic.onrec.com.

Book Review

By Mitch Finley,
Catholic News Service

Any Catholic who attends Mass regularly is likely to be familiar with the new English translation of the Missal prayers published in 2011. This doesn’t mean, however, that familiarity has led to understanding or appreciation.

Many Catholics may not grasp the connections between the responses now spoken by the Eucharistic assembly and both Scripture and the liturgy. As Father John Coakley recounts in his book, “It’s Right and Just,” John Paul II was very clear on the importance of the liturgy.

“Understanding the response ‘And with your spirit’ in the light of... words of the fathers of the church (e.g. Saint John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia) should draw attention to the sacred nature of the assembly as the sacred greeting...”

Catholic News Service

First Martyrs of Rome remembered on feast day
By Ted King,

The feast day for the First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church will be celebrated June 30, the day after the feast day of the especially important and great martyrs Saints Peter and Paul.

The story is told of two Christian men, who were brothers and physicians from Arabia, who led many to the Christian faith by their example of curing the sick. They were brought before Roman authorities in Syria and were brothers and physicians from Arabia, who led many to the Christian faith by their example of curing the sick. They were brought before Roman authorities in Syria and
drived to them for their useful gifts and services. They were finally brought before Roman officials and were sentenced to death for their Christian faith. They were tortured and sentenced to death for their Christian faith. They were tortured and sentenced to death for their Christian faith.

St. Justin (103–163) was a Roman and an important apologist. He had a paganism philo.

St. Polycarp (124-259) was a Roman citizen from Asia Minor. He was martyred in 155 AD.

St. Lausanne, a deacon, (225–258) was a Roman citizen from Spain. He was martyred in 258 AD.

For the many First Martyrs of Rome, the Christian Church honors them on this day.

When commenting on longer responses, such as the “Glory to God in the Highest,” Father Cunningham singles out particular parts for attention. He notes that “the Gloria can be concretely divided into three sections: the song of the angels (Le 2:14), the praise of God and the invocation of the Lord Jesus Christ.” He then goes on to comment on each of these parts, and sometimes his remarks on even a single word will enrich the reader’s appreciation for that word in one context or another.

Regarding, for example, the Gloria’s invocation of peace, he quotes from “The City of God” by Saint Augustine of Hippo: “No great is the gift of peace that... nothing more pleasant can be heard, nothing more desirable can be longed for, and nothing better can be found.”

After reading this, speaking the single word “peace” when reciting the Gloria during Mass may become a more meaningful experience.

There are numerous similar commentaries in this slim volume that readers, be they clergy or lay, will enrich their experience of the Mass and, in particular, their speaking of the responses given by the Roman Missal to the Eucharistic assembly.

For readers who are familiar with “It’s Right and Just,” but it lends itself well to use by parish reading and study groups. It can be a superior book that comes with this reviewer’s highest recommendation.


During the reign of Diocletian and refused to renounce their faith in Christ. They were tortured and then beheaded in 283. Cosmas and Damian are especially revered in the eastern and western Church bodies and are honored on March 13.

Saints Cosmas and Damian were brothers and physicians from Arabia, who led many to the Christian faith by their example of curing the sick. They were brought before Roman authorities in Syria and were sentenced to death for their Christian faith.

They were tortured and stripped naked in public. She proclaimed Christ even while she was being abused. People turned away rather than abide at her undressed. She was beheaded. She is the patroness of girls and chastity.

Ted King is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
Lanzate a lo más Profundo 

Español 

Sooner Catholic 

De pie por la libertad

Por Pedro A. Moran, O.F. 
Director de la Oficina de Ministerio Hispano 

La tragedia en Orlando ha afectado, de una manera u otra, a todas las personas que se han encontrado en el lugar. 

Cristianamente, debemos ser quienes uniéramos nuestras voces y oraciones a estas mismas personas que están en este momento. 

En el encuentro que celebramos este 4 de julio, el cumpleaños de los ingleses por la libertad religiosa, Santo Tomás Moro y San Juan Fisher, 

Comenzó el 21 de junio, en la víspera de este día, con el Padre Price Oswalt el 19 de junio, ésta ha sido una semana de oración para las víctimas de la tragedia en Orlando. 

Por medio de la Oficina de Ministerio Hispano, hemos pedido que se alcancen los oradores y líderes de la iglesia para que seamos presencia en este tiempo de dolor y tristeza. 

Por supuesto que el Padre Oswalt, junto a los líderes de la Pastoral Juvenil, y el equipo de evangelizadores de la Parroquia de N.W. 5 y la Avenida Milam, han estado acompañando a los católicos de esta tragedia impresionantes en el poco tiempo que se han dado. 

Este grupo es nuevo, pero ya está impactando a la comunidad y a Orlando en general. 

La mayoría de los universitarios y aquellos que estén en Orlando nos preocupan, porque sabemos que la crisis es como un arma que está en el mundo, y no se puede evitar. 

La tragedia en Orlando es un punto de llegada de muchas de estas personas que han sido víctimas de violencia inhumana, de hombres y mujeres víctimas de la secularización de nuestra cultura, de personas que no tienen un valor de la vida, de mujeres que no tienen un valor del amor, por el trauma que ha habido en este momento. 

La tragedia en Orlando nos debe motivar a combatir la secularización. Vamos a unirnos a llevar a Dios a cada aspecto de nuestras vidas y de la sociedad. 

La misión de los católicos en nuestra vida es la defensa de la vida humana, del amor, de la verdad y de la dignidad humana. 

Nuestra misión es hacer que el evento le lo suelte con amor a todas las personas que se encuentran en este momento. 

De pie a pie, con todos ellos, nos vamos uniendo a la gran multitud de personas que están en este momento. 

Por: Madeline Hecker, escritora independiente 

Evangelización en la Calle extiende el Evangelio en el centro de OKC

Por Pedro A. Moran, O.F. 
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Evangelización en la Calle extiende el Evangelio en el centro de OKC
Commentary

Several years ago, I was vaca-
tioning in New Jersey and had the op-portunity to join a group who lived in Quee-nna, N.Y. This was the most un-expected place to visit when we still had to study the map to plot our course without GPS.

I was a little apprehensive, be-cause I was going to get out of New Jersey with the road construc-tion projects of that particular summer meant travelling through the con-gested concrete jungle of Manhat-tan.

But I worked out the direc-tions, I set out on my journey, only to find myself wandering through Brooklyn. (Not that summer, at least.)

I didn’t want to go to Brooklyn! I wasn’t ready to have to face my recurrent fear of that place.

My anxiety level spiked. Brooklyn? This was back in the dinosaur ages when the Brooklyn Bridge heading to New York City was considered to be a part of the land.

It’s hard to believe that I was on, all I could do was go around, and Brooklyn was inevi-tably ahead, like it or not. I kept repeating my prayer: “Lord, I want to pray.”

... Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making full use of your time because the days are evil” (Eph 5:15-16; cf. 1 Th 4:8).

In his great encyclical, “The Splendor of Truth,” St. John Paul II contextualized the tendency to separate faith from morality in this way: “This separation represents one of the most acute pastoral con-cerns of the Church amid today’s growing secularization, whereby many are tempted to live too many, people think and live ‘as if God did not exist.’ We are speaking of a mentality, which affects, often in a profound way, all-embracing way, even the attitudes and behavior of Christians whose faith is weakened and loses its characteristic features of original, personal, and communal life. In a widely dechristianized culture, the content of the proclamation, the content of the decisions and decisions often appear extraneous or even contrary to those of the Gospel.”

It is urgent then that Christians should reawaken the love of the faith and its power to judge a prevalent and anti-intricate culture. This is the Apostles Audacious: “Once you were dead, but now you are alive in the Lord; walk as children of the light (for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing in the Lord’s sight” (Eph 5:8-10; cf. 1 Th 5:2).

In remembrance of the 40th anni-versary of his ordination to the presby-rate of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, the Catholic Church, 1864 teaches us that “Everyone has a share in the merit of God, but anyone who deliberately loses that share or mercy by rejecting, repeats the forgiveness of his sins and the salva-
tion offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impotence and eternal loss.”

6:8-11, 15-16; cf. 1 Th 5:4-8).

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tion offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impotence and eternal loss.”
ROME – In the small dormitory room that smelled of moist modeling clay, dozens of statues of a laughing Jesus lined wooden shelves against a wall.

The small plaster statuettes showed the Lord reclining on the ground against a rock, his eyes pinched tight and his hand on his chest, which was inflated with a hearty hoot.

"As students become deacons, I give them one," said Edward Gibney, 54, a Canadian seminarian and sculptor from Saskatchewan. He was preparing to be one of nine men ordained to the diaconate in the Basilica of Saint Paul's Outside the Walls June 15.

"It doesn't say in the Bible, but I believe he laughed," he said, explaining his motivation for the "Laughing Jesus" motif, adding that the unguarded moment of mirth shows "the human side of Christ."

While the souvenir statuettes were ready to go, Gibney was still putting the finishing touches on a bust of Msgr. Roderick Strange, the former rector of Rome's Pontifical Beda College, which is a seminary for older men run by the Catholic bishops of England and Wales.

"I keep saying it's pretty well done," he told Catholic News Service in early June. But, he confessed he has a hard time knowing when to put away the tools as he shaved a bit of soft Plasticine from under the eyes and padded the upper lip with a bit more of the dark gray clay.

An old sculpting professor, he said, used to compare finishing an art piece to raising children and realizing, "OK, they're old enough and ready to go on their own." It's the same teacher Gibney pays homage to with his mustache. He said he was asked to show up at the professor's retirement party 20-plus years ago pretending to be a long-lost relative of Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali. He kept the iconic look going when the professor passed away soon after.

So many years spent as a professional sculptor – often working in contemplative solitude and patiently shaping a fluid form from hard stone – gave him insights he believes will be valuable as a priest.

Though a person's soul is not anything like a chunk of clay or rock, caring for "people's eternal life is something that takes time, it takes an understanding of people" and patiently uncovering what they need, he said.

A pastor needs to be creative because there is no "cookie cutter" answer or response valid for everyone and the priest needs to recognize his own limitations, "to recognize what you can do or not."

Though he still has another year of studies in Rome before priestly ordination back in the Diocese of Saskatoon, Gibney said he hopes that he will be able to practice a bit of his craft at different parishes just as he found a way to continue his artwork during his studies.

The Beda College, where he has completed his third year of studies, has been extremely accommodating, Gibney said, letting him use an extra room furnished with a small sink as his makeshift studio. He repurposed a gutted metal desk frame for his sculpting stand and mounted circles of particle board together for the banding wheel.

Back in Saskatoon, he produced many works of religious art, including a large granite representation of the baby Jesus, Mary and her aging mother Ann for the St. Ann's senior citizens' home.

Seeing how God was "working with me in my studio" and recognizing "he's working with you all the time in everything you do" was a key part of his vocational discernment process, he said.

Making art is a form of evangelization, Gibney believes.

When he was finishing the outdoor granite piece for Saint Ann's, for example, the sounds of carving and sanding drew people from the community to come out and watch him work.

Questions and conversation followed, he said. "I became the entertainment for about three months. It was lovely."

When he's a priest, he said, he would imagine taking whatever free bit of time he finds to throw on his work jeans and -- as a sort of sculptor-priest's version of ringing the church bells -- "pound on a piece of granite."

"That does get people's attention. People will get a better idea of what a priest is, he said. "A priest isn't just that guy who wears the collar and you see him only once a week on Sunday. He is part of the community and he is trying to contribute to the good of the community," Gibney said. "That's opening the church," he said, showing that the priest is there to serve everyone in the community. "Catholic or not, they are part of the flock" and Christ, through the priest, is out there with them.