Young Men, Women Participate in Retreats Offering Time to Listen for God's Voice

OLOG — Young men from across the Archdiocese traveled to Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Youth Camp for the annual Emmaus Days retreat. Shortly after they moved out, young women moved in for their own retreat, “Journey with Christ: As Clay in the Hands of the Potter.”

The retreats allow young people to spend time in prayer and visit with priests and religious who have heard the Lord’s call to service and responded. By all accounts, the young people making the journey were focused on truly listening and learning. Emmaus Days attracted 20 young men and 10 seminarians, while the retreat for the young women attracted 13 participants.

“I was impressed with the level of seriousness the men had this year at Emmaus Days,” said Father William Novak, Archdiocesan Director of Vocations. “Their questions and small group conversations revealed to me that they want to do something meaningful with their lives. I was grateful that they took the time to see if it might be the priesthood.”

Sister Diane Koorie, Archdiocesan Director of Pastoral Ministry, said the young women joined in prayer and faith sharing. They worked with clay and took time to journal their thoughts. Several Sisters shared their own personal stories of how they came to know God was calling them to a life of service to Him and His people.

Father Novak asked Oklahoma Catholics to “Please remember to pray for vocations to the priesthood, for our seminarians and for all those who are discerning a possible religious vocation.”
The Good News

Thousands of students of all ages are returning to school at this time. Preschool children through high school and college ages and many adults are back in the classroom or sitting before computer screens studying. Yes, education is an important part of our lives as individuals and as members of society.

While all of us recognize the need for education, we often limit it to what we have to do or what seems necessary. Too often we have no interest in furthering our education unless it leads to increased income or greater prestige. As a result, our priorities are misplaced and we are the losers.

Jesus often addressed the need for education, sending us out into the world to be learners and teachers for the Kingdom of God. He encouraged us to use and develop the gifts God has given us. He prioritized the commandments, telling which is the first and the greatest. He warned us that a lack of correct priorities and following false directions could be dangerous and even deadly. He posed a simple question for us to contemplate when He said: “What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and to suffer the loss of his immortal soul?”

It is wonderful that we spend time, effort and expense for a child to get an elementary school education, a high school diploma and a college degree. This is necessary and it is good. However, this education cannot be solely about the world in which we live. Yes, it needs to be about the world but also about the dignity and nature of the human persons who live on this earth and God Who created us and our world.

Our time on this earth will pass away and indeed the world will, too. We all know this and therefore realize that authentic, complete education must include religious education.

Whether children attend a Catholic school or parish religious education program, these are only supplements to the religious education every child should receive. The Church has always taught that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children in the way of faith.

The Church has always taught that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children in the way of faith. The opportunities available are countless and exciting, but you cannot just dream about it. You must do something. You must study, which means you must be led by God Who invites us to a new and better life. Guided by the Church established by Jesus Who saves us, we can discover again how good God is and discern more clearly His plan for us individually and personally as well as our role in the community. Then we shall better appreciate the great eternal plan He has for us.

Almighty God created us in His Image and Likeness so that we can know, love and serve Him on this earth and someday have eternal life with Him in heaven. This is the reason each of us must hear and answer the question of Jesus: “What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and to suffer the loss of his immortal soul?”

Cardinal: Abortion Can’t Be Part of Health Reform


Cardinal Rigali, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Pro-Life Activities, reaffirmed the bishops' position that genuine health care reform that respects life and dignity is urgently needed. He also welcomed provisions in America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R. 3200) that do not preempt state laws regulating abortion or current federal conscience laws on abortion. But he criticized the bill for delegating to the Secretary of Health and Human Services "the power to make unlimited abortion a mandated benefit in the 'public health insurance plan' the government will manage nationwide." He called this a "radical change" since federal law excludes most abortions from federal employees' health benefits, and no federal health program mandates coverage of elective abortions.

Cardinal Rigali also criticized the bill for bypassing the Hyde Amendment and other longstanding provisions that prevent federal funding of abortion and health benefits packages that include abortion. He called the provisions to separate funding for abortion created by the House Energy and Commerce Committee a "legal fiction," one that would force low-income Americans, who may only be able to afford the public plan, to subsidize abortions for others and abortion coverage for themselves "even if they find abortion morally abhorrent."

Continued to page 3
Saint Gregory’s President Announces Retirement

Father Charles Buckley to Serve as Acting President

SHAWNEE — St. Gregory’s University President Dave Wagie, Ph.D., announced his retirement Tuesday to university faculty, staff and the monastic community. Father Charles Buckley, O.S.B., a member of St. Gregory’s Abbey and former vice president for the university, will be SGU’s acting president until an interim is named. A search will begin immediately for the university’s next president.

Wagie, an integral part of the school’s success in recent years, said he and his wife, Sue, will devote time to numerous important personal obligations during retirement, including spending time with their aging parents, children and grandchildren. Wagie said he plans to stay in the Shawnee area and continue to support SGU.

“I do feel sad to be leaving, but I felt it was the appropriate time to retire,” Wagie said. “We’ve accomplished much, but we know the future will require much effort as we continue to build the kingdom of God through education.

“Sue and I will miss working with the faculty, staff and monks — but especially our daily interaction with students. They are the mission of the university and have been a wonderful part of our lives the past two years. But we are also enthusiastically looking forward to enjoying the university without the demands required of the president’s position.”

Wagie became the school’s 14th president in March 2007. Since that time, SGU’s College for Working Adults expanded to Oklahoma City and added online courses. Numerous physical im-provements were also made to the Shawnee campus, including the addition of a new front entrance and the renovation of the Mabee Aerobic Center. Plans are also under way to construct new residence halls. SGU was named among the top 10 percent of Catholic Colleges by the Cardinal Newman Society during Wagie’s tenure.

“Dr. Wagie’s impact has been strong,” said Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen, O.S.B., SGU’s chancellor. “He has worked hard to strengthen SGU’s mission and has contributed his leadership and vision in many ways. We are extremely grateful to him for his contributions and his commitment to St. Gregory’s University.”

SGU’s acting president, Father Charles Buckley, has held a variety of offices within the university, including dean of students, chaplain, professor of mathematics and vice president for academic affairs.

“The request by the board of directors came as a surprise, but I accepted because I’ve made this university the expression of my ministry,” Father Charles Buckley said. “I am extremely confident in the talent and good will of the faculty, staff, and boards of this university.”

Catholic School Hit By Reversal

Belmont, N.C. (CNA) — Revisiting a case that had been thought closed, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has ruled that Belmont Abbey College’s decision to remove contraception from its faculty health care policy, in accordance with Catholic teaching, discriminated against women.

After a faculty member discovered that contraception, abortion and voluntary sterilization were covered by the North Carolina college’s health care policy, the drugs and procedures were removed from the plan in December 2007. Though the state of North Carolina requires this coverage, it offers an exemption for religious institutions.

Explaining the decision to end the coverage, Belmont Abbey College President Dr. William Thierfelder had written:

“Dismissal and Notice of Rights” determination letter

The teaching of the Catholic Church on this moral issue is clear. The responsibility of the College as a Catholic College sponsored by the monks of Belmont Abbey to follow Church teaching is equally clear. There was no other course of action possible if we were to operate in fidelity to our mission and to our identity as a Catholic College.

Speaking in a Monday statement, the college said that in March 2009 it had received a "Dismissal and Notice of Rights" determination letter from the EEOC, saying that the Commission was closing its file on the discrimination charge. According to the college, the file was closed because the Commission was unable to conclude that the college’s decision to change the employee health plan violated the statutes.

“We were surprised to learn that the EEOC has now reversed itself,” the college’s statement said.

Reuben Daniels Jr., director of the EEOC Charlotte District Office, issued an Aug. 5 determination holding that the denial of prescription contraception drugs constitutes discrimination based on gender “because only females take oral prescription contraceptives.”

“By denying coverage, men are not affected, only women,” he added, the Gaston Gazette reports.

The EEOC has also ruled that the college retaliated against faculty members who filed charges with the Commission by identifying them by name in a letter to faculty and staff. The Commission said that complainants should be protected by confidentiality.

The full text of the letter can be found online at: http://tinyurl.com/nz6e8o

Cardinal

Continued from page 2

"Much-needed reform must not become a vehicle for promoting an 'abortion rights' agenda or reversing longstanding policies against federal funding and mandated coverage of abortion," Cardinal Rigali said. He added that "no federal program mandates coverage for elective abortions, or subsidizes health plans that include such abortions. Most Americans do not want abortion in their health coverage, and most consider themselves 'pro-life,' with a stronger majority among low-income Americans."

"By what right, then, and by what precedent, would Congress make abortion coverage into a nationwide norm, or force Americans to subsidize it as a condition for participating in a public health program?" he asked.

Cardinal Rigali reiterated the USCCB's long-time support of genuine health care reform that respects human life and dignity from conception till natural death, provides access to quality care for all with special concern for the poor and immigrants, respects pluralism and conscience rights, and shares costs equitably. He urged members of the House to support amendments to correct the "unacceptable features" currently in H.R. 3200 and to oppose any rule for considering the bill that would block such amendments.

The full text of the letter can be found online at: http://tinyurl.com/nz6e8o
Norman Women’s Conference to Feature Panel of Priests

NORMAN — On Saturday, Aug. 22 at St. Mark Catholic Church, the first Women of Faith/Women of Action Conference will be held with doors opening at 7:45 a.m. All women and men are invited to attend this exciting event.

Theme of this year’s conference is Spirituality, Service and Leadership.

Headlining this conference is Dr. Marcellino D’Ambrosio, a national speaker and well known from EWTN. Dr. D’Ambrosio will speak twice to the assembly on Spirituality.

Father Juan Molina O.S.S.T., is the Advocacy Program coordinator for the Southwest Region of Catholic Relief Services. He will speak on Service. Eunice Washa is first vice president of the National Council of Catholic Women and will address the attendees on Leadership.

Another Spirituality speaker is Maria de Ruiz Scaperlanda, who is an award-winning journalist and author. One of her well-known publications is “The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Mary of Nazareth” (Penguin, 2006).

Sign up today! To register by PayPal or for information including bios, visit our Web site: http://ok-accw.trpod.com/woa/index.html

For mail-in registration, contact Karen Ritz: karenritz@cox.net, or call (405) 350-2239. For general information, contact Chris Thomas at thomaschrisL@sbcglobal.net or call (405) 306-5187.

Opening the prayer service will be Rev. Phil Seeton with Byzantine music and prayers at 8:15 a.m. Rev. Robert Wood will give opening remarks.

After lunch break, the conference also includes a Priests Panel for a question and answer session with the attendees. This panel is composed of Revs. Tom Boyer, Paul Galatin and Jim Goin.

Attendees then have their choice of one of three workshops: Spirituality, led by Rev. Tom Boyer, who will speak on the Arts Interpretation of Death and the Resurrection. Service facilitator is Rev. Juan Molina and Leadership will be presented by Eunice Washa.

Dr. D’Ambrosio will address the assembly again in the afternoon session.

Closing prayer will be offered by Rev. Seeton and then a rosary will be said. The chapel will be open for prayer all day.

The conference concludes with the celebration of Mass at 5:30 p.m. at St. Mark.

Registration is $30. A box lunch will be provided for $10. Vendors and Pastoral Services will be present.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available during lunch break. Register today and come be replenished with spirituality, love and hope.

Faith Community Nurses Gather for 10-Year Celebration

By Rose Drebes

EDMOND — The mission of a parish nurse is to foster health and wellness in the faith community.

And the mission of the Faith Community Nurses Association of Oklahoma is to help prepare parish nurses for that role.

Marilyn Seiler is the organization’s education coordinator. She said formalized education for parish nurses was first introduced in Oklahoma 10 years ago. The Faith Community Nurses Association of Oklahoma is some 67 members strong and hosts an annual community education event — this year’s held at First Presbyterian Church in Edmond in July.

While the position of parish nurse has been in existence in some congregations for many years, Seiler said the role really began to be popularized in the mid-1980s. Today, there are an estimated 10,000 parish nurses around the world. As well as the United States, these health care professionals are serving faith communities in Australia, Korea, Great Britain and Africa.

Parish nurses undergo 34 to 40 hours of very intense instruction. Their job description varies.

“Every person builds upon their own strengths and needs of their own faith community,” Seiler said.

One nurse may find herself making more home visits to the elderly, while another may be leading support groups. Parish nurses are often involved in educating their congregations on health issues, as well as providing advocacy and referral services.

“It’s up to the imagination and creativity of the nurse,” Seiler said.

Most denominations take advantage of the services of a parish nurse, including the Jewish and Muslim faith traditions, she said. Some 90 percent of parish nurses are unpaid, however.

One goal of the Faith Community Nurses Association of Oklahoma is to expand its educational outreach to a quarterly basis. These education events include special speakers and vendors who are a source for referrals for the nurses.

A parish nurse herself, Seiler said that her role is very fulfilling and a very special kind of ministry. It requires her to integrate nurturing from a nursing side with spiritual nurturing, which she said is so “life-giving.”

For more information about Faith Community Nursing, contact Mary Diane Steltenkamp at Catholic Charities, (405) 523-3000.

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Sister Liana Mich Celebrates Her 50th Anniversary of Religious Life

OKLAHOMA CITY — In June, 66 U.S. School Sisters of St. Francis celebrated milestone anniversaries of service as women religious. Sister Liana Mich of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City was one of the 66 enjoying a special anniversary, celebrating her 50th year as a religious.

In 1973, Sister transferred into the School Sisters of St. Francis from the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Milwaukee, Wis. She was born in Milwaukee. She has a bachelor’s degree from Mount Mary College in Milwaukee (1965) and master’s degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (1972) and Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, Mo. (1997). Sister has lived her religious ministry in education and pastoral roles. In the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, Sister served as chaplain at St. Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City (1988-2005) and as spiritual director there (1992-present). Sister resides in Oklahoma City.

The School Sisters of St. Francis are an international congregation of more than 1,050 Sisters serving in the United States, Europe, Latin America and India. In the United States, over 620 School Sisters strive to make a difference in the lives of the poor.

Tournament Helps Spread Word of Catholic Foundation

OKLAHOMA CITY — The annual golf tournament, held in support of the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc., serves a number of purposes. The tournament, held in early June, is a great fundraiser for the Catholic Foundation’s Catholic Schools Endowment. This year’s tournament was no exception, generating more than $35,000 for the endowment established by Archbishop Beltran.

The archbishop established the endowment in an effort to eventually cap tuition for Catholic school students and someday, the prayer is to allow active Catholic students to attend our archdiocesan schools tuition free. For this to occur, the endowment would probably need to grow to the vicinity of $100 million.

Besides the golf tournament, the CFO also supports the Catholic Teacher of the Year Award and the Religious Education Director of the Year Award.

Another goal of the tournament is to promote awareness of the Catholic Foundation and its vision and mission. The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc. Vision Statement is to be “the Primary Financial Resource, for Archdiocesan Growth, Expansion and Education.” The Mission Statement for the foundation is “to inspire Catholics throughout central and western Oklahoma, to make charitable gifts, as good stewards, for the investment, management and distribution of funds; in order to advance the works of our Catholic faith.”

Toby Booth, executive secretary for the Catholic Foundation, said besides the golf tournament and Catholic education awards, the CFO also supplies grants to schools and parishes and undergraduate degree scholarships for deserving Catholic students. Judging by the support for the golf tournament attracts, the Vision Statement and Mission Statement are living up to their intended purpose.

The tournament, held at Twin Hills Golf and Country Club, attracted 124 golfers. Ray Haefele, CFO board member, served as tournament chair, while Jill Nisbet, also a CFO board member, served as chairman of the tournament auction. Ten Double Eagle Sponsors and 25 Hole Sponsors were secured for the tournament. Double Eagle sponsors included St. Anthony Hospital, Best Companies, Capital Asset Management, Cooper Medical Buildings, Gallagher Benefit Services, GMX Resources, Lawter & Associates, Love’s Travel Stops and Country Stores and Maguire/O’Hara Construction Inc.

Hole sponsors were Aetna, Asset Services Company, Thomas Avant, Bank of Oklahoma, St. Anthony Hospital, Catapult Learning, Children’s Eye Care Clinic, Dr. Mark Scott, Cole & Reed, CPA, Crowe & Dunlevy, Dental Depot, Dr. Glenn Ashmore, First National Bank of Oklahoma, Ralph Fredrickson, Harrison Discount Pharmacy — Shawnee, Lawrence & Eason, Longhorn Service Company, Montag & Caldwell Inc., Dr. and Mrs. Robert Nisbet, Peters and Chandler, PC, RoseRock Bank, St. Mary’s School — Ponca City, Stink Free Pet Products — Shawnee, UNUM Group, Wedgewood Partners Inc., Wedge Capital Management and Yukon Foot Clinic.

In-Kind Donors included Rick Jones GMC Buick Pontiac, RBC Wealth Management, Rocket Color Printing, Top of the World – Caps, and Tyler Media and Signs.

Donors to the tournament and to the tournament auction included Rick and Toby Booth, GMX Resources, Doug and Tish Eason, Rose-Rock Bank, Wedgewood Partners Inc., W.T. Valenta, Nancy Bodard, Brother Mel Meyer, Sacred Relics, Matt Dallas, Dr. Katherine Farley, Dean Imel, Judy Love, St. Thomas More Books, Sacred Heart Gifts – Edmond, Mr. and Mrs. David Necco, Downtown Goodyear – Pat Smith, Danny Stith, Paige and Chelsea Taub.

CFO board members include chairman, Archbishop Eusebius Beltran; president, Ralph Fredrickson; president-elect, Ben Byers; vice president, Susan Moran Crowder; secretary-treasurer, David Johnson; members-at-large: Rev. Rex Arnold, Thomas Avant, John Barnansy, Stephen Bonner, Pete Dimond, Russ Farley, Ray Haefele, Charles Lawrence, Thomas Linville, Mary McAnulty, Deborah Moon, Jill Nisbet, Doug Oliver, Joseph Otto, Karen Rieger, Manuel Sanchez, Leonard Taron and Tony Tyler.
Mount Hosts 22nd Annual Pete Cordova Golf Classic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Some 119 golfers participated in the Pete Córdova Golf Classic sponsored by Mercy Health Center at The Greens Country Club. Proceeds totaling more than $17,000 go directly to build the Pete Córdova Endowment Fund for tuition assistance at Mount St. Mary Catholic High School, to college scholarships to graduating Mount seniors, and to various school organizations, clubs and activities.

This golf outing is a 22-year tradition named in honor of Pete Córdova, who served the school as a teacher and an administrator for 38 years.

“Mr. Cordova is a unique and special individual in the history of Mount St. Mary Catholic High School. His name is synonymous with the school. To have a record number of golfers at this year’s tournament is a tribute to him and to the worthy mission of The Mount,” said Chris Stiles, Director of Advancement.

The success of this tournament was made possible through a lead corporate partnership with Mercy Health Center. Our other partners in mission who so generously supported this event include lunch sponsor, BancFirst; golf shirt sponsor, Forest Lumber, Mike and Christine Cooper, MSM parents; awards ceremony sponsor, Affiliated Movers of Oklahoma City Inc., Tom Howell 1966; golf ball sponsor, Christian Brothers Automotive, John and Linda Sheffield, MSM parents; beverage cart sponsor, Maguire-O’Hara Construction Inc.; golf cart sponsor, Benchmark Construction Inc., Keith and Rosie Crall, MSM parents; driving range sponsor, John and Melanie Maguire; and putting green sponsor, Tyler Media.


Special thanks to our award sponsors: Audio Dimensions, who donated a 32” flat screen television, and Ultimate Electronics for providing an iPod Touch. Thanks also to Jim Cowen of The Bricktown Association and The Hal Smith Restaurant Group for providing gift cards for our golfers.

Irish Supporters Turn Out for Annual Clancy Event

Over 100 golfers descended on Silverhorn Golf Club last week as Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School hosted the 2009 Clancy’s All Sports Tee-Off Golf Classic. As players arrived at the clubhouse, they were greeted by Irish coaches and athletes who carried their golf clubs to carts. Players enjoyed a four-man scramble with a shotgun start, a luncheon in their honor and an awards ceremony. Prior to the ceremony, several drawings were held for door prizes which included gift cards at local merchants and golf paraphernalia.

The tournament was a family affair this year. Of the 24 teams participating, two-thirds were comprised of family members. Some teams consisted of entire families, while several fathers played with their sons or daughters, and a few siblings competed against each other. Two of the teams captured trophies at the awards ceremony.

Awards were handed out for first, second and third place in the Championship and A Flights.

To determine the winners in the Championship Flight, officials had to go to the fourth tiebreaker criteria. The team of Rick Brezny, Kevin Krahl, Rick Ruffin, ’77, and Jeff Crook won first place. Second place went to alumni Jason Davey, ’96, and Pete Penner, ’96, Billy Garrett and Bryan Schones. Landing in third place was a group of students led by McGuinness senior Charlie Shields and juniors David Krahl and Carter Hood, and friend, Sam Williams.

In Flight A, once again officials had to go to the third-place tiebreaker hole to narrow down the victors. Capturing first place in Flight A were Brian Yost, ’93, Jerrod Nelson and siblings, Gabe Savelly, ’93, and Matt Savelly, ’95.

In second place was Lester LaPorte, along with Robert Gillies and daughters, Betsy, ’05, and Cindy, ’08.

Third place went to the foursome of Bill Donnelly, Kevin Ritchie, Gail Grady and Susie Fuller.

The tournament was a great success through the generosity of the Bishop McGuinness community including our sponsors, players and volunteers. Proceeds benefit the Irish athletic programs.
Harrah Catholic Addresses CDA State Officers Conference

HARRAH — Evelyn Saxton, a national director for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, spoke to CDA state leaders in July at the organization’s biennial state officers conference. The gathering was held at Our Lady of the Snows Retreat Center in Belleville, Ill.

Saxton is a parishioner at St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Harrah.

The conference was held to instruct state leaders, many recently elected, on how to administer Catholic Daughters of the Americas affairs in their respective states.

Evelyn is also ceremonials chairman and spiritual enhancement chairman. During the four-day conference, Evelyn conducted prayer services and expressed her love of spirituality when she explained that “when I became a national director in 2006, I was asked to choose three chairmanships in which I was interested. Being chairman of the spiritual enhancement committee was my first choice. Spirituality is so important to our lives as Catholic Daughters.”

Across Oklahoma

Confession on Wednesday

OKLAHOMA CITY — Pope Benedict XVI has decreed a “Year for Priests” that began June 19. This special year coincides with the 150th anniversary of St. John Vianney, the Cure d’Ars, who is the patron of parish priests. St. John Vianney was known to spend up to 18 hours a day in the Confessional hearing Confessions. Many miracles and conversions have been attributed to him. In conjunction with this year, the priests of St. Charles Borromeo will offer the Sacrament of Confession every Wednesday during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. St. Charles is located at 5024 N. Grove (corner of NW 50th and Grove).

Irish Trivia Night Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — Members of the Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School Alumni Association will kick off the school year by hosting the fourth annual Trivia Night Aug. 22 in the Bishop McGuinness Commons area. All proceeds benefit the Alumni Association Scholarship Fund.

Over 300 people are expected to attend the Peace, Love and Happiness themed Trivia Night.

Registration begins at 6 p.m. and questions begin at 7 p.m. Tables of 10 will compete against each other during eight rounds of questions. The winning table receives preferred seating at next year’s event plus the shillelagh trophy that is passed on to each winner year to year.

Tickets are $10 per person or $100 a table.

Reservations are required. Food and beverage tickets are $1 each. Purchase them with your table reservation to avoid the wait in line.

Trivia Night is open to the public, but guests must be 21 to attend. Seating is limited. For more information, contact Patricia Hudacko, Special Events Coordinator, at 842-6638 Ext. 239, or phudacko@bmchs.org.

Parish Carnival Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — Aug. 23, St. Patrick Church, fifth annual Parish Carnival from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. There will be food, games and prizes. Admission is free and all are welcome. St. Patrick’s is located at NW 19th Street and Portland Ave.

Retreat To Focus on Shame

PIEDMONT — Doing Away With Shame, Saturday, Aug. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with Marie Ballmann, OSB. Come to a safe environment to take another look at the guilt and shame that you may still be carrying from past events. Learn to tell the difference between these two emotions. Realize that they each have a healthy expression and an unhealthy or toxic expression. You will also learn how to begin or continue the healing process as you welcome and accept God’s unconditional love for you. Place: Library at Red Plains Spirituality Center. Call (405) 373-0804 to register by Aug. 19. Fee: $30, bring a sack lunch.

NFP Classes Scheduled

EDMOND — Learn the Sympto-thermal method of Natural Family Planning with Jeanne Blasi, certified instructor, over three nights on Sept. 24, Oct. 28 and Nov. 25 at 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church, 9th and Boulevard, in the basement council room. The cost of supplies is $135. Free child care is available upon request. For information or to register, call Dr. Harry Kocurek at 340-0691 Ext. 109.

“Late Nite” Coming Sept. 26

OKLAHOMA CITY — “Late Nite Catechism” will be performed at the Connor Center at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help on Sept. 26. This uproariously funny play is being brought to Oklahoma City by the Bishop John Carroll School PTO. Ticket prices start at $75 and includes a special Vietnamese dinner. Sponsorships are available. For tickets or more information, contact Lisa Edmonds at 818-6678 or visit www.bjcs.org. Seating is limited.

Marriage Weekend Set

OKLAHOMA CITY — A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is a wonderful way to spend time with your spouse. Attend a Marriage Encounter Weekend and renew the precious sacrament of marriage. The next weekend in Oklahoma City is Oct. 30 to Nov. 1. For information or to register, call Dan or Jean Forgue, (405) 760-0390 or (405) 760-0349.
I read with great interest the article written by Teresa Natare of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops about pornography being deadly for marriage.

I am living that hell. My husband of 18 years is so addicted to porn that he has completely lost all emotion. The addiction has been going on for many years and I was totally clueless until eight months ago.

When I discovered that he was visiting many porn sites, burning hundreds of CDs, and talking online with many women, I was devastated. I was embarrassed and ashamed. But I finally realized that his addiction was also destroying me. My self-esteem, self-worth, value, ego and soul were almost gone. I was depressed and suicidal. Why? Because he had spent years criticizing me, ignoring me, putting me down, making me feel insignificant, ugly and unwanted. I just did not understand what I was doing that was so horrible, the man I loved and admired seemed to despise me.

The truth is he has become so desensitized to me he had to get me as sick as he is in order to keep his dirty little hobby secret.

I urge any woman who has made this discovery to run as quickly as she can to her parish priest. If she feels as dirty as I did, he can put things in a “holy order” for her. I am also begging every single priest to stand up on the altar and let every woman in the congregation know that there is help for her to get through this nightmare. I hope that every priest tells every man sitting there that every time he visits a porn site, he is committing adultery and doing irreparable damage to himself and the woman he vowed to be faithful to.

I urge the Catholic Church to take a vocal stand against pornography and offer help and guidance to any and all that are addicted.

My life will never be the same. My marriage will never be the same. My husband is no longer the person I love and admire. I have my faith, my God and my self-respect back. And even though he will return nameless, I thank God every day for giving me the courage to talk to my priest and ask for the guidance, love and encouragement he gave me. Without him I don’t think I would have survived.

Editor’s Note: Because of the nature of this letter, the writer will remain anonymous.

Modern Culture Makes Mistake Accepting Pornography

Children, teens and young adults are being victimized by an industry that objectifies people by eliminating the human dimension of their lives.

Everyone involved in the pornography industry — whether it’s production, distribution, sale or use — “cooperates and, to some degree, makes possible this debasement of others” because sexuality “is reduced to a demeaning source of entertainment and even profit.”

How can we expect our young people to practice chastity when they are bombarded daily with messages that tell them to do otherwise? This violates the sexual latency of children and promotes teen/college-age promiscuity, resulting in out-of-wedlock/crisis pregnancies and the spread of STDs at epidemic levels.

Within marriage, addiction to pornography can destroy intimacy. Eventually, the husband or wife who views pornography can lose the ability to relate on a personal and intimate level with the real person of his or her spouse.

Pornography addiction is defined as “a psychological addiction to, or dependence upon, pornography, theoretically characterized by obsessive viewing, reading and thinking about pornography and sexual themes to the detriment of other areas of one’s life.” The statistical evidence, as well as the testimony of experts in the field of sexual addiction, shows that pornography is the foremost addiction in the world today due to its pervasiveness and its growing level of acceptability in our culture.

Pornography addiction is a multi-dimensional problem requiring a multi-faceted solution. Such addiction involves the mental, emotional, physical, relational and spiritual components of a human being.

In his book, Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction, Dr. Mark Laaser explains that sexual addiction is a result of trauma or wounds experienced over the course of one’s life. Emotional, spiritual or physical abuse during childhood, inflicted by family and the culture at large, can trigger an addiction in adulthood as an attempt at “self-medication” in response to the trauma. There are practical measures that offer significant hope for those struggling with pornography.

Here are five ways that those addicted to pornography can begin the recovery process:

1. Decide to get well and resolve to stop viewing all forms of pornography.
2. Remove all sources of temptation that may prevent one from healing.
3. Be willing to make sacrifices, which may involve changing current duties or habits.
4. Become familiar with the process by which one begins to repeat addictive behavior.
5. Find a support group or a network of “solid” people to help in one’s recovery.

Without God’s grace, those seeking freedom from pornography addiction may find the five basic steps just outlined very difficult. Fortunately, all believers can seek grace by:

- Praying daily;
- Seeking education and formation in the virtues;
- Practicing patience and perseverance (self-mastery is the work of a lifetime);
- Turning one’s thoughts to God’s merciful love when tormented during recovery with images and temptations.

Additionally, Catholics are blessed to be able to partake frequently in two great sources of sacramental grace: the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

Taken from the USCCB pamphlet: Pornography, What’s the Problem?, by Mark Houck
Priest Finds Spirituality, Weight Loss in Martial Arts

By Rex Hogan
For the Sooner Catholic

Two years ago in February, Father Shane Tharp was serving as pastor at St. Wenceslaus Parish in Prague. He was a hulking man.

At the time, Father Tharp carried 375 pounds on his 6-foot-3 frame.

He decided he had to do something about taking off weight, so he joined Weight Watchers.

“When I went to Weight Watchers the first night, I remember thinking, ‘I don’t want to do this, but I need to do this.’ Then I got a ticket with my weight on it. When I had that number staring back at me, there was no argument. As my spiritual adviser used to say, ‘There’s nothing so stubborn as a fact,’” he said.

Earlier this year, Farther Tharp became acquainted with Michael McCall and Dr. Ralph Latimer. Both men are parishioners at St. Andrew Church in Moore and both belong to Knights of Columbus. Not unusual for Catholic men, but what intrigued Father Tharp about these two fellows is they are also martial arts experts, Kung Fu black belts to be exact.

“I’ve always been interested in the martial arts, going back to the time I started watching action movies and Bruce Lee was very popular,” Father Tharp said. “There was something powerful and beautiful and amazing about the martial arts that someone could do that with their body.”

Father Tharp started talking to McCall and Latimer about taking Kung Fu lessons. The men own Phoenix Rising, a martial arts studio in Moore.

It’s something Father Tharp said he had wanted to do for a long time, but because of his weight, he wasn’t sure he could do it.

“I was nervous about it, this was a whole new ball of wax. I didn’t know whether I could do it. I got private lessons. Once I got enough confidence, I came to a Monday night class and that was it,” Father Tharp said.

He currently wears a yellow belt, the first belt on the way to achieving a black belt.

He said his enrollment in martial art classes have brought some noticeable reactions from parishioners.

“There’s bemusement, the first reaction is usually surprise. When the teenagers of my parish first heard about it, they looked at me like I was crazy. They’d say, ‘You’re really doing this, OK, that’s cool,’” he said.

Father Tharp said besides the physical nature of Kung Fu, it also has a spiritual aspect that he believes has made him a better priest.

“I can tell in the way I pastor a church. There’s a temptation at times to put off conflict. One of the things we teach in Kung Fu is to step directly into a problem.

“Any conflict is just a problem, a technical issue that’s not personal. Once you approach things that way, it’s much easier to deal with,” he said.

“St. Paul often used athletics to describe the spiritual life,” he said.

“Kung Fu stresses a mental clarity and physical excellence. A person who prays the rosary every day show a discipline to put everything aside for a while each day. That’s what Kung Fu is, it is spiritual in so far as it makes it concrete the positive stewardships of the body. How amazing God has made our body so we can do things like this,” he said.

Pastoral Ministry Classes Ready to Begin

In his encyclical, Deus Caritas Est, Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that “individuals who care for those in need must first be professionally competent: They should be properly trained in what to do and how to do it ... in addition to their necessary professional training, these workers need a ‘formation of the heart.’” [Section 31]. For over 25 years, the Archdiocese has been providing professional training and spiritual formation for persons who minister in our parishes, schools, hospitals and various agencies and institutions of the Archdiocese.

Through the Pastoral Ministry Program, persons can learn more about their faith, pray and reflect with others, deepen their own spiritual formation, and become better able to be of service in the Church. This fall, courses are being offered on the New Testament, Christology, the Creeds, Mary, History of the Reformation, Ministry, and in Pastoral Spanish. Studying theology is a first step toward deepening our own faith and learning how to share it with others. Increasing our knowledge is only one part of preparation. Personal and spiritual formation is essential. Sharing prayer, reflection and discussion with others, and delicious refreshments builds community, deepens our spirituality, and forms us in mind and heart for service.

Courses begin Aug. 15. Some are 15 weeks, others eight weeks. Pastoral Spanish begins in September. Courses are offered in various locations: Pauls Valley, Lawton, Chickasha and Oklahoma City. Courses may be taken for personal enrichment, college credit or continuing education [graduates of our programs], Tuition costs are $160 for three hours credit, $90 personal enrichment and $75 continuing education. Books are additional. Payment plans are arranged.

For more information, brochures, schedules or to register, please call or e-mail the Pastoral Ministry Office, (405) 721-4208, cgrimes@catharchdiocese-okc.org. The fall 2009 schedule and program description may also be found on the Archdiocesan Web site: catharchdioceseokc.org, click on Archdiocese Offices, then Education, then Pastoral Ministry.

Death Topic for Panel

Dying Well in the Christian Tradition — a panel presentation on end-of-life issues — will be held at the Catholic Pastoral Center on Sept. 15 from 7 to 9 p.m. The panel will include Dr. Dianne Gasbarra, board certified in palliative care and hospice medicine, addressing the physical aspects of the terminally ill; Rev. Joseph Jacobi, pastor of St. Eugene Church, covering the Catholic Church’s teaching; Richard Klinge, director of Parish Outreach, Advocacy and Legal Issues at Catholic Charities, providing information on legal documents needed at end of life; and Mary Diane Steltenkamp, director of Faith Community Nursing at Catholic Charities, highlighting pastoral-nursing approaches during this stage of life. Panel moderator Dr. Louie Lepak is director of St. Joseph’s Counseling Center. For more information, call (405) 721-5651.
OKLAHOMA CITY- More than 300 people attended the John F. Kennedy Knights of Columbus Awards Dinner honoring former University of Oklahoma football coach Barry Switzer. Switzer was honored for his 36 years of commitment to the Special Olympics. By the time all the bills were paid, the dinner had netted Knights Council 1038 about $140,000, a tidy sum for an evening of good food and celebration.

A number of former OU football players, including Heisman winner Billy Sims, were in attendance, as well as current Sooner coach Bob Stoops and OU Athletic Director Joe Castiglione. Much of the credit for the success of the John F. Kennedy Awards Dinner goes to former Gov. David Walters, a member of Council 1038 and Pat McGuigan the current Grand Knight for Council 1038, according to Council members.

The Knights will use some proceeds from the dinner to promote evangelization, especially pro-life efforts. Three billboards have been purchased promoting life. One billboard has a man and child pictured on it and it reads "Life, the only choice you'll ever hug."
Retreats for The Heart and Mind

Emmaus Days participants take part in Mass.

Father William Novak visits with participants.

Erica Poe, Christy Healey, Gabrielle Salazar and Eileen Crosby watch as Sister Ruth Miriam, OSB, demonstrates craft-making techniques.

At left, Sister Donna Ross, OCD, shares a moment with Evette Corona, while above, Melisa Dominguez takes part in a craft-making exercise.
In Pursuit of Perfection:
Eugenics Mentality Appears to Be On The Rise

By Father John Flynn, LC

ROME (Zenit.org). — The idea that some people are genetically inferior and need to be eliminated or prevented from reproducing is a mentality that still persists, despite the battering it took after the atrocities committed by the Nazi regime.

In a revealing interview published July 12 in the New York Times magazine Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the Supreme Court of the United States was asked about abortion, among other topics.

Referring to the Supreme Court decision that opened the doors to abortion, Roe v. Wade and subsequent decisions about abortion funding, Ginsburg commented: “Frankly, I had thought that at the time Roe was decided, there was concern about population growth and particularly growth in populations that we don’t want to have too many of.”

This amazing statement was not elaborated on, and there was no explanation of which groups might fall into the sectors “we don’t want to have too many of.”

In an opinion article published July 14 by the Los Angeles Times, Jonah Goldberg admitted that the text could be interpreted as a mere description of the mentality behind the decisions, and so we are not certain if Ginsburg endorses this approach.

Nevertheless, he continued, it certainly is true that the push for abortion owed a lot to a desire to eliminate those seen as unfit. It’s well known, he said, that the founder of Planned Parenthood, Margaret Sanger, “was a racist eugenacist of the first order.”

The eugenics mentality is very widespread, albeit in a subtler form, when it comes to those who are handicapped or suffer from genetic defects. Often these people are simply eliminated before they have a chance to be born.

Scientific developments promise to intensify the threat to these handicapped. On July 1, the London-based Times newspaper reported that researchers are developing a universal genetic test for embryos that will be able to screen for almost any inherited disease.

Trials will begin shortly and Professor Alan Handyside, of the Bridge Clinic in London, explained to the Times that the test will be capable of identifying any of the 15,000 known genetic disorders. Currently only 2 percent of genetic defects can be picked up by embryo screening.

The article commented that this technique, known as karyomapping, will deepen the controversy over “designer babies.” It appears that the test could also be used to select an embryo with a particular eye color, or with genes that affect height.

Nevertheless, checking for the many genes that control the diverse facets of development would be difficult to carry out in practice as hundreds of embryos would be needed to guarantee the desired profile.

It’s already common practice to eliminate embryos or fetuses that suffer from Down syndrome. Dominic Lawson criticized this tendency in an opinion article published by the British newspaper, the Independent, last Nov. 25.

Lawson, who has a child of his own with Down syndrome, noted, however, some signs of change. He quoted Carol Boys, the chief executive of the Down Syndrome Association, who said that about 40 percent of mothers who test positive for Down syndrome are refusing to terminate the pregnancy.

In part, Boys explained, this is linked to the fact that women are tending to have children later in life. This means they are more conscious that they may not be able to have any other children. As well, these women have an established career of their own, that gives them more confidence in standing up to the pressures from doctors to have an abortion. According to Lawson, doctors in general have “a visceral bias in favor of eugenic termination.”

“This is not based on a realistic and up-to-date assessment of the possibilities open to those with Down syndrome, still less of the happiness which such people can and do bring to families, and even communities as a whole,” Lawson added.

The cause of such an attitude is based on the fact that people with Down syndrome are going to be more costly for the health system, he accused.

New genetic tests are looming for Down syndrome, too, an article in the online section of the American Spectator announced on June 8. Sequenom, a company that makes genetic analysis products, has developed a new genetic test for Down syndrome. The test, called SEQureDX, is supposed to be safer and more accurate than any previous prenatal genetic test.

“Though the new tests are safer for both mother and child, they will create a profoundly unsafe environment for babies who test positive for genetic abnormalities,” the article stated.

The promise of more accurate tests points to a fact not often given prominence, namely that sometimes perfectly healthy babies are aborted due to errors in genetic testing. According to a May 16 article from the Guardian newspaper, Dr. Anne Mackie, the head of screening programs for the U.K.’s National Health Service, estimated 146 healthy babies a year in England who do not have any abnormality are lost as a result of inaccurate test results.

According to Mackie, 70 percent of hospitals in England still use tests that are more likely to give a “false positive,” that is, assessing women wrongly as at high risk.

On Feb. 21, Benedict XVI spoke to participants in a conference sponsored by the Pontifical Academy for Life on the theme “New Frontiers of Genetics and the Danger of Eugenics.” Every human being, the pontiff affirmed, “is far more than a unique combination of genetic information that is transmitted by his or her parents.”

We must beware of the risks involved in eugenics, the Holy Father warned. He observed that today there are “disturbing manifestations of this odious practice” that are appearing. There is, he explained, “a tendency to give priority to functional ability, efficiency, perfection and physical beauty; to the detriment of life’s other dimensions which are deemed unworthy.”

“The respect that is due to every human being, even bearing a developmental defect or a genetic disease that might manifest itself during life, is thus weakened while children whose life is considered not worth living are penalized from the moment of conception,” the pope commented.
Young Catholics Converge on Neighborhood in Show of Unity with Poor

A Note from CCHD: Teenagers from across the United States came together with the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Catholic Archdiocesan Commission for Justice and Human Development, and Catholic HEART Workcamp to show their solidarity with the poor and vulnerable. The following story is a moving and realistic example of how hard work and support from organizations like the CCHD are making lasting changes.

By Jeanna Daniel

When you look around your neighborhood and you see it declining, you see the houses with peeling paint, broken windows and high grass, and you know in your heart those are good people behind those walls, what do you do? You know the residents are either elderly, sick, or just simply do not have the income to make needed repairs. Do you call the code inspector to add an additional burden on those already cash-strapped families or do you look for an alternative to restore dignity to someone who just needed a hand up?

Riverpark Neighborhood Association chose the latter. We were fortunate to have joined forces with an organization four years ago called Catholic HEART Workcamp that does just that, they help to restore dignity and hope when all seems lost. Through the hard work of the workcampers, they have rehab-ed more than 50 homes the past three years. They worked at 26 sites last year alone and are looking forward to the same this year! We had more than 150 kids last year offering that hand up.

The Workcamp teenagers come from all across the United States. They volunteer to work during their summer vacation. I have seen in them wisdom far beyond their years. They see beyond the darkness that shadows a family that simply can’t do any better to improve their surroundings. They see beyond the age, disability and many times the broken spirit.

I have seen in them wisdom far beyond their years ... They see beyond the age, disability and many times the broken spirit.

for materials. We have a community yard sale on Labor Day Weekend. The residents here, other neighborhood associations like Miller NA and people from all across Oklahoma City donate items for our yard sale. The money we raise from the sale specifically goes back into Riverpark to help out with the Catholic HEART Projects. We are expecting to have a great sale this year. Much has already been donated.

The money that we make from the sale doesn’t scratch the surface of what is needed to repair the homes here. Through the “Donor-Designated Donation Program” at Neighborhood Alliance, we are able to utilize their 501(c)3 designation to ask for donations of materials to improve the homes in Riverpark for the less fortunate. Without that paperwork, our efforts would be futile.

Businesses give, agencies give, other neighborhood associations contribute and people give. This year we had donations of materials and money from Rebuilding Together, Community Action Agency, Home Depot, Lowe’s Home Improvements, Anchor Paint, HIS Paint, Westlake Ace Hardware, Oklahoma Janitorial Supply, Forest Building Materials, Media Technology, CiCi’s Pizza, Waste Connections, Letica Corporation, Terminex, United Refrigeration, Weed and Seed and Camelot NA. They all gave, and they gave freely. They chose to make a difference in the lives of others.

Rebuilding Together donated all the lumber for three wheelchair ramps, Community Action Agency donated paint for three homes and the other businesses donated 150-plus gallons of paint, 50 cans of spray paint, exterminating, roll-off dumpsters and additional supplies. Resident hosts delivered donated water and ice to each of the Workcampers sites.

The impact of Catholic HEART coming to Riverpark is far-reaching. Through their labor, the donations of materials and the generosity of many, the residents of Riverpark have turned the page of despair. We are now a neighborhood of hope for our future. The Workcampers left Riverpark knowing that they’ve left a footprint here, the donors that have given know that their generosity has changed lives, and the residents who had their homes worked on know that there are people out there who care. They took the hand that was offered and in return received their dignity back.

The Riverpark/Catholic HEART Revitalization Project changed the face of our neighborhood. Every resident of Riverpark has benefited from the revitalization efforts that have been ongoing here. There isn’t a price you can put on self-worth. This is no longer a neighborhood that is considered blighted, at least not in my eyes. This is a neighborhood of hope and prosperity. Not in the dollar sense. This is a neighborhood of heart; and you can’t put a price tag on that. This is Riverpark, and I am proud my home is here.

Applications are now available for 2009 local grants. Deadline is Sept. 1. If you are looking for solutions to problems in your community or want to work on behalf of human dignity in a community near you, call your local CCHD Diocesan Director, Becky Van Pool, at (405) 523-3009 or e-mail bvanpool@catholiccharities-ok.org.

Hispanics Receive Parenting Support

By Angela Jennings

Catholic Charities

Imagine you are a parent working very hard to raise your child. Then imagine that you live in a place where most do not speak your language. Your child comes home from school with bad grades but you are unable to communicate with the teacher to help your child. Imagine that when you go to the doctor, your young child must explain your symptoms. Almost everywhere you go, you rely on your son or daughter to communicate on your behalf. Can you imagine how this changes the dynamic of a parent-child relationship? Being a parent is difficult enough without the complexity of language and cultural barriers.

St. Peter Catholic Church of Woodward saw this challenge in its parish community and launched Sacrament Parenting for Hispanics: Raising a Faith-Filled Family. These parent education workshops are held for parents who want to help their children become resilient and self-confident adults. There have been workshops on “Communication in the Family,” “Setting Good Examples” and “Discipline.” Two more workshops, “Children in the Domestic Church” and “Raising Happy and Responsible Children,” will be held in the fall, led by Sister Rosario Martinez from the Office of Hispanic Ministry and Nubia Fiesel-Gallegos from the Latino Community Development Agency.

The program is funded by a local grant from the domestic anti-poverty, social justice program of the U.S. Catholic Bishops. The grants are given annually through the Commission on Justice and Human Development.

For more information, contact Becky VanPool at (405) 523-3003 or bvanpool@catholiccharities-ok.org. Deadline for the grants is Sept. 1. CCHD’s mission is to address the root causes of poverty in the U.S. through promotion and support of community-controlled, self-help organizations and transformative education.
Letters

Elderly and Unborn Expendable

President Barack Obama is determined to get his universal health care through Congress. Obama’s plan will increase the cost of health care for those over 70 years old. It will make it more costly for the elderly, who will need more use of their Medicare Insurance.

Vice President Joe Biden, in his book, “The Health Care Crisis,” tells the elderly that they should not expect extensive health care that will increase the cost to taxpayers. Biden, a “Catholic,” said the elderly should know when it’s time to go and to save the cost of health care for the young and the more productive American citizens.

It seems to me that we have the millions of dollars for abortion and embryo stem cell research, but for our elderly American citizens, who have worked all of their lives to contribute to their Social Security, are now told not to expect much care from their Medicare insurance. In other words, they are expendable along with the unborn.

And why does President Obama offer so much support to Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest provider of abortions, especially to unborn black babies? You will find most Planned Parenthood centers are located next to neighborhoods occupied by black Americans.

This is racist.

President Obama is not alone, he has the cover of “Catholic” politicians Joe Biden, Nancy Pelosi, Ted Kennedy and other influential “Catholic” politicians who support him.

They may get their fame and recognition in this world of politics, but what happens thereafter?

These “Catholic” politicians are not thinking about when they will meet the Lord in Heaven.

Tom Waken
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Oklahoma City

Church Must Speak Out

I am writing in reference to the articles in the Sooner Catholic that are addressing the political issues of the day. Some people feel that the Church has no business speaking out. But because these issues deal with the moral, ethical, social and religious fabric of our society, the Church has a right, no, a responsibility to address these issues.

The reason being is that our government has stepped into the area where God’s teachings preside. In doing so, our culture is being pushed away from the teachings of Our Lord and the Church. The church has not stepped into the political arena, the political agenda has stepped into the church.

The Catholic Church was created by Jesus. With it he laid a great responsibility, “Shepherd my flock.” The Church has a responsibility to defend, protect and promote the teachings of our Lord and the teachings of the Church as given to her by the Holy Spirit. The Church must not concern itself with the political correctness of the day. Its mission is to lead its flock down that straight and narrow path toward our Lord.

From where I stand, the Church has stood by quietly for too long. Sixty percent of Catholics voted for President Obama. Recently, the president spoke at Notre Dame University, saying that he has ir-reconcilable differences with the Catholic Church. He certainly does. Perhaps that 60 percent didn’t realize that the “change” he so promoted would be so far from Christian teachings.

Great moral and ethical issues are being debated today. The Church must stand fast to the teachings of our Lord, the Bible and Catholic Doctrine. It must take a leadership role in educating its flock. It must take us gently by the hand and lead us back to the teachings of our Lord. Jesus left the Church as his Shepherd on this earth until his return. Shepherd, take care of your flock. Time is short and the wolves of political correctness are baying at the door.

Sylvia Watkins
St. Joseph Old Cathedral
Oklahoma City

Retreat in Daily Life Can Help Us Uncover God’s Gifts Within

I attended a Spiritual Directors workshop at St. Eugene’s Catholic Church recently, conducted by Sister Marie Ballman, Mary Diane Steltenkamp and Joanne Forgue. I was reminded of Psalm 139 which says, “I was with you when you were formed in your mother’s womb.”

This verse reminds us that we are conceived and born with God’s love and goodness which remains within our spirits, our souls throughout our lives on this Earth. God’s love and goodness gives us all the potential we need to live loving, productive and wonderful lives throughout our time in this world.

This love and goodness, indeed, this essence of God’s presence within exists in our gifts, our talents, our favorable personal characteristics, our virtues, our strengths, in our loving ways, and in all the ways we contribute to humanity, leaving this a better place when we die.

It is sad most of us lose sight of this love and goodness when our character defects, our shortcomings, the dark and sinful side of ourselves seems to take over and we live lives focused on selfish and self-centered ways. As we become aware of and notice this self-centeredness, we may desperately want to ask and pray for God’s intervention to shift from these selfish ways to living lives more centered on God’s loving gifts that exist within.

To make this shift, however, we might look within to explore, discover and better understand our gifts, our talents, our strengths, our goodness. We might begin by listing the 15 personality types and the gifts and potential growth areas of each personality type. I believe we are a combination of several of these personality types; however, the dominant personality type gives us a beginning point to understanding our gifts and who we are.

Another way of discovering our gifts may be to look at our past lives and notice where we have done well and/or when we felt especially good about something we accomplished. We might look for those times when we felt God’s presence in something we did for another or in a project we completed that meant so much to ourselves and to others.

We might consider the Retreat In Daily Life which is St. Ignatius’s spiritual exercises designed to help us better understand how God has gifted us with these talents, virtues, resources, and how we may respond to Christ’s call to us, using these gifts.

As we better understand our gifts, talents, love and goodness, we will better know who we are and will discover a deeper meaning and purpose in our lives. We will spend more time focused on God’s will and less time reacting to the chaos outside. We will become less concerned about what others think of us and less focused on power, money, position and prestige.

As we better know ourselves, we will better understand what Christ’s call is and how we will respond to His call in living lives centered on God’s will for us. Our lives will have meaning and purpose and our character defects, shortcomings, our sinfulness will soften. We will hurt less, our anger softens, our anxieties lessen.

As we carry out Christ’s call for us, we will spend more time loving God, loving ourselves and loving others, and we will be at peace with who we are. Peace and Blessings!

Joe Froehle can be reached at (405) 359-8539 or by e-mail at jfroehle@swbell.net.
Stop The Press: Time Article Supports Catholic Marriage Teaching

There has been less chatter in the Catholic press than I had expected about Time magazine's July 13 cover story. Above a wedding cake with plastic bride and groom sinking below the icing, the headline read: “Unfaithfully Yours — Infidelity is eroding our most sacred institution. How to make marriage matter again.” Inside, the five-page piece by Caitlin Flanagan was titled “Why Marriage Matters.”

This surprisingly insightful and markedly “un-PC” essay may well mark a turning point in the secular culture’s discussion about sex and marriage. Finally, someone is looking at the facts and being honest about how our sexual misbehavior is destroying marriages and families.

“How much does this matter?” Flanagan asks. “More than words can say. There is no other single force causing as much measurable hardship and human misery in this country as the collapse of marriage.”

And most of that misery falls to children. Citing “groundbreaking research on the effects of divorce on children,” Flanagan reveals, as she admits, “truths that many of us may find uncomfortable.” Why uncomfortable? Because these truths compel us to look in the mirror and examine our sexual choices actually impact others. She cites the late writer Leonard Michaels: “Adultery is not about sex or romance. Ultimately, it’s about how little we mean to one another.”

The reason we need solid, lasting marriages is simple, Flanagan asserts: “On every single significant outcome related to short-term well-being and long-term success” — she cites drug abuse, school performance and dropout rates, teen pregnancy, criminal behavior and incarceration — “in all cases, the kids living with both parents drastically outperform the others. Few things hamper a child as much as not having a father at home,” she concludes.

“As a feminist, I didn’t want to believe [the research],” says Maria Kefalas, a sociologist who studies marriage and family issues ... “Women always tell me, ‘I can be a mother and a father to a child,’ but it’s not true. Growing up without a father has a deep psychological effect on a child,” Flanagan writes.

None of this, of course, is surprising to those well-versed in an authentically Catholic vision of human life and the call of man and woman to become “one flesh” in marriage. What’s surprising is the fact that a major secular media outlet — whether it knows it or not — provided a five-page cover story that essentially defends the oh-so-controversial Catholic position on sex and marriage. Flanagan’s essay doesn’t connect all the dots, but if one carries her argument to its logical conclusion, the arrival point is precisely what the Catholic Church has been saying all along about contraception, adultery, pre-marital sex, homosexual behavior, etc.

“The fundamental question we must ask ourselves at the beginning of the century,” Flanagan contends, “is this: What is the purpose of marriage?” Our answer to this question “will determine a great deal about our fate.” She’s absolutely right. Indeed, the future of humanity hangs in the balance. As marriage goes, so goes the family. As the family goes, so goes the world.

Is marriage “simply an institution that has the capacity to increase the pleasure of the adults who enter into it? If so, we might as well hold the wake [for marriage] now ... Or is marriage an institution that still hews to its old intention and function — to raise the next generation, to protect and teach it, to instill in it the habits of conduct and character that will ensure the generation’s own safe passage into adulthood?” What has enabled society to jettison this age-old definition of marriage so easily and embrace the adult pleasure model? Flanagan points to “the game-changing realities of birth control ... and the fact that motherhood outside of marriage is no longer stigmatized.” Someone is waking up and smelling the coffee.

I often compare the secular culture’s timeless denial of the harmful effects of contraception and sexual promiscuity to Big Tobacco’s timeless denial of the harmful effects of smoking. Eventually the evidence that smoking caused lung cancer was so overwhelming that Big Tobacco had to re-examine its posture. So will it be with the secular culture’s sexual posture — and we can see signs of this posture adjustment in Flanagan’s watershed article.

Christopher West is a fellow of the Theology of the Body Institute in West Chester, Pa., and lectures worldwide on the subject. His books and other information are available at www.christopherwest.com.

Noted Author Anne Rice Describes Her Return to Catholic Church


★★★★★

Did you know that Anne Rice was given the name Howard Allen O’Brien at birth? Rice shares this and some other intimate and personal information with the reader. She is quite open and honest with the telling of her life story. Half of the book is devoted to her childhood. She writes about her life with her family in New Orleans. She tells of her religious life of being a Roman Catholic in the Crescent City. The New Orleans that she interacted with was very Catholic. She says she was not too aware of things of non-

Catholics in New Orleans since she did not associate with many of them. She had a life devoted to her family and she went to a girls Catholic school.

Rice discusses how the Catholic Church was a major part of her early life as a child. She discusses throughout the book about gender and how it has been an issue for her to live with. She was born with a male’s name and she went to an all girls school where they did not associate much with boys.

This reviewer thinks that after the death of Rice’s mother is when she began to question her faith and started becoming an atheist. She seems to admit that her famous vampire stories were a way for her to work out her faith issues. She says that some of the characters are her wrestling with faith issues. She acknowledges that she felt like God was staying with her like Francis Thompson’s poem “The Hound of Heaven.” It was a bit amusing for this reviewer that while he was reading her description of feeling the presence of God as if someone was there with her and then turning the next page and she describes the feeling like what is described in the famous poem. God is always with us even if we are not aware of his presence; Blessed Teresa of Calcutta shows us that. Rice goes into depth about this feeling of a presence in her biography.

If the reader is expecting Rice to go into detail about the writing and meanings of her vampire books, you will be disappointed. She does that a bit in other books, interviews, etc. She devotes this book to her spiritual life and her conversion. She does say, though, that she has always done a lot of research into the periods of history that she is writing about. She still re-researches a lot in preparation in writing her new series of books on Jesus Christ. She wants to stick as closely as possible to the Jesus of the Gospels, but she does include some fictional possibilities.

This book is very inspiring and a joy to read. It is highly recommended to those interested in one of America’s famous authors, those interested in conversions, and Catholicism.

Brother Benet Exton is a Benedictine Monk at St. Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee.
Buenas Noticias...

...Lo que más importa

El Papa Benedicto XVI visitará las reliquias de San Buenaventura

VATICANO, (ZENIT.org) - Benedicto XVI visitará las reliquias de uno de sus maestros decisivos de su vida, San Buenaventura, el gran teólogo conocido como "doctor seráfico", que vivió entre 1218 y 1274.

La visita, según ha confirmado la Oficina de Información de la Santa Sede, tendrá lugar el 6 de septiembre, el día en que San Buenaventura es el obispo de Viterbo y Bagnoregio.

En Bagnoregio nació precisamente Buenaventura da Fidanza O.F.M., mártir, Obispo de Albano, Cardenal, Doctor de la Iglesia, y Ministro General de la Orden de los Hermanos Menores (franciscanos).

El joven sacerdote Joseph Ratzinger, que fue el maestro de vida de Ratzinger, junto a San Agustín, a quien dedicó su doctorado en teología, es el fundador de la Academia Pontificia para las Ciencias, que ha recibido el Papa Benedicto XVI, como reconoció explícitamente el conocido teólogo dominico Yves Congar, con la visita de San Buenaventura.

El Papa visitará Bagnoregio en el día del 6 de septiembre, día en que San Buenaventura, que se venera en la iglesia de San Agustín, cumple 785 años de su muerte.
Hay que aprender a superar cualquier crisis y a vivir con Dios Todopoderoso
Encomendados a entender y atender muy bien el matrimonio

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Por muchos años la Oficina de Vida Familiar de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, ha estado efectuando cientos de cursos de preparación matrimonial y así cumplir con los requisitos canónicos para contraer matrimonio.

El matrimonio es la base de la familia y por consiguiente, la familia es la base de la sociedad. Para tener una familia próspera y sana se debe tener un matrimonio sólido y fundamentalmente enriquecido con la práctica y creencias de nuestra fe Católica. Los cursos prematrimoniales, además de ser un requisito canónico, son una experiencia que permite a las parejas ser instruidas sobre la importancia del sacramento matrimonial y la vida en matrimonio.

El matrimonio conlleva a una afirmación solemne de la verdad de Dios. Cada matrimonio es único y no se debe hacer bajo una mera improvisación, es una decisión entre un hombre y una mujer que están enamorados y desean respetar y mantener los preceptos eclesiásticos para vivir para siempre juntos y con respeto mutuo.

En un matrimonio jamás se puede abandonar uno al otro. Cuando se tiene a Dios en la vida conjugal los problemas son eventos volátiles que sencillamente se vuelven circunstancias superables.

La vida marital santificada por nuestra Iglesia Católica nos lleva a una peregrinación segura en esta vida terrenal. El matrimonio es una relación entre un hombre y una mujer, quienes deben enriquecerse con el conocimiento espiritual y al mismo tiempo concientizar que la vida en la fe Católica es la única vía para defenderse en este mundo material.

Al respecto, recientemente en las instalaciones del Centro Pastoral se efectuó un curso de preparación matrimonial donde se dijo claramente que el dinero no puede ser el centro de vida del matrimonio, Dios es el centro de vida de cada uno de nosotros y especialmente en la vida matrimonial.

Feligresía hispana de San Carlos de Borromeo celebró su primer carnaval de verano
La unión en Cristo es la fuerza de una comunidad emergente

Papás a la huancaina del Perú se ofrecieron en la jornada festiva.
Católicos se unen para promover la unidad y fortalecer nuestra comunidad.
**Jobs Box**

**Pre-Kindergarten Teacher**  
**Villa Teresa Moore** has an opening for an early childhood certified teacher for pre-K (transitional kindergarten). Interested candidates should contact Ann Grover at 691-7737.

**Financial Representative Openings**  
The **Knights of Columbus** has an opening for a financial representative in the Lawton, Enid and Tulsa areas. We provide top-rated financial products to our members and their families and will provide excellent benefits and training. Please contact Kevin W. Pierce for more information at 4001 NW 122nd St. #827, Oklahoma City 73120, by phone at (405) 514-7660 or e-mail at Kevin.Pierce@cflinc.org.

**Director of Religious Education**  
Christ the **King Church** in Oklahoma City is seeking an experienced Director of Religious Education. The director is responsible for overseeing the K-12 religious education for students not attending Catholic school, coordinating the RCIA program, Confirmation, First Communion and First Confession. The director will also be responsible for developing and coordinating a strong adult education program for the parish. The applicant should be well-versed in Catholic doctrine, work well with a variety of people and have strong initiative. Candidates should possess a degree in religion or theology, preferably a master’s degree. Resumes should be sent to Father Rick Stansberry, Christ the King Catholic Church, P.O. Box 20508, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73156, or e-mailed to kelly@ckokc.org.

**Full-Time Director of Religious Education**  
St. Philip Neri Parish, **Midwest City**, is looking for a full-time DRE to coordinate the religious education program. The position will be available Oct. 1. Candidates will also be required to administer the Safe Environment program of the parish. Salary will be commensurate with experience. Send all inquiries and resumes to Father Timothy Fuller, St. Philip Neri Catholic Church, 1107 Felix Place, Midwest City 73110.

**Part-Time Organist**  
St. Philip Neri Catholic Church is in need of an organist to play for our 5 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass. Must meet with cantor at 4:30 for brief rehearsal. The candidate must be a proficient sightreader and possess a level of playing skill to confidently lead an attendance of 300 in the singing of hymns, psalm, and other liturgical music. Knowledge of the Catholic liturgy is preferable but not required. Please submit a resume and be prepared to play a work of your choice to demonstrate your skill. Contact Bernard Jones at 737-4476 Ext. 123 or bernard_jones@me.com to arrange an interview/audition. — SPN has a Rogers Trillium 958 three manual organ.

**Director of Admissions**  
St. Gregory's is taking applications for position of Director of Admissions. Successful candidate is responsible for providing leadership and vision to organize and direct all functional areas within the Office of Admissions. The director is responsible for planning, managing and evaluating undergraduate recruitment and admission activities for the College of Arts and Sciences. Education and experience: Bachelor's degree required. Four-plus years of progressive experience in university admission; supervisory-level experience preferred. Salary is commensurate with experience. Send information to Dr. Richard Ludwick, Provost, c/o Human Resources, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, hr@stgregorys.edu, (405) 878-5350. For full job description, go to catharchdiocesesok.org/sooner/jobs.htm.

**Assistant Director of Admissions**  
St. Gregory's is taking applications for position of Assistant Director of Admissions. The successful candidate's responsibilities include marketing to and building positive relationships with prospective students, parents, counselors, parishes and alumni; analyzing and reviewing applications with the goal of increasing class size and academic quality; recruiting and enrolling qualified students who are good community members. Education and experience: Bachelor's degree required; admissions experience in higher education and management of tour guide programs preferred. Send information to Dr. Richard Ludwick, Provost, c/o Human Resources, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, hr@stgregorys.edu, (405) 878-5350. For full job description, go to catharchdiocesesok.org/sooner/jobs.htm.

**Dean of Enrollment Management**  
St. Gregory's is taking applications for position of Dean of Enrollment Management. The successful candidate is responsible for the development, implementation, maintenance, analysis and general supervision of all programs related to the recruiting and retaining of undergraduate students for the College of Arts and Sciences. A bachelor’s degree is required with a master’s degree strongly preferred. Significant and progressive experience as a university admissions leader is expected. Salary is commensurate with experience. Electronic resumes are preferred, and should include a letter of application describing experience, qualifications, vision and record of achieving/exceeding enrollment goals at one's recent institution. Nominations, expression of interest or requests for the complete position specifications may be sent directly to the university: Dr. Richard Ludwick, Provost, c/o Human Resources, St. Gregory’s University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, Okla. 74804, hr@stgregorys.edu, (405) 878-5350.

**Medical Staff Openings**  
**The Center of Family Love** in Okarche has immediate openings for the following: CMA - Certified Medication Aide to work weekend doubles. LPN or RN - Daytime hours Monday through Friday. Administrators license a plus! Must have excellent organizational, administrative and management skills! To apply, call 263-4658, fax 263-4718, e-mail alemke@cflinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche, Okla. 73762. EOE

**Administrative Assistant**  
Catholic Charities has an opening for an administrative assistant. Successful candidate will possess computer proficiency in Word, Excel and Outlook; excellent organizational skills with the ability to multi-task; excellent typing and document production skills; Publisher or equivalent software proficiency preferred; positive oral and written communication skills; and the ability to relate to and professionally interact with staff, volunteers and the public. Preference will be given to candidates who are bilingual in Spanish. Send cover letter, resume and salary history to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd, Oklahoma City 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org. EOE

**Associate Director for Children/Family Services**  
Catholic Charities has an opening for an Associate Director for Children and Family Services to serve on the Executive Team and oversee the direct social services for children and families offered by Catholic Charities. Successful candidate will possess excellent supervisory and administrative skills, excellent oral and written communication skills, a commitment to continuous quality improvement and the ability to relate to and professionally interact with staff, volunteers and the public. The position requires a master's degree in social work from an accredited school of social work, a current social work license with clinical specialty, and a minimum of three years in social services to children and families. Please send resumes to Human Resources, 1501 N. Classen Blvd, Oklahoma City 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org. EOE

**Clinical Director for Children/Family Services**  
Catholic Charities has an opening for a Clinical Director for Children and Family Services. This position will be responsible for the direction and oversight of all counseling programs and other clinical services of Catholic Charities, including the satellite offices. This position will be responsible for the development and implementation of policies and procedures. The successful candidate will possess a clinical license and have a master's degree in social work, human services or related field plus five years related experience. Knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching is required. Successful candidate must possess excellent oral and written communication skills, a commitment to continuous quality improvement 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, Oklahoma City 73106, or nlargent@catholiccharitiesok.org. EOE

**Part-time Organist**  
**Sts. Peter and Paul Church**, **Kingfisher**, is looking for a part-time organist to help with weekend Masses and/or occasional special events. Stipend is available. Call the pastor, Father Stephen Hamilton for more information at (405) 375-4681.
Radio Programs Bring Catholic Perspective to Oklahoma Listeners

Catholic Answers Live — Catholic Answers Live is a daily LIVE call-in program designed to offer Catholics and non-Catholics an opportunity to hear from and talk with some of the leading apologists and theologians in the Church today. Hosted by Jerry Usher.

Journey Home — Host Marcus Grodi and his guests discuss their personal "journeys home" back to the Roman Catholic Church.

Kresta in the Afternoon — Well-known Catholic speaker and author Al Kresta speaks with people from all walks of life on various topics of the day, and about their walk with the Lord.

Good News Sunday — A local program with Deacon Larry Sousa and Fred Pope that previews the next Sundays readings.

Defending Life — Father Frank Pavone and the staff of Priests for Life discuss pro-life issues.

Bookmark — Doug Keck hosts this weekly series reviewing Catholic authors and their books.

**CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY IN SONG** — This is a contemporary, fresh version of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy — a prayer that pleads God's mercy on the whole world.

**OPEN LINE (LIVE)** — "Open Line" is a fast-paced call-in show, with a new host every day! This enables our listeners to ask questions to each host's area of expertise.

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### Catholic Radio on KTLR AM 890

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<td>3-3:30 p.m.</td>
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- Mondays: John Martignoni (apologetics)
- Tuesdays: Barbara McGuigan (chastity/pro-life issues)
- Wednesdays: Father Mitch Pacwa (Bible and Church questions)
- Thursdays: Patrick Madrid (Church and the world)
- Fridays: Colin Donovan (theology)

The World Over — EWTN News Director Raymond Arroyo hosts this weekly news magazine program from Washington, D.C., with newsmakers from around the world.
Surprise! Archdiocesan Youth Director Nancy Housh Honored for Two Decades of Service to Young Oklahoma Catholics

You should have seen the look on the face of Nancy Housh when she showed up for Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Youth Camp. Housh, director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Archdiocese, is celebrating her 20th anniversary as director, which includes 20 summers at Catholic youth camp.

On July 20, Archbishop Beltran, along with family, friends and co-workers, surprised Housh, showing up for Mass and a get-together following, all while several hundred young campers went about their business of enjoying their stay at OLOG.

“Boys and girls,” Archbishop Beltran said, addressing the campers prior to the start of Mass, “You're probably wondering why are there so many ‘old people’ here with you as we prepare to celebrate Mass. We're here to say thank you to our friend and your friend, Nancy Housh.”

Housh began serving as camp director when the Catholic youth camp was held years ago at Lake Murray, near Ardmore. She has continued in the capacity and was instrumental in the planning and development of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Youth Camp when it was built near Wellston.

She beamed as she entered the camp chapel, prior to daily Mass, and saw so many familiar, yet unexpected faces. Following Mass, Housh hugged and laughed with each of the visitors and received congratulations from the young campers.