Respect Life Sunday October 4

The Challenge for Catholics in U.S. Is to Help Build a Culture of Life That Begins With the Fundamental Core Element: The Right to Life

By Cardinal Justin F. Rigali

The effort to restore legal protection for unborn children faces new challenges, as we deal with a new administration and Congress that support “abortion rights.” Many are asking: Where do we go from here? We first need to recall why we are here, why we Catholics became involved in these tough battles. We begin with the dignity of each human person.

Each and every one of us has intrinsic and immeasurable worth. That is because God created each of us in his image by the outpouring of his infinite and unconditional love. In return he asks only that we share that love with others, beginning with those most in need — the poor, vulnerable and despised of this world.

This intrinsic God-given human dignity is the basis for all inalienable human rights — beginning with the most basic right, the right to life. It is most basic because it is the condition for all the others. First we must live, then we can talk about living well.

The right to life is the core element of other rights. All other earthly rights involve something more than life itself — but without life, they are nothing.

That “something more” is vitally important. The defense of life reaches its fullness when it expands to defend the entire range of human flourishing. This is all one vision, and ultimately one issue — the dignity of the human person. In the words of St. Irenaeus, Gloria Dei vivens homo — the glory of God is man fully alive.

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The Good News

...ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC

During the past six months, a terrible conflict has emerged among some Catholic people in the Oklahoma City area. Last spring I addressed this matter with an article in the Sooner Catholic titled “Our Citizenship Is In Heaven.” I urged the proponents of each side to pray and study, I recommended the study to include Catholic Social Teaching and especially a re-reading of Pope Benedict’s Encyclical Letter DEUS CARITAS EST. I also said I would try to arrange for a formal lecture. Unfortunately, the very competent speaker I had chosen later had to cancel. In the meantime, Pope Benedict XVI, prolific writer that he is, issued another Encyclical titled CARITAS IN VERITATE.

Caritas In Veritate is a further official teaching of the Holy Father on the important current development of Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church.

I believe that my challenge to all our people to read and study these two recent crucially important documents has resulted in many people who never before read an Encyclical to do so. The problem now is that an Encyclical, like any other written document, including the Bible, can be misunderstood or taken out of context. It is most important therefore that Pope Benedict’s official teaching through an Encyclical be received as an expression of the ordinary Papal Magisterium. Catholics should adhere to this teaching with religious assent. In this way, we are all safely guided by the Church in our daily pilgrimage of faith. We are sinful human beings, hopefully on our way to claim our citizenship in heaven. But first, we must be good and holy beings, as individuals they will not always be good or faithful or perfect. However, the Holy Father, as successor of Saint Peter and the visible head of the Church enjoys infallibility when he proclaims by a definite act a doctrine of faith or morals. The infallibility promised to the Church is also present in the body of bishops when, together with the Pope, they exercise the supreme Magisterium.

Since the Magisterium, (the Pope, and the Pope and Bishops) is the authentic and official teacher of the Catholic faith, even those teachings which are not infallibly defined but presented as the ordinary teaching of the Church must be adhered to with religious assent. Thus an Encyclical and the commentaries of various bishops constitute our official Catholic teaching.

The Social Doctrine of the Church is not a recent innovation in the life of the Church. It goes back to Jesus. When Jesus established His Church through the apostles whom He called and commissioned, He promised us special guidance. The apostles and their successors act in the Name of Jesus and on His authority. Since the apostles (and their successors) as individuals are human beings, as individuals they will not always be good or faithful or perfect. However, the Holy Father, as successor of Saint Peter and the visible head of the Church enjoys infallibility when he proclaims by a definite act a doctrine of faith or morals. The infallibility promised to the Church is also present in the body of bishops when, together with the Pope, they exercise the supreme Magisterium. The Social Doctrine of the Church is not a recent innovation in the life of the Church. It goes back to Jesus.

In this way, the Church share the responsibility of living, proclaiming and sharing this Good News. We are not called to insulate ourselves from the world but we are directed to make this world a better place in which to live. Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to save it.

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Likeness of God. Therefore, human life is sacred and is to be respected and cherished. Moreover, Christian people, born in the Sacrament of Baptism, have an obligation to share the Good News of Jesus with others. Catholics have even a greater obligation than others — to the rest of society — because we have the promise of Jesus to protect and watch over us through the Magisterium which teaches us in His Name.

Through our Religious Education, Family Life Office, Catholic Charities and other offices or agencies of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, we have always followed the guidance and direction of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The American Bishops have faithfully and enthusiastically presented the teachings of the Holy Father and the Magisterium of the Church. The Social Doctrine of the Church is not partisan or political. It is, however, based on the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life. Therefore, it touches on every area of human life including the public, civic and political areas. (Read carefully the excerpt from Pope Benedict’s Encyclical Caritas in Veritate which is printed on Page 3.)

Last spring, a number of parishes, following the principals of Catholic Social teaching, joined together with
“It is my hope and my prayer that the events of the past six months will have been a blessing for all of us.”

danger to our Catholic faith, practices or beliefs, they would immediately withdraw from the group. They did not have to express this assurance in words as their pastoral dedication and service to God’s people portrays a faithfulness and love of our Holy, Catholic Church. Thank you, Fathers!

I also wish to commend the good women and men of our Archdiocese who expressed their concern fearing potential danger or harm to the Church. Your calling this to my attention has increased our examination and study of Church teachings, including these beautiful Encyclicals of Pope Benedict XVI. Your continuing prayers and study, especially of our Catholic Social Teachings, will be informative and liberating. Grounded in faith, guided by the Magisterium of the Church and strengthened by the sacramental life we share, we will all overcome fear, sin and evil. Our hope and our trust is in Jesus Who gave us this Church. Jesus alone is our Lord and Redeemer. He never abandons us. Sometimes, however, we are not true to His call as we tend to settle our own problems solely in human terms. The nasty notes written to me and the Sooner Catholic lacked the charity that must underlie all our activities. The damage done to people’s reputations must be healed. The false attacks which are being spread undermine the good works of our Catholic Charities. Public radio and the Internet cannot be used to slander the mission and work of the Church. Otherwise, it leads to scandal, hatred and contempt of our Catholic faith.

It is my hope and my prayer that the events of the past six months will have been a blessing for all of us. We must continue our pilgrimage of faith on this earth to life everlasting in heaven through the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church with which the Lord has gifted us.
Why You Matter: A Reflection on Human Dignity

By Rev. John Bartunek, LC, STL

Long ago, a Frenchman incurred the displeasure of the emperor Napoleon. He was thrown into a dungeon, forsaken by his friends and forgotten by everyone in the outside world. In loneliness and near despair, he took a stone and scratched on the wall of his cell, “Nobody cares.”

So many forces in today’s world want us to reach the same conclusion, to think that we don’t really matter, at least not very much. But these forces are craftier than Napoleon. Instead of locking us in a literal dungeon, they scorn us indirectly. They tell us, for example, that our looks, bank account, career, clothes, résumé, talents and self-esteem are most important. In short, they put the spotlight on all kinds of different things about us, but they ignore us. And when this message tirelessly bombards us, from every form of media, it has its effect.

By overvaluing those good things, we end up undervaluing the most important thing, our very self that resides beneath all the stuff and all the to-do list items. And when that happens, we also start to undervalue other persons, other selves.

This is the root of today’s cultural campaign against human dignity. Something people can have, like health, is given more importance than what people are — so we are willing to dispose of people, starting with human embryos, in order to use their stem cells to search for cures for diseases. And when health begins to wane, assisted suicide is offered as a “medical treatment” to terminate life.

Something people do, like having sexual relations, can fully reflect their dignity as human beings. In marriage, husbands and wives are able to give themselves completely — body, soul, mind and heart — exclusively, and for the rest of their lives. But when sex itself is elevated above the dignity of the persons involved, it becomes more a way of taking physical pleasure from one’s partner rather than giving a gift of one’s whole being. When people use each other for sexual pleasure, their dignity is obscured, which can lead to abuse, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and pornography.

Something people are meant to enjoy, protect and develop, like the natural environment, can turn into an idol. Some people value trees more than children, and favor drastically limiting births so fewer human beings will infest an otherwise pristine paradise.

In contrast, Jesus taught that what matters most is, precisely, ourselves — our personhood, body and soul: A leper now came up and bowed low in front of him. “Sir,” he said “if you want to, you can cure me.” Jesus stretched out His hand, touched him and said, “Of course I want to! Be cured!” And his leprosy was cured at once. (Matthew 8:1-3).

Did you ever wonder why Jesus cured the leper by touching him? Jesus could have cured the leper with a word or a wave of His hand. That would have been much more pleasant than touching him. The bacterial skin infection of leprosy starts small, but it soon spreads, rotting the victim’s extremities and issuing a thoroughly repugnant odor. Lepers were excluded from society and left to die a slow, painful, humiliating death. To come into contact with a leper was to make oneself ritually unclean, since their disease, it was believed, was a sign of God’s punishment. Lepers were prohibited by law from coming within 100 yards of healthy people. When it came to lepers, it was true: Nobody cared.

And yet, this leper broke the rule and approached Jesus. He came right up to Him. The leper must have sensed that Jesus would not be repulsed by his disgusting disease, that He would see the person beneath the putrefaction. And he was right. Jesus not only smiled and healed him, but He actually reached out and touched him — something no one else would do. That touch made all the difference. It restored his health, his status in the community, and, most of all, it restored his dignity. The leper knew then for certain that someone did care about him, that he mattered.

The subtle lies of today’s culture of death are a plague of spiritual leprosy, reducing the value of human persons to some arbitrary standard that changes like fashions. They wound us and wear us down. They make us think that we truly are, underneath it all, lepers. And so we live in bustling cities surrounded by millions of people, while in our little apartment we cry lonely tears. But Jesus is nearby, waiting for us to approach him and ask for a cure. He touches us still, if we let him, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. To the world around us, what matters is what we possess, but to the Lord, we matter because we are His beloved children, created in His image, for whom He died, and with whom He wants to live forever in heaven.

Discovering how much we matter frees us from the slow death of spiritual leprosy. It also shows us how to live. As St. Paul put it, “You should befriend each other, then, as Christ has befriended you.” (Romans 15:7). This is the game plan of all the saints.

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta executed this plan beautifully. Once she was staying with a community of Sisters working among the Aborigines in Australia. She visited an elderly man who lived in total isolation, ignored by everyone. His home was a filthy wreck. She told him, “Please let me clean your house, wash your clothes and make your bed.” He answered, “I’m OK like this. Let it be.” She said, “You will be still better if you allow me to do it.” He finally agreed. While she was cleaning, she discovered a beautiful lamp, covered with dust; it looked like it hadn’t been used in years. “Don’t you light that lamp?” she said, “Don’t you ever use it?” He answered, “No. No one comes to see me. I have no need to light it. Who would I do it for?” Mother Teresa asked, “Would you light it every night if the Sisters came?” He replied, “Of course.” From that day on, the Sisters committed themselves to visiting him every evening. Mother Teresa left Australia. Two years passed. She had completely forgotten about that encounter. Then she received a message from him: “Tell my friend that the light she lit in my life still continues to shine.”

You matter. That’s why Christ came into your life, cleaned your soul, and lit the lamp of faith in your heart. If ever the lamp goes out, He is always there to light it again. And while it shines, it should inspire us to roll back the dark lies of the culture of death and spread the light of Christ’s love to everyone we can, because they matter.

Even Napoleon’s prisoner discovered this. One day a green shoot came up through the cracks in the stones on the dungeon’s floor. It began to reach up toward the light in the tiny window at the top of the cell. The prisoner used some of the water brought to him each day to pour on the tiny sprout. It grew slowly until at last it became a plant with a deep blue blossom. As the petals opened in full bloom, the solitary captive crossed out the words previously written on the wall. “God cares,” he scratched instead.

Father Bartunek, LC, is a Legionary of Christ priest and author of The Better Part and Inside the Passion.
Contraception: Massive Industry of Convenience Masks Deadly Side Effects

By Susan E. Wills, Esq.

The teaching of the Catholic Church on human sexuality is profound and uplifting. Married love is meant to mirror the love within the Trinity — to be faithful, selfless, permanent and life-giving. And isn’t that what everyone really wants out of marriage?

But rather than encouraging this kind of love, contraceptives have helped many people to engage in sexual relationships that are unsafe, selfish, short-term, and altered to be sterile, not life-giving. Such uncommitted relationships can not only damage our ability to love as we’re meant to love, but very often lead to other problems — contributing to the 3 million unintended pregnancies, over 1 million abortions and 19 million new cases of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) in the United States each year.

Almost 90 percent of sexually-active American women “at risk” of becoming pregnant are using contraception. This prevalence is understandable because, for 50 years, we’ve been told they are “safe and effective” at preventing unintended pregnancies and (in the case of condoms) STDs. But if they are so “effective” and so prevalent, how to explain such high levels of unintended pregnancies and STDs? Something doesn’t add up.

One need only look at a report like Contraception Counts (2006) from the Guttmacher Institute, a research institute which supports abortion and contraception, to see there is no correlation between better access to contraception and lower abortion rates.

Condoms

Last year, Guttmacher reported a 17.4 percent pregnancy rate for condom-users over a 12-month period. But that’s an average which includes pregnancies among women in their late 30s and 40s, who have lower fertility and more experienced use.

Teenagers are another story: Almost one in four low-income teens (23.2 percent) who rely on condoms will become pregnant in a year. If these teens cohabit (and are therefore more sexually active), almost three in four (71.7 percent) who rely on condoms will become pregnant in a year.

Condom failure rates in protecting against STDs are even worse. This is partly because a healthy woman can only become pregnant during a six-day window in each menstrual cycle, but she can contract an STD any day of the month. Also, while the risk of contracting an STD may appear low from one exposure, each additional exposure increases the risk until STD transmission becomes all but certain.

Hormonal contraceptives

It is important to understand that hormonal drugs and devices are not “medications” given to cure a disease, where the benefit of restoring health makes some level of risk acceptable. Hormonal contraceptives are powerful steroids intended to disrupt a normal, functioning reproductive system. The more successful they are at disrupting ovulation, the more risks they pose to a woman’s overall health.

The World Health Organization has identified estrogen in combined oral contraceptive pills (COCs) as carcinogenic. Evidence of increased heart attack and breast cancer risk halted a trial of women taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT) halfway through. But note that the dose of estrogen in HRT is four to eight times lower than in many COCs.

Norplant (rods implanted under the skin) was once called “as perfect a method as you can have,” but fell from grace when complications in removing the rods and Norplant’s side effects — excessive bleeding, depression, weight gain and strokes — became known.

The progestins in all forms of hormonal contraception, taken daily or long-term, cause changes to the uterine lining, including “atrophy.” Some researchers believe this can inhibit or prevent implantation of the week-old embryo, causing his or her death.

The popular Ortho Evra patch has been linked to 23 deaths of healthy young women from fatal blood clots, heart attacks and strokes.

Yaz birth control pills can produce some 40 unpleasant side effects including hair loss, depression and emotional instability.

Progestin-only contraceptives — mini-pills, implants and injections (DepoProvera) — can cause depression, weight gain, menstrual changes, headaches and hot flashes, and loss of bone density.

What Works?

For married couples, Natural Family Planning (NFP) works! Yet, many married couples remain unaware that modern scientific methods of NFP enable them to space the birth of their children and, for sound reasons, limit the size of their family, in a way that is lovingly obedient to Jesus Christ and his Church, while avoiding the sin of contraception.

For single people, abstinence works! The steady decline in rates of unintended pregnancies and abortions in the United States has been driven primarily by more teens remaining abstinent: 16 percent fewer teens had ever had sexual intercourse in 2001, compared to 1991, and the percentage who were “sexually active” decreased almost 11 percent in that period.

Greater abstinence means fewer abortions. Between 1984 and 2004 the abortion rate dropped more than 60 percent among girls under 18 and decreased almost 48 percent for girls 18-19. In the same period, abortion rates increased for women 30 and older. There is now plenty of evidence that many school-based abstinence programs help teens postpone sexual activity.

Susan Wills, Esq., is Assistant Director for Education & Outreach in the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities.

Birth Choice Walk in OKC Oct. 4

BirthChoice of Oklahoma Inc. will host its 17th annual Celebration of Life Festival on Respect Life Sunday, Oct. 4. The event will be held at the Myriad Gardens in downtown Oklahoma City.

Check-in time is 1:15 p.m. on the northeast side of the Gardens, at Robinson and Sheridan. The whole family is invited to enjoy an afternoon of fun and entertainment. Be sure to bring your lawn chairs! Activities include our annual Life-Walk, Teen Fearless Factor Follies competition, free moon walk and slide, face painting and other activities for the kids, music provided by the band, Zero to Sixty, food and free balloons. LifeWalk T-shirts are available. The Celebration of Life is one of the major annual fundraisers for Birth Choice.

Birth Choice is an interdenominational, 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Birth Choice exists to provide for the needs of pregnant women, so they can choose life for themselves and their unborn babies. Centers provide confidential pregnancy tests, limited ultrasounds, prenatal assessments, STD testing, maternity and infant clothing, diapers and formula, counseling, community service coordination, access to medical care, transportation and housing, all at no cost. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by IRS regulations.

For more information, call Jan O’Neill at 606-8426. Or to register online, visit our Web site at www.watchfortheunborn.org.
Assisted Suicide Removes God From Issue of Life and Death

By Rita L. Marker, Esq.

Across the country assisted suicide is being promoted as a “choice” that should be available — only for adults, only in “hard cases,” and only under supposedly careful guidelines. This promotion, however, is just the first step of a strategy developed by assisted-suicide advocates to achieve their goal of death on demand. Unfortunately, assisted suicide often receives very little attention, and many people who deeply respect human life are unaware of the threat of assisted suicide.

**What is assisted suicide?**

Assisted suicide means deliberately and intentionally providing an individual with the means to commit suicide. It means that doctors would provide lethal overdoses of drugs to patients so they can end their lives.

In 1994, Oregon voters approved the “Death with Dignity Act,” transforming the crime of assisted suicide into a “medical treatment.” In the years that followed, similar laws were proposed in more than 20 states. Each and every one failed until November 2008, when Washington State voters adopted a law virtually identical to that in Oregon.

Deceptively soothing phrases like “death with dignity” and “aid in dying” gave some people the impression that they were voting for compassionate care, for better pain control, and for the right to forgo medical treatment that was overly burdensome and unwanted.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Today, a pharmacist in Oregon or Washington can dispense a lethal prescription, accompanied by instructions to take it with a light snack and alcohol to cause death. And health insurance can pay for that prescription.

**Assisted Suicide as Cost Containment**

Concerns about health care costs and general financial uncertainty, along with serious discussions about limiting health care for the elderly, are currently reaching a boiling point. If assisted suicide is added to the cauldron, the final result can be doubly lethal.

Making assisted suicide a medical treatment gives it the status of only one among many options for the treatment of certain conditions. In cost-effectiveness, assisted suicide differs in a major way from other treatments. It is extremely affordable and can always be covered by health insurance. The force of economic gravity can lead to increased pressure do you guys think you are? You know, to say that you’ll pay for my dying, but you won’t pay to help me possibly live longer?"

Wagner’s case was not isolated. Other patients received similar letters. After public outrage over Wagner’s story, an OHP spokesperson said the letters were a public relations blunder. He said that, in the future, insurance officials will “pick

I will follow that method of treatment, which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients, and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous. I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; furthermore, I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce abortion.

~ From the Hippocratic Oath, Hippocrates

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**What can be done?**

Do we want to have a society where assisted suicide is common, where it is considered normal?

Do we want to go from a situation where, initially, people are horrified by assisted suicide, but then tolerate it and, finally, accept it? Do we want to see a time, in the not too distant future, when people feel guilty for not choosing assisted suicide?

That is what we're leaving for the next generation if we don't prevent the spread of assisted suicide now.

Many people in Oregon and Washington, including those who voted for a “death with dignity” law, didn't have a clue about its implications. All of us need to help others know what legalized assisted suicide really means. That is the only way we can prevent its spread.

We must work to prevent assisted suicide from becoming the American way of death. Not only our lives but the lives of our children and grandchildren depend on it.

Rita L. Marker is an attorney and executive director of the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide.
Culture of Life
continued from page 1
To keep that vision constantly before our eyes, to remember why we are here and to gain the strength to move forward, we need to begin all our efforts with prayer.

In defending the right to life, our first duty is to oppose the direct taking of innocent human life — any human life, at any stage. As Pope John Paul II confirmed in his encyclical on The Gospel of Life, “the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral.” (EV 57). Abortion and euthanasia are preeminent concerns of the Church for reasons that are intrinsic to these issues, as well as reasons that are situational.

Intrinsically, these acts always constitute the direct taking of a human life when it is most innocent and defenseless. And they are willed and carried out by those most called to defend human life — members of the healing professions, and of one’s own family. To undermine these two havens of life is to make a culture of life impossible.

Situationally, these issues are the places where those committed to a conditional and selective vision of human rights have planted their flag in our time. They want to draw lines between the important and unimportant members of society, between persons and “non-persons.” In a different time or place, the forcing issue might be slavery, racism or anti-Semitism — today abortion and related issues force us to decide whether we mean what we say in speaking of inalienable human rights, inherent in simply being human.

In particular, the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision has made abortion the battleground over our tradition of inherent human rights, and has polarized our society as nothing else has. Later efforts to use law as a weapon against other innocent human lives — against newborn children with disabilities, for example, or against the sick and elderly through a “right” to assisted suicide — have cited Roe as their inspiration and precedent.

Thus, in promoting a culture of life, we must give priority to defending innocent unborn boys and girls from direct attack. We must also make it clear how this effort stands for the dignity and well-being of everyone, before and after birth.

In defending conscience rights in health care, for example, we stand with the unborn child, and also with the women and men of our healing professions whose freedom of conscience is at risk — and with women who will lose access to basic life-affirming health care if those who truly care about them and their children are forced out of medicine.

In sending tens of millions of postcards to Congress against the radical “Freedom of Choice Act,” we have helped stop extreme legislation that would treat ready access to abortion as a goal overriding respect for unborn children or for the well-being of pregnant women.

By insisting that the federal government promote only morally sound stem cell research, we defend the life of embryonic children — and also the health of patients endangered by the many risks of attempted embryonic stem cell treatments, and the health of women whom some want to exploit as “egg factories” for attempts at cloning human embryos for stem cells.

And the “Pregnant Women Support Act” will provide a wide range of assistance so women can bring their children to live birth and receive a helping hand as they parent the child or make an adoption plan.

Of course, helping those in need is not only the task of government. The dedicated efforts of Catholics at pro-life pregnancy centers, maternity homes, hospitals, retirement homes and parish-based support networks for pregnant women and children, as well as prayer and assistance efforts outside of abortion facilities, are needed now more than ever.

Our task is to change hearts and minds, including our own. All our good works in the areas of public policy, education and pastoral care must be undergirded by our prayers and sacrifices offered up to the Lord of Life. Through his saving power, and with the prayerful intercession of our Blessed Mother, we can build a culture of life.

Cardinal Justin F. Rigali is Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities

Across Oklahoma

Parish Welcomes Catholics Home
OKLAHOMA CITY — Starting Sept. 29, Catholics Coming Home at St. Charles. Many Catholics wander away from their faith. We have a gentle way to come back to your Church family through Catholics Coming Home. We meet for one hour on Tuesdays for five weeks. Meetings start Sept. 29 at 6 p.m. in Beckman Hall at St. Charles, 5024 N. Gove Avenue, Oklahoma City. For more information, call Frank at (405) 728-7750.

Chew on This Oct. 3
OKLAHOMA CITY — The next “Chew on This” topic will be “The Arts on Death and Resurrection” by Father Tom Boyer at 6:30 p.m., following a covered-dish supper on Oct. 3 in the Connor Center located at 3300 N. Lake Avenue. Chew on This is an adult faith formation series sponsored by the Religious Education Board of the Cathedral. For more information, contact Faith Reilly at 523-3057 or freilly@cathedralokc.org.

Author to Speak at Parish
OKLAHOMA CITY — Oct. 3, Danielle Bean will talk at St. Eugene Church. Danielle Bean, a mother of eight, is senior editor of Faith & Family magazine and Web editor of Faith & Family Live. She is also author of My Cup of Tea: Musings of a Catholic Mom, and Mom to Mom, Day to Day: Advice and Support for Catholic Living. For more information, contact St. Eugene’s at (405) 751-7115 Ext. 120.

Camp to Host Retreat
OLOG — 2009 Outdoor Retreat Experience, Oct. 9-11 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp sponsored by the Archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting and Camp Fire. The weekend is open to youth groups, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, Camp Fire USA, Venturers, individuals, youth leaders and parents. Training will be offered for those wishing to become a religious emblem counselor. For more information, contact the Archdiocesan Office of Youth and Young Adults at (405) 721-9220, or e-mail aguillotte@catharchdioceseokc.org.

Silent Retreat Set in OKC
OKLAHOMA CITY — God’s Music is Silence retreat Oct 16-18 with Katie Gordy at Mount St. Mary Retreat Center. The retreat starts Oct. 16 at 9 a.m. and runs through Oct. 18 at noon. For more information or to register, call Katie at (405) 627-6954.

Priest Addresses OSC Funding
OKLAHOMA CITY — Father Philip Seeton, pastor of Saint Charles Church, said no parish funds are being used to help support the Oklahoma Sponsoring Committee. Father Seeton said private donations are funding Saint Charles’ participation in the group.

Fall Carnival Oct. 24
OKLAHOMA CITY — Villa Teresa Catholic School is hosting its fall carnival Oct. 24 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. The school is located at 1216 Classen Drive. Tickets can be purchased at the door or the week before. There will be games, inflatable toys, bingo, and a haunted house. The evening will conclude with a drawing of baskets. Call for more information, 232-4286.

St. Mary’s Race Oct. 30
LAWTON — St. Mary’s Catholic School, Oct. 30, fourth annual Race for Education fundraiser. We request the prayers and support of all our Catholic community as we attempt to restore the glory of our school buildings. For more information, call the school at (580) 355-5288. Your donations are most welcome and are tax-deductible.
Your Prayers For Vocations Are Working

By Rev. William Novak
Director of Vocations

I am pleased to announce that the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City accepted five new seminarians this fall to make a total of 17 men from 13 parishes studying for the priesthood.

The new seminarians are:

Aaron Foshee, 22, is a member of Our Lady’s Cathedral. He is the son of Wayne and Lynda Walton and is in his first year of Pre-Theology at St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana.

Blake Jezioro, 19, is a member of St. John Nepomuk Parish in Yukon. He is the son of Ed and Michelle Jezioro and is a freshman at Conception Seminary in Missouri.

Matthew Thomason, 27, is a member of St. John Nepomuk Parish in Yukon. He is the son of Tommy Thomason and Karen Thomason and is in his first year of Pre-Theology at Conception Seminary.

Lance Warren, 28, is a member of Immaculate Conception Parish in Marlow. He is the son of Joe and Deborah Warren and is in his first year of Pre-Theology at St. Meinrad Seminary.

Josh Zakrzewicz, 19, is a member of St. Peter Parish in Guymon. He is the son of Michael and Aggie Zakrzewicz and is a sophomore at Conception Seminary.

Other returning seminarians are:

Cory Stanley, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Mustang, is in his third year of theology at the North American College in Rome.

Vicente Lopez, a member of Little Flower Parish in Oklahoma City, is in his first year of theology at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio.

Brian Buettner, a member of St. Mark Parish in Norman, is in his first year of theology at the North American College in Rome.

Robert Miller, a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Oklahoma City, is in his first year of theology at St. Meinrad Seminary.

Chris Brashears, a member of St. Joseph Parish in Blackwell, is in his second year of Pre-Theology at Conception Seminary.

Linh Bui, a member of Our Lady’s Cathedral in Oklahoma City, is in his second year of Pre-Theology at Conception Seminary.

Tim Ruckel, a member of Epiphany Parish in Oklahoma City, is in his second year of Pre-Theology at Conception Seminary.

Cristobal Deleora, a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Oklahoma City, is in his fourth year of college at Conception Seminary.

Daniel Grover, a member of St. Andrew Parish in Moore, is in his fourth year of college at Conception Seminary.

Andrew Horn, a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Edmond, is in his third year of college at Conception Seminary.

John Paul Lewis, a member of Our Lady’s Cathedral, is in his third year of college at Conception Seminary.

Jared Ortega, a member of Holy Family Parish in Lawton, is in his second year of college at Conception Seminary.

Please keep these men in your prayers and continue to pray and encourage others to listen to God’s invitation to serve the Church as a priest or as a religious brother or sister. For anyone interested in learning more about a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life, please contact the Vocations Office at the Catholic Pastoral Center at (405) 721-5651 Ext. 114.

Prayer for Vocations

Gracious and loving God, help the men and women of our Archdiocese to hear the call to serve the people of God. Our needs are great and our people thirst for Your presence. Open the hearts of many, raise up faithful servants of the Gospel, dedicated holy priests, sisters, brothers and deacons, who will dedicate themselves for Your people and their needs. Bless those who are serving now with courage and perseverance. Grant that many will be inspired by their example and faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen
Support for Catholic Radio Helps Spread the Good News

It was at a Golden-Agers meeting at St. Joseph’s Parish in Norman nearly four years ago when I announced to the group that we were forming a new ministry in the Archdiocese: Oklahoma Catholic Broadcasting. The purpose was to use the media of radio, television and the Internet to evangelize Oklahoma with the Catholic Christian message.

At the conclusion of that very meeting in the Metter Room, a wonderful lady member, who was listening with her heart, called me aside and wrote a check, our very first OCB donation, for $1,000. That generosity helped us get started.

We began broadcasting on Tyler Media station, KTLR, 890 am in Oklahoma City. This 1000-watt station has a primary signal, which reaches 1 million people and covers an area of 30 counties surrounding Oklahoma City.

Since then we have experienced phenomenal growth. First, broadcasting one hour a week, then two hours, then two hours every day. Today we are up to six and seven hours of broadcasting each day, Monday through Friday. Our five-year goal is to own and operate a fully dedicated Catholic radio station within five years.

Recently the FCC has granted us the rights to two future broadcast station licenses. These are very difficult to obtain. Let there be no doubt, we obviously attribute our success to the Lord’s blessing.

Jesus says in Matthew’s Gospel: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

That, my friends, is what this is all about.

As the OCB board of directors, we do all the “legwork,” we put in the time, the effort and the labor.

Here is how you can be part of this:

We need faithful Catholics who believe in what we are doing. Unfortunately, our financial donations have not kept pace with our growth opportunities. We really could use your financial help. Would you please consider a monthly pledge to help us?

Simply address your tax-deductible contribution to:

Oklahoma Catholic Broadcasting
P.O. Box 721041
Norman, Okla. 73070

Thank you and God bless.

Deacon Larry Sousa, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Shawnee Museum to Host Photo Exhibit

SHAWNEE — The Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art is hosting See: The Journeys of Linda Schaefer. The exhibit of photography spans Schaefer’s 30-year career as a photographer and how her journeys have changed her. The exhibit continues until Oct. 25.

Schaefer has spent her career documenting rarely glimpsed parts of the world. Her photographic series include scenes of such diverse places as Coney Island, the homeless in New York, the raucous 1980 presidential election, Eastern Europe just after the fall of communism, and the Amazon. Schaefer was the last photographer given full access to Mother Theresa and her work in India.

“Linda’s photographs capture the essence of the people, not just their surroundings, however exotic. You can truly see a person’s soul in her works,” said Dane Pollei, director and chief curator of the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art.

Donna Merkt, MGMoA Curator of Education, is bringing in classes to experience Linda’s photographs. “I am helping the students explore the photographs and talk about everything they see in them using Visual Thinking Strategies, an object-based discussion method that enhances their critical thinking skills,” said Merkt.

Schaefer’s book, Come and See, is on sale in the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art Gift Shop during the exhibition.

A video interview with Linda Schaefer created by Daniel Lay will be playing during the run of the exhibition.

The Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art is located on the campus of St. Gregory’s University, 1900 W. MacArthur St. in Shawnee.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 1 to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Admission is $5 for adults, $4 for seniors age 65 or older; $3 for students and children ages 6 to 17, and free for children age 5 and younger.

This exhibition is funded in part by the Inasmuch Foundation, Oklahoma Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts and Allied Arts. For accommodations on the basis of disability or more information on this exhibit, call the museum at (405) 878-5300.

A photo of Mother Theresa is among the exhibit.
Holy Family Maternity Home: Help for Mother and Child

It happens. Teenage girls get pregnant. Most of them don’t plan to get pregnant but it happens. In fact, in Oklahoma, according to a recent government report, the number of teen births rose 10 percent in the last year. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has been doing its part for more than 10 years to help make sure these Oklahoma teens and their babies get the care and support they need during this most difficult and challenging time of their lives.

In 1993, Catholic Charities responded to the issue of teenage pregnancy in Oklahoma and decided to help. The mission was simple: to witness the dignity of human life by providing a home for pregnant teens. The program and environment address problems of poverty and abuse and foster education by empowering the girls to develop positive lifestyles that encourage healing and healthy relationships. St. Philip Neri has adopted Holy Family Home to help enhance Catholic Charities’ ministry to mothers and their infants.

Ten years ago, Catholic Charities opened the doors of the Holy Family Maternity Home in Midwest City to serve teenage girls who were confused and scared. The loving staff and a supportive community embraced them. Since 1999, 149 girls and their babies have been served. Of the 149 births, six mothers chose adoption for their babies.

“Our Home provides pregnant girls with a peaceful, organized and supportive environment and gives each girl the life skills she needs to create a nurturing environment for her baby,” said Home Director Mary Jane Webster.

The house is set up like a large home. Each girl has her own room. She lives in community with the other teens and shares responsibilities like cooking and cleaning.

“We provide our girls with excellent prenatal care, make sure they keep a balanced diet, and provide the vital emotional support they need during this important time,” Webster said. “We are very proud of the fact that only two out of the 92 babies born from girls who have been served by Holy Family Maternity Home have weighed less than 6 pounds at time of birth.

To live at the home, each girl must work toward her own educational and vocational goals. Some continue their education at New Beginnings, a program offered through Mid-Del Technology Center.

The home welcomes girls between the ages of 12 and 17, regardless of their religion or inability to pay.

For more information about Holy Family Maternity Home, visit www.catholiccharitiesok.org or phone (405) 741-7419.

Sanctuary Provides Support for Women, Children in Times of Need

OKLAHOMA CITY — The cards were stacking up against Pamela. She was 25 years old, three months pregnant and was fleeing from domestic violence. Her 4-month-old daughter had been taken from her by the state because of the violence at home. She didn’t know where to turn.

A homeless shelter gave her a place to sleep, but what next? She needed more than a warm meal and a roof over her head. She needed to rebuild her life and get her daughter back. She didn’t know where to start.

Luckily, Pamela found her way to The Sanctuary Women’s Development Center. Catholic Charities opened the facility in April and Pamela was among its earliest clients. The Sanctuary is nestled in a neighborhood in southwest Oklahoma City.

The Sanctuary is open for women Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Catholic Charities provides transportation each day from the City Rescue Mission to the Sanctuary.

Once the women arrive, the professional staff provides practical help for such things as crafting a resume, finding housing, obtaining employment, financial planning, life skills training and access to other community services. Perhaps most importantly, the Sanctuary provides a listening ear, a caring heart and loving support.

Kim Woods, Catholic Charities homeless services coordinator, said, “We discuss issues of domestic violence, which is one of the leading causes of homelessness among women. It’s all about making the women feel spiritually safe, physically safe and emotionally safe. Then, each can begin the process of putting her life back together.”

Kim remembers the day Pamela walked through the doors of the Sanctuary. "She was hopeless and broken. She missed her daughter and wanted desperately to get her back. She was angry at her family and friends whom she had trusted, and she was terrified about what would happen to her unborn child.”

The Sanctuary helped Pamela begin the healing journey, one step at a time. First, they helped Pamela apply for housing and food stamps. Then they helped her make contact with the Department of Human Services and the court to ensure she was being treated fairly and knew everything that was expected of her to get her child back.

Next, they helped her get state insurance and prenatal care, and assisted her in getting her nursing aide license reinstated so she could find a job. Pam and her case manager prepared a resume and began the job search immediately. Within two months, Pamela got an evening job at a nursing home, but had problems arranging transportation back to the shelter each night before the doors closed at 7 p.m.

Sanctuary case manager Amy Hampton worked with the shelter to obtain a special pass for Pamela to be admitted after hours each evening.

Pamela’s ultimate goal was to have her own apartment within walking distance of her new job. She had no rental history or income verification for the past six months. After two weeks of searching, Catholic Charities found a place suited for Pamela’s needs. Catholic Charities provided Pamela’s deposit and first month’s rent.

With the help of the Sanctuary staff, Pamela has gained independence and stability and looks forward to the birth of her baby and eventually being reunited with her older daughter.

For more information about Sanctuary, phone (405) 526-2321, or e-mail sanctuaryokc@mail.com.
Clinton Office ‘Takes on Western Oklahoma’

By Ray Dyer  
Sooner Catholic

CLINTON — Father Rex Arnold said he is amazed at the work done by the office of Catholic Charities here.

He’s amazed, but not surprised.

Eileen McGee is the coordinator of the office. She’s also the marriage counselor, substance abuse counselor, finance counselor and she’s in the process of becoming a certified gambling addiction counselor. She handles this and any other job or challenge that walks through the door of the small wood frame house that serves as the headquarters for Catholic Charities in western Oklahoma.

The house is owned by St. Mary’s Parish and is located just across the street. When Father Arnold arrived as pastor three years ago, it didn’t take him long to see how the Catholic Charities ministry was making a difference in the community and the area.

“Eileen single-handedly takes on western Oklahoma,” Father Arnold said. He described the service provided by Catholic Charities in Clinton as the “underpinning of the community.” Custer County judges frequently assign non-violent offenders community service under the direction of McGee and Catholic Charities.

“You know you’re making a difference when they know you at the courthouse and Eileen is known at the courthouse,” Father Arnold said.

The work load carried by McGee has expanded as the energy-based economy of this part of the state has pulled back. The soft oil and gas market is causing problems for families. Money is tight and many bread winners have been forced to take positions that send them to other parts of the country and even outside of the United States.

“The oil field has moved to Pennsylvania and Louisiana,” McGee said. She said women are left at home to care for children, the house, hold down a job of their own and wait until their husbands return home.

“I’ve been working with one family where the man has taken a job in New Zealand,” she said. “He’s gone 28 days and then back for 28 days. It changes the whole dynamic of the family.” But when work is scarce, how does a man turn down a job that pays $67 per hour even if it is on the other side of the world?

McGee said more people are turning to gambling to distract them from the worries of their lives. Of course, this only compounds the problems because most lose more than they will ever win. She is about halfway though the process of obtaining certification as a gambling addiction counselor.

McGee said the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, which operate a casino in Clinton, have expressed an interest in her assisting them once she has her certification.

The C&A operate the George Hawkins Treatment Center for alcohol and substance abuse Clinton. Once McGee has her certification in counseling those addicted to gambling, the Tribes are considering adding that service as well.

Father Arnold envisions one day having a more modern office for Catholic Charities, as well as the St. Vincent DePaul ministry supported by the parish. He’s hopeful an architect might step forward with some free design support. Until then, Father said anyone who would like to donate some modern office furniture would be welcome.

“It’s pretty rustic around here,” he said, looking at the small kitchen that also serves as a conference room and clothes closet.

Counselor Has First-hand Knowledge of Addiction

Eileen McGee knows how easy it is to become addicted to gambling.

Last summer she visited a local casino and walked away a $4,000 winner after hitting it big on an electronic gambling machine. The feeling was overwhelming, she said.

“I found myself going back again and again,” McGee said. “A gambler knows the next spin is going to be the winner. And then it’s the next spin and so on and so on.”

For three weeks McGee said she found a way to every day visit the casino, hiding her visits from friends and family. Finally, after the losses continued to mount, she realized the trap had been sprung on her.

“I was sitting at a machine and all of sudden I just stopped,” she said. “I looked up and said ‘God, what am I doing?’”

McGee is now halfway through obtaining her certification that will allow her to counsel those who find themselves addicted to gambling. She believes her own experience will help her better understand and communicate with those who are struggling with the addiction that almost swallowed her.

She’ll still visit a casino, but now she never goes alone and limits how much she’ll gamble.
Buenas Noticias...

...Una, Santa, Católica y Apostólica

Mis queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:

La Doctrina Social de la Iglesia no es una innovación reciente en la vida de la Iglesia. Viene desde Jesús.

En los últimos cien años, sin embargo, las enseñanzas públicas de los Papas clarificaron y avanzaron las enseñanzas sociales en vista de cambios radicales en la sociedad. Desde los tiempos del Papo Leo XIII (1903) hasta el presente, todos los diez Papas han realizado enseñanzas oficiales en la doctrina social de la Iglesia en forma de de cartas Encíclicas u otros documentos.

La Doctrina Social de la Iglesia está basada en el hecho de que todos los seres humanos son creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Por lo tanto, la vida humana es sagrada y tiene que ser respetada y celebrada.

Es más, los cristianos recordamos en el Sacrificio del Bautismo, teniendo la obligación de compartir la Buena Nueva de Jesús con el próximo. Los Católicos tienen mucho más una obligación para con el resto de la sociedad, porque tenemos la promesa de Jesús de proteger y velar por nosotros, a través del Magisterio, el cual nos enseña en Su Nombre.

A través de nuestra Educación Religiosa, la Oficina de Vida Familiar, Caridades Católicas y otras oficinas o agencias de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, nosotros siempre hemos seguido la guía y dirección de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB).

Los Obispos Americanos han presentado con fe y entusiasmo las enseñanzas del Santo Padre y el Magisterio de la Iglesia. La Doctrina Social de la Iglesia no es partidista o política.

Sin embargo, basado en la dignidad del ser humano y la santidad de la vida. Por esto, toca cada área de la vida humana incluyendo la pública, cívica y política. (Interpretar cuidadosamente el pasaje del Papa Benedicto XVI en su Encíclica DEUS CARITAS EST)

Muy Reverendo y su Eminencia
Ensebía J. Bertrán
Arzobispo Metropolitano de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City.

La pasada primavera, un número de parruquias, siguiendo los principios de las Enseñanzas Católicas, se unieron con iglesias de diferente credo en coalición para trabajar juntos en áreas donde compartimos preocupaciones. Ellos formaron el Comité Patrocinador de Oklahoma (OSC). Por hacer ésto, fueron alentados por muchos Católicos a usar la Fundación de Áreas Industriales (IAF), quienes tienen pautas para la organización y entrenamiento para “organizar comunidades.”

IAF fue severamente condenada como una entidad política liberal que está conspirando para seducir a las iglesias.

El término “organización comunitaria” fue llamado a ser desacuato. En mi artículo escrito el pasado mes de abril, mencioné algunos de los desaciertos del pasado donde IAF usó tácticas equivocadas y deshizo fuerzas para lograr las metas. Sin embargo, mencioné que durante los pasados treinta o cuarenta años, grupos ecuménicos inspirados por la buena organización de IAF han sido formados en muchas diócesis. Ellos han resistido el paso del tiempo y han probado ser sólidos y de ayuda para la gente, para la misión de la Iglesia y para las sociedades locales.

Yo he consultado con los Obispos de estas diócesis y ellos testimonian que las coaliciones ecuménicas son buenas y efectivas.

Cuando un grupo busca y forma maneras de solucionar preocupaciones comunes, el resultado será bueno o mal, dependiendo de la visión, creencias y dedicación de sus miembros. Esto es la razón por la cual, las enseñanzas Católicas Sociales motivan a nuestra gente a ser levadura en el mundo. Católicos con una fe vibrante y alimentada por el sacrificio de la vida de la Iglesia son los mejores candidatos para dar liderazgo e inspiración a estas organizaciones.

Como dije en mi artículo anterior: ‘Nuestra sociedad secular presente no busca la verdad pero tampoco engendra fe. El clima político actual no aumenta la dignidad y el valor de los seres humanos. Sólo aquellos que profesan fe en ellos mismos pueden compartirla con otros. Sólo aquellos que creen en Dios pueden restaurar el verdadero respeto por la intrínseca dignidad humana.”

Por ésto, quiero animar a los comités de seis parruquias representativas de la Iglesia Católica en la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City a continuar sus esfuerzos y ser testigos y levadura en el mundo.

Felicitó a los sacerdotes por su compromiso con las enseñanzas Católicas Sociales. Estos párrocos me han asegurado que siempre seguirán nuestras enseñanzas Católicas.

Si nuestros sacerdotes ven algún peligro para con nuestra fe Católica, prácticas o creencias, ellos inmediatamente se saldrán del grupo. Ellas no tuvieron que expresar esta aseveración en palabras ya que su dedicación pastoral y de servicio a Dios retraen su fe y amor por nuestra Santa, Católica Iglesia. ¡Gracias Padres!

También deseo comentar sobre las buenas mujeres y hombres de nuestra Archidiócesis quienes expresaron su preocupación temiendo un daño potencial a la Iglesia. Llamar a nuestro atencionado para incrementar nuestro examen y estudio sobre las enseñanzas de la Iglesia, incluyendo estas bellas Encíclicas del Papa Benedicto XVI. Sus continuas oraciones y estudio, especialmente de nuestras Enseñanzas Católicas Sociales, entenderemos que serán informativas y liberadoras.

Basadas en la fe, guía y el Magisterium de la Iglesia, estamos fortalecidos por nuestra compartida vida sacramental, todos veneramos el miedo, el pecado y a la maldad. Nuestra esperanza y confianza está en Jesús, quien nos dio la Iglesia. Jesús solo es nuestro Señor y Salvador. El nunca nos abandona. A veces, sin embargo, nosotros podíamos ver que no recibimos su llamado de forma real y nos conformamos con nuestra visión humana de los problemas.

Las notas desagradables escritas hacía mí y hacia al Sooner Catholic distan la caridad con la que debemos definir nuestras actividades.

El daño hecho a la reputación de muchas personas debe ser aliviado. Los falsos atacantes, los cuales han sido esparcidos deliberadamente, menosprecian el buen trabajo de nuestras Caridades Católicas.

La radio pública y el internet no pueden ser usados para difamar la misión y el trabajo de la Iglesia. De otra manera, esto lleva a escándalo, al odio y al desprecio de nuestra fe Católica. Es mi deseo y mi plegaria que los acontecimientos de los pasados seis meses hayan sido una bendición para todos nosotros.

Debemos continuar nuestro peregrinaje de fe en esta tierra hasta alcanzar la vida eterna en el cielo a través de Una, Santa, Católica y Apostólica Iglesia con la cual el Señor nos ha bendecido.
El Instituto Cultural Hispano es algo positivo dentro de nuestra Arquidiócesis
Arzobispo Beltrán agradece los esfuerzos del laicado por integración en Cristo

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

NORMAN — El Instituto Cultural Hispano de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City con sede en la parroquia San José en Norman ha tenido como invitado especial al Arzobispo Eusebius J. Bertrán, quien se dirigió a los presentes para hablar del amor de Dios y las anécdotas que tuvo con el Padre Stanley Rother cuando el Arzobispo Beltrán era Obispo de Tulan.

El Arzobispo Bertrán se refirió al importante positivo desempeño del Instituto Cultural Hispano como parte de un ministerio de integración en los apostolados de Cristo. En esta apertura de un nuevo semestre del instituto, el cual se efectuó el pasado 14 de septiembre en la parroquia San José, el Arzobispo Bertrán replicó que todos formamos parte de la Creación de Dios y no hay, ni debe haber en la sociedad diferencias de nacionalidad, raza, religión, económicas, o ideológicas porque todos fuimos creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Finalmente, el Arzobispo Beltrán mencionó que la clave para el éxito de los esfuerzos de la feligresía para la integración, está en demostrar al prójimo el amor de Dios y seguir los apostolados con respeto y verdadera sinceridad.

Primer congreso de liberación de la dependencia química de las drogas ilícitas
Jóvenes se reúnen en la escuela "Mount Saint Mary" para decir no a la adicción

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — La moral Católica rechaza con firmeza el consumo de drogas ilegales.

Con motivo a la celebración del primer congreso de liberación de la dependencia química de las drogas ilícitas, asistido por los propios jóvenes hispanos Católicos de diferentes parroquias de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, se busca hacer reflexionar a la juventud de Oklahoma para que busquen ayuda y se alejen de la adicción a las drogas dañinas, especialmente se desea hacer énfasis para que los jóvenes busquen su refugio en Cristo.

Al respecto, el pasado 19 de septiembre en las instalaciones de la escuela "Mount Saint Mary", se destacaron los discursos de los jóvenes Católicos William Portillo (ex-pandillero) y quienes vinieron desde California para estar junto a Joel de Loera y aconsejar a los jóvenes de las consecuencias del uso de las drogas, ya que las drogas hoy en día, han aumentado cada vez más porque los jóvenes se han hecho potenciales consumidores de drogas prohibidas.
Jobs Box

Cook Needed
Villa Teresa School has an opening for a cook. Must have some knowledge and experience with federal food program and menu planning. Call Sister Veronica at 232-4286 to arrange an interview.

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 also will 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.

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) 375-4581.

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 preferred 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.

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 catharchdioceseokc.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 goals 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 catharchdioceseokc.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.

LPN Openings
The Center of Family Love in Okarche has immediate openings for the following: LPN - 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 aleinke@cflinc.org or in person at 635 W. Texas, Okarche, Okla. 73762. 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 should 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

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@kofc.org.
The Catholic Foundation is taking applications for its Executive Director position. Successful candidate shall serve as the Chief Operating Officer of the Foundation and is responsible for the administration, operation and management of the affairs of the Foundation. Position involves planning and implementation of development strategies, including donor solicitation and the managing of capital campaigns, planned giving and endowment programs, knowledgeable communication skills with financial managers, direct mail, public relations and special events. It also involves the oversight of the scholarship and grant allocations on an annual basis, preparing an annual operating budget and preparation of appropriate monthly and annual reports. Requirements are a bachelor's degree in a related field or equivalent combination of education and experience inclusive of development and charitable funding. Successful candidate would need a knowledge of estate planning, tax considerations and various gifting instruments and familiarity with the Archdiocesan giving community.

Candidate would need to be an active member of a parish and in good standing with the Catholic Church. Other skills would be strong organizational and computer skills in Microsoft Office and donor database software, self-starter, goal-oriented, a willingness to travel and establish appointments convenient to prospects.

Send cover letter, resume and salary history to David Johnson, Catholic Foundation, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73123-0380, (405) 721-7115.
Foundation Helps Teach English, Along With Life Lessons

Every year the board members of the Catholic Foundation solicit grant applications from the Catholic schools and parishes of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The grant cycle for 2009 has begun and the deadline for applications is Sept. 30. Grants are given in the spirit of the foundation’s purpose of providing a means to religious and educational institutions to advance the works of our Catholic faith. Applications have been sent to every parish and school in the Archdiocese.

The following is an article written by a participant in the St. Thomas More Parish youth trip that the CFO grant helped make possible. St. Thomas More Parish is in Norman.

By Jennifer Grover
For the Sooner Catholic

Teaching English at the Ukrainian Catholic University’s English Summer School (ESS) was the greatest experience of my life, and it would not have been possible without all the help from St. Thomas More. So first we want to thank everyone for their prayers and generosity.

On June 29, Ben Ballard, Michael DuPont, Tara Forth, Eric Anderson and I departed for Lviv, Ukraine, with little idea of the experience that was to come. After a few days in Lviv, training and getting acquainted with life in Ukraine, we left Lviv for a little village about three hours away, called Nahuyevychi. This village was to become our home for the next three weeks.

At ESS, we were busy every moment. We woke up early to begin our day with Divine Liturgy, followed by breakfast and morning assembly. Then classes began. We had three classes every morning, one being a Scripture study class. Then we prayed Sext Hour, which is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, which was followed by lunch and two more classes. The afternoon classes consisted of a reading class and an elective class that we planned prior to Ukraine.

Then we had “free time.” Free time was not really “free” most days. Most days we spent the two hours planning classes for the next day, catching up on much-needed sleep, or talking with students to help them practice their English. After free time was Vespers and dinner. Evenings consisted of a group activity or game and tutoring. Tutoring was voluntary, but even if you did not sign up to tutor for the evening, you still tutored.

While the schedule was very demanding, it helped to enhance the experience by giving us the chance to participate in both the Ukrainian culture and the traditions of the Greek Catholic Church. The Eastern Rite chants much of their services, which I found that I grew to love. The Ukrainian culture was also very unique and beautiful.

The greatest part of the experience, though, was what I learned about myself and the world. I realized that I feel the call to continue to work with people and teaching English abroad. I have just been nominated for the Peace Corps, so hopefully that will become a reality. My eyes were opened to how blessed we are in America, and how it is our obligation to help those who are less fortunate or do not have the same opportunities we have, but the trick is to do so without changing their culture.

Each student had an amazing personal story to tell, which reminded me how blessed I have been. It also showed me how amazing each and every student was. It was an honor to teach and help them learn English so that they could pursue their goals in life. I was told time and again how important it was for them to know English to get a job and be successful. Something we know from childhood seems to be the key to their future.

Every part of the experience was absolutely incredible. It changed my life forever, and now being here, I cannot wait to return. I am already beginning to plan fundraising so that I can return next year to teach again.