Church groups race to help families

By Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON – In public and behind the scenes of a court order that immigrant families separated by the U.S. government be reunited by the end of July 26, the Catholic Church, from its leadership to its charitable and advocacy organizations, worked around the clock to speed up the effort.

Catholic humanitarian organizations rushed to collect material help, bishops loudly denounced the separation policy, and groups such as Catholic Extension established a fund to shelter, feed and defend some of the separated immigrant families.

By the end of deadline day, Immigration and Customs Enforcement said 1,442 of the 2,500 had found their way to a loved one and said the rest did not have an “eligible” family member to go to. The number of families the government reported reuniting by the following morning increased to 1,800.

Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, Texas, and Catholic affiliated centers in San Antonio and Phoenix served as safe physical spaces for families to be reunited following their release. Annunciation House in El Paso also helped. Staff from Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City are assisting.

Some adults apprehended, possibly 400 to 500, have been deported, making it unclear what will happen to their children. Catholic groups were joined by other faith-based entities, including Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Bethany Christian Services.

Blessed Stanley Rother Feast Day

Archbishop Coakley, Archbishop Emeritus Beltran and Abbot Lawrence joined fellow clergy, the Rother family and hundreds of parishioners and visitors July 28 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Okarche to celebrate the first feast day of Blessed Stanley Rother. See more on Blessed Stanley’s feast day in the next issue of the Sooner Catholic.

Beloved priest nurse to retire

By Steve Gust
The Sooner Catholic

Mary Diane Steltenkamp, an extraordinary friend and caregiver to the clergy of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, is celebrating her friendships and successes as she prepares for retirement this month.

“I am grateful for the care, expertise and sacrifice of Mary Diane in her service to the archdiocese as our Priest Nurse,” Archbishop Coakley said.

“Mary Diane loves priests. She brought comfort and laughter to many of our priests, helping them to navigate important health decisions and even to prepare for the end of their earthly life. She will be missed.”

Since 2013, she has been the archdiocesan nurse, helping to comfort more than 100 priests as they face both minor and major health challenges. The longtime member of Saint Eugene Catholic Church in Oklahoma City was the first to lead the nursing program for the archdiocese.

“I knew I wanted to be the one to start this program,” she said. “So many of our priests would otherwise have to deal with these decisions by themselves.”

Mary Diane Steltenkamp with Fr. A. Gerard MacAulay when he was awarded the Blessed Stanley Rother Award in 2016. Photos provided.

Her duties included, but weren’t limited to, making sure clergy had access to vaccines, monitoring of vitals and assisting with health advice. One of the priests who knew she would be perfect for the job is Father Scott Boeckman, now at Conception Seminary College in Missouri.

“Everyone’s life is filled with fears, especially when we are sick,” Father Boeckman said. “Mary Diane helped us to alleviate those fears. We knew we could count on her. She was our healing balm.”

Steltenkamp also communicated with the family of clergy and offered her nursing opinions on various surgeries or medications physicians recommended. Her knowledge came with a wealth of nursing experience and an urge to help others.

That urge dates back to her continued on page 6
"Man cannot live without hope, and education is the generator of hope. … The true educator is like a shepherd cannot run. A Retrospective on the Life of Blessed Stanley Rother." The Rother Heritage Gallery, 7501 Northwest Expressway, presents "The Shepherd Cannot Run: A Retrospective on the Life of Blessed Stanley Rother." The free exhibit is open 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Special tours arranged by calling (405) 721-3651, Ext. 141.

Enrichment programs strengthen, encourage joyful marriages

Five years ago, Pope Francis looked over the sea of volunteers at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro and gave his remarks to married couples: "Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion. … They say that it is not worth making a lifelong commitment, making a definitive decision, ever," because we do not know how things will turn out, are afraid of being let down, and thus, to be revolutionaries, I ask you to swim against the tide: yes, I am asking you to reaffirm this culture that was everything but temporary and that ultimately believes you are incapable of true love." 

Marriage enrichment programs, which are in the top 10, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They say that just because a couple is in the middle of their third marriage, it does not mean they are incapable of true love.

Archbishop Coakley letter to the faithful

In response to recent allegations regarding former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has issued a letter to the Catholic faithful concerning any allegations of sexual misconduct involving women, expressing his concern for the survivors of such actions and action in the alleged incidents, and issuing a call to re-examine the standards and procedures for reporting abuse in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. In an interview with archdiocesan officials, the archdiocese has made the following statement:

"It is important for each diocese, personnel - clergy, seminarians, religious, employees and volunteers - to re-examine the standards and procedures for reporting abuse in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The Charter for the Protection of Minors in the Church, originally established by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002, and revised in 2016, sets a comprehensive set of procedures for reporting and responding to sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.

"The Archdiocese is committed to protecting our children and ministry partners, and to ensuring that every diocese have the full text of the charter on its website, accessible by the public. "The American Bishops' Conference has made violent and nonviolent behavior part of its Code of Ethics, and the charter is available online at www.usccb.org/isb." 

By Elenas Tedrow

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Abby, monks honor St. Kateri feast day

The Benedictine monks of Saint Gregory’s Abbey hosted their annual Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Pilgrimage Day on July 14, their feast day.

Saint Kateri, who died in 1680, is the first American Indian recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church. Also known as the “Lily of the Mohawks,” Pope Benedict XVI canonized her on Oct. 14, 2012.

The Rev. Lawrence Staysyaun, O.S.B., abbot of Saint Gregory’s said, “We are grateful to offer a novena and pilgrimage day each year in honor of Saint Kateri. Not only do we want to promote awareness of this great saint, but we also want to honor all American Indian peoples throughout our history.”

Abbot Lawrence said, “About 100 pilgrims attended the activities. Attendees included people of the Apache, Blackfoot, Caddo, Chocotow, Cherokee, Chickassue, Citizen Potawatomi, Co- manche, Delaware, Kiowa, Lakota, Muskogee-Creek, Osage, Seminole and Wichita tribes.”

The pilgrimage day began with Mass with Abbot Lawrence presiding. Dorothy Whitehorse DaLaun, an elder of the Kiowa tribe, offered prayer in the Kiowas language.

Kevin Conerwerdy, of the Kiowa Nation Women’s Hand Drum Group, Dewey Kwok, drummed and sang songs in Potawatomi. As Abbot Lawrence increased the statue of Saint Kateri, Dewey Kwok sang the traditional “Strong Woman Song.” To conclude the ceremonies, all participants placed white lilies around the feet of the statue.

The monks offered a meal in the monastic refectory that featured lilies around the feet of the statue. Girls with the name Kateri received a special gift.

“We were very pleased with the turnout for our pilgrimage day. Our plan is to keep the activity going and expand for next year’s festivities, which will be held on July 13,” Abbot Lawrence said.

The pilgrimage day is held annually on the Saturday preceding July 14, the memorial of Saint Kateri.

By Joanne Schochmich
The Sooner Catholic

Assumption celebrates annual vacation Bible school

The year’s theme of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s annual vacation Bible school was “Shipwrecked.” The summer program held June 25-29 in Duncan featured images of the ocean and underwater, which transformed the church’s auditorium into a colorful aquatic world for the youth who attended.

With 67 students enrolled, they averaged around 50 students per day, according to Maria Martinez, Assumption’s religious education director. Each evening began around 5 p.m. with a warm meal for the students.

“Whether it was macaroni and cheese or chicken nuggets or cornbread, the children always get something before we get started. Then, we start playing and singing, it is always so fun seeing the little ones dancing and being so engaged in the music,” said Martinez, who is on her sixth year overseeing vacation Bible school.

Every day had a different theme, so the children were excited about something new as the week progressed. One example was, “Jesus Rescues Peter.”

“The always have to respond with, ‘Jesus rescues’,” Martinez said. “We have been going along with that theme because it does not matter what happens in your life. You can always have someone who is there for you, whether you’re wrong, you’re said, Jesus is always there to rescue you. That is what we focus our lesson toward.”

The weeklong school was arranged in sections. In Bible discovery, students heard a story of the day and did a related activity. During imagination, students heard about the theme of the day. Children also watched a movie related to each theme and had discussions among themselves and their leader. In the games section, youth leaders incorporated the daily theme into a fun game.

Martinez said it is a scripted program that they do not have to fit the needs of the children. “Our students graduate to the seventh grade, they have the option to become youth helpers. ‘I have been coming to vacation Bible school since I was in PreK,’” said Angela Ibarra, 12. “The best thing about vacation Bible school is learning about God and interacting with friends, and the food is good too.”

Beth Martinez and Veronica Ibarra, HS, assistant, said, “He helped us make the ship. The ship really went well with this theme, so he came one morning and said, ‘Let’s do this.’ He is very involved. He loves our kids and he does whatever he needs to help us,” Martinez said.

Ibarra said it takes everybody in the parish to make the school come together and be successful. “Our goal is for everybody to be filled with the joy, love, hope and peace that I feel God is. They inspire me even more, just to share the seed that was planted for me,” Ibarra said.

“They eyes light up when they see the decorations. I think that the children feel the love that was put into the decorations and are very excited. They are passionate as well because they are dancing and singing, and they seem like they are just at peace, and that is really nice to see.”

Joanne Schochmich is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
“Mother to Mother” brings love, skills to parents, grandparents

Deadline to apply Sept. 1

Despite the circumstances and the unknown, Mary’s courageous journey led her to welcome a baby that would change human history. De-
Immaculate Conception celebrates final Mass, honors Fr. Pupius

By Debi Wagner
The Sooner Catholic

July 1 marked the end of an era for one Oklahoma City parish as the final Mass was celebrated at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

Father George Pupius, pastor of Immaculate Conception, recently retired due to ill health, and with changing populations and surrounding industrialization, the parish was closed. Archbishop Coakley was the principal celebrant at the final Mass. He was joined by Father William Novak, Father Gerard MacAlary, Father Don Wolf and Deacon James Keene.

Immaculate Conception is the second oldest Catholic parish in the area. Two years after the Land Run in 1889, five pioneer families came from Conception, Mo., to Oklahoma, bringing with them their Catholic faith. Working together on donated land, the pioneers constructed a small frame church building.

Immaculate Conception spent 60 years as a mission church. After closing temporarily during the Depression, it reopened after World War II, thanks to the newly stimulated economy and population growth. Descendants of founding families worked with new families in the area to continue developing parish facilities.

Immaculate Conception got its first permanent resident pastor in 1954, Father A.O. Murphy. To parishioners, Immaculate Conception means family life. Three generations of Sue Hay’s family have worshipped there. She says her best memories are of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren being baptized in the church.

“Immaculate Conception Church has been a lifeline to my family and my community. It has been as they say a small church with a big heart. I am proud to say that I have been one of the fortunate ones to be able to call it my church home for more than 63 years. A big thanks to choir director Ed Mitchell and pianist Pat Koelch, and of course, to Father Pupius for staying on with the church as long as he could.”

Hay asked for prayers for parish members as they seek to find a new church home. Her son Tommy echoes the importance of family in the parish.

“I will forever be grateful to Immaculate Conception and my mother for making me the Christian man that I am.

One of the parish pioneers, Peter Wolf, is the great-grandfather of Father Don Wolf, pastor at Saint Eugene in Oklahoma City and cousin of Blessed Stanley Rother. Father Wolf was baptized there, and grew up in the parish. He celebrated his first Mass after ordination there, and many members of the Wolf family are buried in the Immaculate Conception cemetery.

“IT was always a place marked out by family life. We all went to Mass there together and some of the best times I remember were Christenings, First Communion, Confirmation, and even weddings. There was no place like it with the people and the beautiful setting.”

By all accounts, the final Mass for this parish family was a meaningful event. Many former parishioners came back to celebrate one last time.

Father Wolf praised the homily, and choir director Ed Mitchell shared a song he wrote honoring the parish. Hay said it was “so special and so well done” that the memory is one she will cherish.

Now that the tabernacle is empty and the sanctuary lamp blown out, the people of Immaculate Conception said they will carry treasured memories and their Catholic faith to the next chapter in their journey.

On July 22, the Immaculate Conception family gathered again to honor Father Pupius, who is now in hospice care. Approximately 40 people gathered in his room at Saint Ann Nursing Home in Oklahoma City to celebrate his 55 years of priestly service.

Parishioners and friends shared songs, including hymns on the saxophone. Attendees also offered prayers, and stories of gratitude for Father’s vocation and ministry. Some remembered him baptizing their children who are now adults, others mentioned him staying late after healing Masses to hear confessions. The afternoon was a joyful tribute to Father Pupius, thanking him for his lifetime of spiritual leadership.

Debi Wagner is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
Building on a great foundation

By J.R. Hele
The Sooner Catholic

Most people are the product of the Church’s marriage education programs, follow the footsteps of parents and family, absorb the teachings of others and seem to have been called to something unique. Others seem to have little interest, especially gifted and uniquely individual. Yet, some of these folks, like Stein, a woman ahead of her time who loved her Lord with all her heart, mind and soul. A Jesuit who became a Carmelite and a martyr who died in defense of Jesus, is known to all Catholics.

Our导者 Mark Ruiz delivered an excellent homily "Edith Stein: The Life and Legacy," and his words make an excellent beginning for the Cross. A title in two pieces as a great work of art put together from different pieces.

The details of Stein’s early life are taken from her work, “life in a Jewish Family,” published in 1966 and subtitled “Unfinished Autobiographical Account.” Essays that she wrote as a scholar are referenced in Scaperlanda’s book as are Stein’s letters, many of which were written after religious orders. Scaperlanda describes Stein as a barrier who opened the way for orthodox and in her own terms.

There is a great need for disciples! Because the world needs more disciples! Becoming authentic disciples can’t help but spread what they have found. Even more important, disciples go to heaven, which is the ultimate fulfillment of all that we desire. This is what a mission-minded Church looks like.

This is where we are heading in the archdiocese: It is time to be the Church of Christ. I’m excited to be on this journey and be a part of this process to help us get there.

There are many, many disciples who are practicing their faith, priests, catechists and teachers, who have been part of a certified past-time family or parish catechesis program. They have a particular education for their role, as the Church is the Body of Christ and God is leading us forward.

There is a need for more disciples and authentic disciples. A need more than ever before. A need more than we have ever had. A need that is growing and a need that we can address. This is what a mission-minded Church looks like.

One problem we have to deal with is that there are a lot of different groups out there that want to help the local Church be what it is. We need to make sure that we are working together, if possible, in order to help the local Church be what it is.

Jobs Box

Physician - Teacher - Oklahoma
Mount St. Mary Catholic High School seeks a certified, experienced teacher. Pope Francis states that the mission of the Church is to make disciples. We are currently seeking a part-time, outstanding and dedicated professional to become a part of our family and make disciples.

Please apply by email to info@stmaryok.org.

Development coordinator - Oklahoma
The Family of Life pro-life project seeks an energetic and motivated pro-life leader to coordinate the pro-life project.

Strong skills in organization, planning and execution of events, technology skills, and the ability to work as a part of a team.

Contact (405) 919-2919 or email to info@familyoflifeok.org.

Director of youth ministry, Young adult ministry - Shawnee

Director of maintenance, janitor - Lawton
St. Joseph in Lawton is seeking a full-time maintenance and janitor. Contact (580) 365-2561.

Coordinator of children’s formation - Edmond
St. Francis of Assisi, OKC, is searching for a full-time coordinator of children’s formation. Jobs require oversight of the Office of Marriage and Family Life.

Submit resume to e-mail tdenegri@mountstmary.org.

First-grade teacher - Lawton
St. Mary Catholic School, Lawton, is accepting applications for the position of first-grade teacher. A bachelor’s degree in education with state teaching certification is required. Send resume, letter of intent and copy of teaching certificate to Jeanne Loring, P.O. Box 2546, Lawton 73506, or fax to (580) 559-6700.

Coordinator of children’s formation - Norman
Applications are being accepted for the position of coordinator of children’s formation.

Job listing is ready to be posted on the website.
El hombre no puede vivir sin esperanza, y la educación es generadora de esperanza... El verdadero educador ensalza a un padre o a una madre que transmite una vida capaz de un futuro. 

Papa Francisco

Por estas razones, la Iglesia ha patrocinado a través de su formación en la escuela el desarrollo integral de los niños y jóvenes, contribuyendo así a su formación en cabeza y corazón para vivir en la sociedad de hoy. 

Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City
Come and See weekend

The Benedictine Monks of St. Gregory’s Monastery have been seeking God in prayer and work, and lived in a stable community, since 1876. For those of you to whom God is calling you? Visit the abbey Aug. 10-12 for a Come and See weekend. Contact Fr. Boniface at visit@stgregoryok.org.

RCIA - Edmond


RCIA - OEC

An evening of inquiry to learn more about Catholicism will be 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at Christ the King, 8005 Darret Drive, OKC, on Aug. 14. No cost, no obligation. Contact, 405-833-4766.

FOCUS training

The FOCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory is a comprehensive, going-together tool for couples or professionals who help prepare people for marriage. It is designed to help engaged couples appreciate their unique relationship, learn more about themselves and discuss topics important to them. The next weekend session will be Sept. 7-9 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway. To register, call 405-443-3541 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org.

Surviving Divorce

The Surviving Divorce program will help you and your family heal and grow. You won’t be focused on a preconceived outcome and lose sight of your role. God will use the programs you choose to give you direction in planting your seeds, and you won’t be distracted, wondering if God is on the job. You may not know the results of your participation, but you can be assured, that uniting our Catholic family to spread the word and build and supply your projects will increase the harvest of your righteousness (2 Cor. 9:10).

St. Joseph’s Orphanage reunion

The seventh reunion annual of former residents and staff members of St. Joseph’s Orphanage in Bethany and St. Joseph’s Place, now Home in OKC will be 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aug. 18 at Trinity Gardens, Survey Road, 3825 N.W. 15 OKC. All former residents, staff, their families and friends are invited. Bring old photos and memories to share. Lunch at Noon. Ammunition is free, but enough for all, please RSVP by Aug. 10 to Joan Jane at jmccormack@cox.net or (405) 562-2208.

Bishop McGuinness alumni trivia night

The 12th annual trivia night is Aug. 21 in the Bishop McGuinness commons. Registration 5:30 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., trivia starts 8 p.m. Individual tickets $25, $250 for table of 10. Dinner included. Cash bar available. VIP table, $350. To reserve a VIP table, contact Carl Trilby at trilbyrtn@gmail.com or (405) 761-9997. Open to the public. Guests must be 21. All proceeds to benefit the Home at www.bmhs.org or contact Carl Trilby at trilbyrtn@gmail.com.

Retreat in Daily Life


Rivertreasure

Rivertreasure provides spaces uncover and reawaken the love, trust, and commitment that originally brought them together. The program is highly successful in saving marriages, bringing reconciliation to couples who have already separated or divorced. The next weekend session is planned for Sept. 7-9 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway. To register, call 405-443-3541 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org.

St. Francis of Assisi Ecumeni- cal Franciscan Fraternity of Greater OKC meeting, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m., at St. Anthony Hospital, 1100 N. Lee, OKC. Information at feast desk. Contact (315) 558-0422, billющихся@msn.com.

St. Ann’s Ministry for preg- nancy and infant loss, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. at St. John Raphael House, Edmond. Contact (405) 340-0691, Ext. 197, cmccaughey@okcatholic.org.

Charismatic Catholic prayer meeting, 7 p.m. Catholic Pasto- ral Center, Contact Elaine, (405) 358-3610, cprayerenjoy@gmail.com.

Pray the Rosary for Life at 6:30 p.m. the abortion cen- ter, 2453 Wilkom Dr., Nor- man. Contact Connie Lang, (405) 249-1041, potatoeslang@gmail.com.

Feast of the Transfiguration.

Feast of St. Clare.

Feast of St. St. Matthias.

Feast of St. Lawrence.

Feast of St. St. Stephen.

Feast of St. St. John Vianney.

Feast of St. St. Mary Magdalene.

Feast of St. St. Ignatius Loyola.

Feast of St. St. John of the Cross.

Feast of St. St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

Feast of St. Ingrid.

Feast of St. St. John of God.

Feast of St. Teresa of Avila.

Feast of St. St. Jayme.

Feast of St. St. Anne.

Feast of St. St. Peter.

Feast of St. St. John the Baptist.

Feast of St. St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

Feast of St. St. Jude Thaddeus.

Feast of St. St. Mary of the Assumption.

Feast of St. St. Louis.

Feast of St. St. John Vianney.

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Feast of St. St. Lewis.

Feast of St. St. Jude Thaddeus.

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Feast of St. St. Louis.
It’s Not Too Late To Make Your Gift!

We need your help! As of July: $3,250,000 reached | 2018 Annual Catholic Appeal Minimum Goal: $3,600,000

Making disciples is the mission of the Church, and our primary focus is developing a culture of evangelization and discipleship in every parish and school.

Ways to make your gift...

Completing Pledge Form Below: Please visit archokc.org/appeal OR complete the pledge form below.

Credit Card: Please visit archokc.org/appeal OR use the pledge card to set up direct payments from your credit card.

Telephone: Please call the Office of Stewardship and Development at 405-709-2745 to make a gift over the phone.

Gifts by Check: Checks should be made payable to the “Annual Catholic Appeal.” Please make sure your parish name is clearly printed on the memo line of the check.

My Pledge:

☐ $300  ☐ $250  ☐ $100  ☐ $75  ☐ $25  ☐ Other $________

Enclosed is my check payable to: Annual Catholic Appeal

☐ Please charge my credit card $________ for _______ months until my pledge of $________ is paid in full.

☐ Mastercard    ☐ Visa    ☐ AmEx    ☐ Discover

Account 

3-4 Digit Sec. Code: __ __ __ __ Exp. __ / __

I understand that my credit card will be charged on the 10th of each month.

Signature _____________ Date ____________