Oklahoma City partnerships enhance Catholic school communities

In a question and answer format, Momentum magazine spoke to Oklahoma education leaders:
• Diane Floyd, superintendent of schools, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City;
• James Machell, dean, College of Education and Professional Studies, University of Central Oklahoma;
• Patricia Filer, executive director, Good Shepherd Catholic School at Mercy;
• Mary Sweet-Darter, school psychology professor emeritus, UCO, Good Shepherd board member and current director of the Anselm Center for Evaluation and Consultation in Edmond; and
• Renee Porter, president of Cristo Rey Oklahoma City Catholic High School.

As Catholic schools look to grow as innovators in education, more school and community partnerships are emerging. These partnerships help create learning environments where youth can learn, families can be strengthened, and communities can thrive.

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has embraced this culture of collaboration through two outstanding partnerships: Good Shepherd Catholic School at Mercy and Cristo Rey Oklahoma City Catholic High School.

Good Shepherd Catholic School at Mercy
Good Shepherd is a collaboration between the University of Central Oklahoma, Mercy Health and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

The Good Shepherd Catholic School at Mercy was established in 2011 and is located on the Mercy Health Center campus. Their mission is to provide a therapeutic environment for children diagnosed with autism and other developmental delays to reach their full potential. Their goal is to provide specific learning and therapeutic opportunities for children to become successful in all environments. The therapy programs are implemented by highly trained staff through an individualized curriculum.

NCEA: How did the collaboration with Good Shepherd Catholic School come to fruition?
Mary Sweet-Darter: Most partnerships begin with high-level negotiations and sophisticated bargaining. This one started with a car ride around the Mercy Health Center Campus in Oklahoma City.

In 2011, Di Smalley, executive director of Mercy Health Systems (Mercy) and Kyle Sweet, of Sweet Law Firm in Oklahoma City, a Mercy board member, were touring the Mercy campus and discussing future plans for expansion. On one corner of the large Mercy campus sat an empty one-story child-care center.

To make way for another of Mercy’s many specialty service expansions, the small building was being considered for demolition. As Smalley pointed to the building, Sweet turned to her and asked her not to tear down the small building without first talking to his mother, a professor of school psychology at the University of Central Oklahoma. Smalley graciously agreed, and within a few days the hope

continued on page 8
The Sanctity of Life Mass celebrates life, human dignity

T he Sanctity of Life Mass, a Mass honoring life from conception to natural death, will be celebrated by Archbishop Coakley at 6 p.m. on Jan. 16 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3124 N. Lake Ave., in Oklahoma City.

“We are given the task of defending human life both by reason and by faith,” said Alex Schimpf, director of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life. “We must, therefore, defend life in every way we can. We can defend life by petitional prayer to God for our needs and those of others. We defend life through advocacy and peaceful protest abortion and other human rights violations. We defend life through the corporal works of mercy, feeding and cloth- ing one another.”

Following the Mass, Frank Clay, director of youth ministry at St. Philip Neri Catholic Church, will present a talk on how everyone can be a defender of life. Clay has worked for the Church for more than 20 years and believes that the best way to a defender of life is to lead exam- plers, treating people with the same dignity with which we should treat others.

“As a Catholic, fidelity to the faith is critical and we are called to study an understanding of the dignity of the human being,” Clay said. “St. John Paul II reminds us, the only proper attitude to which we encounter these people is through love. Saving people in this way transforms our interactions with them. Being pro-life begins by loving the people God has rounded you with, in all the com- plexity that entails. We must strive to live with the ethic of unconditional human dignity at the core of our everyday life.”

As clearly stated in the Letter of Saint James: “What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him?” (James 2:14-17).

For an action calendar, liturgical aids and ideas and to find out how to celebrate and search Poverty Awareness Month, visit the website for Oklahoma City and support Catholic Relief Services to fund poverty programs around the world. Catholic schools also play a role in helping families grow by poverty by providing superior education and vari- able opportuni- ties. Catholic schools are one of the key elements in breaking the cycle of poverty. The Opportunity Scholarship Program transforms the Foundation’s commitment to Catholic education for those with limited financial ability to play a role in supporting the poorest in our community. The Sooner Catholic Foundation helps families get the help they need. For more information, contact Alex Schimpf at (405) 721-8949.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

Jan. 16 – Confirmation, 5 p.m., St. Joseph, Hennessey
Jan. 15 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, Catholic Pastoral Center
Jan. 16 – Sacrament of Last Rites, 6 p.m., Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Lawton
Jan. 20 – Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Mass, 11 a.m., Corpus Christi, OKC
Jan. 21 – Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine Design meetings, 9:30 a.m., CPC
Jan. 22 – School Mass and classroom visits, 9 a.m., Holy Trinity, Okarche
Jan. 22 – School Mass and classroom visits, 9 a.m., St. Peter, Midland
Jan. 23 – Seminarian candidate interviews, 1:30 p.m, CPC
Jan. 23 – Archdiocesan Review Board meeting, 3 p.m., CPC
Jan. 23 – School Mass and classroom visits, 9 a.m., tertiary, Okarche
Jan. 24 – School Mass and classroom visits, 9 a.m., St. Peter, Midland
Jan. 24 – School Mass and classroom visits, 9 a.m., Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Enid
Jan. 24 – Archdiocesan Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., CPC
Jan. 25 – School Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
Jan. 25 – Confirmation, 4 p.m., St. John Nepomuk, Yukon

HELPING THE LEAST AMONG US

Wheels helps the elderly poor and parishioners who volunteer to cook and deliver meals. The Sooner Catholic Foundation helps families get the help they need. For more information, contact Alex Schimpf at (405) 721-8949.

Jan. 24 – Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Okla- homa City and support Catholic Relief Services to fund poverty programs around the world. Catholic schools also play a role in helping families grow by poverty by providing superior education and vari- able opportuni- ties. Catholic schools are one of the key elements in breaking the cycle of poverty. The Opportunity Scholarship Program transforms the Foundation’s commitment to Catholic education for those with limited financial ability to play a role in supporting the poorest in our community. The Sooner Catholic Foundation helps families get the help they need. For more information, contact Alex Schimpf at (405) 721-8949.

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Thousands of U.S. Catholics prepare for Launch of “9 Days for Life”

Campaign begins Jan. 14

WHAT: 9days4life.com is the dedicated website for the campaign and offers resources such as daily prayers at www.9days4life.com.

WHO: Participants can subscribe to receive daily prayers at www.9days4life.com.


WASHTINGTON – On Jan. 14, thousands of Catholics across the country will join in prayer for “9 Days for Life.” The nationwide campaign, sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, leads up to the annual Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. The novena and day of prayer are a time of recollection and reflection in observance of the anniversary of Roe v. Wade – the U.S. Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal in the United States.

The overarching intention of the novena is that all human life be respected. Each day of the “9 Days for Life” novena highlights a related topic and provides a reflection, educational information and suggested daily actions. Participants can subscribe to receive daily prayers at www.9days4life.com.

Fr. Lance Warner, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Union City, Okla., was the speaker for the Knights of Columbus retreat held at the Catholic Pastoral Center this fall. Fr. Warner spoke about the problem of evil, what evil is and what the goodness of GOD is. The Knights of Columbus are planning another retreat for 2019.

The Knights of Columbus and Ladies Auxiliary Council No. 57559 in Oklahoma City hosted Christmas Through the Year with Mary presented by Sr. Lawrence, St. John's Abbey, St. John's Abbey. The theme for this year's retreat for women was “Through the Eyes of the Heart” presented by Dr. Robert Pacholczyk.

The so-called “CRISPR” gene-editing technology has made it possible to alter the DNA of human embryos, without destroying them. The U.S. bishops addressed both the scientific and moral issues that arise from the use of this technology. They called for ethics guidelines for the use of gene editing.

The message of Divine Mercy renewed in St. Francis of Assisi Parish has been one of the 100 inspirational stories that have been captured in the newly released book “Vouching for the Least of These,” which highlights the message of Divine Mercy in 100 inspirational stories. The book is now available for preorder.

Preparing for Lent

The Allanday family, parents, Munin and Circle, with their children, Laura Sue, 10, and Jeremie, 9, from Moore, Okla., participate in the Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Oklahoma City. The family is preparing for Lent.

In November, a Chinese scientist associated with Denver’s Bioethics Institute to his associates as “JCR”) claimed he had successfully produced the world’s first gene-edited human babies us- ing “gene surgery.” The twin girls, he said, were born somewhere in China with a modified gene that makes them immune to infection from the virus that causes AIDS. A special DNA splicing technique called CRISPR/Cas9 was used to make the edits. The message of Divine Mercy renewed in St. Francis of Assisi Parish has been one of the 100 inspirational stories that have been captured in the newly released book “Vouching for the Least of These,” which highlights the message of Divine Mercy in 100 inspirational stories. The book is now available for preorder.

The Kniffen family, parents, Emily and Matt, and their children, Olivia, 9, and Finn, 12, from Shawnee, Okla., enjoy the Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. The parents are preparing for Lent with their children.

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The Bible

God’s books of life, truth and love

An unmet dream of the Second Vatican Council is a greater intimacy between Sacred Scripture and all the baptized: “The sacred symbols are not merely and especially outward signs of all that the Christian faith is, especially religious, to be learned by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. The “excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ.” Therefore, they should readily put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself” (Vatican II: Dei Verbum 21).

Various writers have unique ways of describing the Bible in Bishop Barron in “Exploring Catholic Theology: Essays on God, Liturgy, and Evangelization,” has these words: “The Bible is a symphony, a sounding togetherness of tones and melodies, under the direction of the supreme artist. Also, since we the readers of the Bible participate in the divine being and are subject to the divine governance, we should expect the scriptural narrative to be illuminating for us. Finally, given that God is the author of both the Bible and history itself, we shouldn’t be surprised to find a whole set of figurals or typological correspondences throughout the scriptural writings. We should expect that God will speak in a distinctive accent and according to certain characteristic patterns and rhythms.

N.T. Wright, in Ch. 13 of “Simply Christian,” begins his topic on the Bible, “The Book God Breathed,” with these words: “It’s a big book, full of big stories with big characters. They have big ideas (not least about themselves) and make big mistakes. It’s about God and greed, about life, faith, laughter and loneliness. It’s about birth, beginning, beginnings and betrayal; about siblings, squabbles and sex; about power and prayer and passion. And, that’s only Genesis.”

I invite you to make this year your personal Year of the Bible as Pope Benedict said in his Apostolic Exhortation Verbum Domini: “Let us renew our efforts to understand deeply that word that God has given to his Church: thus we can aim for that ‘high standard of ordinary Christian living.’”

Start with the Gospel of Luke or spend some special time with the daily readings for Mass Paragraph 104 from the catechism says: In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she learns by frequent reading of the divine Scripture. In the week of Pope Francis’ final words in the preface to the YOUCAT部: “Do you want to make me happy? Read the Bible.”

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Dear readers,

Each year, I look forward to the last week of January when we observe National Catholic Schools Week. We recognize the value of Catholic education and support our families and schools in educating our young people, so they can reach their full potential.

We acknowledge the vital role of the school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers in this effort. And, we celebrate our students as they learn about their faith and the skills they need to succeed in the world.

Our Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City will set aside this week to build community awareness of, and involvement in, our local Catholic schools as we share with everyone the important role of Catholic schools in providing value-added education and making the world a better place for all.

The week’s theme – “Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.” – focuses on the core of Catholic education. Schools and their communities, themselves, also are part of larger communities, including our parishes, towns, cities and nation. We can support our schools through prayer and resources, and the schools, in turn, collaborate with families to develop our children into future model leaders and citizens.

The theme also highlights key elements of Catholic education: faith development, making disciples, academic excellence, leadership and dedication to service. These elements are what set Catholic schools apart from other education options.

Catholic Schools Week is a great opportunity for all of us to see what our students are accomplishing and to thank administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers who give so much of themselves to educate our students. Our Catholic schools are part of our future as a Church and a nation. They are vital to the evangelization of our youth. May God bless them and all who contribute to the important work they do.

Please join the Catholic Schools Week celebration as we invite you to be a part of these faith-filled communities! For more information about enrolling your child in an Oklahoma Catholic school, call or visit the school of your choice or find contact information at www.archok.org/schools.

Sincerely,

Linda Hays
Superintendent, Catholic Schools Office

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Sooner Catholic

January 13, 2019

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Pedro A. Moreno, O.P.
Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis

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IVF gives us a long list: IVF turns procreation into “production.” It dehumanizes embryonic children, treating them as objects to be frozen, manipulated, abandoned or destroyed. Since the practice began in 1978, millions of embryos have become warehoused in liquid nitrogen, abandoned or destroyed. Editing our embryonic children also may involve risks to them that we will only understand later when they grow up. Is it ever proper to experiment on our own offspring? Moreover, gene editing in embryos introduces changes that will be passed into the human gene pool, establishing permanent and irreversible changes to our own humanity. Does one adequately evaluate the risks of such changes?

The fact remains that we’ve been willing to tolerate an abundance of human carnage in the past. Will we do this with IVF, and one of the great tragedies of our age has been the tone deafness to the evils of IVF.

I argue that we are similarly poised to accept the production of gene-edited babies as yet another variation on the theme.

Will his hueen instrumentalization of human beings call forth gags of disbelief, serious reflection and action, or only a few more passing yawns?”

Msgr. Theodore Pantaleon earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

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Mount St. Mary celebrates 115th anniversary

Honors Sr. Betty’s retirement

Mount St. Mary Catholic High School celebrated its 115th birthday, the 17th birthdays of The Sisters of Mercy and the retirement of MSM’s beloved Sister Betty Elmer.

Sister Betty dedicated 20 years to Mount St. Mary but has devoted her life to the Sisters of Mercy since 1964. She taught at MSM in the 70s, returned to teach in the early 2000s and has remained at MSM since. Sister Elmer taught science classes, but most recently served as a coordinator for The Mount’s PLUS program (a program for students with additional learning needs) and as a coordinator for the work grant program.

Mount St. Mary surprised Sister Betty with an assembly on Dec. 12. Principal Talita DeGgebn and Rocket students honored her with a video, cake and ice cream.

“The Mount Family sends its love with our incredible Sister Betty!” Principal DeGgebn said. “They’re in professional settings, learning the inner workings of an office like human resources and marketing. ‘I’ve always worked with Google, so Microsoft is new to me and I’ve learned how to use it since I started here,’ she said.

“The work-study program provides the company with additional manpower at a low cost, and the student with a unique opportunity to receive a Catholic education that they could not afford otherwise.

While each job varies slightly, the majority of positions are administrative support roles. Students experience more than they would in a typical internship, as they are filling the role of an entry-level employee.

Regina Birchum, director of the Corporate Work Study Program at Cristo Rey, said the program is more beneficial than the typical work experience for a teenager.

‘Each team shares a work position, and the job they do is providing value to the workplace.’ Birchum said. ‘They’re in professional settings, learning the inner workings of an office like human resource and marketing. It’s exposing them to potential careers.’

Laura Martinez, a Cristo Rey student working at the Catholic Pastoral Center, assists with data entry, mailings and other clerical tasks. ‘I’ve always worked with Google, so Microsoft is new to me and I’ve learned how to use it since I started here,’ she said.

In addition to learning how to utilize a database management system, Martinez explained how the opportunity has helped improve her social skills.

‘I’m pretty shy, so when I started working here, it forced me to come out of my shell a little. I’m better at starting conversations than I was before, so that’s another positive of the work-study program.’

For Alex Sanchez, his first exposure to an office environment has given him a better idea of what awaits him in the workplace.

“I do anything from helping with projects and writing to filing and opening mail,” said Sanchez, who recently began working with the Office of Communications at the Catholic Pastoral Center. “It will definitely benefit me later to have these skills.”

Kiera Dileras has spent her time at the pastoral center editing information on the website, taking photographs of recent renovations and interviewing people. She recently began working in the Office of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma.

“I’m not used to opening up and talking to people, so this is a new experience for me. I like to learn new things about people,” she said. “And I like taking pictures too!”

The exposure to different types of careers in a professional setting serves as an opportunity for students to connect their classroom learning to real-life experiences. Cristo Rey is committed to helping each student acquire the skills that many entry-level workers are lacking, including written and verbal communication, setting a new standard in the workplace.

There are 35 schools in the Cristo Rey network. The Oklahoma City school, located on the campus of OBU, is the 33rd location to open in the United States and serves only the freshman class. Each year going forward, a new freshman class of 125 students will be added, and the school will eventually serve grades nine through 12, making it the third Catholic high school in the Oklahoma City metro area.

Sr. Betty Elmer talks with Mount St. Mary Catholic High School student Christian Yeh during a celebration for her retirement and the school’s 115th anniversary. Photo by Chris Landers/ COURTESY THE OKLAHOMAN.

Cristo Rey students meet their supervisors from the Catholic Pastoral Center on draft day. Photo provided.
Bilingual freelance writer
The Sooner Catholic archdiocese is looking for a bilingual freelance writer who frequently works in English and Spanish. The writer will contribute articles related to events, programs and parishes throughout the archdiocese. Interested candidates are encouraged to apply. Contact Diane Clay at (405) 721-1810 or dclay@archok.org.

Young adult, campus evangelization coordinator
Good Shepherd Catholic Community in Mustang is seeking a coordinator of young adult ministry. The coordinator will be responsible for all aspects of campus evangelization, including campus ministry efforts through- out the year. Previous experience with the director of Youth, Young Adult, Young Adult Evangelization and Discipleship. Priority will be given to training, resources and scheduling of opportunities. Must have at least two years of experience in youth ministry. Ability to travel. Pay is $20,000. Interested candidates should email resume and letter of interest to nlaenger@archok.org.

Consentive services assistant
The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a consentive services assistant to provide a support to the stewardship and development department and assist in all efforts around gift processing, donor stewardship, data analysis, research, data organization and reporting on gifts. The successful candidate will possess the following skills: excellent computer skills in Microsoft Office software; an advanced understanding of donor management and database management systems; a passion for helping others; outstanding customer service; and the ability to manage a database. Interested candidates should email resume and letter of interest to nlaenger@archok.org.

Campus Ministry coordinator
The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a campus ministry coordinator. The successful candidate will possess the following skills: excellent computer skills, professional demeanor and attitude, trustworthy, able to maintain confidentiality and be well-organized and detail-oriented. Send resumes and inquiries to nlaenger@archok.org.

J.E. Helm
Sooner Catholic
The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a constituent services assistant. This position requires a bachelor's degree in the social sciences or a related field. Three years of experience in database management and consti- tuent relations is preferred. The successful candidate will possess the following skills: excellent computer skills, strong organizational skills, ability to prioritize, manage competing tasks and deadlines and the ability to maintain confidentiality. This is a part-time position. Interested candidates should email resume and letter of interest to nlaenger@archok.org.

Catholic Charities of Greater Oklahoma City is seeking a pastoral assistant. This is a part-time position. Interested candidates should email resume and letter of interest to nlaenger@archok.org.

A joyful beginning
Mother Mary Francis's writing shows us the depth and breadth of the rich traditions and ideas that are clearly the fruits of contemplation. That is where the beauty of contemplation, reading phrases like “the compelling power of beauty” and “nothing to break her down, to make her undefiled” comes from. She says that, “Nothing good will ever be accomplished unless our lives were merciful and our hearts fair.” And she asks, “Are we always ready to do the things that are difficult?”

Sooner Catholic
Save the Date!
CELEBRATING CATHOLIC EDUCATION BREAKFAST
The Petroleum Club
Jokh Nichols Room
Tuesday, January 29, 2019 - 7 a.m.
More info at archok.org/breakfast

Jobs Box
Book Review
Crato Rey Oklahoma City Catholic High School

Crato Rey is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
La Biblia
Libros Sagrados de vida, verdad y amor

Por Biblia Guilde
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON – Después de finalmente presentar la canonización de Oscar Romero, los salvadoreños y admiradores del santo dan la enhorabuena aprendiendo acerca de él, reflexionando sobre cómo sus enseñanzas se aplican al presente y ver cómo ayudan al mundo buscando en el ejemplo de Romero el poder para poner fin a la injusticia y la exclusión, dijo el Director Nacional de Obras Misionales Pontificias para El Salvador, la patria del santo: “Nos toca darle vida a sus palabras, que son verdaderas para nosotros en el momento y en la situación en la que nos encontramos como nación.”

Un sueño, aun no logrado por completo, del Concilio Vaticano II es una mayor intimidad entre la Sagradas Escrituras y todos los habitas de Dios. El Concilio esbozó con vehemencia a todos los cristianos en particular a los religiosos, el “santo conocimiento de Jesucristo”, con la lectura frecuente de las divinas escrituras. Porque el desconocimiento de las Escrituras es desconocimiento de Cristo” (Dei Verbum 21).

Otros escritores tienen formas únicas de describir lo que es la Biblia. El Obispo Barrett en “Explorando la Teología Católica: Ensayos sobre Dios, Liturgia y Evangelización”, tiene estas palabras: “La Biblia es una sinfonía, una combinación de tonos y melodías, bajo la dirección de un compositor. Además, dado que nosotros, los lectores de la Biblia, participamos en la vida del ser divino y estamos acostumbrados a ello, debemos esperar que la narrativa bíblica sea escandalosa para nosotros. Finalmente se dice que Dios es el autor de la Biblia y de la historia, si no debemos sorprendernos al encontrar todo un conjunto de correspondencias figurativas o tipológicas en todo el testimonio de los Evangelios. Deben esperar que Dios habló con un acento distinto y de acuerdo con ciertos patrones y ritmos característicos.”

T.W. Wright, en el cap. 13 de “Sencillamente Cristianos”, rememora su tema sobre la Biblia: “El Libro Inpirado por Dios”, con estas palabras: “No es un gran libro, lleno de historias y aventuras con personajes con grandes pasiones. Tienen grandes ideas (no solo con respecto a sí mismos) y compromiso con la comunidad para seguir las historias y la condición de la vida, la sabiduría, la vida, la justicia y la paz.”

¿Cómo hablamos de él en el hoy? ¿Cómo percibimos de él en el hoy? ¿Cómo le hablamos a los jóvenes: “¿Quieren darme una prueba?”

La Biblia

Jefe de misiones: Honren a san Romero luchando contra la injusticia

Por Biblia Guilde
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La Biblia
Save the Date!

July 6, 2019

Help save the unborn! The event sponsored by the Oklahoma City Knights of Columbus will be 11 a.m. at the Downtown Home, OKC. Mass 9:30 a.m.; Bishop Coakley will be 7 a.m. Jan. 19 at St. Gregory’s Abbey, Shawnee. Abbot Stephen Walls, O.S.B., will present.

The 2019 Celebrating Catholic Identity Breakfast The 2019 Celebrating Catholic Identity Breakfast with Archbishop Coakley will be 7 a.m. Jan. 29 at The Petroleum Club in the John Nichols Room. Register at www.archokc.org/breakfast.

Chili Bingo St. Thomas More University Parish in Norman will host its annual Chili Bingo at 6 p.m. Feb. 2 at All Saints Catholic School. For tickets, contact Cathy Irwin at (405) 327-5176.

Pasta dinner Knights of Columbus Council #10282 at St. Eugene, 2400 W. Britton Rd. in Oklahoma City, will be hosting its annual pasta and homemade Italian sausage meatball dinner at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 2. All proceeds benefit Friends of St. Joseph’s medical mission in May. Tickets $10 for adults, $5 for kids ages 0-12. Kids under age 5 are free. Takeout available. Steve Chaustian at (405) 470-2053.

Rose Day The 26th annual pro-life rally will be at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 6 at the Oklahoma State Capitol. Pro-life advocate Jen Brucker will be the speaker. Advocates begin handing out roses at 9:30 a.m.

Assembly of Catholic Professionals Luncheon The Assembly of Catholic Professionals first quarterly luncheon for 2019 is Feb. 7 at the Downtown Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City. The guest speaker is Bishop Steven Law. To register, visit www.archokc.org/app or contact (405) 709-2745, sac@archokc.org.

Together in Holiness Marriage Conference The Together in Holiness Marriage Conference will be 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Feb. 9 at St. Benedict in Broken Arrow. Childcare available for $5 per child. Bishop Konderla will speak along with Roland Mul lers and Patty Schnurr. Register at https://holinessfamily.org/events/th19-tok/.

Briefs

Free museum tour The Heritage Gallery at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway, presents “The Shepherd Cannot Run: A Retrospective on the Life of St. Stanley Rother.” The free exhibit is open 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Special tours are arranged by calling (405) 524-6561, Ext. 141.

Suicide prevention training Did you know you can help save a life? Catholic Charities encourages parishioners to participate in mental health awareness training. QPR is a free one-hour suicide prevention training that provides three simple steps to reach someone who may be feeling hopeless. Professional counseling also is available. Contact St. Joseph Counseling Center at (405) 524-0969.

Suicide grief support group A support group for those who have lost a last one to suicide meets at St. Francis in Oklahoma City on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Meerschum House located just north of the church building. The gathering is in a caring atmosphere to remember loved ones. Call (405) 526-0485.

CPC daily Mass Daily Mass is held weekdays at 11:30 a.m. in the St. Francis de Sales Chapel at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway. No Mass on days CPC is closed.

Sanctity of Life Mass The Sanctity of Life Mass is a celebration of life from conception to natural death. Archbishop Coakley will preside at the Mass at 6 p.m. Jan. 16 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City.

Mercy Health Foundation Gala The annual Mercy Gala will be at 6 p.m. Jan. 18 at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. This year’s event will feature dinner, silent auction, raffle, performance by country music star Runaway June and an after party hosted by DJ Kirby. The event supports the charitable needs of patients at Mercy, including the Mercy Good Samaritan Clinic, Project Early Detection and other forms of patient assistance. Visit www bât liy.org/Mer- cyGALAI or call (405) 486-8945. Individual tickets $220. Sponsorship opportunities available.

Week of prayer for Christian Unity The 2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Jan. 15-25. The Unity Service will be 4 p.m. Jan. 20 at St. Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church, 1470 N. My Ave. in Oklahoma City. One of the speakers will be the Rev. Roger Bruns, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church. The international theme is “Justice, Only Justice, You Shall Pursue” based on Deuteronomy 16:20. Locally, people will explore “Justice: the dream of Isaiah, Jesus, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the challenge for us today.” The event sponsored by the Oklahoma Alliance for Liturgy and the Arts (OALA). Contact Fr. Stephen Ola, OALA president, at Stilnini@archokc.org.

Relic and devotion A presentation on the Holy Face of Jesus Relic and Devotion will be 9 a.m. Jan. 19 at St. James in Oklahoma City. A Holy Face of Jesus relic will be present for veneration. The relic has been toured to Veronica’s Veil, the True Wood of the Cross and the spear that pierced Christ’s side. These relics are verified by the Papal Seal and are verified by the Papal Seal and devotion and other forms of patient assistance.

Day of reflection St. Gregory’s Abbey will host a Day of Reflection, “Through the Year with Mary,” 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Jan. 19 at the abbey in Shawnee. Abbot Lawrence Staunyars, O.S.B., will present. Cost is $30 and includes lunch. Registration is limited to 40 participants. Call (405) 878-5665 or e-mail re- treat@monkseok.org to register.

Faith response to family violence Learn how to help people experiencing family violence during a presentation at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 24 in Bryce Hall at Epiphany of the Lord, 7336 W. Britton Rd. in Oklahoma City. Contact Jenny Fenner at (405) 722-2110, Ext. 123.

The shrines of Italy Jesus Week will be a pilgrimage to the shrines of Italy Oct. 29 – Nov. 8. A special travel presentation will be at 7 p.m. Jan. 28 at St. Ann, 7501 W. Britton Rd. The trip is 83,500 miles round trip from OKC, four-star hotel’s, 15 meals and more. Rites include Rome, Basil- ica of St. Francis of Assisi, San Giovanni Rotondo, tomb of Padre Pio, Abbey of San Giovanni Sant’Antonio, Madonna del Rosario Sanctuary, Monte Cassino, Assisi, St. Peter’s Basilica, Christian Rome city tour, St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. Mary Major, St. John in Lateran and more. Sponsored by St. Ann Retirement Center. Contact Richard Amend at (405) 721-0747 or amend@stanniretirementcenter.com.

Catholic Education Month Breakfast The Catholic Education Month Breakfast with Archbishop Coakley will be 7 a.m. Jan. 15-30 at the theological and devotion presentation at Little Flower High School, O.S.B., will present.

The Oklahoma City Community of the Secular Franciscans meets monthly at Little Flower, OKC. Anyone interested in deepening prayer life with community support, call Vicky Caudell at (405) 637-4611 or William Ginn at (405) 377-2024.

Feast of St. Anthony Monthly Novenas to the Infant Jesus. Nine days of novenas to the Infant Jesus of Prague. During the nine days, the novena prayers will be: Monday-Friday following Noon Mass, Saturday following 5 p.m. Mass, and Sunday follow- ing 11 a.m. Mass.

Surviving Divorce program, 6-8 p.m. Jan. 19 at St. Mark the Evangelist in Norman. Contact Ferrella Am- end at (405) 721-0747 or ferellamark@stanniretirementcenter.com.

Calendar

January

13 Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

17 Charismatic Catholic prayer meeting, 7 p.m., Catholic Pastoral Center. Contact Elaine, (405) 358-3610, ccpraygroup@gmail.com.

23 Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.

26 Feast of St. Marianne Cope

29 Feast of St. Vincent.

February

4 Feast of St. Francis de Sales

14 Faith response to violence Prevention, 6:30 p.m. in Bryce Hall at Epiphany of the Lord, 7336 W. Britton Rd., OKC.

3 Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle.

6 Feast of St. Timothy and Titus.

30 Feast of St. Sebastian.

30 Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle.

19 Feast of the Annunci- ation.

20 Feast of the Assumption.

21 Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle.

25 Feast of St. Marianne Cope.

26 Feast of St. Vincent.

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School is a Catholic learning community that educates young people of limited economic means to become men and women of faith, purpose and service. Through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, integrated with a relevant work-study experience, students graduate ready to succeed in college and in life. The school opened to the first class of ninth-graders in the fall. Each year thereafter, the school would add another freshman class of 125 students. By 2021, the school will serve grades nine through 12.

NCEA: The Cristo Rey Network is the only new high school in the United States that could provide the true sponsorship of the Cristo Rey could provide to students we either were not serving, or had been serving, but could not make the financial transition to high school tuition, therefore we still the fear of the impact of this new school, not only on enrollment, but on those who donate and support existing schools.

NCEA: Cristo Rey programs provide rigorous college preparatory academics with four years of professional work experience through the Corporate Work Study Program. How did such a program come to be in Oklahoma City?

Diane: The collaboration began with a simple conversation with our previous Superintendent of Schools Cris Carter. Her initial meeting with Damon Gardenhire, the local representative for the Walton Family Fund, began the conversation about the Cristo Rey school model and the possibilities of what that might look like in Oklahoma City.

Renée: In fall of 2015, a Cristo Rey steering committee made up of people in and around Oklahoma City studied the feasibility study to measure interest and support for a new Cristo Rey school. We wanted to determine: first, are there students and families interested in this kind of educational experience? Second, are businesses willing to participate in the Corporate Work Study Program that makes the school financially viable? Finally, is there a faculty interested?

The support was overwhelming. Families were excited about the opportunities to access affordable private, Catholic college preparatory education. Kids were thrilled by the idea of going to a school offering the ability to acquire work-experience and real-world skills. We were encouraged by the buy-in of local companies that recognized the transformative opportunity Cristo Rey presents. We already have more than 30 companies signed up to participate in the Corporate Work Study Program.

NCEA: What roles does your organization cover in this partnership?

Renée: In most cases, schools in the Cristo Rey Network are sponsored by a religious order. There were no viable religious orders that could provide the true sponsorship of the school, especially with the financial commitment.

As a result, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City would become an endorser for the high school. The responsibility of the archdiocese would be to monitor the Catholic identity and mission of the school as well as to provide a priest chaplain for the school. In addition, through the Catholic Schools’ Office we facilitate a relationship between our Catholic elementary schools.

NCEA: What challenges have you experienced in launching Cristo Rey OKC?

Diane: The most obvious challenge is the launch process. A longer than anticipated search for a school principal resulted in extending our launch period over a second school year. Initiating the acceptance and enrollment process with students eager for this learning environment, only to be told that the school opening would be delayed, was difficult, but necessary.

One of the more significant challenges for the Catholic Schools’ Office was the inclusion of a new Catholic high school in a community that has only had two Catholic high schools. While all acknowledged the opportunities that Cristo Rey could provide to students we either were not serving, or had been serving, but could not make the financial transition to high school tuition, there was still the fear of the impact of this new school, not only on enrollment, but on those who donate and support existing schools.

NCEA: Cristo Rey programs provide rigorous college preparatory curriculum, integrated with a relevant work-study experience. Why will this model be successful in the OKC community?

Renée: We are a Catholic school. We are open to students of all faiths, but we emphasize spiritual growth, faith-based values, moral development and personal responsibility. Second, we exist to provide a great educational opportunity to families in undererved communities.

A lot of times when people hear “private school,” the assumption is that it is financial-ly out of reach for most students. But, it is our commitment to the students - that the school partnership will work with every family to set our tuition at an amount that is affordable for them. We will work with every family to set our tuition at an amount that is affordable for them. But, it is our commitment to the study partnership that really sets us apart.

The Corporate Work Study Program also is a growth experience for the students. They learn the values of hard work and personal responsibility. By working in professional settings, students are exposed to mentors and careers, and connect what is taught in the classroom to the job.

Students acquire the soft skills they need to succeed in the workplace. They also graduate high school with an impressive resume that most young people their age don’t have.

All of this is possible because our business community has become tremendously receptive to the mission of the school. We have some of the largest, most visible and most well-respected Oklahoma corporations enlisted as partners as well as local nonprofits. Our students will be fully integrated within the fabric of the Oklahoma City community.

NCEA: How does the model and mission of Cristo Rey OKC respond to the mission of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City?

Renée: I’ll paraphrase what Father Foshee said when we brought him on board as our chaplain. First, we are a Catholic school centered on the premise that Christ is King, and that means love is king. We will love each other, and we will see amazing outcomes because of our love and our hard work.

We are focused on spiritual growth and fulfillment as much as academic fulfillment. Second, by focusing on underserved communities and families of modest means, we are responding to the Second Vatican Council’s mandate to identify people in-need and offer them assistance. We give students an opportunity to take ownership of their education, to work for it, and to earn their success. That will be a powerful and life-affirming experience for our students.

Diane: The mission of Cristo Rey Oklahoma City Catholic High School is a Catholic learning community that educates young people of limited economic means to become men and women of faith, knowledge, purpose and service. Through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, integrated with a relevant work-study experience, students graduate ready to succeed in college and in life. This mirrors the mission of our archdiocesan schools. It also mirrors Archbishop Coakley’s vision for the archdiocese to “go make disciples.”

The timing of the feasibility process was divinely in sync with the release of the archbishop’s pastoral letter, which articulated three priorities – new evangelization, faith formation and Hispanic ministry. The addition of the Cristo Rey High School uniquely combined these priorities in the formation of a powerful tool – a school. Many parents arrive on our doorsteps wanting a better life for their children. More often than not, our elementary schools are able to assist them, but the leap to Catholic high school can be too large at times. This is a source of great pain to all of us, because it is a denial of the very roots of Catholic education, which began as a ministry to educate poor immigrants and minorities.

If we truly believe in Christ’s call to love our brothers and sisters, and that everyone is our brother and sister, and if that belief extends to an understanding that education, grounded in love, is the pathway out of poverty, then Cristo Rey provides parents, regardless of their zip code, with the opportunity to choose a quality education for their children.