First girls’ digital discernment group starts in archdiocese

By Jolene Schonchin
The Sooner Catholic

High school and college can be a very demanding time in the lives of students. As they finish their classes, edging their way to graduation, they are faced with the milestone question, “What do I want to do with my life?”

Teachers, parents and peers give them advice on what the next step should be. As offers and opportunities arise, so does the opportunity to serve God.

But, how do they know if God is really calling them, and how do they know what God wants them to do? How can God mold them to be disciples of the Church?

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has found a way to help students with these questions as well as others through Digital Discernment Groups. Taking advantage of the digital information age, both young men and women have an opportunity to gain encouragement and guidance through digital meetings.

The first-ever girls ArchOKC Girls Digital Discernment Group was Jan. 2. It was led by Father Brian Buettner and Sarah Pierce, an Oklahoma City University graduate student. The group meets 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. every Tuesday through Google Hangouts.

“One of the great things about discernment groups is that we do... continued on page 7

Catholic Sisters Week: Take time to recognize the good work of women religious

The 6th annual National Catholic Sisters Week will be March 8-14. The week is part of National Women’s History Month and highlights the important contributions religious women make to their communities, often without much thanks or recognition.

There are approximately 45,000 Catholic sisters in the United States, and their stories provide hope in a time when so much seems negative and divisive.

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has many remarkable sisters, two of whom we highlight this year.

Sister Mary Ann Cirillo grew up in New Jersey and credits her family with her strong faith formation, appreciation for education and compassion for others.

On Sept. 4, 1962, Sister Mary Ann entered... continued on page 7
As I sit down to write this column, the presidents of the world’s Catholic bishops conferences likely are traveling to Rome. From Feb. 21-24 they will participate in a Vatican summit with Pope Francis to address the clergy sexual abuse crisis that has enveloped the Church in many countries around the globe. The crisis, provoked by revelations of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy, has been exacerbated by the often inadequate and negligent responses of bishops to deal with these crimes.

There are many dimensions to this global crisis. Last summer, the case of Theodore McCarrick, however, was the lightning rod that sparked a renewed outcry in the United States and around the world. The Holy See responded promptly to new credible allegations by removing McCarrick from the College of Cardinals and initiating an investigation, ordering him to a Kansas friary to begin a life of prayer and penance pending the outcome of that investigation. A decisive step was taken last week with the decision to “laicize” McCarrick. Admittedly, there are many more questions that need to be addressed as investigators continue to peel back the layers of this bitter onion. A brief summary of some of the key facts follows. On Jan. 11, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith convicted Theodore McCarrick on charges of sexual abuse of minors and solicitation in the confessional. After McCarrick’s immediate appeal, the decision was definitively upheld on Feb. 28.

He has been dismissed from the clerical state (meaning that he may no longer celebrate Mass or the sacraments or be referred to as a priest) making him the highest-ranking prelate in history to be laicized. After McCarrick and Taft in 2017, there are currently 20 other clerics who have handled allegations over the years. In keeping with my pledge, we are striving to demonstrate our own accountability, transparency, and combat the growing crisis of priests who have been abused by clergy. We must be good and faithful shepherds of God’s people. Please pray for me and all of our clergy, that we may be good and faithful shepherds of God’s people.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley
El Reno’s Taste of Sacred Heart hits its stride

By Charles Albert

The Sooner Catholic

On March 2, El Reno’s Sacred Heart Catholic School will host its annual Taste of Sacred Heart. The event attracts more than 500 people and has gained in popularity. It is El Reno’s major fundraising event for its school. The Taste of Sacred Heart will include food tasting booths, a $3,000 raffle, plus live and silent auctions.

Fun is the major theme of the event. Participants can auditioned off the chance to be “The Fame.” Ken Strickey, Sacred Heart Graduate, is a well-known auctioneer who has donated his established skills to the annual event. In the history of the event, the most lucrative auction item was a dinner for four for $10,000.

Tricia Holm was The Taste of Sacred Heart in its early form started in 1996 as a small school event. Participants such as in-person, holiday parties and other fun activities for students who attended an all-day raise money for the newly re-opened Catholic school.

The second principal for the school, Lois Jeffery, then fine-tuned the program by adding food tasting booths. The early days of the program had the program grew to well over 500 in attendance and generated more than $50,000 for Sacred Heart Catholic School and is the major fundraiser for the school.

The program now has 20-25 food booths manned by parent volunteers, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, Altar Society and corporate sponsors. In addition, classrooms supply themed “baskets” for guests.

The principal of Sacred Heart Catholic School, Shannon Stratton, said, “The Taste of Sacred Heart is financially critical to our school because it provides the majority of our school budget. The event is critical to our community to share in a night of fellowship and fun celebrating Catholic education.”

Charles Albert is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
Celebrating black Catholics

The story of black Catholics in the United States has been largely overlooked and continues to be a source of great pain and shame. Many were forced to hide their identities or ignore their faith, particularly during the Civil War and Reconstruction era. Despite these challenges, the faithful persevered and built a rich tradition of faith and community. Today, we honor their contributions and all that they have accomplished.

The contributions of black Catholics to the Church are numerous and significant. They have played key roles in the development of the Church in the United States, including the establishment of the first black seminary, Saint Augustine in Baltimore. They have also contributed to the development of the Catholic Church in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

In addition to their contributions to the Church, black Catholics have also made significant contributions to society at large. They have been leaders in the civil rights movement, and have worked tirelessly to promote justice and equality for all.

We celebrate the legacy of black Catholics and all that they have accomplished. Their contributions continue to inspire us today and will continue to shape the Church and society for generations to come.

From the Archives…

A photo series from George Rigazzi, archdiocesan archivist

Brothers Bernard Murphy and Benedict Bonaventure were the first Benedictines to arrive in Atoka, I.T., to meet Father Idabere Robot and Brother Dominick Lambert. Brother Bernard and Brother Benedict were the only two Benedictines in the United States at the time. They were instrumental in establishing the first Benedictine monastery in the United States.

The monastery was established in 1877 and served as a center for education and spiritual development. It was later moved to New York and eventually closed in 1973. However, the legacy of the monastery lives on today, with the Benedictine Center in New York City serving as a beacon of hope and healing for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The monastery was named for Saint Benedict, the patron saint of monks and nunneries. He is revered for his wisdom, humility, and dedication to serving others. His feast day is celebrated on July 11th, and is a time for reflection and prayer for those who seek to follow in his footsteps.

In celebration of the legacy of black Catholics, we encourage you to explore further the history and contributions of these faithful. Whether you are a young person or an old soul, there is much to learn and many ways to honor the memory and work of these people.

If you are interested in learning more about the contributions of black Catholics, please visit the website of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, or contact the archdiocesan archivist for more information.

For additional resources, please visit the website of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. You can also find information on the Archdiocesan Archivist's website.
“Give, and Gifts Will Be Given to You”

The Annual Catholic Appeal is our chance to support the work of the Church throughout the archdiocese. Ministries supported by your generous gifts include:

- Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry
- Blessed Stanley Rother Institute
- Children’s Evangelization and Catholic Schools
- Marriage and Family Life
- Vocations and Seminarians
- Clergy Formation and Support
- Guatemala and Local Hispanic Ministry

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Archbishop’s Circle
Celebrates the inspired generosity and discipleship of those who support Archbishop Coakley’s efforts to fully fund archdiocesan ministries with gifts of $1,000 or more.

Steward Circle for pledges of $1,000 to $4,999
- Included in a Prayer Intention Book of Archbishop’s Circle members
- Invited to the annual Mass and reception with Archbishop Coakley

Patron Circle for pledges of $5,000 to $9,999
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- Invited to Archbishop’s Christmas Reception

Benefactor Circle for pledges of $10,000 or more
- All the recognition from the Steward Circle and Patron Circle
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2019 Annual Catholic Appeal
minimum goal $3,600,000

Your pledge in 10 monthly payments

- $250/Month $2,500
- $150/Month $1,500
- $100/Month $1,000
- $50/Month $500
- $25/Month $250

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Please visit archokc.org/appeal to make your online gift.
Using the Bible as our first stop for reflection or meditation helps us embrace God present in his Word. We have been blessed with much books that guide us and lead us on the ancient and proven practices of Lertios Divina.

Starry Knight is a better for a understanding of our faith is to be able to understand the Lord’s truth and wisdom that has been transmitted to us through the Church. Consult our study of the Catholic Church and Bible help us do this path.

Ways in which the Bible can help bring us closer to God

We have seen that the Bible is in our prayer book prayer when we have a conversation with God. We pray in communion by offering in prayer St. John Paul the Great

The greatest lessons that contain our personal weekday cycle of reading of the Bible:
- Catholic Bible Dictionary, Scott Hahn
- Dictionary of the Bible, John L. McKenzie, S.J.
- Ignatius Catholic Bible Study, series of books, Ignatius
- Catholic Introduction to the Bible, Q.T.
- The Navarre Bible, commentary on the Bible;
- New Testament Basics for Catholics, Ignatius
- You Can Understand the Bible, Peter Keefer
- Catholic Commentary, Mark P. Shea
- Making Sense Out of Scripture, Mark Shea
- Scripture Poet: The Greek of Jesus, George Martin
- The Psalter Biblical Commentary, a one-volume commentary

Everyone should have some basic resources of help at home. Here are a few suggested resources:

- Catholic Bible Dictionary, Scott Hahn
- Dictionary of the Bible, John L. McKenzie, S.J.
- Ignatius Catholic Bible Study, series of books, Ignatius
- Catholic Introduction to the Bible, Q.T.
- The Navarre Bible, commentary on the Bible;
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- You Can Understand the Bible, Peter Keefer
- Catholic Commentary, Mark P. Shea
- Making Sense Out of Scripture, Mark Shea
- Scripture Poet: The Greek of Jesus, George Martin
- The Psalter Biblical Commentary, a one-volume commentary

If you have any favorite in the list above by sending me an e-mail – pmurphy@archokc.org. In the future, I’ll include some of your recommendations.
Después de la apelación inmediata de McCarrick por cargos de abuso sexual de menores y solicitud de la Fe condenó a Theodore McCarrick con la decisión de “laicizar” a McCarrick. Es una investigación, ordenándole a un convento de McCarrick del Colegio de Cardenales e iniciando una revisión independiente por parte de la Iglesia. El verano pasado, el caso de Theodore McCarrick delitos, los obispos para hacer frente a estos delitos, se ha visto exacerbada por las denuncias de abuso cometido por los obispos y un mecanismo para investigar esas denuncias cuando se reciben. Incluirá un informe sobre la Iglesia puede imponer a un clérigo. Él pierde los sacramentos o ser llamado sacerdote), que lo hace. Es probable que incluya un código de conducta para investigar esas denuncias cuando se reciben, una se- lección de pasajes y oraciones bíblicas organizadas con el propósito de orar en privado o en comunidad. Segundo, el uso de la Biblia como nuestra guía para la Liturgia Eucarística, cuando nuestra fe en el Verbo Encarnado, puede acercarnos más al Verbo Encarnado. 

El uso de la Biblia para comprender mejor nuestras vidas como discípulos de Jesucristo y en conexión con Cristo, comience en el Nuevo Testamento. ¿Cómo lo resumirías en dos palabras? ¿Cómo lo harías en un resumen de un capítulo? ¿Qué está diciendo el texto de cualquier capítulo. ¿Qué son las etapas de la vida de Jesús, el Verbo Encarnado. Los vocabularios bíblicos mejorará. Todas estas ideas nos pueden ayudar a acercarnos a Jesús, el Verbo Encarnado. 

Catequesis y la Biblia puede ayudarnos a acercarnos más al Verbo Encarnado. 

Si tiene algún recurso favorito, déjame saberlo. 

Pedro A. Moreno, O.P.
Secretario de Evangelización y catequesis
Read Archbishop Coakley’s new pastoral letter

Archbishop Coakley’s new pastoral letter, “Make Disciples: Building a Culture of Conversion and Discipleship for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City,” lays out the vision for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City through 2030. Read the letter and download it at www.archokc.org/2030. Print copies coming soon!

St. Kathe TekwahkiHonor Dance

Archbishop Coakley invites everyone from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the Diocese of Tulsa and from other Catholic families, native dancers and the public to join him July 6 for the St. Kathe Tekwahki Honor Dance in Oklahoma City. The Honor Dance will begin with Mass followed by an afternoon/evening of powwow dancing contests, the presentations of the new American Indian Catholic Outreach prizes and amazing food! Visit archokc.org/honorance.

Pop-up flu clinics

St. Eugene presents “Create in Me a Clean Heart Lenten Mission” with Val Limer Jones at 7 p.m. Feb. 24-26 at 2400 W. Herif Rd. in OKC. Janis is a highly regarded singer, composer and recording artist. She also is a college professor, leader of worship and prayer, and a national workshop presenter. Contact Patty Yardly or Judi Wilkinson at (405) 751-7115, psyardly@steugenes.org, jwilkins@steugenes.org.

BMCS registration

Incoming freshman registration for Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. and is designed for parents and the first initial of a student’s last name: A-G Feb. 25; H-N Feb. 26 and O-Z March 4.

Nurses’ Association Conference

The 12th annual Faith Communi-

city Nurses’ Association Conference will be March 1 at Crossings Community Center in OKC. The presentation will be on, “When Disaster Hits: The Role of the Faith Community.” For registration and brochure, visit www.fmcsok.org or contact fmcsok@gmail.com.

Family Bingo Night

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School’s annual Irish Family Bingo Night is March 2 in the BMCS commons. Dinner is 5:30 p.m.; bingo is 6 p.m. Pre-regis-

ration bingo packs $12; $15 at the door. Deadline is Feb. 27. Regis-

tration at www.lmacha.org/alumni or contact Carly Wege-

ner at cmwagner@gmail.com.

Ask Fr. John: A discussion on the Lenten Ic on Writing Workshop

Breyer Layton is offering a Lenten workshop March 11-15 in Lawton. No experience necessary. Students will learn more about the ancient art of iconography and complete a 11x13 inch hand painted icon on a wooden panel of St. Veronica, who offered her veil to Jesus to wipe his face on his way to the cross. All supplies are included in the fee of $40. Regis-

ter by March 3. Contact Breyer Layton at (580) 678-6743.
Archbishop Coakley celebrated Mass on Feb. 9 at St. Andrew Dung Lac in Oklahoma City for the Vietnamese Tet celebration. Photos Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

Sooner Catholic

More than 400 parishioners from several parishes joined Fr. Rex Arnold and Fr. Francis Nguyen on Feb. 6 at St. John Nepomuk in Yukon for Mass and to celebrate Tet — the Vietnamese New Year. Photos Dana Attocknie/Sooner Catholic.