Frontline workers lean on Catholic faith while serving during pandemic

By Jolene Schonchin
The Sooner Catholic

As the number of coronavirus cases and hospitalization were rising daily around the nation, dedicated Catholic men and women within the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City were serving on the frontlines, helping others, caring for the sick, protecting and serving the communities, and educating students through it all.

While people were told to stay home, these unsung heroes were in the middle of the pandemic every day. Dedicated people such as health care professionals, educators, city workers, law enforcement officers, food suppliers and emergency management teams helped those in need, leaning on their Catholic faith to get them through.

Sr. BJ’s Pantry gains new bus to deliver meals, hope

By Eliana Tedrow
The Sooner Catholic

Sr. Barbara Joseph sits in her new “mobile meals” bus that helps feed the homeless. Photo provided.

Church celebrates Christ the King while nation celebrates Thanksgiving

By Charles Albert
The Sooner Catholic

After the Spanish Flu 100 years ago, Pope Pius XI gave Catholics the Feast Day of Christ the King to “hasten the return of society to our loving savior.”

Christ has always been known as the King. As Saint Paul told the Philippians, “At the name of Jesus, every knee should bend of those in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth.” In Revelations 19:16, “Christ is referred as

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Michelle DeLeon, a labor and delivery nurse at Oklahoma Children’s Hospital. Photo provided.
We are not out of the woods yet. During this difficult time, I have been reflecting on a passage from Saint Paul in which he bares his soul about his struggle with weakness and vulnerability. He says, “I am weak—but what does that mean? [My weakness] is a sign that God’s power is at work here. I am weak, but God’s power is strong. The weakness of the human being is stronger than the strength of the human being.”

During this time, I have become more aware of the needs of others. I have perhaps become more aware of our need for prayer, more aware of the family, for prayer and to foster the important relationships in their lives.

The pandemic experience has been a time to reprioritize many things in our lives. We have discovered that we can get along quite well without some things, which can help us make wise habits and help us achieve the results we desire.

Among them is the task of finding new ways to deliver services to all our people. I have marveled at the creativity and determination of so many of our priests, lay leaders and parishioners during this pandemic. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Christ is present in it. The challenges of this time have fostered a marvelously missionary spirit. Not many were expert in live-streaming events this time have helped foster a marvelous missionary effort during this pandemic. This is the work of so many of our priests, lay leaders and parishioners despite the personal risks involved.

I am grateful to the many who have used their time and talents to minister during this time. We see the creative efforts of our clergy, religious men and women, family, friends and loved ones. I am grateful to all who have provided support and help during this time.

Amen.
Fund assists elderly sisters, brothers, priests in religious orders

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City will hold the Retirement Fund for Religious collection Dec. 12-13. This annual event promotes retirement funding among the U.S. religious communities with their retirement needs. Nearly 30,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests benefit from the collection.

This past year, the archdiocese donated $79,149.92 to the collection. In 1988, Catholic bishops of the United States initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious collection to help address the deficit in retirement funding among U.S. religious congregations. Each congregation is responsible for the care and support of its members. Financial distributions from the collection are sent to a bonded retirement fund or a central trust for the U.S. religious communities with their retirement needs.

Max Marcott

What is your home parish?

My home parish is St. James the Greater Catholic Church in Oklahoma City.

What seminary do you attend?

I attended the 2001 National Seminary in Westminister, Mass.

If it is God's will, what year will you be ordained a priest?

God willing, I will be ordained a priest in 2025.

What advice would you give to someone discerning a call to the priesthood?

Do not be afraid. God will never abandon you, for you are his beloved child, regardless of your age. Remember that you could never do your own good or the good of another more perfectly than he. In other words, God is the Lord is calling you to your main job, as hard as it can be, is simple. Open your heart to our Lord, invite him into every corner, and then share the love that he will fill until eternity.

What do you look forward to most about becoming a priest?

I look forward to serving the faithful and administering the sacraments, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, the granting of ordination and giving blessings!

Same one thing that every Catholic needs to know?

Nothing but what? I would say, "What is your poverty of spirit?" means, and that our humanity is a priceless gift.

Why choose a life of sacrificial love?

Every vocation calls us to live a life of sacrificial love. Yes, we can directly love God the way that he loves us, but through sacrificial love for one another, and for the sake of his Church. God provides a way for us to truly reciprocate his love. If you always run from sacrifice, you will always be running away from life.

To learn more about seminary, contact:

Rev. Brian Baetruer at bbaetruer@archokc.org or 405-212-9251

PEN PALS SEMINARIAN

This is part of a series to introduce the seminarians of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Max Marcott

From the Archives...

A photo series from George Rippey, archdiocesan archivist

Bishop Theophile Meur- chet, Bishop of Oklahoma (the state was one diocese until 1973), had decreed that the growth of the Church in Tulsa had necessitated the creation of a diocese to be called Sacred Heart. This occurred in 1917, and within a year a brick church had been constructed. It was soon to be replaced with the brick church of the 1920s and the influx of Catholics from the east coast that the need for a larger space was apparent. The new bishop, Francis Clement Kelley (inaugurated in 1919), took a special interest in its construction. It would become his favorite church. Kelley was fascinated by the Chicago architect Barry Byrne who was a protégé of the famed Frank Lloyd Wright. Byrne was one of the first religious architects to abandon historic styles such as Gothic and Romanesque. According to Byrne, the church was a “holy enclosure” and should be planned functionally. Bishop Kelly’s attention to the church’s design and construction was in keeping with the style of the church. The King Catholic Church – with such a creative talent was an Art Deco masterpiece. A stained glass window in the south side of the church reveals three kings who are crowned saints on the north side and two Old Testament kings among the other ones. The window is dedicated to the prosperity and well-being of the faithful. With its completion in 1927, it was determined that it would be dedicated to the newly proclaimed feast of Christ. The King of our Father Pope Pius XI. It would become the first church in the world with that title. In 1934, Marquette School was completed, allowing for the church to the King of Kings. Liturgical actions have proclaimed them to be among the best in the United States. By 1927, it was determined that it would be dedicated to the newly proclaimed feast of Christ. The King of our Father Pope Pius XI. It would become the first church in the world with that title. In 1934, Marquette School was completed, allowing for the church to the King of Kings. Liturgical actions have proclaimed them to be among the best in the United States. By 1927, it was determined that it would be dedicated to the newly proclaimed feast of Christ. The King of our Father Pope Pius XI. It would become the first church in the world with that title. In 1934, Marquette School was completed, allowing for the church to the King of Kings. Liturgical actions have proclaimed them to be among the best in the United States. By 1927, it was determined that it would be dedicated to the newly proclaimed feast of Christ. The King of our Father Pope Pius XI. It would become the first church in the world with that title. In 1934, Marquette School was completed, allowing for the church to the King of Kings. Liturgical actions have proclaimed them to be among the best in the United States. By 1927, it was determined that it would be dedicated to the newly proclaimed feast of Christ. The King of our Father Pope Pius XI. It would become the first church in the world with that title. In 1934, Marquette School was completed, allowing for the church to the King of Kings. Liturgical actions have proclaimed them to be among the best in the United States.

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Dowdell retired to Saint Ann Parish in Oklahoma City. He retired in 2018.

Rev. Thomas Dowdell

Rev. Thomas Robert Dowdell died Nov. 6 in Tulsa after a long illness. He was 75.

Father Dowdell was born in Roswell, N.M., on April 20, 1945, to Thomas and Gladys (Picker- ett) Dowdell. He was baptized at Saint Peter Catholic Church in Roswell on May 6, 1945.

The family moved to Tulsa where they attended Archbishop Theophile Meurchet Catholic Church. Father Dowdell transferred to University Village in Tulsa. Father Dowdell was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

He attended Saint Francis de Sales Minor Seminary in Oklahoma City and Conception Abbey College in Conception, Mo.

After completing college seminary, Father Dowdell was sent to Assumption Seminary in San Antonio in 1967 to begin his graduate theological formation. On May 21, 1971, he was ordained to the priesthood in the then Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa at Christ the King Cathedral Church in Tulsa by Bishop Victor Reed. Soon after his ordination, the Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa was divided into two parts, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Diocese of Tulsa.

Father Dowdell became incardinated in the new Archdiocese of Oklahoma.

He served at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Ardmore; Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Blackwell; Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church in Enid and its mission of Saint Michael Catholic Church in Guilford; Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Perry and its mission of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Billings; Saint Mary Catholic Church in Ardmore; Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; Saint Charles Borromean Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; and Saint James the Greater Catholic Church in Oklahoma City.

Church in Oklahoma City; Saint Charles Borromean Catholic Church in Oklahoma City; and Saint James the Greater Catholic Church in Oklahoma City.

Rev. John Michalicka

Rev. John Joseph Michalicka, a retired beloved priest of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, died peacefully on Nov. 13 at his residence in Oklahoma City. He was 86.

Father Michalicka was born Nov. 25, 1933, in Unincor City to Joseph and Antonia (Korossel) Michalicka. He attended Saint Joseph Catholic School in Union City and Saint Gregory Catholic High School in Shawnee where he earned a bachelor’s degree at Saint Benedict College in Kansas, a degree at East Central State University and a catholic pastoral certification at Saint Anthony Hospital.

He attended Saint Thomas Seminary in Colmer- do and was ordained a priest on May 16, 1959, by Bishop Victor Reed at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

He served at Saint Peter Catholic Church in Wescacord; The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpet- Halp, Saint Mary Catholic Church in Ponca City, Holy Family in Lawton, Blessed Sacra- ment in Caddo, Ripphol of the Land Catholic Church in Oklahoma City, Saint Francis de Sales Chapel at the Catholic Pastoral Center and as chaplain at the Catholic Renewal Center and Saint Anthony Hospital. He served on the boards of Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School and the Catholic diocesan Administration.

He was canonized saints on the day the Metropolitan. He participated regularly with the Catholic Daughters of the Americas national council and the Czech Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

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Elk City parish prepares to celebrate 50 years

By Sooner Catholic Staff

Saint Matthew Catholic Church is preparing to celebrate their 50th anniversary in December. Archbishop Coakley will celebrate Mass on Dec. 5 at 10 a.m., in Elk City. 

The first Masses were said at Saint Matthew on Dec. 5, 1970, after Bishop Victor Reid consecrated the church in 1965. The church was Saint Francis, Saint Joseph and Holy Family. Parishioners later found themselves a part of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City when that led to Saint Matthew Catholic Church in 1981.

“Before I can adequately relate the history of this iconic church, I need to go all the way back to its beginnings,” said retired pastor Msgr. Dominic Bottino, vocation director for the diocese. “In 1949, Bishop John J. Meyers of the diocese of Newark for his claims of sexual harassment by McCarrick. McCarrick was born in New York, and those who then discovered there had been at least one other settlement by the Diocese of Metuchen, the Vatican reports. McCarrick found no record that “Priest 2” was a priest of the Church in Rome.

“The Diocese of Metuchen in 2000 with the Dioceses of Metuchen and Trenton and Archbishop McCarrick for his claims of sexual harassment by McCarrick. McCarrick was born in New York, and those who then discovered there had been at least one other settlement by the Diocese of Metuchen, the Vatican reports. McCarrick found no record that “Priest 2” was a priest of the Church in Rome.

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Frontline workers lean on Catholic faith while serving during pandemic

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“In the nearly 14 years that I have done this job, I have approached it with God, and unfortunately there was a time I attempted it on my own,” said Lt. Christopher Brugh, of the Yukon Police Department. “What I have learned in this job is far more rewarding and I am far more effective when I do it with God. Saint John Paul II once said: ‘Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’”

“Through my faith, I am able to trust in God’s love and presence. I am able to work my hardest day in and day out, knowing God will place me where he needs me that day. If I cast myself into the deep, and open my nets, he will lead me to those in need. There have been many times, especially in this pandemic, when I walked away from a single contact or a single call and said, ‘That moment there was exactly why God placed me here this morning.’”

Suzanne Clem, the priests’ nurse for the archdiocese, shares with the priests COVID-19 information, symptoms, treatment and assists the priests if they have had a potential exposure by finding a testing site, explaining quarantine and checking on them by telephone throughout their illness.

“My faith is an important part of my work. I try to be open to whatever God puts before me each day. During the pandemic, the ways I serve in my work have been different and challenging in order to protect others and myself from exposure to COVID-19. The necessary precautions also have created isolation and loneliness for some, especially those in nursing facilities. This has created more opportunity to say ‘yes’ by reaching out more often and staying more connected. God also reminds me to be gentle, loving and patient with others, and myself, when the challenges of COVID-19 become tiresome.”

Michelle DeLaun, a labor and delivery nurse at Oklahoma Children’s Hospital, said, “Praying helps reduce my anxiety of going to work. On my way to work, I always pray for every patient on our unit and my co-workers. I ask God to keep us all safe and healthy to return home. I pray that my co-workers and I keep giving our best patient care after long and exhausting days. When I feel tension rising in my unit, I like to say to my co-workers ‘what would Jesus do?’ I want to make sure I bring the light of God where it is most needed. I always pray that I bring my patients and co-workers hope because I feel that God put me in this position to help others in time of need. And, I have faith that the Lord will protect us all.”

The frontline workers also lean on saints for prayers and intercession.

“Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton not only shares her name with our school, but she is also the patron saint of all Catholic schools and my particular saint from Confirmation!” said Jenny Lang, a second grade teacher at Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School in Edmond. “I continually ask for her intercession, to guide and share my positive outlook with others, and to help community members recognize what a gift it is to be in school during this time. As a teacher there is no way for me to honor God more than to lead and guide children by setting a positive example and helping them learn to turn to God in uncertain times.”

Lt. Brugh said he leans on Saint Michael the Archangel for prayers and intercession.

“I don’t know a single Catholic police officer who doesn’t have a special love and relationship with Saint Michael. Whether it’s a precious medal they carry, patch that wear on their vest, tattoo they may have or card they keep close. For years I have worn a Saint Michael patch on my vest under my uniform. Every single shift starts with the Saint Michael prayer, followed by a prayer to my patron saint, Saint Anthony of Padua. Help me to see what I need to see, hear what I need to hear and be who I need to be. I can’t tell you how many times I have prayed an intercessory prayer to Saint Anthony over and over, sometimes most of a shift looking for someone. When I am a suspect, a silent agent, a runaway ... it’s always the same prayer. When I worked investigations, I was working crimes against children, sex crimes and Internet crimes against children. I really leaned on intercessory prayers to Saint Michael; prayers to guard my heart and my soul. Because I learned quickly those cases really take you to dark places in this world.”

Michelle DeLeon, a labor and delivery nurse at Family Catholic Church in Lawton.

Residents said having these steadfast men and women on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic gives communities a sense of security and hope.

“I am thankful for the frontline workers for risking their health to help patients and to protect us during this pandemic,” said Gina Muse, parishioner at Holy Family Catholic Church in Lawton.

Sonia Chavez, Hastings, a parishioner at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Lawton, also recognizes the importance of the front-line workers dedication to their community and family.

“No, they are not taking care of their family, but they are taking care of ours too,” she said.

“The pandemic has been so hard on everyone,” said Patricia Brud, a parishioner at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in Apache. “I am thankful for all of the workers who are helping us get through it all, especially the elders of our communities.”

Nurse Suzanne Clem added, “I am most thankful for all those who make sacrifices to serve others during this pandemic, especially those who risk exposure during their work and those whose jobs do not allow them to work from home. I’m also thankful for the daily sacrifices everyone makes to help prevent the spread of the virus.”

Lang explained how her second-grade class prays the Rosary once a week for not only the frontline workers, but for all who have been affected by the coronavirus.

“Each week on Fridays, our second-grade class prays the Rosary together. It’s such a special time of our week! We go outside by our Mary statue in the courtyard and the children each find a special spot to reflect as we pray. It has been amazing to see how the children gravitate closer to Mary’s statue. I’m in absolute awe of the personal relationship each one of them is developing with God and the Blessed Mother.”

Jolene Schonchin is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker

Heavenly Father, we put our trust in you. We ask the intercession of St. Joseph under his title of the worker. We ask that through his intercession and following his example we may come to understand our place in your plan, and exercise responsibility for the welfare of others, especially those close to us who depend on us. We pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in these weeks before Pentecost so that your plan might be clearer to us, and that our desire to follow it would be more wholehearted. We ask all this through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

Lt. Christopher Brugh of the Yukon Police Department.

Archbishop Coakley prays for victims, survivors of blast in Lebanon

Archbishop Coakley celebrated Mass Nov. 1 at Our Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church in Norman to celebrate All Saints Day and to remember the 200 people killed, 6,500 injured and thousands left homeless in Beirut by a massive explosion in August. Archbishop Coakley was joined by Father Nabil Mouannes, pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon, with Deacon Paul Lewis and Deacon Paul Albert.

The Feast of All Saints fell on the same day as the liturgical new year on the Maronite calendar when Maronites all over the world celebrate the consecration of the Church.

Prayers were said in Arabic and in English. After Mass, Archbishop Coakley blessed the cross at the entrance of the church.

Photos provided.

Lt. Brugh said he leans on Saint Michael the Archangel for prayers and intercession.

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Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker

Heavenly Father, we put our trust in you. We ask the intercession of St. Joseph under his title of the worker to be open to your divine plan even in difficult and uncertain times and circumstances.

We ask that through his intercession and following his example we may come to understand our place in your plan and exercise our responsibility for the welfare of others, especially those close to us who depend on us. We pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in these weeks before Pentecost so that your plan might be clearer to us, and that our desire to follow it would be more wholehearted. We ask all this through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.
jobs Box

Hispanic leadership development coordinator - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City seeks an energetic person to coordinate the Hispanic Leadership Development Program. This position will collaborate with all diocesan ministries and serve as a resource for the offices of Religious Education and Vocations. The coordinator will promote formation programs with the Hispanic community and assist both the director of the IHS. The position involves travel to parishes and serving as an assistant director of Evangelization-ACTS. This position will coordinate formation programs to respond to the leadership development and formation needs of Hispanic-speaking Catholics; facilitate meetings, group sessions, and provide ongoing spiritual training activities and assist with renewal activities at the Hispanic faculty for the Spanish programs staff. The position requires strong Spanish speaking and writing in Spanish and English; have a bachelor’s degree in a religious studies field; be practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church; have several years of parish Hispanic ministry experience preferably as catechist and leader; must possess basic computer knowledge; including use of Microsoft Office tools. Submit resume to mmills@archokc.org.

Cook - OKC

The Catholic Pastoral Center seeks an experienced cook for a part-time position. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of five years experience in food service. Overtime can be arranged on a case by case basis. Send resume to Kelly@archokc.org.

通讯主管 - OKC

Christ the King Catholic School is seeking an excellent communicator with a strong passion for our Catholic faith and for the administration of our School. The preferred candidate has experience in a leadership role, is a proven leader, and demonstrates integrity and strong values. Send your letter of application and resume to the attention of Sr. Margaret Neufeld at sr.margaretn@archokc.org.

making Sense of Bioethics

should I get vaccinated?

Recently, many people have been reaching out with questions about vaccines. So, I thought I would take some time to mention some of the most common ones and try to provide some answers.

There are sound medical reasons to oppose vaccination? There can be, but vaccines typically reduce or eliminate contamination and herd immunity that involves less morbidity and mortality. Today’s childhood vaccination schedule protects against more than a dozen different diseases. Some individuals, though, may need to decline vaccination. This is especially true for individuals who are immunocompromised or are allergies to one of the ingredients. When a vaccine is determined to be safe and effective, we will often encourage healthy individuals to choose, on their own initiative.

Are vaccines safe? The safety profile of vaccines is incomparable to the huge number of exposures that we experience for our routine daily activities. Every year, Americans are exposed to millions of toxic drugs and chemicals that cause adverse health events, and the science has shown that vaccines are 100 times safer than any of those exposures. The unique safety profile of vaccines makes vaccines safe and effective. Vaccines are safer than the exposures we are exposed to daily. When it comes to vaccinations, one needs to consider the risk of not getting vaccinated and the risk of getting the disease. When a vaccine is given, there is no risk of getting the disease. When a disease is given, there is a risk of getting the disease.

Are there ethical reasons not to receive vaccines? There are. Certain concerns of conscience arise when cell lines derived from births are used in vaccines and production of vaccines. Vaccines should not be manufactured in this way. However, the real world does not make use of these fetal cell lines. The Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the USCCB have been clear that this is a moral issue.

Thinking about when to receive a vaccine made from aborted fetal cells? No moral issue is committed to those who get vaccinated. Those who are interested in being excluded from those cell lines; rather those who originally experimentally obtained the cell lines and a more ethical scientific pharmaceutical company policies that rely on cell lines. Additionally, the USCCB and the Vatican have been clear that no moral issue is committed.

The one receiving the vaccine has no causation connection to those wrongful decisions made previously by others, and the enduser cannot be held culpable for their wrongdoing. Even so, the Vatican emphasizes when we get vaccinated manufactured in this way, we should make steps to register our disapproval and call on pharmaceutical companies to reformulate their vaccines using alternatives without the use of fetal cell lines.

What about the new technologies behind RNA vaccines which has been in use for safety in laboratories? In vaccine and other standard types of vaccines. In this stage of the various vaccines that have already been done in animals, and pressuring rigorous human clinical trials, it should be clear that while RNA vaccines are as safe and effective as other vacc...

Sacred Journey

Sacred Journey, written by Karen Poutabaee, appears to be an excellent resource for those wanting to experience the Advent season more deeply.

The beautiful book cover illustration and scripture references throughout make this an excellent choice for anyone wanting to use Advent as a time of spiritual renewal.

Sacred Journey is an introduction to the beauty of the Advent season through its stories, reflections, and artwork. It provides a glimpse into the traditions and customs associated with the Advent season, inviting readers to explore the spiritual significance of the season.

The book contains a variety of elements including photographs, quotes, and artwork that help convey the beauty and significance of the Advent season. The inclusion of scripture passages and prayers provides a deeper theological perspective on the season.

Furthermore, the book is suitable for individuals of all backgrounds and offers a unique perspective on the Advent season. Its engaging format and thought-provoking content make it an excellent resource for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of the Advent season.
**Informe de McCarrick describe falta de investigación seria de rumores**

San Juan Pablo II “tomó presiones” de un obispo para apoyar al abusador sexual McCarrick, según el Vaticano

El informe también concluyó que el abusador sexual McCarrick no inició un proceso canónico formal contra el cardenal en el año 1980, como McCarrick recientemente reconoció bajo “su juramento formal” de que “no habría un proceso canónico que las acusaciones fueran falsas; las acusaciones de McCarrick incluían cuatro hombres jóvenes de no más de 18 años de edad y que se habían mantenido en secreto en todas las configuraciones de la república, incluyendo un encuentro formado por el Vaticano, residiendo en el Casino de McCarrick y dos hombres jóvenes y seminarios en el oeste de Estados Unidos, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, resumiendo los informes, se realizaron encuentros con el Vaticano, 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First Advent Lessons and Carols
Join Archbishop Coakley in person, online or on Oklahoma Catholic Radio for the 2020 Advent Lessons and Carols on Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. at Saint Thomas More University Parish in Norman. The service will be live-streamed at archokc.org/live, on Facebook and on YouTube. More information at archokc.org/carols.

Lunches for Life
The next Lunches for Life is 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Dec. 10 at Embassy Suites by Hilton, 741 N. Phillips Ave. in Oklahoma City. Speaker: Andrew Ocha, Mission Integration, St. Anthony Hospital. Topic: Building Culture of Life in Medicine. RSVP at archokc.org/live or archokc.org/carols.

Jesus 2020 Conference
On Dec. 11-12, several Jesus 2020 gatherings will be held during a national virtual conference. Local host site locations available soon. For more information go to archokc.org/Je

Lunches for Life
The January Lunches 4 Life is 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City. Speaker: Dr. Patrick Lagrange, Pasteur Hospital. Topic: Transgender Issues/Christian Anthropology. RSVP at archokc.org/live.

Oklahoma March for Life
The Oklahoma March for Life is Jan. 22, 2021, at the Oklahoma State Capitol. More information can be found at okmarchforlife.com.

Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference
The 2021 Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference is Feb. 27 at Embassy Suites, 2515 Conference Dr. in Norman. Tickets $55 for Archdiocese of Oklahoma City with the help of new study guides in English and Spanish. The letter and pastoral plan lay out the vision for the archdiocese through 2030.

What I found reassuring was the subject, “The Philosophers That Shaped Pope Francis.” I was comforting to have someone so articulate who can in a rational contemplation of the “why” and “how” of society and human behavior as we encounter it. In another person’s hands, Karl Marx could have been too intimidating for me. Bishop Barron’s ability to down-to-earth demeanor disarmed me and opened me up to curiosity ready to learn. I was humbled to realize that the Holy Spirit was at work: my anxiety was being answered by one of the most well-read and able scholar bishops in America! My dread and feelings of helplessness lifted. The conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer captured my thought. “For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.” I thought, this is God’s kingdom. He does make such an agreement in our place, whether we recognize that or not. To carry on his will. He does not seem to be asking me to cure a sin or orchestrate world peace and prosperity... where? Right at that moment, he was equipping me to drive a volunteer activity and to call my 93-year-old father Mass. Call (405) 721-8944, (405) 538-6252.

Feast of St. Catherine of Alexandria
29
For First Sacred Heart Mass at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City. Speaker: Dr. Patrick Lagrange, Pasteur Hospital. Topic: Transgender Issues/Christian Anthropology. RSVP at archokc.org/live.

The January Luncheon 4 Life is 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City. Speaker: Dr. Patrick Lagrange, Pasteur Hospital. Topic: Transgender Issues/Christian Anthropology. RSVP at archokc.org/live.

First Sunday of Advent
29
Pray the Rosary for Life, 6:30 p.m. at the chapel at St. Thomas More, 100 Stinson St., from now on Tuesday. Lang, (405) 249-1041, potato.lang@gmail.com.

November 22
22
Sermon of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.
22
Pray the Rosary for Life, 6:30 p.m. at the chapel at St. Thomas More, 100 Stinson St., From now on Tuesday. Lang, (405) 249-1041, potato.lang@gmail.com.

30
Feast of St. Andrew.

December
1
Daily Mass live-streamed from St. Francis de Sales Chapel, 11:30 a.m., archokc.org/live, Facebook Live, TV, YouTube Live.

23
Feast of Blessed Miguel Aguirre
23
Feast of St. Clement I
23
Feast of St. Francis Xavier.

24
Daily Mass live-streamed from St. Francis de Sales Chapel, 11:30 a.m., archokc.org/live, Facebook Live, YouTube Live.

25
Feast of St. Catherine of Alexandria.

26
The conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer captured my thought. “For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.” I thought, this is God’s kingdom. He does make such an agreement in our place, whether we recognize that or not. To carry on his will. He does not seem to be asking me to cure a sin or orchestrate world peace and prosperity... where? Right at that moment, he was equipping me to drive a volunteer activity and to call my 93-year-old father Mass. Call (405) 721-8944, (405) 538-6252.

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Family planning strengthens marriages, families

By K.S. McNutt
The Sooner Catholic

Cameron and Jodi Homeyer were inspired to become certified Natural Family Planning teachers five years ago so they could share with others the amazing gift NFP has been in their spiritual journey and their marriage.

People often think Natural Family Planning is only about avoiding pregnancy. “It’s not just focused on the physical aspects of your marriage, but on the whole gamut of what it means to be a married couple,” Cameron said. “Children are great fruits of marriage, but there is so much more.”

Natural Family Planning was a big part of marriage preparation for the couple, who met as freshmen at Texas A&M University and were married shortly after graduation. When they moved to Norman in 2014, they had been married for nearly 10 years and had two children.

Cameron is an associate professor of meteorology at the University of Oklahoma, and Jodi is the director of religious education at Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Norman. They wanted to educate and support couples in family planning to help spouses respect God’s design for their life and marriage, so they became certified teachers of the Sympto-Thermal Method associated with the Couple to Couple League. It is one of the NFP methods offered by the archdiocese.

“It’s scientifically based, using a woman’s fertility signs for achieving or avoiding pregnancy. We’ve had success at both,” Jodi Homeyer said.

Today, the couple has four children, ages 10, 8, 5 and 1. Each time the couple prayed and discerned and felt God calling them “to be open to another little soul,” she said.

When they married, the couple knew they wanted children, but not how many and when.

“This plan allowed us to continuously ask the question. Natural Family Planning is a continual act of discernment each month for both spouses,” Cameron Homeyer said. “That constant communication is a part of making the decisions about God’s will in your life. A positive byproduct is good communication in all aspects of marriage.”

As a scientist, Cameron appreciates the evidence that NFP is 99 percent effective if practiced correctly. It has helped many couples overcome fertility issues, he said.

“It’s a very powerful tool to have in your married life,” Cameron said. “And, a powerful tool for identifying health problems that you wouldn’t see. It’s increasingly popular even outside the Church.”

Couples who want to learn about the Sympto-Thermal Method can find the Homeyers through the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City website (archokc.org/nfp), a referral from their priest or an introduction class at their parish.

The three-part instruction can be taken in private lessons or small group classes. It also is available online with the Homeyers serving as mentors, an option that has been helpful during the pandemic.

“People are sometimes uncomfortable talking about this,” Jodi Homeyer said. “Our goal is they start to see the beauty in this as not just a fertility issue, but also spiritually.”

K.S. McNutt is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

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to King of King and Lord of Lords.”

Since the 4th century, Catholics state in the Nicene Creed, “His Kingdom will have no end.” Christ the King marks the end of the Church calendar before Advent begins. It is time to reflect on the Kingdom of Christ.

Even though Christ was King, he gave a wonderful example how lonely it can be as a Christian on the Way of the Cross. Luke 5:16 says, “Jesus withdrew into lonely places and he prayed.”

Christ showed his human side when he said in Matthew 27:46, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Father Aaron Foshee, pastor of Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Ada, explained the feast in the following manner, “In the 17th century, Saint John Eudes, a French priest, wrote a treatise ‘On the Kingdom of Jesus.’ In it, he speaks to how our participation in the Body of Christ acts as a means by which to divinize us. Saint John Eudes wrote: ‘Christ fulfills his hidden life in us, hidden with him in God... causing us to suffer, die and rise again with him and in him... (so as to) live a glorious, eternal life with him and in him in heaven.’”

Father Foshee added the following, “By this, we can infer that if we listen to and obey Christ, we will participate in who he is. When we are reborn in the crystal waters of regeneration, we participate in his incarnation. When we proclaim his kingdom to the ends of the Earth, we participate in his ceaseless proclamation of the Kingdom of God. When we suffer, we struggle, and God-willing when we even die for the Good News, we participate in what our King Jesus has done for us.”

“And, with confidence we believe that we will rise again, and reign in majesty as kings and priests in God’s dominion, because we will be found within the loving and intimate embrace of him who loves us and has freed us from the cancer of our sin by his blood. For us, then, the meaning of kingship for which we must strive, and from which we will receive our strength, is to listen – not to the chaos of the world around us, but to the voice of truth, who we claim as the sovereign of our souls. To him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.”

Charles Albert is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

A Prayer to Christ the King

Lord, Jesus Christ, our sovereign King
The beginning and end of all things, you have made your Church to be a people that bears witness to the goodness and beauty of your kingdom. By your Holy Spirit, you have united us as one body, called to live as one family of God. Fill our hearts with your grace, that we would be close to you by being close to the vulnerable and marginalized.

Give us the patience to share one another’s burdens, and, give us the courage to always be friends of the truth. May we remain with you always. Amen.