Okarche celebrates third Rother feast day

By K.S. McNutt
The Sooner Catholic

OKARCHE – Holy Trinity Catholic Church will celebrate native son Blessed Stanley Rother with a special memorial Mass on his feast day, July 28, and the annual parish carnival July 25.

Stanley Francis Rother was born March 27, 1935, in Okarche, where he attended Holy Trinity Catholic Church and School. As a young priest, he went to serve the Oklahoma diocese’s mission in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, during a time of civil war. The Catholic Church was caught in the middle of the war and Rother was killed in his rectory July 28, 1981.


The memorial Mass will be at 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity, 211 W. Missouri, which can accommodate about 150 worshippers with the coronavirus distancing guidelines. Overflow seating will be available in the parish hall.

Nancy Schudalla, administrative assistant, said the church is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays for people who want to pray at Blessed Stanley’s home parish.

The annual carnival hosted by the Knights of Columbus will take place July 25 following the 5 p.m. vigil Mass.

Grand Knight Jeremy Schwarz said the carnival – a decades-long tradition that was moved in recent years to coincide with Blessed Stanley’s feast day – will be scaled down this year due to coronavirus precautions.

“It will be nice for the community to get out and see each other,” Schwarz said.

Proceeds from the carnival will benefit The Center of Family Love and Holy Trinity Catholic School.

For more information on Blessed Stanley or the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine, go online to stanleyrother.org or rothershrine.org. K.S. McNutt is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

MORE INFORMATION

Blessed Stanley Rother
stanleyrother.org

Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine
rothershrine.org

Rother Feast Day at Resurrection Cemetery

Resurrection Memorial Cemetery will be open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the feast of Blessed Stanley Rother, July 28. There will be extended visiting hours from 9 a.m. to Noon on Saturday, July 26, and on Saturday, Aug. 1.

Blessed Stanley is interred at the cemetery’s chapel awaiting construction of the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine. The chapel is in the middle of the cemetery at 7801 Northwest Expressway or 7500 W. Britton Rd. Find more information at stanleyrother.org.

Walking with Moms in Need a year of service

“I n an effort to further help pregnant women in need across the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the Walking with Moms in Need program was established by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops pro-life committee for parishes.

“The goal of Walking with Moms in Need is to form a small team of people to evaluate and compile all local and parish resources, ministries and organizations available to help women in need,” explained Noelle Garcia, coordinator of the Respect Life Ministry for the archdiocese.

“Everything from helping find affordable prenatal care and ultrasounds to counseling to helping with material needs. The team encourages their pastor and parish to pray for pregnant women and be aware of services offered to pregnant women so they can refer as needed for help.”

Garcia explained it only takes two or three parishioners to form a team. It is envisioned to be a year of service for pregnant women in parishes that will help make the community aware of what resources are available for pregnant women from the Catholic Church in Oklahoma.

“This will help women know they are loved and cared for in the Church and also will show them we are here as pro-life people to continued on page 16
In the Gospel, Jesus invites us to "Come away... and rest awhile" ( Mk.6:31). This is normally a good summertime theme since this is the sea- son that many of us look forward to change of pace in our busy lives. Due to the COVID expe- rience that we all have been living through in re- cent months, most of our accustomed rhythms have been severely disrupted.

Whatever the rhythms of our lives may be, from time-to-time we need to refresh ourselves. We need time away from our ordinary work and daily concerns to renew our energies, to spend time with family and friends (to the extent that we feel comfortable doing so), and to remember our Creator. Because of travel restrictions this year, many planned vacations may become "stay-cations." At home or away from home, however, the rhythm of a regular "sabbath" rest is very much a part of God's plan for our well-being. "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath" ( Mk.2:27).

Unfortunately, the enjoyment of true leisure is practically a lost art in our culture. Many of us have become addicted to busyness, activity and screen time. We are too dependent on our smart phones and electronic devices to be able to simply relax. Even during our vacation, if we are fortunate enough to have one, we often feel compelled to stay connected with work, with news and social media or to fill our days with so much activity that we return even more weary and dissipated in spirit than before.

"Often the rhythm of life may be the key to the kind of vacation that we long for. Still, the Lord does not promise that a vacation may be a idle, he spent "free" time working in the abbey vegetable garden and caring for his eight furry friends. He also spent "free" time making the communion of the Mass on the Solemnity of the Transfiguration. The Mass, he said, is the most important and meaningful prayer of his day. He added: "I think that the Mass is the most important thing in our lives. It is the Mass that is the heart of the Mass of our lives. It is the Mass that we need to live a life of faith and to be able to live in faith with Christ as missionary disciples unless we are committed to keeping our faith alive."

"The Lord's Day is a day that we often take for granted. It is a day that we often forget to rest as much as we should. It is a day that we often take for granted. It is a day that we often forget to rest and refreshment that our kind of vacation that we long for. Still, the Lord and dissipated in spirit than before. Much activity that we return even more weary to simply relax. Even during our vacation, if we are fortunate enough to have one, we often feel compelled to stay connected with work, with news and social media or to fill our days with so much activity that we return even more weary and dissipated in spirit than before.

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City announced a new training program for volunteers, staff members and clergy that will be required before working with minors in Catholic churches or schools, beginning July 1.

The Safe Environment Program, and Safe and Sacred Program, provides online training in several areas, including appropriate and inappropriate interaction with minors, proper boundaries, potential red flags and how to report suspected abuse.

The Domesic Church Evangelization Retreat is Sept. 5-7, at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City. Cost is $350, scholarships are available. Contact Alex Schimpl at (405) 744-2867 or a.schimpl@archokc.org. Register online: archokc.wsoverseas.org/ with opportunities/Domes- ticChurchEvangelizationRetreat.

The new Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Safe Environment Training Program was launched July 1. The new Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Safe Environment Training Program was launched July 1.

Rev. Eugene (Casmite) Marshall, O.S.B.

Rev. Eugene Marshall, O.S.B., died on June 18 at age 97. He had completed 76 years of monastic profession and 55 years of ministry at the time of his death. He was the most senior and oldest member of the monastic community and the oldest Catholic priest in Oklahoma.

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The next 40 Days for Life campaign is Sept. 23-Nov. 1. For the Norman campaign, contact Conni Lang, (405) 149-1041, langcmy@gmail.com.

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Restoring Memorial Cemetery

We would like to announce the construction of our Lady of Sorrows Mausoleum

Our Lady of Sorrows will consist of 992 indoor and outdoor crypts, 29 indoor niches, 222 outdoor niches, and a chapel and exquisitely appointed surroundings. It is a designation of a new church and the celebration of the new church. It is also a place for the funeral Mass of Fr. Eugene Marshall, O.S.B., on June 22. Photo: Theresa Bragg.

Father Marshall was born on Dec. 23, 1922, in Harrah to Walter and Catherine (Heyl) Marshall. He was ordained two days later on Christmas Day and raised in Saint Teresa Parish in Harrah. After completing high school in Harrah, he enrolled at nearby Saint Gregory’s College in 1941, coming to the College to be his permanent residence for the rest of his life. Father Marshall professed vows as a monk of Saint Gregory’s Abbey on July 11, 1944. He earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy at Saint Gregory’s College and completed theological studies at Saint Gregory’s Abbey. He was ordained to the priesthood on March 25, 1950. He completed a bachelor’s degree in library science from the University of Oklahoma in 1953 and a master’s degree in educational technology from the University of Southern California in 1971.

With the exception of one year when he was assigned to Saint Leo Abbey, he served with Saint Gregory’s Abbey. He was ordained to the priesthood on March 25, 1950. He completed a bachelor’s degree in library science from the University of Oklahoma in 1953 and a master’s degree in educational technology from the University of Southern California in 1971. With the exception of one year when he was assigned to Saint Leo Abbey, he served with Saint Gregory’s Abbey. He was ordained to the priesthood on March 25, 1950. He completed a bachelor’s degree in library science from the University of Oklahoma in 1953 and a master’s degree in educational technology from the University of Southern California in 1971.
Oklahoma teens discern, visit religious order

By Father James A. Wickersham
For the Sooner Catholic

Most parish summer programs for youth this year have been cancelled or reduced due to COVID-19. This was not the case for a group of 10 girls from Saint Mary Catholic Church in Edmond who made a pilgrimage to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent in Wichita, Kan.

The purpose of the trip was so the girls could encounter the life of consecrated religious as they are discerning their vocational calling. For a young Catholic teenager, the most important thing they can do besides seeking to always remain in the friendship of the Lord, is to discern what God has made for them in this world. For a Catholic, the three vocations are marriage, priesthood, and consecrated life.

The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are a beautiful order of women religious who have consecrated themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ through vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They number 29 sisters and teach in Catholic schools. These beautiful consecrated religious uphold the Church by their prayers and by their teaching apostolate.

Sadly, since the 1960s, many of the once-great religious orders have had their charisms diluted or even abandoned. But, many religious orders in the United States are still growing and are youthful. The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters are one of these orders, humbly continuing their spiritual work in this world by remaining faithful to their order’s charism of teaching religious faith to our nation’s youth. Consecrated religious life still has much to offer our ailing world, and for those young women who have been made by God for this life, this is how they will give glory to God and in their own way build up the Kingdom of Christ the King on this earth.

Father Wickersham is pastor of Saint Mary Catholic Church in Edmond.
Bishop McGuinness announces 2020 Distinguished Alumni of the Year

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School named Bentley Edmunds (1981) and Lisa Ruffin Edmonds (1981), who were named Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School Distinguished Alumni of the Year. Photo provided.

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The chairmen of three U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ committees have called for “better practices for formation and accountability for police” in a joint letter to all members of Congress.

“Law enforcement officers perform a great and needed service; they serve to promote justice and the common good in society,” they said. “But it is clear that there have been too many failures in serving everyone, with tragic consequences.”

The Edmondses are proud newcomers serving in Oklahoma City. They frequently open their home for newcomers serving in Oklahoma City through ministries like the Alliance for Catholic Education teachers and the National Evangelization Team.

“Lisa and Bentley Edmonds are excellent examples of combined dedication to Catholic education, community and faith,” said Carly Wegener, Bishop McGuinness Alumni Executive Committee president. “Together, they must certainly exemplify the Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School mission statement: to be a person for others.”

The Edmondses attend Catholic Church and schools. Saint Katharine Drexel Parish is a firm believer in education and schools. Saint Katharine Drexel Parish is the Edmondses, who had been a convert to their alma maters. This tradition has continued with their four children who also attended both schools — their youngest will graduate from BMCHS in 2023.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City and Archbishop William Skelton of Oklahoma City, chairmen of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, offered prayers March 12 for those suffering from coronavirus and those providing health care to the sick as well as those affected by disruptions, quarantines and closures of workplaces and schools.

“We stand in the long tradition — from St. Augustine, to St. Thomas Aquinas, to Dr. Martin Luther King — that claims that the purpose of law and policy is the promotion of justice,” they wrote. “The only solution to the challenges of this moment,” they said, “is to follow the wise counsel of Saint Paul VI. ‘If you want peace, work for justice.’”

The U.S. Catholic bishops, they said, “have pointed out numerous times that racism remains a problem in the criminal justice system.”

“We are particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of policing and the criminal justice system on communities of color,” they said. “We stand with those who have pointed out numerous times that there have been too many failures in serving everyone, with tragic consequences.”

“Our nation’s history of systemic racism historically in Oklahoma and the Catholic Church’s response to the sin of racism, understanding its effects on individuals and society,” they said.

“Across our country, indeed across the entire world, people are examining yet once more the evil of racism, both historic and present, and its devastating effects on individuals and society,” they said.

The letter was signed by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Auxiliary Bishop Marcus E. Denvir of Washington, chairman of the Committee on Migration; and Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism.

G iven the current discussion on racial inequality and its consequences, and in the wake of Archbishop Carroll Coadley’s prayer to protect life and end the sin of racism, understand the Catholic Church’s response to racism historically in Oklahoma is imperative.

From the beginning, there was an outreach to African American residents in towns such as Ponca City, Guthrie and Caddo Indian reservations by Saint Katharine Drexel, who provided funds for churches and schools. Saint Katharine was present and present, and its devastating effects on individuals and society,” they said.

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On a hot day in June, Sister Maria Faulkner and Father Don Wolf, pastor of Saint Eugene Catholic Church and a cousin to Blessed Stanley Rother, led a pilgrimage from the farm where Blessed Stanley was born to his original burial site in Okarche. The pilgrimage marked the conclusion of the spring session of the Gospel of Life School and the beginning of the summer session.

“Blessed Stanley speaks to all of us of any age, especially to young people in his gift of self. As Saint John Paul II said, ‘to be fully realized, each person must give oneself away in love.’”

Father Wolf recalled Blessed Stanley’s father Franz as “stubborn” and his mother Gertrude as having a “kind heart.” Their son who was martyred for the faith and for the people he served had inherited a dose of his father’s stubbornness, but according to Father Wolf, it was the kind heart and soft tone of his voice that endeared him to the people of his mission in Guatemala.

The pilgrimage began with Mass at Saint James the Greater Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. The caravan continued to the Catholic Pastoral Center where Archbishop Coakley gave his blessing for the success of the pilgrimage.

George Rigazzi, archivist for Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, provided a tour of the Heritage Gallery at the Catholic Pastoral Center, which currently houses items that depict the priest’s ministry working among the indigenous Tz’utujil people in Santiago Atitlan.

The young pilgrims in the group were drawn to a photograph of Blessed Stanley holding the hand of a child in the community where he served as a missionary priest at Saint James the Apostle from 1968 until his murder by three assailants on July 28, 1981.

The next stop for the pilgrimage was Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Okarche where Blessed Stanley was baptized on March 29, 1935. Father Wolf provided keen insight into the nature of the mild-mannered priest.

“There is a presumption about holiness that is not necessarily accurate,” he said.

Father Wolf explained that our expectation of a saint is of someone whose feet never touch the ground. The amenable visual would be of a priest growing up in a pious family in an idyllic farmland community. On the contrary, Father Wolf painted a picture that offered a more realistic image of the often harsh reality of farm life and growing up in the midst of a family as a backdrop for a mild-mannered priest.

The pilgrims left Holy Trinity to walk more than three miles to the cemetery where Blessed Stanley originally was buried.

“His life was given in service before it was given in blood.”

Katelyn Williams, who was part of the summer session of the Gospel of Life School and who is discerning a call to religious life, said the pilgrimage will have a lasting influence on her life. Melina Maloukis remarked that in a dream, Blessed Stanley had directed her to her present mission working with Sister Maria.

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Walking in the footsteps of Bl. Stanley Rother

ROTHER FEAST DAY JULY 28

By Linda Schaefer
Special for the Sooner Catholic

The group of pilgrims walked more than three miles to the cemetery where Bl. Stanley Rother was first buried in Okarche.

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Blessed Stanley was beatified on Sept. 23, 2017. Construction is underway for the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine to be completed in 2022.
Real Life Disciples

Come into my heart!

Job Box

Middle school theology, PE teacher – OKC

St. Mary Catholic School in Oklahoma City is looking for an experienced educator to take on the role of middle school theology and physical education teacher at our school. A bachelor’s degree in education or a related field is required, and experience with middle school (6th-8th grade) students is preferred. The ideal applicant will possess strong teaching skills, the ability to engage students, and a commitment to the faith formation of young minds. Please submit a cover letter and resume to the principal at principal@stmaryokc.org.

Director of evangelization – Edmond

St. Monica Catholic Church in Edmond is seeking a full-time director of evangelization to oversee the parish’s efforts to reach out to non-Catholic neighbors and help them find their way into the Catholic Church. The role involves developing and implementing evangelization programs, coordinating parish events, and managing communication efforts. A bachelor’s degree in religious studies or a related field is required, along with experience in Christian education and a strong understanding of the Catholic faith. Please submit a cover letter and resume to the pastor at pastor@stmonicaedmond.org.

Election in February 2017, Pope Benedict gifted me with his Aposto- logical Exhortation “Sacroememto Christi.” For me, the Church is the source and summit of the Church. The Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is the 22nd of February, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The 22nd of February is the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. And it is that source of love that I am drawn to as a disciple, and what I hope my students will also grow in as we grow as a family through prayer.

John B. Delezay
The Sooner Catholic

Our faith in the Church

Book Review: “Jesus Invites Me to Mass”

By John B. Delezay
The Sooner Catholic

“Jesus Invites Me to Mass” is a new book by Bishop Benedict XVI and the Eucharist as our Sacrament of Charity

What is the Church?

The Church is the Body of Christ, the Mystical Body of Christ. It is the place where we encounter Christ and are formed in his image. The Church is not just a place to go to on Sunday, but a place where we live out our faith every day.

Pope Benedict XVI in his Apostolic Exhortation “Sacroememto Christi” writes: “The Church is the source and summit of the Church. It is the Mystical Body of Christ, the living body of the risen Christ. The Church is the place where we encounter Christ and are formed in his image.”

Jesus invites us to mass

Jesus invites us to mass because he wants us to be part of his body, the Church. He wants us to be part of his mission to love and serve others. He wants us to be part of his plan to bring salvation to the world.

The Mass is the source and summit of the Church

The Mass is the source and summit of the Church. It is the place where we encounter Christ and are formed in his image. The Mass is the place where we receive the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the Church.

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**Brieffs**

*Please contact event or meeting organizers before attending.*

**New safe environment training launched**

The archdiocese announced a new training program created by working with minors in the diocese’s Catholic churches or schools. The program launches July 1. Learn more at archokc.org/safe-environment.

**Shrine webcam**

Live streaming is now available for viewers to watch the building of the St. Stanley Rother Shrine in Oklahoma City. The webcam will be live-streaming Thursday, July 5, at 11 a.m. in English and Spanish. The webcam can be watched at archokc.org/shrinewebcam.

**Rother documentary**

A new documentary, “An Ordinary Martyr,” premieres to watch the building of the St. Stanley Rother Shrine in Oklahoma City. The documentary will premiere July 5. The film is available online at archokc.org/shrinewebcam.

**Online Mass Tuesday**


**COVID-19 information, online Mass list**

A nomination requires the name and what city and state they reside in, as well as a contact phone number. See the online Mass list at archokc.org/mass.

**Financial support**

Need financial support from parish organizers before attending. See COVID-19 information, online Mass list at archokc.org/mass.

**Daily Mass live-streamed from St. Francis de Sales Chapel**

Daily Mass live-streamed from the archdiocese’s Know Your Faith Facebook page, 11:30 a.m., archokc.org/live, Facebook Live, YouTube. View worldokc.org/briefs.

**Serra Club**

The next Serra Club of Oklahoma meeting is at 10:30 a.m. July 21. The Serra Club meets in person at the Catholic Pastoral Center and via Zoom on the third Wednesday of each month. Contact Roderick Satterfield, 405-245-1486, rcsatterfield2@gmail.com.

**Rosary Run**


**Serra Club**

Feast of St. Benjamin John Schaapveld and Sr. Mary Francesca Schapaevd

Sr. Mary Francesca Schapaevd

Sr. Mary Francesca Schapaevd (June Marie Schapaevd) died June 18. She was born to Benjamin John Schapaevd and Mary Elizabeth Spansiegel Schapaevd on June 12, 1936, in Oklahoma City.

Sr. Francesca attended Sacred Heart Catholic Church and Mount St. Mary’s High School, both in Oklahoma City. She received a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary’s College in Xavier, Kan., a master’s degree in education at Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio and a master’s degree in theology at Saint Mary’s Universitv, San Antonio.

Sr. Francesca entered the Sisters of Mercy on Sept. 7, 1948, at Webster Groves, Mo., and made her profession of final religious vows on Aug. 19, 1954. In 1951, she began her teaching career in parochial schools and became principal of a high school in Oklahoma City. She also taught at Sacred Heart and Bishop John Carroll schools. She taught at Saint Benedict Catholic School in Shawnee. She was the assistant superintendent of Catholic schools/religious education from 1977 to 1979. She was named Outstanding Educator in 1973 by the Office of Superintendent of Oklahoma City. She was ministered to Mercy Health Center in Oklahoma City in 1973 where she cared for many in need. She was also an enthusiastic Oklahoma City Thunder basketball fan.

Christian burial was at Resurrection Memorial Cemetery in Oklahoma City.

Mass information

For daily Mass and a time-line for renaming public Mass in Oklahoma in English and Spanish, frequently asked questions and a video message from Archbishop Coakley visit archokc.org/mass.

COVID-19 information, online Mass list

Find a list of daily online and Sunday Masses, prayers, an act of spiritual communion and other resources related to the quarantines and coronaviruses at archokc.org/coronavirus.

Support your parish

With public Mass not in full ca-

Access to daily Mass, parishes and priests still need financial support from parishioners. Find online giving links and prayer addresses for your parish at archokc.org/parishgiving.

Study guides available

Archbishop Coakley encourages all clergy and lay people to spend time studying the latest pastoral letter, “Go Make Disciples! Building a Culture of Conversion and Disciple for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City” with the help of study guides in English and Spanish. The letter and pastoral plan layout out the vision for the archdiocese through 2030. Find pastoral letter and study guides at archokc.org/Vision2030.

OK Fun-Of-Run - cancelled

The OK Fun-Of-Run postponed until 2021.

Online music conference

The 2020 Lives of Saints Music Institute of America presents an online conference “Beauty, Simplicity, Prac-

To see more briefs, go online to www.archokc.org/briefs.

**Best shrines of France pilgrimage**

Join Fr. Carson Krittenbrink on an all-inclusive pilgrimage Oct. 5-16. This could be you!

**Sr. Marion Hangsterfer, O.P.**

Sr. Marion Hangsterfer, O.P., died June 18 at St. Dominic Villa, Hael Green, Wis. Her religious name was Sister Josephine Brindisi. She was born in the Roman Catholic Church. She made her profession of final religious vows on Aug. 19, 1954. In 1951, she began her teaching career in parochial schools and became principal of a high school in Oklahoma City. She also taught at Sacred Heart and Bishop John Carroll schools. She taught at Saint Benedict Catholic School in Shawnee. She was the assistant superintendent of Catholic schools/religious education from 1977 to 1979. She was named Outstanding Educator in 1973 by the Office of Superintendent of Oklahoma City. She was ministered to Mercy Health Center in Oklahoma City in 1973 where she cared for many in need. She was also an enthusiastic Oklahoma City Thunder basketball fan.

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Jr. 12

Feast of St. Alphonsus Liguori.

Feast of St. Peter Chrysologus.

Feast of St. Francis de Sales.

Feast of St. Mary Magdalene.

Feast of St. Francis de Sales.

Feast of St. Lawrence of Brindisi.

Feast of St. Elmo.

Feast of St. Valentine.

**Seminarian dinner**

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Seminarian dinner is in 7 p.m. Aug. 6 via Zoom. Those invited to participate at a follows at 11:30 a.m. online at archokc.org/live. Register at serrarockc.org.

**Rosary Run**


**Longest married couple**

Nominations are being accept-

The third annual BL Stanley Rosary Run is July 25. This year the run is virtual. Visit www.therothermen.com.

**Gospel of Life School**

The Gospel of Life School presents “Dedicate Yourself to the Lord” study group sponsored by the World Marriage Encounter. A nomination requires the name and what city and state they reside in, while the nominee’s mother’s name, number phone or e-mail address. Submit nomi-

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Archdiocese of Oklahoma City hires executive director for Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine

OKLAHOMA CITY – Archbishop Paul Coakley announced Wednesday the selection of Leif Arvidson as the executive director for the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine in Oklahoma City. Arvidson was selected after a national search.

“I am excited to begin this new adventure and join the effort to recognize the faith and witness of this holy Oklahoma priest,” Arvidson said. “I am honored to be chosen to help carry out the vision for the shrine and to assist with the creation and development of this beautiful destination of prayer, faith, education and ministry for the Oklahoma City community and for faithful from around the world.”

Arvidson most recently served as executive director of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisc., from June 2010 to the present where he oversaw a $2 million budget, 45 full-time and part-time employees, more than 50 volunteers, more than 30,000 benefactors and 75,000 pilgrims who visited the shrine each year.

He graduated summa cum laude from Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, in 1996 with a bachelor’s degree in history and a minor in theology. In 2002, he earned a juris doctorate from Notre Dame Law School.

In Wisconsin, he has coordinated or volunteered for a food pantry, Eucharistic adoration and pro-life initiatives, and served on a parish council and as an RCIA teacher for people wanting to join the Catholic Church. He and his wife are proud parents to 10 children.

“Leif is a wonderful leader in the local church, for his family and in his community,” Archbishop Coakley said. “He understands the importance of Blessed Stanley in Oklahoma and will be dedicated to telling the story of our parish priest who gave his life for his Catholic faith and for the love of his people.”

The $40 million shrine at S.E. 89 and Shields Boulevard in south Oklahoma City is the signature element of the first-ever capital campaign for the archdiocese. The site will include a 2,000-seat church, a chapel where Blessed Stanley Rother (ROW-ther) will be entombed, an education building, an event space and several areas designated for shrines and devotion. The site will be developed over time.

The archdiocese broke ground on the shrine on Nov. 3. It is expected to be completed in 2022.

Blessed Stanley was a priest from Okarche who volunteered to serve the diocesan mission in Guatemala. The Catholic Church in Guatemala was caught in the middle of a civil war at the time and Blessed Stanley was targeted for helping to educate the local indigenous people and for creating a co-op to help them get better prices for their crops.

On July 28, 1981, he was murdered in his rectory at Saint James Apostle Catholic Church in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala. In September 2017, he was beatified during a Beatification Mass in Oklahoma City, becoming the first martyr from the United States and the first U.S.-born priest to be beatified.

Each year, on July 28, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the Diocese of Tulsa and the Diocese of Little Rock, Ark., celebrate his feast day.

For more information, go online to rothershrine.org. For more information, architectural renderings and a live webcam for the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine, go online to rothershrine.org.

continued from page 1

help them get on their feet and find what they need to parent and choose life,” she added.

According to 2014 statistics, women who chose abortion are poor, young and unmarried: 75 percent were low income, 60 percent were in their 20s and 86 percent were unmarried.

There are many ways the program can be utilized by parishes – through the bulletin, website, social media, announcements at Mass or being present with available resources at parish-wide events.

Garcia and her husband David McHugh coordinate the office of Respect Life Ministry and will serve as a resource for parish teams to help connect them to ministries they may not be aware of in their community. The parish teams also will be able to let them know of needs not being met or ministries and opportunities they had not yet discovered.

“Don’t be afraid of beginning this program! The primary purpose is to be a resource and help advertise resources for women to get the help they need.”

Anyone interested in forming a Walking with Moms team for their parish, can go online to www.walkingwithmoms.com or www.archokc.org/respectlife. Both Spanish and English resources available.

Encouraging parishioners to be knowledgeable about these resources and to pray for these women and families will help make our whole parish pro-life and welcome those struggling to choose life,” McHugh said.

Jolene Schonchin is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

SAVE THE DATE

CATECHETICAL CONFERENCE:
TILLING GOOD SOIL

August 29, 2020

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School
8718N 52 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Keynote Guest Speakers:
ARCHBISHOP PAUL S. COAKLEY & BISHOP NICHOLAS K. STInclude
FREE all day event for catechists of children, youth, and adults
with live presentation of speakers and presentations into Spanish and Vietnamese.

www.archokc.org/catechetical-conference