

Humilitas

Newsletter of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church ~ March, 2023

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St. Joseph Altar

Not enough to eat in your Medieval village? Can't grow crops on the once fertile island of Sicily? Long time between rains? Then pray to Jesus' foster father St. Joseph for intercession so the spring rains will come soon and save the food supply.

St. Joseph's feast day is March 19 and in American regions with a significant Italian population, there is a traditional celebration called St. Joseph Altar or St. Joseph Table. During a Medieval drought and famine in Sicily, desperate farmers and villagers prayed to St. Joseph for help as the planting season loomed and more starvation faced them.

After the fervent prayers, the rains came and the crops prospered. In thanksgiving, this Catholic celebration began with a promise to prepare a feast in honor of St. Joseph on his special day. In Italian and Italian/American churches, elaborate, three level altars representing the Trinity, were filled with colorful foodstuffs including bread, pastries and lucky fava beans.

The fava beans were the locally grown Sicilian crop and a staple of their diet centuries ago. Handing out a "lucky" fava bean is a part of the celebration to this day. The offerings are meatless because it is during Lent but can include creatively displayed various fruits, fresh vegetables, baked goods, flowers, wheat stalks, candy, candles, wine, photos, all topped with a prominently displayed statue of St. Joseph, many holding baby Jesus. Bread, cakes, and cookies are baked in shapes of a cross, a Bible, wreaths, braids, fish and other religious symbols. The entire colorful effect is impressive. When the feast day is over, the food is donated to the poor.

Parades, festivals, fundraising luncheons, dinners, auctions and bake sales can accompany the altar tradition. According to a Google search, New Or-



The Annunciation of the Lord - March 25

leans has a particularly strong tradition.

St. Joseph was one of those strong, behind-the-scenes, always-there persons who did not call attention to himself. His gentle words, patient teaching and stalwart example helped Jesus as he grew. On March 19, we can honor him, if not with a fancy Italian feast, but with some humble prayers and gratitude for his role in our Savior's earthly life. Don't miss photos of the elaborate altars on Google Images: St. Joseph's Day Altars.

—Monica Knudsen



St. Joseph - March 19

The Death Penalty

When I asked to write this article on the death penalty, I struggled in figuring out how to approach the subject. In a state like Oklahoma, discussions on the death penalty can be rather charged. While *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* currently reflects the Church's understanding that the death penalty should be abolished,* for many this is one aspect of Church teaching with which they struggle. A notion, rooted in humanity's sinfulness, that sometimes violence is the only solution.

If I am being honest, I would argue that society's desire for the death penalty is rooted in antiquity. When we look at the *Code of Hammurabi*, which is one of the oldest known written codes of law (circa 1750 BC), we find present the ancient principle of *lex talionis*, the law of retribution in kind: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. From there, the idea of the death penalty becomes commonplace. We don't see the dignity present in the offender, for we convince ourselves that they have forfeited theirs and have convinced ourselves, as a society, that the only sure way to achieve justice is to put the offender to death. When we look at the concept of *lex talionis*, the idea is formed that justice, true justice, can exist without mercy. That the point of punishment is not the reform of the offender but rather for society to be vindicated.

For many, this desire present in human society for millennia brings them in conflict with the Church's understanding of human dignity and the value of life. This also brings our society's laws in conflict with what the Church states is one of the key components of any form of penal law, the conversion and reformation of the offender.

The reality is that while the death penalty does provide justice if one looks at true justice being achieved by *lex talionis*, the question should be asked, does true justice exist without mercy.

I do know that the purpose of this article isn't to persuade you or to change your mind if you are a supporter of the death penalty, because truly, the best way to change minds and hearts is face-to-face conversation. However, I do hope that this serves as an invitation to look deeper into why the Church's teaching is that the death penalty is an affront to human dignity. I encourage to read the articles written by Archbishop Coakley on this subject, as he has been a strong voice in our community in advocating for an end to the death penalty.

When we find ourselves struggling with Church teaching, we should take it as an opportunity to learn the why about the teaching, rather than just say, "Well, I disagree and so be it!" And I hope and pray that we as a commu-

nity can begin to learn that *lex talionis* does not quite rise to the level of authentic justice. I often ask the question to high schoolers, "Can justice exist without mercy?" After a time of discussion I then follow up with a second question, "Should justice exist without mercy?" For myself the answer is obvious, "justice should not exist without mercy." The death penalty removes mercy from the equation.

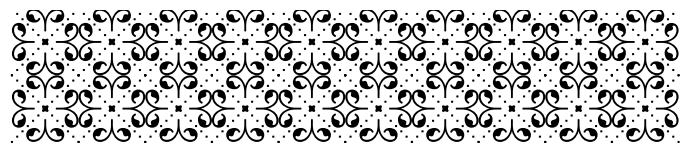
In closing, I leave you with the words of Archbishop Coakley when discussing mercy in the context of abolishing the death penalty: "Mercy perfects justice and brings healing."

—Fr. Will

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2267. Recourse to the death penalty on the part of legitimate authority, following a fair trial, was long considered an appropriate response to the gravity of certain crimes and an acceptable, albeit extreme, means of safeguarding the common good.

Today, however, there is an increasing awareness that the dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of very serious crimes. In addition, a new understanding has emerged of the significance of penal sanctions imposed by the state. Lastly, more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens but, at the same time, do not definitively deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption.

Consequently, the Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that "the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person", and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide.



* My neighbor just got arrested for ruining our community garden.

They charged him with disturbing the peas.

* I was attacked by a flock of sheep today.

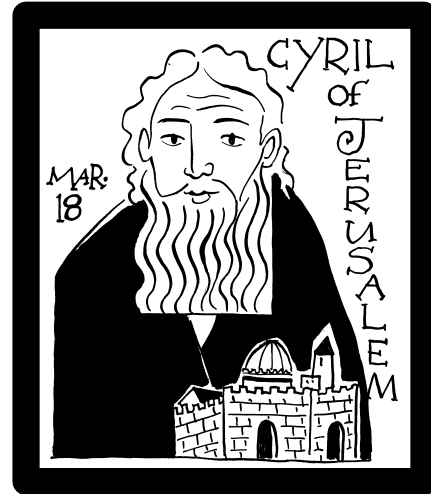
Luckily I was only grazed.

Farewell to Carolyn Beck

Farewell to a parishioner who was a student here at St. Charles and a founding member of the parish. She was first a volunteer at our school and then one of our committed teachers from 2004 - 2019. The article below was written by Ms. Les Basset who also taught here and was willing to share some thoughts on a special lady.
—Margaret Phipps

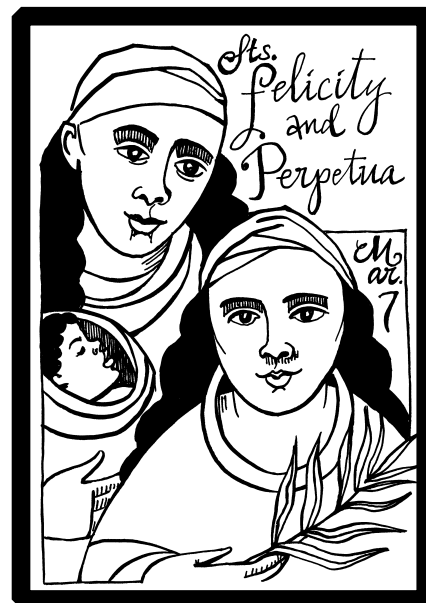
Carolyn Beck and I were colleagues and friends. This woman, who epitomized love and gentle kindness, taught with me for 17 years in pre-k at St. Charles. We shared some emotionally difficult and also joyful journeys, including my own cancer diagnosis. I thanked her daily for being an angel in my life and in the lives of the students in our care. Deeply humble, she rarely thought of herself like that. She loved her daughters and later her grand babies more than words could say, and she would've done anything to make their lives easier and better. Her last text to me was about her new grand baby. We laughed a lot, and the stories we could tell about the hilarious situations in the classroom will always make me smile when I remember her.

Not long before her death (Jan. 3, 2023), she texted to say that the "big C" was nowhere in her body. I shared her text with the students in my art class right then, and they applauded and cheered this woman they did not know but knew meant a lot to me. She later said that it touched her heart, reminding her of our glorious days in the classroom together. When my family moved to Texas, we talked almost weekly on the phone. When she got sick, I felt helpless to see her in such pain, and hear her exhausted voice. She never complained to me. She loved her Lord with all her heart and soul and I wanted my sometimes faltering faith to be like hers. Carolyn, it was an honor to know and be loved by you, and a God given privilege



* What neutralizes formaldehyde?
casualdejekyll.

* I programmed a pirate game, but users said the main character doesn't look enough like a pirate.
There will be a patch soon.



* What did the color say to the other color?

I love hue.

* How do 37 mathematicians board a bus with only 36 seats?

They carry the one.

We Can't Afford Not To Invest in Affordable Housing

"There are many flavors of affordable housing," explained Yolanda Worth. The Catholic Charities Director of Housing was kind enough to sit down and teach me a little about affordable housing, a term tossed about frequently and, perhaps like you, I realized that I do not actually know what it is.

The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines an "affordable dwelling" as one that a household can obtain for 30% or less of its income. The idea is that one could pay mortgage/rent and still have money left over for food, transportation, and health care.

Affording housing is not to be confused with public housing and Section 8 housing. Affordable housing policies and programs are designed to get people into a place to live and facilitate their maintaining that residence. They target low-income households, workers who need to work in an area but would not be able to afford the area, the elderly, the disabled, as well as those at risk of losing their home because of COVID.

To be an affordable dwelling, HUD determines the Area Median Income and because they are a federal entity they give that an acronym — AMI. The AMI, for instance, of Warr Acres will differ from the AMI of Deer Creek. If one was a police officer in Deer Creek, logically wanting to live in Deer Creek but perhaps not able to afford a house on his/her salary, that person could qualify for WFH (Work Force Housing). HUD considers a household that makes less than 80% of the AMI to be low income. (And, no. Gaillardia is not its own AMI. No need to start applying to the OHFA. (see side bar below)

Oklahoma City has a growing population and limited available housing units (be those rentals or homes-for-purchase) for people with a fixed or low-income. Supply is down and demand is up. With high demand, most landlords have tenants and are not interested in accommodating the federal regulations that need to be met for residents whose rent is subsidized. Ms. Worth explained that our city needs rehabilitated pre-existing buildings and new buildings designated as affordable housing. Catholic Charities has entered the housing landscape with three existing properties in the metro and one in Lawton. (see side bar, page 6)

Driving around our parish neighborhood, it is easy to see marks of a previous era that built small single-family homes. Extend your drive into housing additions built anywhere from the 1970s to 2020s and the dilemma of finding "a nice little place" for your family becomes obvious. People in existing neighborhoods, Ms. Worth not-

ed, need not be fearful when they hear of plans to build affordable housing in their area. For those are plans for homes to be built or preexisting structures to be refurbished by organizations meeting federal regulations to create nice little places for families who have met HUD qualifications.

The pressing problem of the unhoused has a face at every intersection in the metro. For each of those faces, there are four or five we do not see because their experience of being without a home manifests differently. It is the man, who couch surfs from one friend to the next but keeps his job at Jiffy Lube. Or it is the woman with two children, who is staying with her cousin so she can keep the kids in their same school, even though they have been evicted. (see side bar, page 6)

People who are living in tents and makeshift shelters are a different population, as a rule, than those experiencing a housing need that can be addressed with an affordable option. Many who are living on the streets are best served by transitional housing combined with a case worker who introduces them to multiple services for health and employment in addition to housing. The goal with agencies such as the Homeless Alliance is to equip a person for maintaining a stable residence.

After speaking with Ms. Worth and coming to understand the many flavors of affordable housing, it became clear to me that the first thing we could do to help in this effort is to dispel misunderstandings and misinformation around housing. We can be on the lookout for bills and projects that address this issue and throw our voice in to expand options in our city.

—Kathy Judge



* Why did the chicken go to the gym?

To work on his pecks.

* Did you hear about the pregnant bed bug?

She'll be having a baby in the spring.

Oh, right. OHFA. Not to be outdone by the feds, Oklahoma has the Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency. This is the source to check out if you need assistance because of COVID related deficits, if you are buying a house for the first time, or if you need to apply for a disability housing-choice voucher (which is Section 8.)

A Path Through The Growing Darkness

"Follow me." Luke 5: 27

The man invited in an unassuming voice. The way he beckoned would lead through these woods and seemed promising, for I was growing wary of shadows and sounds becoming warped in the growing darkness of the evening.

He turned back and asked me, *"Why are you so terrified? Why are you lacking in faith?"* Mark 4:40

"I am not sure this is the right way." Suddenly, I was less confident. "Do you know where we are going? Is this way safe?"

"Get hold of your[self]! It is I. Do not be afraid!" Mark 6: 50

What a ridiculously direct response? No irony. No "don't come if you don't want to" exit opportunity. "Follow me" and off into the pink-orange western sky, he went. cf. Matt 9:9

The trees through which he was leading me became silhouetted as the sun set and he said, apropos of nothing, but when pointing to the scrub oak: *"... the reign of God ... It is like mustard seed which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a large shrub and the birds of the air nested in its branches"* Luke 13: 18-19

He reached out his hand toward a finch perched on a slender branch. *"Come to me."* I was amazed that it stayed still, not shying from his outstretched hand. Yet it was to me that he continued to speak, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you."* Matt 11: 28

The words flew right to my needy heart and nestled there. *"Refresh you."* I love the sound of that, but what does that even mean? How will you refresh me?"

"My friend, your sins are forgiven you. I do it. Be cured." Luke 5:20 and Mark 1: 41

"What is it that you are curing me of?" Suddenly, I took offense. "I am fine."

Smiling, he reached out his hand to me, and like that little bird I did not startle, *"People who are healthy do not need a doctor; sick people do. I have come to call sinners, not the self-righteous."* Mark 2:17

He touched my chest. *"... your sins are forgiven."* With these words, seemingly my heart flew out with my chest and up beyond the evening darkness. cf. Mark 2:5

As he turned back toward the path and moved a branch blocking our way, he said, as though to someone not there with us but with whom he was often arguing, *"For I did not come to condemn the world but to save it."* John 12: 47

"Where are we going?" This time I asked with anticipation rather than fear.

"To other towns I must announce the good news of the reign of God, because that it is why I was sent. This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand!" Luke 4:43. and Mark 1:15

Then, he shouted back over his shoulder at me, *"How many loaves do you have?"* like it was a joke, that I wasn't in on yet. Mark 8:5

mkj



* Just so everyone's clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.

* Never buy flowers from a monk.
only you can prevent florist friars.

Catholic Charities Affordable Housing in OKC

Casa Maria is transitional housing for families who are recovering from a crisis. These residents meet the income requirement and have a plan for independent and permanent housing. This location has six units

Villa Isenbart and **Trinity Gardens Apartments** provides housing for people who are 62 years of age and older and meet specific income requirements. Together these two complexes have 94 units.

March Saints and Days

- 03 [USA: St. Katharine Drexel]
- 04 [St. Casimir]
- 05 **Second Sunday of Lent**
- 07 [Sts. Perpetua and Felicity]
- 08 [St. John of God]
- 09 [St. Frances of Rome]
- 12 **Third Sunday of Lent**
- 17 [St. Patrick]
- 18 [St. Cyril of Jerusalem]
- 19 **Fourth Sunday of Lent**
- 20 **St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Solemnity**
- 23 [St. Turibius of Mogrovejo]
- 25 **The Annunciation of the Lord; Solemnity**
- 26 **Fifth Sunday of Lent**



* How much did the pirate pay to get his ears pierced? A buccaneer.

* Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm.

Evictions and Oklahoma

Tulsa ranks 11th and Oklahoma City 20th in the nation on evictions (<https://evictionlab.org/rankings/#/evictions?r=United%20States&a=0&d=evictionRate&lang=en>). One reason for our high eviction rate is that our state does not have an anti-retaliation law, which would allow for language in rental contracts that makes it illegal for a landlord to retaliate against a troublesome renter. So, say you call your landlord about a leaky faucet or a bug problem. And you call again, because no action was made. And perhaps again because there is still a problem. In Oklahoma, your landlord could evict you and you would have no legal recourse.

St. Charles Borromeo—March, 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div> Confessions every Saturday at 3 pm Adoration every Wednesday at 9:30 am - 7:00 pm </div>			1 6:15 PM Confirmation & RE 7:00 PM Choir Practice <u>Adoration</u> <u>9:30 AM - 7 PM</u> <u>Every Wednesday</u> Archdiocesan Spelling Bee	2 4:00 PM Newsletter Meeting - Kastner Room	3 6:30 PM Stations of the Cross / Via Crucis 7:00 PM RICA 7:00 PM Soup & Salad	4 9:00 AM Clase PreBautismal en Beckman Hall
5 9:15 AM Confirmation & RE	6 6:00 PM Social Minstry Board 7:00 PM Talleres de Oración Adultos in C	7 6:00 PM Talleres de Oración Niños in A/B 7:00 PM Baptismal Seminar English - C 7:00 PM <i>Journey of Faith</i>	8 7:00 PM Choir Practice	9 <u>6:30 PM Parish</u> <u>Penance Rite</u>	10 6:30 PM Stations of the Cross / Via Crucis 7:00 PM RICA 7:00 PM Soup & Salad 3rd Quarter Ends	11 9:00 AM Clase PreBautismal en Beckman Hall
12 3:00 PM WOSC Meeting	13 9:45 AM Food Bank Delivery 7:00 PM Talleres de Oración Adultos in C	14 5:30 PM Stewardship Meeting Kastner Room 6:00 PM Talleres de Oración Niños in A/B 7:00 PM <i>Journey of Faith</i>	15 6:15 PM Confirmation & RE 7:00 PM Choir Practice	16 6:30 PM Catholic Social Justice Meeting - KR	17 6:30 PM Stations of the Cross / Via Crucis 7:00 PM RICA 7:00 PM Soup & Salad	18 9:00 AM Catholic Worker Delivery
Spring Break - No School						
19 9:15 AM Confirmation & RE Pope Francis Anniversary	20 7:00 PM Talleres de Oración Adultos in C No School- Professional Development St. Joseph	21 6:00 PM Talleres de Oración Niños in A/B 7:00 PM <i>Journey of Faith</i> 7:00 PM Parish Council Meeting	22 6:15 PM Confirmation & RE 7:00 PM Choir Practice	23	24 6:30 PM Stations of the Cross / Via Crucis 7:00 PM RICA 7:00 PM Soup & Salad	25 9:00 AM Catholic Worker Delivery 6:15 PM Presentation on the Death Penalty - Don Heath Annunciation
26 9:15 AM Confirmation & RE	27 7:00 PM Talleres de Oración Adultos in C 7:00 PM Knights Meeting Bl. Stan Rother	28 6:00 PM Talleres de Oración Niños in A/B 7:00 PM <i>Journey of Faith</i>	29 6:15 PM Confirmation & RE 7:00 PM Choir Practice	30	31 6:30 PM Stations of the Cross / Via Crucis 7:00 PM RICA 7:00 PM Soup & Salad	



February 2023

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26	27	28				

April 2023

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Parish Life

New Parishioners-January

Armando Cardoza & Jacqueline Roman
 Cristian & Gisselle Escalera
 Juan Escalera & Ofelia Esparza
 Yobany Figueroa & Estefania Perez
 Jose Carlos Hernandez
 Sanjuana Hernandez
 Daniel & Maria Guadalupe Martinez
 Martin & Estefany Olvera
 Francisco Perez
 Jose & Maria Romo
 Jose Suarez
 Luis Velasco & Adela Macias
 Jesus & Marisa Morales
 Raul Romo & Araceli Figueroa

Baptisms-January

Link Stanley Andrews
 Francis Atsushi Fujiyoshi
 Adrian Escobar Nieto
 Anna Lopez
 Daniel Martinez Flores



Deaths-January

Carolyn Beck
 Virginia Pabst
 Elizabeth Houck

Anniversaries-March

Mar.		Anniv.
06 th	Heriberto Duron & Cynthia Muñoz	02 nd
12 th	John Heinen and Carmen Santos-Heinen	07 th
16 th	Chet and Sue Bartlett	60 th
20 th	E. J. and Alma Natale	36 th
21 st	Mike and Paula Murphy	42 nd



Weddings-January

Jose Ivan Escobar & Blanca Equigua



Humilitas

We, your newsletter team, submit this issue with humility and thanks to God: Father Will Banowsky, Les Basset, Michael Carpenter, Kay Dumesnil, Kathy Judge, Monica Knudsen, Margaret Phipps
 print shop: Karen Flores, Jennifer Hernandez-Reyes

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