

Sooner Catholic

Serving the People of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

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Prayers For Life

Oklahoma Catholics Take to Streets To Promote 40 Days for Life Effort



OKLAHOMA CITY — Several dozen people stood in the bright sunshine on a Friday morning holding pro-life banners and signs outside a Warr Acres abortion clinic as the 40 Days for Life campaign again brought its sanctity of life message to Oklahoma.

Drivers motoring down NW 63rd Street honked their horns in approval of the peaceful vigil. Father Rick Stansberry joined the morning effort along with several parishioners. Catholics from Epiphany Parish and St. Damian's Latin Community were also among the pro-lifers as were members of the Baptist and Pentecostal faith communities. But as David Wallace, a lifelong Baptist said, "The Catholics are by far the leaders in the pro-life effort."

One of the highlights of the morning came when Shawn Carney, national campaign director for 40 Days for Life, arrived on the scene. Carney, who once considered the priesthood but is now married and the father of three, said 40 Days for Life got its start in 2004.

Carney said College Station, Texas, was the birthplace for 40 Days. It was also the place where last year national attention was focused when a director for Planned Parenthood walked away from her job after witnessing an abortion via

an ultrasound.

"Abbey Johnson walked out of the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic and into my office which is right next door," said Carney. He said Johnson told him after seeing the beating heart of the child before it was aborted, she could no longer deny that abortion is murder and she could no longer be a part of it.

Carney said since its beginning in 2004 in that single Texas community, the 40 Days for Life campaign has spread to more than 307 cities across the United States. It is in every state in the nation and is now being promoted in six countries.

Oklahoma has three abortion clinics, one in Warr Acres, one in Norman and one in Tulsa, Carney said. He said six abortion clinics have been closed following 40 Days for Life vigils and 38 employees of abortion clinics have walked away from their jobs following the vigils. The most important figure Carney cites is that some 3,000 abortions have been prevented.

He said 40 Days for Life supporters speak honestly to the women and men who are entering the abortion clinics on their way to a scheduled abortion. The tone is never one of condemnation or aggressive in nature.

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Dozens turned out to pray on the sidewalk outside a Warr Acres abortion clinic as the 40 Days for Life campaign came to Oklahoma City.



Archbishop Beltran and pilgrims from Oklahoma are pictured with the representative of His Beatitude Fouad Twal at the Latin Patriarchate in the Old City of Jerusalem during their September visit.

Sooner Catholic

Most Reverend
Eusebius J. Beltran
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Publisher

Ray Dyer
Editor

Cara Koenig
Photographer / Technology

Mauro Yanez
Hispanic Editor

7501 Northwest Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
(405) 721-1810 Fax: (405) 721-5210
e-mail: rdyer@catharchdioceseokc.org
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 32180
Oklahoma City, OK 73123

Visit us online through the
Archdiocesan Web Page at
www.catharchdioceseokc.org.

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A \$200 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by St. Eugene's Parish, OKC.

A \$50 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by Rosalie Larkin.

A \$50 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse in memory of Mary Victoria Tinker.

A \$500 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by Little Flower Parish, OKC.

A \$250 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse in memory of Joe and Mary Tinker.

A \$183.75 donation was made to the Father Stanley Rother Seminary Burse by the students of St. Mary School, Ponca City.

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— \$75 donation from Katherine Harney.

A \$250 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse by Our Lady's Cathedral Parish.

A \$500 donation was made to the Father Joseph Beltran Seminary Burse in memory of Marianna C. Grotefend.

A \$25 donation was made to the Archbishop Charles Salatka Seminary Burse in memory of Corene Hammen.

A \$5,000 donation was made to the Bishop Stephen A. Leven Seminary Burse by an anonymous donor.

40 Days

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They simply ask the people to prayerfully consider what they are about to do.

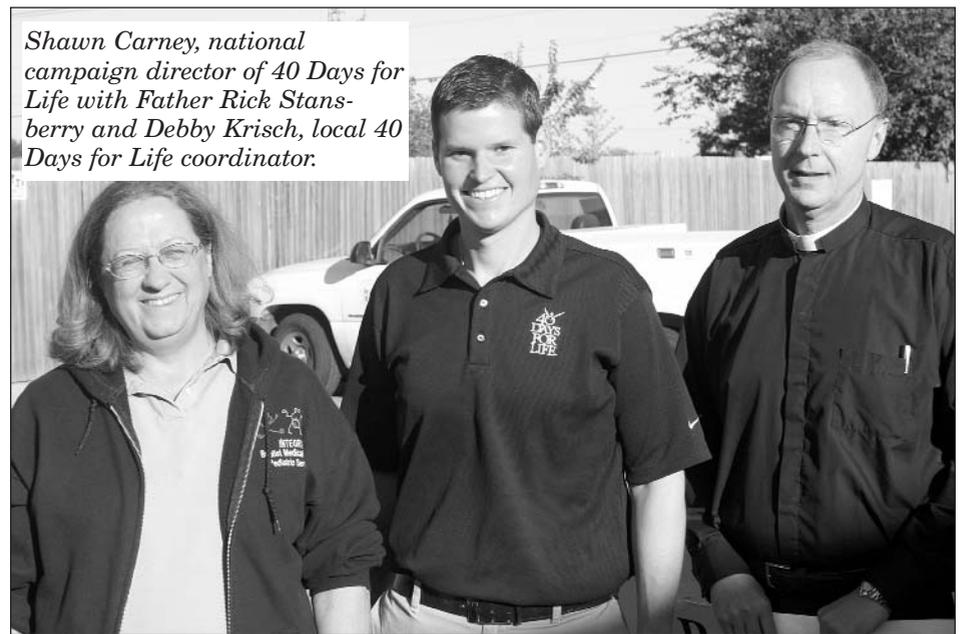
"We're not here to judge people," Carney said. "We find that people respond to the truth and to love." He said the fact people are willing to speak in public and pray in public for an end to abortion is very powerful.

Debby Krisch serves as coordinator for the 40 Days for Life effort in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. A parishioner at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Krisch said she's seen the ministry grow and make a difference.

"We have many Catholics working with us, but there are other faiths as well," Krisch said. She said all are welcome and needed in the battle to save lives and turn our culture of death into a culture of life.



Shawn Carney, national campaign director of 40 Days for Life with Father Rick Stansberry and Debby Krisch, local 40 Days for Life coordinator.



Catholic Radiothon To Begin on Oct. 25

Oklahoma Catholic Broadcasting will hold its fall Radiothon Oct. 25-29 from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Each night listeners can tune in to KTLR AM 890 and FM 94.1. There will be special guests throughout the week including our own Archbishop Beltran on Tuesday. The archbishop will be answering questions from listeners.

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St. Damien Doors Open With Blessing

Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran led the blessing and dedication of the new St. Damien Catholic Church on Oct. 2. A standing-room only crowd joined in the celebration.

The church, which celebrates the traditional Tridentine Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, is pastored by Rev. Howard Remski of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP), an organization founded by the late Pope John Paul II to promote and preserve the Latin Mass.

St. Damien and other parishes under the FSSP have flourished since current Pontiff Benedict XIV in 2007 eased restrictions on use of the Latin Mass, the celebration of which had faded since the changes of Vatican II in the 1960s.

The church was built by Clear Creek Construction, and furnishings including pews, stained-glass windows, a massive bell and an ornate antique Italian marble altar were donated by a closed Catholic church in Amsterdam, N.Y.

The building (technically a chapel) will serve as the church until a larger official church can be built in five to 10 years, at which time the current structure will

serve as the parish hall.

According to Father Remski, FSSP, St. Damien of Molokai was chosen by Archbishop Beltran as the patron of the new church because the archbishop is very devoted to this saint.

"I am very pleased with his choice," said Father Remski, "and I think it is a great opportunity to spread this devotion, his life is very inspiring. I read his biography when I was a child and it strongly influenced me and inspired me with a great love for the priesthood and missions."

St. Damien of Molokai was born Jozef De Veuster on Jan. 3, 1840, in Belgium. He became a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a missionary religious order. He arrived on the Hawaiian island of Molokai on May 10, 1873, where he spent the rest of his life ministering to people quarantined on the island with leprosy.

After 16 years caring for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of those in the leper colony, he contracted and died of leprosy. He is considered a "martyr of



Archbishop Beltran, center, blesses St. Damien Church. He is being assisted by Father Howard Remski, left, and visiting priest, Father Justin Nolan.

charity," that is one who dies through practicing Christian charity. He is the ninth person recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church to have lived, worked and died in what is now the United States. He died April 15, 1889, and was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 11, 2009. Thus Damien is venerated as a saint, that is one who is holy and worthy of public veneration and invocation.

St. Damien's will be the permanent home for the Traditional Latin Mass, also known as the Extraordinary Form of the Liturgy in the Roman Catholic Church. Archbishop Beltran wrote congratulating the community on its new Church, saying, "There you will be able to practice the fullness of our Catholic faith under the spiritual care of your priest."

The Latin Mass, celebrated universally in the Catholic Church up until the Second Vatican Council, has been celebrated in the Oklahoma City Archdiocese with the permission of the archbishop since 1993, when the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP) began supplying priests trained in the Latin Mass to this Archdiocese.

The FSSP was established in 1988 by Pope John Paul II. With full approval of the Holy See and the permission of local bishops, it

provides priests to dioceses for the purpose of administering a full sacramental life for the faithful according to the liturgical books of 1962.

In 2009, the FSSP, seeking a permanent home for its apostolate in the Oklahoma City Archdiocese, requested that the Archdiocese allow a new church to be built for this purpose. The site chosen was the previous site of St. Patrick's Catholic Church, which burned down in the 1960s. St. Patrick's cemetery is still in use and is adjacent to the new church.

According to Father Remski, "The furnishings for the new church are from a now closed Catholic church in Amsterdam, N.Y. The church was in an urban area which lost a lot of its population over the years and had to close, but the parish council did not want to sell the furnishings since it was a sacred place and those things really belonged to God, having been a gift of the people at its founding in 1931. The pastor called my superior and he was put in contact with me since we were the only FSSP apostolate that could use everything. We then sent a contractor who tried to salvage everything usable from the church. This reminds us that blessed and sacred things should

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The exterior of St. Damien Church.

Book Provides Daily Marian Reflection

Through the Year with Mary: 365 reflections. Karen Edmisten. Cincinnati, Ohio: Servant Books, 2010. 133 pages. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-86716-937-9. \$12.99.



There have been several books offering one minute meditations published over the years. This one is devoted to Mary, the Mother of God. Karen Edmisten has collected reflections from various authors from various times and places. These authors include such holy people as Bl. John Henry Newman, Venerable John Paul II, Bl. Teresa of Calcutta,

St. Teresa, St. Bonaventure, and many others. She has also gathered sayings from other persons like G.K. Chesterton, Mark Shea, Paul Elie, Thomas Merton and many others both living and deceased.

For each day, Edmisten has a one sentence reflection from someone and then she provides a short prayer or reflection the reader can use. She provides end-notes whereby the reader can look up more material to read and ponder on. She probably should have provided a



By Brother Benet Exton

reflection for Feb. 29 since it shows up every four years.

In her introduction she writes why she wrote this book to help Catholics and non-Catholics to get to know Mary better. Mary leads a person to her Son, Jesus.

She is the author of *The Rosary: Keeping Company with Jesus and Mary*, and she has written for various Catholic magazines and is a blogger. You can find her online at www.karenedmisten.com.

This book is highly recommended to those looking for a quick daily Marian reflection for each day of the year.

— Brother Benet Exton, O.S.B., St. Gregory's University, Shawnee.

Art Event to Raise Funds for Bishop John Carroll

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop John Carroll School and The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will host their annual fundraiser on Friday, Nov. 5, 2010, in the Connor Center located at 3214 N. Lake Ave. AN EVENING OF ART will begin at 6 p.m. with an hors d'oeuvre and wine reception.

To help with this event and for additional information, contact Liz Dominguez at 570-0608. If you can volunteer to assist with the event, contact Debbie Brown at 664-4942. Please join us!

Art donated by local and parish artists will be bid on by silent auction. Additional pieces will be available for purchase. Some great fixed priced dinners, events and the famous wine pull are also being offered.

We are very excited to present a wonderful art collection from Aaron Enterprises LLC. This collection includes originals and prints, pottery, wood-turned vessels and hand-blown glass from various artists including Rev. John L. Walch, Nan Sheets, Jay O'Melia, Sheridan Oman, Paul Maxwell, Monte Hoke, Addison Burbank, Cletus Smith, Rick Nicholson, Michael Foster, David Greer and Greg Burns.

Additional featured artists include Troy Chavez, Oliver Douberly, Carol Egger, Louisa Hoelscher, Kimba Motley, Carolyn Rossow, Betsy Rowland, Michele Schmidt, Mary Tevington, Jo Vanden, Izzy Walters and students of BJCS.

St. Damien —

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always be used for sacred purposes. Right now we are using the pews, the main altar and the baptismal font, and in the future church we will use the rest of the furnishings."

"In support of the FSSP and our ministries in the Archdiocese," Father Remski adds, "the archbishop has granted us permission to establish the new rectory as a Canonical House of the FSSP. This grants to us a more permanent basis locally, so that we are no longer simply guest priests. Our Superior General, Father John Berg, has issued a decree for our establishment under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

St. Damien Catholic Church invites those interested in praying the Latin Mass to the new location. Sunday services will include a Low Mass at 8 a.m. and a Sung Mass at 10:30 a.m. Daily Masses and many other activities such as classes, socials and extra devotions will also be available.

Father Remski, FSSP, may be contacted at (405) 219-1516.

St. Damien Catholic Church is located on Sorghum Mill Road (234th Street), 4.5 miles west of SH-74 (Portland). Visit the church's new website at www.stdamiens.org.



The altar at St. Damien's.

Archbishop's Dinner Benefits Catholic Education



Archbishop Beltran, honorary host, spoke recently about Catholic education in the Archdiocese at the annual Archbishop's Dinner held in the home of Carleen and Jerry Burger. Patrons of the dinner signed up at the Catholic Foundation Golf Classic and proceeds from the event went to the Catholic Schools Endowment Fund at the Catholic Foundation.



Archbishop Beltran, along with hosts Jerry and Carleen Burger, greeted dinner guests at the Archbishop's Dinner.



The Catholic Foundation

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Please Remember the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in Your Estate Plans

The Catholic Schools We Need

By Archbishop
Timothy M. Dolan

When St. Paul describes the gifts God has given the church, he includes teaching among the most important (1 Cor 12:28). No surprise there. “Go teach!” was the final mandate of Jesus. History has long taught that without teachers to announce the Gospel and educate the young, the church struggles to survive. Evangelization through good teaching is essential to Catholic life. Pastoral leaders in developing nations say that Catholic education is what attracts people to Jesus and his church. When it comes to education, nobody has a better track record than the church.

In the 20th century, for example, there was no greater witness to the effectiveness of Catholic schools than the Nazi and Communist efforts to destroy them. Pope Benedict XVI’s own beloved homeland — where to be Bavarian was to be Catholic — was perhaps hardest hit in all of Germany. By January 1939, nearly 10,000 German Catholic schools had been closed or taken over by the Nazi Party. Tyrants know and fear the true strength of a Catholic education: what parents begin in the home, Catholic schools extend to society at large.

But what of today’s Catholic schools that exist in a world largely free of those sorts of 20th-century threats? Are we not facing our own crisis of closure for the Catholic school in America?

The answer is yes. Statistics from the National Catholic Educational Association tell a sobering tale about Catholic schools in the United States. From a student enrollment in the mid-1960s of more than 5.2 million in nearly 13,000 elementary and secondary Catholic schools across America, there are now only half as many, with just 7,000 schools and 2.1 million students enrolled.

The reasons for the decline are familiar: the steady drop in vocations to the religious teaching orders who were the greatest single work force in the church’s modern period; the drastic shift in demographics of the late-20th century that saw a dra-



Archbishop Timothy Dolan

matic drop-off in Catholic immigration from Europe; the rising cost of living since the late 1970s that forced nearly every American parent to become a wage-earner and put Catholic education beyond their budget; and the crumbling of an intact neighborhood-based Catholic culture that depended upon the parochial school as its foundation.

The most crippling reason, however, may rest in an enormous shift in the thinking of many American Catholics, namely, that the responsibility for Catholic schools belongs only to the parents of the students who attend them, not to the entire church. Nowadays, Catholics often see a Catholic education as a consumer product, reserved to those who can afford it. The result is predictable: Catholics as a whole in the United States have for some time disowned their school system, excusing themselves as individuals, parishes or dioceses from any further involvement with a Catholic school simply because their own children are not enrolled there, or their parish does not have its own school.

Widespread Benefits

The truth is that the entire parish, the whole diocese and the universal church benefit from Catholic schools in ways that keep communities strong. So all Catholics have a duty to support

them. Reawakening a sense of common ownership of Catholic schools may be the biggest challenge the church faces in any revitalization effort ahead. Thus, we Catholics need to ask ourselves a risky question: Who needs Catholic schools, anyway?

The answer: We all do. Much of the research on Catholic education conducted over the last five decades — from Rev. Andrew Greeley to the University of Notre Dame; from the National Opinion Research Center to the work of independent, often non-Catholic scholars — has answered with a unanimous voice that without a doubt Catholic schools are an unquestioned success in every way: spiritually, academically and communally. More to the point, the graduates they produce emerge as lifelong practitioners of their faith. These Catholic graduates have been, are and will be our leaders in church and society.

Consider:

* The academic strength of Catholic schools is unassailable. Researchers like Helen Marks, in her essay, “Perspectives on Catholic Schools” in Mark Berends’s *Handbook of Research on School Choice* (2009), have found that when learning in a Catholic school is done in an environment replete with moral values and the practice of faith, its test scores and achievements outstrip public school counterparts.

* Updating the work of John Coleman in the early 1980s, Professor Berends also estimates that two factors — the influence of Catholic values and the fostering of Catholic faith and morals — are the single biggest supports for the success of many young people, Catholic or not, educated in inner-city Catholic schools.

* Sociologists like Father Greeley, in his book, “Catholic Schools in a Declining Church” (1976), and Mary Gautier, in her more recent article, “Does Catholic Education Make a Difference?” (*National Catholic Reporter*, 9/30/05), have found that graduates of Catholic schools are notably different from Catholic children not in parochial schools in four important areas: 1) Fidelity to Sunday Mass and a keener sense of prayer; 2)

Maintaining pro-life attitudes, especially on the pivotal topic of abortion; 3) The personal consideration of a religious vocation and 4) Continued support for the local church and community, both financially and through service projects, for the balance of their adult lives.

* Catholic school graduates make good citizens, deeply committed to social justice, the care of the poor and the planet, proud volunteers in the church and in community. The widespread institution of service program requirements in Catholic schools over the last two decades has helped to create an entire generation of generous, socially minded alumni ready to help, no matter the need.

More could be written, of course, about how Catholic schools continue to excel in so many ways, helping to form citizens who are unabashedly believers in the way they live out what is most noble in our American identity. The few points listed above are potent reminders of the many long-term effects that Catholic schools have on the formation of their students. As both history has shown and researchers have documented, there are plenty of reasons for all American Catholics to take proud ownership of Catholic schools.

Reviving Catholic Schools

Not only should the reasons behind changes in attitude toward Catholic schools give us pause, but also the consequences of letting this school system decline. If Catholic education promotes lifelong commitment to faith and virtue, a high sense of social justice, greater numbers of religious vocations and an embrace of a way of life based on responsible stewardship, then will not its continued decline risk further erosion in all of these areas? Catholic history can answer this clearly.

In New York, for example, a nagging concern from the 19th century is re-emerging at the start of the 21st. My predecessor, Arch-bishop John Hughes — famously known as Dagger John for his fearsome wit and readiness to fight for Catholic rights — struggled to

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All Saints Celebrates Completion of Gym

NORMAN — All Saints Catholic School celebrated the school's 15th birthday with the dedication of a new gymnasium. More than 600 people took part in the dedication celebration.

The highlight of the dedication of the new 12,000-square-foot, \$1.3 million multi-purpose building was having Archbishop Beltran preside at the blessing with assistance from Father Thomas Boyer, pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church. The center boasts a gymnasium designed to host basketball and volleyball games, as well as daily physical education classes, a full-sized commercial kitchen, concession areas, a lobby, restrooms, physical education offices and storage.

The first fundraising efforts began around 10 years ago, raising around \$250,000. The remaining million dollars have been raised over

the past four years, with the ground being broken for the center a little over a year ago.

During construction, the school chapel was converted into additional classroom space. The new chapel, designed by Father Boyer, is a beautiful and prayerful space, which was missed by the 40 staff members who gather each morning for prayer.

It was hard to imagine 15 years ago that the school, then only 160 students in the education wing at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, would now enroll 450 students. The school is the second largest Catholic elementary school in the Archdiocese, as well as the second newest.

The school was one of only 100 private and parochial schools in the nation in 2007 to be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. A criteria for

private and parochial schools to receive this honor is to achieve test scores in the top 10 percent of the nation.

In celebration of our 15th birthday, this year has been named the Year of Service. The theme of "It is in giving that we receive" has been adopted.

Every classroom has selected a year-long service outreach program. It was important that students not only give back to the community, but also learn about why social issues come about and come up with solutions to help those in need.

All Saints Catholic School serves children in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. It is an interparish school supported by four Cleveland County parishes: St. Mark, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. Thomas More.

Catholic Schools

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rid the New York public schools in the 1840s of their anti-Catholic bias. He was convinced, after watching immigrant families fight discrimination, that "the days had come, and the place, in which the school is more necessary than the church" (from James Burns' *A History of Catholic Education in the United States*, emphasis added). Quite a statement, one echoed by several of his brother bishops, including a saint, John Neuman, bishop of Philadelphia, and the scholar and reformer John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, who said that "without parish schools, there is no hope that the Church will be able to maintain itself in America" (see David Sweeney's *The Life of John Lancaster Spalding*). These men understood that until Catholic schools were up and running, Catholic life would be stagnant. They made the establishment of Catholic schools their priority, and, thank God, most other American bishops followed their example. In 1956, for instance, my own parish in Ballwin, Mo., built its school even before its church, and I am sure glad they did, because that year I entered first grade to begin the most formative eight years of my life.

Given the aggressive secularization of American culture, could it be that Catholics are looking at the same con-

sequences that met those 19th-century prelates? Today's anti-Catholicism hardly derives from that narrow 19th-century Protestantism, intent on preserving its own cultural and political hold. Those battles are long settled. Instead, the Catholic Church is now confronted by a new secularization asserting that a person of faith can hardly be expected to be a tolerant and enlightened American. Religion, in this view, is only a personal hobby, with no implications for public life. Under this new scheme, to take one's faith seriously and bring it to the public square somehow implies being un-American. To combat this notion, an equally energetic evangelization — with Catholic schools at its center — is all the more necessary.

The 21st-century version of the Hughes predicament, which tried to establish Catholic rights in the face of a then anti-Catholic America, would seem to suggest that without Catholic schools the church in the United States is growing less Catholic, less engaged with culture and less capable of transforming American life with the Gospel message. As long as we Catholics refuse to acknowledge that the overall health of the church in the United States is vitally linked not only to the survival but the revival of the Catholic school, we are likely to miss the enormous opportunity this

present moment extends.

It is time to recover our nerve and promote our schools for the 21st century. The current hospice mentality — watching our schools slowly die — must give way to a renewed confidence. American Catholic schools need to be un-abashedly proud of their proven gritty ability to transmit faith and values to all their students, particularly welcoming the immigrant and the disadvantaged, whose hope for success lies in an education that makes them responsible citizens. This is especially true for the Catholic Hispanics in the country, whose children account for a mere 4 percent of the Catholic school population. Failure to include the expanding Hispanic population in Catholic education would be a huge generational mistake.

To re-grow the Catholic school system, today's efforts need to be rooted in the long-term financial security that comes from institutional commitment through endowments, foundations and stable funding sources and also from every parish supporting a Catholic school, even if it is not "their own." Catholic education is a communal, ecclesial duty, not just for parents of schoolchildren or for parishes blessed to have their own school. Surely American Catholics have sufficient wealth and imagination to

accomplish this.

It is both heartening and challenging to remember that Catholic churches and schools were originally built on the small donations of immigrants who sacrificed nickels, dimes and dollars to make their children Catholics who are both well educated and fully American. Have we Catholics lost our nerve, the dare and dream that drove our ancestors in the faith, who built a Catholic school system that is the envy of the world?

We cannot succumb to the petty turf wars that pit Catholic schools against religious education programs and other parish ministries. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that the church is all about both/and, not either/or. Strong Catholic schools strengthen all other programs of evangelization, service, catechesis and sanctification. The entire church suffers when Catholic schools disappear.

As the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, Bishop of Covington, has said: "While there may be alternatives to Catholic education, there are no substitutes."

Most Rev. Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York, has just released "Pathways to Excellence," a new course of long-term planning for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York.

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Human Embryos in the Age of Obama

The First Annual Neuhaus Colloquium calls for a permanent reversal of a misguided stem-cell policy

Nine years ago, the White House announced and implemented the first-ever federal funding policy for stem-cell research. That policy sought to advance cutting-edge research while remaining faithful to the U.S. government's long-standing posture of neutrality toward research that depends on the use and destruction of living human embryos: It neither funded it nor proscribed it. Last year, President Obama announced a new policy that marked a radical and misguided departure from this approach, and the National Institutes of Health published new guidelines to implement this change in policy. On Aug. 23, 2010, Judge Royce Lamberth of the federal district court in Washington, D.C., issued a preliminary injunction against the NIH guidelines because a very strong case can be made that they violate a statutory ban (known as the Dickey-Wicker Amendment) on the use of federal funds to support "research in which a human embryo or embryos are destroyed." Judge Lamberth's ruling is only preliminary and preserves a pre-Obama policy status quo while further litigation proceeds — or the administration changes its guidelines. In light of these events, it is worth pausing to reflect carefully on the new policy the Obama administration seeks to put in place, including its justifications and implementation.

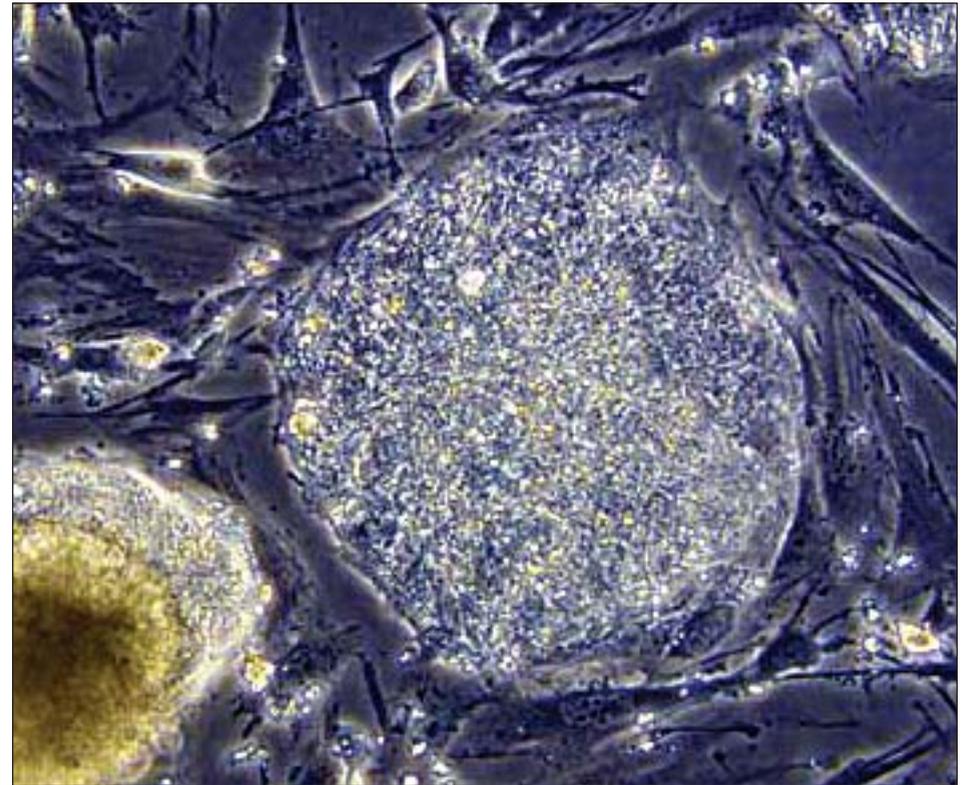
If the new policy survives the challenge of litigation, for the first time in U.S. history, taxpayer funds will be available to promote research that requires the destruction of human embryos. This sharp reversal of direction was imposed with essentially no public justification or argument, and indeed with efforts that mask its true nature and significance. Since the new policy took effect, with an executive order issued in early March of last year, the

Obama administration and its congressional allies have sought to avoid further argument about embryo-destructive research and to depict the debate as settled.

We believe the debate is not settled, and we commend Judge Lamberth for faithfully applying existing law that voices the conviction of a majority of the American people that human life is not to be destroyed with taxpayer dollars. The question of the use and destruction of human embryos in scientific research requires greater consideration than the administration has given it, and the new policy raises serious concerns that should be brought to light. A free nation can never permit itself to be indifferent to the treatment of human beings, let alone to be actively complicit in their abuse, yet the new policy and the president's statements commit the nation's resources to such complicity in the mistreatment of developing human lives. We hope that by laying out the policy and the statements, and explaining the ways in which they both violate crucial ethical principles and fundamentally misrepresent the relevant scientific facts, we may alert our fellow citizens to a grave injustice in need of swift correction.

The New Policy

The administration's new policy was announced by the president on March 9, 2009, was elucidated by guidelines published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) four months later, and came into effect with a series of grants announced at the beginning of December of that year. The new policy overturned three decades of federal refusal to use taxpayer dollars to encourage the destruction of human embryos for research. Now, the federal government would offer public funds to support research using newly created lines of human embryonic stem cells (hESCs), thereby providing a direct incentive to destroy human embryos to produce such lines. In the name of the American people, the federal government made researchers an unmistakable offer: If you destroy human embryos to



An embryo stem cell.

produce new lines of cells, you and others will become eligible for public dollars to study those lines.

President Obama's executive order announced this new policy in one terse and conclusory sentence: "The Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary), through the director of NIH, may support and conduct responsible, scientifically worthy human stem cell research, including human embryonic stem cell research, to the extent permitted by law." None of these criteria is defined or elaborated in the text of the order. It leaves the details to the NIH.

Substantively, the order imposes virtually no limits on funding for embryonic stem-cell research. It does not, for example, include any restrictions on funding for research involving stem cells derived from human embryos who were created solely for the sake of research by whatever means, including cloning. Even the statement that funding is restricted by law is misleading, since the only legal restrictions on such funding are appropriations riders that must be reauthorized every year. The instability of this "restriction" is aggra-

vated by the fact that, in his speech announcing the new policy, President Obama called on Congress to pass new laws that further advance embryo-destructive research.

The NIH guidelines that followed, some four months after President Obama's announcement, did define some more particular — although temporary — boundaries. Under these rules, now enjoined by Judge Lamberth, funding is restricted to research involving cell lines derived from embryos who were "created using in vitro fertilization for reproductive purposes and were no longer needed for this purpose," where such embryos were donated by the parents. The guidelines forbid funding for research that uses embryonic stem cells derived from embryos conceived by human cloning (somatic cell nuclear transfer), parthenogenesis, "and/or IVF embryos created for research purposes."

Moreover, applicants for federal funding must document that "all options available in the health facility where treatment was sought" and that "what would happen to the embryos in the derivation of hESCs

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for research” was explained to the donors and their informed consent secured, and that no payments were offered for the embryos. For applicants seeking funding for research involving lines derived before the new policy was announced, an advisory committee to the director of NIH may recommend funding even if these criteria are not completely met, if the committee is persuaded that the embryos in question were created by in vitro fertilization for reproductive purposes and donated by individuals who gave written consent.

The guidelines also prohibit funding for research in which human embryonic stem-cell lines are “introduced into non-human primate blastocysts” or which involves “the breeding of animals where the introduction of hESCs or human induced pluripotent stem cells may contribute to the germ line.” They mention an appropriations rider (the Dickey Amendment) that forbids federal funding for the direct destruction of embryos by researchers, although the rider has been construed to permit federal funding for research using the cells derived from such destruction.

The NIH guidelines are indeed more restrictive than President Obama’s executive order. But it is worth noting two things. First, even with these limitations, the guidelines mark the first time in history that taxpayer dollars have been conscripted into supporting and promoting the use and destruction of living human beings. Indeed, they permit funding for lines derived by every technique now known to be practiced in the field of embryo research. The only techniques left out of bounds are all speculative. Second, the guidelines can be changed in very short order, given the breadth of the executive order they are implementing. It would be a very small thing for the NIH to adopt a far more aggressive posture of funding embryo-destructive research including, for example, funding for research involving stem-cell lines derived from embryos created solely for the sake of research (e.g., by IVF or cloning).

It is also important to note that the guidelines are grossly inadequate for their own purposes. For instance, they do not require the fertility clinic seeking a parent’s consent for making his or her embryos available for research to inform the parent specifically that the research will destroy those embryos. They also do not require the clinic to inform parents of any alternatives for their embryos beyond those available at that particular clinic; since most clinics do not offer embryo adoption, most parents will never be told they have an option that will preserve the life of their embryonic child. The guidelines fail even to prohibit the serious conflict of interest inherent in circumstances in which the fertility doctor advising the parents and the embryo researcher who will destroy their embryos work closely together, or indeed are actually the same person.

Beyond its direct effects — on the embryos

themselves and on the taxpayers whose money will now be used to provide incentives for the destruction of human embryos — this radical new policy entrenches in federal law a dangerous precedent: the principle that some human beings may be instrumentalized and treated as raw materials. Respect for the lives of all human beings is eroded as a result.

The new funding guidelines simply ignore this concern, instead describing in great detail a regime of so-called ethical rules that in fact address only questions of informed consent and professional practice — questions that can be asked only when more fundamental ethical concerns about the treatment of human embryos have been put aside.

Following conception, from the single-cell stage of development onward, the human embryo is a discrete, living, self-directing, integrated, whole member of the human species.

The President’s Explanation

Both the president and the guidelines put aside such concerns. In his remarks announcing the new policy, President Obama noted that “many thoughtful and decent people are conflicted about, or strongly oppose, this research. I understand their concerns, and we must respect their point of view.” Yet he in no way sought to address, explain or even refer in any detail whatsoever to the particulars of that point of view. Instead, he claimed, without evidence, that “the majority of Americans — from across the political spectrum, and of all backgrounds and beliefs — have come to a consensus that we should pursue this research” and then proceeded to explain how his administration would pursue it.

At no point has the president offered any argument for treating human embryos as less than human beings and intentionally destroying them for scientific research. At no point has the administration sought to answer the arguments of those who oppose the research. They have treated the question of the moral status of human embryos as entirely irrelevant to their policy decision, and have insisted that any relevant ethical concerns about embryonic stem-cell research are addressed by the informed-consent guidelines.

Rather than take up the profound ethical questions and make a case for his position grounded in moral principles and biological facts, the president has chosen to allow the question to be entirely subsumed by what he insists is the sci-

entific imperative to pursue embryo-destructive research.

The executive order, for example, offers only one positive argument in favor of the new approach, which reads, in full, “Advances over the past decade in this promising scientific field have been encouraging, leading to broad agreement in the scientific community that the research should be supported by federal funds.” The notion that “the scientific community” alone should determine what research should be supported by federal funds betrays a serious misunderstanding of the president’s responsibility, and of science policy in a democracy.

Many of the president’s other statements on the subject betray a similar misapprehension. In his March 9 remarks, President Obama said: “Promoting science isn’t just about providing resources — it is also about protecting free and open inquiry. It is about letting scientists like those here today do their jobs, free from manipulation or coercion, and listening to what they tell us, even when it’s inconvenient — especially when it’s inconvenient.” But science is not merely abstract inquiry. Science is also concrete action, and, when those acted on are human beings, scientists must answer to moral principles and boundaries for which — and to which — the whole society is responsible. These principles and boundaries are not the province of scientists alone, but of all men and women, employing the moral reasoning common to us all, and making the shared effort to be an ethically responsible society. Slighting this common responsibility and attempting to hide behind the authority of science makes it impossible to have an informed ethical debate.

President Obama’s failure to grasp this essential truth about the limits of science is all the more worrisome given the lofty aspirations he expressed for his funding policy, which border on the utopian or the messianic. In his March 9 speech, he said: “There is no finish line in science. The race is always with us — the urgent work of giving substance to hope and answering those many bedside prayers, of seeking a day when words like ‘terminal’ and ‘incurable’ are finally retired from our vocabulary.”

The Ethical Issues

Because of the failure of President Obama and his administration to do so thus far, we should consider carefully the ethical issues at stake in scientific experimentation that uses and destroys human embryos. That consideration can certainly begin from what the science tells us about the nature and biology of human embryos. And what it tells us turns out to be, in the president’s own word, “inconvenient” for those who would treat human embryos as mere raw materials for research.

Following conception, from the single-cell stage of development onward, the human embryo

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is a discrete, living, self-directing, integrated, whole member of the human species, who, if given the appropriate environment, will move along the seamless trajectory of biological development. From the beginning — and a fortiori at the blastocyst stage, when the embryo might be destroyed to derive embryonic stem cells — the embryo is a living, individuated organism. It is a whole and not a part.

Indeed, each embryo's constituent parts are integrated so as to advance the species-specific development of the whole being. Neither the facts of "twinning" (a rare process of regulation and restitution in which disaggregated blastomeres sometimes resolve themselves into a new organism), nor "natural embryo loss" (the seemingly high rate of embryonic deaths in utero before or shortly after implantation) calls into question the living embryo's status as an individuated whole member of the human species. Biologically, it is beyond dispute that he or she is a living organism from the very beginning — is, from the moment of conception, a human being.

These facts do not by themselves resolve the ethical question of the use of human embryos for research. We would not claim that science alone resolves moral questions. Rather, these facts inform our judgment of the moral standing of the embryo. They help us formulate the question that should guide public policy about the destruction of human embryos for research: Should human beings at the earliest stages of life be used as raw materials and have their lives ended for the sake of medical research, however promising that research might be?

This question could hardly be more important for a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. It gets to the heart of our commitment to the equal dignity of every human being. Biologically, the human embryo is as much a human being as any of us. But what does that fact mean, morally and practically? Is our equal humanity enough to merit some protection and regard — at least the minimal protection from being killed on purpose — or are we required to prove we have some other preferred set of capacities and abilities (which all humans possess to varying degrees in the course of their lives) to qualify for protection from harm? Do we refrain from mistreating fellow human beings because of what they can do, which excludes some, or because of who they are? Shall we treat the human embryo as less than human because that embryo would be more useful to us dead than alive? Or shall we treat our equal humanity as a vital brake on our ambitions, even when it comes at a price? Shall we limit our ambitions, even at a price to ourselves?



Five-day-old human.

We believe these questions have a clear answer. Every human being deserves to be treated with the same basic level of concern and regard that we owe to all members of our species. At the very least, no innocent human being may be harmed intentionally to benefit others. To abandon this principle is to embrace an incoherent, indeed self-destroying, conception of equality. If equality means anything at all, it must mean that individuals deserve equal moral regard and legal protection in virtue of who they are, not because of their worth as judged (or assigned) by others according to their needs or wants.

The decision to treat some human beings as raw materials or instruments for the use of others — the fundamental decision embodied by the administration's funding policy for embryonic stem-cell research — denies the equal dignity of every human being and insists that some deserve to be treated like human beings and others do not, for reasons that have to do not with the embryonic human beings involved but with the attitudes, desires or needs of the rest of us. As a policy supporting such treatment with public dollars, moreover, it implicates us all.

The Administration's Confusion

The administration's rules seem implicitly to recognize some deep problem with such abuse of human embryos, but in a confused and inadequate way. While the rules allow for funding new lines of embryonic stem cells, they do not permit funds to be used on lines from embryos created specifically to be destroyed for research. Embryos abandoned by their parents (and therefore unlikely to be implanted and to develop to birth) are fair game for researchers, but no embryos can be produced specifically for experimentation. The distinction is never explained but seems to rest on the proposition that, since embryos created for

fertility treatment but not used are likely to be stored or discarded, they can legitimately be destroyed for research instead, while creating new human lives specifically for the purposes of such research, on the other hand, is unethical.

This reasoning is deeply flawed. The embryos who find themselves in clinic freezers are there as a result of choices made by others — namely, their parents and the clinicians involved. To use these circumstances as an excuse to destroy them — to say that embryos in these circumstances are not entitled to even the most minimal protection and regard we give to fellow human beings — is to empower some of us to render or to deem the lives of others meaningless, and to allow those who do so to evade the moral consequences of their actions.

These embryos already began their lives in the service of a biomedical project designed to serve the needs of others; now we propose to end their lives in the service of another such project and somehow judge the balance ethically acceptable. It is true many of them will "die anyway," but, as Gilbert Meilaender has written, "our relation to their dying is not a matter for moral indifference. It is one thing for us to acquiesce in their death; it is quite another for us to embrace their death as our aim, to seize on it as an advantageous opportunity to use them yet again for our purposes."

The administration's distinction between embryos who have been abandoned by their parents and those created specifically for research simply does not hold up. Anyone moved to make such a distinction would seem to be worried enough about the standing of human embryos to seek to avoid gross and intentional abuses. Some reflection on the nature of the distinction, however, should persuade such a person that it fails to avoid such abuses.

The refusal to avoid the abuse of human life inherent in embryo research is especially troubling in light of the fact that scientific alternatives to such practices are increasingly available and effective. Whatever its merits might once have seemed, the case for a scientific imperative for the research — which is the core of the administration's position — has grown increasingly weak in recent years.

Ironically, federal policy has taken a sharp turn in favor of embryo-destructive research just as the science emerging from the nation's leading stem-cell research labs has begun to turn elsewhere. For about the past five years, a series of alternative sources of human pluripotent stem cells, perhaps most notably so-called induced pluripotent stem cells (or iPS cells), have increasingly been proving their utility. This is another truth "inconvenient" to those who are steadfastly

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committed to promoting embryo-destructive research. Several of these techniques offer benefits that the use of cells derived from embryos produced for fertility treatment do not, such as the potential for genetically matched cell lines and for the development of lines from patients with particular diseases. Just as important, all of these techniques offer the potential to advance promising research without imperiling our commitment to the equal dignity and standing of every human being.

President Obama has said that he supports the exploration of these alternative avenues, yet his actions suggest otherwise. As he reversed his predecessor's funding policy for embryonic stem-cell research last March, he also revoked his predecessor's 2007 executive order supporting the exploration of alternative sources of stem cells. There is no good reason to revoke such support. Whatever his intent, President Obama's actions make it more difficult for ethically uncontroversial alternatives to the destruction of human embryos to succeed.

In designing his funding policy, the president also declined to privilege avenues of research with the greatest potential for near-term clinical benefit. Ignoring such opportunities, his policy instead has a single-minded focus on the funding of stem cells from one particular source — destroyed human embryos. It is therefore hard to avoid the conclusion that his administration's approach to a matter of such moral gravity and scientific importance is guided by wholly political impulses. If so, there could hardly be a plainer case of the naked politicization of science in the very worst sense.

The policies of the Obama administration support and encourage the mistreatment and destruction of human life for scientific research. In the name of the American people, and with the funds provided by them, it has begun to incentivize such research. It has done so without addressing the profound moral issues at stake, without offering a serious argument in defense of its approach, and in spite of the fact that alternatives to the destruction of embryos are emerging in stem-cell science. The scant ethical safeguards the policies do provide are grossly inadequate even in light of their own purposes.

We urge all those concerned for the American ideals of equality and human dignity, for the integrity of American science, and for the sanctity of human life to consider carefully the significance of the administration's approach and to express their unease and opposition. And we urge President Obama to consider his responsibility as a public official and steward of the public's resources and to reverse his ill-conceived policy.

The Neuhaus Colloquium, sponsored by the Witherspoon Institute and cosponsored by FIRST THINGS, was founded to discuss questions of ethics and public affairs and held its first meeting in Princeton, N.J., on Sept. 17, 2009. This statement results from discussions begun among the Colloquium's members that day.

Signed:

Helen Alvaré

George Mason University School of Law

Ryan T. Anderson

Public Discourse

Joseph Bottum

First Things

Gerard V. Bradley

University of Notre Dame Law School

Eric Cohen

The New Atlantis

Maureen L. Condic

University of Utah School of Medicine

Farr A. Curlin

University of Chicago

Jean Bethke Elstain

University of Chicago

Matthew J. Franck

Witherspoon Institute

Robert P. George

Princeton University

Prayer for the Protection of Embryonic Children

Lord God, you lovingly knit us in our mother's womb. Grant that each human embryo will be respected as a human being, and not dismissed as a product to be manipulated or destroyed.

Grant us the courage and conviction to be your voice for our sisters and brothers at the very earliest stages of their development, and for all defenseless unborn children.

Jesus, Divine Healer, foster in those conducting medical research a commitment to finding cures in ways that respect these little ones and all your vulnerable children.

Holy Spirit, grant us the wisdom to develop morally sound treatments for conditions now thought to be incurable. Help us persevere in defending human life while alleviating suffering.

Show mercy to all who have cooperated in killing our tiniest brothers and sisters. Bring them and all who support destructive embryo research to true conversion. Grant them the ability to see the immeasurable dignity of all human beings even in the first days of life.

Father, we ask this in Jesus' name, through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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Mary Ann Glendon

Harvard Law School

William B. Hurlbut, MD

Neuroscience Institute at Stanford

Donald W. Landry

Columbia University

Patrick Lee

Franciscan University of Steubenville

Yuval Levin

National Affairs

Michael Novak

American Enterprise Institute

Ramesh Ponnuru

National Review

Carter Snead

University of Notre Dame Law School

James R. Stoner, Jr.

Louisiana State University

Christopher Tollefsen

University of South Carolina

Micah J. Watson

Union University

CFO to Support 10 Commandment Effort

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma, through the guidance of Archbishop Eusebius Beltran, adopted a program that would place monuments depicting the Ten Commandments at each Catholic grade school and high school in the Archdiocese as a guide to all Catholic students in their faith formation.

The Ten Commandments were revealed by God to Moses for all of God's people. They are a summary of the law and they tell us how to respond in love to God and to our neighbor.

All human beings are obliged to observe the Ten Commandments. Jesus refers to the Ten Commandments and assures their validity in the dialogue with the rich young man in St. Matthew's Gospel. (Mt. 19:16-21)

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Inc. committed to raise, through individual donations, grants and matching funds, an

amount necessary to produce and erect a monument of the Ten Commandments at all the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

The first monument was placed at Our Lady of Guadalupe Youth Camp several years ago. The first of four Ten Commandments monuments that were recently ordered has been placed at the entrance to St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Grade School. Archbishop Beltran blessed the monuments during his annual visit to the school on Oct. 6.

Monuments will also be placed at Mount St. Mary High School, Christ the King School and Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School before the end of the year.

If you would like to be a part of this exciting program, please contact the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma offices at (405) 721-4115 or by e-mail to bsemtner@catharchdioceseokc.org.



Archbishop Beltran at the St. Charles School Blessing of the Ten Commandments.

Catholic Charities Updates Annual Appeal

OKLAHOMA CITY — Catholic Charities annual appeal, announced in September, has generated good interest and response from all parts of the Archdiocese, said Catholic Charities Executive Director Tim O'Connor. Receipts in pledges and gifts indicate that 50 percent of the campaign goal of \$2.4 million has been met, and additional gifts are still being counted. More than 3,600 gifts have been counted, and the average annual gift is about \$328, he said.

Molly Bernard, president of the Catholic Charities Board of

Directors, said, "While we need an additional \$1.2 million to reach our campaign goal, we are pleased by the initial results and grateful for all we have received. We especially appreciate the support of our clergy and volunteers who have helped to make people aware of the needs and the services Catholic Charities is providing to help families and children in Oklahoma who are experiencing very hard times."

Catholic Charities is making a special effort to increase donor participation in the appeal. O'Connor said the total number of

donors has declined by 10 percent since 2007 and historically only 25 percent of all parish members support the appeal.

"In building strong local participation in this campaign," O'Connor said, "the programs of Catholic Charities will be more effective in responding to local needs as they arise."

He added, "Our theme, Called to Respond," invites all people in our archdiocese to share in this ministry of serving our brothers and sisters. Every gift is an investment in the life of someone who needs

help. With the continued prayers and support of all persons, Catholic Charities will continue and grow the good works that are greatly needed today in Oklahoma."

More information about Catholic Charities is available through the agency website at www.catholiccharitiesok.org. Online donations may be made with a credit card through the website or by check. Checks should be made payable to "Catholic Charities" and mailed to Catholic Charities, 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106.

Grants Awarded to Support Parish Projects

OKLAHOMA CITY — Grants were awarded for 11 programs throughout the Archdiocese. Local grants were given to parish communities to support community-controlled, self-help projects that work with low-income persons to address the causes of poverty.

"These projects include a wide range of programs, from community after-school programs to piloting Faith Community Nursing in our

parishes," says Becky VanPool, archdiocesan director for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). "What better way to live our faith than to be the catalyst in our communities that works with those in poverty."

Grants were awarded to the Oklahoma City parishes of Holy Angels, St. Charles Borromeo, Sacred Heart, St. Eugene, Christ the King and the Cathedral of Our

Lady of Perpetual Help. Other parishes receiving grants include St. Mary in Ardmore and St. Peter in Woodward.

Local grants provide seed money for parish-based efforts that foster human development. An annual collection to support the campaign will be taken the weekend of Nov. 20 and 21.

One-fourth of the money collected remains with the Arch-

diocese to fund local grants.

"Catholics have a long tradition of working with the poor and treating those who live on the margins of our communities with dignity," adds VanPool. "Now more than ever, CCHD needs our support to help lift people up and out of poverty. Families are struggling. Our faith is calling. Join the numbers who care. Please be generous in this year's collection."

Briefs

Kingfisher Event Set

KINGFISHER — The 20th annual Sts. Peter and Paul auction will be held Nov. 20 beginning at 6 p.m. The evening will include a meal and silent auction. The live auction will begin at 7 p.m. We have some wonderful things that are being auctioned off. They include a Garth Brooks guitar, Garth Brooks tickets, Neal McCoy tickets, Chris Owen limited edition painting, Oil Barons and Thunder tickets, so much more that it is too much to list.

Irish to Host Open House

OKLAHOMA CITY — Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School will host its annual open house for all interested and prospective students and parents on Sunday, Nov. 7, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Teachers from each academic department will be available to provide information and answer questions. Student organizations as well as parent groups will be represented and ready to help visitors. Coaches will be present to highlight the school's athletic programs. Visitors will be able to tour the school and meet the school's administrative staff. Refreshments will be served in the Commons area.

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is the largest Archdiocesan secondary school in the city. Its college preparatory curriculum serves more than 700 students from grades 9-12. Its mission is to educate the whole person in mind, body and spirit and to foster students who value their faith and service to others.

Adoption To Be Discussed

OKLAHOMA CITY — If you are considering adoption, Catholic Charities will host an open house on Tuesday, Nov. 9 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 1501 N. Classen Blvd., Oklahoma City, to share information about its Adoption and Maternity Services Program. Couples will learn about the

adoption process and hear from other adoptive couples. Any couple interested in adoption services is invited to attend. For more information, call (405) 523-3012.

Parish Plans Fall Fantasy

EDMOND — St. John the Baptist Parish will celebrate its annual Fall Fantasy Auction at the Cox Center in Oklahoma City on Friday, Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. The funds received from this event benefit the following local community organizations: the Samaritan House, which provides food and monetary assistance to the needy; the Zachary House, which provides shelter for families trying to become self-sufficient; a Senior Outreach Ministry, a Youth Ministry and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Elementary School. Also this year, some lucky raffle winner will take home a 2011 Honda Civic. For tickets or questions regarding the event, please e-mail or call Anne Keef, assistant business manager, at 340-0691, or go to the parish website at www.stjohn-catholic.org.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in February

Steve and Janet Ray with Father Shane Tharp will lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land Feb 17-27, 2011. This 11-day trip will include visits to Nazareth, the Church of the Annunciation, Mount of Beatitudes, the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River, and into Jerusalem, Bethlehem and many more places. The cost is \$3,799 per person with double occupancy. For more information, go to www.stevegoes.com or call 313-565-8888 Ext. 151.

Home Seeks Help

OKLAHOMA CITY — At St. Ann's Home is that time of the year when we start planning for the holidays. We are asking our church families if they could adopt a hall again this year. We really appreciate your support of St. Ann's in the past

years. We need your help more than ever this year. If you can help in any way, please contact Carolyn Winter at 728-7888 or write us at St. Ann's Home, 9400 St. Ann Drive, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73162.

Parish to Break Ground

OKLAHOMA CITY — The groundbreaking ceremony for the building of the new St. Eugene parish church will be held on Sunday, Oct. 31, at 3 p.m. at 2400 W. Hefner Road, Oklahoma City. Reception following. All are welcome ... and bring your shovel!

St. Thomas More to Host Gala for Ministry

NORMAN — It is time once again for St. Thomas More's Annual Gala benefiting Campus Ministry. The event is Friday, Nov. 5 at the Embassy Suites in Norman. Cocktails will begin at 6 p.m. followed by a silent and live auction and a wonderfully funny entertainer. Tickets are on sale now for \$55 each, \$100 per couple or Ten Top Tables for \$800. Raffle tickets are also on sale for \$5 each or five tickets for \$20.

Raffle items include a \$125 gift certificate to Benvenuti's in Norman, \$150 worth of lottery scratch-off tickets and a Norman Embassy Suites New Year's Eve package inclusive of party tickets, room and breakfast the next morning. All tickets are available in the office or may be purchased by mail or by phone. For more information, contact Christy Meiser at 321-0990.

Vatican II Discussed

JONES — Oct. 26 is the next group discussion on Vatican II, moderated by Father Jack Zupez, SJ. The discussion is currently meeting in St. Robert's Church Hall, 121 NW 1st St., on the second and fourth Mondays of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. All are welcome. For further information, call Father Jack at 301-0203.

Midwest City Scout Earns Top Rank of Eagle

MIDWEST CITY — The dream of making Eagle Scout came true for Life Scout Evan J. Maselli. Thanks to help from the Knights of Columbus, Midwest City, Council 4026 and Assembly 2508, Evan's Eagle Scout project came to a successful conclusion.

This is a part of the Knights of

Columbus program to reach out to the community and provide support where needed. Evan was working on his Eagle Scout project. He and a number of Boy Scouts had collected numerous toiletries and small games, part of which was a donation drive from St. Philip Neri Parish collected over a two-week period. In

addition to the many items collected for military members overseas, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan, Evan and members of his troop made Cool Tie neck bands to be worn by the military during patrols. Working with the organization "Blue Star Moms" of Moore, Maselli insured all items collected were

packaged and shipped overseas. This is where the money collected from the Knights of Columbus was needed to mail all the packages. In addition to helping Evan, Council 4026 supports and hosts Boy Scout Troop 122. As a follow-up, Evan has successfully been awarded the rank of Eagle Scout.

Faith and Family

Norman Couple's 60 Years of Marriage Filled with Love, Faith and War

NORMAN — Fall colors are here. Then comes Thanksgiving and Christmas, the most joyful season of the year when families gather to spend time together and to give thanks.

For a Catholic couple living here, this will mark 60 years of marriage. Their journey has been one of faith, love, hope and perseverance. But for many of these years, they were separated, not by choice, but by war, hate, fear and intolerance.

Joseph Huong Pham and his wife, Yen, met in the winter of 1950-1951. They came together through an arrangement made by their aunts and would marry a few weeks later. The bride was the prettiest girl in the city, and the groom was the new graduate from the prestigious Vietnamese Military Academy.

Lt. Joseph took his new bride to his outpost, leaving many men jealous. They ridiculed Yen, telling her she would soon be a widow.

With war quickly approaching the Vietnamese countryside, these young soldiers had no idea how close their jokes would come to being reality.

Joseph was a major in the Army Guard for President Ngo Dinh Diem, the first president of the Republic of Vietnam. In 1963, the government was overthrown by coup d'etat.

Joseph and Yen lived with their young family on the base about one mile from the president's Independence Palace. There had been many violent anti-government demonstrations and a few unsuccessful coups d'etat. Yen, who was nine months pregnant with their seventh child, saw Joseph all armed heading to the palace. She guided her six children out of the base, walked through the Marines who were armed with rifles and grenades. These Marines were waiting for an order to open fire into the base. The family escaped just in time before the exchange of artillery and bomb-



ing. The coup d'etat was successful. Joseph was heartbroken to learn that President Diem was killed, along with his brother. Joseph was then jailed for two weeks before being transferred far away. Yen stayed in town with their seven children.

For the next decade and more, the war would tear at their homeland and their way of life.

By 1975, Joseph was a colonel in the South Vietnamese Army and with the country about to be overrun by the communists, he made arrangements for his wife, his seven children and nine family members to escape via a Vietnamese Navy ship.

Joseph went back to his work and to his men, planning to fight to the end. Little did anyone know, South Vietnam would fall to the communists of North Vietnam the next day.

The country was immediately in turmoil, some officers committed suicide, some were executed on the streets, and many were sent to concentration camps. Joseph was one of those many POWs sent to the rugged north. The communists confiscated properties, rationed food, printed their own money, and made every free citizen a beggar, living in poverty.

Meanwhile, in America, through the work of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Saint Joseph Church in Ada would come to sponsor Yen and her family. The Vietnamese refugees would soon move to Norman where 16 years later, through the work of U.S. Humanitarian Organization, Joseph was released from POW prison to be reunited with his family.

Joseph and Yen now live in Oklahoma City.

During those years of imprisonment in Vietnam, Joseph managed to survive. He was a fighter and every day he gave praise and thanks to God.

Through his military career, Joseph survived ambushes, battles, his helicopter being shot down, anti-government coups d'etat, and twice as a prisoner of war.

He was first captured in 1952 and spent two years in a POW camp. His first daughter was only 4 months old when he was taken prisoner. He was released through the Geneva Treaty.

Then, in 1975, when Saigon fell, he was again taken prisoner, this time for 13 years. After being released, it took another three years to reclaim his rights and to work through the red tape to come to America.

During his captivity he survived thirst, hunger, freezing temperatures, ticks, mosquitoes, many illnesses and jungle diseases.

POWs had no rights, they were often killed slowly and painfully, and death came every day. The only fears the POWs lived with were isolation or to be poisoned. They had no fear of a bullet from their enemy. A quick death was viewed as the better way.

Joseph made it through all these adversities through prayers and God's guidance. His faith was so powerful, it gave him the courage to share it, to offer prayers, to teach the Old and New Testament, and to convert nine POWs to be baptized, all in secrecy, while in prison.

In 1973, Joseph was honored and proud and humbled to receive the medal Benemerenti from the Vatican, for his efforts in building a new Catholic church.

For more than 20 years in America, Joseph and Yen regularly donate and solicit donations from families and friends to support the seminarians in the United States and Vietnam. They work to help the lepers in Vietnam, and to help rebuild abandoned and ruined churches in Vietnam. At age 87, Joseph is still on his knees to pray every day. He finds solace in saying the Rosary, and faith is his passion.

Joseph and Yen have achieved their Catholic mission.

In his memoir of more than 200 typed pages to his children, Joseph reminds them to pray and to thank God every day.

His children do pray and thank God and ask Him to give Joseph and Yen many more years of health and happiness.

They will celebrate their 60th anniversary with their seven children, 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, families, friends and relatives.

They pray and give thanks to the Lord every day.

Señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos, Barack Obama con mucho respeto en español

Desprecio a la gente de color, odio y antipatía hacia los inmigrantes

Por Mauro Yanez
Sooner Catholic

OKLAHOMA CITY — Con mucha prudencia, se puede hacer un análisis periodístico e histórico donde se concluye que vamos hacia un verdadero desconocimiento del concepto de paz. Grupos radicales enquistados en las entrañas del poder y el dinero, siguen y se niegan a que nuevas generaciones los releven, a menos que ellos escojan el relevo a dedo y no por méritos.

En los últimos 10 años, el mundo entero ha entrado en una crisis de valores morales, algunos grupos e individuos de poder y dinero se niegan hablar de corrupción, de sus errores y de sus fallas y es más se niegan a corregir sus acciones. Culpan a la gente de color, de escasos recursos, a la gente que se mezcla o son amistosos con la gente de color, entre ellos con los inmigrantes. A esa poca gente de poder y dinero le importa pasar por los preceptos legales de la Constitución de sus países, muchos de ellos, hablan en nombre de Dios sin ser verdaderamente representantes de Él.

El que ama a Dios respeta su mandamiento de amar al prójimo. Estos pocos individuos de poder y dinero manchan a los medios y la información a su antojo y dicen e imponen lo que ellos quieren en gran parte del mundo.

Por muchos años la gente de color ha sido discriminada en el mundo entero, ahora, la realidad es que éstos son la mayoría en el mundo y es hasta ahora que gracias a la voz del pueblo, han elegido a presidentes buenos en países con mucha riqueza y poder. Los pequeños grupos económicos y de poder suelen etiquetarse con un complejo de superioridad absurdo que nos remonta a la historia del siglo XX en la segunda guerra mundial con la barbarie cometida en contra del pueblo judío, ellos siguen en su persistencia irracional de vivir con odio, tanto que ahora en los actuales momentos se atreven a decir que son ellos los discriminados.

Vivimos una desgracia en el mundo que solamente la podemos mitigar con la Paz de Cristo y la convivencia entre razas y religiones. La gente de bajos recursos está sufriendo muchísimo los estragos de la

corrupción corrida en el mundo entero en los últimos diez años. Por qué hablar de los últimos diez años, sencillamente, porque en ese tiempo se formó una estructura diabólica y opresora que visionó el control del poder y el dinero para oprimir a la gente de color en caso de que ocurriese una implosión de su estructura perversa. Las consecuencias, ahora existen sociedades divididas, con estrategias maquiavélicas de guerra, donde se fecunda la conspiración y las violaciones de los derechos humanos, se viola el respeto y la dignidad humana y peor aún se ataca a la religión de forma indiscriminada. En los Estados Unidos, mi patria, mi gran nación, no escapa de lo dicho anteriormente, hay una división muy tóxica que nos está conduciendo a una conflagración silenciosa que puede socavar la paz.

Es un orgullo tener un presidente de color, es un regalo de Dios que hubo tolerancia para aceptar la voluntad del pueblo. No obstante, presidente, entiendo que usted es un ser humano y comete errores, solamente por darse el hecho de ser Presidente, le debemos respeto. Pero

a estas alturas, cuál es el cambio prometido. Dónde está el imperio de la ley, dónde está la justicia social prometida o equidad, el respeto a la vida, el cese a la guerra, la legalización de los indocumentados, el plan de salud en su apogeo, los corruptos presos, vemos a los mismos dinosaurios en el poder federal, la abolición del aborto no se menciona, un intento por abolir la pena de muerte mucho menos, dónde están los indultos presidenciales para la gente que los merece, dónde están nuestros jóvenes sin empleo, dónde están los "babyboomers" que usted iba a retirar para dar marcha al progreso y trabajo a nuestros jóvenes.

Señor presidente, usted es un líder, pero el poco progreso logrado, puede ahora desmoronarse, ponga su fe como Cristiano, que se hace llamar y llénese de valor con Dios para hacer los cambios que prometió para evitar un colapso de la paz interna y mundial. Ponernos en manos del presente y el pasado es una desgracia peor que cualquier promesa. Que Dios bendiga a nuestro pueblo y a los pueblos del mundo para encontrar la Paz en Dios.

Un nuevo Arzobispo de origen Mexicano en Texas

Papa nombra Arzobispo de San Antonio al Obispo Auxiliar de Chicago García-Siller

WASHINGTON — El Papa Benedicto XVI ha nombrado Arzobispo de San Antonio, Texas, a Monseñor Gustavo García-Siller, hasta ahora obispo auxiliar de Chicago.

El Arzobispo-designado García-Siller, nativo de México, es miembro de la Congregación de Misioneros del Espíritu Santo. Era superior de la Provincia "Cristo Sacerdote" de su congregación, la cual comprende los Estados Unidos y Canadá, cuando fue nombrado Obispo auxiliar de Chicago en 2003.

El nombramiento a San Antonio fue hecho público el 14 de octubre en Washington por el Arzobispo Pietro Sambi, nuncio apostólico para los Estados Unidos.

Gustavo García-Siller nació en San Luis Potosí, México, el 21 de

diciembre de 1956. En 1973 ingresó a la Congregación de Misioneros del Espíritu Santo en la Ciudad de México.

Estudió en St. John's Seminary en Camarillo, California, y en la Pontificia Universidad Gregoriana en Roma, y tiene maestrías en filosofía, teología y psicología. Fue ordenado sacerdote en Guadalajara, México, el 22 de junio de 1984.

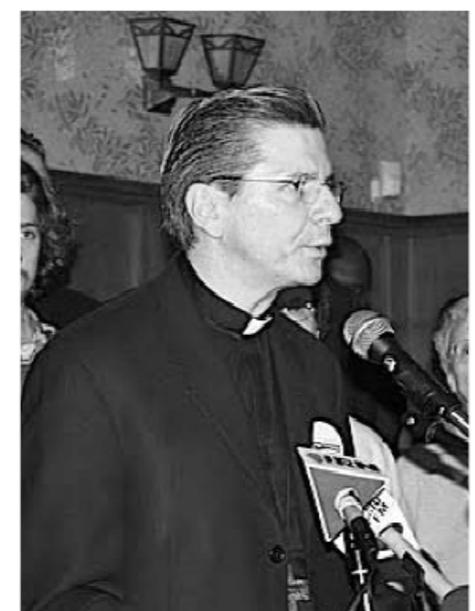
Entre 1984 y 1988 sirvió en la Parroquia de San José en Selma, California, y después fue a estudiar al Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO) de la Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara. De 1994 a 1999 fue rector de casas de estudios de su congregación religiosa en Lynwood,

Long Beach y Mt. Angel, California, y en Portland, Oregón.

De 1999 a 2002 fue rector de la casa del teologado que su congregación tiene en Oxnard, California, y también prestó servicio en tres parroquias de la Arquidiócesis de Los Ángeles, California. Fue nombrado Superior Provincial de la Congregación del Espíritu Santo en 2002.

En la Conferencia de Obispos de Estados Unidos ha sido miembro de los subcomités para Asuntos Afroamericanos y Asuntos Hispánicos.

La Arquidiócesis de San Antonio comprende 23.180 millas cuadradas. Tiene una población total de 2.315.988 de las cuales 702.547, o el 30 por ciento, son católicas



Monseñor Gustavo García-Siller.



Archbishop Beltran, Father Lucas Raj Pinapati, right, and Father Eugene Marshall, left, blessing the new parish hall.



Debi Wagoner portraying St. Teresa of Avila during a play in the new parish hall.

Harrah Parish Opens New Family Center

St. Teresa of Avila at Harrah has officially opened its \$1.2 million Family Center.

The center took two years to complete and was done mostly by volunteer work by parishioners and without the parish borrowing a penny.

On Oct. 17, Archbishop Beltran celebrated Mass at St. Teresa's and blessed the center.

"We've been working on it since August of 2008," said Parish Council chairman Joe Tytanic. "We had a work day every Saturday. The women of the parish brought out food for the workers. It was a miracle how it all came together."

"This was a family of St. Teresa project and it brought all the parish together," he said.

The work includes a new parish hall, nursery, and youth center and kitchen. There is a new 161-inch screen in the hall in which Mass can be watched.

"Before when we had Thanksgiving dinners, we could seat just over 200. Now we can seat just over 300 and another 112 in the overflow area," he said.

Tytanic said the parish fund-raising committee held various events such as dinners and breakfasts to bring in money and various parish groups gave cash "to make this happen."

But what made the project



Archbishop Beltran cutting the ribbon to open the new St. Teresa of Avila Parish Hall.

possible, he said, was the number of parishioners who had expertise in various phases of the construction

who donated their time.

"When we had one area that we really needed some help, a parish

Story and Photos by Rex Hogan

family member who had experience in that area would step up and take care of it," Tytanic said.

Calendar

OCTOBER

24 Pilgrimage Sunday, Mass at 11 a.m., blessing of the sick and children, noon lunch, 1 p.m. Novena prayers to Infant Jesus of Prague, Litany of the Infant Jesus, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Shrine is located at St. Wenceslaus Church, 304 Jim Thorpe Blvd., Prague. (405) 567-3080 or shrineofinfantjesus.com.

24 "Living the Mass, the Outward Expression of our Catholic Faith" at 5:30 p.m. at St. Andrew Church, 800 NW 5th St., Moore. For more information, call (405) 799-3334, or e-mail Mhochla@standrewmoore.com.

26 Vatican II Discussion Group, moderated by Father Jack Zupez, SJ, will meet at St. Roberts Church, 121 NW 1st St., Jones, on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. For further information, call Father Jack at 301-0203.

26 Aging Gracefully — Caregiver Support, resources, self-care and care receiving home health, hospice, assisted living and daily living cen-

ters. The Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway, 7 to 8:30 p.m. For questions or to RSVP, call (405) 721-8944.

27 Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, NW 32nd and Western, every Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to noon. All are welcome.

28 Eucharistic Adoration, every Thursday night from 5 p.m. to midnight at St. Gregory's Chapel, St. Gregory's Monastery, Shawnee. Mass at 5 p.m. with adoration to follow. Included is vespers with the monks.

28 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at Epiphany Parish, in the chapel every Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and daily (M,T,W,F) from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. All are welcome. Epiphany is located at 7336 W. Britton Road, Oklahoma City 73132.

31 St. Eugene's groundbreaking for the new parish church will be at 3 p.m. at 2400 W. Hefner Road, Oklahoma City. Reception following.

NOVEMBER

1 All Saints, Holy Day of Obligation

2 Aging Gracefully — Legal and Financial Issues, powers of attorney, estate planning, living will, DNR, guardianship, pensions, investments. The Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 NW Expressway, 7 to 8:30 p.m. For questions or to RSVP, call (405) 721-8944.

5 1st Friday Adoration at St. Francis of Assisi, Oklahoma City. After the 7:30 a.m. Mass, and concludes at 5:30 p.m. with closing prayer and Benediction. This is open to all. St. Francis is located at 1910 NW 19th (just two blocks east of Penn), Oklahoma City.

5 Holy Family Home Mass, 11:30 a.m., Holy Family Home, 6821 Eddie Dr, Midwest City. To confirm that Mass will be held that day and for directions, call 741-7419.

5 First Friday Sacred Heart Mass at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 5:30 p.m., Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to Mass.

Mass at 7 p.m. For more information, call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

6 Stepping Into Marriage with Children. The issues highlighted in this program are communication, stepfamily structures, former spouses, conflict, sexuality and spirituality. For questions or to register, call the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-8944.

6 Fall Open House at Trinity Gardens Apartments, 3825 NW 19th St., Oklahoma City, from 9 a.m. to noon. A breakfast will be served from 9 to 11 a.m. Cost is \$4 per person. Door prize tickets will be available for \$1 each. We will offer tours of the building and show apartments.

7 Annual Turkey Dinner at Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Kingfisher, in Ross Hall, Nov. 7 from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

7 Open House at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School for all interested and prospective students and parents from 1 to 3 p.m.

Jobs Box

Long-Term Substitute Teacher

Sacred Heart Catholic School, El Reno, is looking for a long-term first-grade substitute teacher. Candidate must be a Certified Teacher in the state of Oklahoma. Please call Shannon Statton at 262-2284 for more information.

Director of the Business Department

St. Gregory's University has an opening for the position of Director of the Business Department at our Tulsa location. This position will teach undergraduate and graduate business courses; director and curriculum coordinator for undergraduate business programs. Earned doctorate in a business-related field with strong quantitative background preferred; MBA with strong quantitative background required with three to five years of academic program development experience desired; 12-month faculty reporting to dean of College for Working Adults. Send letter of application, vita, transcripts, statement of teaching philosophy and three letters of recommendation to the attention of Jean Thornbrugh, Ph.D., by e-mail to hr@stgregorys.edu or by mail to Human Resources Department, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur Drive, Shawnee, Okla. 74804.

Adjuncts

The College for Working Adults at St. Gregory's University has adjunct faculty openings on campus in Tulsa and Shawnee at the undergraduate and graduate level for courses in finance, marketing, project management, research methods, clinical social work, art, nutrition, speech, statistics, math, English literature, economics, history, critical thinking, accounting and accounting control systems. Candidates for adjunct faculty openings for undergraduate courses are required to hold a minimum of a master's degree in the preferred subject, doctoral degrees preferred and related business and industry experience. Adjunct faculty openings at the graduate level require a doctorate in a business-related field or in health care management/health care administration or a doctorate in management/business with an area of specialization in health care management. Candidates for graduate courses should have related business and industry experience. Send a cover letter, vita and transcripts to the attention of Jean Thornbrugh, Ph.D. Materials may be sent electronically to hr@stgregorys.edu.

CWA Financial Aid Counselor (Tulsa)
St. Gregory's University, College for Working

Adults, Tulsa campus, has an opening for a financial aid counselor. Candidates must be able to advise students about financial aid eligibility, applications procedures, aid programs and indebtedness and work closely with accounting and student services staff. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree preferred and financial aid experience, knowledge of data processing and computer tracking systems required. Send cover letter, resume and three references to hr@stgregorys.edu or mail to Att: HR, 5801 E. 41st St., Tulsa, Okla. 74135.

Part-Time Organist Needed

St. Philip Neri Church, Midwest City, is in need of a principal organist/accompanist to play for Sunday Masses (8:15 a.m. and 11 a.m.), solemnities and feast days and accompany Wednesday evening (7 p.m.) choir rehearsals. The candidate must be proficient in sightreading and possess a level of playing skill to lead attendance of 350 in the singing of hymns, psalm and other liturgical music, and accompanying the choir in special numbers. An interview and audition is required. To arrange for an audition/interview, contact Bernard Jones at 737-4476 or bernard_jones@me.com.



Deacon Cory Stanley with Fathers Joseph Irwin, James Wickersham and Philip Creider. Photos by Seminarian Brian Buettner.



The Basilica of Saint Peter.



Deacon Stanley with his mother and grandmother.

Ordination

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world may call us crazy for binding ourselves in this way, it has ironically been the most freeing experience of my life. Upon one's ordination to the diaconate, he can finally begin doing that to which the Lord has called him.

As a deacon I can now assist priests and bishops by baptizing, witnessing marriages, and presiding at burial rites. Then after I am, God-willing, ordained to the priesthood on the 8th of July next summer, I will be able serve the Lord and His people in our archdiocese in many ways, including anointing the sick, hearing confessions and offering the Mass.

If you feel called to the priesthood, don't hesitate to begin looking into it. Contact our archdiocesan vocations office and ask for more information. Listening to God and entering the seminary seven years ago when I felt the call was the best thing I have done in my life. Through the years of priestly formation, God is abundantly generous and He makes it clear through prayer and spiritual direction where He is calling each man. So don't be afraid to begin answering his call.

Please keep me and our other 18 archdiocesan seminarians in your prayers as we journey on this road toward the priesthood.

Family, Friends Make Ordination In Rome Look A Lot Like Mustang

By Deacon Cory Stanley
For the *Sooner Catholic*

After three years of priestly formation in Rome, the city and its churches have begun to feel very familiar — almost like home. I've been blessed both to be at the heart of our Church in this way, and to be able to share the experience with others.

Though I have felt increasingly more comfortable with the city over the last years, it has never felt more like home than it did during two weeks ago when a group of 37 people from Holy Spirit Parish in Mustang, four of our archdiocesan priests and three of my immediate family members were able to journey to the Eternal City on a pilgrimage which included attending my diaconate ordination on the 7th of October.

Primarily because of its setting at the Basilica of Saint Peter, the diaconate ordination of seminarians from the North American College receives a bit more attention than most. This event gives many of



Above, Father James Greiner, Deacon Stanley's pastor, vests him for the first time as a deacon. Below, Bishop Hebda from Gaylord, Mich., lays hands on Stanley during his diaconate ordination. Photos by Seminarian Brian Buettner.



our family members and friends from all around the world the chance to make a pilgrimage to a place made holy through the blood of the Martyrs and by the lives of the Saints. In Rome, through Peter and through his current successor, Pope Benedict, Christians are able to reach out and experience our Lord in a new way, and it was an



Deacon Cory Stanley after being vested.

immense blessing for us seminarians to have so many guests here with us to celebrate this significant day in our lives.

Processing to the altar, I was filled with joy to recognize so many people from home in the congregation for this Mass where I would receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders alongside 30 of my brother seminarians. They were there supporting and praying for us on a day we will never forget — the day on which we, the new deacons, promised our lives to God and to His Church. It is this ordination which marks the date when all men studying for the priesthood permanently lay down their lives in service of the Lord. The deacons in that Sacrament are consecrated to God, solemnly promising to live from that day forward a life of respect and obedience to his bishop and his successors, of faithful daily prayer with and for the Church, and of chaste celibacy.

Pledging these things is often seen as absurd in the eyes of the world, and to pledge them forever is almost unheard of. But in the eyes of God, it's one of the greatest gifts that can be given — because in doing this, a man gives himself completely to the Lord. And it is this gift that every Catholic priest gave God at his diaconate ordination, in a step which prepared him for the priesthood. Though the

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