

Ruling exempts employer members of Catholic Benefits Association from HHS contraception mandate

By The Sooner Catholic Staff

OKLAHOMA CITY — A U.S. district court judge in Oklahoma delivered a ruling June 4 that protects the employer members of the Oklahoma-based Catholic Benefits Association from the conscience-violating requirements of a burdensome federal regulation.

In a class-action lawsuit filed by the CBA, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and others, Judge David Russell of the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma ruled that those Catholic employers who are currently members of the CBA should be exempt from an Obama administration mandate that requires employers to provide employees with health insurance that covers contraception, abortifacients, sterilization and related counseling — drugs and procedures to which CBA members have religious objections.

In his decision, Judge Russell clarified that “the Court’s inquiry is focused upon how the plaintiffs themselves measure their degree of complicity in an immoral act.” He found the employer members of the CBA to be sincere in their belief that complying with the mandate renders them complicit in the provision of contraceptive services to their employees, which they find “morally repugnant.”

“This is where the Court’s inquiry ends, as it is not the Court’s role to say Plaintiffs’ religious beliefs are mistaken,” Judge Russell wrote.

Judge Russell’s ruling also “enjoined and restrained” the relevant federal departments, “their agents, officers and employees, and all others in active concert or participation with them ... from any effort



to apply or enforce” the mandate against members of the Catholic Benefits Association. The judge also specifically ruled that the more than 450 CBA employer members and the almost 2,000 Catholic parishes that are CBA members shall not be liable for “any penalties, fines and assessments for noncompliance with” the mandate.

The Most Reverend William Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore and president of the CBA, said, “We formed the Catholic Benefits Association to support Catholic employers in providing quality, cost-competitive, morally compliant health care benefits for their employees. (This) decision makes this a reality.”

Prior to the lawsuit, the Obama administration granted an exemption from the mandate to Catholic employers who directly operate Catholic dioceses and houses of worship, but refused to extend the exemption to those who own and operate separately incorporated charitable organizations and for-profit corporations. The Catholic Benefits Association includes employer members in all three groups — houses of worship, separately incorporated charitable organizations and for-profit corporations.

“This ruling is especially gratifying because this lawsuit, alone among the HHS contraceptive mandate cases, includes all three groups of Catholic employers — “houses of wor-

ship” that are, by regulation, exempt; non-exempt ministries likes colleges, Catholic Charities and health care institutions; and Catholic-owned for-profit businesses,” said Martin Nussbaum, CBA general counsel.

The Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley, Archbishop of Oklahoma City and vice president of the Catholic Benefits Association, said Judge Russell’s decision is a source of hope and encouragement.

“I’m heartened by today’s ruling,” Archbishop Coakley said. “Judge Russell was right to recognize that the Catholic employers of the Catholic Benefits Association have a right to allow their faith to inform not just their private beliefs, but also their public actions.

“The administration has been discriminatory to grant relief to some Catholic employers and not others based on whether they operate within the diocesan structure or at separately incorporated charitable organizations and for-profit businesses,” he explained. “Whether bishops or businessmen, Catholics cannot in good conscience provide employees with insurance that covers drugs and procedures that undermine the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of human life.”

“This ruling is a very good one for proponents of religious liberty in general and for the Catholic Benefits Association in particular,” he said, adding that Catholics must

nevertheless continue to pray for an increased recognition of religious liberty.

“Religious freedom entails more than the right to worship and any contrary legislation must be opposed,” he said.

The Catholic Benefits Association is an association of Catholic employers united and committed in their defense of their First Amendment right to give witness to their Catholic faith, through their ministries and businesses, by providing their employees with life-affirming health care coverage that is consistent with Catholic teaching. There are more than 450 Catholic employers in the association, whose insurance plans cover more than 40,000 employees. They include Catholic dioceses and archdioceses, religious orders, local Catholic Charities, colleges, nursing homes, cemeteries, retreat centers and medical facilities. The Catholic Benefits Association serves both non-profit ministries and for-profit businesses.

The CBA also makes it possible for Catholic employers — both non-profit and for-profit — to exercise their religious values through the health coverage they provide to their employees. To accomplish this, the CBA has formed a wholly-owned subsidiary, The Catholic Insurance Company (CIC), and arranged for health provider networks to assist Catholic employers in providing comprehensive, quality health care that honors the dignity of the human person. The CBA also provides vigorous defense of its members’ First Amendment religious liberty regarding such coverage. More information about the Catholic Benefits Association is available at www.lifeaffirmingcare.com.

St. Gregory’s celebrates the ordination to the priesthood of Simeon Z. Spitz, O.S.B.

By J.E. Helm

For the Sooner Catholic

On Saturday, May 31, 2014, Brother Simeon Z. Spitz, O.S.B., was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City. The ordination took place at 10 a.m. at Saint Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee, Oklahoma, on the beautiful feast of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. Mass and the ordination were held in the Abbey church.

The events of the day began with a procession led by 10 members of the Knights of Columbus with their capes and swords and colorful plumed headgear. The procession next included a small contingent of the Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The black capes of the Ladies and the white capes of the Knights are both adorned with a prominent, red Jerusalem Cross. Monks of the Abbey and various priests of the Archdiocese also processed with Brother

Simeon together with Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, Archbishop Emeritus Eusebius J. Beltran and Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen of Saint Gregory’s Abbey.

The simplicity of the Abbey church, built in 1943, was underscored by the Gregorian chant used throughout the liturgy. T.C. Viet, dean of students at Saint Gregory’s University, beautifully canted the ceremony.

The Rite of Ordination began after the Gospel was proclaimed. Brother Simeon was called forward by name and answered “present.” Abbot Stasyszen presented him to Archbishop Coakley, testifying that Brother Simeon “has been found worthy,” and Archbishop Coakley declared his acceptance and his intention to ordain Brother Simeon.

Archbishop Coakley then delivered the homily, focusing on the many joys of this happy occasion. He spoke about the joy of the Feast of the Visitation, detailed in the Gospel for the day (Luke 1:39-56). Saint John the Baptist, still in

continued on page 7

Put Out Into the Deep

Luke 5:4

Freedom to serve

Religious liberty is more than the freedom to worship, though worship is an essential expression in virtually every religious tradition. Minimally, religious liberty certainly safeguards the freedom to worship. But a robust religious liberty, as our Constitution enshrines it and as the Creator has inscribed it in our hearts through the natural law, is also the freedom to live out the implications of our religious faith in the public as well as the private dimensions of our lives. As Christians we are called not only to love God, but also to love our neighbor. Service to God requires service to our neighbor.

For the third consecutive year, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is sponsoring a Fortnight for Freedom calling Catholics as well as other people of faith and good will to reflect upon the importance of religious freedom in our society and in our world. The Fortnight is an opportunity to pray, to study and to advocate for religious freedom, which is being threatened not only in faraway places, but also here in the United States.

The theme for this year's Fortnight for Freedom, which runs from June 21 to July 4, is "Freedom to Serve." Our freedom to serve the poor and the vulnerable in accord with human dignity and the Church's teaching is being challenged. One of the most emblematic threats to religious liberty in the United States today is the controversial HHS mandate, which imposes hefty financial penalties on employers who refuse to include contraception, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs in the health insurance plans they provide to their employees under the Affordable Care Act. The rules of the mandate provide no acceptable conscience clause to protect Catholics and others who find these procedures contrary to their religious faith and their understanding of human dignity rooted in faith. We are being presented with an unacceptable dilemma: either consent to the provision of immoral services that undermine human dignity and violate our conscience, or face crippling fines that could force businesses as well as Catholic and other faith-based charitable services, schools and health care facilities to close their doors.

Service to our neighbor, especially service to the poor, is a fundamental constituent of our Catholic faith. It is not merely icing on the cake. We are being denied the freedom to serve in a way that is consistent with our deeply held religious beliefs and convictions. We serve the poor, we care for the sick, we give shelter to the homeless, we educate children, not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic. It is our Catholic faith that enables us to see Christ in every person and to recognize the dignity of every human being. It is our Catholic faith that motivates us to serve; that demands that we serve. This injustice cannot stand.

In March of this year, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and other Catholic entities including Catholic-owned businesses which are part of the

Catholic Benefits Association (based here in Oklahoma and representing more than 450 Catholic employers around the country) filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking injunctive relief from the unjust burdens of the HHS mandate, which are contrary to our Catholic faith. As you will read in this issue of the Sooner Catholic, we have recently been granted this relief. This is a significant victory for religious liberty. But this is not the end of the struggle either with regard to the mandate or the many other threats to religious liberty looming on the horizon.

I encourage you to visit the Fortnight for Freedom website at www.Fortnight4Freedom.org or the US-CCB website for more information and resources for prayer, study and activities.



Archbishop Paul S. Coakley



Prayer for the Protection of Religious Liberty

O God our Creator,
from your provident hand we have received
our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
You have called us as your people and given us
the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God,
and your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit,
you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world,
bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel
to every corner of society.
We ask you to bless us
in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty.
Give us the strength of mind and heart
to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened;
give us courage in making our voices heard
on behalf of the rights of your Church
and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.
Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father,
a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters
gathered in your Church
in this decisive hour in the history of our nation,
so that, with every trial withstood
and every danger overcome—
for the sake of our children, our grandchildren,
and all who come after us—
this great land will always be "one nation, under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Archbishop Coakley's Calendar

The following events are part of Archbishop Coakley's official calendar.

- June 15 – Confirmation, 1 p.m., Saint Peter Church, Woodward
- June 17 – Saint Ann Retirement Center Board Meeting, 8 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
- June 17 – Department Head Meeting, 10 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
- June 17 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., Saint Francis De Sales Chapel at Catholic Pastoral Center
- June 17 – Finance Council Meeting, 2 p.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
- June 18 – Presbyteral Council, 9:30 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
- June 18 – Dedication of Ross Hall, 7 p.m., Saint Eugene Church, Oklahoma City
- June 19-25 – Private Retreat
- June 26 – Catholic Charities Board Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Catholic Charities Offices
- June 26 – Java at Joe's, 6:30 p.m., Parish Center at Saint Joseph Church, Norman
- June 28 – Priesthood Ordination, 10 a.m., Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Exclusively on the website

By Sooner Catholic Staff

Additional coverage of Church and archdiocesan news and events, only on www.soonercatholic.com:

✓ On Saturday, June 7, Archbishop Paul Coakley ordained three seminarians to the transitional diaconate (see story this issue). View a **recording of the ordination** in the "Videos" section of the archokc.org homepage.

✓ On Saturday, June 28, Archbishop Coakley will ordain five seminarians to the priesthood. To view a **live stream of the ordination** at 10 a.m. that day, visit <http://www.ckokc.org/archokc-ordination-2014>.

✓ Read one participant's reflections on the annual **Retreat in Daily Life**, offered by the archdiocesan Office of Worship and Spiritual Life, in the online exclusive, "Top 10 things I learned during my retreat with Saint Ignatius," found in the "News" section of www.soonercatholic.com.

✓ Catch up on **the New Evangelization blog "Into the Deep"!** Written and curated by Carole Brown, archdiocesan director of New Evangelization, the blog features videos, document excerpts and conversational insights that are all aimed to help Catholics – or those who are just curious about Catholicism – to know, live and share the faith. Several new posts from the month of June are up now. Find the blog at: <http://www.newevangelizationokc.blogspot.com/>.

Plus, don't miss daily updates on Facebook and Twitter!



Cardinal says invocation for peace an example of pope's openness to all

By Julia Willis
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Inviting the Israeli and Palestinian presidents to the Vatican and praying alongside them for peace in the Holy Land does not insert Pope Francis into the political process but is another example of his efforts to help all people, said Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick.

"He didn't go out on a limb with this. He got up on the Cross, and I think that's where he needs to be," the retired archbishop of Washington told Catholic News Service when asked whether the pope's move could be seen as political.

"This pope is absolutely transparent," he said. "He is who he seems to be ... and is so obviously open and anxious to deal with all the needs of the people with great joy and great enthusiasm."

Cardinal McCarrick made the comments in a brief interview June 6, two days before the pope's "invocation for peace" in the Holy Land with Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the Vatican.

The cardinal spoke to CNS before he and other speakers gathered at a briefing room on Capitol Hill for a discussion titled: "Can Pope Francis change the conversation between Israelis and Palestinians?"

Led by Sean Callahan, chief operating officer at CRS, the U.S. bishops' overseas relief and de-



Israeli President Shimon Peres, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (both partially hidden), Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople plant an olive tree after an invocation for peace in the Vatican Gardens June 8. (CNS photo)

velopment agency, the panelists discussed the possible impact of Pope Francis' invitation to Peres and Abbas and the first-of-its-kind event at the Vatican.

Although doubtful the meeting would be enough to foster peace between the two countries, Ronit Avni, founder and director of Just Vision, said Pope Francis has succeeded in his mission by "sparkling curiosity among Catholic populations around the world."

"This is a conflict where, like it or not, the international community will need to play a significant

role," said Avni. "In any situation where you have an asymmetrical power dynamic, the group that has more structural power will not cede that power without some pressure."

"From Just Vision's perspective, we want that pressure to be nonviolent, we want it to be with a rights-respecting lens ... and that pressure has to come from people who have moral concern for the two societies," she said.

Just Vision is an organization that supports Palestinian and Israeli efforts to end the Israeli occu-

Christianity is hands-on action, not school of thought, pope says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Being a good Christian demands concrete action and deeds, Pope Francis said.

And, he said, the "how-to" manual is found in the beatitudes and the Last Judgment, which spells out the consequences awaiting those who fail to help others in need.

Jesus offers a guide to life that is "so simple, but very difficult," the pope said June 9 during his early morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he lives.

It's difficult because Christianity is "a hands-on religion; it isn't for thinking about, it's for putting into practice, to do it," he said in his homily, according to a report by Vatican Radio.

The pope focused his homily on the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew in which Jesus teaches the beatitudes, which begin, "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

The beatitudes are the "program" and "the identity card" for every Christian, outlining a step-by-step guide to being "a good Christian," he said.

Jesus' teaching goes "very much against the tide" of a worldly culture, he said, in which monetary wealth, superficial joy and personal satisfaction are the measures of happiness and success.

But "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," he said, and "blessed are they who mourn, for they will be



Pope Francis greets the crowd during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 11. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

comforted."

People who face reality and life's big and small difficulties will mourn in their hearts, but they will also find consolation in Jesus, the pope said.

Most of the world, on the other hand, "doesn't want to cry, it prefers to ignore painful situations and cover them up" or just turn the other way and pretend they're not there, he said.

Jesus also says, "Blessed are the meek in this world that, from the beginning, is a world of war, a world where people everywhere fight, where there is hatred everywhere," the pope said.

Jesus, however, wants people to be meek, even if everyone "will think that I'm a dolt."

pation and conflict without arms. Discussing the role of the United States in such efforts, Jesuit Father Drew Christiansen, an ethics professor at Georgetown University, said the initiative to bring peace to the region cannot be led by American politicians.

"The lesson of the last several rounds of peace attempts is the American government cannot be an honest broker in the Middle East," said Father Christiansen. "I think the best thing that American Christians can do is to support Christians in the Holy Land through groups like CRS ... and human rights groups that are working both on the ground and in various states to improve the situation there. Even with the best intentions, our political ties are just too entangled to accomplish the work of peacemaking."

Although all of the panelists agreed that inequality and repression could not be combated unless every Israeli and Palestinian constituency was represented within discussion, none of the panelists could predict exactly how or when the effects of the meeting would manifest themselves.

"The pope is full of surprises," said Father Christiansen. "I've found the graces of prayer sometimes come afterwards, maybe weeks or even months later, but often with arresting power, so we will just have to wait and see."

all been forgiven."

He said blessed are the clean of heart, those who have "a simple heart" and a heart that "knows to love with purity," for they will see God.

Today, it's all too common to be "makers of war or at least makers of misunderstanding," the pope said. Instead, blessed are the peacemakers.

Gossip and backstabbing are another form of warmongering, he said.

"These people who gossip do not make peace, they are enemies of peace. They are not blessed."

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, he said, as theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Pope Francis said the beatitudes are "the program of life that Jesus offers us."

He said, "If we want something more, Jesus also gives us other instructions" in the "Judgment of the Nations" in later chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel.

People should remember the "protocol by which we will be judged" — by what everyone has done or didn't do for the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the ill and the imprisoned, he said.

He asked that people find the time to read the beatitudes and the final judgment "once, twice, three times."

By following these two teachings, "you can live a holy Christian life," the pope said.



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Go Make Disciples: In print, online and in the pews

Dear Reader:

When Christ first commissioned His apostles to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,” He must have known that the ability to communicate effectively would be critical to the success of that mission. After all, just 10 days after His ascension into heaven, Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to Saint Peter and the Eleven – and the very first talent the Holy Spirit conferred on them was the power to proclaim the Gospel in a multitude of languages.

Archbishop Paul Coakley, too, recognizes the importance of communications to renewed efforts to evangelize the people of central and western Oklahoma. Last year, he created the Office of Communications preparatory to announcing “Go Make Disciples” as the official vision of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Upon that announcement, he urged each and every one of the more than 120,000 Catholics of the archdiocese to engage in the important work of studying and sharing the Catholic faith.

The *Sooner Catholic* exists to support *you* in that work. In addition to archdiocesan news, each issue of the paper contains guidance from Pope Francis and Archbishop Coakley, insights into the faith, tips about how to evangelize, profiles of ordinary men and women who are striving for holiness, and relevant prayers. Our writers regularly cite Scripture and the Catechism!

When you send a gift of \$25, \$50 or even \$75 today, you make it possible for the Sooner Catholic to curate this kind of unique, evangelical content – content you can use to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others. Your gift also makes it possible for us to offer the paper to all members of the archdiocese at no cost to those who cannot afford it.

To make studying and sharing the faith even easier, we’ve expanded the digital presence of the *Soon-*

er Catholic. In addition to our website, Facebook and Twitter, we’ve also launched a weekly newsletter. Visit us at www.soonercatholic.com, follow us on Twitter @ArchOKC, join us at [Facebook.com/ArchOKC](https://www.facebook.com/ArchOKC) or subscribe to the newsletter at [FlockNote.com/ArchOKC](https://www.flocknote.com/ArchOKC). With the *Sooner Catholic*, evangelization can be as simple as retweeting 140 characters, sharing a Facebook post or forwarding an email!

Will you please send \$25, \$50 or even \$75 today to support the Sooner Catholic print edition, newsletter and online presence as we strive together to “Go Make Disciples: In print, online and in the pews”? Alternatively, save the postage and give online! This year, for the first time, we are able to accept donations through our website at <https://archokc.weshareonline.org/SoonerCatholicCampaign2014>. We will be most grateful for any amount you can give. If you are unable to donate at this time, will you please pray for the success of our communications efforts? Thank you for your support!

Peace and joy,

Tina Korbe Dzurisin
Director of Communications
Sooner Catholic, Editor

P.S. The *Sooner Catholic* is an aid to evangelization in central and western Oklahoma. **Will you please send \$25, \$50 or even \$75 today to support our efforts to share the Good News with readers in print, online and in the pews?** Thank you in advance for your generosity!

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‘Fortnight’ emphasizes connection between religious freedom, service

By Julia Willis

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The third annual Fortnight for Freedom: Freedom to Serve will take place from June 21 to July 4, 2014, a time when the Catholic liturgical calendar celebrates a series of great martyrs who remained faithful in the face of persecution by political power—Saint Thomas More and Saint John Fisher, Saint John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul, and the First Martyrs of the Church of Rome. The theme of this year’s Fortnight will focus on the freedom to serve the poor and vulnerable in accord with human dignity and the Church’s teaching.

“People who value their Catholic faith will understand that there is an organic connection between what we believe and how we practice our faith in service well beyond the borders of the church,” said Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore. “We want to be able to practice it unabashedly, whether in church or in the workplace or as part of church ministry. We don’t think we should have to compromise our beliefs in order to observe.”

As chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, Archbishop Lori has been involved with the fortnight movement from the beginning. Originally stemming out of a 12-page statement released by the committee in June 2012 titled “Our First, Most Cherished Liberty,” the fortnight aims to protect religious liberties from government infringement.

For the Catholic Church, chief among threats to religious freedom is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ mandate that most employers, including

Catholic hospitals, schools and charities, provide insurance coverage for contraceptives, sterilization and some abortion-inducing drugs.

Although the event mainly targets Catholics, Archbishop Lori cites the fortnight as a chance for individuals of all faiths to educate themselves regarding the issue of religious freedom.

“The aim of the Fortnight for Freedom is to build a prayerful awareness not only among Catholics, but among all people of good will, of the importance of religious freedom,” he told Catholic News Service June 3. “This year, we are working with ecumenical and other faith groups to lay foundations over time for a larger, unified religious freedom movement.”

The archbishop said he hopes that campaigns like this will provide hope to religiously persecuted individuals everywhere.

“This is a time for individuals to come to understand better what religious freedom is, what the church teaches about it and how that affects the way we exercise good citizenship and an appropriate love for our homeland,” said Archbishop Lori. “We believe that the flame of freedom ought to be kept burning brightly within this

country as a beacon of hope for religiously persecuted people around the world.”

Two nationally televised Masses will bookend the Fortnight. Archbishop Lori will celebrate Mass at the Baltimore Basilica on June 21, at 5:30 p.m. EDT. Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington will celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on July 4, at noon EDT. USCCB President Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, will be the homilist at the July 4 Mass. To view the Masses, check local TV listings.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has prepared materials to help dioceses and

parishes participate in the fortnight, including templates and guides for special prayer services, a list of frequently asked questions about religious liberty, one-page fact sheets on current threats to religious freedom in the U.S. and around the world and a study guide on Dignitatis Humanae, the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on Religious Freedom.

These materials and more information on the Fortnight and related issues can be found online at www.fortnight4freedom.org and www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/. In addition, a devotional developed locally for last year’s Fortnight for Freedom remains available (and relevant!) at http://archokc.org/office-of-communications/documents/doc_download/648-fortnight-for-freedom-devotional. To receive the content of this devotional in your email inbox daily during the fortnight, along with other helps to observe the fortnight, visit www.flocknote.com/archokc and subscribe to the list “Fortnight for Freedom 2014.”

Sooner Catholic staff contributed to this report, drawing on information from the USCCB website and various news releases.

What do we mean by religious liberty?

In Catholic teaching, the Second Vatican Council explained in Dignitatis Humanae that the foundation of the principle of religious freedom is rooted in the dignity of the human person, who is endowed with reason and free will, and therefore able to take responsibility for his or her actions. Religious liberty is protected in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and in federal and state laws. Religious liberty includes more than our ability to go to Mass on Sunday or pray the Rosary at home; it also encompasses our ability to contribute freely to the common good of all Americans.

-USCCB Fact Sheet www.usccb.org

March for Marriage defends the integrity of family; demands attention of lawmakers

By Brianna Osborne

The Sooner Catholic

In the 41 years since the March for Life began to protest the ruling handed down in Roe v. Wade, many states have upheld the right to life with legislation and court decisions. The weight of these significant victories must be balanced with the facts of loud support for abortion from various sources and a lack of media coverage of the March. With this in mind, supporters of marriage as the union of one man and one woman speculate on the outcomes of the second March for Marriage, to take place on June 19 in Washington, D.C.

The National Organization for Marriage, a collection of faith communities and interest groups that plan and sponsor the March, seems confident that it will have a role in the continuing debate on marriage. Without promising immediate results, NOM indicates the direction this movement will take.

The event website, www.marriagemarch.org, states, “The March for Marriage is poised to become an essential and indispensable

vehicle for voicing the values of pro-marriage Americans in a way that cuts through the biased media narrative and demands hearing in the halls of power.”

Among other reasons for supporting marriage, the website puts forward that “marriage as the union of one man and one woman is our culture’s best means of linking mothers and fathers to one another and to their children.”

The March will open with an 11 a.m. rally at the Capitol building, with the March beginning at 1 p.m. Speakers at the rally include Mike Huckabee, a TV and radio host and the former governor of Arkansas, and Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage.

The date of the March recognizes two major decisions involving marriage handed down from the Supreme Court in June of last year. In one decision, the federal Defense of Marriage Act defining marriage as between one man and one woman was ruled unconstitu-



tional. In the other, the challenge to California’s Proposition 8 (a voter-approved ban on same-sex “marriage”) was sent back to a lower court. Subsequently, same-sex “marriages” were allowed to continue in the state.

Oklahomans await the ruling of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which heard arguments in April regarding a federal court decision to strike down an amendment to the Oklahoma constitution that banned same-sex marriage.

Catholics believe that marriage is the union of one male and one female, “a partnership of the whole of life,” ordered toward the good of spouses and that of their children (Catechism of the Catholic Church

1601).

The U.S. bishops have voiced their support for the March for Marriage; a USCCB website that provides catechesis on marriage, www.marriageuniqueforareason.org, is a sponsor of the March.

Archbishop Paul Coakley has emphasized the consequences of attempting to change marriage in society. In “If not God’s plan, whose plan?” his column from April 7, 2013, he states “The current marriage redefinition arguments focus exclusively on the needs of adults and their fulfillment. It views marriage as a privatized relationship not oriented toward children or connected with the community.”

“The attempt to redefine marriage is to build a structure on sand,” he added. “It cannot stand. It will collapse. And God only knows what other basic goods of society, such as religious liberty, may be brought down with it.”

Brianna Osborne is a staff writer for the Sooner Catholic and the editor of the Sooner Catholic newsletter, available at <https://uno.flocknote.com/list/126932>.

Archbishop Coakley ordains three seminarians as deacons

OKLAHOMA CITY – At a jubilant Mass at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 7, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City, Archbishop Paul Coakley ordained three seminarians of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to the transitional diaconate, the holy order that immediately precedes priesthood.

On Saturday, Lance Warren of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Marlow, Oklahoma, Aaron Foshee of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City and Daniel Grover of Saint Andrew Catholic Church in Moore, Oklahoma, vowed celibacy and obedience to the bishop, preparatory to a final year of seminary study and eventual ordination to the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

“The ordination of three transitional deacons is a great blessing for the archdiocese,” Archbishop Coakley said. “As deacons, as heralds of the Gospel, it will be the duty of these three young men to teach and instruct others in the riches of the Catholic faith, as well as to perform works of charity in the name of the Church. We rejoice and give thanks that they have responded to the call of the Lord in their lives, and we pray that He would continue to pour out His grace upon their diaconal ministry.” “It’s encouraging, too, that this signifies these three men are also nearing priestly ordination,” the archbishop added.

The ordination Mass began with a jubilant choral rendition of “Blessed be God, Who Chose You in Christ.”



From left to right: Deacon Warren, Abbot Stasyszen, Archbishop Coakley, Archbishop Emeritus Beltran, Deacon Foshee and Deacon Grover. More on p. 8 and 9.

Archbishop Coakley’s homily emphasized that the particular vocation of these three men is an outgrowth of their primary vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ – a primary vocation all people share.

“Before you were called and in order to be sent as deacons, you were called as disciples,” the archbishop said. “All of us, by virtue of our baptism and confirmation, are called to be ... missionary disciples.”

The archbishop urged the ordinands to “bear witness to the Gospel in every detail, in your speech, conduct and bearing.”

He also advised them to continue to pray and cultivate the gift of celibacy, calling it a “stimulus to greater charity” and a “remarkable source of fruitfulness in the world.”

“Living this state with total dedication, you will draw closer to Christ more easily in an intimate friendship and with an undivided heart,” he said. “Firmly grounded in faith, you are to show yourselves

chaste and beyond reproach before God and man. ... Never allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope that is offered by the Gospel.”

The high points of the Mass came during the Rite of Ordination, when Archbishop Coakley laid hands on each candidate and then uttered the Prayer of Ordination over them.

“This prayer, along with the laying on of hands, brings the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and the conferral of the Diaconal Order,” according to the program.

Subsequently, the newly ordained received the vestments proper to the diaconate – a long, wide band of colored cloth called a “stole” and a long, wide-sleeved tunic called a “dalmatic” – as well as the book of Gospels.

Archbishop Coakley presented the Gospel Book to each candidate with the words, “Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe and practice what you teach.”

At the sign of peace, all the deacons present greeted the newest members of their order.

The three new deacons said they are overjoyed to have been ordained and eagerly anticipate the coming year of ministry.

“It was a beautiful experience, and I’m just really happy,” Deacon Warren said. “I’m looking forward to being able to be more involved in the life of the Church and parish ministry and to getting to know the people where they are in their faith journey. Hopefully, we can all grow together.”

Deacon Foshee said he’ll never forget a particular moment of the ordination when he lay prostrate before the altar and listened to the congregation sing the litany of the saints. “To hear the saints of the Church praying with you and for you is very profound,” he said. “I feel blessed; I feel absolutely blessed to be a part of the Church in Oklahoma and to begin my ministry here at home.”

Deacon Grover said he is also “excited and happy.” “It was a great day,” he said. “Now, I’m looking forward to preaching, being able to baptize and being able to help out in any way I can.”

The ordination was broadcast to the public at <http://www.ckokc.org/archokc-ordination-2014> -- a first for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. A recording of the ordination is now also available at <http://www.ckokc.org/live-streaming>. To view the recording, click “Archives” and then “Deacon Ordination.”

Simeon Z. Spitz, O.S.B.

continued from page 1
the womb of his mother Elizabeth, leaps for joy, and Mary proclaims the Magnificat, her joyful hymn of praise. The archbishop noted that there is joy in the monastery at this ordination and that the whole Church rejoices that God “has blessed us with a new priest.” He also thanked the family of Brother Simeon for their “generosity and sacrifice” in giving their son to the Church.

After the homily, Brother Simeon declared his intention to undertake the office of the priesthood, promising respect and obedience to the archbishop and his successors.

He then lay prostrate before the altar in a solemn gesture of humility as the entire congregation joined in a litany of supplication, the Litany of All Saints.

Next was the most essential act in the Sacrament of Holy Orders: the laying on of hands and prayer of ordination. Brother Simeon knelt before the archbishop, who placed his hands on Simeon’s

head and prayed that God would grant him the graces of the priesthood. The laying on of hands is the moment when a man becomes a priest.

Archbishop Beltran, Abbot Stasyszen and all priests present then also participated in the laying on of hands, a truly ancient gesture of blessing and consecration.

Father Simeon exchanged his deacon’s stole for the stole and chasuble of a priest. He was vested by Abbot Stasyszen and others who assisted him. Father Simeon knelt before the archbishop who anointed his palms with Sacred Chrism.

The archbishop presented Father Simeon with a chalice and paten, symbolic of his duty to offer the Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist at Mass.

The archbishop greeted the newly ordained Father Simeon with the sign of peace, followed by all the ordained priests present.

Holy Mass continued with Father Simeon concelebrating with the archbishops, the abbot and all priests present. Following the



Fr. Simeon concelebrates his ordination Mass with the archbishops and the abbot.

conclusion of the Mass, Father Simeon offered his first blessing as a new priest to the two archbishops and the abbot. As he left the altar in procession, the entire congregation broke into joyful applause.

Everyone attending the ceremony was invited to a lovely reception in the University dining hall.

Father Spitz’s mother, Susan Boyer, said the whole ceremony was beautiful and “overwhelming.”

His dad, Jerry Spitz, recalled that “it seemed like yesterday I was teaching him to pray.” He noted that his son was a youth representative to the parish council “in the seventh grade” at Saint Matthew’s church in Elk City.

Father Spitz was raised in Canute, Oklahoma, attended public school, and was educated at Saint Gregory’s University. He was accepted as a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Okla-

homa City, but, after two years, decided to enter the novitiate at Saint Gregory’s Abbey. He made his first profession as a monk in 2010 and his solemn vows three years later, taking the name of Simeon.

Father Spitz says he “just kept thinking” about monastic life, and eventually he “felt at peace” with his decision to become a monk.

Abbot Stasyszen feels that young men are drawn to orders like the Benedictines at Saint Gregory’s because of their traditional character. The monk’s habit and cowl signify a “strong sense of community and identity,” he says, things that are reflected in a “life of prayer and piety.”

Father Spitz completed his seminary studies at the Monastery of Saint Vincent Arch Abbey in Latrobe, Pa., and Father Ed Mazich of Saint Vincent’s came to attend today’s ordination. He says he has “great hopes for the future” of Father Spitz, remembering him as “an excellent student, really sharp.”

Father Spitz’s exact duties at Saint Gregory’s are yet to be determined. For now, he is continuing to grow blackberries and produce honey; both blackberry jam and the honey are available for purchase from time to time at the Mabee-Gerrr Museum of Art on the campus of Saint Gregory’s.

J.E. Helm is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic and an adjunct professor of English at several area colleges.

Archbishop to ordain five seminarians to the priesthood

By Sarah Cooper

For the Sooner Catholic

On June 28 at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the largest priestly ordination class from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City since 1991 will be ordained by Archbishop Paul Coakley. For Deacons Christopher Brashears, Linh Bui, Cristobal De Loera, Carson Krittenbrink and Timothy Ruckel, this month’s ordination Mass is not only a culmination of their discernment but a starting line for their lives as priests. Each of them is looking forward to administering the sacraments, serving their parishioners and growing deeper in their own faith life.

Deacon Linh Bui, from the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish in Oklahoma City, began seminary studies in Vietnam but had to suspend them when he immigrated to America as a refugee with his family in 1999. After settling in the United States, Deacon Bui strayed from his Catholic faith for a number of reasons; however, once he realized what was missing in his life, he came back to the faith and applied to be a seminarian in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

“I had a good job and my own house, but I did not feel peaceful and happy at all. I missed the

time when I was in seminary in Vietnam,” said Deacon Bui. “As a sinful man forgiven by God’s love and mercy, I wanted to be a witness to others.”

As a young child Cristobal De Loera, from Saint Charles Borromeo parish in Oklahoma City, told his mother he wanted to be a priest. Over the years, his interest in the priesthood ebbed and flowed until Sister Margarita Vasquez, HCG, looked right into his eyes and asked if he had considered entering the seminary. From that moment on, he asked Jesus and Mary to lead him to his vocation.

“As I approach my ordination, I feel at peace with my decision to follow God’s call,” said Deacon De Loera. “I also feel grateful because God placed His eyes on my family to choose me, an unworthy servant.”

While on a Cursillo retreat, Deacon Christopher Brashears’ vocation was ignited. He then looked to his pastor at Saint Joseph parish in Blackwell, Oklahoma, for wise advice before committing to a seminary education.

“My pastor said that we have to be willing to take the first step; after that, God will give us the clarity we need,” said Deacon Brashears.

After spending 10 years in a career in funeral services, Deacon

Timothy Ruckel, from Epiphany of Our Lord parish in Oklahoma City, decided to stop delaying answering God’s call to the priesthood. Deacon Ruckel said he was influenced greatly by a book about the Brothers of Saint Joseph who founded Resurrection Memorial Cemetery in Oklahoma City. His advice to young men thinking about entering seminary is to stay focused and let the Lord lead your path.

“Listen to the voice of God in your prayer,” said Deacon Ruckel. “He can speak to our hearts in a gentle way and we feel his presence and guidance.”

Deacon Carson Krittenbrink, from Saints Peter and Paul parish in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, credits his grandmother along with Father Rick Stansberry with pushing him closer to a priestly vocation.

“I am so happy that I did follow God’s call because God has plans for our benefit and not for our harm, and I knew that if I did respond to God’s call I would be the happiest I could possibly be, and that’s exactly what I’m feeling now,” said Deacon Krittenbrink.

All five of these Deacons will be ordained together at the Mass of Priestly Ordination. This special Mass includes specific rituals and traditions connecting the Catholic Church of today to its ancient roots. As a symbol of giving their

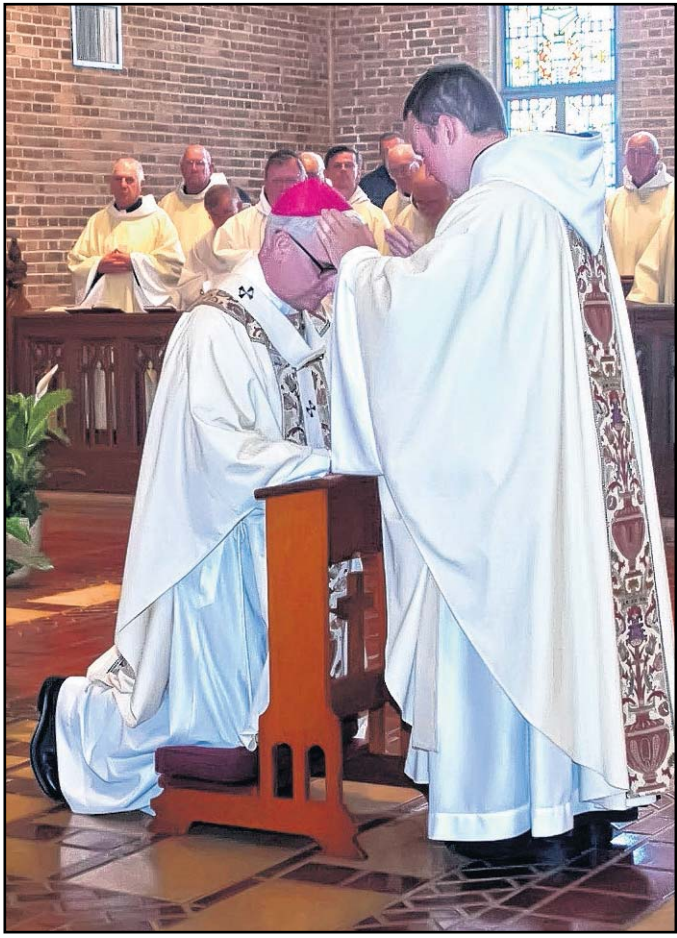
whole lives to the Church, the candidates will lay prostrate on the floor during the Litany of the Saints. Then, each young man will kneel before the archbishop who will then lay his hands on their head followed by all the priests in the archdiocese. Subsequently, the archbishop will pray the prayer of consecration and the young man will become a priest.

“I am very much looking forward to when all of the priests come through and place their hands on my head,” said Deacon Brashears. “There is a real entrance in the brotherhood of the priesthood; it is a moment of solidarity in the ministerial mission of the Church.”

The laying on of hands is followed by the investiture with stole and chasuble and anointing of the hands with the sacred chrism. After becoming a priest, each of the new priests will then concelebrate the rest of their own ordination Mass.

Because of space limitation, the Mass of Priestly Ordination is a ticketed event. For those unable to attend the event, the archdiocese will be streaming the Mass live at <http://www.ckokc.org/archokc-ordination-2014>. A recording will also be available for viewing afterwards.

Sarah Cooper is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.



Fr. Simeon offers his first blessing as a new priest to Archbishop Coakley.



Abbot Stasyszen lays hands on Fr. Simeon during the ordination Mass.

Briefs

Charismatic Catholic prayer group to form

Think that a charismatic/Pentecostal/Holy Spirit-driven faith is a Protestant thing? Think again. Learn the Catholic roots of the modern charismatic renewal. If you are interested in discovering the charismatic dimension of our Catholic faith, call Toni Calvey at (405) 630-0539 or email tonicalvey1900@gmail.com. We hope to begin a new Catholic charismatic prayer group in the Oklahoma City area.

Summer concert series

Vinum, Organum, et Completorium (Wine, Organ, and

Compline): Saint Thomas More University Parish in Norman, Oklahoma, will offer Wine, Organ and Compline at 7 p.m. on June 26, July 10, July 24 and Aug. 7. This series will begin with a wine and cheese gathering in the Atrium at 7 p.m. After the gathering, local organists and university professors will present an organ recital. The evening will end with a Compline service – Night Prayer – officiated by Deacon Aaron Foshee. This service is shorter than Vespers. At the end of this liturgy, those in attendance are asked to leave the church quietly, observing the great silence of the night.

Catholic radio across the archdiocese

Find us on your radio dial at:

97.3 FM Oklahoma City
88.3 FM Lawton
88.3 FM Prague
100.7 FM Canute/Elk City

94.9 FM Tulsa
90.3 FM Antlers
105.7 FM Bristow

También en español:

Spanish Programs are 1:00 pm until dark – Monday thru Friday
890 AM Oklahoma City **1570 AM Tulsa**

Here is a list of all the locally produced programs:

Sunday Mass from St. Eugene	7 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday
Sounds of Sunday (Music)	8 - 11 a.m. Sunday
Living Catholic with Fr. Don Wolf	12 noon Sunday & 3:30 p.m. Monday
Make Straight the Way	3:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday
Good News Sunday w/Dcn Larry Sousa	3:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Saturday
Divine Mercy Chaplet	3 p.m. Weekdays
Around the Archdiocese	3:25 p.m. Weekdays

Photo Essay: Archbishop Coakley ordains three new deacons



Photos by Cara Koenig/
Sooner Catholic More
photos can be seen on-
line at <http://archokc.org/picture-gallery>.

Seminarian visits OKC from Mexico



Archdiocesan seminarian Rodrigo Serna is currently visiting the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City during his months off from seminary study in Mexico. Above, fellow seminarians, Fathers Joseph Irwin and Scott Boeckman greet Serna at the airport. Serna is seventh from the left. "Since my arrival here, I have had very pleasant and beautiful impressions," Serna said. "The most impressive was the welcoming at the airport. These are details I keep lovingly in my heart." Photos by Fr. Brian Buettner

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond to celebrate 125th anniversary

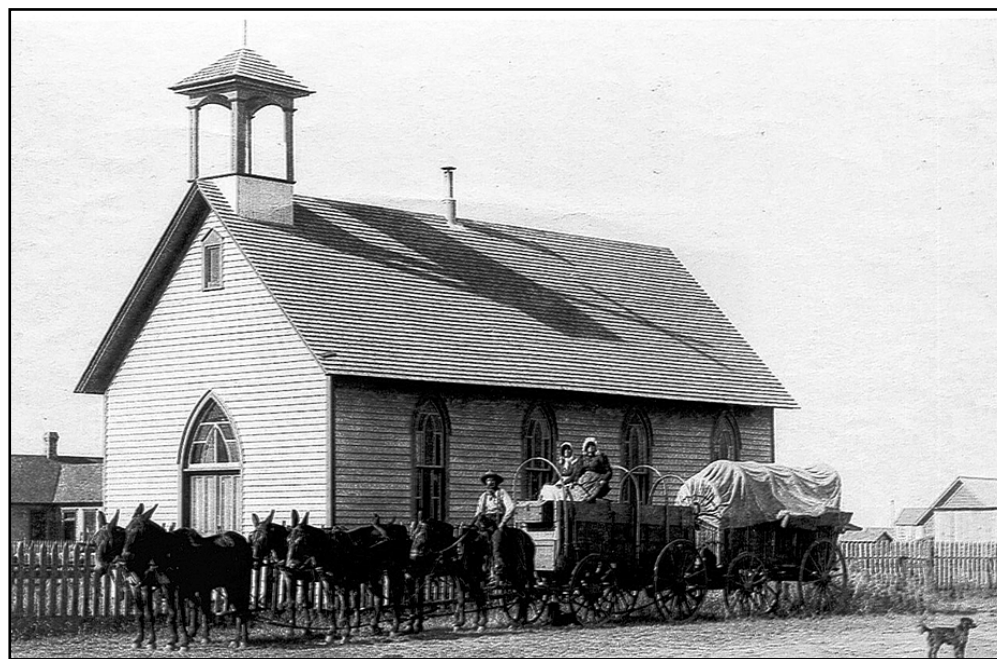
Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, prepares to celebrate its 125th anniversary, linking its rich heritage as Oklahoma's first church directly back to the 1889 land run.

Edmond's largest church, with more than 10,000 members and more than 3,000 families, is busy preparing for the unique celebration. On Saturday, June 21, a parish-wide picnic will follow the 5:30 p.m. Mass. On Tuesday, June 24, a special 6 p.m. Mass and dinner will mark the actual founding date of the parish.

The anniversary Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Emeritus Eusebius J. Beltran, followed by the dinner and program in the parish's remodeled Great Hall where the past of Saint John's will be revisited through photographs, a video tribute and speeches.

Former pastors, associate pastors, deacons, native son priests and former staff members have been invited. In addition, invitations have been sent to Gov. Mary Fallin, Edmond Mayor Charles Lamb and ministers of three Protestant churches, the congregations of which also used the original Saint John's church for their services.

That first church was built at First and Boulevard in 1889. The first Mass was celebrated just 63 days after the epic Land Run event, which opened the Oklahoma territory. That made Saint John's the first church of any denomination built in the newly opened Oklahoma territory. The original church seated 150 and cost \$500. The church was shared with other denominations. One Sunday a month, Saint John's would celebrate holy Mass. The other three Sundays, it was used by the Methodists, Presbyterians and Christian churches for



The first building of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church was built in 1889.

their services. A replica of that church was made by the Catholic fraternal group the Knights of Columbus on Saint John's centennial anniversary in 1989. It is on display at the nearby Edmond Historical Society and Museum.

A new church was built on the same location in 1900. However, on March 16, 1936, a fire destroyed the belfry and roof of the church, forcing reconstruction. In the mid-1950s, Saint John's moved to its present location at Ninth and Boulevard, where two more church homes were constructed, with the latest and most current dedicated in 1982.

In 1990, Saint John's started Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic grade school. Today

the pre-K to eighth grade school has just under 500 students, making it one of the largest Catholic elementary schools the state.

Saint John's is also responsible for dozens of ministries that reach out to help people in the community in need. Since 1998, Saint John's has helped support a mission with Santissimo Sacramento (Blessed Sacrament), in Piura, Peru. Hundreds of Saint John's parishioners have made mission trips to Peru, helping to feed, clothe, house and tend to the health care of thousands. Saint John's also supports the Samaritan House, which provides groceries, utility and rental assistance to those needing support who live within parish boundaries.

In its 125 years, Saint John's has had 31 pastors. In 2011, the sheer size of Saint John's sanctuary (1,250 seating) led to it being chosen for the installation of Archbishop Paul Coakley in 2011. Today, Father Ray Ackerman is the pastor of the thriving parish.

Thirteenth annual CFO Golf Classic draws 165 golfers

By Sarah Cooper
For the Sooner Catholic

A weekend of rain cleared up just in time for play to start at the 2014 Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma golf classic. On June 9, 165 golfers from across the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City gathered at Gaillardia Country Club to raise money for the Catholics schools of the archdiocese as well as to enjoy a great round of golf.

The 13th annual tournament started with an 8 a.m. shotgun start followed by lunch and an afternoon golf session beginning at 1 p.m. A skills' contest on the course provided an added incentive to the golfers on many of the holes. The Archbishop's traveling trophy, awarded to the winner of the school flight, was won by Christ the King parish. This trophy also comes with a \$2,500 grant for Christ the King School. Receiving the Father Kirk Larkin All Parish Trophy this year was Saint Thomas More parish.

Barney Semtner, executive director of the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma, noted that 90 percent of the golfers participating come back every year and that the mission of the foundation is very important to those participating. From the proceeds of the previous 12 golf classics, almost \$400,000 has



The Archbishop's traveling trophy, awarded to the winner of the school flight, was won by Christ the King parish. Photo by Sarah Cooper. More photos can be found online at <http://archokc.org/picture-gallery>.

been raised to benefit the Catholic schools of the archdiocese.

"The CFO golf classic was founded to support Catholic schools and the Catholic school endowment fund," said Semtner. "We want to help lower the tuition costs to make the Catholic schools more affordable. Half of the proceeds of this year's golf classic will go directly to the 21 schools in the archdiocese and the

other half will go toward challenge grants to seven of the schools' endowment funds. They can then use the earnings and growth to support their schools."

The tournament participants were also treated to a wine and cheese reception and awards dinner in addition to having the opportunity to bid on a number of one-of-a-kind items during the silent auction. One

popular item was "Dinner with the Padres," for which various archdiocesan priests volunteered to have dinner with tournament participants at a later date in exchange for a donation to the foundation.

"The golf tournament ends up supporting so many great things with the foundation," said Father Ray Ackerman, pastor of Saint John the Baptist parish in Edmond, Okla. "While raising money to benefit Catholic schools, the tournament allows a group of people from all over the archdiocese to have fun both playing golf and sharing a good meal while bidding on some fine items that people have offered to go to a good cause."

Golfer Hugh O'Hara returned to the golf classic this year to contribute to a worthwhile cause while being able to play a round of golf with friends from across the archdiocese.

"Participating in the golf tournament for the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma is really a no brainer," said O'Hara. "The work that they do, not only locally here but throughout the state, really cannot be matched by any other organization. Anything that we can do to make their job a little bit easier, we are just so happy to be able to accomplish."

Sarah Cooper is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Oklahoma Catholic musician releases album with aim to glorify the Lord

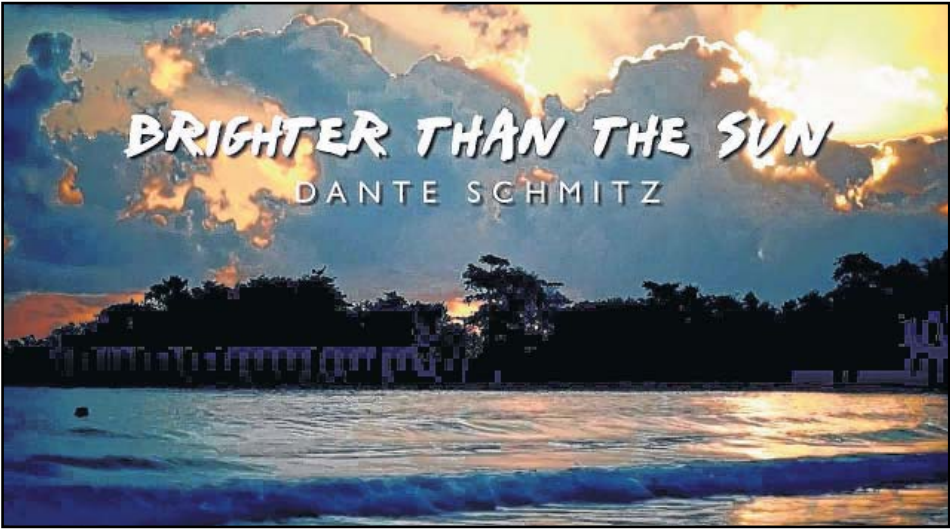
By Rebekah Scaperlanda
For the Sooner Catholic

Saint Augustine of Hippo is often cited as having said, “He who sings, prays twice.” Although the accuracy of the saint’s quote is oft-debated, Oklahoma Catholic musician Dante Schmitz leaves no doubt in listeners’ minds as to the validity of the statement. In his new album, Brighter than the Sun (released April 27), Schmitz literally sings the words in the track Alive in Me, “You are my song and my voice of praise.” The song later continues, “I long to sing the glory of your name.”

Music comes easy to Schmitz, who began his music ministry in middle school and high school, when he attended Saint Joseph’s parish in Norman and sang in a band that headlined youth rallies and retreats around the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. He currently leads music at two parishes in Tulsa. A humble Schmitz attributes this talent and love of music to a clear sign that this is what God wants him to do. Prayer and singing is when he says he feels closest to God.

“I love playing music in church because it literally forces me to address my faith daily,” he noted. “With Mass coming up all the time, I have to look over the readings, really focus on the Scriptures and what point they’re trying to make, try to connect songs that relate to that and try to speak to people about whatever we’re ministering about.”

After growing up in Norman and attending college at OU, Schmitz moved to Tulsa and shortly after started his rock band, Dante and the Hawks. Although the band



plays mostly secular music while his solo career is as a Christian performer, he considers it a blessing to be able to have a place in both worlds. Schmitz expressed how his band gives him more “street cred” with a younger crowd listening to Christian music. Faith has always been a foundation for Schmitz and it carries over into every aspect of his music.

“Even my secular songs with my band all have a very spiritual overtone,” he explained. “Hope and faith have always been a big part of my life; it’s impossible for me to be an honest artist and have that not be a part of what I’m saying.”

This ability to bridge secular and spiritual music gives a refreshing sound to his new solo album. Lyrically, the songs are personal to Schmitz, having written them as part of his faith journey. He compares songwriting to piecing bits of a journal together. The album features a varying array of upbeat light rock music, but also includes songs with a more twangy red dirt country sound. The influence of folk music is apparent, with the

occasional detectible sounds of a banjo, and the album holds an originality not normally associated with Christian music. It’s easy to tell this is a passion project for Schmitz, showcasing the music of great raw talent with lyrics full of prayer.

The theme of “being light in the darkness” holds his new album together. For this album, Schmitz collaborated with producer Ed Cash, who has produced Chris Tomlin, Matt Wertz and several others in the Christian Music industry. Cash heard Schmitz’ song “Uncovered,” which he wrote for Catholic Heart Workcamp, and asked if he could re-record the single. With doors opened by Cash, Schmitz spent a year working with Cash in Nashville to make the album, two or three songs at a time.

“With this album, it was everything on the line with effort. I took my time to make it what I wanted it to be,” Schmitz emphasized. “Musically, it’s by far the best thing I’ve done. We hired the best musicians, best studio and best

producers. But more than that, I just wanted to do an album that I felt was the best I could offer to give glory to God. I wanted to record these songs about my faith, in order to give everything I could give and what truly is the best I could offer for Him.”

Schmitz realizes it’s a challenging world to be a Christian, especially in the music industry, but he’s determined to be patient to see what God has in store, and to focus on making great art that gives glory to God. His new album is not only a joy to listen to, but does just that. It has a great sound and allows the listener to connect with the music on a spiritual level.

“If you focus on making a great record and leading a great worship, people will gravitate toward the truth and what is honest and true,” he explained. “You write about your struggles, and, if someone happens to be going through a similar struggle, they relate. If I can take one person who was in darkness and my music brought them back to light, that’s enough.”

For more information, visit danteschmitz.com. To download his new album “Brighter than the Sun,” visit iTunes. Dante and the Hawks perform around Tulsa at various venues and will be at the upcoming Center of the Universe Festival on July 25 and July 26. Schmitz will also be on tour with Catholic Heart Workcamp this summer.

Rebekah Scaperlanda is a freelance writer with a background in development, sales, fashion and new media. She holds a degree in journalism from the University of Kansas.

Essay collection provides glimpse into a fully Catholic life

The Thorny Grace of It: And Other Essays for Imperfect Catholics by Brian Doyle (Loyola Press, \$14.95)



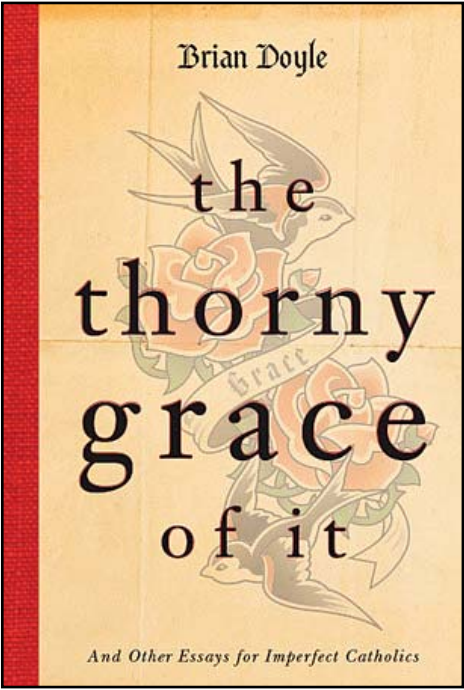
Reviewed by Anamaria Scaperlanda Biddick
Brian Doyle’s “The Thorny Grace of It” contains a series of vignettes that bring to life everyday experiences of grace. Most of the short pieces are the author’s own experiences, ranging from childhood memories of installing window screens at the end of winter to his first meeting with his post-college boss. Doyle’s style effortlessly weaves the poignant with the humorous, making each an enjoyable read.

“The Brilliantine Coattails of Lust,” which I first read in the March 2013 issue of First Things, comically describes a preparatory assignment for the Sacrament of Confession. The young Doyle must solicit aid from an older sibling; Kevin, the eldest, takes time from his mountain of homework to instruct his young brother as to what the priest would like to hear

in the confessional, full of made-up sins. The amusing episode is told from the perspective of second-grade Brian Doyle, who adores his eldest brother and remains in awe of the time Kevin takes from his homework to help him.

This episode serves as preparation for the three pieces centering around Kevin’s death: “His Epic Head,” “His Last Game” and “The Country of Who He Used to Be.” The first is a joking piece, combining many memories of Kevin that have to do with just how big his head was. The second describes an outing of the two brothers, as Kevin is dying; they drive together in the country and watch a pickup basketball game. The last of the trio wanders around Kevin’s four-year home at the University of Notre Dame, an old dorm still in use. These pieces provide a glimpse into the fraternal relationship over a lifetime.

The section “There are Many Ways to Pray” speaks of grace in unexpected places, from basketball to buses to butcher shops. “The Ballad of Jimmy Ward,” follows Ward, a basketball prodigy, through his enlist in the marines



and his return home, sans his left hand, changed by war into a promoter of peace. “The Woman in the Vast Blue Coat,” tells the story of a Chicago bus ride in which one of the passengers, the blue-coat wearing woman, dies. Doyle watches as the bus driver treats her abandoned body with loving-kindness. The presence of

God is evident on a cold Illinois morning, through an ordinary man presented with an unusual circumstance. “Mr. Kim” hilariously describes the generosity of a local butcher, who hides his kind heart behind a gruff exterior. These stories convey the complexity of life: life emerging from war; tenderness in the face of death; compassion masked by a rough personality.

In the final section, “The Rich Soil of The Past,” Doyle pays tribute to people of his past who were agents of God’s grace to him, from the nuns of his grade school and his scout master to the people who did his laundry while a student at the University of Notre Dame to his first boss in Chicago. Like many of the stories, each piece finds the right blend of humorous and heartwarming, while avoiding sentimentality.

Doyle’s varied collection illustrates the richness and complexity, joy and sadness, of life, and God’s work within it. It is a refreshing glimpse into a fully alive and fully Catholic life.

Anamaria Scaperlanda Biddick is a freelance writer and math tutor living in Oklahoma City.

Archbishop Coakley to visit St. Vincent de Paul thrift store in OKC July 11
10-year-old thrift shop a signature element of SVdP outreach to the poor

By Brianna Osborne
The Sooner Catholic

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is an international organization, but the archdiocesan council of Oklahoma City is committed to helping the poor locally. This involvement was displayed prominently last year when Vincen-tians from across the state assisted in tornado recovery and relief efforts, services that they continue to offer to victims. Yet, the Society does most of its work out of the spotlight, in making personal visits to the homes of the poor and, in Oklahoma City, running a thrift store.

Located at 4515 NW 10th Street, just west of Meridian, the Saint Vincent de Paul Thrift Store has been in business for 10 years. Council President Bill Seck said that, because of generous donations of clothing and appliances from parishes, the thrift store can offer these items at reasonable prices to people who could not otherwise afford them.

Seck is especially grateful to the parishes that hosted thrift store drives, including Saint Andrew’s in Moore, Saint Mark’s in Norman and Saint Francis of Assisi in Oklahoma City. He said he would love to see more parishes do the same.

“These were all very successful,” said Seck. “It’s great to see different parishes, particularly in the metro, feel like we all have ownership in [the store’s] success.”

Cabrini Wellness Ministry yields immediate results, garners interest from state officials

By J.E. Helm
For the Sooner Catholic

The Catholic Church is the visible means by which we experience God’s loving care of us. This charity may be felt when those in need receive food, clothing, or medical care. It sometimes also happens that this concern focuses on those who, tragically, attempt to take their own lives.

Thanks to training from the Cabrini Wellness Ministry, a joint suicide prevention program of Catholic Charities and the Catholic Pastoral Center, more than 800 people in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City have been trained to respond to those contemplating suicide.

The three-pronged program of the Cabrini Wellness Ministry begins with a one-hour “Question, Persuade and Refer” training session that prepares educators, parents, clergy and ministry leaders to be able to approach someone who might be suicidal.

Participants in small classes of about 30 learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide, how to offer hope and how to get help from local service providers.

Aimee Ryan, director of social work with Catholic Charities and one of the QPR trainers, says she realizes that it is hard to ask someone, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”

“But if you’re willing to say those words and if you’re willing to hear the answer, then you’ve opened that door,” she says.

Amy Shipman, LPC, a therapist with Saint Joseph’s Family Counseling Center, is also a trainer for the QPR program. She notes that, while talking to someone about suicide is not the easiest thing to do, it is vital.

“You have to realize that saving their life is more important than your being uncomfortable,” says Shipman.

Results of the training have been immediate. Pedro Moreno, archdiocesan director of Hispanic Ministry, attended a QPR training session. Immediately after the class, Moreno was approached by a young man with a question who then expressed his struggle with suicide.



The SVdP thrift store aids many in Oklahoma City.

At 10 a.m. on July 11, Archbishop Paul Coakley will visit the thrift store and spend the morning enjoying coffee and donuts with the employees and any customers who might visit.

According to Seck, this will show that the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is “another asset to assist the poor in the archdiocese.”

Donations are always needed, as are volunteers to help sort clothing at the store. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Visit their website at stvincentdepaulokc.org or call (405) 917-5999 for more information.

The core mission of Society members is to visit the homes of the poor, give them the help they need and pray with them.

“Vincen-tians are the only ones (as far as I

Moreno was able to help, thanks to the training he had just received.

“Some people just need someone to listen. When you give your time in an act of love, hope is born of that love,” Moreno observes.

Shipman credits Archbishop Coakley for the success of the program, saying that “he has been key” in its development. Archbishop Coakley mandated QPR training for parish and school staffs, and he himself “participated in the priests’ training program,” says Shipman.

Ryan and Shipman recently attended a suicide prevention conference sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health, and they presented the QPR program. It was very well received, and “a variety of professional counselors were intrigued with how to take it back to their own faith community,” according to Becky Van Pool, director of parish outreach at Catholic Charities.

A second component of the suicide prevention program of the Cabrini Wellness Ministry is the Lifelines Prevention Program. This is to help people who are struggling with mental health issues. Van Pool, who is also a QPR trainer, says that the program is designed to be a resource for people who are struggling with mental health issues. She says that the program is designed to be a resource for people who are struggling with mental health issues.

A more intensive training program for educators that will include a parent component and will ultimately incorporate actual classroom sessions for students. Selected schools and parishes will launch the program this fall.

The third part of the Cabrini Wellness Ministry plan involves the establishment of protocols for use in the event of critical incidents.

All aspects of the suicide prevention program will eventually be extended throughout the archdiocese. QPR training has already been conducted in the Lawton and Enid areas, and Saint Joseph’s Family Counseling Center services are offered in several rural communities.

Van Pool explains that the Cabrini Ministry was founded in response to what was recognized as the serious problem of suicide in the archdiocese, particularly among young people. The Centers for Disease Control report that “For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the third leading cause of death.”

know) who routinely go out and do home visits,” said Seck. “We sit down and listen to the story, the plight, of the people who need help ... We try to help them with utility bills, rent and other expenses and then we hold hands and pray for a few minutes. For me, that’s a very powerful thing.”

Currently the Society also participates in the national non-denominational initiative Bridges Out of Poverty, which mentors candidates in pulling themselves out of poverty.

Deacon Joe Forgue, the spiritual adviser for the Oklahoma Council of the Society, provided some insight into its spiritual organization.

“One of the images I use that a lot of people don’t, is it’s like being in a third order. The primary purpose for the Society is for the growth of holiness in the members. The charism of holiness they have is service for the poor,” said Deacon Forgue.

“We are Christ, serving Christ,” he added.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was founded by Blessed Frederic Ozanam in 1833. He was beatified by Saint John Paul II in 1997.

Saint Vincent de Paul was a priest who served the poor in France in the 17th century. His feast day is Sept. 27.

Brianna Osborne is a staff writer at the Sooner Catholic and the editor of the Sooner Catholic newsletter, available at https://uno.flocknote.com/list/ 126932.



The Ministry is named for St. Frances Cabrini.

The staff of Saint Joseph’s Family Counseling Center had sometimes been called upon to assist students following the death of a classmate who committed suicide. It was felt that something should be done to raise awareness of the issue and to aid in suicide prevention.

“We needed to be on the front end, teaching prevention skills,” says Van Pool. “Church should be the first place we go when we need help, not the last place.”

For more information or to express concern that a family member or friend might be considering suicide, please contact either Aimee Ryan or Amy Shipman at (405) 524-0969 or toll free at 1 (800) 375-8514.

J.E. Helm is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic and an adjunct professor of English at several area colleges.

Lánzate a lo más Profundo

Luke 5:4

Libertad para Servir

La libertad religiosa es más que la libertad de culto, aunque el culto es una expresión esencial en prácticamente todas las tradiciones religiosas. Como mínimo, la libertad religiosa, sin duda salvaguarda la libertad de culto. Pero una libertad religiosa sólida, como nuestra Constitución consagra y que el Creador ha inserto en nuestros corazones a través de la ley natural, es también la libertad de vivir las consecuencias de nuestra fe religiosa en el público, así como las dimensiones privadas de nuestro vivir. Como cristianos estamos llamados no sólo a amar a Dios, sino también a amar a nuestro prójimo. El servicio a Dios requiere el servicio al prójimo. Por tercer año consecutivo, la Conferencia Estadounidense de Obispos Católicos está patrocinando una Quincena por la Libertad llamando a los católicos, así como otras personas de fe y buena voluntad a reflexionar sobre la importancia de la libertad religiosa en nuestra sociedad y en nuestro mundo. La Quincena es una oportunidad para orar, estudiar y abogar por la libertad religiosa, que se ve amenazada no sólo en lugares lejanos, sino también aquí en los Estados Unidos. El tema para la Quincena por la Libertad de este año, que se extiende del 21 de junio al 4 de julio es “Libertad para Servir”. Nuestra libertad para servir a los pobres y los vulnerables de acuerdo a la dignidad humana y la



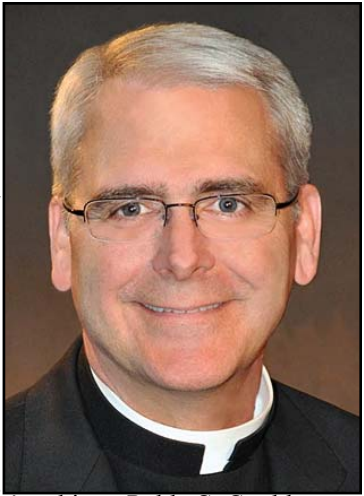
do una Quincena por la Libertad llamando a los católicos, así como otras personas de fe y buena voluntad a reflexionar sobre la importancia de la libertad religiosa en nuestra sociedad y en nuestro mundo. La Quincena es una oportunidad para orar, estudiar y abogar por la libertad religiosa, que se ve amenazada no sólo en lugares lejanos, sino también aquí en los Estados Unidos. El tema para la Quincena por la Libertad de este año, que se extiende del 21 de junio al 4 de julio es “Libertad para Servir”. Nuestra libertad para servir a los pobres y los vulnerables de acuerdo a la dignidad humana y la

doctrina de la Iglesia está siendo desafiada. Una de las amenazas más emblemáticas a la libertad religiosa en los Estados Unidos hoy en día es el controversial mandato HHS, que impone sanciones económicas fuertes para los patrones que se niegan a incluir anticonceptivos, esterilización y drogas que inducen el aborto en los planes de seguro de salud que prestan a sus empleados bajo la Ley de Cuidado de Salud a bajo Precio. Las reglas del mandato no proporcionan ninguna cláusula de conciencia aceptable para proteger a los

católicos y otros que encuentran estos procedimientos contrarios a su fe religiosa y su comprensión de la dignidad humana

enraizada en la fe. Se nos presenta un dilema inaceptable: o bien permitirán la prestación de servicios inmorales que atentan contra la dignidad humana y violan nuestra conciencia, o se enfrentan a multas paralizantes que podrían obligar a las empresas, así como católicos y otros servicios de caridad basadas en la fe, escuelas y servicios de salud instalaciones a cerrar sus puertas. Servicio al prójimo, especialmente el servicio a los pobres, es un componente fundamental de nuestra fe católica. No es meramente la guinda del pastel. Se nos niega la libertad para servir de una manera que es consistente

con nuestras creencias y convicciones religiosas profundamente arraigadas. Servimos a los pobres, nos preocupamos por los enfermos, le damos refugio a las personas sin hogar, educamos a los niños, no porque sean católicos, sino porque somos católicos. Es nuestra fe católica que nos permite ver a Cristo en cada persona y reconocer la dignidad de cada ser humano. Es nuestra fe católica que nos motiva a servir; que exige que sirvamos. Esta injusticia no puede permanecer. En marzo de este año la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City, Caridades Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City y otras entidades católicas, incluidas las empresas de propiedad católica, que forman parte de la Asociación Católica de Beneficios (con sede aquí en Oklahoma y que representa a más de 450 empresarios católicos de todo el país) presentó una demanda en la corte federal para una búsqueda de medidas cautelares de las cargas injustas del mandato del HHS que son contrarias a nuestra fe católica. Como se puede leer en este número del Sooner Catholic, recientemente se nos ha dado la razón. Esta es una importante victoria para la libertad religiosa. Pero este no es el final de la lucha, ya sea en relación con el mandato o las muchas otras amenazas a la libertad religiosa que se avecinan en el horizonte. Los animo a visitar el sitio web de la Quincena de la Libertad en www.Fortnight4Freedom.org.



Arzobispo Pablo S. Coakley

¡Conocer a Jesús es lo más importante!

Por Pedro A. Moreno, OP, MRE

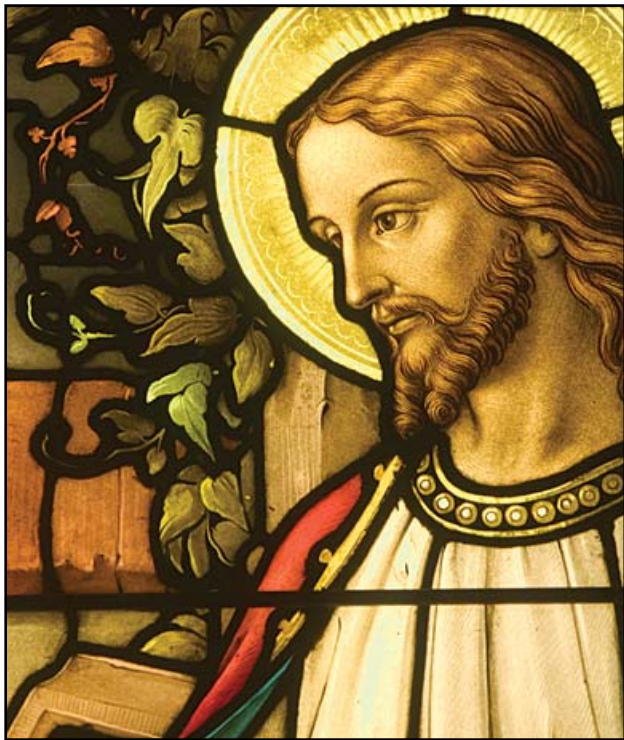
Director del Ministerio Hispano

Mientras que en siglos pasados existían ejemplos de matrimonios arreglados por los padres de los novios, que convenían a sus hijos de cuan buena pareja le habían encontrado, el presente es muy distinto. Tampoco basta que una computadora o tus mejores amigos te digan “cásate con esa persona”. No, para dar un paso tan importante como el matrimonio se necesita conocer personalmente al futuro cónyuge.

Así mismo, el conocer a Jesús y llegar a ser su discípulo. Tiene que llegar un momento en la vida de cada persona, independientemente de cual Iglesia o confesión cristiana haya tenido en su niñez, adolescencia o vida de adulto donde se de ese paso de conocer personalmente al Señor. No basta lo que digan otros, eso es solo un comienzo, necesitamos la experiencia personal de Jesús. Necesitamos la oportunidad de conocerlo personalmente, necesitamos la vivencia personal de donde uno pueda decir por sí mismo(a) “Gracias a todos los que me han iniciado en este camino pero ahora puedo decir por cuenta propia que conozco personalmente a Jesús, Él es mi Señor, Salvador y Redentor.”

¡Esto no quiere decir que uno automáticamente rechace todo lo que otros nos han dicho o digan sobre Jesús! Rechazar de plano todo lo recibido de otros en cuanto a la fe desde nuestra niñez o juventud y lanzarse a solas podría ser solo una manifestación de inmadura rebeldía adolescente que busca independizarse de sus padres y que puede nacer de la actitud de “Yo sí se y los demás no saben nada”, o “Yo solo me basto para encontrar las respuestas a mis preguntas”. Esto sería un error. Lo que otros nos han dicho y enseñado nos puede servir de inicio en el camino hacia Jesús.

Viene a mi mente el pasaje del Evangelio según



San Juan, en el capítulo cuatro. Es la historia de la Samaritana en el Pozo. Al final encontramos los siguientes versos...

Muchos samaritanos de aquel pueblo creyeron en él (Jesús) por las palabras de la mujer, que atestiguaba: «Me ha dicho todo lo que he hecho.» Cuando llegaron a él los samaritanos, le rogaron que se quedara con ellos. Y Jesús se quedó allí dos días. Fueron muchos más los que creyeron por sus palabras, y decían a la mujer: «Ya no creemos por tus palabras, pues nosotros mismos hemos oído y sabemos que éste es verdaderamente el Salvador del mundo.»

Para muchos samaritanos su camino hacia el cristianismo comenzó en su formación religiosa de niños y continuo en sus prácticas religio-

sas. Cuando la mujer samaritana, mujer no muy santa que no era del grupo “oficial” de los discípulos y apóstoles de Jesús, compartió con otros su experiencia de Jesús y esto les sirvió de inicio en la vida cristiana. Pero aunque esta gran mujer había hecho mucho, al final, muchos más creyeron en Jesús no por las palabras de ella sino por haber aprovechado la oportunidad de conocer al Señor personalmente.

Aquí vemos tres pasos muy comunes, la formación en la fe de la niñez, las prácticas religiosas, testimonios de otros muy convincentes (y no siempre del grupo “oficial”) y finalmente nuestro encuentro personal con el Señor, el conocerlo y entrar en comunión con Jesús personalmente.

Por más bueno que sean los comienzos de la fe en Jesús, comienzos donde fuimos primordialmente agentes pasivos recibiendo y haciendo lo que otros entendían que era lo mejor para acercarnos a Jesús, es necesario para alcanzar la fe adulta que encontremos a nuestra samaritana del pozo, a veces de otro grupo, que nos entusiasme tanto con su testimonio de Jesús que terminemos abriendo nuestras vidas a encuentros personales con el Señor, Salvador y Mesías.

¡Lo más importante es conocer a Jesús, conocer su amor y misericordia! Las ayudas de la familia y la comunidad son indispensables para comenzar en el camino hacia el Señor, pero la madurez se comienza a vivir al tener experiencias personales con Él, sobre todo en la oración privada y comunitaria donde se vive la comunión con Jesús.

Que hermoso sería poder decirle a los que nos han iniciado en la fe desde nuestra niñez, padres, sacerdotes, religiosos, catequistas o predicadores...: «Ya no creemos por tus palabras, pues nosotros mismos hemos oído y sabemos que éste es verdaderamente el Salvador del mundo.»

Iglesia insta a los gobiernos a dar mayor protección a los inmigrantes más jóvenes

Por Ezra Fieser

Catholic News Service

SANTO DOMINGO, República Dominicana — Algunos dirigentes católicos han llamado la atención sobre el aumento increíble de inmigrantes latinoamericanos expuestos a riesgos inauditos en contra de sus derechos humanos, especialmente el enorme número de menores de edad que tratan de emprender el viaje desde su país nativo hacia los Estados Unidos sin ninguna compañía de adultos.

En reuniones separadas, el mes de mayo, en Centroamérica, obispos, trabajadores de la iglesia y organizaciones católicas de Latinoamérica y de los Estados Unidos concluyeron lo mismo: se necesita mayor protección para los inmigrantes durante su ardua jornada en busca de trabajo y deseosos de reunirse con familiares.

“Nuestra mayor preocupación, entre otras, ha sido la violación de derechos humanos a la que se exponen los inmigrantes durante su viaje a los EE.UU., con incremento de trata de personas, con la aplicación de acciones políticas y la explotación de varios grupos inmiscuidos en el asunto”, dijeron representantes del Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad del Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano en una declaración, posterior a una reunión que se llevó a cabo en Panamá el 16 de mayo.

Algunos días después, el 22 de mayo, los obispos de Centroamérica y de Estados Unidos concluyeron una reunión en El Salvador en la cual subrayaron los riesgos causados por la creciente

tendencia de jovencitos y menores de edad que hacen el viaje a los Estados Unidos para reunirse con sus respectivos familiares.

Las reuniones se suscitaron en momentos en los que se han elevado peticiones al Congreso de los Estados Unidos para que se aprueben leyes de una reforma de inmigración que han permanecido atoradas. Hace un año, el Senado aprobó un proyecto de ley mediante el cual se preparaba el camino para que los inmigrantes indocumentados alcanzaran la ciudadanía y que ahora viven en los Estados Unidos. Además, se pedía un aumento de guardaciones en la frontera, castigos contra patrones que contrataran trabajadores indocumentados y la agilización del proceso de inmigración legal. Y a pesar de eso, en la Cámara no se ha logrado que se apruebe una pieza legislativa semejante.

Algunos trabajadores de la iglesia dicen que las pobres condiciones sociales y económicas en su país de origen obligan a la gente a huir de su tierra. Y la situación es especialmente crítica en Centroamérica, en donde Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador se destacan como los países de más alta incidencia de homicidios.

“Las fuerzas que impelen a los inmigrantes a abandonar su patria son la violencia, añadida a la pobreza y a la falta de oportunidades de trabajo”, dijo Kevin Appleby, director de acción política de inmigración y asuntos públicos de Migration and Refugee Services de la U.S. Conference of Catholic

Bishops.

Appleby, quien asistió a la reunión realizada en El Salvador, dijo que la iglesia está especialmente preocupada por el aumento en el número de inmigrantes de menor edad que realizan los viajes solos sin compañía de adultos.

“Una mujer, resguardada en un centro de repatriación, nos dijo: ‘Mejor dejo que mi hijo muera camino a Estados Unidos y no a la puerta de entrada de mi casa’”, dijo Appleby. “Creo que en los dos últimos años, las pandillas han ganado mayor fuerza, pues están presentes en las escuelas y en los barrios”.

En un periodo de 12 meses, que terminaría el 30 de septiembre, las autoridades de inmigración de los Estados Unidos consideran que unos 70,000 inmigrantes menores de edad que viajan solos alcanzarán la frontera que media entre México y los Estados Unidos, cifra mucho mayor que la alcanzada el año pasado, cuando se registró la cifra de 24,668 inmigrantes.

Los gobiernos centroamericanos respectivos y las instituciones necesitan actuar de manera más vigorosa para prevenir que los menores abandonen su país sin ir acompañados de algún adulto, dijo Appleby.

“Lo crítico de la situación, en el sentido de que están perdiendo muchos jóvenes, no se percibe en los países respectivos”, dijo. “Esas son naciones que tienen una gama de otros problemas mayores, por lo que están colmados de conflictos. Para que tales países progresen, necesitarán de la ayuda de

los Estados Unidos de una manera u otra”.

Y la iglesia percibe también otros problemas de varia índole.

En la reunión de Panamá, a la que asistieron más de 130 obispos, sacerdotes, trabajadores de la iglesia y representantes de otras organizaciones dedicadas a asuntos de inmigración, se compartía la certeza de los riesgos a los que se exponen los inmigrantes cuando pasan de un país en desarrollo a otro, dijo Luis Enrique Pinilla Portilla, director del Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad del Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano.

Después de la reunión, el departamento subrayó los países que causan especial preocupación, entre ellos, la República Dominicana, países de Centroamérica y México.

En la República Dominicana, los legisladores aprobaron en el mes de mayo una ley dirigida a inmigrantes del país vecino de Haití y sus hijos nacidos como dominicanos. En ella se procura un camino para la ciudadanía para decenas de miles de hijos de inmigrantes nacidos como dominicanos, pero se establecen reglamentos más severos para inmigrantes actuales y su respectiva familia.

“Como efecto de esto se puede observar más tensiones en la frontera. La situación es difícil para los haitianos, que se ven sujetos a abusos”, dijo el padre claretiano Jeannot Lefranc, que trabaja en La Descubierta, población situada al sudoeste de la República Dominicana, cerca de la frontera con Haití.

Religiosos de Brasil lideran campaña de conciencia de contrabando durante Copa Mundial

Por Catholic News Service

SAO PAULO — A días del comienzo de la Copa Mundial en Brasil, una campaña interreligiosa está llamando atención a la explotación sexual y al contrabando humano.

La campaña fue desarrollada por la Conferencia de Religiosos de Brasil y está orientada a prevenir la explotación sexual “antes, durante y después de la Copa Mundial”, dijo sor Manuela Rodríguez, miembro de las Hermanas Oblatas del Santísimo Redentor y una de las coordinadoras de la campaña en Sao Paulo.

Más de 30,000 religiosas, casi 8,000 sacerdotes y unos 2,700 hermanos religiosos están involucrados en el esfuerzo, según la CRB.

Sor Manuela explicó que la campaña comenzó en marzo con visitas a escuelas y parroquias para discutir cómo reconocer las víctimas de la explotación sexual.

La información de la CRB dice que los eventos deportivos tales como la Copa Mundial “terminan siendo ocasiones para la práctica de este crimen” y que “en muchos casos niños son adoptados ilegalmente y adolescentes son involucrados inicialmente en la promoción del deporte pero luego son sumergidos en las redes de la explotación sexual”.

Una semana antes del comienzo del torneo de la Copa Mundial los miembros y voluntarios estaban distribuyendo panfletos en estaciones de autobuses y en aeropuertos para extenderse a los visitantes que llegan a las 12 ciudades anfitrionas brasileñas.



ENCUENTRO MATRIMONIAL MUNDIAL

Los padres que se aman tienen el doble que ofrecer.



UN REGALO SIN PRECIO...

Que sus hijos valoraran para siempre...

Que les darán un gran beneficio en sus vidas...

Que será un gran valor en los años venideros...

Un regalo muy especial que solamente USTEDES les pueden dar...

El regalo de su Amoroso Matrimonio.

Cada niño merece Crecer siendo amado...

próximos fines de semana del 2014

Junio 20,21, 22 y Octubre 10, 11, 12 en el Centro Pastoral Arquidiocesano

Por más de 40 años, el Encuentro Matrimonial ha estado ayudando a buenos matrimonios a volverse mejores matrimonios. Dese la oportunidad de vivir la experiencia de un Fin de Semana de Encuentro Matrimonial y descubre lo que más de 3 millones de Parejas sus familias y Sacerdotes han experimentado-comunicación íntima, perdón y entrega.

♥ Reconstruya ♥ Re encienda ♥ Renueve... ♥ SU AMOR ♥

Martin y Emma Barcanas

(918)557-7275 (405)923-8744

Edgar y Nancy Morales

(405)476-6283 (405)602-6950



Job Box

Lay Pastoral Minister
St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, a growing rural parish in beautiful Pauls Valley, is accepting applications for a Lay Pastoral Minister to assist with adult and young adult faith formation and religious education. The candidate must be bilingual in Spanish/English and deeply rooted in the Catholic tradition. The position is part-time, but can be combined with similar duties at a sister parish to become full-time. Interested candidates should contact Fr. Jim Chamberlain, Email: frjim@suddenlinkmail.com.

Director of Religious Education
St. Peter Catholic Church, Woodward, Oklahoma, is accepting applications for the full-time position of Director of Religious Education. Applicant should hold or is working toward Archdiocesan DRE Certification and a minimum of 1 year experience working in catechetical ministry. Interested candidates should contact Judith White, Office Administrator, for a complete job description and application to stpsongbird@sbcglobal.net (580) 256-5305. Resumes and applications must be submitted to St. Peter Church no later than July 27 at 5 p.m.

Elementary School Principal
The Catholic School of St. Eugene in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma is seeking an Elementary School Principal. Candidates for the PreK3-8th grade school of

over 350 students must be practicing Catholics, hold a master's degree in educational administration or related field, and have at least five years of educational experience. Exceptional communication skills and enthusiasm for maintaining an excellent academic and religious oriented school is necessary for candidates seeking this faith and academic leader position. Contact the Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 32180, Oklahoma City, OK or call (405) 721-4202 to request an application.

Fourth Grade Teacher
Holy Trinity Catholic School, Okarche is accepting applications for the 14-15 school year for a 4th grade teacher. Interested applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in Elementary Education and should send a resume, cover letter, and a copy of teacher certification to Tammy Jacobs at tjacobs@holytrinityok.org or fax to (405) 263-9753.

Fifth Grade Teacher
Saint Eugene Catholic School is seeking a fifth grade teacher who is dynamic, energetic, curriculum-driven and Catholic. If this is you and you would like to be a part of a faith-filled community, please send your resume to SWilliams@steugeneschool.org.

High School Openings
Mount St. Mary Catholic High School is seeking a full time

guidance counselor, with college guidance experience. Also, a part-time Reading position is also available. Please fax resume, Oklahoma certification and letter of inquiry to Talita DeNegri at (405) 631-9209, or by email at tdenegri@mountstmary.org.

3rd and 4th Grade Teachers
Saint John Nepomuk Catholic School in Yukon is accepting applications for the 2014-15 school year. Positions are available for a full-time 3rd grade teacher, a full time 4th grade teacher, and part time music teacher. Applicants for this position must be certified in the state of Oklahoma. Interested applicants should send a cover letter, copy of teacher certification and resume to Jay Luetkemeyer at jluetkemeyer@sjnok.org or fax to (405) 354-8192.

Library and Computer Teacher
St. James the Greater Catholic School is seeking applications for a full time Librarian/Computer teacher for the 2014-2015 school year. Applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in Elementary Education. Please send archdiocesan applications to Anne Coddling, 1224 S.W. 41, Oklahoma City, OK 73109 or email: to stjames1@cox.net.

Early Childhood Teachers
St. James the Greater Catholic School is seeking applications for a full time Kindergarten teacher and full time Pre-Kindergar-

ten teacher for the 2014-2015 school year. Applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in Early Childhood Education. Please send archdiocesan applications to Anne Coddling, 1224 S.W. 41, Oklahoma City, OK 73109 or email: stjames1@cox.net.

Latin/Social Studies teacher
Christ the King School in Oklahoma City is looking for a Latin/Social Studies middle school teacher. Full-time position available for the 2014-2015 school year. Must be Social Studies state certified. Please send Archdiocesan application to 1905 Elmhurst Ave. OKC, OK 73120 or by email to kcarter@ckokc.org.

Fifth Grade Teacher
All Saints Catholic School seeks applicants for the position of Grade 5 teacher for the 2014-2015. Applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in Elementary Education. Send resumes to Dana Wade, All Saints Catholic School, 4001 36th Avenue, N.W., Norman, Oklahoma 73072.

Pre-Kindergarten teacher
All Saints Catholic School seeks applications for a full-time Pre-Kindergarten teacher for the 2014-2015 school year. Applicants must hold Oklahoma certification in Early Childhood Education. Send resumes to Dana Wade, All Saints Catholic School, 4001 36th Avenue, NW, Norman, Oklahoma 73072.

Briefs

“Gift of Love Gala” is June 21
The Center of Family Love and the Knights of Columbus will host the “Gift of Love Gala” the evening of Saturday, June 21, at the Skirvin Hotel in Oklahoma City. Located just 25 miles west of Oklahoma City, the Center of Family Love serves as a safe haven and home for 115 developmentally disabled adults through residential living and vocational training. Proceeds from the gala enhance health, community, social/human service and educational programs directly impacting residents. Ticket prices are \$150 each (includes \$100 cash raffle ticket and \$50 banquet ticket). The cash raffle will yield a grand prize of \$10,000, a second prize of \$2,000, three \$1,000 prizes, four \$500 prizes, five \$200 prizes and 20

\$100 prizes. For ticket and other information, contact Richard Schulte at (405) 620-7491 or the Center of Family Love at (405) 263-4658.

Office of Worship and Spiritual Life to lead pilgrimage to Chicago
The Office of Worship and Spiritual Life is sponsoring a pilgrimage Aug. 21 — 25, led by Father Stephen Bird. The group will visit Holy Name Cathedral, Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini Shrine and other significant Chicago churches. The group will stay at the historic Palmer House Hotel. The trip will include a boat tour of the Chicago River and Lake Michigan, as well as visits to Navy Pier and the John Hancock Tower. To register or for more information, call (405) 721-5651 ext. 158.

Beginning Experience Weekend

Widowed Separated and Divorced Beginning Experience Weekend retreat is 7 p.m. Friday July 11 to 3 p.m. July 13 at the Catholic Pastoral Center (7501 NW Expressway Oklahoma City). Cost is \$100. To register, call Ana Romero at the Office of Family Life at (405) 721-5651 ext. 108. For more information, go to: www.beginningexperience.org.
During my 12 years as director of the Office of Family Life, I can attest to the transforming power of the Beginning Experience program. I have seen countless individuals come to the weekend on Friday evening broken and suffering and leave on Sunday hopeful and on the road to healing.
—George Rigazzi, Office of Family Life, Archdiocese of Oklahoma

Calendar

This calendar only covers the two weeks between issue dates and may not reflect all of the calendar items. To see a full calendar go to www.soonercatholic.org.

JUNE

15 **Father's Day**

17-20 **Pilgrimage weekend guest lectures.** His Grace Bryan Bayda, a Ukrainian Catholic Bishop of Saskatoon, Canada, will be coming to the National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of the Infant Jesus of Prague to do a series of lectures on Eastern Catholicism. Call the church for more details (405) 567-3404.

17-25 **Monthly Novena to Infant Jesus.** Nine days of novenas to Infant Jesus of Prague monthly. During these nine days, the novena prayers will be as follows: Monday-Friday following noon Mass, Saturday following 6 p.m. Mass, and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.

19 **Devotion to The Precious Blood Of Jesus.** An unending means of tapping the inexhaustible mercy of God from the source of our salvation. No one who is devoted to the Wounds and Blood of Jesus can be lost. Thursdays 9 p.m. -12:30 a.m. St. James Church 4201 S. McKinley, OKC. Loan at (405) 420-2527 (Bilingual). Linda at (405) 210-1414 (Spanish)

21-July 4 **Fortnight for Freedom: Freedom to Serve.** More information can be found at www.fortnight-4freedom.org and www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty.

Save the Date

Celebration of 100th Anniversary of Carmelites' Arrival in Oklahoma City, July 13 from 3:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. at Little Flower Church in Oklahoma City. Archbishop Coakley will celebrate the Mass. Open to the public.



21 **The Lay Missionaries of Charity**, the Secular (Lay) Order of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, at St. John the Baptist Parish, Edmond, on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month beginning with Mass at 7:30 a.m. in the Chapel. For more information contact Toni Harrelson, lmc at (405) 341-2199 or lmckoklahoma@sbcglobal.net.

21 **The community of the Secular Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel and St. Teresa of Jesus** - Oklahoma Community and Province of St. Therese, meets at Little Flower Church, OKC from 12 - 4:30 p.m. For more information call Katherine Payne (405) 210-4826 or Betty Sharp (405) 408-4275.

21 **Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Oklahoma City will host the 12th annual International Food Fest** at 6 p.m. in the Saint Francis of Assisi parish hall (1901 NW 18th St., Oklahoma City). The dinner benefits the Rosary School Scholarship and Endowment Funds. Dinner tickets will be sold for \$20 each

after all the Masses on the two weekends prior to the dinner. Call Cassie Le for ticket information at (405) 570-5430.

22 **Corpus Christi Sunday**

22 **Corpus Christi Eucharistic Procession.** Celebrate the Year of the New Evangelization with us! Join us at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond, as we honor the miraculous truth of Our Lord's True Presence in the Eucharist! The procession is at 10 a.m. Bring your family and loved ones!

22 **Hierarch Divine Liturgy.** **His Grace Bryan Bayda**, a Ukrainian Catholic Bishop of Saskatoon, Canada, will celebrate an Hierarch Divine Liturgy at 11 a.m. at the National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague. All are invited.

26 **Bingo** at Saint James Catholic Church, 41st and S. McKinley Ave. in Oklahoma City. Food and beverages served at 5:45 p.m., and bingo will begin at 6:30 p.m. All games are \$10. Awards include door priz-

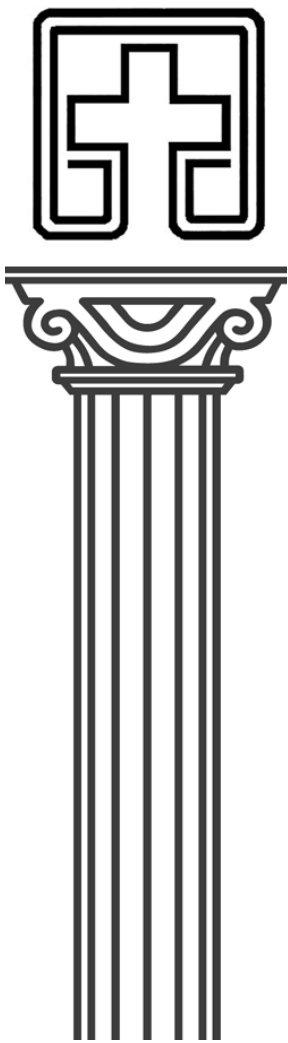
es and recognition for players born in June. All players are entered in a drawing (to take place in October) for a large flat screen TV. For more information, contact Michael Zink (405) 314-4120.

28 **Priesthood Ordination** at Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 10 a.m. This is a ticketed event. For those unable to attend the event, the archdiocese will be live streaming the Mass at <http://www.ckokc.org/archokc-ordination-2014>. A recording will also be available for viewing afterwards.

28 **Singles dance.** St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church will be having a Singles dance for Catholic Singles and Friends. Gathering time is 7 - 8 p.m. with music starting at 8 - 11 p.m. Call Al for more information: (405) 631-0763. Bring a finger food for our sharing table.

29 **Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul.**

For a full calendar and up-to-date jobs box, visit soonercatholic.org or use this QR Code with your smart phone.



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For more information on Planned Giving contact:
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Father's Day is a reminder to obey Biblical injunction to "Honor thy father"

By J.E. Helm

For the Sooner Catholic

Sunday, June 15, is Father's Day, a day to honor all fathers. In the United States, Father's Day is always the third Sunday in June, and celebrations of Father's Day date back as far as 1908. While Mother's Day was established as a national holiday by presidential proclamation in 1914, Father's Day was not officially designated as such until 1972. It was feared that it would lead to excessive commercialization. Many other countries have a Father's Day celebration, and while most are in June, some few are held in the fall.

In Catholic Church teaching, a father's role is defined in terms of his responsibilities to his children. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that it is "the right and duty of parents to educate their children," and that they specifically "receive the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children." The Catechism goes on to say that "parents' respect and affection are expressed by the care and attention they devote to bringing up their young children and providing for their physical and spiritual needs" (CCC No. 2221 to CCC No. 2231). The family and a father's place in that family are part of God's plan.

Christ Himself in the Gospels frequently refers to God as Father. Christ gives Him to us, saying "your Father" and "your heavenly Father" many times. Jesus prefaces that most sublime of prayers, The Lord's Prayer, with "This is how you are to pray: Our Father." Jesus assumes the love of all human fathers



for their children, asking "Which of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish?"

In addition to our Heavenly Father, Saint Joseph, foster father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is another model for all fathers. Saint Joseph is described in the Gospel of Matthew as a "righteous man" who sought God's will in relation to his life with Mary and the Child Jesus. Three times an angel comes to him in a dream to

provide him with the guidance he is seeking. In the Litany of Saint Joseph, he is called "pillar of families," "model of workers," and "head of the holy family," appellations to which all good fathers would surely aspire.

The Old Testament, too, teaches much about fathers and fatherhood. The Book of Proverbs says "a wise son makes his father glad" and that "grandchildren are the crown of old men." Chapter 30 of the Book of Sirach gives advice to fathers on "The Training of Children," warning "pamper your child and he will be a terror to you" and noting that "he who educates his son makes his enemies jealous." Further, the Book of Sirach admonishes "with your whole heart honor your father" and promises that "he who honors his father is gladdened by children, and, when he prays, he is heard." Finally, in Sirach, we find "take care of your father when he is old ... for kindness to a father will not be forgotten."

On Father's Day, as we love and honor those to whom God has entrusted us, we know that we are bidden to do so by the Fourth Commandment. Interestingly, of the seven commandments that prescribe our duties to one another (the first three detail how we should honor God), it is the only one that comes with a promise: "Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord is giving you." Happy Father's Day to all our dads.

J.E. Helm is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic and an adjunct professor of English at several area colleges.

Trinity, Corpus Christi Sundays highlight essential mysteries of the faith

By Sarah Cooper

For the Sooner Catholic

In the midst of a busy summer season, this June, the Catholic Church stops to celebrate two feast days that are essential to the faith, the feast of Trinity Sunday and the feast of Corpus Christi. Both celebrate complicated mysteries while leading Catholics closer to a deeper devotion to Christ.

Always the Sunday following Pentecost, Trinity Sunday honors not a saint or an event but a crucial Catholic belief, the Holy Trinity. Originated in the 14th century by Pope John XXII, this feast day allows Catholics to be reminded that they believe that God is three persons in one nature. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all equal and none is greater than the other.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in Himself. It is therefore the source of all of the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them."

In Venerable Fulton Sheen's book "Life of Christ," he reminds Christians that there was significance in Christ commanding his apostles to baptize the whole world in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

"The baptism was to be administered not in 'the names' of the three persons of the Blessed Trinity, since it would imply three gods, rather, it was to be given in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, because the Three Persons are one, having the nature of God," Sheen wrote.

The feast of Corpus Christi, or

the Body and Blood of Christ, is traditionally celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday, but, in the United States, the feast is moved to the following Sunday. Although the institution of the Holy Eucharist is heavily emphasized on Holy Thursday, this feast day gives Catholics another day to focus on the directive Christ gave his people to consume his body and blood each time the celebration of the Mass occurs.

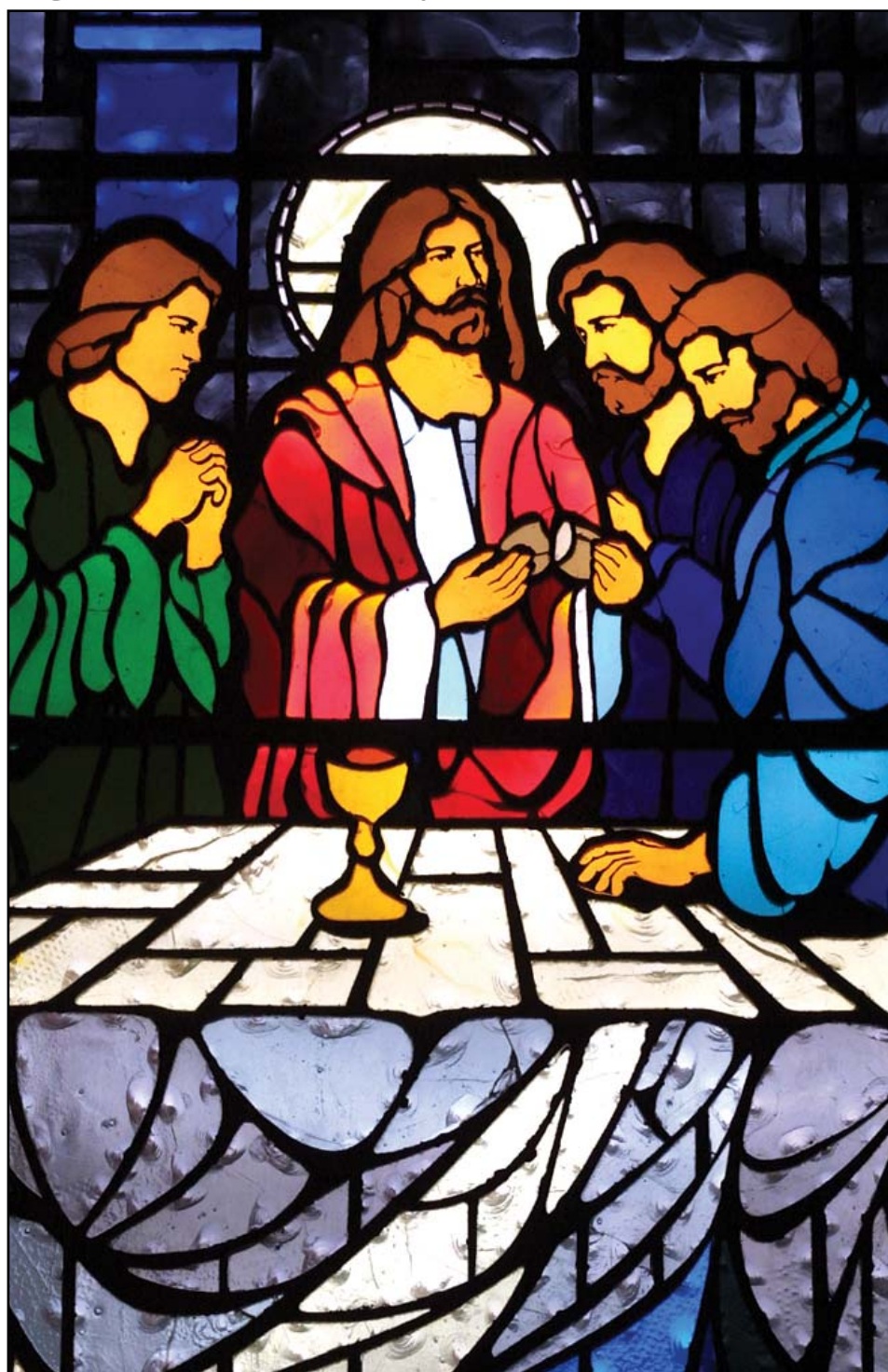
The Gospel from Corpus Christi Sunday, taken from the bread of life discourse in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, states one of the central elements of the Catholic faith.

"Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink." (John 6:53-55).

Traditionally across the world, parishes hold Corpus Christi processions to celebrate this feast day. Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond, Okla. will host a Corpus Christi procession at 10 a.m. June 22.

"Eucharistic Processions are a popular historical practice dating back to the middle ages," said Cindy Case, organizer of Saint John the Baptist's procession. "Because 'faith without works is dead,' it is an opportunity to build upon our own faith life and proclaim it to others in this Year of the New Evangelization."

Sarah Cooper is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.



Stained glass depicting the Last Supper from St. Peter Church, Woodward.