The Easter Vigil: “the mother of all vigils”

By Catholic News Agency

The Easter Vigil, which takes place Holy Saturday night, "is the greatest and most noble of all solemnities and it is to be unique in every single Church," the rubrics of the Missale Romanum proclaim.

continued on page 20

Archbishop Coakley celebrated Mass for students at Mount St. Mary Catholic High School on March 25 and led a procession to the school’s Marian Grotto to consecrate the school to the Blessed Mother. He also lead an Act of Consecration of Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Photo Avery Holt/Sooner Catholic.

continued on page 10

“I’m ready to work for the salvation of souls”

JOURNEY TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Transitional diaconate ordination April 9

By Diane Clay
The Sooner Catholic

Every October in high school, Robert Miller’s family drove to Panama Beach, Fla., for vacation, a special treat that gave the teenager access to cable. The station he chose to watch? EWTN.

"Everybody was mad because I was watching Mother Angelica and they wanted to watch something else!"

The young Robert couldn’t get enough information about Christianity, religion, Catholicism, even though his family hadn’t always been active in a church. His only experience with church was Vacation Bible School at his grandmother’s Baptist church and a brief stint with his family at a Methodist church.

In grade school, he asked him mom about baptism and communion, and began his inquiries about the Catholic Church. No one could answer his questions to his satisfaction, so he kept digging.

“It’s kind of embarrassing, but my first exposure to the Catholic Church was "Sister Act," the movie. As a little protestant boy in Oklahoma, I saw a nun for the first time, I saw a priest for the first time, I saw the
Easter in a time of pandemic and war

As the Church enters Holy Week and celebrates another Paaschal Triduum, some may ask what Easter means in times such as these. We have been through a lot these past few years. We have experienced suffering from a year of pandemic. The threat of an expanding war in Ukraine is looming over the world. Death has cast its shadow over us in unexpected ways. Can faith still sustain us in the face of such challenges?

"Why do you seek the risen one among the dead? He is not here. He has been raised." (Lk 24:6)

This starting news announced by the angels to Mary Magdalene at the tomb on Easter morning and proclaimed by the Apostles and countless witnesses throughout the ages summons the heart of Christian faith. "Christ is risen! Indeed, he is truly risen!" Death has met its match.

In order to experience this starting proclamation as Good News, however, it must mean something for us personally. The Easter proclamation is not merely information about the fate of Jesus. Information cannot save us. Only an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ has power to save. Yes, the Father has truly exalted Jesus by raising him up through the power of the Holy Spirit. But, what is that to us? Jesus, the Son of God, became man, suffered, died and rose again precisely “for us and for our salvation,” as we say in the Nicene Creed at Mass. He gave his life for us, for you and me, to reveal the Father’s love for us.

Because Jesus Christ has conquered death for us, our human flesh, we have hope that he will share his victory through faith. Faith and Baptism give us a share in his new life. We already are living that new life of grace that will come to its fullness in heaven. Baptism gives us a share in the victory in life. It is truly the birthday of Easter.

Ever since sin entered the world, humanity has been trapped in a downward spiral of hopelessness. Death ultimately consumed all hopes in the victory of life. It is truly the birthday of Easter in unexpected ways. Can faith still sustain us in a world where life and death seem to have exchanged places? In order to experience this startling proclamation as Good News, however, it must mean something for us personally. The Easter proclamation is not merely information about the fate of Jesus. Information cannot save us. Only an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ has power to save. Yes, the Father has truly exalted Jesus by raising him up through the power of the Holy Spirit. But, what is that to us? Jesus, the Son of God, became man, suffered, died and rose again precisely “for us and for our salvation,” as we say in the Nicene Creed at Mass. He gave his life for us, for you and me, to reveal the Father’s love for us.

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U.S. bishop chairman on supreme court’s ruling in Ramirez v. Collier

WASHINGTON — On March 23, the Supreme Court ruled 8-1 in favor of John Ramirez, a death row inmate, in his challenge to Texas’s denial of his request that his pastor audibly pray and lay hands on him as the state executes him.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee for Religious Liberty, and Archishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, issued the following statement:

“As fallen creatures, we are all in need of God’s grace and forgiveness. For John Ramirez’s actions, the state sentenced him to death. He has asked the state to allow him what he sincerely believes he needs to prepare for the end of this life. The supreme court rightly has ruled that the state did not meet the appropriate standard to keep the condemned in accordance that their religion prescribes.

“Permitting Mr. Ramirez’s pastor to provide the spiritual assistance that Mr. Ramirez has requested would not render his execution a just act. The practice of state-sanctioned executions of human beings – the irrevocable termination of God’s gift of human life – is a grave violation of human dignity. An execution represents a judgment by fallible human beings that a person is beyond redemption – a judgment the Catholic Church rejects. The state should act with justice and mercy by sparing Mr. Ramirez’s life.

“The supreme court has done the right thing in its ruling to allow Mr. Ramirez’s right to seek the mercy of God at the moment of his death.”

The USCCB submitted an amicus brief in support of John Ramirez’s claim jointly with the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, which also issued a statement in response to the supreme court’s ruling.

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From the Archives …

A photo series from Bigfoot Pizazz, archbishopian archivist

Francis Clement Kelley was an extremely talented priest and visionary. His gifts were not always appreciated by the clergy when he arrived as the new bishop in Oklahoma in 1924. The clergy were primarily European – predominantly Belgian and Dutch – and native-born priests were scarce. Many had served in the frontier areas where little if any contact with the bishop happened on a regular basis, which spurred a certain independence.

Father David Monahan recalled in 1975: “They were proud of their faithful priest. Monsignor Spiess in his fourth assignment in Oklahoma.

Bishop Kelley also became interested in the priests who found the funds to return to Europe on vacation but did not see the need to pay their quotas to keep the diocese operating. In a letter he wrote during the height of the Depression to the clergy, he stated: “What is not paid must be made up some way by the bishop himself. I am getting too old to be running around the country lecturing, preaching re-trials, etc., in order to line up and run the diocese.”

Funds were scarce and he struggled to keep the diocese afloat. He took no salary and kept his expenses to a minimum. The seeming indifference of the clergy to his welfare deepened his distrust and the clergy grumbled at his extended absences from the diocese (ironically his absences were to raise money).

He began to cultivate his own clergy that were a bit more in tune with his style. Home grown talent such as Father Victor Reed (later bishop), Father Stephen Loven (also a future bishop), Father Sylvester Luecke, Father Fabian Finan and Father Donald Kerner. Finan was a few of the star clerics that would lead the Church in Oklahoma out of her infancy to a growing maturity.

All were of the kind of men Kelley admired: bright, capable and more aware of the changing climate as to the place of the Catholic faith in Oklahoma. They were indeed Kelley’s priests.

In fairness, the contribution of these priests was not diminished because they were the foundation for what the Church has become and their colorful nature a source of pride and amusement. They laid the cornerstone from which future generations benefited.

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Mount lands in esports top 10

Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School has launched a new sport called esports, the first school in the archdiocese to do so.

According to esports coach Jared Smith, esports is a competitive, organized form of video gaming, consisting of teams that compete across the state, nation and world.

“Our athletic directors, Chris Crouse and Blake Gunter, approached me about this new sport the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association was adding to their list of Fall 2021 Programs” Smith said.

“All we researched the sport and discovered more than 200 colleges nationwide provided scholarships, we decided to bring this opportunity to the students of MSM. The University of Oklahoma recently gave their first full-ride scholarship for esports, which piqued our interest, and we participated in the very first OSSAA season last year.”

Smith said there are minor differences between esports and other sport programs offered at the school.

“Another challenge was trying to understand all the rules of four different games (Splatoon 2, Super Smash Brothers Ultimate, Rocket League and Mario Kart 8 Deluxe). You can imagine having to know all the rules of a sport being challenging, but knowing the rules of four takes an extra level of commitment and focus. Finally, trying to get an identity as a program and how it would be organized was, and still is, in its beginning stages.”

Despite these obstacles, Smith said having student-athletes who are motivated and understanding made a huge difference.

“They understood we were taking on a new frontier for MSM and Oklahoma. There really was no precedent for us in this sport, but we have powered through learning along the way what we are as a team. We had a lot of buy-in from the parents who have helped tremendously by donating time, equipment and resources,” he added.

The Mount Saint Mary Rockets, in their first season of playing, finishing in the top eight in the state for Super Smash Bros. Coach Smith said he believes they have opportunity to make it to the state championship as well as the regional championship.

“I have learned to surrender my responsibility as a coach and take on more of a managerial role. I mentor and coach the kids about life and the challenges of losing and building ourselves when we win. My student-athletes are the real coaches as they play these games more often and are more up-to-date on the games themselves.”

When parents and students are considering participating in this form of sports, Coach Smith said he understands the temptation they may have, but to consider that, like most other conventional sports, they require teamwork, which takes time and practice.

“The benefit of virtual sports is that you can participate in the competitive video-game activity, which is in a completely different environment. There are scholarships and career opportunities. This year, esports is projected to be about $2 billion industry,” he pointed out.

“Jolene Schonchin is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.”
Pope Francis expresses “sorrow and shame” for Catholic role in abuse against Indigenous peoples

By Hannah Brockhaus

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis on Friday expressed a “sorrow and shame” for the role Catholics have played in the abuse of Indigenous peoples in Canada, especially in residential schools.

During a meeting with representatives of the Métis, Inuit and First Nations groups at the Vatican on April 1, the pope condemned colonization, saying he was sorry for the historic evil committed against Canadian Indigenous peoples. He also said he would like to visit them in their “native lands,” indicating that he hopes to travel to Canada for the July 26 feast of Saint Anne.

Pope Francis, who had private meetings with the Métis, Inuit, and First Nations delegations during the week, said “listening to your voices, I was able to enter into and be deeply grieved by the stories of the suffering, hardship, discrimination and various forms of abuse that some of you experienced, particularly in the residential schools.”

“It is chilling to think of determined efforts to instill a sense of inferiority, to rob people of their cultural identity, to sever their roots, and to consider all the personal and social effects that this continues to entail: unresolved traumas that have become inter-generational traumas,” he said.

He condemned the colonization which broke the Indigenous peoples away from their native land and ways of life, stating that “in this way, great harm was done to your identity and your culture, many families were separated, and great numbers of children fell victim to these attempts to impose a uniformity based on the notion that progress occurs through ideological colonization, following programs devised in offices rather than the desire to respect the life of peoples.”

The pope said that learning about these situations made him feel deep indignation and shame.” Because it is not right to accept evil and, even worse, to grow accustomed to evil, as if it were an inevitable part of the historical process.”

“I feel shame – sorrow and shame - for the role that a number of Catholics, particularly those with educational responsibilities, have had in all these things that wounded you, in the abuses you suffered and in the lack of respect shown for your identity, your culture and even your spiritual values,” he stated.

“All these things are contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” he underlined. “For the irreplaceable conduct of those members of the Catholic Church, I ask for God’s forgiveness and I want to say to you with all my heart: I am very sorry.”

“Certainly, the content of the faith cannot be transmitted in a way contrary to the faith itself: Jesus taught us to welcome, love, serve and not judge; it is a frightening thing when, precisely in the name of the faith, counter-witness is rendered to the Gospel,” he added.

Pope Francis also said he was grateful for good Christians who, “in the name of the faith, and with respect, love, and kindness, have enriched your history with the Gospel.”

“It is my hope,” Francis continued, “that our meetings in these days will point out new paths to be pursued together, instill courage and strength, and lead to greater commitment on the local level. Any truly effective process of healing requires concrete actions. In a fraternal spirit, I encourage the bishops and the Catholic community to continue taking steps towards the transparent search for truth and to foster healing and reconciliation.”

Over the past few days, I have listened attentively to your testimonies. I have brought them to my thoughts and prayers, and reflected on the stories you told and the situations you described. I thank you for having opened your community to improve, which changes annu-

ally, although some groups work collectively. Once areas are selected, volunteers fan out to identify properties that could benefit from the program. The volunteers submit a list of prop-

erties to the city of Ponca City, whose staff then approaches homeowners with flyers containing contact information for church volunteers.

“We pick an area, the city puts out flyers and anything else the homeowners asked. Team leaders met with homeowners at four properties to discuss what they wanted to change. Work included cutting and removal of trees and shrubs, trash and leaf cleanup, mow-

ing and anything else the homeowners asked. The homeowners told volunteers they were very happy with the work performed. “They are appreciative because they just can’t get out there and do it,” Strichan said.

Those who volunteer said they do so for a variety of reasons, whether it’s to help their fellow citizens or simply to help do what they already love.

Mary Meyer was one parishioner who devoted her time to the cleanup of Ponca City proper-

ties. “A lot of people need help and as long as I’m able, I’ll help,” she said. “The homeowner was very appreciative. He stepped out on his porch and said, ‘Thank you.’”

Everett Brazil is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Pope Francis speaks about SI.

Stanley Rother on March 18 at the JFK Newman Center in Oklahoma City.

A Sooner Catholic freelancer.

Photos provided.
NORMAN – Sister Veronica Higgins, a consecrated religious sister with the Carmelite Order of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus, will give the 2022 Agnes and Herbert True Family Lecture at 7 p.m. April 20 in Hoople Hall at Saint Thomas More Catholic Church, 100 Stinson Ave. in Norman. The title of her talk is “My Story: Protests, Prayer and Putting Faith into Action.” The event is free and open to the public.

"God has no hands but ours. We are the instrument through which he touches the lives of others, bringing healing and comfort to those in need. We need to remind each other, together, that, together, we are the instrument of the Lord, the hands but ours. We are the instrument of the Lord, the hands but ours.

The Agnes M. and Herbert True Family Lecture series brings a Catholic intellectual or artist to the University of Oklahoma campus each year to deliver a public lecture on a topic of university-wide interest. Sponsored by Saint Thomas More Catholic Church and Student Center and the Catholic Student Association, the series is funded in part by an endowment established by the Trues’ three sons who all graduated from OU.

For more information, contact (405) 321-0990.
inside of a Catholic church for the first time. It piqued my curiosity,” he said. “Then, once I found EWTN, I got a lot more substance to go with that. Then, it became a history thing for me. Any time we talked about Christianity in history class there was a lot of history about the Catholic Church. I wanted to be part of the Church that Jesus started and that led me to learn more about Catholicism.”

Once Miller was able to drive, he began attending Mass at Saint Charles Catholic Church in Oklahoma City and entered RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation) at 16. The night before Easter Vigil, he met with Father Paul Gallatin, who asked him what he wanted to be. “I told him I was kind of thinking about becoming a priest.”

At Father Gallatin’s suggestion, Miller signed up for Emmaus Days, a vocations awareness program for young men, with Father Rick Stansberry and Father Ed Weisenburger, now bishop of Tucson.

“Emmaus Days put more substance to the thought, the feeling, but it also was at the height of the abuse scandal,” he said.

So, after graduating from Putnam City North High School in Oklahoma City, he met with Archbishop Balda who asked him – as he did many potential seminarians – to give seminary at least one year. Miller entered Conception Seminary in Missouri and for the first two weeks “hated it.” But soon, with routine and new friendships, he began to enjoy it.

He also learned while at seminary that his mom, Regina, had entered RCIA. She joined the Catholic Church in 2010.

Miller, 35, earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy at Conception, a bachelor’s degree in classical languages from the University of Oklahoma, a master’s degree in historical theology from Boston College and a master’s degree in divinity at Pope Saint John the XXIII Seminary in Massachusetts. He is working on a canon law degree from Catholic University of America. His home parish is Saint Damien of Mokolii in Edmond.

“My family is very supportive, and they want me to be happy. I finally feel that moment of fulfillment and content.”

Miller is scheduled to be ordained to the transitional diaconate at 10 a.m. April 9 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Oklahoma City. The ordination is open to the public and will be live-streamed on the archdiocesan YouTube channel, Facebook page and at archokc.org/live.

Miller said other young men considering the priesthood should pray and listen to what God wants for their lives and their happiness with priests serving as good examples.

“Don’t be afraid. Some guys think ‘How can God possibly want me to be a priest because of things in my past or there are holier people?’ So, they don’t entertain it. The linchpin in all of that is if you aren’t praying about it you won’t come to an understanding. Prayer is an essential component,” he said.

“Another thing that plays into a guy responding to a vocation is the witness of priests, holy priests. I’m ready for the priesthood, to serve others. I’m ready to work for the salvation of souls. That’s what priesthood is all about.”

Diane Clay is editor of the Sooner Catholic.
Photos provided.

Russia and Ukraine March 25 at St. Matthew Catholic Church in Elk City.

Fr. Daniel Grover led a Eucharistic procession and Marian consecration over fry fund various KOC activities.

300 people were served, including groups from St. Mary Catholic Church in annual fish fry on March 18 in celebration of the Feast of St. Joseph. More than

The Knights of Columbus of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Blackwell held their 12 April 10, 2022

Parish endowments provide long-term support

By Owen Canfield

One goal of the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma is to establish endowed funds to benefit every parish and school in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma. A gift from one couple is getting this process started at St. Eugene Catholic Church in Oklahoma City.

The couple, who wished to remain anonymous, are longtime members of St. Eugene. They said they wanted to help ensure the parish is on solid financial footing for years to come.

“It is our desire to leave a lasting and perpetual gift that, combined with others to come over the years, will support our wide-ranging parish ministries and the good works done by and for parishioners,” the couple said.

The couple will give $50,000 to establish the Saint Eugene Parish Endowment Fund. This fund is an example of a designated endowment at the foundation – one created to benefit a specific parish, school or ministry. The foundation also has field of interest endowments, which benefit specific needs such as youth ministry initiatives.

The Saint Eugene Parish Endowment Fund provides members of the parish with an avenue to make their own legacy gifts – as the endowment grows, so too will the amount that is distributed annually, and forever, from the fund.

Archbishop Coakley celebrated a confirmation Mass on March 26 for students in 8th and 9th grade at Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. (Photo provided)

Students from Sacred Heart Catholic School prayed the Rosary March 25 during the Mount St. Mary school Mass and procession when Archbishop Coakley consecrated MSM to the Blessed Mother. (Photo provided)

Synd survey

Archbishop Coakley has asked the input from parishioners on the future of the diocese through an online survey. The responses will be accepted until April 30. Find the survey in English, Spanish and Vietnamese at archokc.org/synd.

Naomi Schuman, O.P., died March 2, followed by burial in the Motherhouse Cemetery.

Sister Suzanne was born Nov. 30, 1929, in Chicago, the daughter of Ernest and Rose (Winter) Schuman. Sister Suzanne was principal and taught at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic School in Kingfisher from 1965-1972.

By Owen Canfield

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Jobs Box

Associate director of development – OKC

Shrine is seeking an associate director of development to assume who is passionate about Catholicism and donor relations. Will serve as part of a growing team and be responsible for major gifts. Candidates should have a background in communications or related field, and a proven record of public relations, fundraising, and event planning.

Director of Immigration Legal Services – Oklahoma City

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a military legal services director who is detail-oriented, an expert in military law, and has leadership experience. This position will be responsible for the legal services program.

Interpretation and translation specialist – OKC

Bilingual in English and Spanish, the interpretation and translation specialist will be responsible for providing interpretation and translation services for office meetings and events. Must have excellent communication skills and be able to work effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Director of Communications – Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is seeking an energetic and creative individual to lead the school’s communications efforts. This role will involve managing the school’s social media, website content, and marketing strategies.

Counselor – Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is seeking a counselor who is committed to helping students navigate the challenges of high school. This position will involve working with students on academic, social, and emotional support.

Director of Campus Ministry – St. Mary’s Catholic High School

St. Mary’s Catholic High School is seeking a director of campus ministry who is passionate about faith formation and leadership development. This role will involve collaborating with teachers and staff to provide spiritual guidance to students.
La Pascua en tiempo de guerra y pandemia

Al tiempo que nos acercamos como Iglesia a la celebración de la Semana Santa y otro Triduo Pascual, algunos podrían preguntarse lo que significa la Pascua en estos tiempos difíciles. La amenaza de una creciente guerra en Pascua en estos tiempos difíciles. La Iglesia a la celebración de la Semana Santa, con nosotros, por ti y por mí, para revelarnos nuestra salvación”, como decimos en el Pangea. “¿Por qué buscamos entre nuestros sueños, por aquellos que han resucitado a Jesús resucitándolo por el Padre, ha verdaderamente restaurado. Si una persona enferma y en un momento de desesperación, la esperanza le da esperanza nace en el corazón humano, la esperanza tiene como objeto la victoria de la vida. Es verdadera mente un cumpleaños de esperanza. ¡La muerte verdaderamente no tiene significado de la Pascua. ¡Cristo es nuestra esperanza! Ese es el mensaje liberador de Cristo. Los hombres y las mujeres que viven en la incertidumbre y peligro.

Dando la bienvenida a recién llegados con corazones y puertas abiertas

Bajo el MMP, aquellos que llegan a la frontera sur y solicitan asilo reciben avisos para comparecer ante la corte de inmigración y son llevados a la frontera sur, en brinden más atención a la comunidad. “Puesto que hay muchos refugiados en escuelas y ayudar a sus padres a encontrarlos en la corte, dijeron Ross. “Por supuesto que hay muchas más y que hacer, 100 años y más por venido”, dijo Ross. Alrededor de 100 refugiados anunciaron en un paseo en Estados Unidos y hacen arreglos con ellos para establecerse cerca. La mayor, sin embargo, tienen a menudo que dejar sus hogares en busca de oportunidades que nunca antes han conocido en su vida. Aunque los refugiados que se acercan las cosas, por ejemplo, no saber el verdadero significado de la esperanza. Aquí se dan la bienvenida a recién llegados con corazones y puertas abiertas.

Las actualizaciones del Sántuario

Magníficos oradores han estado pro moviendo la historia y el testimonio del Beato Stanley Rother y el santuario de su recuerdo, nuestro santuario, nuestro santuario. “Quédate en México”, señaló Sar don de MPP en el estado de Washington – que acaba de recibir a 230,000 habitantes, incluyendo las áreas periurbanas, según el censo de 2020. "Hay muchas personas de todo el mundo, en los lugares más oscuros, reconocemos que estamos llamado a construir una comunidad espiritual de la resurrección ex altada a Jesús resucitándolo por el Padre, ha verdaderamente restaurado. Si una persona enferma y en un momento de desesperación, la esperanza le da esperanza nace en el corazón humano. Es verdadera mente un cumpleaños de esperanza. ¡La muerte verdaderamente no tiene significado de la Pascua. ¡Cristo es nuestra esperanza! Ese es el mensaje liberador de Cristo. Los hombres y las mujeres que viven en la incertidumbre y peligro.

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**Briefs**

Sponsor sign-up is at tinyurl.com/stmplayoff.

**Golf tournament**

St. Thomas More Catholic Church golf tournament April 18, The Trails Golf Club, Norman.

**Shrine dedication**

Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine on Rother shrine dedication Nov. 4 in Oklahoma City and the Diocese of Tulsa will host a Day of Prayer, Reflection (405) 760-3886, OklaPost168@cox.net. Masks, social distancing required.

**Easter Sunday**

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord.

**November Novena**

Monthly Novena to the Infant Jesus of Prague. During November the novena prayers will be: Monday-Friday: 5 p.m., Saturday 5 p.m., and Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass.

**Memorial Marathon Mass**

St. Joseph Old Cathedral, 307 N.W. 7th Street, Oklahoma City, will have a Mass at 5 p.m. April 24 for any and all who have participated in the memorial mar- athon and in memory of everyone who lost their lives in the 1995 bombing. Everyone welcome.

**A Day of Silence**

April 30, spend a day in si- lence in the peaceful environment of St. Gregory’s Abbey, 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. Participants will be guided through the day in a reflection on selected texts related to Easter. Attendees must pre-register by email (re: e-mailed reflection text) to mdrtokc0781@gmail.com or call (405) 878- 5656. Cost $30 per paid at the door. Lunch lunch included.

**ACCW convention**

The Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women 21st biennial convention “Women of Faith and Vision” 2022 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. April 30 at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Doors open at 9 a.m. The keynote speaker, Katrina Wilson, director of parish engagement at the archdiocese will present “Cling to Jesus: An Easter Reflection on St. Mary Magdalene.” Register at okcawomencon.com/events or call/text (405) Mary Ann Schmitt at (405) 600- 7890 or ccrprayers@archokc.org. Cost $35 per person.

**Father, son retreat**

A father and son retreat will be held May 6-7 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp and led by Dave DiNardo, founder of True Manhood Catholic Men’s Ministry, and his assistant, Joe Fesler. Call (405) 834-3782 for more information.

**Game tournament**

St. Thomas More Catholic Church presents a campus ministry golf tournament April 18 at The Trails Golf Club, 3200 S. Berry Rd. in Norman. Sign up at tinyurl.com/stmplayoff.
The word vigil, which means “staying up all night,” takes on a special meaning for the night before Easter because it recalls the holy women who came to the tomb the early hours of Sunday morning.

In Matthew’s Gospel, Mary Magdalene and another Mary arrive at the tomb at dawn to finish embalming Jesus, but his body isn’t there. An angel tells them, “I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He’s not here. He has risen. Tell his disciples to go to Galilee and they will see him there” (Mt 28:6-7).

The vigil by its very nature takes place no sooner than nightfall Holy Saturday night and must end before daybreak Easter morning.

The vigil begins with the kindling of a “blazing fire” at a suitable place outside the church to gather the faithful around its warmth and beauty and to dispel the darkness of the night.

The celebrant blesses the fire with a prayer and then the Paschal Candle is brought forth and lit from the fire. The candle symbolizes the light of Christ, which “shines in the darkness” which “has not overcome it” (John 1:5).

The Paschal Candle is then processed into the darkened church and the congregation lights their small hand-held candles, starting from the Paschal Candle and then from one another, lighting up the whole church.

At the beginning of the vigil after the Paschal Candle is lit, the Easter Proclamation or Exsultet is said or sung, usually by a deacon, or by a priest or a lay cantor.

It briefly tells the story of salvation from the creation, the testing and fall of Adam, the liberation of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt, and the culmination in Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and leads us to salvation.

The Exsultet is addressed to all humanity but especially to Christians. Saint Augustine invites Christians to constantly recall it because it is a message of hope that brings us the victory of light over darkness.

After the Scripture readings, the Baptismal Liturgy continues for candidates who have never been baptized. They and those who have been validly baptized in another Christian faith are then confirmed.

If there are no candidates for Baptism, the Mass continues with the blessing of the water and the renewal of baptismal promises.

Finally, the Liturgy of the Eucharist follows and concludes the Easter Vigil.

“The Easter Vigil celebrates the Resurrection which fulfills all the prophecies by Jesus rising, never to die again,” said Father Donato Jiménez speaking to ACI Prensa, CNA’s Spanish language news partner.

Jiménez is a noted theologian who taught for many years at the Faculty of Pontifical and Civil Theology of Lima. The priest has published numerous articles on theology and other topics.

“This resurrection is what teaches us, more clearly than anything else, the fulfillment of the words of Jesus in our lives. Just as Jesus Christ died and on the third day he rose again, so the Christian who dies in Christ will also rise again at the end of time,” Jiménez said.