Advent is the time of joyful preparation for Christmas. It is also the time of personal resolutions recommended by the Catholic Church as a form of deepening one’s prayer life by performing corporal and spiritual acts of mercy in anticipation of the Messiah. Resolutions can take the form of prayer, fasting, and/or almsgiving.

Saint John Chrysostom said, “As the body without the soul cannot live, so the soul without prayer is dead and emits an offensive odor.”

Holy and sacred places can assist with one’s prayer life and meditation, especially during Advent. Three shrines, a Benedictine monastery and parochial churches in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City offer meaningful and prayerful experiences. A pilgrimage to any one of these places can serve as an Advent resolution.

**Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine in Oklahoma City**

The shrine was dedicated by Archbishop Coakley on Feb. 17, 2023. It is the largest Catholic church in Oklahoma, built to honor of Blessed Stanley Rother from Okarche, who became the first US-born martyr priest, when he was killed in Guatemala in 1981. He was beatified in 2017. The chapel serves as his final resting place. The adjacent Tepeyac Hill, with the statues of Our Lady of Guadelupe and Saint Juan Diego, overlook the shrine grounds, and invites pilgrims to meditation.

Miguel Mireses, executive director at the shrine, expressed words of invitation to pilgrims: “The Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine is a holy place where one can escape the noise of the city and learn how an ordinary martyr leads pilgrims to encounter Christ. The shrine welcomes all, and Blessed Stanley’s life will change and inspire you to go out and spread the good news.”

**National Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague**

The shrine was built in 1949, and welcomes thousands of pilgrims from across Oklahoma and other states, as well as from abroad. Miraculous cures through the intercession of the Infant Jesus of Prague have been reported. Mary’s garden, the stations of the Cross and a playground with the Infant Jesus chaplet for children offer a prayerful atmosphere to spend individual or family time.

Father Christopher Tran, pastor and rector of the shrine, said, “Advent and Christmas are all about the Infant Jesus. Here at the shrine, we celebrate the Infant every day. Each day holds the joy of Christmas for us. It is the most beautiful place. We invite everyone to come to Prague to receive spiritual blessings from the Infant Jesus and prepare your hearts for Christmas celebrations.”

**The Archdiocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Bison**

This small shrine, located outside Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Bison, was dedicated in 1951 and is open to visitors 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Pilgrims can

continued on page 6
Keeping Catholic schools affordable

Education plays a significant role in securing a brighter future for our young people. A Catholic education is especially valuable with its focus on the whole child in goodness, truth and beauty. Catholic schools provide children with the opportunity to expand their knowledge in all academic subject areas, to explore what they are passionate about, to learn how to share their gifts and talents with the wider community, and to know that God loves them and has a plan for their lives.

Many families in our archdiocese would like to send their children to a Catholic school but believe the cost of tuition is beyond their means. Thankfully, help is on the way! There are several new school choice resources now available to help families afford the investment of a high-quality Catholic education.

In May, Oklahoma legislators passed the Parental Choice Tax Credit, a universal tax credit that will help families pay tuition and fees at an accredited private school of their choice. Starting Dec. 6, parents can apply for the tax credit at parentchoice.ok.gov.

The maximum amount of the tax credit is determined by a family’s total federal Adjusted Gross Income during the preceding tax year.

- Households with an AGI of $0-$75,000 can receive $7,500; households with an AGI of $75,001-$100,000 can receive $7,000.
- Households with an AGI of $150,001-$250,000 can receive $6,000 and households with an AGI of $250,001 and up can receive $5,000.

Additional coverage of Church and archdiocesan news and events, only on soonerchatholic.org.

- To send photos, event information or story ideas, e-mail communications@archokc.org.
- For everyone who gives their time and talent to help people in need. May their example inspire others. We pray to the Lord, Lord, hear our prayer.
- The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the Diocese of Tulsa and St. Gregory’s Abbey have launched the Oklahoma Catholic Native Schools Project to better understand the history and experiences of Native students in Oklahoma Catholic boarding schools from 1880 to 1965. To contribute documents, photographs or an oral history to the project, e-mail info@oknativeschoolsproject.org. Learn more at archokc.org/oknativeschoolsproject.

To find more information about Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City or schedule a tour at archokc.org/find-a-catholic-school.

To learn how Catholic schools can be affordable for families, visit archokc.org/tuition-assistance.

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

December 3, 2023
- Advent Lessons and Carols, 5 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Oklahoma City

December 4
- Advent Reception for ACP, CFO and volunteers, 6 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 5
- Presentation on Bl. Stanley Rother, Sheen Center for Thought and Culture, New York, N.Y.

December 6
- Advent reception for ACP, CFO and volunteers, 6 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 7
- Advent reception for annual Catholic Appeal donors, 6 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 8
- Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine Board meeting, 3 p.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, OKC

December 9
- Seminarian visit to St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, Denver, Colo.

December 10
- Presentation on Bl. Stanley Rother, Sheen Center for Thought and Culture, New York, N.Y.

December 11
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 12
- Archdiocesan Human Resources meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 13
- Archdiocesan Human Resources meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 14
- Seminarian visit to St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, Denver, Colo.

December 15
- Archdiocesan Human Resources meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 16
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 17
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 18
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 19
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 20
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 21
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 22
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 23
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 24
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December 25
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 26
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 27
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 28
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 29
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 30
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

December 31
- Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 7 p.m., Archbishop’s residence

Find news more news on the website

By Sooner Catholic Staff

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Prayer for the Advent Wreath

Lord, our God, we praise you for your son, Jesus Christ, for he is Emmanuel, the hope of all people. He is the wisdom that teaches and guideth us. He is the Savor of our souls. O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light the first (purple) candle of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this in his holy name. Amen.
December 3, 2023

The power of silence

By Jed Zielkowks
The Sooner Catholic

I n October, archdiocesan priests spent one week on a retreat in Kansas to reinvigorate their spiritual vigor and zeal. The retreat motto was, “First, review, restore and respond to the Word of God.”

Father Christopher Tran used the time to meditate on the meaning of silence. He shared his thoughts on why silence is crucial in growth in faith, devotion and reverence, especially during the season of Advent and Christmas.

Why is it important for Catholics to keep silence in their daily life?

Silence is profound for this tight-knit family. Due to his keen intellect, strong faith and communication skills, he was a possible vocation for the priesthood was not surprising. He entered the seminary at age 23 after graduating from Oklahoma State University. He was ordained priest at the age 37.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City

During Advent and Be better prepared for Christmas?

Bishop Stephen Leven, 1956
Oklahoma City - 97.3 FM
Woodward - 93.3 FM
East OKC - 97.7 FM
Enid - 104.9 FM
Clinton - 98.3 FM
Edmond - 100.9 FM

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How can people enter into silence without being afraid of it?

Keeping silence never be a reason. The Lord showed us that his followers have to become inspired by the Holy Spirit who enables us to fulfill our daily duties well for the glory of God. Keeping silence will never be a reason.

Fr. Christopher Tran during a pilgrimage with Vietnamese priests active and working in all 50 states, US Catholic in 2019 on the mountain where Jesus prayed in silence.

How can we pray in silence?

We should meditate on the meaning of silence. He shared with the Eucharist, he brings silence, peace, love, and tranquility to our hearts. When we adore him in the Blessed Sacrament, we nurture silence in our souls. From these moments of prayer, we can draw vitality and resilience for our daily struggles in our vocations.

Silence during the season of Advent and Christmas.

He called his disciples to him and chose 12 of them, whom he also designated as apostles. 

“Jesus chose the apostles only after spending all night in prayer to God the Father. Similarly, he gave authority over the Church to Peter after spending time in prayer. “The Lord showed us that his mission on earth was always united with the father’s way of doing things and those who are his disciples must also be united with the father in the same way through prayer in silence.”

How can we pray in silence always be a reason. The Lord showed us that his followers have to become inspired by the Holy Spirit who enables us to fulfill our daily duties well for the glory of God. Keeping silence never be a reason.

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When in silence is the best way to start the day to keep silence of heart?

Always begin the day with a personal encounter with God in silence of your heart through meditations on the Holy Scripture, contemplations, examination of conscience, but most importantly the Holy Eucharist and adoration. When we receive Jesus with the Eucharist, he brings silence, peace, love, and tranquility to our hearts. When we adore him in the Blessed Sacrament, we nurture silence in our souls. From these moments of prayer, we can draw vitality and resilience for our daily struggles in our vocations. When we meet God in the silence of your heart, you will live a truly professed life.

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December 3, 2023

The Sooner Catholic

An example of silence came to a close when the famous novelist Mark Twain wrote, “When in silence is the best way to start the day to keep silence of heart?”

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contemplative life of prayer, service, and teaching. Currently, 16 monks live their lives opening for the Benedictine community in 1929 when they transferred from their original Sacred Heart Abbey outside of Konawa. Currently, 16 monks live their lives at Saint Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee.

Saint Gregory’s Abbey was opened for the Benedictine community in 1929 when they transferred from their original Sacred Heart Abbey outside of Konawa. Currently, 16 monks live their lives at Saint Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was established to celebrate the 100th anniversary in 2024. Father Richard Stansbery, pastor of the cathedral, said, “Please come and visit with us for joint worship and prayer. The cathedral was stunningly renovated in 2019 and is one of the most beautiful historic churches in the state with captivating stained glass windows and ceiling paintings.”

contemplative life of prayer, serving also at various parishes in Oklahoma. The faithful are welcomed to attend the Divine Office prayers and Holy Eucharist with the monastic community. Abbot Lawrence Staysayer, O.B.B., extended words of welcome to the faithful inviting them to visit the Abbey as part of their Advent journey. “The Abbey provides an oasis of peace and quiet where one can spend time in silence and prayer. Whether in the beautiful Abbey church or around the peaceful grounds, pilgrims can listen for the Holy Spirit speaking in the silence of their hearts.”

Pilgrims can also visit the Ma- crowner Museum on the campus of the Abbey, the Monks’ Marketplace, and find several pieces of sacred art depicting the Blessed Mother and the Child Jesus.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a place where pilgrims can visit and pray. It is located on the campus of the Abbey, the Monks’ Marketplace, and find several pieces of sacred art depicting the Blessed Mother and the Child Jesus.

The Holy Trinity Catholic Church in the home parish of the Blessed St. Joseph Church. The current church was built in 1993. The Holy Trinity Catholic Church, home to the Monks’ Marketplace, and find several pieces of sacred art depicting the Blessed Mother and the Child Jesus.

The meaning of prayer during Advent, in addition to the Holy Eucharist, is to spread time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Four churches in the Oklahoma City metro area offer perpetual adoration, including the Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. The Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. The Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Oklahoma City.

St. Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee

St. Gregory’s Abbey was opened for the Benedictine community in 1929 when they transferred from their original Sacred Heart Abbey outside of Konawa. Currently, 16 monks live their lives.

Archdiocesan events marking Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

In the middle of Advent are two special Marian Feast Days: the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8, and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12. Many local churches have a tradition of honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe—a major liturgical celebration for many Latin American Catholics.

Holy Cross Catholic Church, Madill

For many years, Holy Cross Catholic Church in Madill has hosted a traditional program for the annual celebration. This will be a unique experience for the new pastor, Father Raul Sanchez. Parishioners are invited to gather at 3 p.m. on Dec. 12 for an early morning service with music and breakfast at 6 a.m.

Holy Cross Catholic Church will continue the celebration at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16. Parishioners will meet at the Walmart in Madill and have a 30-40 minute procession to the church. Mass will then be celebrated at 6 p.m. by Father Sanchez. After Mass, the parish will host a dinner at El Bronco Ballroom.

Amy Rivera, director of religious education said, “As Catholics, many people are critical of us for worshipping Mary, however, what we are doing on feasts, like Our Lady of Guadalupe, we honor Mary as our mother, seeing how much she suffered as she watched her son suffer. As a mother, it is always tougher.”

For more information, contact Amy Rivera (580) 677-5002.

Saint Mary Catholic Church, Ardmore

Saint Mary Catholic Church in Ardmore will have a program on Dec. 12 for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. At 5 p.m., there will be an outside procession followed by a Mass at 6 p.m. celebrated by Father Kevin Buitrman, pastor of Saint Mary Catholic Church. Following Mass, there will be a dinner in the Blessed Stanley Rother Hall for all the parishioners.

Deacon Juan Jimenez said, “Although many of the participants who attended last year were Hispanic, there were almost as many who weren’t. We are prepared to have a bilingual program again this year.”

For more information, contact Deacon Juan Jimenez in the church office at (580) 223-0231.

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Mustang

The archdiocesan office of the Hispanic Ministry is having a program from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9 at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Mustang. The program includes lunch and is under the direction of Liz Santiago, pastor of the church.

Some interesting facts about the tilma/cloak of Our Lady of Guadalupe:

• Our Lady grew roses in the middle of winter.
• The Virgin of Guadalupe is pregnant.
• The image is always at 98.6°F.
• There’s life in the Virgin’s eyes.

There are many unique aspects of the image printed on Santa Diego’s tilma. From ourcatholicradio.org, some of these are:

- The image can’t be recreated
- There are no animal or mineral pigments on the tilma/cloak.
- There would have been present had the image on the tilma been painted.
- There are no underdrawings or brush strokes on the image.
- The pigments that were available in the time and in that area would have faded after almost 500 years, and yet the image hasn’t faded.

Mary’s skin tone

The color in Mary’s skin changes depending on one’s distance to the image. The further away, the darker her skin tone and the more she resembles an Aztec princess. The closer, the lighter her skin tone and the more she appears a young Mexican girl.

The stars

The stars on Mary’s mantle are exactly as they would have appeared on Dec. 12, 1531. The perspective isn’t if looking from behind the sky to Earth — like heaven looking down on Earth. The pattern of the stars would place the constellation coronas coronas (the crown) on her fore- head, virgo (the virgin) over her heart, and leo — the Lion of Judah — over her nose.

Deacon Jimenez stated, “Our Lady of Guadalupe leads us to Christ and tells us to do what Christ wants.”

Charles Albert is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
How do you lose track of Jesus?

By Charles Albert
The Sooner Catholic

A

movie commonly

watched around Christ-
mass is the comedy, “Home Alone.” It is far
from a comedy, however, for any-

one who has ever lost a child for

5 minutes, an hour or longer. It is
every parent’s, grandparent’s or

guardian’s worst possible night-

mare.

This one is of many reasons we

honor the Feast of the Holy Fam-
ily. The Church commemorates

and honors the Holy Family with

a Feast Day on the Sunday be-
tween Christmas and New Years.

In 2023, the feast day is Dec. 31.

Imagine the terror that the

Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph

faced when they lost the “Son of

God” for three days! These par-

ents lost the Son of God. What

happened to him? Where is he? Are

they going to find him? What does

Jesus mean when he said, “I will be

in your heart”? What did Mary and

Joseph mean when they said, “Have

you seen him?” Where is Jesus

right now? What is he doing? Why

is he there? What is his mission? Why

is he there? What is he doing? Where

is he? Are we going to find him?

These are all questions that the

Mary and Joseph asked the shep-

ders. Luke quotes Jesus as saying,

“Telling is the story in detail. “After

three days they found him in the

temple, sitting among the teach-

ers, listening to them and asking

them questions.” Luke quotes

Mary upon discovering Jesus in

the temple, “Son, why have you

treated us so? Behold, your father

and I have been looking for you anxiously.” And

Jesus said to them, “How is it that

you sought me? Did you not know

that I must be in my father’s

house?” There

many

reasons

that

the

Holy

Par-

ents

should

be

bur-

ond on

this

feast

day.

Luke wrote,

“And they did

not understand

the saying which he

spoke to them.”

They were limited on

their understanding on God’s plan

for Christ and their role in his life.

Pope Saint John Paul II said,

“They placed God at the

center of their family

life, they loved and

sacrificed for one

another.” He

called Saint

Joseph, “the

Custodian

of

the

Bo-

dom.”

In the

New

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Joseph is

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Mary

and earthly

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Jesus.

A direct
descen-
dant

of

David,

he

passes that

rightful

title

to

the

Lord, satisfy-

ing the promises

Samuel made to David

that his throne would

be

eternal (2 Sam. 7:16), a hint at

the divine and human nature of

one of his descendants.

From Biblical accounts, the Holy

Family made the trip from Naz-

areth to Jerusalem every year to

celebrate Passover, not just where

Jesus was 12. Also in keeping with

Jewish tradition, they made

two additional religious pilgrimag-

es to Jerusalem each year.

In the archdiocese, there is

in one church dedicated with

the name Holy Family Catholic

Church. It is in Lawton.

Deacon Mike Romaka explained

how the church celebrates their

name sake.

“In years before COVID-19, tradi-
tionally the Holy Family Feast

Day brought the Whole church

and its family together in a large

gather together with potluck. The

pastor hopes to get the tradi-
tion started up again in the near

future. However, there is always

a special Mass to commemorate

the Feast Day and the parish.”

Deacon Romaka said.

According to Luke 2:52, Jesus

ultimately honored his earthly

parents. Luke finishes the pas-

sage with, “And he went down

with them and came to Nazareth

and was obedient to them.”

Charles Albert is a freelance

writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Photo: Stained glass window at Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

Seminarian Education Appeal

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City has 18 men in seminary discerning a

call to the priesthood. These seminarians will hopefully one day be ordained

to the priesthood as the result of the encouragement and financial support

of the faithful. It costs almost $60,000 per year to educate each seminarian.

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Day brought the Whole church

and its family together in a large

gather together with potluck. The

pastor hopes to get the tradi-
tion started up again in the near

future. However, there is always

a special Mass to commemorate

the Feast Day and the parish.”

Deacon Romaka said.

According to Luke 2:52, Jesus

ultimately honored his earthly

parents. Luke finishes the pas-

sage with, “And he went down

with them and came to Nazareth

and was obedient to them.”

Charles Albert is a freelance

writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Photo: Stained glass window at Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City. Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.
Catholic Charities Appeal
The Corporal Works of Mercy serve as the cornerstone for the annual appeal of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Catholic Charities provided services to thousands during the past year. It did so by:

- Feeding the Hungry – It distributed 200-350 snack packs per month to those in need.
- Giving Drink to the Thirsty – The lobby of Catholic Charities includes a water station where clients can fill their own canisters, and it provided bottled water to about 40 people per day.
- Curing the Sick – The agency has gifted burial care. “Our mission,” Sister Barbara Joseph said, “is that of being an immediate but effective service.” Gifts may be made at www.srbjpantry.org.
- Visiting the Sick – Catholic Charities partnered in conjunction with the Order of Malta, the pantry offers a Coats for the Homeless program that in 2022 distributed 100 coats to the homeless in all their needs, material and spiritual, until they can find some others who can help them in a better and more lasting way.” Gifts may be made at www.srbjpantry.org.
- Visiting the Dead – The agency has gifted burial care.
- Helping the Homeless – The agency has gifted burial care.
- Giving Drink to the Thirsty – The lobby of Catholic Charities includes a water station where clients can fill their own canisters, and it provided bottled water to about 40 people per day.
- Curing the Sick – The agency has gifted burial care.

Catholic Schools Support
About 4,800 students attend the 15 Catholic grade schools and three Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Two funds at the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma help with this important ministry. One is the Saint Katharine Drexel Fund, which provides grants to Catholic schools and parishes. The other is the Drexel Fund to ensure that all students, regardless of financial ability, have access to a Catholic school. High-quality administrators are vital to Catholic schools. The Saint John Bapst de la Salle Fund provides leadership formation opportunities for teachers and principals in the archdiocese. The goal is to elevate the professional capacity of future Catholic school leaders. Gifts to these funds may be made at www.cfook.org/drexel and www.cfook.org/oklasm.

Okahoma Catholic Radio
Oklahoma Catholic Radio spreads the Gospel through high-quality programs produced locally and nationally. Local programs include “The Catholic Man Show” with Adam Minihan and David Miles, “Make Straight the Way” with Dr. Larry Souris and “Living Catholic” with Father Don Wolf. The popular EWTN programs “Called to Communion with Dr. David Anders” and “Catholic Answers Live” are among the syndicated offerings. The growth of Oklahoma Catholic Radio through the years has been made possible through gifts to its annual appeal. One way to provide support is to join the Keeper of the Airwaves by making a monthly gift of $48 – or $4 for each station. Gifts of any size may be made at www.okcr.org/give or by calling (405) 255-7348.

Center of Family Love
The Center of Family Love has been caring for intellectually and physically disabled adults since its founding by the Knights of Columbus in 1967. Today, Center of Family Love has 130 residents, or “angels.” Gifts may be made at www.centeroffamilylove.org.

New Catholic Foundation Endowments
Two new endowments created recently at the Catholic Foundation include the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Endowment and the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Endowment. The former will provide annual distributions to support the ministry of the Church in the archdiocese. The other will provide grants to parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations for ministry operations, facility improvements, equipment purchases or other activities that advance the Church in the archdiocese. Gifts may be made to www.cfook.org/endowments.

Support your parish with gifts of stock
Gifts of stock are a wonderful way to support your parish. By giving stock that has appreciated for more than a year, you may avoid paying capital gains taxes and be able to deduct the full, fair-market, value of the stock.

Would you like to give more to the Church but need income from your IRA for retirement? A charitable gift annuity may be a solution. The Secure 2.0 Act allows you to take a tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution from your traditional IRA to create a Ditrable gift annuity.

Contact Peter de Keratry or Mary Smith at the Catholic Foundation to learn more.

Sooner Catholic
Own a business? Consider TCS program

By Owen Canfield

For qualified businesses, the Tax Credit Scholarship program is a boon for students and Catholic schools and provide the donor with a nice tax credit (not a tax deduction) in return. The term “win-win” is trite, but it fits in this case. Students, families, donors and parishes all benefit from gifts to this program. And for business owners, TCS is an even bigger winner.

Go to tcsok.org to make a gift before Dec. 31. Contact Owen Canfield at ocanfield@tcsok.org or call (405) 709-2700.

Direct Your Taxes to Scholarships for Kids

- A gift to the Tax Credit Scholarship program helps pay Catholic school tuition for children whose families might otherwise not be able to afford it.
- With a two-year pledge, couples get a 3% state income tax credit up to $2,000 each year. Individual filers get up to $1,000 each year.
- Qualified businesses can receive a much larger tax credit.

Make your two-year pledge before the end of the year. Visit: www.tcsok.org or call Owen Canfield at (405) 709-2700.

Businesses can tailor their gift amount based on their tax liability, and thus erase any state taxes they would have otherwise paid. If the business operates as a pass-through, the tax credit on the gift can pass through to the owner’s personal tax liability.

Consequently, corporate gifts have the potential to significantly expand the Tax Credit Scholarship program and help even more young people get a Catholic school education. Consider: Everyone must pay their state income taxes. The Tax Credit Scholarship program is a way to redirect those monies to provide opportunity scholarships for children in Catholic schools and provide the donor with a nice tax credit (not a tax deduction) in return.

Students and staff at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Oklahoma City concluded their annual food drive for Sister BJ’s Pantry. They collected 1,677 items. First grade had the most items with 480 items – winning a pizza party. Photos provided.

Contact Owen Canfield at ocanfield@tcsok.org or call (405) 709-2700.

A gift to the Tax Credit Scholarship program helps pay Catholic school tuition for children whose families might otherwise not be able to afford it.

Last year, those donors received $1.5 million in state income tax credits. The Tax Credit Scholarship program is a boon for students and Catholic schools. This year, more than 18 archdiocesan schools are combined to give $2 million to the TCS program in 2022. In return, those donors received $1.5 million in state income tax credits.

For qualified business owners, this program is especially beneficial. Whereas the maximum annual state tax credit is $2,000 for couples and $1,000 for single filers, most legal business entities (LLCs, S-corps, C-corps, general partnerships, etc.) can get a credit of up to $100,000 per year.

Visit: www.tcsok.org or call Owen Canfield at (405) 709-2700. Make your two-year pledge before the end of the year.
Cook/Cocinero - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a part-time or full-time cook to assist with meal preparations at the Catholic Pastoral Counseling Center located in downtown Oklahoma City. This flexible part-time or full-time role schedule will include some evenings and weekends. Applicants should have at least two years’ experience in food preparation and customer service. A background check and safe environment training will be required. Submit your resume to: humanresources@archokc.org.

Office manager - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking an office manager with a strong administrative support and clerical skills. This position involves a combination of administrative and clerical work in the office. Applicants should have at least a year of office experience, strong organizational skills and attention to detail. Submit your resume to: humanresources@archokc.org.

Maintenance assistant - Shini

The Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine is seeking a part-time maintenance assistant to work 10-20 hours per week. Flexible schedule with some weekends required. Work performed will include the daily aspects of the office, including cleaning, budgeting, annual events and seminarian application processes. Submit your resume to: humanresources@archokc.org.

Director of Immigration Legal Services - Oklahoma City

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking an administrative support person to provide administrative and clerical support for the offices of youth, young adult and vocations. Submit your resume to: Brooke Basler, executive assistant, at mbasler@archokc.org.

Mailroom/administrative support - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a part-time mailroom/administrative support person to be responsible for processing and distributing incoming and outgoing mail, including collecting and delivering mail to offices each morning and distributing to appropriate departments, processing incoming and outgoing mail and delivering to the post office. Submit your resume to: humanresources@archokc.org.

Musician/music coordinator - Hinton

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a bilingual assistant to be responsible and for assisting individuals eligible for immigration relief and representing individuals before USCIS and the immigration court.
Escuelas católicas accesibles

La educación tiene un papel fundamental para garantizar un futuro más prometedor para nuestros jóvenes. La educación católica es especialmente valiosa al centrarse en la integridad del niño en cuanto a la bondad, la verdad y la belleza.

Las escuelas católicas ofrecen a los niños la oportunidad de ampliar sus conocimientos en todas las materias académicas, explorar lo que les apasiona, aprender a compartir sus dones y talentos con el resto de la comunidad, y saber que Dios los ama y tiene un plan para sus vidas.

A muchas familias de nuestra arquidiócesis les gustaría enviar a sus hijos a una escuela católica, pero creen que el costo de la colegiatura está fuera de sus posibilidades. Afortunadamente, ¡ya ayuda está por llegar! Existen varios recursos nuevos para ayudar a las familias a costear la inversión en una educación católica de alta calidad.

En mayo de este año, los legisladores de Oklahoma aprobaron el Crédito Fiscal para la Elección Parental. Este es un crédito fiscal universal que ayudará a las familias a pagar la matrícula y las colegiaturas en una escuela privada acreditada de su elección. Comenzando el 6 de diciembre, los padres de familia podrán solicitar el crédito fiscal en el sitio parentalchoice.ok.gov.

Encuentre más información sobre las escuelas católicas en la arquidiócesis de Oklahoma City o programe una visita en el sitio archokc.org/find-a-catholic-school.

Para informarse más sobre cómo las escuelas católicas pueden ser accesibles para su familia, visite el sitio archokc.org/tuition-assistance.

Lánzate a lo más Profundo

El arzobispo Pablo S. Coakley visitó a los alumnos de la escuela católica del Sagrado Corazón de El Reno en 2022. Foto Archidiócesis de Oklahoma City.
Thomas ‘Tom’ Rother

Yo hablo español

Served in the Oklahoma Air National Guard and was a long resident of the community in which he lived. He was a life-long resident of the community in which he lived and was a rural mail carrier for 30 years. He also served on the Oklahoma Air National Guard.

He was a member of the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Catholic Order of Foresters, Knights of Columbus, Blessed Stanley Rother Auxiliary Council and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus.

He also served on the Holy Trinity school board for many years. Rother enjoyed golfing, hunting and watching sports, especially with his children and grandchildren.

Everyone knows he never met a stranger. He loved to tell old stories, especially of his children playing ball. People could always find him sitting in front of his TV watching his favorite team, the New York Yankees, while wearing his Yankees hat, Yankees shirt and Yankees blanket.

On May 1, 1965, Rother married Martha Liel, They were blessed with 58 years of marriage, six children, 16 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Rother always said he was blessed with a good life and family.

He is survived by his loving wife, Martha Rother. He is also survived by their children and their spouses, Patrick and Karen Rother of Oklahoma City, Douglas and Lynne Rother of Yukon, Janie and Raymond Flatt of Yukon, Michele and Matt Smith of Edmond, Kendal and Kaye Rother, Mansfield, Kan. He is also survived by his children, Kelby, Kyle Liel, and Kasey Rother; Troy, Tyler, Hope and Kasid Rother, Edmond, Okla; er; Spencer (Paston) and Riley (Breakall) Flatt; Avery, Gavin and Levi Smith; Lane, Cameron and Cull Rother; and great-grandchildren Presley and Fuller, Flatt.

He was a member of Holy Trinity Catholic Church with two additional great-grandchildren due in December and February.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He also served as a member of the Senior Service Organization and was a charity of choice in memory of Thomas Rother.

Leaves a Legacy, Support the Church.

Francis Xavier Ast, O.S.B.

Father Nicholas (Kevin) Ast, O.S.B., monk of St. Gregory’s Abbey, died in the Abbey infirmary following an acute illness leading to open heart surgery on Nov. 17, 2023. He was 60 years old. He had completed 33 years of monastic profession and was serving as postulator of the Order as a postulant.

Father Nicholas was born on Nov. 13, 1963, and raised in Colwich, Kan., where he was member of Sacred Heart Church.

He entered the novitiate at Saint Gregory’s Abbey on July 10, 1989, and professed vows as a monk on July 11, 1990. He continued his academic formation at Wichita State University, earning a Master of Science in American history. He pursued seminary formation at Saint Vincent Seminary in Latrobe, Pa., completing a Master of Divinity degree and a Master of Arts in Theology.

He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., on June 12, 1993. Within the monastery, Father Nicholas served on various occasions as a member of the Senior Council, assisted with the formation of novices and for several years as director of oblates. He served on the faculty and staff of Saint Gregory’s College and University. He taught courses in American and European history, western civilization and sacred scripture. He assisted with several student organizations, including as sponsor of the Student Newman Club and as chaplain for the Knights of Columbus and the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia.

He also served as a campus minister and as vice president for mission and identity. In addition to his campus assignments, Father Nicholas frequently provided weekend supply ministry at parishes throughout Oklahoma.

Father Nicholas is survived by the monks of Saint Gregory’s Abbey, his mother Mary Ann Ast of Colwich, Kan., and brothers Jon (Tina) Ast, Edmond, Okla., and Joe (Standy) Ast. He is predeceased by his parents, Dr. and Mrs. Aemil Ast. A Vigil for the Deceased was celebrated on Tuesday, Nov. 21, in the Abbey Church at Saint Gregory’s Abbey. A memorial Mass was held Nov. 17 at Saint Gregory’s Abbey. Interment followed in the Abbey Cemetery.

A prayer service for Thomas Joseph Rother was Tuesday, Nov. 21, at 10 a.m. at Johnsgard Chapel, Benedictine Fraternity of Central Oklahoma, with Deacon John Teague officiating. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday, Nov. 22, at 10 a.m. at the Benedictine Fraternity of Central Oklahoma.

Our Lady of Guadalupe festi-
val - McDonald/Morning prayers 5 a.m.; Rosary 5:30 a.m.; Mass in main church 12:15 p.m.; Outdoor Mass with Archbishop Cordale 4 p.m.; Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89th, Okla-
City.

Our Lady of Guadalupe festi-
al - San Juan Diego caval-
cade, procession 1:30 p.m.; Vigil Mass 5 p.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89th, Okla-
City.

Second Sunday of Advent

Our Lady of Guadalupe festi-
al - English Mass 9 a.m.; Spanish Mass 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Apparition play, Mata-
class dances, music, food; Nov-16 p.m.; Spanish Mass 6 p.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89th, Okla-
City.

Advent Lessons and Carols, 5 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave, Oklahoma City.

Feast of St. John Damascene.

Feast of St. Nicholas.

Feast of St. Ambrose.

The Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary.

Catholic Pastoral Center closed.

The Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma is here to help. Contact us (405)721-4115 or dso@cfook.org. Visit our website for more information cook.org.
Since opening in February 2023, we have welcomed over 90,000 pilgrims to the shrine. Because of you it has become a place of prayer and reverence to learn about the life of Blessed Stanley. Numbers have exceeded expectations, and we are eager to host more visitors from all over the world. Please consider a gift to support the important work of the shrine by visiting: www.rothershrine.org. Thank you for your generosity!