

## Saint Mary Academy in Guthrie offers cooperative learning program to families

**By Sally Linhart**  
*The Sooner Catholic*

Families in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City now have another option to consider for the education and faith formation of their children.

Saint Mary Academy in Guthrie is now enrolling students in a home-school cooperative program for the 2023-24 school year. The program expands school choice by providing parents with the tools and training to serve as the primary educators of their children.

Father James Wickersham, pastor of Saint Mary Catholic Church in Guthrie, explained why the school is opening as a homeschool co-op model.

"We want to offer resources and provide support as we walk with parents on their homeschool journey," Father Wickersham said.

The closure of Saint Mary Catholic School in 2020, coupled with an increasing interest from the growing homeschool community, prompted parishioners to approach Father Wickersham with the idea of equipping parents with the knowledge and resources to educate their children in the Catholic classical tradition. After three years of research, planning and development, the vision of Saint Mary Academy is coming to fruition.

Rachel Sandoval, one of the driving forces behind the inception of the co-op, calls it a beautiful middle ground.

"The mission of Saint Mary is to help equip

parents to be the primary educators of their children," she explained. "Many parents I've talked to feel called to homeschool but don't know where to start and are intimidated by the thought of being the sole educator."



Students will receive in-person instruction two days per week, Tuesday and Thursday, with the three remaining days dedicated to parent-led learning at home.

"This model is perfect for those wanting to take a homeschooling approach to their children's education but want guidance, accountability and community to go along with it," Sandoval said.

Education in the Catholic classical tradition follows a three-part process called the "trivium," which emphasizes the areas of grammar, logic and rhetoric.

Headmaster Tomas Sandoval explained the trivium follows the natural human inclination to learn in stages.

"It starts with grammar, we first learn to speak and articulate thoughts," he said. "Then around middle school age we move on to logic: asking why, looking for proof, making sense of the world around us."

Rhetoric incorporates the ability to articulate thoughts and use logic into the next natural stage of human learning.

"It's deep diving," Sandoval said. "What is truth, what is good, why is it good and how do I explain this to others?"

Father Wickersham described Saint Mary Academy as a true community-led effort. Having parents as facilitators will allow the co-op to operate independently of the parish, as a self-sustaining entity. Every Tuesday will be "family day" which requires one parent from each family to contribute their time and talent to the co-op by teaching, cleaning, providing administrative support or other general assistance.

The full-day commitment once a week takes an all-hands-on-deck approach to serving students, as well as providing support to

**continued on page 20**

## New Discipleship Conference prepares for inaugural event

A new bilingual conference in the archdiocese will be held this year at the Oklahoma City Convention Center. The new Discipleship Conference will be taking the place of the annual Catechetical Conference and the Sembradores de la Fe conference.

On Aug. 19, Father John Riccardo and Father Augustino Torres will be the keynote speakers of the inaugural conference.

Father Riccardo is a missionary, Executive Director of Acts XXIII and was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit in 1996. In 2019, after 23 years in parish ministry, he founded Acts XXIX to proclaim the gospel in an attractive and compelling way.



Father Torres is a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal and is the president and co-founder of Corazon Puro and Latinos por la Vida, apostolates dedicated to awakening and accompanying leader in areas of great need.

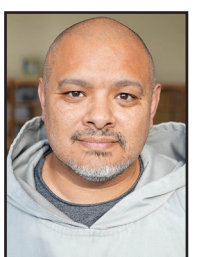
Speakers leading breakout sessions will include Jim Beckman, Albert Faraj, Mary Guilfoyle, Matt Regitz, Luis Soto, Mary Ann Wiesinger Puig and Sheri Wohlfert.

There will also be vendors for attendees and accommodations at various downtown locations.

Tickets are \$20 per person. To register, see the entire day's schedule and get more information, visit OKDisciple.org, or text DC2023 to 84576.



*Fr. John Riccardo*



*Fr. Augustino Torres*



Put Out Into the Deep

Luke 5:4

What is your passion?

It is common for people to express their intense interests as something they are “passionate about.” Someone can be passionate about golf or food or the Oklahoma City Thunder or exercise. For each of these passions, there is something deep within us that moves us to action.

Oftentimes, a passion moves us to act in a measure that seems extreme or out of proportion. I suppose I would have to admit that I have become passionate about the Camino de Santiago, having walked portions of it five times! Perhaps your experience is similar: your passion moves you to act with such an intense focus that your friends or family look at you quizzically and think, “Why do they spend so much time doing that?”

The answer, of course, lies in the very nature of passion. The word itself implies being “out of control.” Someone with a passion is passive, and it is the passion that acts through him or her. Passion, then, implies a suffering: for the passion that moves one to such intense activity takes its toll.

The final two weeks of Lent are called “Passiontide” for this very reason. God’s passion is for us! It is expressed by Jesus in the Gospel through the familiar verse, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).

The result of God’s passionate love for us is the gift of the Son, not only in the incarnation, but especially in the crucifixion, for Saint Paul reminds us: “He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?” (Rom 8:32).

The passionate love of God for the world, for you and for me, points ultimately to one thing – the Cross. Thus, the Cross ought to find a special place in our worship and in our lives during these final two weeks of Lent.

Saint John Paul II speaks of the necessity of the Cross in his apostolic letter on the “Christian Meaning of Human Suffering” (Salvifici Doloris), “Christ goes toward his Passion and death with full awareness of the mission that he has to fulfill precisely in this way. ... Precisely by means of his Cross he

must strike at the roots of evil, planted in the history of man and in human souls. Precisely by means of his Cross he must accomplish the work of salvation. This work, in the plan of eternal love, has a redemptive character” (16).

The traditional practice of covering or veiling the images of our Lord and the saints during the final weeks of Lent comes from John 12:36, “When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.” When Good Friday arrives, the image of the Cross stands alone as the sign of the passionate love of God for us.

How are we to respond to the passionate love of God?

We are invited to allow Christ’s passion to be our own by uniting our passions and sufferings to his. The observance of Passiontide is not merely about going to Church on Palm Sunday to pick up our palms and walk in procession. Passiontide is not merely about going to kiss the wood of the Cross on Good Friday. These liturgical rites move us to ponder, “Who and what am I passionate about because I see God is passionate for me?”

Our earthly passions can become the palms that hail the coming of the King of Glory rather than an expression of self-seeking pride. Our earthly sufferings become the splinters from the Tree of Life that affirm our hope in the Resurrection.

We unite our passion to God’s passion, our suffering to Christ’s suffering, and then the words of Saint John Paul II ring clear in our hearts, “The eloquence of the Cross and death is completed by the eloquence of the Resurrection” (Salvifici Doloris, 20).

Be passionate about your Catholic faith! Seize the opportunity to participate in the liturgical services of Passiontide this year in your parish. Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday and Good Friday all have their places along the path to Easter Sunday.



Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

Find more news on the website

By Sooner Catholic Staff

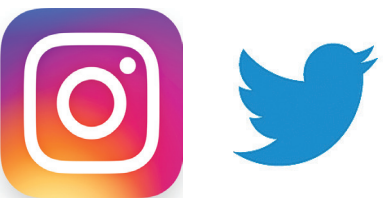
Additional coverage of Church and archdiocesan news and events, only on soonercatholic.org.

✓ **To send photos**, event information or story ideas, e-mail communications@archokc.org.

✓ **For people** trapped by sin or addiction. May God grant them hope, conversion and freedom. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

✓ **The Black and Indian Mission Collection** in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is in March. The Black and Indian Mission Office helps support the National Black Catholic Congress and the Tekakwitha Conference. blackandindianmission.org. Donate online at archokc.org/special.

✓ **St. Gregory’s Abbey** invites everyone to the spring Abbey greenhouse plant sale 8 a.m. – Noon (or until all the plants are sold) April 22 at St. Gregory’s Abbey, 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. Shop for spring bedding plants, herbs, vegetable plants and succulents. Cash or check only.



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Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Arquidiocese de Oklahoma City

Heavenly Father, look upon me and hear my prayer during this holy season of Lent.

By the good works you inspire, help me to discipline my body and to be renewed in spirit.

Father of love, source of all blessings, help me to pass from my old life of sin to a new life of grace.

Prepare me for the glory of your kingdom. I ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever. Amen.

Annual women’s conference attendance soars

By Jolene Schonchin  
The Sooner Catholic

The 2023 Oklahoma Women’s Conference was held on March 4 at the Embassy Suites in Norman.

The theme for this year’s conference was “Be Blessed.” It is the end of Mary’s prayer, “Ecce, Fiat, Magnificat’... behold, be done, be blessed,” said Leigha Liuzza, local artist who designed the logo for this year’s conference. “All the themes in the past have been going in the same direction.”

Meg Beckman, conference committee chairwoman, explained what the conference committee hoped the related themes would accomplish.

“This year’s theme is healing and how the Lord and his greatest desire is to set us free to heal us. We all need healing. We all need the Lord. This year’s theme is deeper and more serious than in years past. We will stretch our women



a little more out of our comfort zones. At the end of the day, we all want to go to Heaven, and you have to go to places you have not allowed the Lord to go,” said Beckman.

“This year, we have the highest number in attendance ever. We have over 1,100 women. The excitement, the energy and the people were all looking forward to coming so they could receive from the Lord and fill their hearts so they could continue on the path of holiness,” Beckman said.

Father Donald Calloway, MIC, was the first speaker of the day. Father Calloway is Vicar Provincial and Vocation Director for the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. He is the author of 15 books, including “Concentration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father.”

He gave his testimony about the consecration of Saint Joseph. He told the packed audience how he is desperately needed in these times, and he is the ideal role male model for both men and women.

“Everyone is broken. Thank God for his mercy,” Father Calloway said.

He explained the misconceptions about Saint Joseph and urged everyone to get to know him better, from his miracles to his appearance with Mary at Fatima.

His new book, “Concentration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father,” unfolds the story of Saint Joseph and his legacy as father of the Church.

Following Father Calloway was Heather Khym, who spoke about the “Inner Room: Abiding and Intimacy with Christ.” She is the cohost of the popular “Abiding Together” podcast. She and her husband, Jake, are the co-founders of Life Restoration Ministries, where she serves as a director of the Celtic Cross Foundation.

“What I hope for today is we reborn into ourselves in what is true, sound and who Jesus is? I think what is happening in the world and our lives until now and in various circumstances, we have experienced some darkness at certain times,” Khym said.

Quoting the Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph 2331: “God is love. We have all heard that. But what does that mean? God is love, and we are made in his image, so we are made in the image of love. That is why our heart burns for it. We want to be loved and to love because this is stamped in our bodies and God’s desire for us from the beginning to be in perfect love with and near him. That is what God intended for



Sr. Barbara Joseph provided information about Sr. BJ’s Pantry at the 2023 Oklahoma Women’s Conference on March 4 at Embassy Suites in Norman. Photos Theresa Bragg/ Sooner Catholic.

us. The only way to bridge the gap between God and us is Jesus so that man may know him,” Kyhm said.

The last speakers before the breakout sessions were Dan and Stephanie Burke. Their topic was “Devil in the Castle: St. Teresa of Avila, Spiritual Warfare and the Soul’s Progress.” Together, they host EWTN’s “Divine Intimacy Radio.”

They explained to the audience how the devil is at war with the family structure because it reveals the Trinity, in that it is procreative, unitive and helps people to believe in God.

“Sister Lucia of Fatima said a time will come when the decisive battle between the Kingdom of Christ and Satan will be over marriage and family. And those who will work for the family’s goodwill experience persecution and tribulation. But do not be afraid because Our Lady has already crushed his head,” Dan said.

The conference continued with breakout sessions from Heather Khym about the “Invitation to the Full Life and Living on Purpose,” Stephanie Burke about “Marriage and Spiritual Warfare” and Father Jerome Krug about finding healing with Jesus.

Many opportunities to enhance the attendee’s spirituality were available throughout the conference. A relic from Saint Teresa of Avila provided by the Carmelite Sisters of Saint Therese of the Infant was in the Eucharistic Adoration chapel for women to pray with and a vocation corner with several religious orders sharing information on religious life.

Multiple priests from the archdiocese offered confessions during lunch to ensure everyone who wanted to receive forgiveness of

their sins wouldn’t have to wait long.

The attendees also browsed the numerous vendors that filled two rooms.

The conference concluded with Mass, celebrated by Bishop David A. Konderla of the Diocese of Tulsa. Music for the Mass was provided by Nolan Patrick Reilly and a vocalist.

Next year’s conference is set for March 2, 2024.



Meg Beckman said that conference committee is looking forward to welcoming everyone again next year.

“We want to keep growing it. We don’t want to turn women away. We want every woman who wants to come in to come so they can receive from the Lord and continue their journey. This world is not an easy world to live in, and everyone is fighting so many battles. We want them to know this is a safe space to meet the Lord,” Beckman said.

For more information, go to okcatholicwomen.com.

Jolene Schonchin is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.





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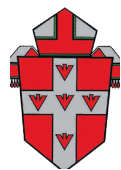
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## Official Priest Assignment



### Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

The following assignments are effective Monday, March 20.



#### Priest in Residence and Sacramental Minister

**Rev. Zachary M. Boazman**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church, Oklahoma City, and continuing as Associate Director of Secretariat for Divine Worship; Chaplain for Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School; and Master of Ceremonies for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

## From the Archives ...

A photo series from George Rigazzi, archdiocesan archivist

The impact of the Sisters of Mercy on the Church in Oklahoma is profound. Having arrived at Sacred Heart in Konawa on July 9, 1884, four courageous sisters began to carve out their niche on the expansive, and sometimes unforgiving, plains.

The sisters came as educators and brought the faith to countless children throughout the state of Oklahoma. They began, and still maintain a connection with, Mount St. Mary Catholic High School in Oklahoma City. Understanding that ministry and being Christ to others could take other forms such as health care, they adjusted accordingly.



Archbishop Coakley celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sisters of Mercy on Feb. 23 at the convent chapel in Oklahoma City. Photo Chris Stiles.

When a mine explosion occurred in the Krebs community in 1892, the sisters suspended their small school to serve the injured. In fact, this led to the building of a hospital in McAlester, about three miles from Krebs, that was under their care from 1902 to 1906. With the Influenza of 1918, the sisters ministered to the sick and dying and offered consolation to the survivors.

Given the history of the order, and seeing a need for increased healthcare services, Oklahoma City General Hospital was acquired and the name was changed to Mercy Hospital.

Mercy Hospital, by its location in the city's core, eventually expanded to a 225-bed institution. Notably, the hospital and nursing school discriminated against no one regardless of race, color or creed.

Due to the quality of care offered, the hospital eventually outgrew the capabilities of the facility. The hospital was

inadequate for the expansion of the mission and land was sought elsewhere for a new facility to be constructed.

When the location of the land was announced, many scratched their heads, as it was located in the farthest northwest reaches of the city on Memorial road. In 1974, it was surrounded by pastures and seemingly endless, empty land.

As was the case in most every venture undertaken by the Sisters of Mercy, their vision, insight and forward thinking was impeccable. This location was perfect, as the city expanded rapidly, and now Memorial is a thriving retail area with many neighborhoods close by.

At its opening in 1975, the convent for the Oklahoma City community at the new Mercy Hospital would provide space for 31 sisters, both active and retired, moving from their old home at Mount St. Mary. Many of the sisters still worked in administration and some had ministerial assignments outside of the hospital. It also became a center for hospitality of sisters from other regions who were welcomed with open arms.

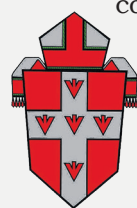
As the years passed, the community began to decrease in size as vocations were not plentiful. No longer serving in hospital ministry, the remaining sisters either retired or worked in the community in some other capacity. In 2023, only four Sisters of Mercy remained at the convent.

The decision was made to close the convent and the remaining sisters would return to the Motherhouse in Saint Louis, Missouri. Two sisters remained in Oklahoma. Sister Diane Kouri, continues to be an active catechist and leader of retreats in Oklahoma City, and Sister Carolyn Stoutz works for Mercy Hospital in Ardmore. A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at the convent chapel on Feb. 23, with Archbishops Coakley and Beltran in attendance, as well as Abbot Lawrence, five priests, two deacons, friends of the community and sisters from other states.

Effectively ending the more than 150-year presence of the Sisters of Mercy in Oklahoma, except for the previously mentioned sisters, the Church in Oklahoma has lost a powerful voice that spoke clearly about the true call to discipleship.

Through their example and tireless work, they provided education and healthcare throughout Oklahoma and made the lives of the people they touched better.

As Oklahoma Catholics, we are forever in their debt.



ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY ARCHIVES

# Leaving the 99 for the one

**By Charles Albert**  
*The Sooner Catholic*

Many people leave the Church for various reasons. In his parables, Christ gave very clear instructions on how Christians should deal with returning “lapsed members.” Christ wants prayers for the lost, and Lent is a great time for those prayers.

In Luke 15:1-32, the Prodigal Son returns. People should not judge but celebrate the return. On April 30, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, the Church celebrates Good Shepherd Sunday.

Good Shepherd Sunday celebrates the return of one sheep to the flock.

#### Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Sulphur

Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Sulphur celebrated the return of Mary (Kay) Fike after a 40-year absence from the Catholic Church. She met her ex-husband when she was about 18, was baptized and became fully involved in the Mass. However, her marriage did not last, and she was later divorced.

Fike said, “I remained in Iowa, feeling alone, embarrassed by the marriage failure, and depressed. I was isolated from the Church.”

Fike moved to Oklahoma to be near her son and grandchildren and get a fresh start. She worked and retired as a certified nurse associate. She tried many different churches in the Sulphur area before finding Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church.

During her 40-year absence from the church, Fike said, “I made many wrong choices and went looking at all the wrong places. What I was really missing was the Mass and the Holy Eucharist.”

She added, “When I found Saint Francis, I tried sitting over by the side but people like Rosalina kept telling me to sit in the main congre-

gation with them, I felt so warm and welcome. Tremendous peace came over me. That was seven years ago!”

She sings regularly in the choir, helps with Altar Society and now works with the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

Finally, Fike recommends two publications: “The Daily Mass: The Testimony of Catalina,” and “Heaven, Hell and Purgatory: Diary of Sister Mary Faustina Kowalska.”

“For Catholics, these publications who have lapsed or who don’t understand what is going on at Mass, it will give them a better appreciation of what Christ did for us,” Fike said.

#### Holy Cross Catholic Church, Madill

Holy Cross Catholic Church in Madill recently celebrated the return of Fanny Guevara. Guevara, a young mother, had fallen away from the faith more than once. Guevara had her first “lapse” between the age of 18-22 when

she was trying to find her way.

She ultimately found her way back to the Church, however the trappings of “social media” made religion seem irrelevant.

“Despite pleadings from my family, social media and my friends seem to be more important,” Guevara said.

“My husband’s faith journey was similar to mine. However, things really changed when I got pregnant and my family urged me to meet Father Raul Sanchez, pastor at Holy Cross Catholic Church. All of a sudden, the most important thing in the world was that our daughter is to know Jesus and the sacraments. We both want her under the protection of Christ and the Church. Holy Cross Catholic Church in Madill and Father Sanchez have welcomed us back with open arms.”

Finally, Guevara has simple advice for young people and families with society’s peer pressure and caught up in social media: “Shut your phone off and talk to Jesus.”

Charles Albert is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.



Fanny Guevara and family. Photo provided.

Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma

## Pilgrimage to Rome and Malta

Scan for more info ↓

- Led by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley
- September 24 - October 4, 2023
- \$5,700 per person, double occupancy
- \$7,090 single occupancy
- Optional 4 night extension to Sicily
- [www.cfook.org/2023pilgrimage](http://www.cfook.org/2023pilgrimage)

Airport taxes and fuel surcharges (approx. \$125.00) are included yet may vary slightly. Adjustments will be made at the time of final invoicing.

Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma

## Mother's Ministry PILGRIMAGE

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- TOUR BLESSED ROTHER SHRINE





Jayce Palmer

Jayce Palmer is the director of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry. He has worked at the chancery for three and a half years. He provides direction and vision for the various programs, efforts, resources, training and formation for all phases of evangelization and discipleship of young people in the archdiocese.

He enjoys disc golf, playing in the Catholic Young Adult sports league and spending time with family.

Go to [archokc.org/cyaevents](http://archokc.org/cyaevents) and follow Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Young Adults + Campus on Facebook to check out the upcoming events the Catholic Young Adults are hosting this year.

Monthly Events!



Catholic Young Adults

OKC



Fr. Don Wolf celebrated the first school Mass at the Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine on Friday, March 10. Students from all grade levels at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Oklahoma City participated in the liturgy. After Mass, Fr. Wolf gave the students, teachers and some family members a tour of the shrine and museum. *Photos Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.*



Fr. Kelly Edwards celebrated Mass honoring scouts on March 12 in the St. Francis de Sales Chapel at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City. For more information about scouting, visit [archokc.org/scouting](http://archokc.org/scouting). *Photos Fran Kozakowski/Sooner Catholic.*

## Annual Mass honors the hard work of youth in scouting

By Everett Brazil, III  
*The Sooner Catholic*

The Catholic Church has long held relationships with scouting organizations, as many parishes host their own respective troops to foster community, education and a nurturing spirit in their young members.

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City celebrated those connections on Sunday, March 12, with a special Mass in recognition of all that scouting programs do for area youth.

The Mass was celebrated at 4 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City. Scouting programs recognized included Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, American Heritage Girls and Trail Life. Camp Fire was also recognized, but did not have any awards to present.

Mass was celebrated by Father Kelly Edwards, pastor of Saint Eugene Catholic Church in Weatherford, and chaplain of the Catholic Student Center of Southwestern Oklahoma State University. Father Kelly is also an Eagle Scout and chaplain of the Catholic Committee on Scouting for the archdiocese.

"It was good to participate in something from the other side, to see the process and give them something I also received," Father Edwards said. "I'm learning as we go along because it is my first year to be part of the Liturgy as the chaplain."

Chad Goodman and his wife, Janie, are scouting volunteers within the archdiocese, and were participants in the Mass. Approximately 65 scouts and their families participated.

"Duty to God is one of the key fundamentals of all of the scouting programs," Chad said,

adding that the Catholic Church has promoted scouting going back a century, to the 1920s.

Recipients of nine awards were recognized at the Mass, including Boy Scouts of America. Wyatt Robinett was awarded the Footsteps of American Saints – Mother Marianne Cope Award; Charles Braun, Charlotte Bryson, Mark Bryson, IV, Josiah Fedor and Wyatt Robinett were presented with the Light of Christ award; Charles Braun and Connor Yamamoto were presented with the Parvuli Dei award; and Pearson Brown, Daniel Myers, Kaitlyn Patton, Lauren Patton, William Patton, Jacob Rojo and Jude Tejada were presented with the Ad Altare Dei award.



American Heritage Girls presented two awards. Cordelia Bement, Lily Claire El-

kins and Emma Lusch were presented the God is Love award and Sophia Bement and Sarah Meyers were presented the Marian Medal (Mary, the First Disciple).

Girl Scouts of America awards included The Spirit Alive and Pillars of Faith – Service to God Award, both earned by Kaitlyn Patton.

The Bronze Pelican Award is awarded to Boy Scouts of America adult leaders. Recipients

included Janie Goodman, Matt Jackson and Eric Patton.

Each award reaches a certain demographic for religions education. For the Light of Christ, it is geared toward the youngest in Cub Scouts.

"The purpose is to help Tiger and Wolf Cub Scouts develop a personal relationship with Jesus," Goodman said. "With the parents' active assistance and participation in this program it is hoped that the Cub will come to see Jesus as a real person, as his friend."

Older Cub Scouts can receive the Ad Altare Dei, also known as Altar of God.

"The goal of Ad Altare Dei program is to help Catholic Youth that have completed sixth grade to evolve a Christian way of life in the faith community," Goodman said. "The program is organized in chapters based on the seven sacraments."

"The 'God is Love' program is designed for use with students who are in kindergarten through first grade," Goodman said. "Mary, the First Disciple is for Catholic girl scouts, grades seventh through 10th, to enable them to 'proclaim the greatness of the Lord.'"

The Mass was followed by a special outdoor themed dinner recognizing the spirit of scouting in the outdoors.

"We had a bit of a scouting theme, hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans. It was really nice," Chad said. "This was the first year we had a dinner following the Mass. It was nice to break bread with one another."

The goal of the awards is to foster a love of God in the scouts and teach them the Gospel and to spread it.

"While it's very helpful for the scout to receive the award, it is another step through the door of being joyful, faithful, Christ-centered Catholics," Father Edwards said.

*Everett Brazil, III is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.*



# Law update provides excellent giving opportunity

By Peter L. de Keratry

As part of the 2023 Secure Act 2.0, Congress gave individuals ages 70 and a half years and older a fantastic opportunity to create lifelong income via a Charitable Gift Annuity.

Individuals may give up to \$50,000 in a Qualified Charitable Distribution from their IRA to create the annuity. Up to \$100,000 may be given by couples who combine their qualified distribution to create a two-life annuity.

As a reminder, a Qualified Charitable Distribution is a gift made by someone 70 and a half years and older from a traditional IRA to a qualified 501(c)(3) charity such as the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma. The QCD may satisfy all or part of the Required Minimum Distribution mandated for those 73 years old or older.

The new legislation allows you to use a QCD to create a Charitable Gift Annuity. While still counting toward the Required Minimum Distribution, the QCD-funded Charitable Gift Annuity will provide you income for life. Rather than being taxed on the required distribution, you can still receive income, but over the rest of your lifetime.

The limit on the new QCD-created Charitable Gift Annuity is \$50,000 per person and is

available in one tax year only. The amount counts toward the \$100,000 annual limit for Qualified Charitable Distributions, and toward your Required Minimum Distributions for those 73 years old or older. There is no charitable gift income tax deduction for QCDs, but you also avoid income tax on those transfers. All gift annuity payments will be taxed as ordinary income.

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Example: A 75-year-old makes a \$50,000 Qualified Charitable Distribution from her IRA to create a Charitable Gift Annuity at the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma. No withdrawal penalty or income tax is assessed, and no charitable deduction applies. She could expect a 6.6% payout rate for the rest of her life. The annual income of \$3,300 is subject to ordinary income tax.

For more information, or to receive a personal illustration, visit [cfogift.org](http://cfogift.org) or call the Catholic Foundation at (405) 721-4115.

Peter L. de Keratry is the executive director of the Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma and the Secretariat for Stewardship and Development for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

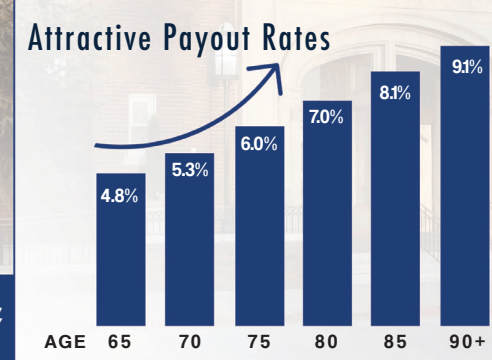
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# Lay Missionaries of Charity serve in Oklahoma

By Courtney Rhone  
The Sooner Catholic



"We are led by Jesus, Mary and our Dear St. Teresa of Calcutta. It conveys our primary spirituality as Lay Missionaries of Charity," Toni Harrelson said.

The Lay Missionaries of Charity (LMC) is a group that is spiritually affiliated with Missionaries of Charity Brothers and is a lay branch of Missionaries of Charity of Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Founded in Rome in 1984 by Saint Teresa of Calcutta and Father Sebastian Vazhakala, the LMC is comprised of lay people, both married and single, who take private vows of chastity, poverty, obedience and whole-hearted free service to the poorest of the poor.

The LMC movement grew quickly, and it spread to several countries in Europe; North, Central and South America, and its statutes have been translated into more than 15 languages.

With the growth and development of the LMC movement, the Lay Missionaries of Charity began meeting in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in 2007, with the blessing of Archbishop Eusebius Beltran.

The Missionaries of Charity fully recognize the Magisterium of the Church, and respect and obey its ministers.

"I want people to know there is nothing contrary to Church teaching; we are fully in line with the Church," Toni Harrelson said.

The purpose of the lay person is to be like Jesus, "set apart" from the materialistic thinking of society. This is achieved by consecrating themselves and their families to God and following the example of the Holy

Family of Nazareth.

"The purpose of the lay person is becoming increasingly more important in Catholicism. The Church is yearning for proper roles of lay people within the Church; and because lay people remain in the heart of the world, this is a part of the role of lay missionaries of charity," Harrelson said.

"The Lay Missionaries of Charity is a spiritual calling. The vows are what bring us all together in the world."

For those who are interested in becoming a part of the LMC and are interested in the charism of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, they are welcome to attend a come-and-see period, where you meet with the group on a regular basis to read, study and reflect on the statutes. At the conclusion of the come and see

## Lay Missionaries of Charity Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Contact: Toni Harrelson  
(405) 694-1292 or (405) 341-2199  
[tonimah@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tonimah@sbcglobal.net)

period, candidates meet with a spiritual director, and then may begin the two years of formation in preparation for their first vows.

The LMC group meets twice a month; on the first Saturday of the month at Saint Ann for Holy Mass at 9:30 a.m., adoration and the rosary, and on the third Saturday of the month, the group meets in the conference room at the Holy Innocents' chapel in Oklahoma City.

Courtney Rhone is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

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# Children's collection feeds more than 41,000

By Eliana Tedrow  
The Sooner Catholic

Every Sunday, Father Joseph Jacobi sits on the steps of the altar during Mass at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Mustang holding a small wicker basket labeled “children’s collection.” The children of the parish bring coins and small bills, happily placing them in the basket.

“When I started the Children’s Collection at our Sunday Masses in November 2021, I envisioned our young people not only sharing their material treasure to feed other hungry children in our world but also physically putting into practice this work of mercy,” said Father Jacobi, pastor of Holy Spirit Catholic Church.

The parish’s children’s collection has amassed more than \$14,000 since its inception, enough to fund a significant outreach project. Partnering with Cross Catholic Outreach, the parish set out to pack 40,000 meals; life-saving food that would be distributed to people in need worldwide.

On Saturday, Feb. 18, hundreds of parishioners and community members of all ages packed their Family Life Center to begin the hours-long process of sorting, organizing and carrying completed packages of “vitafood,” specially formulated meal packs designed to meet the needs of malnourished people around the world.

“It gave me great joy to see over 200 people, ranging in age from 84 to little children, helping pack over 40,000 meals for those who hunger for food in other countries,” Father Jacobi said. “Everyone working together and enjoying each other’s company was a powerful sign of the Holy Spirit at work, uniting us as the Body of Christ despite language, cultural or age differences.”

“It’s a wonderful blessing not only to the people that we feed with these food packets but also to the people who have come to work together to do so,” Father Jacobi said, “and

getting to know others and a sense of a wider community to which they belong.”

Erika Kvak, development officer for Cross Catholic Outreach, a Vatican-endorsed nonprofit whose mission is to partner with Catholic religious and lay people to deliver food, hope, and shelter, kicked off the day by thanking the



nearly 300 people in attendance.

“[This] was one of my all-time favorite packing events,” Kvak said. “The outpouring of volunteers from the parish and community was a beautiful thing to witness.”

Kvak recalled looking up at one point in the morning, con-

cerned there wouldn’t be enough room for all the volunteers to help.

“This was not a problem,” Kvak said. “The entire room was filled with volunteers packing, translating, cleaning, boxing, filling bins and hospitality. Every person that helped did so with a smile and a joyful heart. I truly witnessed seeing the hands and feet of Jesus in action that morning.”

When Kvak and her team left that day, more than 41,000 meals had been packed and prepared to distribute to families in need all over the world.

Martha Torres, coordinator of Children’s Evangelization, organized the day of service.

“The vitality of our parish, community and the presence of the Holy Spirit were so in tune and joyful that day. God called his people, they responded to his call, and he’d laid out a plan to care for their needs as they cared for others,” Torres said.

Elijah Coleman, age 14, worked alongside a friend for the day.

“It was great! I liked that so many of us came together. It felt good to know this would be helping people.”

His sister, Elisa, age 9, said the morning was much work, “but it was worth it because I like helping people!”

Less than three hours after the day began, Jorge Morales, parishioner and volunteer translator, took the mic.

“It is my honor to let you know we didn’t meet our goal. We exceeded it!” he exclaimed, which was met with loud cheers and applause.

“Every single Sunday, this money has been coming from your families into that little basket. Imagine how many families we have fed today. Imagine how many families can say thank you because of this today. You are a blessing. You came in today and gave some of your time with a goal in mind and not only met it but exceeded it. We are a body of Christ. We are a community,” said Morales.

For more information on Cross Catholic Outreach visit their website at [CrossCatholic.org](http://CrossCatholic.org).

Eliana Tedrow is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.



Photos Eliana Tedrow/Sooner Catholic and Alyssa Spencer.







The annual Oklahoma City St. Patrick's Day parade was held March 11 in Historic Stockyards City. The grand marshals were former Gov. Frank and Cathy Keating. After the parade an Irish celebration was hosted by the Oklahoma Irish Heritage Society. Photos Dana Attocknie/Sooner Catholic.



Jaxon and Jaxon are altar servers at Sts. Peter and Paul in Hobart. Photo provided.



High school students from throughout the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City spent their spring break, March 13-17, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp at the first "Awaken" retreat. Photos Jackson Howell.

## Make Straight the Way

hosted by Dcn. Larry Sousa

*Conversations with people who are making a difference in Oklahoma.*

**April 4 and 5:** Sally Crowe Nash, various ministries and parishioner at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Oklahoma City.

**April 11 and 12:** Jayce Palmer, director of youth, young adult and campus ministry for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

**April 18 and 19:** Sr. Pauline Quinn and Dr. John Otto, prison ministry involving dogs.

**April 25 and 26:** Denis Rischard, attorney, elder law and parishioner at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Edmond.

"Make Straight the Way" broadcasts on Oklahoma Catholic Radio Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. Listen online at okcr.org.

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## "Santiago: The Camino Within" in theaters for one night only

The movie, "Santiago: The Camino Within," will be in select theaters on March 28.

The movie follows pilgrims along the Camino de Santiago, sharing their stories, the transformation of their souls and the radiance that will be revealed at the conclusion of their journeys.

This deeply contemplative film projects in color and sound an epic journey of the heart and soul changing lives forever.

The Camino de Santiago is a well-traversed pilgrimage route dating back to medieval times. Legend recalls that the remains of the Christian apostle Saint James the Great were mysteriously discovered at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain after having thought to be lost.

For centuries, pilgrims have

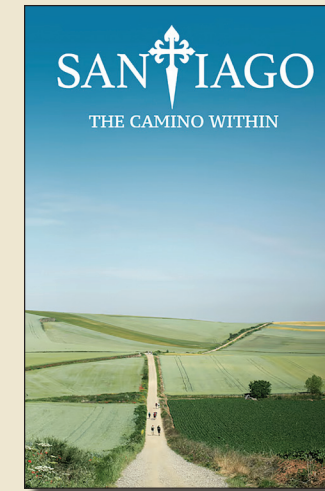
traveled the route, also known as the Way of Saint James, for spiritual reasons.

This film, "The Camino Within," follows pilgrims along this way.

Sharing their stories and profound experiences about how walking the Camino changes them in different ways, viewers will be inspired to experience this pilgrimage as their own interior journey of discovery.

The movie will be shown at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 28, at the following local theaters:

- Cinemark Tinseltown and XD, 6001 North M.L.K. Blvd., Oklahoma City.
  - Regal Warren Moore & IMAX, 1000 South Telephone Rd., Oklahoma City.
  - AMC Quail Springs 24, 2501 W. Memorial, Oklahoma City.
- Visit [fathomevents.com](http://fathomevents.com) for more information or to buy tickets.



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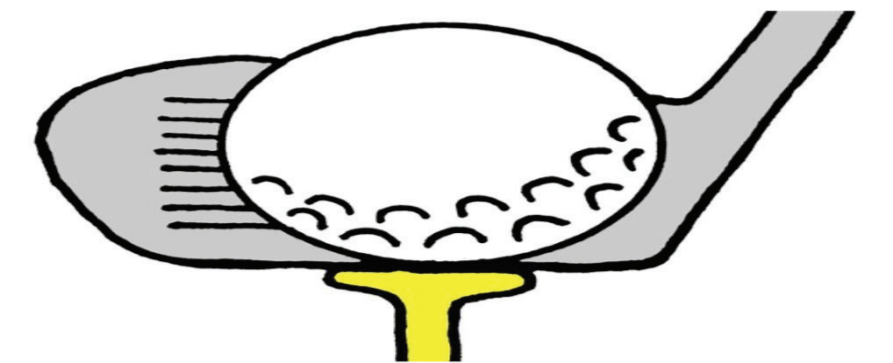
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## ST JAMES THE GREATER Third Round Golf Tournament MONDAY, May 22 (proceeds to St. James benefits)



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## Jobs Box

### Cook - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking an experienced cook to assist with daily meal preparation at the Catholic Pastoral Center. This full-time position will allow a flexible work schedule that will include some evenings and weekends. Must have a minimum of two years' experience in food preparation and service. Catering experience is preferred. Customer service experience a plus. High school diploma a must. A background check and safe environment training required. Send cover letter and resume to [humanresources@archokc.org](mailto:humanresources@archokc.org).

### Director of marriage, family life - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a director for the Office of Marriage and Family Life Ministry to provide overall leadership, vision and direction including programming. Coordinate marriage preparation, marriage enrichment, healing after divorce or death and pro-life ministry programs; collaborate with the curia, priests and community organizations. Must have a good understanding of discipleship and evangelization and be able to assist parishes in deepening their understanding through consultation, formation and training. A degree in theology, philosophy, marriage and family life, catechesis, or related field is required, master's degree preferred, plus five to seven years of experience in a leadership capacity. Diocesan-level experience is preferred but not required. Send resume and cover letter to [humanresources@archokc.org](mailto:humanresources@archokc.org).

### Gift shop associate – Shrine

The Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine is seeking a gift shop associate (full-time and part-time positions) to be responsible for assisting customers with item selections and completing sales transactions. Duties include, but are not limited to, customer service, sales, inventory, stocking and cleaning. Knowledge of POS software, cash and credit transaction processing, and inventory procedures is required. Must be an active practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church. Bilingual in Spanish a plus. Send resume and cover letter to [humanresources@archokc.org](mailto:humanresources@archokc.org).

### BMCHS president – OKC

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School is seeking a president. Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. Advanced degree in an education or business-related field with a full understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Catholic education. Excellent oral and written communications skills and ability to effectively interact with parents, students, teachers and administrators. Excellent presentation skills when addressing faculty, staff, parents and the community. Send letter

of interest that aligns experiences and skill sets with the current needs of BMCHS as understood; Statement of Catholic educational philosophy; Current resume with all appropriate dates included. Send as separate pdf documents to Aimee Viana at [aviana@partnersinmission.com](mailto:aviana@partnersinmission.com).

### Principal – OKC

Christ the King Catholic School is seeking a principal. Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing, master's degree in educational leadership or related educational field, Oklahoma principal certification, experience as a Catholic school principal or teacher, experience with budgeting, accreditation and Catholic Curriculum Standards. Send cover letter and resume to [lschuler@archokc.org](mailto:lschuler@archokc.org). All inquiries, nominations and applications confidential.

### Principal – MWC

St. Philip Neri Catholic School in Midwest City is seeking a principal. Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing, master's degree in educational leadership or related educational field, Oklahoma principal certification, experience as a Catholic school principal or teacher, experience with budgeting, accreditation and Catholic Curriculum Standards. Send cover letter and resume to [lschuler@archokc.org](mailto:lschuler@archokc.org). All inquiries, nominations and applications confidential.

### Internship - OKC

Catholic Charities joins with the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to provide a 10- week summer internship for any U.S. Catholic between the ages of 18 and 30 seeking professional opportunities in social ministry fields, community development and economic development. The internship is 37.5 hours per week from June to August 2023 at Catholic Charities in Oklahoma City. The internship pays (\$14/hr) and includes three-day, expense paid training with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington D.C. Applications are due no later than April 3. Contact Brian Smith at Catholic Charities, (405) 523-3000, Ext. 245 or [bsmith@ccaokc.org](mailto:bsmith@ccaokc.org).

### Substitute teacher - OKC

Sacred Heart Catholic School in Oklahoma City is looking for qualified candidates for a long-term substitute position for the 4th grade beginning mid-April through the end of the current 2023 school year. Classroom experience and Oklahoma teacher certification are preferred. Must complete safe environment training and be able to support the mission of Sacred Heart Catholic School. Send resume to Principal Tera Albert at [principal@sacredheartokc.org](mailto:principal@sacredheartokc.org). Download the teacher application packet at [archokc.org/careers](http://archokc.org/careers).

### Director of campus ministry - Norman

St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Norman is seeking a director of campus ministry to recruit and lead groups of students as they serve on leadership teams, accompany students in their spiritual growth, fundraise for campus ministry and assist other staff members in their various departments. Must be a practicing Catholic with a degree in theology, ministry, or a related field or demonstrated experience in ministry. View job description at [catholicjobs.com/job/13850156844](http://catholicjobs.com/job/13850156844). Send cover letter and resume to [alex@stm-ou.org](mailto:alex@stm-ou.org).

### Director of Immigration Legal Services – OKC

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a director of immigration legal services to establish and provide effective management and oversight for all operational and strategic services and programs. Juris doctorate degree; admitted to and licensed by the state bar of Oklahoma or of another state(s), which license must be maintained in good standing at all times; fluent in the reading, writing and speaking Spanish; minimum of three years of experience in providing family-based immigration legal services under the INA and related statutes, rules and regulations; significant experience in the management or coordination of professional and/or clerical staff involved in the providing of legal services under the INA and related statutes, rules and regulations. Send cover letter and resume to Monica Palmer at [mpalmer@ccaokc.org](mailto:mpalmer@ccaokc.org).

### Human resources coordinator – OKC

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a human resources coordinator to help ensure compliance across the agency with federal, state and local laws and provide assistance with and facilitate the human resource processes at all business locations. Serve as the agency PQI coordinator and help with tasks in the administration department. Bachelor's degree in Human Resources, business or related field. Experience may be substituted for degree. Experience with Microsoft Office. Send cover letter and resume to Christy Knotts at [cknotts@ccaokc.org](mailto:cknotts@ccaokc.org).

### Director of educational technology - OKC

Mount St. Mary Catholic High School is seeking a director of educational technology starting July 1 for the 2023-24 school year. Bachelor's degree in education or technology-related field, an Oklahoma teaching certificate and experience in a secondary or post-secondary educational setting. Responsibilities include developing and imple-

menting the school's technology vision with the various components that comprise that vision. Mount St. Mary is a 1:1 Chromebook school and technological proficiency is a necessity. The director will help prepare students for life in an increasingly global and technologically demanding society, provide instructional support and training to faculty and serve as a member of the campus administrative team. Send cover letter and resume to Principal Laura Cain at [lcain@mountstmary.org](mailto:lcain@mountstmary.org).

### Teachers - OKC

Mount St. Mary Catholic High School is accepting resumes for teaching positions for the 2023-24 school year. Must hold at least a bachelor's degree in the desired content area or an education-related field, Oklahoma teaching certification and recent teaching experience. Send cover letter and resume to Principal Laura Cain at [lcain@mountstmary.org](mailto:lcain@mountstmary.org). Applicants will be contacted as teaching positions become available.

### Science teacher - Edmond

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School in Edmond is seeking a middle school science teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Must possess the heart of a Catholic educator, to serve in the spirit of Christ and bear witness to young people in all that they do. Responsible for the science instruction and curriculum development for 6th-8th grade. Send resume and cover letter to Principal Nicole De Longe at [ndelonge@seasok.org](mailto:ndelonge@seasok.org).

### First grade teacher - Edmond

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School in Edmond is seeking a 1st grade teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Must possess the heart of a Catholic educator, to serve in the spirit of Christ and bear witness to our young people in all that they do. Must be enthusiastic, creative and eager to engage students in the learning process. Send resume and cover letter to Principal Nicole De Longe at [ndelonge@seasok.org](mailto:ndelonge@seasok.org).

### Music teacher - Edmond

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School in Edmond is seeking a music teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Must possess the heart of a Catholic educator. Must be enthusiastic, creative and eager to engage students in the learning process. Send resume and cover letter to Principal Nicole De Longe at [ndelonge@seasok.org](mailto:ndelonge@seasok.org).

### Teachers - MWC

St. Philip Neri Catholic School in Midwest City is seeking early childhood and elementary teachers. Applicants must hold state certification. Teaching experience is preferred. Send resume to Brenda Tener, principal, at [btener@spnok.org](mailto:btener@spnok.org).

## The Catholic Difference

# Naaman, the Nazarenes, and the Germans

To vary Oscar Wilde, the Church's liturgical life often imitates art by being strikingly appropriate to a particular moment. That was certainly true on Monday of the Third Week of Lent, 2023 — a day when the Scriptures of the Eucharistic liturgy invite us to ponder the greatest of the capital sins, pride, through the story of Naaman, the Syrian general, and Jesus's confrontation with his fellow-Nazarenes. This year, the Monday of the Third Week of Lent immediately followed the concluding meeting of the German "Synodal Way." And while there are many reasons why institutional German Catholicism is hurtling into apostasy, and may go off the cliff into schism, pride is one of them.

Naaman seeks a cure for his leprosy from the "man of God," Elisha, successor to Elijah as "prophet in Israel" (2 Kings 5:8). The Syrian is willing to make a long and difficult journey to gain what he seeks. He is prepared to compensate the prophet for a cure with gold and silver. But when Elisha tells him to bathe seven times in the Jordan, Naaman balks. Why should this piddling Israelite stream have more curative power than the greater rivers of Damascus? He's about to return home in a huff when his servants plead with him to bathe in the Jordan, arguing that, as he would have done something difficult if the prophet asked, why not do something easy?

Naaman bathes as Elisha instructed, is cured, and then declares that "I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel" (2 Kings 5:15). Naaman's pride had been the obstacle to his cure, and ultimately to his faith in the one true God.

The Gospel reading for the Monday of the Third Week of Lent offers the Church a New Testament parallel to the tale of Naaman and

Elisha. Just before the passage from Saint Luke's Gospel read that day, Jesus had taken the scroll of Isaiah the prophet at a Sabbath service in his hometown synagogue, read about the one who would "proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," declared that "today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" — and won the plaudits of all, "who spoke well of him" (Luke 4:20-22). The atmospherics quickly change, however, and the story as read on Monday of Lent III displays a different face of the Nazarenes.

For, in their pride, they start wondering about this upstart. "Isn't he Joseph's son, a carpenter?" "Who does he think he is?" "And what kind of messiah is this?" We had something different, something better, in mind. So they drive Jesus out of Nazareth and are about to throw him off a promontory when, "passing through the midst of them, he went away" (Luke 4:30). Pride, once again, has been an obstacle to faith. We, the Nazarenes, know what kind of messiah God should have sent — just as Adam and Eve, in their pride, thought they knew better than God about what was good and evil, displaying an arrogance that drove them out of Paradise in Genesis 3.

When the German Synodal Way declares that it knows better than God about what makes for righteous living, happiness and ultimate beatitude — which is what the Synodal Way did when it rejected the biblical anthropology of Genesis 1 and embraced gender ideology and the LGBTQ agenda — the Germans were behaving exactly like Adam and Eve, Naaman before his conversion, and the Nazarenes. When the German Synodal Way endorses a kind of parliamentary system of Church governance in defiance of the order that Christ himself established for his Church, the Ger-

mans were doing precisely what every prideful sinner from Adam and Eve through the leprous Naaman and the scornful Nazarenes had done: rejecting divine revelation. Thus, the remarkable, artful symmetry of those readings for Monday of the Third Week of Lent following immediately after the conclusion of the German Synodal Way, which deconstructed Catholicism in the name of the allegedly superior culture of today.

Some months after John Paul II issued his 1993 encyclical on the reform of Catholic moral theology, "Veritatis Splendor," a book of commentaries on that text — all negative — was published by German theologians. The book's editor wrote in the foreword that the book was being published because Germany had a special responsibility for theology in the Catholic Church. To which one wanted to say, "Says who? When was the election?"

That is the kind of pride that led many German theologians to regard the brilliant John Paul II as a pre-modern, reactionary Slav, not quite up to their enlightened standards. That same pride has infused, and thoroughly corrupted, the German Synodal Way.

*George Weigel's column 'The Catholic Difference' is syndicated by the Denver Catholic, the official publication of the Archdiocese of Denver.*



George Weigel  
Ethics and Public  
Policy Center

## Book review: “America’s Mary: the story of Our Lady of Good Help”

By Br. Benet Exton, O.S.B.  
*The Sooner Catholic*

Did you know that you do not have to leave the United States to visit a place where the Church has approved that the Blessed Virgin Mary has appeared?

You can go to Champion, Wisconsin, where the Church has concurred that the Blessed Virgin appeared three times to a Belgian immigrant, Adele Brise, in October of 1859.

Mary identified herself as the Queen of Heaven and encouraged Adele to teach local children their catechism, to pray, do penance, make sacrifices and to receive the sacraments frequently. This apparition was simple and involved only one person seeing Mary.

There were other people present for the other apparitions, and they

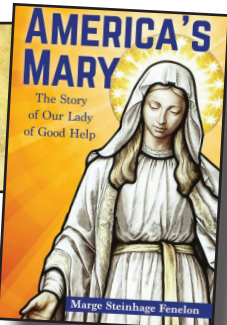
felt something was happening, but they could not see or hear Mary speak to Adele.

Champion, Wisconsin, is part of what is called the “Door Peninsula of Wisconsin.” The area was settled by Catholic Belgians. Adele organized a group of women to house and educate children in the Door area. This group of women became Franciscan Tertiaries, whom Adele called the Sisters of Saint Francis of Assisi, while others called them the “Sisters of Good Health,” or “Sisters of Good Help.” They had a convent, boarding school and other buildings around the Shrine of Our Lady.

Some people questioned the validity of Mary's apparition, but a miracle concerning a large fire in 1871, which burned a lot of land and killed many people, changed many minds. The fire headed toward the shrine, but did not touch

the property of the shrine. The fire went around, rain eventually put it out and this

## Book Review



was considered a major miracle that the Blessed Virgin Mary had interceded for them.

This apparition of Mary was approved by Bishop David Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, on Dec. 8, 2010, after having completed the prescribed inquiry into the apparition. This made the apparition of Our Lady of Good Help the only approved Marian apparition in the United States.

This book, “America's Mary: the

story of Our Lady of Good Help in Wisconsin” by Marge Steinhage Fenelon, discusses all of this and more.

Fenelon includes information about Marian apparitions and how they are approved. Father Edward Looney had written a previous book on this apparition, provided the epilogue for this book.

This 191-page book has illustrations, a timeline and bibliographical references.

This book is highly recommended for information on Our Lady of Good Help, but also about how Marian apparitions are approved by the Church.

*Br. Benet Exton, O.S.B., Saint Gregory's Abbey, Shawnee, is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.*



## Lánzate a lo más Profundo

Luke 5:4

# ¿Cuál es tu pasión?

Es muy común que, para referirse a las cosas sobre las cuales se tiene un interés intenso, las personas digan que eso “les apasiona”. Alguien puede ser apasionado del golf, la comida, el equipo de basquetbol de Oklahoma o el ejercicio. Y para todas esas pasiones, siempre existe algo más profundo dentro de nosotros que nos mueve a la acción.

Algunas veces, una pasión nos mueve a actuar de una manera que puede parecer extremadamente fuera de proporción. ¡Supongo que yo me he convertido en un apasionado del Camino de Santiago!, dado que lo he caminado cinco veces. Quizá a ustedes les ha pasado algo igual: su pasión los mueve a hacer algo con un enfoque tan intenso que sus familiares y amigos los miran incrédulos y piensan, “¿por qué pasa tanto tiempo haciendo eso?” La respuesta, por supuesto, se encuentra en la naturaleza de la pasión.

La palabra misma implica estar “fuera de control”. Una persona con alguna pasión es en realidad pasiva, y es la pasión la que actúa en él o ella. La pasión, entonces, implica sufrimiento: porque la pasión que nos mueve a una actividad tan intensa tiene su costo.

A las últimas dos semanas de Cuaresma se

les llama las semanas de la pasión, por esa misma razón. ¡La pasión de Dios es por nosotros! Lo expresa Jesús en el Evangelio a través del versículo tan conocido: “porque tanto amó Dios al mundo que le dio a su Hijo único, para que todo el que crea en él no se pierda, sino que tenga vida eterna” (Jn 3,16).

El resultado del amor apasionado de Dios por nosotros es el don de su Hijo, no solo en su encarnación, sino especialmente en su crucifixión, como nos lo recuerda San Pablo: “El que no perdonó ni a su propio Hijo, antes bien le entregó por todos nosotros, ¿cómo no nos dará con él graciosamente todas las cosas?” (Rom 8,32).

El amor apasionado de Dios por el mundo,

por ti y por mí, apunta de manera definitiva a una sola cosa, la cruz. Por lo tanto, la cruz debe tener un lugar especial en nuestra alabanza y nuestras vidas durante estas semanas finales de la Cuaresma.

San Juan Pablo II nos habla de la necesidad de la cruz en su carta apostólica sobre “El significado cristiano del sufrimiento humano” (Salvifici Doloris), cuando escribe: “Cristo va hacia su pasión y muerte con toda la conciencia de la misión que ha de realizar de este modo... Precisamente por medio de su cruz debe tocar

las raíces del mal, plantadas en la historia del hombre y en las almas humanas. Precisamente por medio de su cruz debe cumplir la obra de la salvación. Esta obra, en el designio del amor eterno, tiene un carácter

redentor.” (16)

La práctica tradicional de cubrir o velar las imágenes de Nuestro Señor y de los santos durante las últimas semanas de Cuaresma, viene de Juan 12,36, “Dicho esto, se marchó Jesús y se ocultó de su vista”. Cuando llega el Viernes Santo, la imagen de la cruz se encuentra sola, como signo del amor apasionado de Dios por nosotros.

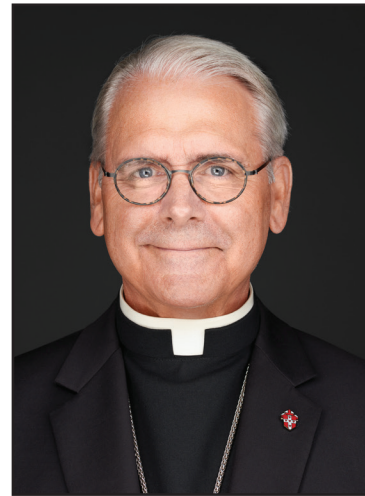
¿Cómo debemos responder a este amor apasionado de Dios?

Estamos invitados a hacer nuestra la pasión de Cristo, uniendo nuestras pasiones y sufrimientos a los suyos. Observar las semanas de la pasión no consiste solamente en ir a la Iglesia el Domingo de Ramos, recoger nuestras palmas y caminar en la procesión. No se trata solamente de ir a besar la cruz el Viernes Santo. Estos rituales litúrgicos deberían motivarnos a reflexionar ¿hacia quién o hacia qué soy apasionado como resultado de ver la pasión de Dios por mí?

Nuestras pasiones terrenales pueden convertirse en las palmas que dan la bienvenida al Rey de la Gloria, en vez de una expresión de orgullo personal. Nuestros sufrimientos terrenales pueden convertirse en fuentes que brotan del Árbol de la Vida que afirma nuestra esperanza en la Resurrección.

Unamos nuestra pasión a la pasión de Dios, nuestros sufrimientos a los sufrimientos de Cristo y, de esa manera, las palabras de San Juan Pablo II resonarán en nuestros corazones, “La elocuencia de la cruz y de la muerte es completada, no obstante, por la elocuencia de la resurrección.” (Salvifici Doloris, 20)

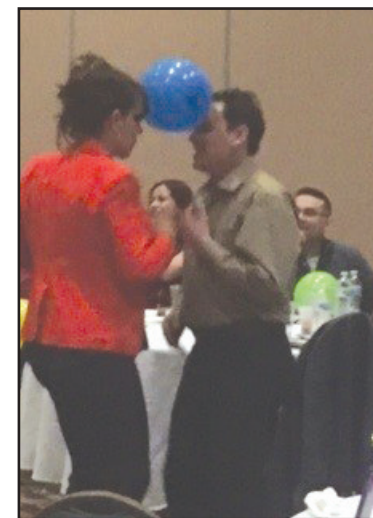
¡Apasionense de su fe católica! Aprovechen la oportunidad de participar en los servicios litúrgicos de las últimas semanas de Cuaresma este año en su parroquia. El Domingo de Ramos, el Jueves Santo y el Viernes Santo tienen su lugar en el camino hacia el Domingo de Resurrección.



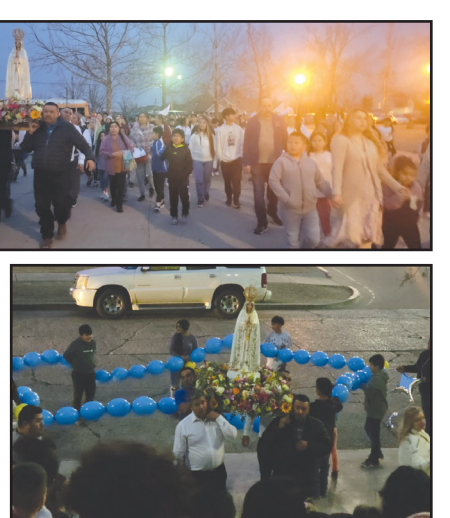
Arzobispo Pablo S. Coakley



El primer Retiro Femenino de Emaús en español tuvo lugar los días 18 y 19 de febrero en el Campo Católico Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Participantes de Tulsa fueron a apoyar el retiro por primera vez, para la comunidad de la Iglesia Católica St. James the Greater, y con el apoyo y consejo del P. Scott Boeckman, vicario de esa parroquia. *Fotos proporcionadas.*



El equipo español de Encuentro Matrimonial OKC organizó un evento para recaudar fondos, “Día del Matrimonio”, el 18 de febrero. Patrick, una cena en el Centro Pastoral Católico seguida de juegos de pareja y baile. *Fotos proporcionadas.*



Los feligreses se reunieron en la Iglesia Católica Histórica del Sagrado Corazón el 20 de febrero para el 5° Rosario Mundial de la Matera de Fátima en Oklahoma orando por la Paz Mundial y la conversión de los pecadores. *Fotos proporcionadas.*



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- Nutrición
- Ciclos Femeninos

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Erika Fraire: (405) 438-0294  
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# Briefs

### Oklahoma Catholic Native Schools Project

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, e-mail [info@oknativeschoolsproject.org](mailto:info@oknativeschoolsproject.org). Learn more at [archokc.org/oknativeschoolsproject](http://archokc.org/oknativeschoolsproject)

### Discipleship Conference

The Discipleship Conference will be on Aug. 19 at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, 100 Mick Cornett Dr. in Oklahoma City. Cost: \$20 pp. The annual Catechetical Conference and Sembra-dores de la Fe have been combined and are now the Discipleship Conference. Text DC2023 to 84576 for updates or visit [OKDisciple.org](http://OKDisciple.org)

### Golf tournament

St. Thomas More Catholic Church is hosting their 13th annual golf tournament beginning at 8:30 a.m. April 17 at The Trails Golf Club, 3200 S. Berry Rd. in Norman. Cost \$125 pp by April 3 and \$150 per hole sponsor. Visit [tinyurl.com/stmgolfplayer2023](http://tinyurl.com/stmgolfplayer2023) or [tinyurl.com/stmgolfsponsor2023](http://tinyurl.com/stmgolfsponsor2023).

### Chrism Mass

Archbishop Coakley will celebrate the Chrism Mass at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave. in Oklahoma City.

### Father and son retreat

A father and son retreat will be held May 4-6 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp. Cost: \$35 pp. Fathers and sons must attend together. Sons should be ages 10-21. Register at [archokc.org/fathers](http://archokc.org/fathers).

### A Lenten Mission

St. Eugene Catholic Church Lenten Mission is 7 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. Monday, March 27 – Wednesday, March 29, each night in the church, 2400 W. Hefner Rd. in Oklahoma City. Everyone is invited. Fr. Tom Boyer will present “The Roman Rite Mass and the Language of the Ritual.”

### Eucharistic Adoration

Eucharistic Adoration will take place every Thursday after the 11:30 a.m. Mass, from Noon to 3:50 p.m. in the St. Francis de Sales Chapel at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway. The period of adoration will conclude with benediction.

### Pilgrimage to Canada

Water and Spirit: A Pilgrimage to Canada Oct. 11-18 led by Fr. Scott Boeckman and Fr. Rex Arnold. Contact Judi Wilkinson

at [j\\_wilkinson@cox.net](mailto:j_wilkinson@cox.net) for more information.

### Monastic Encounter Weekend

St. Gregory's Abbey invites single Catholic men ages 18-45 for a monastic encounter weekend March 31-April 2 at 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. Participants will share in the liturgical prayer, Lectio Divina, common work, communal life of the abbey and live as a monk. Contact Fr. Simeon Spitz, O.S.B. at (405) 878-5456, [vocations@monksok.org](mailto:vocations@monksok.org) or visit [monksok.org/vocations](http://monksok.org/vocations).

### Day of Reflection

Day of Reflection, “A Day of Silence at the Abbey” presented by Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen, O.S.B. is 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. April 1 at St. Gregory's Abbey, 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. Attendees must pre-register by e-mailing [retreats@monksok.org](mailto:retreats@monksok.org), via the link at [monksok.org](http://monksok.org) or call (405) 878-5656. Cost \$30 pre-paid or \$35 at the door. Lunch included.

### Spiritual retreat for grieving parents

An Emmaus Ministry spiritual retreat for grieving parents is 9:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. April 1 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City. This Catholic ministry serves the spiritual needs of parents whose children of any age died by any cause, no matter how long ago. Space is limited. Register at [emfgp.org](http://emfgp.org).

### Wonderfully Made mother and daughter conference

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City presents the annual mother and daughter Wonderfully Made conference, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. April 1 at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City. Mothers with daughters ages 9-12. Keynote speaker is Monica Ashour. Topics include Theology of the body, nutrition and women's cycles. Free event. Visit [archokc.org/wonderfully-made](http://archokc.org/wonderfully-made).

### Good Friday pilgrimage walk

St. Joseph Catholic Church in Ada will host their annual Good Friday pilgrimage walk from Allen to Ada beginning at 7 a.m. on April 7. Participants will meet in the St. Joseph Catholic Church parking lot for instructions and prayer, then carpool to Allen. The walk will be comprised of 2-3-mile intervals, stopping for breaks and Stations of the Cross, and will end about 3 p.m. in Ada with a Lenten meal in Benedictine Hall. There will be relief cars available. Everyone is invited. Contact Dcn. Dennis Fine at (580) 279-4700 for more information.

To see more briefs, go online to [archokc.org/briefs](http://archokc.org/briefs).



## Are you listening?

By Sally Crowe Nash

After my mother died in 2019, my elderly father lived alone. He lived out of state, so weekly visits were not possible. Instead, I called him most weekdays. It was an important connection for both of us, but I never called at 8:30 p.m., as that was my dad's time to pray the rosary with EWTN.

Our Catholic faith honors the rosary as one of the most efficacious prayers for spiritual development. The rosary itself was not prayed by Jesus, or anyone in sacred scripture, nor was it prayed by the disciples as a part of apostolic tradition, but it does find its roots in the Bible.

Part of this practice came from monks as early as the ninth century, who recited all 150 psalms daily. They kept track by placing a pebble in a container or a pouch as they prayed each psalm. At the time, most people could not read, so those who wanted to imitate the monks, would pray the Lord's Prayer 50 times.

There were other adaptations, too. A pious legend spread that 12th century Saint Dominic de Guzman had been given the rosary by Mary as a powerful prayer to stop heresy, specifically Albigensianism, which rejected Christ's incarnation, and promoted many activities the Church forbade. The 17-18th century preaching and writings of Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort recommended people renew their baptismal promises and inspired many more to conversion through praying the rosary. The rosary today contains prayers found in scripture, the Our Father and the Hail Mary, as well as those found in Christian tradition, like the Apostles Creed, the Glory Be and the Fatima prayer.

The rosary is structured in sets of ten Hail Mary's, a decade, headed by the Glory Be, the Fatima prayer and then an Our Father. For each decade, there is an associated mystery which recalls an event from the life of Christ. As we pray the Hail Mary's and focus on each mystery, we are drawn into the meditative power of the rosary, deepening our understanding of

Saint Louis-Marie de Monfort's proclamation of “Through Mary to Jesus.”

These reflective qualities completely negate the Protestant notion of the prayer as mere repetition of words. The Hail Mary echoes the greeting of the angel Gabriel to Mary in the gospel of Luke, followed by Elizabeth's exclamation in Luke chapter 1, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

Jesus himself gave us the Our Father by teaching his disciples to pray, both in Matthew and Luke. Praying the words with reverence and remembering the moments captured in the mysteries opens our hearts to receive the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Saint John Paul II put it this way in his Apostolic Letter, “The Rosary of the Virgin Mary:” “It is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man is seen in its true light ... if we allow ourselves to be healed and transformed by the Holy Spirit. It could be said that each mystery of the rosary, carefully meditated, sheds light on the mystery of man.

If the rosary is not one of your habits, the season of Lent is a good time to get started. A quick search of the internet displays multiple invitations from our parishes, via Facebook, such as Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Stillwater and Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church in Edmond. Many parishes publish their communal times for the rosary in their bulletins. Saint Mary Catholic Church in Guthrie, for example, invites people at 4 p.m. on Saturdays and 9:45 a.m. on Sundays.

The Ladies Auxiliary and the Knights of Columbus at Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Norman meet at 6 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month and pray a pro-life rosary. Bishop Barron also offers the rosary daily through his “Word on Fire” ministry.

When OKCR airs EWTN's rosary, prayed with Father Benedict Groeschel, it ensures you are not praying alone. You join thousands of Catholics, like my dad, around the world. There is comfort and strength in praying all over the world together. It is so very Catholic.

# 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 [sooneratholic.org](http://sooneratholic.org).

## March

26 Fifth Sunday of Lent.

27 Lenten Mission, 7 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. March 27–29, St. Eugene Catholic Church, 2400 W. Hefner Rd. in Oklahoma City.

31 CPC staff Lenten Retreat. CPC Closed.

31 Monastic Encounter Weekend, St. Gregory's Abbey, 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee. Visit [monksok.org/vocations](http://monksok.org/vocations).

## April

1 Day of Reflection, 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., St. Gregory's Abbey, 1900 W. MacArthur St., Shawnee.

1 “Wonderfully Made,” 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway, Oklahoma City. Visit [archokc.org/wonderfully-made](http://archokc.org/wonderfully-made).

1 Spiritual retreat for grieving parents, 9:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., Catholic Pastoral Center, 7501 Northwest Expressway, Oklahoma City.

1 Lay Missionaries of Charity provides an explanation

through prayer and the charism of St. Teresa of Calcutta. Meeting on the first Saturday of the month at St. Ann for Holy Mass at 9:30 a.m., adoration and the Rosary. On the third Saturday of the month the meeting is at Holy Innocents' conference room. Contact Toni Harrelson at (405) 341-2199, (405) 694-1291.

1 Pray the Rosary for Life, 9:30 a.m., Our Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church, 500 Alameda St., Norman. Contact Connie Lang, (405) 249-1041, [potato.lang@gmail.com](mailto:potato.lang@gmail.com).

2 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

2 Palm Sunday Mass, 10 a.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.

2 Third Order (Lay) Dominicans meeting, 3 p.m. - 5 p.m., St. Monica Catholic Church, Edmond (St. Ambrose building room No. 105), for any Catholic layperson drawn to religious life. Call John or Mary McClernon, (405) 313-6611, (405) 414-9407.

3 Monday of Holy Week.

4 Tuesday of Holy Week.

4 Chrism Mass, 6 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.

5 Wednesday of Holy Week.

6 Thursday of Holy Week (Holy Thursday). CPC Closed.

6 Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.

7 Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday).

7 Passion of the Lord, 7 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.

7 First Friday Sacred Heart Mass, 7 p.m., Catholic Pastoral Center. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 5:30 p.m.; reconciliation prior to Mass. Call (405) 721-8944, (405) 528-6252.

8 Holy Saturday.

8 Pray the Rosary for Life, 9:30 a.m., Our Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church, 500 Alameda St., Norman. Contact Connie Lang, (405) 249-1041, [potato.lang@gmail.com](mailto:potato.lang@gmail.com).

8 Easter Vigil, 8:30 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.

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continued from page 1

parents – particularly those who are new to homeschooling.

“This helps forge a bond between the parents as well,” Father Wickersham said. “The idea is to create a community.”

The autonomous nature of this framework makes Catholic education more accessible for families who might otherwise be unable to afford the cost of tuition.

“One of my requirements in opening the co-op was that it must be more accessible to our parish families, especially the larger ones,” Father Wickersham said. “And it can not rely on the parish for subsidies.”

Although Saint Mary Academy is affiliated with Saint Mary Catholic Church, it will operate independently of the parish and the archdiocese.

Lara Schuler, archdiocesan director of Catholic education, explained the role of the archdiocese is to offer resources and support.

“We are here to support parents as the first educators of their children in whatever way they choose,” Schuler said. “We want to assist parents with the faith formation and education of their children, however they best see fit.”

In-person instruction will take place in the building that formerly housed the parish school.

Father Wickersham explained that although the closure of the parish school several years ago was a disappointment for many families, it ultimately resulted in an opportunity to expand school choice options and allow parents more involvement in their children’s education.

“If you leave room for God to work, he does some pretty good stuff!” Father Wickersham said.

For more information about Saint Mary Academy in Guthrie, visit [smaguthrie.org](http://smaguthrie.org).

*Sally Linhart is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.*



Students at Saint Mary Academy in Guthrie will receive in-person instruction two days per week in the former St. Mary Catholic School building. *Photo provided.*

### SAINT MARY ACADEMY CATHOLIC. CLASSICAL. COOPERATIVE.



Saint Mary Academy in Guthrie is now accepting enrollment applications for the 2023-24 school year. Saint Mary Academy empowers and assists parents to live out their vocation as the principal educators of their children through a two-day cooperative model. Early enrollment ends May 1. [Visit smaguthrie.org](http://smaguthrie.org).

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