The Blessed Mother did not have an easy life or an easy path following Christ, yet her journey is an inspiration to mothers around the world. Meet some moms in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City who want to share their story this Mother’s Day.

Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Sulphur

Gerri Engel moved with her husband, Jerry, to Oklahoma in 1998 from Nebraska. She has three children and five grandchildren. Her second husband, Jerry, brought her back to the Catholic Church after many years. Engel said, “I prayed for 16 years to meet someone like Jerry to help me get back to the Church. God answered those prayers.” It was love at first sight and they were married in 1993. They eventually moved to help family and found the perfect home in the rolling hills surrounding Sulphur and the parish of Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Unfortunately, Engel’s husband passed away in 2008, but that hasn’t stopped her from being involved with family and church. She has been an usher, greeter, Eucharistic minister to the sick, and is currently vice-president of the Altar Society. She is also deeply involved in all the choir activities.

Spring Oblate Sunday at Saint Gregory’s Abbey draws more than 60 participants

On April 16, Divine Mercy Sunday, spring 2023 Oblate Sunday was celebrated at Saint Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee, with more than 60 participants from across Oklahoma sharing in the joyful spirit of the Easter season and Christ’s resurrection.

Four oblate novices were enrolled into the oblate program while six current novices made their final oblation for life, committing themselves to live out Saint Benedict’s rule, written around 530 A.D., in their individual vocations in the world. The festive ceremony of the oblate enrollment was led by the Very Reverend Simeon Spitz, O.S.B., the prior of Saint Gregory’s Abbey on behalf of the Right Reverend Lawrence Stasuszen, O.S.B., the abbot.

The day started with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, followed by a conference on humility by Father Nicholas Ast, O.S.B., the director of oblates. The day ended with the Divine Mercy Chaplet and solemn vespers at 3 p.m.

Referring to the book by Father Augustine Wetta, O.S.B., from Saint Louis Abbey in Missouri, “Humility Rules: Saint Benedict’s Twelve-Step Guide to Genuine Self-Esteem,” Father Nicholas motivated the participants to climb the ladder of humility to discover God’s power in their lives. He explained Christian humility as an attitude and action of taking the focus off self and directing it to God. He further discussed 12 steps to humility: fear of God, self-denial, obedience, perseverance, repentance, serenity, self-abasement, prudence, silence, dignity, discretion and reverence. Encouraging the oblates to practice humility in daily life and share it with others, Father Nicholas emphasized, “This is your task, dear oblates, to go out to be witnesses, to love stability in the culture that is fallen, to show people that there is an alternative … not by shouting in the streets but through the quiet power of perseverance.”

The conference sessions were alternated with times for personal exchange among oblates about living their oblate vocation in their environments.

Chandra Miller from Ada, an oblate for 12 years, shared her thoughts about spiritual benefits of the oblate program in her life.

Judy Faihey signed her final oblation as a Benedictine Oblate of St. Gregory’s Abbey on April 16. Photo Br. George Habi, O.S.B.

Interested in becoming a Benedictine oblate at Saint Gregory’s Abbey? Read more on page 9.

continued on page 13
Put Out Into the Deep
I chose you

What does it mean to belong to the Catholic Church? To be a member of the Church? Is it membership in a political party, that is, something that we can join in such sweeping terms about our origins and identity? Saint Augustine claimed that God responded to the tragedy of the Fall at the first moment of Adam’s sin by the truth of Christ’s victory over sin and death. We see this clearly when we celebrate the saints. Their examples remind us of the infinite variety of ways that God is at work amid the circumstances and situations of life. Saint Paul was holy even amid his irritable impatience with those who couldn’t see the truth of Christ’s gift.

Archbishop Coakley has released a new Pastoral Letter, “On the Unity of the Body and Soul: Accompanying Those Experiencing Gender Dysphoria.” This pastoral letter seeks to address the anthropology underlying the transgender movement and to provide pastoral guidance on how the Church, its ministers and the lay faithful can accompany—walk with—those who struggle with their gender identity, especially those who identify as transgendered. Read the letter in English and Spanish at archokc.org/pastoral-letter.

My family and I remember the mothers who have gone before us, the mothers of Scripture who are part of our story. We remember those who have not been given birth to us, but who are mothers to us. We remember expectant mothers. We remember the mothers who have lost children. We remember the women who struggle with fertility. Lord, bless all mothers, grandmothers, Godmothers, adoptive mothers, aunties, sisters, women religious and fathers who take on the role of mother for their children. Amen.

Archbishop Coakley’s Calendar

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

May 7 – Archdiocesan Confirmation Mass No. 2, 3:30 p.m., St. Stanley Rother Shrine (St. Patrick, OKC); St. Francis Xavier, Sulphur; Sts. Peter & Paul, Hobart; St. Andrew Dung Lac, OKC; Our Lady of Sorrows, Choctaw
May 9 – Presbyteral Council meeting, 9:30 a.m., Catholic Pastoral Center
May 9 – Confirmation, 7 p.m., St. Francis Church, Guthrie
May 10 – Confirmation, 6 p.m., Holy Family Catholic Church, Lawton
May 11 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
May 11 – Catholic Foundation of Oklahoma Board meeting, 3 p.m., CPC
May 12 – Baccalaureate Mass, 6 p.m., Franciscan University, Steubenville, Ohio
May 13 – Confirmation, 7 p.m., St. Eugene Catholic Church, Weatherford
May 14 – Confirmation for Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 3 p.m., St. Stanley Rother Shrine
May 16 – Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, 2 p.m., CPC
May 16 – Graduation, 7 p.m., Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School, OKC
May 17 – Confirmation, 6:30 p.m., Holy Cross Catholic Church, Madill
May 18 – Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Francis de Sales Chapel, CPC
May 18 – Vocatura Board meeting, 2:30 p.m., CPC
May 20 – Confirmation, 10 a.m., St. Francis Catholic Church, Norman
May 21 – Graduation for Cristo Rey OKC High School, 1 p.m., National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, OKC

Find more news on the website

By Sooner Catholic Staff

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

For all students preparring for graduation, may they know that God is always with them. We pray to the Lord, ‘Lord, hear our prayer.

Pastor

Rev. Bill Pruitt
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Oklahoma City

Pastor

Rev. Christopher T. Brabham
St. Benedict Church, Shawnee

Pastor

Rev. Lawrence Dankam
St. John the Baptist Church, Ponca City

Pastor

Rev. Lawrence Dankam
St. Joseph Church, Norman

Pastor

Rev. Christopher Okoye
St. Mary Church, Penna City
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Midwest City

Pastor

Rev. Scott A. Boeckman
St. Stanley Rother Shrine/Sacred Heart Church, Oklahoma City

Pastor

Rev. Lawrence Dankam
St. Joseph Church, Norman

Pastor

Rev. Russell L. Hewett
St. James the Greater Church, Oklahoma City

Pastor

Rev. Joseph P. Schwartz
St. Peter Church, Gentry
St. Francis Catholic Church, Beaver
Church of the Good Shepherd, Bixby
Sacred Heart Church, Broken Arrow

Pastor

Rev. Lin K. Bui
St. Ann Church

Pastor

Rev. Raymond K. Ackerman
St. SACRAMENT Church, Lawton
St. Patrick Church, Walters

Pastor

Rev. John Paul Leto
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Oklahoma City

Pastor

Rev. John Paul Leto
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Oklahoma City

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Our Lady of Sorrows, Chan

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

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Many people have trouble keeping up with housework, as they may be disabled or otherwise unable to do the work themselves. Many people in Ponca City, including Saint Mary Catholic Church parishioners, offered their time Sunday, April 23, for the annual “Great Day of Service” to help those homeowners who simply need help.

Saint Mary Catholic Church participates annually with other churches to serve other members of the community. Brothers Rick and Dominick Stritch are the organizers for Saint Mary Catholic Church.

“So many people just need help,” Rick Stritch said.

The Great Day of Service is a joint event through churches across the Ponca City community. Leaders come together to help one another put on the event. Each church that participates chooses neighborhoods near them to serve, which helps cover the larger Ponca City community. Within that neighborhood, they identify homes that may need help with maintaining their properties. “The people of these churches get together, and they canvass areas,” Rick Stritch said. “They pick an area in towns they want to serve, and find houses that need help, and they get a group of volunteers and go out.”

The neighborhoods are typically within a few blocks of each church.

“We try to canvass around our church, and most churches try to do the same thing so that volunteers cover the city, as the churches are spread out across the community,” Stritch said.

Once houses are identified as potential properties for cleaning, the volunteers approach the homeowner about the program. “They have a form to fill out, and when they return the form to church and let the form, I assign a team leader, and a team to go to each house, and depending on how bad it is, they may do multiple houses,” Rick Stritch said.

The churches typically hold it on a Sunday, and for Saint Mary Catholic Church, they gather after the 8 a.m. Mass. Volunteers who have signed up in the weeks leading up to the event learn which group they will work with, and which properties they will be at. Volunteers can also sign up to participate the day of.

The Great Day of Service only focuses on yard work, including mowing, weeding, eating, tree and shrub trimming, gardening and even brush pile removals. Anything else, such as painting, is not part of the program. “It’s in just yard work. We don’t go in the house or on the roof,” Stritch said.

Each year, the number of volunteers is different, along with the number of houses served, as well as the number of volunteers. For 2023, Saint Mary Catholic Church had 33 volunteers, spread across five teams and 13 houses, eight of which they did not start out their own program. Another five were in conjunction with LifeChurch.

“The pastor told us in the (morning) that they were overwhelmed with houses, as told them, depending on the number of people we had, we might be able to help,” Rick Stritch said.

Driving through the neighborhoods, it wasn’t hard to find a property that was being cleaned by community supporters. Many homeowners were gracious for the help they received.

George Wilhem was one such property owner. He was seen helping the volunteers on his property.

“It gets ahead of me, starting off a little, and it gets bigger,” Wilhem said, referencing ice storm damage to his trees. “After the ice storm a few years ago, there were so many trees damaged, and a lot of branches didn’t come down. This year, there were problems, with the trees falling to the number of limbs than usual.”

For the volunteers, it is a chance to help those in need.

“It is humbling to help those less fortunate,” Susan Bailey said. It is those homeowners, though, who have the most to gain. “Seeing it get going, simply wanting to help,” Bailey said.

“If they aren’t able to keep their yard cleaned up,” Wilhem said. “I praise God for bringing this group down to help.”

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

By Everett Brazil, III
The Sooner Catholic

Small things with great love

A photo series by George Rippa, archdiocesan archivist

From the Archives …

W ith the consolidation of Holy Angels Catholic Church and Sacred Heart Catholic Church to the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine, a fascinating chapter of diocesan history came to a close.

Founded in 1926, on the outskirts of Oklahoma City at Third and Blackwelder, the property was purchased for $9,000 on what had been a ranch – with the house and barn still remaining. The church was the brainchild of recently consecrated bishop, Francis Clement Kelley. Bishop Kelley believed that parishes would be more effective in reaching the large number of newly consecrated bishops.

The barn was remodeled to house the chapel in order to house the chapel in order to have parishes. Consequently, Father James Garvey, who had just been appointed to head Catholic Charities was named the first pastor.

The barn was remodeled to house the chapel in order to celebrate Mass and was later converted into the parish center. The church was the brainchild of newly consecrated bishop, Francis Clement Kelley. Bishop Kelley believed that parishes would be more effective in reaching the large number of newly consecrated bishops.

In truth, the space had seen the need for a more extensive outreach to the growing Hispanic population. Father Don Wolf was assigned to help the church with this new work.

“Bishop Kelley believed that parishes would be more effective in reaching the large number of newly consecrated bishops,” Monsignor James Damascene School of Liturgical Art at the parish and served as the director of his parish, Peter John Garvey, who became the associate director of Catholic Charities in 1934. Due to ill health, Father Garvey resigned and was succeeded by Father, later Monsignor, James Garvey. He was assisted by two newly-ar- rived Polish priests: Fathers Hudy and Walcerek.

After building the new church it became apparent that Father Lalterns would not be able to lead Catholic Charities and the parish, as the death of James Garvey had elevated him to the position of director. Father Nic Schmitt became the new pastor in September 1950.

The 1960s were not kind to the area as urban blight set in, and the church was converted into a convent and two classrooms. In the 1960s, approximately 75 students at its apex, before closing in the 1960s.

Monsignor James Garvey was suc- ceded by his nephew, Father John Garvey, who became the associate director of Catholic Charities in 1934. Due to ill health, Father Garvey resigned and was succeeded by Father, later Monsignor, James Garvey. He was assisted by two newly-ar- rived Polish priests: Fathers Hudy and Walcerek. After building the new church it became apparent that Father Lalterns would not be able to lead Catholic Charities and the parish, as the death of James Garvey had elevated him to the position of director. Father Nic Schmitt became the new pastor in September 1950.

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Oklahoma City students win awards in statewide Law Day Contest

Elizabeth Haynie and Thanh Thanh Nguyen received first place awards for their entries in the recent statewide Law Day Contest sponsored by the Oklahoma Bar Association. Haynie, who is homeschooled, won for fifth grade writing. Nguyen, a Bishop John Carroll Catholic School student, won for fifth grade art. They were recognized by Oklahoma Supreme Court Chief Justice John Kane during a ceremony on March 21 at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

Also receiving awards were Bishop John Carroll Catholic School students Hayes Johnson, second place for pre-K coloring, and Camila Brunwasser, honorable mention for third grade art. They will be honored at a school award ceremony.

More than 1,400 students in pre-K through 12th grade entered this year’s Law Day Contest, themed “Crematoriums of Democracy: Crisis, Civility and Collaboration.” To view all the winning entries, visit okbar.org/lawday/contest/winners.

“The theme for this year's contest was selected to remind us that by engaging in civics and working together, we can strengthen our democracy,” said OKA Law Day Chairman Ed Wunch. “It’s inspiring to see so many students from across the state participating in this annual contest.”

Law Day, a nationwide event designated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, is celebrated annually with events on or around May 1 to raise awareness of American law. The idea for Law Day was conceived by the late Hicks Epton, a Wewoka attorney and OKA past president.

In early 2022, the Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden launched the School Mascot Challenge for all schools, elementary to high school, statewide. For any Oklahoma school that official- ly and permanently changed its current school mascot to any real, non-mythical animal or insect, the OKC Zoo would award every student, teacher and school employee with two general admission tickets to the OKC Zoo.

On April 7, the OKC Zoo welcomed students and staff of Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School to a special elephant presentation, where their new school mascot, Royal, an African elephant was unveiled.

“Cristo Rey has referred to ourselves as ‘the Royals’ but we didn’t have an actual mascot until this year” said Kolrey Herman, Cristo Rey OKC principal. “The students voted for a mascot this year and overwhelmingly selected the elephant, which we think is a brilli- ant embodiment of our students’ strength, tenacity and overall awesomeness.”

The new mascot was revealed in a most unusual way – during one of the OKC Zoo’s elephant presentations – on a large mural constructed of cardboard boxes and tempera paint which one of the Zoo’s Asian elephants promptly destroyed and destroyed. The consumption of this mascot display is a safe and non-toxic enrichment experience for the Zoo’s elephants.

In 2022, the OKC Zoo discovered that of 475 Oklahoma high schools, 284 schools or 60% have an animal for a mascot. Of those 284 ani- mal mascots, 96 (34%) are classi- fied by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a threatened, vulnerable, endan- gered or critically endangered species. Oklahoma’s most popular high school mascot (45 schools), the tiger, is classified as critically endangered. All these classifications indicate a declining popula- tion in the wild due to a wide range of causes, including habitat loss and poaching.

“A playful as this mascot chal- lenge may seem, our intention has been seri- ous,” said Dr. Rebecca Snyder, OKC Zoo’s director of con- servation, educa- tion and science. “We’re thrilled that the students of Cristo Rey not only accepted the mascot challenge but that they selected an iconic African elephant as their mascot.”

The African elephant, Loxo- dona Africana, is known for their intelligence, strength, curiosity and, unfortunately, is listed as extremely vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. An IUCN Afri- can Elephants Status Report from 2016 estimated the population of African elephants in Africa to be around 415,000.

The number of African forest elephants fell by more than 86% over a period of 21 years, while the population of African savanna ele- phants decreased by at least 60% over the last 50 years, according to the assessments. The population of African elephants continue to be challenged by the loss of habitat as well as poaching.

No other school in Oklahoma can claim the elephant as their mascot, making Cristo Rey OKC’s selection a historic first. Other “only one” school mascots in Okla- homa include the Zebras (Plains High School, Plains), Golden Tigers (Mounds High School, Mounds), Giraffes (Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School, Guin), Jaguars (Westmore High School, Oklahoma City) and Red Wolves (Capitol Hill High School, Oklahoma City).

Only one Oklahoma High school mascot represents an extinct an- imal, Southmoore High School’s SaberCats. In short, one out of five Oklahoma high school mascots is currently threatened with extinc- tion.

The mascot challenge is be- ing extended for another year, through Wednesday, May 1, 2024. This challenge does not apply to schools who already have an ani- mal or insect as their mascot.
Photos provided.

Holy Week at Holy Family Catholic Church in Lawton. Photo provided.

A 25th Anniversary Mass was celebrated for Fr. Thomas Nallapatti on April 21 at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Norman for their Kimball pipe organ. A dedication concert was given later that afternoon by Adam Pajan, the church organist.

Photos provided.

Easter egg hunt on April 9 at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Norman. Photo Daiz Long.

A 25th Anniversary Mass was celebrated for Fr. Thomas Nallapatti on April 21 at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church for their Kimball pipe organ. A dedication concert was given later that afternoon by Adam Pajan, the church organist.

Photos provided.

Archbishop Coakley celebrated a dedication Mass on April 23 at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Chickasha for their Kimball pipe organ. A dedication concert was given later that afternoon by Adam Pajan, the church organist.

Photos provided.

Fr. Nicholas Art, O.S.B. Photo Jad Zielinskiwski/Sooner Catholic.

Interested in becoming a Benedictine oblate at Saint Gregory’s Abbey?

A unique call and privilege

By Jad Zielinskiwski

The Sooner Catholic

Every year, Saint Gregory’s Abbey in Shawnee holds a Spring and Fall Oblate Sunday for the more than 200 active oblates.

A Benedictine oblate is a person committed to the service of a particular Benedictine monastery, but not under monastic vows or the monastic rule. An oblate can be any lay or clerical person (single or married) committed to living a Christian life in the world (in their personal vocations) in harmony with the spirit and the rule of Saint Benedict.

Becoming an oblate is a unique and personal calling.

“To make an oblation means to make an offering of self to God,” said Father Nicholas Art, O.S.B., the oblate director at Saint Gregory’s Abbey.

The Oblate Program at the Abbey has been in place for as long as most senior monks can remember. The interest has been steady over the years, with four to six novices admitted to the program annually and a similar number of oblate novices making their final oblation every year. During the enrollment ceremony, the oblate novices receive the Jubilee Medal of Saint Benedict along with the rule and the handbook for oblates. The oblate novices making their final oblation sign an official certificate as a pledge of their lifelong commitment, which is also sealed with the signature of the abbot.

“People are interested in becoming an oblate because of the kind of spirituality that the rule of Saint Benedict offers. The rule has been around for more than 1,500 years. It has proven its validity and relevance for centuries, and it attracts many people because it provides stability in their lives. They find it comforting, accessible, and edifying; it is something they can do, and which anchors them in their spiritual lives,” said Father Nicholas, O.S.B.

And this is exactly the motto of Saint Benedict written in his rule, ‘Ut In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus,’ (In all things God may be glorified) said Father Logo, O.S.B.

Father Logo, O.S.B. also mentioned Raissa and Jacques Maritain, French Benedictine Oblates and Servant of God Dorothy Day, a U.S. oblate – all three currently on the path to canonization, as he continued to explain the special calling of the oblates. “Oblates should imitate the Benedictine missionary spirit by spreading the Gospel values not only for their own sanctification but by helping others to become holy, through small or great things, by making their ordinary personal and professional lives Christ-centered in all they do, while respecting God’s creation, and loving and preserving the beauty of the nature.”

Potential candidates are invited to contact the oblate director at oblates@monksok.org, and submit an application, upon which they will be enrolled as oblate novices for one year on Oblate Sunday. During their personal discernment process the novices will decide individually if they are ready to make the final oblation for life before the following year, or at a later date. The amount of participation in the Abbey prayer life and service is voluntary, while most oblates are spiritually connected with the monastery through prayer, the Divine Office, readings and reflections on the Scripture and frequent participation in the Eucharist at the Abbey’s places of residence.

Father Nicholas, O.S.B. encouraged interested persons to consider becoming an oblate.

“For everyone interested in becoming an oblate of the Abbey, we invite them to come visit us here at the monastery first and connect with other oblates to learn how they live their spiritual life in personal lives.” Father Nicholas, O.S.B. said.

For information and resources about Saint Gregory’s Abbey Oblate Program can be found at monksok.org/oblates.

Jad Zielinskiwski is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

“Being an oblate gives me courage; it helps me to be signed with higher values and makes me realize that I live for God and others, not for myself. It helps me trust more in God and be merciful to others,” Miller said.

Inviting others to join the oblate program, she said, “I feel at home at Saint Gregory’s Abbey – it is another home for me. It is restorative to the mind and heart; it immerses the soul in peace and joy. In the quietness of this place, you can see what you can’t get on the outside.”

William Fontanez, Jr. and Rachel Fontanez, catechists at Saint Benedict Catholic Church in Shawnee and oblate novices at the Abbey since November 2022, shared similar sentiments.

“I’m interested in making Saint Benedict’s rule work for families by living it and teaching our children how to continuously turn to prayer and service in the Church,” Rachel said.

William confirmed her views, “As an oblate dad I feel I’m supported a lot by the monks. I’m uplifted through them. They affirm me in my vocation as a married man and the dad. We are benefitting from the oblate program to have the stability we need to go back to the ministry in the Church.”

Father Nicholas, O.S.B. closed the conference sessions by emphasizing the importance of the oblates’ mission for Christ and by sending them out with a blessing to share the monastic values of Saint Benedict with people in the world.

Jad Zielinskiwski is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

I learned about life as an oblate novice is to slow down and to get smaller.”

William added, “The oblate program helped me to refocus my energy. By being in the community of monks I found a sense of love, which they live out every day. I can be a part of their vocation without becoming a monk myself.”

Summarizing his conference talk and discussions, Father Nicholas said, “Humility helps to lead us to holiness and holiness of life leads us to that perfect love that casts out fear. God doesn’t call us to be just ‘a good person’, but he calls us to be saints.”

Father Spitz, O.S.B. closed the conference sessions by emphasizing the importance of the oblates’ mission for Christ and by sending them out with a blessing to share the monastic values of Saint Benedict with people in the world.

Jad Zielinskiwski is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Hollis. Photo Theresa Bragg/Sooner Catholic.

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, Moore. Photo Theresa Bragg/Sooner Catholic.

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Oklahoma City. Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Enid. Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, Enid. Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

St. Phillip Neri Catholic Church, Midwest City. Photo Theresa Bragg/Sooner Catholic.

St. Mary Catholic Church, Ponca City. Photo provided.

St. Sacrament Catholic Church, Lawton. Photo Jolene Schneer/Sooner Catholic.

St. Ann Catholic Church, Elgin and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, Sterling. Photo provided.
Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, Purcell. Photo provided.

Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Chickasha. Photo provided.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Tonkawa. Photo provided.

Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, Purcell. Photo provided.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Hennessey. Photo provided.

Sharon Semtner and family.

Joann and Thomas Adams have just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They were Byzantine Catholics in Pennsylvania. Upon moving to Madill three years ago, they were welcomed to Holy Cross Catholic Church. Although they formerly attended the former pastor, Father Oby Zimmars. She is presently the president of the altar society of Holy Cross Catholic Church.

Although there are some differences between the Roman and Byzantine rites of the Church, Adams grew up with strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Her parish had programs such as May crowning of which she participated. Besides the Blessed Virgin Mary, Adam’s mother, Emma, was a great Catholic role model for her. Adams has two sons and six grandchildren.

“My mom is a very loving and caring woman,” Thomas said. “She was always encouraging and supportive. She even taught me how to cook. I couldn’t have asked for a better mom.”

Her son, Joseph said, “My entire life she has been a nurturing, protector, helper, teacher, provider, listener – but one of the greatest things I can call my friend.”

Finally, her son Robert said, “Mom is literally the definition of the word.”

Her husband, Gerald summed it up, “It takes a special woman to become a mother on the first day they get married. My wife is that woman.”

Joann and Thomas Adams have just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They were Byzantine Catholics in Pennsylvania. Upon moving to Madill three years ago, they were welcomed to Holy Cross Catholic Church.
**Book Review:** “Sitting on a Keg of Dynamite”

By John H. Rodel
The Sooner Catholic

"On April 16, 1947, the town of El Reno, Oklahoma, was forever etched into the history books. It was the site of one of the most devastating industrial accidents in American history -- the El Reno disaster. The explosion that occurred that day not only claimed the lives of over 300 people but also destroyed a significant portion of the town. It stands as a stark reminder of the dangers inherent in the industrial age and the importance of safety regulations."

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**Catholic Schools Job Postings**

**Seminarians**

School is seeking a director of education for the 2023-2024 school year. Must have a master's degree in education and at least five years of experience in educational administration. Send resume and cover letter to Msgr. Richard Conlin at archokc.org/careers.

**Teachers**

Christian Schools of El Reno is seeking a teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Bachelor’s degree in education-related field and strong Catholic faith required. Send resume and cover letter to Archdiocese of Oklahoma City’s Office of Education at archokc.org/careers.

**Administrators**

Mount St. Mary’s High School is seeking a principal for the 2023-2024 school year. Requirements include a master’s degree in education administration and a minimum of five years of experience in educational administration. Send resume and cover letter to Msgr. Richard Conlin at archokc.org/careers.

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**Catholic Homeschool Conference**

June 9-10, 2023

**Join for ANY or ALL of this special day of prayer and pilgrimage.**

**8:00 a.m.** Gather at the Blessed Stanley Rother Barn - Introduction to the Pilgrimage (The Shepherd Who Didn't Run: Blessed Stanley Rother, Martyr from Oklahoma)

**10:00 a.m.** Visit the Shrine Museum and Tepeyac Hill

**12:00 p.m.** Blessing of the portrait by Most Reverend Archbishop Paul Coakley

**2:00 p.m.** Adoration in the Blessed Stanley Rother Chapel

**6:00 p.m.** Potluck pizza supper followed by a talk with author, Maria Ruiz Scaprelanda

**8:00 p.m.** 1:10 a.m. Confessions available

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**The Shepherd Who Didn't Run: Blessed Stanley Rother, Martyr from Oklahoma**

In this year's nationally recognized annual liturgy of travel, the Catholic Home School Conference will gather June 9-10 for the 2023-2024 school year. Must have a bachelor’s degree in education-related field and a minimum of five years of experience in educational administration. Send resume and cover letter to Archdiocese of Oklahoma City’s Office of Education at archokc.org/careers.
¿Qué significa ser parte de la Iglesia Católica? ¿Ser un miembro de ella? ¿Es como tener una licencia para estar en el club y vivir en el mundo de los lujos? ¿No es más como un aviso de que todo lo que Dios ha hecho para rescatar el mundo entero, en todos lados igual, y cada uno de nosotros los adoptivos de Dios. San Agustín afirmó que Dios respondió al lamento del pecado desde el primer momento del pecado de Adán, comenzando la Iglesia desde ese momento. Agustín la llamaba "la Iglesia de Adán". Normalmente no pensamos de esa manera. Sólo pensamos en pensamientos y acciones de la vida. San Pablo era santo aun en medio de su limitada paciencia con aquellos a los santos. Sus ejemplos nos recuerdan de ver la verdad de su negación de su bendición. Nuestras vidas, con todos sus inconvenientes, son el lugar donde Dios ha elegido vivir y acompañarnos en nuestra jornada. 

Imagina como sería tu vida si, al verte al espejo, pudieras ver cada parte sucia de tu cuerpo. Dios nos ha elegido y nos ha hecho parte de su bendición. Nuestras vidas, con todos sus inconvenientes, son el lugar donde Dios ha elegido vivir y acompañarnos en nuestra jornada. 

Usa nos aportar un bien precioso. O actuaría como consumidores, somos parte de la Iglesia Católica. ¿Ser un miembro de ella? ¿Es como tener una licencia para estar en el club y vivir en el mundo de los lujos? ¿No es más como un aviso de que todo lo que Dios ha hecho para rescatar el mundo entero, en todos lados igual, y cada uno de nosotros los adoptivos de Dios. San Agustín afirmó que Dios respondió al lamento del pecado desde el primer momento del pecado de Adán, comenzando la Iglesia desde ese momento. Agustín la llamaba "la Iglesia de Adán". Normalmente no pensamos de esa manera. Sólo pensamos en pensamientos y acciones de la vida. San Pablo era santo aun en medio de su limitada paciencia con aquellos a los santos. Sus ejemplos nos recuerdan de ver la verdad de su negación de su bendición. Nuestras vidas, con todos sus inconvenientes, son el lugar donde Dios ha elegido vivir y acompañarnos en nuestra jornada. 

Eres a quien podemos unirnos y salirnos cuando queramos. Aun cuando muchos católicos la ven así, nuestro bautismo tiene consecuencias mayores. Por nuestro bautismo somos parte de la vida de la Iglesia. Esto nos precede y nos afecta en un nivel profundamente personal y existencial. Por el bautismo también compartimos la naturaleza divina. Nos convertimos en hijos adoptivos de Dios. San Agustín afirmó que Dios respondió al lamento del pecado desde el primer momento del pecado de Adán, comenzando la Iglesia desde ese momento. Agustín la llamaba "la Iglesia de Adán". Normalmente no pensamos de esa manera. Sólo pensamos en pensamientos y acciones de la vida. San Pablo era santo aun en medio de su limitada paciencia con aquellos a los santos. Sus ejemplos nos recuerdan de ver la verdad de su negación de su bendición. Nuestras vidas, con todos sus inconvenientes, son el lugar donde Dios ha elegido vivir y acompañarnos en nuestra jornada.
The annual Convocation of Deacons was held April 22 at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City. Archbishop Coakley celebrated Mass in the St. Francis de Sales Chapel. Deacons with 10 years of service received a certificate and a deacon lapel pin. Deacons with 20, 25, 35, 40 and 45 years of service received an icon. Photos Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.

Service Anniversaries

10-year: (2013)
Deacon Charles L. Allen
Deacon Clifford W. Fitzmorris
Deacon James S. Fourcade
Deacon De Forest W. Hearn
Deacon John J Page
Deacon Charles F. Romero
Deacon Manuel G. Garcia
Deacon Robert L. Quinnett, Jr.

20-year: (2003)
[St. Stephen Icon]
Deacon Eduardo Donosso
(Ordained in New Jersey)

25-year: (1998)
[St. Lawrence Icon]
Deacon James M. Conway
Deacon Dunn H. Cumby
Deacon Patrick E. Gabrish
Deacon Jeffrey M. Kelly

35-year: (1988)
[St. Joseph Icon]
Deacon George H. Leal
Deacon James G. Young

40-year: (1983)
[Holy Family Icon]
Deacon Joe M. Cruz

45-year: (1978 – First Deacon Class, Archdiocese of OKC)
[Bl. Virgin Mary Icon]
Deacon Larry J Sousa
Deacon David P. Best