

Go Make Disciples

‘We are still here’

Archbishop Coakley celebrates third annual Native American Mass



By Sally Linhart
The Sooner Catholic

Facing east toward the altar of the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine, Deacon Roy Callison burned cedar as his wife, Susan, recited the first of the four invocations in the Prayer in the Four Directions, a traditional spiritual practice rooted in Indigenous culture.

Using a shell and an eagle fan, Deacon Callison continued the Native American ritual of cedar-ing. As he turned to face south, the congregation mirrored his moves and Susan recited the second prayer. He continued the symbolic act of purification, using items found in nature, and recited the two remaining prayers facing west and then north.

Following the recitation of the

Archbishop Coakley delivered his homily during the Native American Mass on Nov. 23 at the Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine in Oklahoma City. *Photo Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.*

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Chris Engel, long time missionary, recently spent time in Piura working to build houses for residents. *Photos provided.*



In Peru, priest carries Oklahoma connections to Pope Leo

By John Helsley
The Sooner Catholic

Yes, Pope Leo is the first American pope, a stunning development in its own right. But he's Peruvian, too, holding dual citizenship stemming from his time as Bishop of Chiclayo in northern Peru, a 2 1/2-hour drive south of Piura.

“For us this was very special because we know the faith of the people that Pope Leo was taking care of as Bishop of Chiclayo,” said Father Joseph Uhen, who once attended Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School and has served as a pastor in Piura since 1995. “We know the faith that these people hold, and many of them live in challenging circumstances. Many of them are impoverished.”

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In Piura, Peru, the priest with Oklahoma ties gathered with friends and waited like so many across the globe for the white smoke alerting all for the big news to come.

Then, from the balcony of Saint Peter's Basilica, came the Latin phrase proclaimed by the “protodeacon” of the College of Cardinals: “Habemus papam” – in English, “We have a pope.”

The name of the new pope, Robert Francis Prevost, sent shockwaves around the world. Among the impoverished of Piura, it prompted cheers and tears of joy as one of their own was ascending to the throne of Peter as Pope Leo XIV.



Fr. Joseph Uhen, who first found a calling the priesthood in the pews of Christ the King Catholic Church, has been serving the community in Piura since 1995.



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Parishes to hold collection for retired religious

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) is announcing that the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held on the weekend of Dec. 20-21 in parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

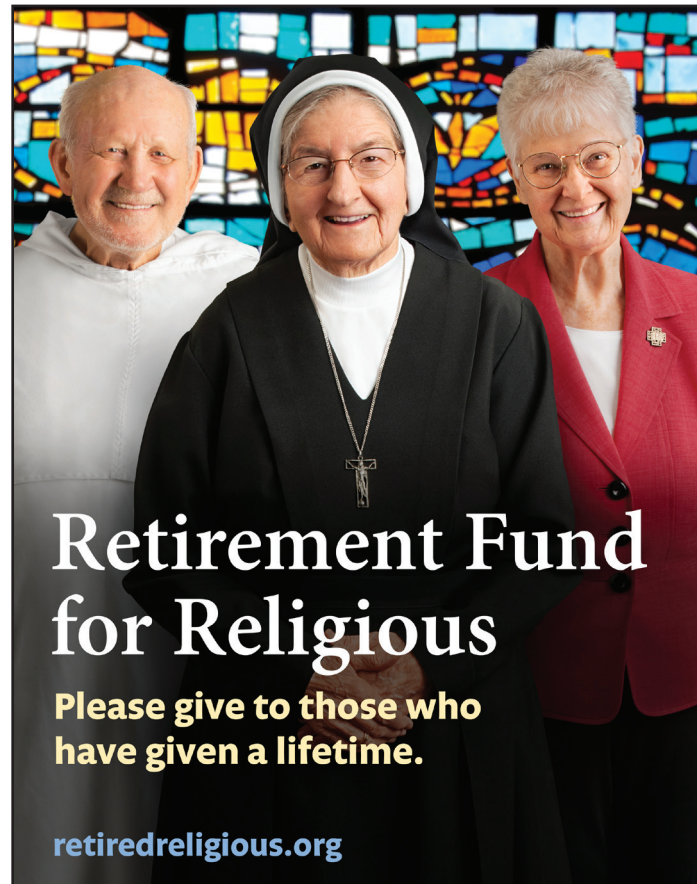
In 2024, Catholics across the archdiocese contributed \$49,947.50 to the collection, mostly through their home parishes. From the collection, the Benedictine Fathers received a total of \$57,244.52 in financial assistance.

"The generosity of U.S. Catholics continues to make a profound difference in the lives of aging religious," said John Knutsen, NRRO director. "This year, we invite all Catholics to help provide the care and dignity these women and men of faith so richly deserve."

Rising health-care costs and the absence of traditional retirement plans have placed significant financial strain on many religious communities. The Retirement Fund for Religious helps address this need, supporting more than 21,000 religious over the age of 70.

In 2024, the appeal raised over \$28.1 million, providing financial assistance for the retirement needs of 266 U.S. religious communities. Beyond financial aid, the collection supports educational programs, empowering religious communities to plan for their long-term needs.

The NRRO coordinates the annual national appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes financial assistance to eligible religious communities. It is sponsored by the Conference of Major



Superiors of Men, the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Visit retiredreligious.org



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MSM hosts group to inform students about addictions

By Andrew W. Griffin
The Sooner Catholic

For teenagers in the United States, the odds are high that they will try drugs or alcohol during these formative years. In fact, statistics say 9 of 10 teens get addicted to these substances during those important years and usually begin as early as age 13.

But a more recent addiction: social media. More and more schools are banning cell phones from school hallways, classrooms and facilities because of the addictive and distracting nature of the devices.

With many parents and teachers not sure how to best handle this growing problem, one organization, Hope Is Alive, is visiting schools and holding events where speakers share their experiences. Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School recently hosted one of the talks – "Social Media and The Teen Brain: Understanding the Effects of Digital Life."

Visiting The Mount, as part of the Hope Is Alive school support team were Ann Sandager, HIA's senior development manager, and Courtney Davis, HIA's school support coordinator.

Sandager told the Sooner Catholic the program "empowers students to make good choices that are biblically based." This takes the form of the organization's many resources, revolving around vid-

eos and online sources, as well as places to stay and be encouraged in a Christian environment.

The featured speaker accompanying Sandager and Davis at the talk was Trevor Berger, a native of Texas eager to share his story.

The story of his descent into addiction was intense and moving and captured the attention of the students who were struck by his honesty and humility as he described his issues and his eventual rise out of the depths of despair.

"It was neat to hear him share his (difficult) path through high school and he came out of his addiction," senior Wayne Hygema said.

As noted on its website, hopeisalive.net, this engaging ministry first began in 2013 and is led by Lance and Allyson Lang, who had their own addiction problems to deal with as a young couple, where Lance ran a big company and had turned to drugs and alcohol to relieve the stress. After getting sober, the Langs started Hope Is Alive here in central Oklahoma.

Since that time, HIA has spread to 12 cities with a total of 26 homes. According to the organization's website, HIA "has become a leading voice in the recovery community, developing a unique program with unmatched results."

Sandager said in an interview in the days after the event that HIA "keeps growing and expanding," and even has a fleet of vehicles to



Photo Andrew W. Griffin/Sooner Catholic.

serve those struggling with addiction.

In early 2013, with a dream in his heart and two years of sobriety under his belt, Lance and Ally began looking at homes to start Hope is Alive. Since then, they've received more than 10,000 inquiries for help and over 250 graduates. Recovery homes are in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Claremore and Weath-

erford, with additional homes in Texas, Kansas, Colorado and North Carolina.

Sandager said the feedback received from the recent visit to Mount Saint Mary was "great" and that those in attendance – students and faculty – have requested they return.

Andrew W. Griffin is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

NEW Gift Processing Address

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* is blessed by the generosity of donors like you. To ensure your gifts are handled with the highest standards of speed, security and transparency, we partner with a specialized company to process donations protecting both you and the Archdiocese.


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Prayer in the Four Directions, and in his first major Mass since being elected President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Coakley processed down the aisle of the shrine as students from Riverside Indian School, and some adults, sang the processional hymn in Kiowa.

This was the third annual Native American Mass. It was celebrated on Nov. 23, the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, at the shrine in Oklahoma City.

Michael Dalby, along with his son Wyatt, participated in the procession in full Native American regalia.

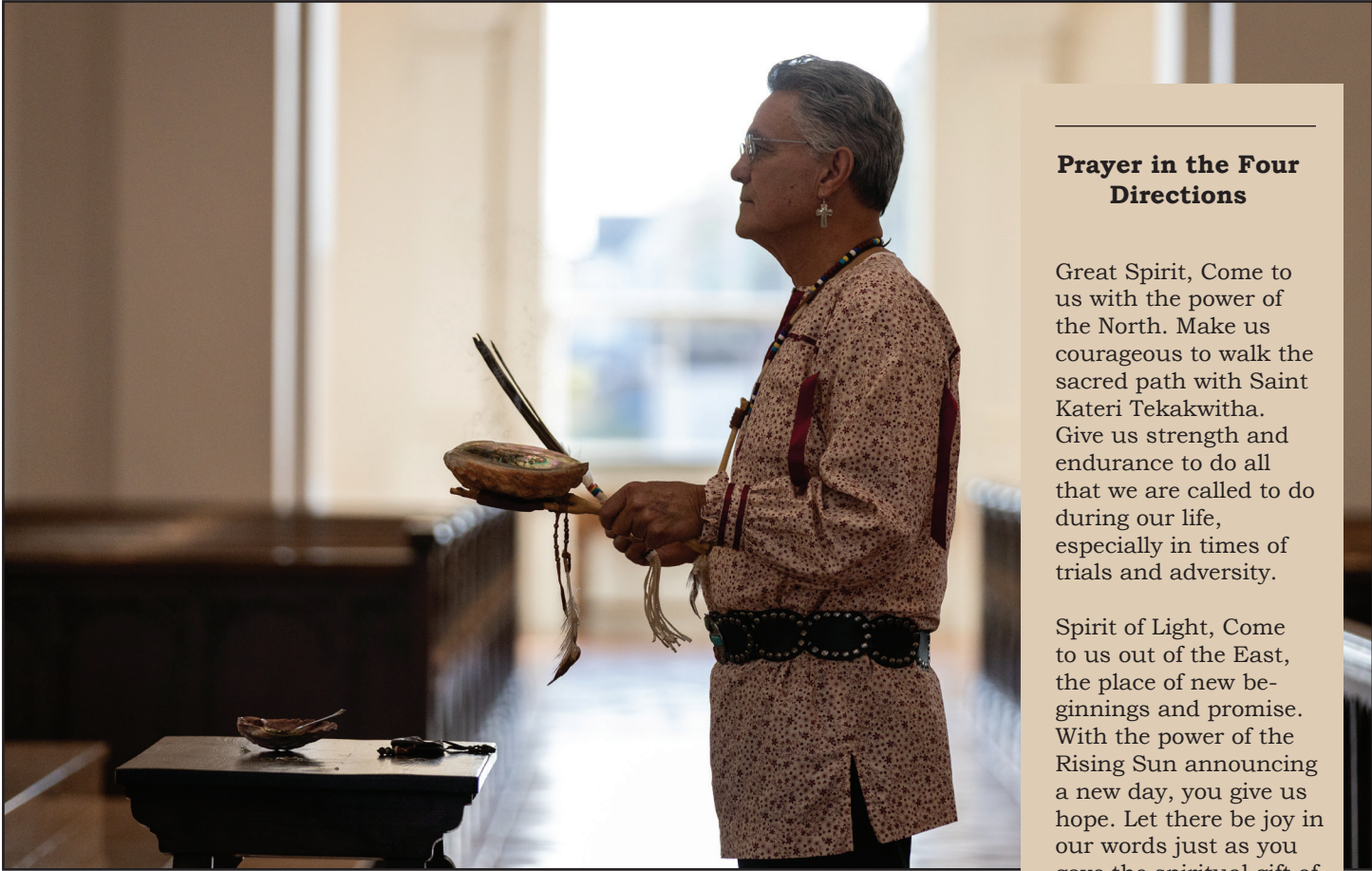
“We are still here,” Dalby said. “We are participating, we are Catholic.”

Dalby recited the first reading in both his native language Kiowa and then in English. The second reading was recited in Cherokee and English by Harry Oosahwee.

Coakley was joined by concelebrants Right Reverend Lawrence Stasyszen, O.S.B., abbot of Saint Gregory’s Abbey and Right Reverend Philip Anderson, O.S.B., abbot of Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey. Assisting deacons were Deacon Roy Callison and Deacon Craig Victor.

Both Michael and Wyatt, a day student at Riverside Indian School, recited prayers in Kiowa. Prayers were recited in Comanche by Dana Attocknie and Cathy Lonewolf, as well as in Potawatomi by Robert Collins.

In his homily, Archbishop



Dcn. Roy Callison, coordinator of the American Indian Catholic Outreach, led the Prayer in the Four Directions at the Native American Mass on Nov. 23 at the Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine. *Photos Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic.*

Coakley acknowledged Oklahoma’s 39 federally recognized Native American tribes, saying “All the tribes of the Earth will be blessed in him.”

The event, sponsored by the American Indian Catholic Outreach for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, incorporated facets of Native American culture while honoring the traditional manner of celebrating Mass according to the liturgical calendar.

Dalby explained: “We’re just doing what we always do. It’s regular Mass, just in our native language. This just gives us a chance to get out there and show that we do walk in two worlds.”

For more information on the American Indian Catholic Outreach office, contact Deacon Roy Callison at (918) 822-3255 or rcallisonarchokc.org.

Sally Linhart is a freelance writer for the Sooner Catholic.

Prayer in the Four Directions

Great Spirit, Come to us with the power of the North. Make us courageous to walk the sacred path with Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Give us strength and endurance to do all that we are called to do during our life, especially in times of trials and adversity.

Spirit of Light, Come to us out of the East, the place of new beginnings and promise. With the power of the Rising Sun announcing a new day, you give us hope. Let there be joy in our words just as you gave the spiritual gift of new life to Saint Kateri through the waters of baptism.

Great Spirit, Send us the warmth and soothing winds of your healing medicines from the South. You are the gentle rain that brings forth the seed of life. Enable us to hear prophetic voices around us as Saint Kateri Tekakwitha shared God’s love, compassion and healing power among her people.

Spirit of Life, We face you in the direction of the West. Help us to be bearers of your Word. May we be voices of life and hope to all peoples, nations, races and beliefs, as exemplified in the life of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha.

Amen.



Mercy Center convent. *Photo provided.*

Cathedral building toward renovation of Mercy Center

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help has launched a \$3.5 million capital campaign to fund the renovation of the historic Mercy Center, a building at the heart of parish life since 1941.

Originally constructed as the convent for the Sisters of Mercy, the building housed the women who taught at Bishop John Carroll Catholic School for more than 70 years. Beyond their work in the classroom and parish, the sisters operated a food pantry out of the convent and regularly hosted school board meetings, confirmation retreats, piano lessons, and other gatherings. During the school renovations of the 1990s, the Mercy Center even served as temporary classroom space, continuing its long tradition of supporting Catholic education and formation.

For generations, the Mercy Center has been a place where parish ministries flourished, creating a sense of community, fellowship and prayer that is woven into the identity of the cathedral.

Today, the building continues to support a wide array of ministries, including youth ministry, TNTT, the BAT/Vietnamese Culinary Ministry and several parish programs. However, after decades of use, the structure has deteriorated, space has grown tight, and safety concerns have limited accessibility. As ministries continue to expand, parish leaders determined a comprehensive renovation is essential to sustain current needs and welcome future growth. The cathedral formally launched the campaign as 2025 draws to a close.

Of the \$3.5 million project cost, the cathedral begins the public campaign with \$1 million already secured. This seed funding comes from the sale of land jointly owned by the cathedral and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The remaining \$2.5 million will be raised through donor commitments over a five-year pledge period.

Planned renovations address several longstanding needs. The

former living quarters of the Sisters of Mercy will be redesigned into larger, more functional meeting rooms. A new meeting hall will be added to the southeast side of the building, and the entire north wing will be expanded to increase classroom and ministry space. An early childhood education addition will house programs for pre-K 3 and Mother’s Day Out.

Crucially, the renovation will correct the building’s accessibility challenges. The current structure has only one stairwell, no elevator, and just two single-use restrooms. The north addition will include two new stairwells, an elevator, and restrooms on both floors. Further improvements will create dedicated areas for religious education, youth ministry, and a variety of Vietnamese ministries. Asbestos abatement will also be completed to ensure long-term safety.

The Mercy Center’s legacy is perhaps felt most deeply by the young people who have grown up within its walls.

“We have so much fun spending time here, both on weekends and weekdays,” said Tony Huynh, co-leader of TNTT and a member of the Saint Thérèse of Lisieux Choir. “To me, the Mercy Center has so much to offer and has immeasurable value to so many people. I love the history that it holds and look forward to it being renovated for the cathedral ministries and generations to come.”

Though modest in appearance, a two-story brick building on the southeast corner of the campus, the Mercy Center has been an irreplaceable part of the cathedral’s spiritual, communal and educational mission.

For more than eight decades, the Mercy Center has touched thousands of lives. Through this renovation campaign, the cathedral hopes to ensure that it continues to form disciples and strengthen the faith of generations to come. To learn more about the Mercy Renewed Capital Campaign visit, cathedralokc.org/mercy-renewed.

ASSEMBLY of Catholic PROFESSIONALS

: What:

The Assembly of Catholic Professionals offers men and women the opportunity to come together quarterly for fellowship, meaningful connections, lunch and inspiring speakers.

: When:

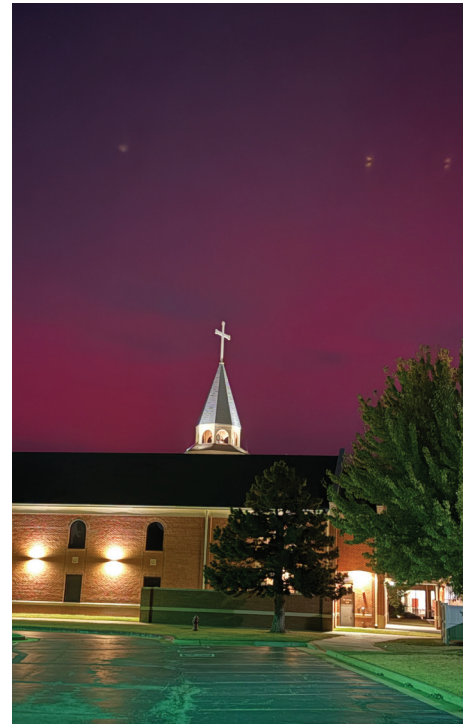
Each luncheon runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., beginning promptly and ending on time.

Become a member today and join us!





Parishioners from St. Patrick Catholic Church in Oklahoma City celebrated Mass and held a carnival on Oct. 19. *Photos Fran Kozakowski.*



The northern lights could be seen at St. Monica Catholic Church on Nov. 11 in Edmond. *Photos provided.*

✓ **The Lay Missionaries** of Charity is a response of the laity to the universal call to holiness. As the Third Order of the Missionaries of Charity of St. Teresa of Calcutta, they are dedicated to a life growing in holiness through the Sacraments and the Magisterium of the Church. Their primary emphasis is free service to the members of their own families and to the poorest of the poor. They meet twice a month for Holy Mass, prayer, study and discussion. For meeting schedule and locations contact Jonathan Tarman, LMC (405) 278-8199 or Toni Harrelson, LMC Link (405) 341-2199.



Fr. Joseph Uhen was called to a missionary through the lens of Bl. Stanley Rother. *Photo provided.*

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"And yet, they are people that turn to the Lord, believe in the Lord and the Lord responds to them. And for us to see in their joy and their patience, even in their tears, that they are not alone, they are accompanied. To have Pope Leo sitting in the chair of Peter for us is like this great mystery, and we are so grateful to the Lord."

Father Uhen recently made a pass through the metro area to thank and update parishioners at Christ the King Catholic Church in Oklahoma City and Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church and Saint Monica Catholic Church in Edmond – parishes participating in the Family-to-Family ministry, linking families in Oklahoma to those in Piura with support of food and other items. He said more than 500 families are currently assisted by families in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Catholics, as well as those in other states, donate \$30 a month to help with food, but often also ship Christmas gifts and household items to an area stricken by poverty. In addition, teams from Saint John and Christ the King also visit Peru to build homes and provide a variety of medical services with doctors joining the mission trips.

"It's very effective," Father Uhen said. "It really is hope and encouragement. Food packages, sometimes a little something extra to help them fix their roof or such. It's really breaking the cycle of poverty for many families."

Born in Milwaukee, Father Uhen came to Oklahoma with his family in 1968 when his father was transferred for his job. He attended Christ the King for grade school and later Bishop McGuinness, before going on to Notre Dame upon graduation. His call to the priesthood, however, took place in the

pews as a youngster.

"I would sit at Christ the King as a young boy and look at those 12 crosses they had around the crucifix kind of representing the apostles," he said. "The Holy Spirit was working and just kind of calling and letting me know that, you know, this is sacred, this is salvation. This is the Lord."

The call strengthened when he went to work with Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity in the South Bronx.

"Those sisters were just saying, 'wow, look, you're at the age to enter the seminary ... we're starting a group of Missionary of Charity priests. What about you?' he recalled. "And these sisters were extraordinary. So I gave it a shot."

Feeling called to be a missionary pastor, Father Uhen arrived in Piura in August 1993. And he's been serving the people there since.

"It's been a great ride and I thank the Lord for that," he said. "You know, we're not always perfect in what we do, but it has been a graceful ride with a pope who knew their plight, the former bishop of neighboring Chiclayo."

And on May 8, Father Uhen and his people experienced a different kind of fruit – the election of a pope who knew their plight, the former bishop of neighboring Chiclayo.

"We were overwhelmed," Father Uhen said. "We were just sort of looking at each other saying, 'Wow, this is almost like my cousin and now he has been elected pope.' We're still riding this with great joy to see that one of ours is now the pastor of the Catholic Church and really the pastor of the world. And we are praying for him."

"We have great hope of all the good things that can come. Because we know the faith of the people whom he has served."

John Helsley is editor of the Sooner Catholic.

Fr. Uhen influenced by Bl. Stanley



Chris Engel, pictured with a family in Piura, makes regular trips to help in a variety of ways. *Photo provided.*

By John Helsley
The Sooner Catholic

Father Joseph Uhen rejoiced with the people of Piura, Peru, where he serves as their pastor, when Pope Leo XIV was elected in early May.

The election was personal, for the Peruvians, and for Father Uhen.

It also brought him back to his Oklahoma experience and the influence of Blessed Stanley Rother.

While in formation with the Missionaries of Charity in Tijuana, Mexico, Father Uhen went to Guatemala and studied in Guatemala City, where he heard of the wonders of Blessed Stanley in Santiago Atitlan.

"That was powerful to see and understand," Father Uhen said. "His ministry, to be among that and to see that, it really was amazing."

Blessed Stanley influenced Father Uhen's own missionary work in Peru.

"He was really a guiding light," Father Uhen said, "and to give his life ... that's one of the reasons I came down here. He gave his life serving his people. They were being persecuted and being killed, and he still was there. The shepherd cannot run."

In Peru, priests were killed and martyred, too.

"That also called me. I said, 'Well, it's a little bit like going to war. You send in replacements.' I said, 'I'm gonna go as a replacement for those who've been killed,'" he said. "And that's sort of what drew me here."

Some compare Pope Leo's time in troubled Peru to Blessed Stanley's time in Santiago Atitlan, hoping the familiarity aids in the cause for canonization for Oklahoma's own.

"I do, too," said Father Uhen. *John Helsley is editor of the Sooner Catholic.*

Annual Living Nativity

When: Saturday, December 20th at 1:00 PM
Where: Blessed Stanley Rother Barn

4113 S Eastern Ave
Moore, OK 73160
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Light refreshments afterwards



RVSP to Dolores Person, Ministry Operations Director:
dolores@gospeloflifedisciples.org



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Together in Faithful Stewardship

SUPPORTING OUR CHURCH THROUGH YEAR-END GIVING

Because of you, our Church is alive!

By Jennifer Yardley

Dominick Denney recalled the first time he felt called to the priesthood. He was 6 and serving the Holy Mass when the thought, "I could do that!" came to his mind.

Throughout Denney's childhood, priests had a particular impact on him, asking if he had considered a call to the priesthood. This unlocked his first memory of when he heard the call.

Now in his eighth year as a seminarian, Denney said the journey has not been easy, yet it would not have been possible without the generous support he has received.

"As the Lord says through the prophet Jeremiah: 'For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope' (Jer. 29:11). The Lord knows what his people need without us even asking for it!" Denney said. "Seeing how many seminarians we have this year, it is clear the Lord is answering our prayers. Please consider supporting the Seminarian Education Appeal so that we can live our vocations of love and service to you and our almighty God."

Your gift to the Annual Catholic Appeal continues to support vocation efforts in the archdiocese, and this appeal reaches far beyond vocations. It equips teachers and catechists to share the faith in parishes and Catholic schools. It helps nurture families, allowing them to grow together in discipleship. The tribunal is available for families, free of charge, in times of challenge to restore God's hope and love. Each ministry is supported through the appeal and is a visible expression of Archbishop Coakley's mission to Go Make Disciples.

And through the Communications Appeal, the message of hope spreads even farther. From sharing stories in the Sooner Catholic that can reach far beyond parish boundaries to livestreamed liturgies that reach the homebound, your gift ensures that the Gospel can be heard and hearts can be touched, no matter where people are on their faith journey.

This Advent season, a season of preparation, reflection and anticipation, we are reminded that Christmas is the ultimate gift – God's gift of his Son to the world. In the spirit of giving, we invite you to share your own gift of love with our Church. Your year-end gift will help form future priests, strengthen vital ministries or share the Good News across the archdiocese. Together we are one Church, one Body in Christ sharing our Faith in Action.

Jennifer Yardley is the director of annual giving for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.



Photos Chris Porter.

Because of you, pilgrims encounter faith!

By Araceli Mingura

Pilgrims from around the world come to the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine to learn about Oklahoma's own martyr. Increasing by more than 100,000 visitors from last year, the shrine welcomed roughly 260,000 pilgrims by the end of October. The shrine remains dedicated to telling the story of Blessed Stanley and providing an environment of encounter worth visiting for all future pilgrims to come.

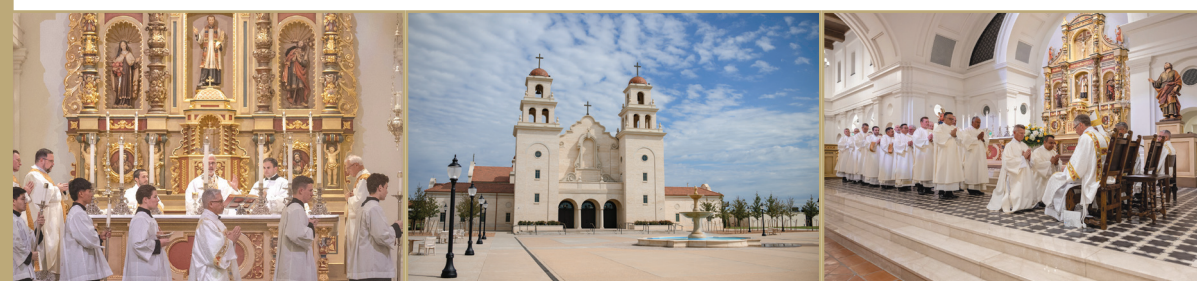
For many visitors, the shrine is a haven of information. The museum provides an extensive display that takes each visitor through the life of Blessed Stanley. For others, the shrine is a place of artistic brilliance. With Spanish colonial-style architecture of the shrine, beautifully painted murals and retablos, the shrine offers an incredible experience of color, texture and sacred artistry. However, for a vast majority of the visitors who come to the shrine, it is a place where they can exercise their devotions to Blessed Stanley Rother, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego on Tepeyac Hill.

The opportunity to exercise a particular devotion is not only a blessing, but also vital. If faith without works is dead, then a devotion without action is null. The shrine provides the space and the means for pilgrims who yearn to express their devotion. A simple act of love, such as leaving flowers at the feet of Our Lady of Guadalupe, praying before the gravesite of Blessed Stanley in the chapel, or sitting in silence in the main church gazing upon the crucifix can transform the heart and bring the soul closer to God's love.

It is crucial that the shrine exists to host these acts of faith. Therefore, the shrine remains deeply grateful to the donors who give what they can to support the shrine. Without generous donations, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims could not exercise their devotions at the shrine.

The Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine continues to rely on the generosity of those willing to support the shrine in order to maintain its sacred space. Donations from supporters ensure that the shrine remains a site of spiritual encounter. Contributions to the shrine help preserve this holy place of devotions, allowing it to remain a place of faith-filled action. The shrine invites all to consider making a donation as the year ends to support its ongoing mission. It just might provide the pathway for another heart to grow closer in knowing Christ!

Araceli Mingura is the director of communications at the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine.



Photos Chris Porter/Sooner Catholic, Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine.

Because of you, lives are renewed!

By Rachel Shortt

As this year comes to a close, I invite you to take a moment to reflect on the impact your generosity can make in the lives of those most in need in our community. People like Sarah and her son, Michael.

"I started out living in my car with my son, Michael," Sarah said. "When we lost my car, I turned to the Sanctuary Women's Development Center. It gave us a place to go during the day so we wouldn't have to walk the streets. We could take showers, do laundry, visit with our case manager and find a place to sleep without the fear of being unsafe."

Support from generous benefactors made it possible for Sarah and Michael to find more than shelter. They found hope, dignity and the strength to begin again. The Sanctuary Women's Development Center is one of many programs supported through the Catholic Charities Campaign.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, please consider making a year-end gift to help your neighbors most in need. Your generosity provides care for families in crisis, counseling services, disaster relief and more.

Together, we can continue to open doors of compassion – share mercy, spread hope, and renew lives. Your gift today fans the flame of hope. Will you join us?

Rachel Shortt is the director of communications and marketing at Catholic Charities.



"I started out living in my car with my son, Michael. When we lost my car, I turned to the Sanctuary Women's Development Center. It gave us a place to go during the day so we wouldn't have to walk the streets. We could take showers, do laundry, visit with our case manager, and find a place to sleep without the fear of being unsafe," Sarah said.



Photos Rachel Shortt, Jeff McSweeney and provided.

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Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

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Royals Report

The heart of a Royal

Historic victory on the Oklahoma River

Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School made history on Nov. 8. With a final time of 1:57.877, the school's rowing team won first place in the High School Division of the YRL Fall Regatta at the Oklahoma City Boathouse District. It was the school's first ever regatta victory, a milestone that reflected years of growth, dedication and belief.



Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School rowing team won first place in the High School Division of the YRL Fall Regatta. *Photo provided.*

For a team that started small and often raced against larger, more experienced schools, the moment represented more than athletic success. It symbolized perseverance, season after season, and a community that kept believing in the possibility of a breakthrough.

Leadership on the water

Boys rowing captain James Cortez-Rodriguez,

a current senior, has been a steady presence throughout the season. Known for his calm focus and reliability, he worked to set an example for other rowers, helping them grow more confident during practice and time trials. He often reminded teammates to row with purpose and to keep faith at the center of their efforts.

As he described it, the goal was always "to row for something bigger than ourselves."

Girls' captain Tatiana Vierling, a junior, brought encouragement and determination to the team. She helped create a welcoming environment where new rowers felt comfortable learning the sport and where experienced rowers stayed motivated. Her leadership was especially important during challenging practices when the team was pushing to improve its timing and synchronization. For her, the victory was proof of what consistent teamwork can achieve.

A first-time coxswain steps up

The regatta also highlighted the work of Andrea Armbruster, a current freshman, who is the team's new coxswain, making her racing debut at the event. Handling the role for the first time brought nerves, yet her preparation paid off.

She guided the boat with clarity, keeping rowers aligned and steady during the most intense sections of the race. Her confidence grew with every call and every practice. She helped the crew maintain rhythm as they approached the finish line.

Coach Gena's steady guidance

The heart of the rowing team is coach Gena Terrill, who has led Cristo Rey's rowing team for three seasons. Her coaching combines discipline, patience and a belief in each student's potential. Over each season, she has helped the rowing team grow from a handful of curious students to a team capable of competing at a championship level. Saturday's win reflected not only the rowers' strength, but her time and commitment as well.

The growth of a team

Cristo Rey OKC's rowing program started

with limited members and little experience. Many students who

joined had never touched an oar before high school.

What kept the program moving was the sense of purpose and community students found on the water. As the team expanded, its goals did, too, and the idea of winning a regatta slowly became a shared dream. This fall, that dream finally became reality.

Faith and teamwork at the core

While the final time and trophy are memorable, many rowers said they will remember the unity they felt during the race. Before launching, the team shared a moment of prayer, asking for strength, focus and the ability to work as one.

Rowing demands total trust – every stroke and movement must align. Throughout the race, each rower relied on their teammates to maintain power and rhythm, and the calm direction from their coxswain helped keep the boat steady. Their teamwork developed through long practices, which carried them across the finish line.

Looking toward the future

The victory energized the Cristo Rey community of students, alumni, families and supporters. It marks a turning point for the rowing team and sets a new standard for future seasons.

For captains James and Tatiana, the win is both a celebration and the beginning of something bigger. With strengthened confidence, a supportive community, and a foundation built on faith and unity, the team looks forward to what lies ahead on the Oklahoma River.



Allison Turrubiarres

Cristo Rey OKC-Catholic High School

Moments at the Mount

Decorating for good: a Key Club holiday tradition

For 11 years now, the Mount Saint Mary Key Club has volunteered at the J.D. McCarty Center in Norman to decorate Christmas trees. The J.D. McCarty Center works to bring extra light to the lives of children with developmental disabilities.

This year, Key Club, along with math honor society – Mu Alpha Theta – decorated a school tree, decked out with ornaments handmade by students, allowing an injection of Rocket pride to the kids at the center.

"What I enjoyed the most about the tree decorating was the fact that we got to put up a tree that represented the Mount," senior Bella Yeakley said. "It was also fun to do it with my friends and all the volunteers that came."

"Volunteering is important for so many reasons," said Key Club sponsor Kathryn Pickens. "First and foremost, Christ sent us to serve one another, and volunteering in the community is an essential part of being the Body of Christ."

"In addition to meeting the needs of those around us, volunteering builds confidence, strengthens leadership skills and allows us to further develop the gifts God has given us. "Part of Catholic education is ensuring that we are forming a whole person, and giving students a variety of ways to serve others is one way of doing just that."

"I have had Key Club members discover new skills, passions and even career paths through our service projects. I love to see it!"

Students engaged in canned food drive

One of the Corporal Works of Mercy is to feed the hungry. Since Mount Saint Mary is a school founded by the Sisters of Mer-

cy, the school uses the Works of Mercy as a foundation for how the students conduct themselves. To embody the work of feeding the hungry, the National Honor Society hosts a canned food drive every year.

This year, the NHS collected food for Feed the Children, with students asked to donate 30 pounds of food. And there was inspiration: a week of free dress after Thanksgiving break.

The food drive allows students to help others around the holidays

have no control over what's happening.

To give students more advice and wisdom for their life after high school, senior theology teacher Brian Boeckman has the students do what he calls "The Wisdom Project." This project is aimed to help students gain insight into things in their lives that they may have questions on, including work/life balance, marriage and staying connected to God.

"I began this project about 17 or 18 years ago so students can learn



The MSM Key Club and Mu Alpha Theta decorated Christmas trees at the JD McCarty Center. *Photo Mark Woodward.*

so families can have proper meals. It brings a sense of community to not just the school but to those who helped by the drive.

Seniors gather wisdom for journey ahead

Senior year tends to turn everything on its head. Suddenly, students are faced with a million unanswered questions that all have to somehow be answered by the end of the school year, if not sooner. It can be a stressful and trying time for the seniors, who can feel overwhelmed or like they

practical advice and guidance for navigating life's challenges," Boeckman said.

Today, kids can be glued to phones and devices to the point they struggle to maintain an in-person conversation. For this project, students were asked to interview at least four different people for their different topic areas.

"The interview process of this project encourages students to develop interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence by building connections with people from



Lucy Rosenhamer

Mount Saint Mary Catholic High School

different backgrounds," Boeckman said. "Also, interacting with older adults can lead to more positive attitudes toward the elderly, reducing age-related stereotypes."

At the end of the project, students will take all their quotes from interviews and put them into a slideshow and present it to the class. By doing this, they will be able to share what they learned from those they interviewed with each other. Boeckman said it also makes sure that the stories and advice of the older generations will be preserved.

"My favorite part of the Wisdom Project is listening to the stories and insights of the students as they present their findings from their research and interviews," he said. "I always gain new ways to better handle life's challenges and surprises. After the students finally finish the process, it is always good to hear how many of the students enjoyed the project even though the process can get a little overwhelming."

Thanks to Boeckman, students spend time listening to the advice of older generations and learning ways to better handle whatever situations they may face in their future. This project serves as a reminder to the students and those they interview that good conversations don't have to be difficult, someone just has to take the first step.

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BRONCHO CATHOLIC
COLLEGE CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Diocese of Tulsa held the annual Discipleship Catholic Youth Conference (DCYC) on Nov. 22 at the Arvest Convention Center in Tulsa. This year's DCYC theme was "Rise Up: Saints in the Making." The life of St. Kateri Tekakwitha was highlighted. The speakers included Beth Davis, Oscar Rivera, Tanner Kalina and Giancarlo Bernini. Some of the students who attended were from Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Mustang, Sacred Heart Catholic Church at the Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, and St. Francis Xavier and St. Gregory the Great in Enid. Broncho Catholic from the University of Central Oklahoma was also there. *Photos Dana Attocknie/Sooner Catholic.*

Irish Insights

Irish basketball teams begin season with confidence

Eager to begin their seasons, both the boys and girls basketball teams charged into the start of their seasons.

The boys team advanced to the state tournament a year ago.

“I think we set the tone with this group, kind

“Other than that, we want to defend the same way. We want to incorporate a little more zone into what we do.”

Though the path to state will be challenging with each team moving up to Class 5A, Brown said he still thinks the boys goal is realistic.



BMCHS students constructed a pirate ship sculpture from the cans they collected for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. The theme was Pirates of the Can-ibbean. *Photos provided.*

of getting a taste of the state tournament last year,” boys coach Jake Brown said. “So we’d like to get back there and then just kind of elevate and see where we can go from there.”

After falling at regionals last season, girls coach Jade Carter said the girls team is also optimistic about reaching the state tournament with a “more athletic” group.

“Our girls were all a little young last year,” Carter said

With an older and more experienced team, Carter aims to focus more on defense this season and create a “mentally tougher” team.

“We are practicing more intensely,” Carter said, “and we also are doing more weight training this year to get a lot stronger.”

In addition, Brown said the boys team will strive to be more guard-heavy than in the past.

“The last couple years we’ve been more of a half-court team, so longer possessions, taking longer to have plays develop, like longer sets and stuff, and we’re really trying to emphasize playing with pace more this year,” Brown said.

All Saints Catholic School hosts Advent Open House for prospective families

All Saints Catholic School will host an Advent Open House for prospective students and their families from 1-3 p.m. Dec. 14 at the school, 4001 36 Ave. NW in Norman. The event will offer an inside look at the school’s Pre-K through 8th-grade classrooms, ac-

ademic programs and faith-based learning environment.

Visitors will have the opportunity to meet principals, teachers and staff, tour classrooms and speak with current students. School leaders will be available for interviews and to answer questions

about academic offerings, student life and the school’s mission.

Information will also be provided about the Oklahoma Parental Choice Tax Credit Program, which helps make a Catholic school education more affordable and accessible for many families.

Having collected cans and raised money throughout November, the school has met its goal, exceeding 100,000 meals raised, which was donated to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.



Katherine Menz

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School



John Nguyen

Nguyen has faith in Irish swim

With early meets behind them, the Irish swim season is well underway.

This year will be senior John Nguyen’s fourth on the team. Individually, Nguyen has started his season strong, beating a 2013 school record in the 100 breaststroke. Nguyen won state in the 200 freestyle in both his sophomore and junior years.

Though the team has a prominent senior class, Nguyen said he has seen growth in each class through “teamwork and dedication in the pool.”

“I know during these swim meets, I’ll see our teammates cheering on each other and the support is really great,” Nguyen.

Nguyen also said the program has expanded since his first season, with 26 swimmers competing this year.

“I have faith in my team,” Nguyen said.



best kept secret” up through Pope Francis. Highly recommended as a textbook.

“An Anxious Age: The Post-Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of America,” by Joseph Bottum:

Why has the United States become so cranky in recent decades? Poet and philosopher Bottum offers an intriguing proposal – because the old Protestant cultural hegemony collapsed when liberal Protestantism imploded into post-Christian wokery; Catholicism failed to fill the cultural vacuum (as it might have done through the teaching and example of John Paul II); and spiritual anxiety reigns supreme, taking various bizarre forms. Think of this distinctive work as both a primer for the New Evangelization and a penetrating analysis of the roots of our 21st century political discontents.

“Make Peace Before the Sun Goes Down: The Long Encounter of Thomas Merton and His Abbot, James Fox,” by Roger Lipsey:

Abbot James is typically presented as the authoritarian nemesis of the world’s most famous Trappist during their lifetimes. The relationship certainly had its complexities, but Dom James took Merton as his confessor for 15 years, even as they were battling over various aspects of monastic life. That the two men are buried side by side at the Abbey of Gethsemani has always struck me as something deeply Catholic; this uneven but fascinating book confirmed that intuition.

“Zbig: The Life of Zbigniew Brzezinski, America’s Great Power Prophet,” by Edward Luce:

Catholic readers will be particularly interested in Ed Luce’s discussion of the relationship between Brzezinski and Pope John Paul II, which had a significant effect on history during the rise of the Solidarity movement in 1980 and the Soviet threat to crush it by military force.

“The Golden Thread: A History of the Western Tradition, Volume One,” by Allen

C. Guelzo and James Hankins:

A magnificent, detailed overview of the evolution of the West from antiquity to the Renaissance, and, thanks to the good people at Encounter Books, the most beautiful piece of bookmaking in decades. Give it to every college student you know.

“If Russia Wins: A Scenario,” by Carlo Masala:

A brief, deeply informed analysis of what might happen around the world if the United States and Europe do not gather the wit, will, and capacity to resist the new Russian imperialism.

“On Active Service in War and Peace,” by Henry L. Stimson:

A reminder of the days when men of experience and character brought distinction to public service rather than getting notoriety from it, and an elegy for the days when bipartisanship characterized U.S. foreign policy.

“The Last Manager: How Earl Weaver Tricked, Tormented, and Reinvented Baseball,” by John Miller:

Given the subject’s salty vocabulary, don’t read this aloud with children around. But if you want to know how contemporary baseball “analytics” trace their roots to a bookie in Depression-era St. Louis, this fine biography of the “Earl of Baltimore” is for you, and for anyone who loves the great game.

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

Jobs Box

Accountant - OKC

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is seeking a full-time accountant to work at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Will be responsible for general accounting tasks and assisting parishes that utilize the shared accounting services program. Tasks include data entry, accounts payable, and maintaining the internal control environment. Will process general ledger transactions, reconcile bank statements, distribute financial statements and assist with tasks associated with the annual audit. To submit cover letter and resume, visit archokc.org/jobs-box.

Director of Liturgy - OKC

St. Eugene Catholic Church is seeking a full-time director of liturgy who is a skilled organist, pianist and choral director. Will provide well-prepared liturgies. Must be well-versed and fluent in leading a wide range of traditional and contemporary worship styles, including Gregorian chant, classical choral repertoire, Gospel/African American Spirituals, and current praise and worship music. Practicing Catholic in good standing with a strong understanding of Catholic liturgy. Proficiency in both organ and piano required. Bachelor’s degree in music, liturgy or related field preferred. Strong organizational, communication and leadership skills. Experience choral directing, in a parish liturgy or music ministry context, is highly preferred. Able to pass a

background check and abide by archdiocesan Safe Environment requirements when working with children. Must be available to work weekends, evenings and holidays throughout the year, especially Christmas Eve/Day, New Year’s Eve/Day, and Easter/Holy Week. Send cover letter and résumé to manager@steugenes.org.

Director of admissions, retention - OKC

Cristo Rey OKC Catholic High School is seeking a director of admissions and retention. Key responsibilities include recruitment and outreach, admissions and enrolment, retention and student support, marketing and communications and data and analysis. Bachelor’s degree required; master’s degree preferred. Five-plus years of relevant experience in admissions, recruitment, community outreach, sales or education. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with fluency in Spanish preferred. Strong project management, organizational, and data analysis skills. Experience working in urban school environ-

ments or with first-generation students is highly desirable. Availability to work evenings and weekends as needed for events and outreach. Apply to cristoreyokc.org.

Parish business manager - OKC

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church is seeking a parish business manager to provide administrative support to the pastor and parish staff. Will be responsible for oversight and supervision of parish staff and operations, including administrative and financial matters. This position also serves as the Safe Environment Coordinator for the parish. A minimum of five years office experience as well as proficiency with Google Drive and Microsoft Office products recommended. Bilingual skills with the ability to communicate effectively in English and Spanish strongly preferred. A background check and Safe Environment training will be required. Send a resume and cover letter to info@stcharlesokc.org.

To see more job openings, go online to archokc.org/jobs-box.

Lánzate a lo más Profundo

Luke 5:4

Abran de par en par las puertas a Cristo

Incluso con mi nuevo cargo en la USCCB: ‘Me comprometo a servirles fielmente como su pastor’.

Entre las riquezas espirituales de nuestra tradición católica se encuentra el testimonio de san Ignacio de Loyola, un soldado español del siglo XVI convertido en sacerdote y fundador de la Compañía de Jesús.

San Ignacio fue un hombre que luchó profundamente por encontrar su lugar en el mundo y en la Iglesia. Una y otra vez, tuvo que resistirse al instinto de escribir su propia historia y, en vez de eso, se entregó a las indicaciones de Dios. Al hacerlo, perfeccionó su comprensión de la vida en el espíritu, dejándole a la Iglesia valiosos legados como los “Ejercicios Espirituales” que contienen sus “Reglas para el discernimiento de los espíritus”.

A lo largo de mi vida como sacerdote y obispo, he obtenido un gran beneficio de los escritos espirituales de san Ignacio.

Una expresión en particular que se me ha quedado grabada es la que san Ignacio llama el “Primer principio y fundamento” que dice: “El ser humano fue creado para alabar, venerar y servir a Dios nuestro Señor, y así salvar su alma”.

En esta declaración concisa sobre nuestro propósito y responsabilidad ante Dios, Ignacio nos recuerda que “necesitamos volvernos indiferentes hacia todas las cosas creadas, siempre que el asunto esté sujeto a nuestra libre elección y no exista ninguna prohibición. Así, por nuestra parte, no deberíamos desear la salud más que la enfermedad, la riqueza más que la pobreza, la fama más que la desgracia, una vida larga más que una corta; y así con todo lo demás; deseando y eligiendo solo aquello

que más contribuya al fin para el cual fuimos creados”.

Esta sabiduría ignaciana subyace en la invitación que Cristo hace a Simón Pedro en el Evangelio que dice: “Rema mar adentro” (Lucas 5,4). Algo cambió dentro de aquel pescador convertido en apóstol cuando eligió la santa indiferencia y sólo quiso lo que Jesús le estaba pidiendo que hiciera.

Al elegir esta frase como mi lema episcopal, siempre he tratado de imitar tanto a Pedro como a san Ignacio. Intento discernir la voz de Dios, seguir su voluntad y confiar en que, por su poder, una “gran cantidad de peces” serán llevados a Cristo a través de mi pequeña cooperación.

En las últimas semanas, el Señor, a través de su Iglesia, me ha invitado de nuevo a “remar mar adentro”. El 11 de noviembre mis obispos hermanos de la Conferencia Episcopal de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB) me eligieron para desempeñar el cargo de presidente de la conferencia. Es un gran honor y una gran responsabilidad que sitúa mi ministerio en un plano mucho más público.

En las horas, días y semanas posteriores a mi elección, he recibido muchas palabras amables de felicitación y apoyo, tanto de forma personal como a través de diversas plataformas de redes sociales. (Sin embargo, tengo que admitir que no todas las respuestas de los medios han sido amables, ¡pero hoy en día ese es el precio que se paga por ser una figura pública!)

Sin duda, estoy muy agradecido por esta muestra de apoyo, y pido humildemente sus oraciones al comenzar este nuevo capítulo en mi ministerio episcopal.

A ustedes, fieles de la Arquidiócesis de la Ciudad de Oklahoma, deseo asegurarles que

estoy comprometido a servirles lealmente como su pastor. Esta elección no significa que vaya a abandonar Oklahoma ni que vaya a dejar el ministerio que tanto aprecio. Oklahoma

es mi hogar, y mi servicio para ustedes permanece en el centro de mi vocación.

Sin embargo, esta nueva función conlleva responsabilidades adicionales. La USCCB existe para apoyar a los obispos de los Estados Unidos en las funciones pastorales encomendadas por Jesús: santificar, enseñar y gobernar.

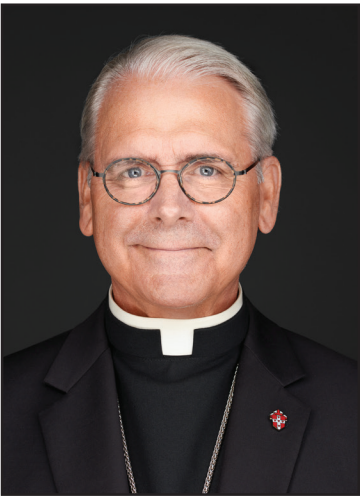
Junto con los obispos, la conferencia cuenta con un numeroso equipo de personal laico, sacerdotes y religiosos. Como presidente, debo ejercer las funciones de director ejecutivo, así como también debo presidir el Comité Administrativo y las Asambleas Plenarias de la Conferencia, que se realizan dos veces al año y de las cuales ya fui partícipe.

Además, como representante público de la USCCB, se me han confiado relaciones cívicas y eclesásticas más amplias. Debo representar los intereses de la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos en la esfera pública y dentro de la Iglesia Universal. Esto incluye establecer relaciones con líderes civiles nacionales, como el presidente y el vicepresidente, miembros del Congreso y otras personas cuyo trabajo se relaciona con las exigencias morales y sociales del Evangelio.

También colaboro estrechamente con el nuncio apostólico para apoyar y ayudar a llevar a cabo las iniciativas del Santo Padre en las iglesias locales de nuestra nación.

Aunque toda esta responsabilidad puede parecer por momentos abrumadora, me consuela el primer principio de san Ignacio: Fui “creado para alabar, venerar y servir a Dios nuestro Señor”.

Por eso, me llena de alegría servirle en mi calidad de presidente de la USCCB, y puedo escuchar claramente las palabras de ánimo de san Juan Pablo II, inspirado por nuestro Salvador: “No tengan miedo. Abran de par en par las puertas a Cristo”.



Arzobispo Pablo S. Coakley

‘Viene uno más poderoso que yo’: Vivir el Adviento con San Juan Bautista

(OSV News) – Si buscamos en las Escrituras, con la excepción de la Sagrada Familia, ninguna persona es más favorecida por Dios que San Juan Bautista. Los cuatro Evangelios aclaman a este santo hombre y lo distinguen de los demás. Desde antes de su nacimiento, fue elegido por Dios para anunciar, bautizar e identificar a Jesús como el Mesías tan esperado.

Al observar la totalidad de su breve vida, se ve la mano de Dios en cada momento. El papel único de Juan en la historia de la salvación fue inmortalizado por Jesús, quien dijo: “Les aseguro que no hay ningún hombre más grande que Juan” (Lc 7, 28).

Aunque celebramos tanto el nacimiento de Juan Bautista (el 24 de junio) como su muerte (el 29 de agosto), es durante el Adviento cuando la liturgia amplifica el papel de Juan como precursor de Cristo. Es Juan quien, como instrumento de Dios, dice al mundo que se prepare, que el Mesías está llegando; es Juan quien luego señalará al Mesías que vive en medio de los hombres.

La Iglesia enseña que Cristo no solo viene en Navidad, sino que volverá al final de los tiempos. En ambos casos, se nos exhorta a preparar nuestros corazones y nuestras almas para estos acontecimientos. San Juan Bautista nos dice cómo prepararnos, cómo reformar nuestras vidas; la Iglesia nos ofrece los medios durante este tiempo santo a través de la penitencia, la confesión y la conversión sincera.

Juan es el hijo de Zacarías e Isabel, una pareja santa, anciana y sin hijos que vivía en las montañas de Judea. Su nacimiento fue revelado por un ángel, que le dijo a Zacarías que él e Isabel tendrían un hijo. El ángel era Gabriel, quien más tarde anunció a una joven hebrea que se convertiría en la Madre de Dios. Gabriel le dijo a Zacarías que el niño se llamaría Juan y que “estará lleno del Espíritu

Santo desde el seno de su madre, y hará que muchos israelitas vuelvan al Señor, su Dios. Precederá al Señor con el espíritu y el poder de Elías ... preparando así al Señor un Pueblo bien dispuesto” (Lc 1, 15-17). Zacarías, creyendo que él y Isabel eran demasiado mayores para tener un hijo, se negó a creer en el mensaje del ángel y, como resultado, quedó mudo. Permaneció así hasta que nació Juan. La Visitación es uno de los pasajes más conmovedores y recordados de las Escrituras: la historia de María, embarazada de Jesús, caminando o viajando en algún medio de transporte incómodo, haciendo el viaje de varios días desde Nazaret hasta las montañas de Judea para visitar a Isabel.

El ángel Gabriel le había dicho a María que Isabel, su pariente mayor, estaba embarazada de seis meses de Juan. El Evangelio de San Lucas (1,39-45) describe la llegada de María. Isabel se siente honrada de que la Madre de Dios haya venido a cuidar de ella y de su hijo por nacer.

Cuando María entró en la casa, Juan saltó en el vientre de su madre, y Isabel se llenó del Espíritu Santo. Sobre esta escena, San Juan Crisóstomo escribió: “(Juan en el vientre) aún no ha visto la luz, pero señala el sol; aún no ha nacido, y está deseoso de actuar como precursor”.

Como Isabel estaba “llena del Espíritu Santo”, Juan fue bautizado en el vientre y, por lo tanto, nació sin pecado. Juan, al igual que la Virgen María, fue elegido especialmente por Dios; en el caso de Juan, su papel es presentar al Salvador al mundo.

Mientras Jesús crecía tranquilamente en Nazaret, Juan, seis meses mayor que Jesús, vivía de forma anónima en el desierto de Judea. La juventud de Juan se resume en Lucas 1,80: “El niño (Juan) iba creciendo y se fortalecía en su espíritu; y vivió en lugares desiertos hasta el día en que se manifestó a Israel”.

Sobreviviendo de la tierra, no se vio contaminado por los pecados mundanos, sino que recibió aún más la gracia de Dios a través de la oración constante y la abnegación.

A los 30 años, cuando comenzó su ministerio público, el mensaje de Juan era: “Conviértanse, porque el Reino de los Cielos está cerca” (Mt 3,2), lo que significaba que la llegada del Mesías era inminente y que la humanidad se preparara. Inspirado por Dios, Juan sabía que Cristo iba a venir, pero en ese momento no conocía su identidad.

La gente acudía en masa a escuchar a Juan, en gran parte porque habían pasado 400 años desde que alguien había anunciado públicamente la llegada del Mesías. Estaban ávidos de ese mensaje. Juan los animaba a



San Juan Bautista. Foto OSV.

confesar sus pecados, a cambiar de corazón y, como señal pública de sinceridad, a bautizarse. Cada año, en Adviento, escuchamos su llamamiento a la conversión interior.

Comenzó a bautizar a la gente en el río Jordán, y algunos pensaron que Juan era el Mesías esperado; otros pensaron que era Elías regresado a la tierra. Juan les dijo que no era ninguna de las dos cosas, que los bautizaba con agua, “pero viene uno que es más poderoso que yo, y yo ni siquiera soy digno de desatar la correa de sus sandalias; él los bautizará en el Espíritu Santo y en el fuego” (Lc 3, 16).

Jesús vino al Jordán para presentarse al bautismo. Sin pecado, sin necesidad de bautismo, quería relacionarse con el hombre pecador. Juan se opone, argumentando que Jesús debería bautizar a Juan, y no al revés. Nuestro Salvador se humilla, insistiendo en el bautismo de arrepentimiento, y Juan accede. Cuando Jesús salió del agua, Dios envió una paloma que representaba al Espíritu Santo y anunció: “Este es mi Hijo muy querido, en quien tengo puesta toda mi predilección” (Mt 3, 17). Se confirma la divinidad de Jesús.

Después de ser bautizado, Jesús se retiró al desierto, donde pasó cuarenta días orando, ayunando y preparándose para su ministerio público. Al final de ese tiempo, regresó al Jordán, donde Juan lo señala al mundo con las palabras sagradas que se pronuncian en cada Misa: “Este es el Cordero de Dios, que quita el pecado del mundo” (Jn 1, 29).

Allí, entre los que se congregaban a orillas del río Jordán, estaba el Mesías. La espera había terminado. Jesús sale ahora al mundo, difundiendo su mensaje de salvación, mientras Juan se desvanece en la sombra de su Salvador, diciendo: “Es necesario que él crezca y que yo disminuya” (Jn 3, 30). Estas palabras siguen siendo un reto para todos los cristianos.

Mientras Juan seguía predicando, se enfrentó a Herodes Antipas, gobernador provincial de Galilea. Juan condenó públicamente a Herodes Antipas por vivir en incesto con la esposa de su hermano. Herodes encarceló a Juan, pero pronto desarrolló una afinidad especial por el Bautista.

La mujer implicada, Herodías, no sentía tal afinidad y buscó una oportunidad para matar a Juan. Es bien conocida la historia (Mc 6, 21-28) de cómo la hija de Herodías bailó para Herodes y, cuando terminó el baile, Herodes le ofreció a la muchacha lo que quisiera. Herodías animó a la muchacha a pedir la cabeza de Juan en una bandeja, y así fue. Juan fue martirizado como precio de un baile.

El impacto de su corta vida hace que Juan sea objeto de una veneración especial; junto a la Santísima Virgen, es nuestro santo más grande. Su mensaje de que debemos prepararnos para la venida de Cristo renunciando a nuestros pecados resuena durante cada Adviento.

Retiro de Adviento

Dirigido por Talleres de Oración y Vida

Destino Materno

DE PADRE IGNACIO LARRAÑAGA

13 de Diciembre

8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Centro Pastoral Católico
7501 Northwest Expressway,
Oklahoma City
Salón C3

No habrá ningún costo,
se proveerá desayuno ligero

Material Requerido: Cuaderno y Biblia

bit.ly/retirodeadviento

Para más información:
Liz Pacheco (405) 738-6154
Lanny Stewart (405) 274-4777

Celebración de Nuestra Virgen de Guadalupe
en el Santuario del Beato Stanley Rother

CABALGATA

PROCESIÓN
MARIANA A
CABALLO, CON
MÚSICA Y
DANZANTES!

¡Acompáñanos a celebrar la fiesta
de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe!

Procesión: 11 a.m.
Inicio: 1100 SE 66th St. y Crossroads Access Rd.
Final: Santuario del Beato Stanley Rother ~1:30 p.m.

¡Danzantes, matachines, música y mucho más
después en el Santuario del Beato Stanley Rother!

13 DIC.

AyudaNuestroMatrimonio.org

RETROUVAILLE

UN SALVAVIDAS PARA TU MATRIMONIO

¿Están pensando en la separación o el divorcio?

¡Este programa puede salvar su matrimonio!

- Cómo influye la personalidad y la familia de origen
- Adquirir herramientas de comunicación
- Cómo dialogar los conflictos y lograr acuerdos
- La importancia de tomar decisiones todos los días
- Volver a la primera etapa de la relación... ¡Reconstruir!

Comunidad Oklahoma Español ofrece:
Experiencia de fin de semana para matrimonios
Del 23 al 25 de enero de 2026

¡Muchos matrimonios nos hemos fortalecido... ahora ustedes!

Edgar: (405) 517-9723 Nancy: (405) 675-2592

Código QR para registrarse:

AyudaNuestroMatrimonio.org

Briefs

Become a seminarian pen pal
To become a Seminarian Pen Pal, visit archokc.org/penpal to find their addresses and write a note.

Join the team
Applications are open for 2026 summer staff at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp in Wellston. Must be 16 years of age by June 1, 2026, to apply. campguadalupe.org/summerteam.

Calling all Epiphany “Legacy Members”
As Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church’s 50th anniversary year approaches in 2026, the parish is looking for “Legacy Members,” any person who attended Epiphany when the church was located at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Those dates are June 17, 1976 until the first Mass in Bryce Hall on June 21, 1980. Anyone who was an adult, teenager or child that attended during that time can e-mail epiphany50@epiphanyokc.org.

Advent Lessons and Carols
Advent Lessons and Carols is 5 p.m. Dec. 7 at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave. in Oklahoma City. A reception will follow. Childcare will be provided free of charge. RSVP at cathedralokc.org/carols.

Be not afraid
The middle school retreat “Be not afraid” with the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia is Dec. 12-14 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp in Wellston. Early bird price

\$100. After Nov. 20 \$125. Visit campguadalupe.org/be-not-afraid.

Our Lady of Guadalupe festivities
There will be Las Mañanitas Mariachi on top of Tepeyac Hill at 5 a.m. Dec. 12 at the Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89 St. in Oklahoma City. There also will be a Cabalgata at 1:30 p.m. on Dec. 13 and an Our Lady of Guadalupe festival noon-8 p.m. on Dec. 14 at the shrine.

Living Nativity
The Gospel of Life Disciples and Dwellings Living Nativity is at 1 p.m. Dec. 20 at the Bl. Stanley Rother Barn, 4113 S. Eastern Ave. in Moore (behind the JP2 Dwelling). Light refreshments. RSVP to Dolores Person at dolores@gospeloflifedisciples.org.

Casino night
The Knights of Columbus Council No. 6477 New Year’s Eve dinner and charity casino is 6:30-12:30 p.m. Dec. 31 in the Great Hall at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 9 and Boulevard in Edmond. Cost \$80, includes dinner, open bar, Blackjack, Texas Hold’em, door prizes and a champagne toast. Contact (405) 478-5200.

Retrouvaille
The next Retrouvaille weekend is Jan. 16-18. No marriage is beyond hope. Whether people are bored, angry, frustrated, not communicating well or in a state of hope-

lessness, Retrouvaille can help. Contact Troy and Lovette Rausch at TroyLovetteRausch@HelpOurMarriage.org, (405) 885-0667 or visit HelpOurMarriage.org.

Rose Day
The annual pro-life rally Rose Day is Feb. 4 at the Oklahoma State Capitol. The day includes rose distribution and an indoor rally. The keynote speaker is Mia Armstrong. Visit roseday.life.

Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference
The Oklahoma Catholic Women’s Conference is Feb. 21 at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, 100 Mick Cornett Dr. Speakers include Mgrs. James Shea, Mary Healy and Scott Hahn. Cost \$79; students \$59. Visit okcatholicwomen.com.

The forge
The forge college retreat with the Servants of Christ Jesus is Feb. 27-March 1 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp in Wellston. Early bird price \$60. After Feb. 7 \$100. Visit campguadalupe.org/forge.

Oklahoma Catholic Men’s Conference
The Oklahoma Catholic Men’s Conference, In the Father’s Footsteps, is 8:45 a.m. March 14 at the OKC Convention Center, 100 Mick Cornett Dr. Speakers include Fr. Larry Richards, Curtis Martin, Nathan Crankfield and Joe Heschmeyer. Early bird registration \$79 ends Dec. 31. Cost \$94; at

the door \$105; college men \$49; high school students \$39. Visit catholicmen.net.

Revival
Save the Date: Revival, a week-end retreat for mothers grieving from the loss of a child from pregnancy and infant loss, will be April 24-26, 2026, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp, 890488 S. 3290 Rd. in Wellston.

Guatemala Mission Trip
Join a mission trip to Guatemala Feb. 20-March 1. Adults 21 years of age and older can embark on a journey of faith and service, as well as enjoy a pilgrimage to the site of Bl. Stanley Rother’s martyrdom and encounter the people he served. Price starts at \$2,200 per person. Package includes airfare, room/board, transportation and mission expenses. Apply at archokc.org/gua2026. Contact Kendra Mann at kmann@archokc.org.

Rome, Assisi pilgrimage
Join Fr. Kelly Edwards May 11-19 on a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. Some sights on this young adult and college adventure pilgrimage include major basilicas, the Roman Forum, colosseum and the Vatican Museum. There will be Daily Mass. Cost: \$3,750, includes room, airfare, travel to and from airport and some meals. Contact Fr. Kelly at kelly.edwards@archokc.org or on social media, [fr.kelly.edwards](https://www.instagram.com/fr.kelly.edwards) (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube).

Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration
at the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine

CABALGATA



**HORSEBACK
PROCESSION,
MUSIC AND
DANCE!**

Join us to celebrate the feast day
of Our Lady of Guadalupe!

Procession: 11 a.m.
Start: 1100 SE 66th St. & Crossroads Access Rd.
End: Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine ~1:30 p.m.

Matachines dancers, music and more to follow at
the Blessed Stanley Rother Shrine!

DEC. 13

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.

December		Catholic Church, 1901 N.W. 18 St., Oklahoma City.		14	Third Sunday of Advent.
7	Second Sunday of Advent.	10	Feast of Our Lady of Loreto.	14	Our Lady of Guadalupe festival, noon-8 p.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89 St., Oklahoma City.
7	The Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity of Central Oklahoma meets at 2 p.m. on the first Sunday of the month at St. Eugene Catholic Church in meeting room 3. Interested individuals can join. Contact Bill Full, OFS minister, at billfull1@att.net.	10	Catholic War Veterans USA Post No. 168 meeting, 5 p.m., Sunnyslane Family Reception Center, 3900 S.E. 29, Del City. Mass at 6:15 p.m. Contact Ronald Sandhop, CWV Post 168 Adjutant, (405) 640-0450, resandhop@gmail.com.	16	Serra Club of Oklahoma City meeting, 11a.m., Catholic Charities, 1232 N. Classen Blvd, Oklahoma City. Visit serraokc.org.
7	Third Order (Lay) Dominicans meeting, 3 p.m. - 5 p.m., St. Monica Catholic Church, Edmond (St. Ambrose building room No. 115, for any Catholic layperson drawn to religious life. Call David Lassiter (405) 924-6661 or Cesar Vallejos (405) 706-6271.	11	Feast of St. Damasus I.	16	Suicide grief support group, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 1901 N.W. 18, Oklahoma City.
		12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.	16	Catholic in Recovery meeting, 7 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 1901 N.W. 18 St., Oklahoma City.
7	Advent Lessons and Carols, 5 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City.	12	Las Mañanitas Mariachi on top of Tepeyac Hill, 5 a.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89 St., Oklahoma City.	17	Monthly Novena to the Infant Jesus of Prague begins.
8	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. CPC closed.	12	Middle school retreat “Be not afraid,” Dec. 12-14, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Camp, 890488 S. 3290 Rd., Wellston.	18	Summit, 7 p.m., The Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 3214 N. Lake Ave., Oklahoma City. An evening of adoration, confessions, praise and worship every third Thursday of the month.
9	Feast of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin.	13	Feast of St. Lucy.	20	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.
9	Catholic in Recovery meeting, 7 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi	13	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.	20	The Lay Missionaries of
			Cabalgata, 1:30 p.m., Bl. Stanley Rother Shrine, 700 S.E. 89 St., Oklahoma City.		

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Sr. BJ's Pantry

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR 2025

Each day add an item to a box for the homeless at Sr. BJ's Pantry. Drop off will be Saturday, January 10th from 7-9:30 am.

Dec. 1- Can of Fruit	Dec. 13- Pasta
Dec. 2- Peanut Butter- 12 oz	Dec. 14- Spaghetti Sauce- 15oz
Dec. 3- Instant Potatoes- Box	Dec. 15- Progresso Soup
Dec. 4- Macaroni and Cheese	Dec. 16- Can of Corn
Dec. 5- Canned Chicken	Dec. 17- Cake Mix
Dec. 6- SPAM	Dec. 18- Can of Frosting
Dec. 7- Canned Tuna	Dec. 19- Can of Chill
Dec. 8- Tomato Sauce - Small	Dec. 20- Lunch Size Chips
Dec. 9- Pork & Beans	Dec. 21- Can of Potatoes
Dec. 10- Peanut Butter Crackers	Dec. 22- Granola Bars
Dec. 11- Hamburger Helper	Dec. 23- Saltines
Dec. 12- Package of Dry Beans	Dec. 24- Can of Green Beans

Thank you for your continued support and prayers!
Sister Barbara Joseph.
819 NW 4th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73106
sbjpantry.org

*Ranked the #1
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2015, 2017, 2018, 2019,
2020, 2022, 2023 and 2024*

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 <p>Kevin Pierce General Agent SKC FICF, FSCP, CLTC Office: 877-707-0752 Cell: 405-514-7660 kevin.pierce@kofc.org</p>	 <p>Trey Welker Assistant General Agent MDRT, SKC FICF, FSCP, CLTC 405-850-4092 trey.welker@kofc.org Councils: 1537, 2974, 3113, 3220, 03309, 10822, 12669</p>	 <p>Mike Maggio MDRT, SKC Court of the Table FICF, CLTC 405-697-8820 michael.maggio@kofc.org Councils: 949, 1038, 1053, 1903, 3336, 4026, 4042, 5266, 5396, 9583, 11135, 11237, 16214</p>	 <p>Max Yardley MDRT FICF, FSCP, CLTC 405-570-2179 max.yardley@kofc.org Councils: 916, 1044, 1533, 4601, 6477, 9334, 13366</p>
		 <p>Edgar Garcia MDRT 405-815-7017 edgar.garcia@kofc.org Councils: 9668, 13828, 14220, 15834</p>	 <p>This could be you! Career opportunities available Councils: 1018, 1302, 4598, 5160, 5354, 9333, 11734, 14106, 14248, 16048, 18010</p>

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An All Saints' Day celebration was held at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Norman. *Photos provided.*



St. Mary Catholic Church and School in Ponca City held a Saint Night in November. *Photos provided.*

