

Passion flower tells Easter story

The exotic and rare passion flower is said to tell the Easter story of Christ's crucifixion, as its showy purple blossoms represent a crown of thorns, 10 apostles, a spear, nails and the cross. (CNS photo)

Bishop rejects 'simplistic' solutions to illegal immigration

The debate over immigration reform could have a positive impact, says Bishop Edward J. Slattery, if it causes the American people to realize the issue is complicated and that simplistic solutions will not suffice.

On April 2, speaking in Spanish at St. Francis Xavier Church following communion, Bishop Slattery said the bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives would "make this intolerable situation even worse." The bill contained enforcement provisions only and would make it a crime to provide humane or pastoral assistance to illegal immigrants. The legislation drew wide criticism from U.S. bishops and prompted massive demonstrations nationwide.

The following day, the Tulsa World carried a banner Page 1 story about the bishop's remarks and printed his assertion that he would go to prison rather than stop ministering to the people of his flock.

A couple of days later, the "Your World" FOX News cable television program contacted the Bishop, and he agreed to be interviewed live by host Neil Cavuto on April 5. Both appearances prompted several people to call, email or write Bishop Slattery. Some praised him for his stand; others denounced him.



Bishop Slattery prays before reading his statement in Spanish at St. Francis Xavier Church April 2.

On April 7, the Bishop said he is concerned that some people are confused over his position on the issue. (The text can be found on Page 6 in English and Page 14 in Spanish.)

Bishop Slattery said he stands by all his statements – including those that acknowledge the current system is "intolerable."

"We have to protect the borders and recognize people have broken the law. But we must do it in a

humanitarian way. I'm not for amnesty; some people seem to think I have just thoughtlessly rushed into this.

"The issue is really about 11 or 12 million people and their well-being and what we would do if we somehow made them all leave, given that the economy is very dependent on them, that prices are lower because they are willing to work for low wages. It a complex issue," the Bishop said.

The U.S. Senate was close to a compromise that combined the enforcement measures in the House bill – minus the most punitive measures – on April 7. But the deal collapsed, and Congress adjourned for a two-week Easter recess. Both political parties blamed the other, and nobody is sure if momentum to confront immigration will remain.

At St. Francis Xavier Church, Bishop Slattery reminded the congregation that "our faith calls us to serve those in need with the same prompt response and the same generous love that we would

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Henry Harder retires as chancellor

By MARILYN DUCK

Dr. Henry Harder, who served as chancellor of the Diocese of Tulsa since 2000, retired April 5. His successor is John Johnson, who was named vice chancellor in January.

"Dr. Harder has been very helpful to me - he has served the Diocese very well," said Bishop Edward J. Slattery. "Being chancellor is not an easy job. In addition to maintaining all the

records of the Diocese, he also oversees all the temporalities in cooperation with the pastors."

Dr. Harder said working with the pastors was perhaps the most rewarding part of his job.

"I think the way I helped most is a way that won't be seen. It was the many conversations I had with the pastors to help them however I could. They were always small things, no bells and whistles; but the pastors are the ones down in

the trenches, and I was glad to do anything I could for them."

He said he also was grateful for "the opportunity to serve the Bishop in his mission as shepherd of all the people."

This marks the third retirement for Dr. Harder, a big man with a booming voice and a bounce-off-the-walls laugh. People who worked for him were delighted to

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Calendar

APRIL

St. Philip Neri dinner

19 The annual St. Philip Neri Society Dinner will be at 7 p.m. April 19 at the Allen Chapman Activity Center on the University of Tulsa campus. Guest speaker will be Father Joseph Fessio, S.J., provost of Ave Maria University, editor and founder of Ignatius Press who studied under the direction of then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. Tickets are \$100 per person, and table sponsorship is available. For information, contact Susan Gaway at 599-0204.

New Life seminar

19 The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Team will lead a New Life in the Spirit seminar from 7-9 p.m. beginning April 19 and continuing every Wednesday between Easter and Pentecost at Church of the Madalene. Topics will include God's love, salvation, new life, receiving God's gifts, life in the Spirit and transformation in Christ. The April 19 and April 26 classes will meet in the church library; subsequent classes will meet in Aquinas Hall.

Benedictine life experience

21 The Benedictine sisters of Red Plains Monastery in Piedmont will host a Benedictine Life Experience weekend for single Catholic women from 7 p.m. April 21 until 2:30 p.m. April 23 at the monastery, 728 Richland Road. The theme is "Listening for the Voice of God," and the weekend will focus on an immersion into the Mystery of Christ. There is no cost. For information or reservations, call 405-373-4565 or email benedictinevocation@ionet.net.

Azalea festival, garden walk

22 St. Therese Church and Diocesan Shrine in Collinsville will celebrate its "Azalea Festival and Garden Walk" from April 22-24 with events and activities all day Saturday and tours of the garden and church set for Sunday and Monday evenings at 5:30 p.m. Tickets also are available for the parish's annual Easter in Italy seven-course banquet at 6:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$15, and seating is limited to 150 guests. Advance sales only. Contact Dee Schneider, 371-2704.

Kelley dinner auction

22 "Baby, It's Grand" is the theme for the 26th annual Bishop Kelley High School dinner auction beginning at 5 p.m. April 22 at the Pavilion, Expo Square. Tickets are \$75, and corporate tables are available. For information or reservations, contact Rooney Leittem-Murrell, 664-1451.

Day of retreat

22 Sister Eugenia Brown, O.S.B., will present an artists' and crafters' day of retreat from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 22 at St. Joseph Monastery, 2200 S. Lewis Ave. The registration deadline is April 19, and the fee is \$10. For information or reservations, contact Sister Eugenia Brown, 746-4211 or email, sebrownsb@yahoo.com.

Divine Mercy Sunday

23 Bishop Slattery will celebrate Mass at 3 p.m. April 23, Divine Mercy Sunday, at Holy Family Cathedral. Prayers begin at 2:30 p.m., followed by a procession and Mass. For more information, contact Joseph at 724-5283.

Praying family lecture

27 The Office of Family Life and the Pastoral Studies Institute will present a lecture on "The Praying Family - at the Heart of the Church" from 7-8:30 p.m. April 27 in the parish hall at the Church of the Madalene. Speaker Bill Beckman has a master's degree in marriage and family from the Pope John Paul II Institute. Child care will be provided. To register, contact Erick Bell, 585-8167. This lecture will be broadcast to ITV remote sites in the Diocese.

Rome lecture series

27 Dr. Henry Harder will teach a class on art and faith in the churches of Rome from 7-8:30 p.m. April 27 at St. Clement's Marian Center in Bixby. This class will examine how art and architecture in select churches in Rome demonstrate the development of Catholic teachings. Contact PSI, 294-1904.

Catholic Peace Fellowship conference

28 The Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church in Oklahoma City will host a two-day conference on the Catholic response to the war in Iraq

beginning at 7:30 p.m. April 28 in the church's Family Life Gymnasium, 7336 W. Britton Rd., Oklahoma City. The conference will continue at 8:30 a.m. April 29. Registration fee is \$10 and includes lunch on Saturday. For information, visit www.catholicpeacefellowship-oklahoma.org or RSVP to cpfok@cox.net.

St. Catherine trivia night

29 St. Catherine School will hold a trivia night at 5:30 p.m. April 29 in the school activity center, 2515 W. 46th St. Tables for six are available for \$60, or individual tickets can be purchased for \$10. Guests must be 21 or older. Contact Catherine Nichols, 808-9587.

Cultural diversity celebration

29 The Church of St. Mary will celebrate its cultural diversity at 6 p.m. April 29. Food, music and dance will center on the theme "Ireland and the British Isles." Tickets are \$5 for guests 13 and older, with a \$20 maximum per family. Contact Hilary, 749-2561.

Prayer breakfast

29 The Daughters of the Annunciation will host a prayer breakfast from 9-11:45 a.m. April 29 at St. Bernard's Church. The speaker will be Sister Philip Marie Burle, co-author of the popular "You Will Receive Power" retreat program. For reservations, send name, phone number and \$12 check made payable to the Daughters of the Annunciation to: Carolyn Reese, 12549 Kathy Lane, Sapulpa, OK 74066. Reservations are required, and the registration deadline is April 26.

'Passion' at St. Monica

29 St. Monica Church will show "The Passion of Christ" at 6:30 p.m. April 29. Cost is \$1, and a concession stand will be open. All proceeds will benefit the youth group's summer trip. Contact Susan Harris, 230-5174.

Chinese dinner, auction

29 Church of St. Benedict will hold its second annual Chinese Auction & Dinner following the 5 p.m. Mass April 29. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children and include a delicious Chinese dinner and 10 tickets to the white elephant table section of

the auction. The silent auction section will highlight the talents of the St. Benedict's community. Some items include hand-painted chairs, mosaic items, knit scarf, oil painting, painted bench, handmade rosary, hand-painted flower pot and much more. Also on auction will be fine wines, dinner certificates and autographed photos of celebrities. For tickets call Joyce Winters, 455-5938.

Religious awards Mass

30 The Catholic committee on Scouting and Camp Fire will host its annual religious awards Mass at 2 p.m. April 30 at St. Pius X Church. Bishop Slattery will celebrate Mass with the awards recipients and their families, followed by the awards presentation.

Discovery Sunday

30 Subiaco Academy, a Catholic all-boys college preparatory residential school in northwest Arkansas will host a Discovery Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 30. Visitors can tour the campus and meet members of the faculty and staff. The entrance exam will be administered from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For information, call 800-364-7824 or email admissions@subi.org.

MAY

May and Mary course

1 Monica Skrzypczak will lead a class on Catholic Marian traditions from 7-8:30 p.m. May 1 in Benedictine Hall at Church of the Madalene. This class will study the many titles given to the Blessed Mother and Marian devotions practiced in the Church. Contact PSI, 294-1904.

CORRECTION

The following entries either were incorrect or omitted from the confirmation schedule published in the April 2 Eastern Oklahoma Catholic.

May 3, 7 p.m. - St. James Church, Bartlesville, joined by St. Catherine Church, Nowata; St. John Church, Bartlesville, and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Dewey
May 7, noon - Holy Family Cathedral, Tulsa, hosting St.

Bishop Slattery's public schedule

Sunday, April 16 - 10 a.m.

Easter Mass, Holy Family Cathedral

Wednesday, April 19 - 7 p.m.

Blessing for St. Philip Society dinner, Alan Chapman Activity Center, TU campus

Friday, April 21 - 6:30 p.m.

Catholic Charities volunteer appreciation dinner

Saturday, April 22, 6:30 p.m.

Bishop Kelley auction and dinner, Fairgrounds Pavilion

Sunday, April 23 - 2:30 p.m.

Prayers for Divine Mercy Sunday, 3 p.m. Mass and homily, Holy Family Cathedral

Thursday, April 27 - 6:30 p.m.

San Miguel School reception, F&M Bank

Saturday, April 29 - 5 p.m.

Knights of Columbus Mass, St. Thomas More Church
Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran, principal celebrant; Bishop Slattery, homilist

Saturday, April 29 - 7 p.m.

Banquet for Knights, Raddison Hotel, 41st and Garnett

Sunday, April 30 - 2 p.m.

Scout Awards Mass, St. Pius X Church

Friday, May 5 - 1:30 p.m.

St. Mary School golf tournament, Stone Creek at Page Belcher

Saturday, May 6 - 10 a.m.

Mass for Diocesan Stewardship Day, Bishop Kelley

Sunday, May 14 - 5 p.m.

Vespers, homily, Bishop Kelley Chapel
Brother Norman McCarthy's 50th anniversary

Sunday, May 15 - 9:50 a.m.

Mass, Kelley gymnasium

Saturday, May 20 - 10 a.m.

Bishop Kelley graduation, Reynolds Center

Augustine, Tulsa; St. Monica, Tulsa; Christ the King, Tulsa; St. Joseph, Cleveland; Sacred Heart, Fairfax, and St. Joseph, Hominy

May 13, 5 p.m. - Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Tulsa, hosting St. Thomas More, Tulsa

May 14, 10:30 a.m. - St. Joseph Church, Muskogee

May 28, 10 a.m. - St. Patrick Church, Sand Springs, hosting Our Lady of the Lake, Mannford

Edward J. Slattery Bishop of Tulsa

Summarizing Synod-inspired guidelines for pastors, parishes

Editor's note: This is the eighth in a series of articles outlining Bishop Slattery's response to the pastoral recommendations issued by the members of the Diocesan Synod.

The first six articles concerned the first pastoral priority, which the members of the Synod task force identified as our need to foster a deeper communion with God. Since this need is felt on three levels simultaneously (that is, on the diocesan level, on the level of the local parish community and as individuals in a community formed by our families) the Bishop gave specific recommendations for all three, offering a unified vision of how we can best live out the Gospel in the context of contemporary life, conscious first of all that modern life offers us a series of temptations to compromise the Gospel's life-changing demands and secondly that the secular world constantly challenges the Church's right to speak in the public forum.

In his seventh article (and now in this eighth), Bishop Slattery offers a summary of his previous points as a guide for pastors, parish councils, pastoral musicians and liturgy planners, whose ministry is focused on the spiritual well-being of their parishioners, as well as those faithful who have sensed the importance of their relation to God and who are committed to making that relationship deeper and more fruitful through their Sunday worship.

Bishop Slattery's understanding is that these articles are authoritative, that is, by publishing them in the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic, the provisions contained in these articles and which were summarized in this issue and the last issue of the paper reflect and implement the universal teaching of the Church in this diocese and thus are to be understood as having the force of particular (that is, "diocesan") law.

A renewed call for Adoration every Friday in every parish

(From the Feb. 19, 2006 edition of the EOC)

Consistent with my first response to the Synod recommendations ("... my first and greatest desire is that my priests and deacons be holy. This above all" - taken from the Feb. 5 edition of the EOC), I am renewing my call that every parish and institution in the Diocese offer a Holy Hour of Adoration in Reparation every Friday night from 6-7 p.m. This Holy Hour is to be offered in reparation for the sins of bishops, priests and deacons - or rather, let me say, "in reparation for my sins, and the sins of my brother priests and deacons."

I believe it is critical for our shepherds to call their people together for prayer, especially knowing that they are asking their flock to pray for them in reparation for their sins of indifference, pride or lack of prayer. I also believe that it is essential for our people to love their priests and deacons in all their formidable weaknesses, and to bind themselves together in this kind of active prayer for the holiness and sanctity of the clergy who serve them.

Wherever pastors have been reluctant or hesitant to begin this Holy Hour, whether for fear that it would not attract a sufficient number of people or from the press of his other obligations, I want to encourage them to make this a priority for themselves personally and for the people entrusted to their care. Again, I am asking the people of our parishes to accept the responsibility for this great need and insist that their pastors and deacons offer this holy hour in union with all the parishes and institutions of the Diocese.



A greater effort is needed in praying the Mass

(From the Feb. 19, 2006 edition of the EOC)

My third request is this: I am asking that all of us make a much greater effort to pray the Mass well. Let me suggest a renewal in these four specific areas:

I. I want our celebrations of the Eucharist to show an even greater fidelity to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

Our obedience here is an open, public profession that the Eucharist is something which we have received and not something which we ourselves make. This is the same overriding concern which prompted St. Paul to write to the Corinthians: "For I myself have received from the Lord that which I in turn handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread and giving thanks, broke it and said, 'This is my body which is given up for you.'" (1 Corinthians 11:23)

Our fidelity to the General Instruction is also a daily reminder that the Eucharist is not a "thing" which can be manipulated or played with. The Eucharist is not subject to the whims of those who celebrate it nor those who derive their life from it. The Eucharist is a Person, Jesus Christ, who gives Himself to us that we might participate in His self-surrender. It is the celebration of the Mass which constitutes the Church as that faithful assembly called to righteousness and justified by the Blood of Christ which we receive in the Eucharist. This is why St. Paul continues: "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:27)

In particular I am asking pastors to be mindful that

- The color of the vestments must be in accord with the rubrics,

- Glass chalices are not to be used, and

- We remain seated until after the celebrant has finished his invitation at the Orate Fratres, when we stand in response to the celebrant's call to prayer and as a body say with perfect unanimity, "May the Lord receive this Sacrifice."

- Those who are called upon to serve one ministry must not - except in the rarest of cases brought on by true necessity - be called upon to exercise a second ministry in the same celebration. Thus those who read ought not take up the collection or assist in the distribution of Holy Communion as extraordinary ministers.

- Where we have men who have been installed in the Office of Lector, they are to be allowed to fulfill their obligation of proclaiming the Scripture at each Mass they attend.

II. I want our liturgies to be characterized by the kind of openness which can only be created by a deep and penetrating silence.

(From the March 5, 2006 edition of the EOC)

It is proper for us to look at the Mass through the prism of creation, when, at the beginning, the Father spoke His eternal Word, and the vast silence of uncreated time and space was penetrated by the Presence of perfect love. This penetration brings forth the world with all its created forms. These sprang from utter nothingness in response to God's perfect Word, and in a wholly marvelous parallel, when God speaks to us that same Word at Mass, our world is re-created, and all that which is finite becomes infinite and that which is corruptible takes on incorruptibility, beginning with the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine.

This is why it is absolutely essential that our liturgies be

characterized by the kind of openness which can only be created by a deep and genuine silence which will allow the re-creating Word of God to be heard in its fullness. By silence, I do not mean the mere avoidance of noise, but a much more profound silence, that deep silence of the heart which promotes an attitude of openness and receptivity to the Word spoken by the Father and proclaimed in the Scriptures.

- I am asking our pastors to respect the congregation's need for reflective space in the penitential rite (1), in the Liturgy of the Word after the first reading (2), after the homily (3) and finally after Communion (4).

- I am asking choir directors, musicians and liturgy coordinators not to fill those open spaces with music for music's sake.

- I am also asking our people to recover their sense of the sacredness of the sanctuary by refraining from idle conversation in Church before and after Mass.

- After baptisms, confirmations and weddings, a family's desire for keepsake photographs should not give way to an attitude which disregards the sacredness of our churches and the Presence of Him who is the Author of the Sacraments we celebrate.

III. I am asking that the music in our liturgical celebrations be completely renewed and the proper balance between the word and the melody - reflected in the balance between the celebrant and the choir or cantor - be restored.

(From the March 5, 2006 edition of the EOC)

Since the Synod presents us with a necessary opportunity to review various facets of diocesan life, I would like to ask all those concerned with the music of our liturgical celebrations, that is, priests, deacons, cantors, musicians, organists and liturgical planners, to review the musical programs which they present in the light of their careful and complete rereading of the Vatican Council's document on the liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium.

I ask them to pay special attention to the sections devoted to Sacred Music (Chapter 6, §112 - 121) that those who share responsibility in a parish for the implementation of the Council's liturgical norms might acquaint themselves with what the Council Fathers actually wrote concerning the requirements of proper liturgical music and, in particular, the principle which places the text in importance over the melody, thus acknowledging the primacy of Gregorian Chant among the Church's musical traditions, not merely from the position of its great venerability and beauty, but also because chant, having no rhythm, never forces the text to be rewritten to fit a specific meter.

Chant allows us a certain sacred space within which that Word which God spoke in ancient times can be heard today with greater clarity and fidelity.

As a sign of the seriousness with which I approach this topic, I am asking that pastors move with some dispatch to introduce their congregations to the simpler chants of the Kyriele, including the Gloria, Sanctus, Pater Noster and the Agnus Dei.

The balance between proclamation and response

(From the March 5, 2006 edition of the EOC)

This problem has been confounded in some communities by a further distraction. In my travels around the Diocese, I

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Marilyn Duck EOC Editor

Holy Week offers hope for a respite

The U.S. Congress recessed for two weeks on April 7, after the U.S. Senate failed at the last minute to pass comprehensive immigration reform that had won the support of President Bush, a bipartisan Senate majority and the U.S. bishops. It was a disappointment but also a relief. Perhaps it is enough that the elected representatives at least did no (more) harm.



John Kennedy once said, "We do these things not because they are easy but because they are hard." One has to wonder, 40 years on, if the U.S. government is still capable of summoning the will to do the seemingly un-doable. Some argue that the true secret of America's greatness is its ability to right itself, adjust course and recover from catastrophes like the civil war and the Great Depression.

I hope it's still true, but in this age of an open-ended "war on terror," at a time when instant communication gives so many so much to gain, in the short run, from polarizing the people, I worry that it's not.

The United States has a very serious problem. Its borders are and have been, for years, out of control. As many as 12 million people are here illegally. "Fixing" the problem may be impossible. We tried, 20 years ago, and it didn't work. There's a reason some people want to secure the border first and later decide what to do with the people already here. It's regrettable that the House voted to do so in such an inhumane way.

Does America really want to be a place where a surgeon in a Catholic hospital who removes a 4-year-old's appendix before it bursts could be arrested?

Alas, at this juncture, some of our elected representatives view compromise as a character flaw. They blame one another and wonder why people lack faith in government.

The U.S. bishops have weighed in, as bishops of the Catholic Church should, on an issue of such overwhelming importance. They have championed, as bishops of the Catholic Church must, the rights of those who would suffer from some of the most draconian measures.

Bishop Edward J. Slattery offered his perspective April 2, when he delivered a statement from the pulpit of St. Francis Xavier Church that he has distributed and asked be read at all parishes in the Diocese of Tulsa. It is reprinted on Pages 6 and 14.

If you read nothing else in this issue, the newspaper's editor hopes you will read Bishop Slattery's statement. Headlines can't capture its nuances; far from "coddling" the Mexicans, as one reader said in canceling her subscription, he gave a synopsis of the problem and advocated a just approach to solving it. Everything in the document reflects Catholic social teaching.

That former subscriber said something else that typifies the immigration "debate."

"Mexicans broke into my house, and I don't want this newspaper with the Bishop (coddling) the Mexicans in my

The immigration debate . . . needs less heat, more light and a touch of grace.

house." She used a more vulgar word.

How to refute such flawless logic?

Bishop Slattery is hopeful the uproar of the past couple of weeks eventually will prompt Americans to recognize the complexities of the immigration issue, and I hope he is right.

For now, as the EOC goes to press, we are in Holy Week. I am grateful the Congress is gone, and the immigration debate might calm down. This issue needs less heat, more light and a touch of grace.

I hope to celebrate Holy Week – my first anniversary of joining the Catholic Church – absent the vitriol of recent days.

These days give us an opportunity to reflect on what we can agree on. Come Easter morning, the world's 1 billion-plus Catholics can come together to rejoice as one Church, with malice toward none and charity to all.

That's an American aspiration worth fighting for, which is what the U.S. bishops have been doing. I agree with them all the way.

I just don't want to fight about it right now. It's Holy Week, and, soon, we'll be singing "Welcome, Happy Morning."

George Weigel

The embrace of the cross

Why is the cross the most apt of Christian symbols? G.K. Chesterton offered a typically, well, Chestertonian answer in his masterpiece, "Orthodoxy."

A circle, Chesterton wrote, suggests infinity and perfection, but a perfection "fixed forever in its size." By contrast, the cross "has at its heart a collision and a contradiction." And because of that, it "can extend its four arms forever without altering its shape. Because it has a paradox in its center it can grow without changing. The circle returns in upon itself and is bound. The cross opens its arms to the four winds; it is a signpost for free travelers."

Chesterton's insight into the universal embrace of the cross has a long pedigree in Christian theology; the Latin and Greek Fathers of the Church spoke of the cross in analogous ways.

Thus that late first century manual of Christian prayers and practices, the "Didache," describes the cross as a "sign of expansion." St. Cyril of Jerusalem picked up on that image, noting that only God could be so expansive: "On the cross," Cyril wrote, the Son of God "stretched out his hands to encompass the bounds of the universe."

Lactantius, a Christian apologist of the late third and early fourth centuries, saw in the cross a foreshadowing of the universal Church: In Christ's suffering, "God stretched



out his arms and embraced the world, thus prefiguring the coming of a people that would, from East and West, gather under his wings."

St. Athanasius, one of the greatest of the Greek Fathers, pondered the cross of Christ surrounded by two other crosses, and saw in that scene on Calvary the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile into the one People of God: Christ, God made man, and thus made a creature capable of standing erect and extending his hands, reaches out to the two thieves, who figuratively represent the two peoples to be gathered into the one Church.

And in His reaching out, the God-man tears down the walls of division between Jew and Gentile and extends God's covenant of faithful love to the whole of believing humanity. The cross, by pointing in all four directions, symbolizes the radical inclusivity of God's redeeming purposes.

And thus Hans Urs von Balthasar, the 20th-century Swiss theologian from whom I've borrowed these patristic images, suggests that the cross of Christ is the ultimate ground of solidarity: solidarity among the members of the human race; solidarity between humanity and God.

Chesterton saw a "collision and a contradiction" at the heart of the cross. Balthasar takes a different tack and sees, at the center of the cross, not so much colliding wood but the sacred heart of Jesus. The heart of Christ crucified is, Balthasar writes, the fountain of the Church: "It is at the

moment when Jesus suffers the most absolute thirst that he dissolves, to become an eternal fountain."

And from that fountain pour forth water and blood, Baptism and the Holy Eucharist: the sacrament from which the Church is born, and the sacrament from which the Church lives. In handing over his sacred heart in a perfect act of obedience to the will of the Father, Jesus redeems our wayward hearts, and makes it possible for us to make a gift of ourselves – to hand over to others, in love, that which is most intimate and personal to us.

Three times in my life, I have had the privilege of praying at the 12th station of the cross – Calvary – in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The memories of jostling one's way through the Old City's narrow, winding streets, the noise of the tourists, and the cacophony of contending rites and sects in the basilica all fade away.

It is, perhaps, the easiest place to pray in the world – and not so much prayer in the sense of formulated words, but prayer as "practicing the presence." At the 12th station, we are immersed in the sacred heart of Christ.

And there we find the center of the world, and the truth of the world's story. That is why it's "Good" Friday.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Forum

'Uneasy' about bishop's music comments

Editor, EOC:

I have read and reread Bishop Slattery's March 6 column, "Parishes must recover sense of the sacredness of the sanctuary." His comments on the Synod and the resulting resolutions made have left me feeling uneasy. I am especially concerned with the comments made about the music in our liturgies and the place that music has in the Mass.

The Bible tells us to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord," and this is what our choirs try to do. Most parishes have dedicated individuals who spend many hours practicing and singing for our liturgies. Hours are spent matching the readings and responses of the Mass to the many beautiful and meaningful songs that have been written and approved by our Church.

To say that choirs try to distract the congregation from the altar is an insult to every intelligent Catholic today. Do Catholics need a program each week to tell them what is taking place and where their attention should be? The music in our parish is selected to add to the solemnity and the devotion of the Liturgy of the Mass. Whether we are beside the altar or in a choir loft or hidden somewhere out of sight, our music is to help people know and love God and give him the adoration He deserves.

As a member of our choir for many years, I have sung in both the choir loft and beside the altar. It has been our observance that the congregation tends to participate and sing along better when they can see the choir and follow the song leader.

When Pope John XXIII "opened the window" and the United States bishops brought that enthusiasm home to us, we welcomed it with great expectations. Hymnals and books were written and approved by the U.S. bishops so that we could take advantage of all the talented

musicians in our Church who wrote beautiful and inspiring songs to express our feelings of love and devotion to God and His creations.

Now we seem to be returning to the cold, remote atmosphere of the past where we sit and watch the priest go through the rituals of our faith. In that atmosphere, choirs were more performance groups than song leaders for the congregation. Do we want to go back to this way of attending Mass?

The future of our Church lies in the hands of our youth. Do Gregorian chant and Latin phrases compete with the music and pressures our children face today? Can our children leave church humming or singing the closing chant?

How much more meaning is there in the messages given to us in the beautiful hymns written by such composers as David Haas, Marty Haugen or Father Bob Dufford?

Rose Wilkinson
Stillwater

Illegal immigration

I would like to address the issue of illegal immigration. Why do bishops support illegal immigrants? They do not support the Church – the American taxpayer does. When bishops support illegal immigrants they are supporting subsidized labor for big business. Illegal immigrants violate the law, they don't pay taxes, and they lie to get free government benefits, which is stealing.

So I ask again, why do bishops support people who lie, cheat and steal? When bishops do this they are stabbing the American taxpayer in the back and embarrassing the Church. If bishops want to do something good, then they should stop abortion or stop crime in the federal government. But do not embarrass the Catholic Church by making such decisions. I know Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor," but He never said tolerate liars, cheats and thieves.

Also, if illegal immigrants go home, then businesses would have to raise the pay scale and we could get people off welfare. Americans would do any immigrant's job if it paid more than welfare. If people want to come to America, that's great. But be honest and do it legally and pay taxes.

Don Conway
Broken Arrow

Message for Cox Cable

At a recent meeting of the Confraternity of Christian Women, we were speaking about the media and how television is affecting our families and belief system and whole culture of life. We agreed the only program we enjoy is EWTN, but why did we have to go to dish or pay extra just to get decent programs? All people could learn more about us and our beliefs and what great teaching the Church has on such a variety of subjects we want our families as well as ourselves to be informed about.

We decided to write a letter and ask all Oklahoma Catholics to contact Cox Cable.

In the last EOC, a story from the Vatican on Catholics' approach to media stated, "Let us continue not so much to curse the darkness as to offer the light of Christ through the communications media to those who search for purpose in life and love." That's something for Catholics in Oklahoma to consider.

We Oklahoma Catholics can do this very simply: Contact Cox Cable TV and suggest it place EWTN on its regular programming without extra charge. What better way to get the Catholic message to all of Oklahoma? Why should we have to pay extra or switch to dish?

Together we can make a difference. Go to www.cox.com/oklahoma, send mail to 11811 E. 51st St., Tulsa, 74146, or call 806-6000.

Kathie Jackson
Tulsa

Marital situations deprive many

Editor, EOC: There is a situation within our Diocese (and probably in many other dioceses) that should be addressed.

The situation is the large number of people who are being deprived of the very essence of the Catholic Church because of their marital situation. Has the Church encouraged and participated in special prayers for these people? Has there been an intensive investigation and discussion for the purpose of providing a means of reconciliation for them?

Many of us were taught that "the Church" is not the building we use for religious services. We were taught that the Church is the people and the priests, bishops and religious etc. So what makes this group of people, called Catholic, different from other Christian denominations?

Is it what the people (the Church) does? Is it the Sacrifice of the Mass and the sacramental presence of the Body and Blood of Christ? Is it the people partaking of this Body and Blood? Are these things the greatest visible sign of the difference?

When Jesus invited the 12 to partake of the bread and wine (changed into His Body and Blood) He did not exclude Judas, who already had a heart and soul black with sin. No, Jesus left the door open for Judas' reconciliation. How, then, can we, the followers of Christ, justify closing the door on people who have made mistakes (sin) regarding their marriage; regarding its failure; regarding decisions thereafter?

The leaders of the Catholic Church carry a heavy burden with regard to separating people from reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. Most of these separated people quit attending Mass. They feel they have been deprived of the thing that makes them Catholic.

Thomas L. Steidley
McAlester

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Publication	Deadline
April 30	April 21
May 14	May 5
May 28	May 19
June 11	June 2
June 25	June 16
July 23	July 14
Aug. 6	July 28
Aug. 20	Aug. 11
Sept. 3	Aug. 25
Sept. 17	Sept. 8
Oct. 1	Sept. 22
Oct. 15	Oct. 6
Oct. 29	Oct. 20
Nov. 12	Nov. 3
Nov. 26	Nov. 17
Dec. 10	Dec. 1

Bishop Edward J. Slattery's April 2 statement on immigration

When we consider the question of immigration and border control, it is imperative that that we do so from our perspective as disciples of Jesus, who was Himself exiled as a child and was received with his parents as an immigrant in a foreign land, though he had no papers and could produce no documents.

His are the sufferings we see in hundreds of thousands of children in our midst, born into families who have crossed the border into this country without papers or documentation, seeking only to make a better living and provide for the health and the education of their children. The situation and plight of millions of undocumented families, living in the shadows and squeezed both by their lie and by their fear of deportation, must be as much our concern as is the need to restore the rule of law on our borders and protect our nation against attack by infiltration.

We freely admit that our current system of immigration and border control does not work, and has not for many years. Our current immigration quotas are unrealistic and unworkable. They no longer serve the best interests of either the Mexican or the American people. Perhaps they never did. But now is not the time to make this intolerable situation even worse by passing more unrealistic and unworkable legislation, such as is being considered now in the Congress of the United States.

The economic and personal costs of implementing some of this legislation would be catastrophic. The deportation of millions of our



The congregation at St. Francis Xavier gives a standing ovation after Bishop Slattery's remarks.

friends and neighbors would bring whole sectors of our nation's economy to a standstill. Little cement would be poured, few buildings would be framed, construction and roofing would slow to a standstill, and our service industries would grind to a halt. At the same time, this legislation would have a devastating effect in our communities. Families would be divided, parents would be separated, and their children - naturally born citizens of this country - would be forced from the only home they know. This is intolerable, and as Bishop of Tulsa

and shepherd of many of these families, I cannot accept it.

The harshness of this legislation as it is now being considered is aptly revealed by provisions in this law which would make it a crime to provide pastoral, social or health care for those among us who cannot prove their legal status here. Teachers, nurses, doctors and aid workers could all be charged with a felony level criminal offense for providing even basic assistance to undocumented immigrants.

Our faith calls us to serve those in need with the same prompt response and the same generous

love that we would show Christ Himself were He to come before us sick or tired or in need. To make charity a crime is to make those who love criminals, and if it should become a crime to hear the confessions of a Catholic who has no papers, then I will become a criminal.

If it becomes illegal to baptize the children of those who have crossed into this country illegally, then I will gladly and freely become another illegal.

When it becomes a crime to love the poor and serve their needs, then I will be the first to go to jail

for this crime, and I pray that every priest and every deacon in this diocese will have the courage to walk with me into that prison.

Surely this nation, as great as it is, and as conscious as it is of our largely immigrant roots, can propose sensible immigration reform that secures our borders, restores the rule of law and protects us against terrorism, while still allowing eager and energetic workers to come into our country to build our cities and harvest our crops.

I encourage our nation's leaders to work in concert with the leaders of Mexico and Canada to move toward the kind of just immigration reform which might allow the undocumented to move towards a fully documented and legally recognized status here while providing a safe, orderly and fair system of receiving those who wish to work here and contribute to the welfare of this nation.

I remember the promise of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who offered her maternal love to those who would live in peace in this land. I place under her protection all those undocumented workers in our community, and I ask her Son Jesus to give us faith to seek the Kingdom of God, hope and courage to believe in the Father's love for us, and that true charity by which the Father's love is revealed and Christ's Church made holy.

I leave you my blessing: in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Immigration *Continued from page 1*

show Christ Himself were He to come before us sick or tired or in need." If those who love others are to be branded as "criminals," then the Bishop said he is willing to become a criminal. The statement was distributed to the 78 parishes in the Diocese of Tulsa and was to be read from pulpits either the weekend of April 1-2 or April 8-9 or placed in church bulletins.

St. Francis Xavier Church, where the Bishop presented his remarks, is located near downtown Tulsa and hosts several Hispanic-related ministries operated by Catholic Charities. The church, which was

designated as a Diocesan Marian Shrine and Expiatory Temple of Our Lady of Guadalupe by Bishop Slattery in 2004, offers nine weekend Masses, eight of them in Spanish. Its pastor is Father Jose Maria Briones. Concelebrating the April 2 Mass was Father David Medina, director of the Hispanic Apostolate.

After Bishop Slattery's statement, Father Medina told the congregation that a rally against proposed immigration legislation in Oklahoma City the previous day had attracted up to 10,000 people, an all-time record for a rally at the

state Capitol. The congregation, which earlier had vigorously applauded Bishop Slattery's remarks, responded to Father Medina's announcement with a standing ovation.

Father Medina estimated that 500 to 600 of the 900 people present were illegal immigrants. "It was very encouraging and very emotional to hear how strongly our Bishop is speaking out at unjust legislation," said the priest, a native of Mexico who was ordained in 2002.

Although St. Francis Xavier Church has the largest number of

Hispanic parishioners in the Diocese, several Tulsa parishes offer Spanish Masses each weekend. The Hispanic Apostolate celebrates Mass and offers youth ministry, workshops, leadership training, marriage and adult formation and continuing education to at least seven parishes and missions in rural parts of the Diocese.

The Diocese of Tulsa has an estimated 60,000 Catholics, but Bishop Slattery has said the number might be double that if all the illegal immigrants who are not registered in parishes were to do so.

Ongoing problems in trying to unify all Diocese of Tulsa Catholics have preoccupied the Bishop for several years. In February, he said, "We have two dioceses now. I'm the bishop of the Hispanics and the bishop of the Anglos, and we should start thinking about possibilities of bringing them together."

He represents all the Americas - North, Central and South - on the Supreme Committee of the Pontifical Societies, which oversees the Catholic Church's evangelization efforts all over the world.

Clash between Islam, West called inevitable unless both change

By ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Catholic News Service

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. - Jihad and suicide bombers, bin Laden and terrorism. That image of Islam, prevalent in the West, may not be representative of the majority of Muslims in the world.

But neither is it a false image, says Archbishop Cyrille Salim Bustros, an expert on Christian-Muslim relations who currently serves as head of the Melkite Diocese of Newton, Mass., and spiritual leader of all Melkite Catholics in the United States.

While visiting the Melkite communities in Miami and Delray Beach in March, he spoke at St. Thomas University on the "clash of civilizations" between Islam and Christianity.

Archbishop Bustros was born in Lebanon, studied in Jerusalem and was head of the Lebanese Archdiocese of Baalbeck from 1988 to 2004. He said the current conflict is not about religion but about "the different forms of structuring society and the relationship of religion to the state."

While Islam has many different interpretations and no central arbiter of doctrine, such as the pope, he said, most Muslims are taught to interpret the Quran literally. Following its precepts, they divide the world into Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb - the land of Islam and the land of war, the land conquered by Muslims and the land yet to be conquered by Muslims.

Like Christians, Muslims are obligated to

"convert nonbelievers." Unlike Christianity, however, "the doctrines of Islam dictate war against unbelievers." Jihad, or holy war, is justified as self-defense whenever Islam is threatened - whether by a conquering power or an offensive cartoon.

Most Muslims do not take those interpretations of Islamic teaching as far as Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, Archbishop Bustros said. But "the concept of nonviolence is absent from Muslim doctrine and practice," he added.

Although Islam calls itself a religion of peace, the peace it preaches is the literal interpretation of Islam, which means "surrender to the will of God."

"The peace in Islam is based on the surrender of all people to Islam and to God's power based on Islamic law," Archbishop Bustros said. "They have to defend this peace of God even by force."

Islam also is an "absolutist faith" that merges religion and politics - quite a different understanding from the Western

concept of the separation of church and state.

"In the Islamic conception, there is no separation between God and Caesar. Caesar is governing in the name of God," Archbishop Bustros said.

Complicating matters is their view of the West not so much as a Christian society but as materialistic, corrupt and immoral.

"Muslims see their opponents as the godless West. They are convinced of the superiority of their culture and obsessed with the inferiority of their power," Archbishop Bustros said. "Muslims fear and resent Western power and the threat which this poses to their society and beliefs."

Today, many Muslims see themselves "as victims of a widespread anti-Muslim prejudice comparable to anti-Semitism," he said.

That worldview, combined with the large number of unemployed people between the ages of 15 and 30 and the ease with which religious and political leaders can exploit their religious zeal, explains the existence of suicide bombers.

"He has no future. He has no work. He is convinced that is the only way to win the war against the infidel," Archbishop Bustros said.

Not that it is impossible for Christians, Muslims and Jews to live together, the archbishop said. Although all three faiths have engaged "in deadly combat for power, land and souls" for most of the past 1,400 years, Islam does not view Christians and Jews as infidels.



Boy plays in Pakistani village

A boy plays in a village outside Mirpur Khas, Pakistan. With help from the Lower Sindh River Development Association, an organization supported by Catholic Relief Services, his family members are working their own fields, free of the control of a landlord for the first time. The development association has helped people to achieve freedom from a landowners system that has left many people as virtual slaves. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

'Gospel of Judas' paints alternate portrait of Jesus' betrayer

WASHINGTON (CNS) - A gnostic writing long thought to have been lost, the Gospel of Judas, was put on display April 6 at the National Geographic Society in Washington.

The document, a third-century Coptic translation of what had originally been written in Greek before 180 A.D., paints Judas in a more sympathetic light than his well-known role as Jesus' betrayer in the canonical Gospels.

In it, Jesus said Judas would "exceed all" of the other disciples, "for you will sacrifice the man that clothes me" - a reference to Judas' impending betrayal of Jesus. It is also an allusion to gnostic belief that held the spirit in higher esteem than the body, and that, through the liberation of Jesus' body, his spirit would be freed.

The Gospel of Judas was mentioned in a book condemning heresies that was written by St. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, France, in 180 A.D.

The find, though, was touted at an April 6 press conference as one of the three most significant discoveries of sacred

writings of the past century, along with the Dead Sea Scrolls, thousands of fragments of biblical and early Jewish documents discovered between 1947 and 1956, and the Nag Hammadi Library, a collection of 50 texts found in Egypt in 1945.

In the Gospel of Judas, "Judas is portrayed as the only disciple who knows Jesus' true identity," said Gregor Wurst, a professor of Catholic theology at the University of Augsburg in Germany and one of the chief translators of the Gospel of Judas from the Coptic.

Passionist Father Donald Senior, president of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, said it was doubtful the Gospel of Judas would shed new light on the New Testament Gospels or serve as a source of inspiration to rival them.

The New Testament canon "was not chosen by some elites" without regard to how early Christians used the sacred texts available to them, Father Senior said. The canonical Gospels had already enjoyed wide use because they "nourished" early Christians, he added.

But as to whether the Gospel of Judas would give insight into gnostic thinking, Father Senior said the answer was "emphatically yes." He later said there would always be questions about why a member of Jesus' inner circle would betray him.

Marvin Meyer, a Bible and Christian studies professor at Chapman University in Orange, Calif., and another chief translator, said it was interesting to note that - as opposed to the canonical Gospels, which are Gospels "according to" - this document is a Gospel "of."

It is clear that neither Judas nor the Evangelists actually wrote the books that bear their names, Professor Meyer said. But what is less clear is whether the Gospel of Judas is "a Gospel 'about' Judas or a Gospel 'for' Judas."

The Gospel of Judas, which contained three additional Coptic documents, was unearthed in El Minya, Egypt, in the 1970s. An Egyptian trader in such antiquities tried to sell them in the United States but could not get the price he sought.

A brief explanation of gnosticism

WASHINGTON (CNS) - An understanding of gnosticism is key to making sense of the newly unveiled Gospel of Judas, a gnostic writing put on display April 6 at the National Geographic Society in Washington.

Early Christians used the term to describe various sects that arose in the second century which exalted arcane knowledge, mixing Christian belief with pagan speculation and theories. "Gnosis" is the Greek word for knowledge.

Repudiated as heretics, gnostics claimed that salvation could be obtained only through the knowledge and acceptance of certain divinely revealed mysteries which they alone possessed.

Until the 20th century most of what was known about gnosticism came from the anti-gnostic writings of Christian theologians of the second and third centuries.

That has changed since 1945, when an ancient library of about 50 gnostic works in Coptic, including the so-called Gospel of Thomas, was discovered in a cemetery near the modern Egyptian village of Nag Hammadi.

Pope says Nazi brutality helped him decide to become a priest

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY - In a meeting with young people, Pope Benedict XVI said he decided to become a priest after witnessing the brutality of the Nazi regime in his native Germany.

While his vocation came naturally to him, the pope said he had to seriously ask himself about priestly celibacy and had doubts about whether he could be a simple pastor to simple people.

The pope's reflections, the most personal since his election to the papacy a year ago, came during a question-and-answer session April 6 with some 40,000 Rome youths in St. Peter's Square.

The annual pre-Easter event included songs, dance, prayers and testimonials. This year it also featured short film clips of Pope John Paul II, who initiated the youth meetings many years ago.

Pope Benedict, seated in a chair in the late-afternoon sun, fielded questions from young people on topics like science and faith, sexuality and marriage and the development of his own vocation.

The pope said he grew up "in a very different world" of Nazi Germany.

"The Nazi regime told us in a loud voice: 'In the new Germany, there will no longer be priests or consecrated life. We don't need that anymore. Find another profession,'" he said.

"But precisely in hearing these strong voices, I understood, looking at the brutality of this system and its inhuman face, that there was a need for priests."

As a boy, Joseph Ratzinger was enrolled by school officials in the Hitler Youth movement, but at a certain point he stopped going to



Pope Benedict XVI prepares to escort a group of young people carrying the World Youth Day cross to the tomb of Pope John Paul II after a Q&A session April 6. (CNS photo)

meetings.

He said his own vocation was driven by two other factors: an appreciation for the beauty of the liturgy and "the beauty of knowledge," including knowledge of God and the Scriptures.

Naturally, he said, there were problems to resolve in the path to the priesthood.

"I asked myself if I would have the capacity to faithfully live celibacy for my entire life," he said. He also recognized that by nature he was more theoretical than practical, and that being a good priest involved pastoral contact.

"There was a need to be always available

for young people, the elderly, the poor, and to be simple with the simple people. ... So I asked myself if I would be able to live all this and not just be a theologian," he said.

The young people in the square reacted in different ways to the pope's spontaneous remarks. While groups of grade-schoolers giggled on the steps of the basilica, older youths listened attentively.

Responding to a question about sexuality and marriage, the pope said it was important to remember that marriage "is not an invention of the Church." For millennia, he said, cultures have recognized that men and women are created for love and marriage.

The problem today, he said, is that a consumer society has falsified these traditional values and wants to prevent people from living according to God's plan.

"So we have to have the courage to create islands, oases, and then great areas of Catholic culture, in which one lives this design of the Creator," he said.

The greatest challenge of our age is secularism, a way of presenting the world as if God does not exist, he said.

In answer to a question about science and faith, the pope cited "the great Galileo," who saw a connection between the world created by God and the science of mathematics.

Naturally, the pope said, no one can devise an experiment to prove that a single intelligence created the world, but such a conclusion seems more and more compatible with what people know through reason.

The greater the human capacity to understand the world through science, "the greater appears the intelligent design of creation," he said.

In that sense, he said, faced with the question of God's existence, the Church has chosen the more rational and human path - recognizing a great intelligence behind all creation - and rejected "irrational" explanations that would see creation as a chance occurrence.

The pope added that the real challenge to the faith is the question of evil in the world and its compatibility with the plan of the Creator.

"And here we really need the God who became flesh and who shows us that God is not only mathematical reason ... but also love," he said.

Couple raising awareness of Sunday-best behavior at Mass

BALTIMORE (CNS) - When people are guests in someone's home, they most likely practice their best manners and teach their children to do the same. If they were a guest in God's house, their manners might be 10 times better.

John and Joan Scornaienchi, parishioners of St. Louis Parish in Clarksville and Church of the Resurrection in Ellicott City, are etiquette and protocol consultants. It's their mission to raise awareness of personal behavior in social and professional interactions through their company, Ambassador Protocol.

"We view our mission to advance civility as a calling from God and welcome the opportunity to do His work," said John Scornaienchi.

They are in the planning stages

of offering training to places of worship and other Catholic organizations that will include tips on Mass etiquette.

Although they witness many well-mannered families and well-behaved children in church, the Scornaienchis believe that more support and attention need to be directed to the way things are supposed to be.

Sometimes a Mass is filled with distractions: latecomers, talkers, misbehaving children and people leaving early.

"Everything in life has rules, including church," said Joan Scornaienchi.

"How can we pray if we are also watching children run up and down the aisle?" she asked. "We need to remind adults what we learned as children, and then teach our children to treat God with respect. If we do not teach

children respect in God's house, how can we expect them to behave at school, in sports or while driving?"

As public speakers, the Scornaienchis are familiar with distractions from an audience. They offer protocol and etiquette training at corporate sites, schools, restaurants, civic meeting places and churches.

"Proper etiquette is about relationship building and can apply to all areas of your life," said Joan Scornaienchi.

Here are some of the guidelines offered by the couple:

- Attire: The idea of "Sunday best" should be honored; churchgoers of all ages should dress conservatively. Coat and tie are appropriate for men, but not required. Women should wear modest dresses, skirts and slacks; no tank tops, short skirts or tight-

fitting clothing.

- Arrival: Arrive at least 10 minutes before Mass begins. This helps reduce distractions and provides time to get settled. Latecomers should wait to be seated by ushers so as not to disrupt the service and the congregation.

- Entering the church: It is optional to bless yourself with holy water, but as a sign of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, genuflect before taking your seat. Slide over to the center of the pew to accommodate others who arrive after you.

- Quiet time: The liturgy is not the time to socialize with friends or prepare the offering envelope. Instead, sit quietly or pray. Turn off cell phones and pagers.

- Kneeling: Respect for the Eucharist demands that we kneel without leaning back on the pew.

Be careful not to drop or bang the kneelers. If ill or disabled, it is acceptable to sit.

- Sign of peace: People usually shake hands or exchange a quick kiss, but if you have a cold or cough, you can politely say "Peace be with you," without shaking hands.

- Communion: Receive the Eucharist with reverence, bow slightly and respond "Amen." If receiving the host by hand, place the left hand over the right (or opposite if you are left-handed) and raise your arms slightly. Gum or candy should never be in your mouth when taking the host.

- Leaving the church: The final part of Mass is singing a closing hymn. Leaving before the hymn ends is inappropriate. Genuflect toward the altar before leaving the pew or at the end of the pew.

Spirituality will be focus of Stewardship Day at Bishop Kelley

A parish priest in Indiana who for the past decade has been appearing nationwide to promote true stewardship in the Catholic Church will make a stop in Tulsa next month to give the keynote address at the second annual Diocesan Stewardship Day.

“Tending the Garden of Stewardship” will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 6 at Bishop Kelley High School.



Father Daniel J. Mahan

Bishop Edward J. Slattery will celebrate Mass at 10:30 a.m., followed by Father Daniel J. Mahan’s talk at 11:15 a.m. His topic is “Stewardship as Spirituality.”

The day also will include lunch and a series of afternoon workshops, a priests-only discussion and a laity round table discussion. Cost is \$15 for lay persons and \$10 for clergy and religious. RSVPs to 294-1904 are

requested by April 28. Also, registration forms have been mailed to all parishes.

“The process of authentic stewardship is really taking hold, not only internationally but here in our Diocese as well,” said Bob Gisler, director of the Office of Stewardship and Development. “At whatever level one is in their discipleship, this will be a great opportunity to learn about the fruits of this ministry based on an attitude of gratitude.”

In an April 4 telephone interview from St. Louis Church in Batesville, Ind., Father Mahan said he is looking forward to the Tulsa visit because people here and around the country are coming to a deeper understanding of what stewardship truly is, and he enjoys nurturing its growth.

“Stewardship is more important than many people think. It’s not just a way of the Church finding the resources to pay its bills, or finding people with the time and talent to administer our ministries but a means of renewal for the Church based on a way of life deeply rooted in Jesus Christ

May 6 workshop schedule

Four workshops will be offered in two afternoon sessions of the second annual Diocesan Stewardship Day May 6 at Bishop Kelley High School.

At 1:15 p.m., participants can select from Youth and Children’s Stewardship; Getting Started; the Spirituality of Stewardship, and Hospitality – Becoming a Welcoming Parish. The latter panel will feature stewardship committee members from Church of St. Mary, Church of the Madalene and St. Henry Church in Owasso.

Also at 1:15 p.m., priests will be invited to a roundtable discussion led by Father Matt Gerlach,

pastor of St. Catherine Church and a member of the Diocesan Stewardship Council. The topic is “The Importance of Being on Board,” and priests will discuss ways to make stewardship a part of their own lives and how to bring its tenets to bear on the practicalities of parish life.

After a break at 2 p.m., the four lay group workshops will be repeated. After another break at 3 p.m., the concluding laity round table discussion will run until 4 p.m., when there will be a closing prayer.

For information, call 294-1904 or email bob.gisler@dioceseoftulsa.org.

Himself,” the priest said.

Although he is pastor of a vibrant parish with 1,500 families and a parish school, Father Mahan said that he increasingly is asked to speak to groups such as the one that will gather May 6. More and more Catholics are coming to realize that embracing stewardship as spirituality fosters “an attitude about the Lord and His goodness and being thankful each and every day in a way that takes the responsibility for what

comes with those blessings.”

He said that “Stewardship - A Disciple’s Response,” a pastoral letter issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1992, has become the bestselling pastoral letter ever. The document rarely mentions money but rather discusses the importance of people “undergoing a conversion of the heart and the need to follow the Lord wholeheartedly. No other response will do because of all the things God has done for us.”

Father Mahan is a native of Indianapolis who graduated from St. Meinrad College in 1984 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1989. He completed graduate studies in Rome the following year.

In 1996, he began his national stewardship ministry and serves as director of formation with the summer and winter sessions of the Institute for Stewardship and Development of the International Catholic Stewardship Council.

Harder *Continued from page 1*

learn he plans to continue to help out at the Chancery.

“He is one of the most hard-working and competent men I have ever had the honor of being associated with,” said Msgr. Patrick Gaalaas, vicar general. “He loves the Church. He loves the Church.”

Dr. Harder was a U.S. Navy pilot for nine years before retiring because active duty kept him away from his family. “I didn’t want the children raised in a one-parent household, and I’m glad I made the change. There were so many things going on in the kids’ lives, and I felt I owed them my presence.” He and his wife, Ramona, have five children, including Father Kenneth Harder, co-pastor of St. John University and St. Francis Xavier parishes in Stillwater, and 10 grandchildren.

Dr. Harder remained in the Naval reserves while he earned a Ph.D. in English with a specialty in medieval literature at the University of Maryland in

1970. He taught for 28 years at Missouri Southern State College, retired in 1998, and within three weeks had enrolled at the University of Tulsa School of Law. Many years earlier, as a novice in the Benedictine community of Subiaco Abbey in his native Arkansas, he studied four years of matrimonial canon law.

Dr. Harder first worked for the Diocese of Tulsa in 1999, when Msgr. Dennis Dorney asked him to serve on the Marriage Tribunal on which his son, Father Harder, now serves.

The former professor currently is teaching a course for the Pastoral Studies Institute on the art and churches of Rome in preparation for a mission trip this summer to be led by his former pastor at St. Clement Church in Bixby, Msgr. Daniel Mueggenborg, director of admissions of the North American College in Rome. Dr. Harder made the same trip with Mrs. Harder, Msgr. Mueggenborg and others from the Diocese of Tulsa in 2004 and has said, “I went on a trip and came back from a pilgrimage.”

Last spring, he developed a power-point presentation on the Death of a Pope and the Election of a Pope that he was finalizing just as Pope John Paul II died and Pope Benedict XVI was chosen as his

successor.

“Dr. Harder has an amazing mind with a great variety of expertise,” Bishop Slattery said.

When he became Chancellor in 2000, Dr. Harder said energy and enthusiasm are second nature to him and always have been. “A six-pack and a LA-Z-BOY recliner are not my idea of a good life,” he said. “Working hard and making a contribution, that’s a good life.”

In his “retirement,” Dr. Harder will return to volunteer in the Marriage Tribunal and also will assist Father James White in the diocesan archives.

Mr. Johnson is scheduled to be ordained to the permanent diaconate next spring.

The Christ the King parishioner is a native of Granite and earned a bachelor’s degree in finance from the University of Oklahoma in 1978. He worked for Johnson & Johnson McNeil Laboratories and also as a strategic planner for architectural and engineering firms. He returned to school to earn a master’s degree in international relations from Oklahoma State University-Tulsa.

He and his wife, Margaret, who is a stockbroker, have a 10-year-old son, Patrick.

Priest’s redeployment reduces Saint Francis chaplain corps

With Father Robert Cain called up for his third tour of duty with the U.S. Marines in Afghanistan last month, Saint Francis Hospital briefly had only one chaplain on duty, down from the usual three.

Father Cain, a member of the U.S. Navy Reserves, had served at Saint Francis since last spring, when he returned from a previous deployment. Father Joseph Thoonkuzhy, who had been a chaplain at the south Tulsa hospital since 1998, retired to his native India last month.

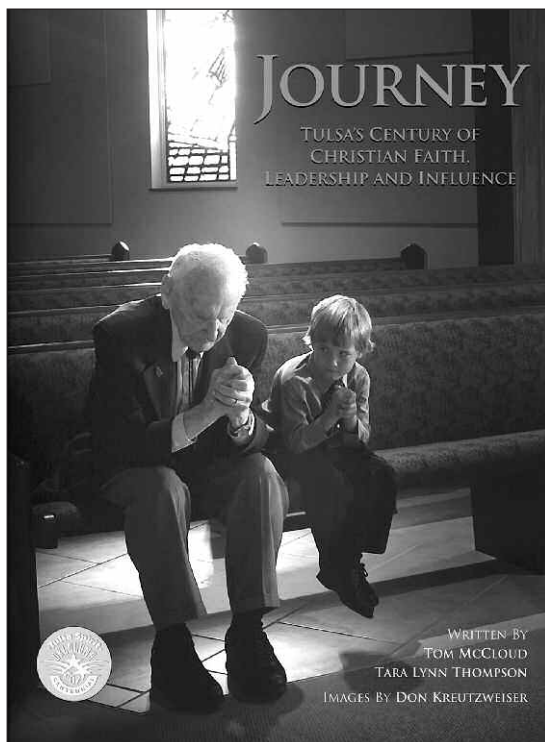
For a time, only Father John Choorackunnel was on hand to minister to between 600 and 800 patients each day.

“We’re not doing too badly; Father John is a real worker and he likes to visit patients and frequently celebrates Mass,” said Sister Barbara Ann Gooding of the Religious Sisters of Mercy who also provide pastoral care to the Saint Francis community.

As of April 3, a new priest – Father Peter Igwilo – joined the chaplain corps, Sister Barbara Ann said, with the approval of Bishop Edward J. Slattery. The native of Nigeria most recently has been serving in Hackensack, N.J.

“We are working on getting a third one, but he is working on getting a visa to come to the United States,” she said. “Soon we hope to be up to our normal number.”

**Diocesan
briefs**



Book cover of 'Journey, Tulsa's Century of Christian Faith, Leadership and Influence.'

May 4 day of prayer, concert

A new book on Christianity in Tulsa that includes contributions from and articles by Catholics will be unveiled at a National Day of Prayer that will include the choir from Christ the King Church.

The Catholic singers will lend their voices to a 1,000-member choir that will perform at the National Day of Prayer and Oklahoma Centennial to be held May 4 at the Mabee Center in Tulsa. The Catholic choir will be one of the featured musical groups to perform during the evening of the day-long event.

The day also will be the kick-off for sales of "Journey, Tulsa's Century of Christian Faith, Leadership and Influence," which includes contributions from Father James White, historian of the Diocese, regarding the Catholic Church in Tulsa and its influence on Christianity and the community. Another section, citing influential individuals, features Msgr. James Halpine for his ecumenical work and Sister Therese Gottschalk for her leadership of St. John Medical Center. Two pages identify all Catholic parishes in the city.

The coffee-table books sell for \$50 and will be available at the prayer day and at Catholic Book and Gift Store, 3141 S. Yale.

The day has been designated an official Oklahoma Centennial Celebration event and begins with a 7:30 a.m. National Day of Prayer breakfast. At 11 a.m., former Tulsan Kelly Wright, Washington D.C.-based Fox News correspondent, will discuss his experiences as a Christian reporter. Booths from many Christian business and ministry groups will be open.

The Centennial Celebration Concert will be at 7 a.m., as choirs from city churches sing to celebrate the state's birthday and the day of prayer. For information, contact McCloud Media, 307-2323.

Deacon Barnes to retire

Deacon Robert Barnes, who has dedicated his entire diaconal ministry to the people of Blessed Kateri Parish in Roland and to the larger Catholic communities in Webbers Falls, Cookson and Sallisaw, will retire as of May 29, the 18th anniversary of his ordination.

Bishop Edward J. Slattery accepted Deacon Barnes' petition for retirement on March 20, the Feast of St. Joseph.

For a period beginning in 1994, Deacon Barnes served as parish life coordinator for the four Catholic Churches, which also include St. Joseph Church in Webbers Falls, St. John the Evangelist, Cookson, and St. Francis Xavier in Sallisaw.

A reception was being planned for Deacon Barnes and his wife, Phyllis, at Blessed Kateri Church in Roland.

Sister Marie Gerard to celebrate 60th jubilee

Sister Marie Gerard Donovan, OP, who is retired and tutoring and writing in Tulsa, will celebrate her 60th Jubilee in June.

A Mass will be held in Queen of the Rosary Chapel at Sinsinawa Mound on June 4, for her and 11 other Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters celebrating 60 years.

Sister Marie Gerard's home parish is Christ the King, and she is the daughter of the late James Leslie and the late Mary (Kirwan) Donovan. Her ministry has been dedicated to teaching, and she has served six dioceses in the United States.

In the Diocese of Peoria, Sister Marie Gerard taught at Trinity, Bloomington, 1946-1950.

In the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, she taught at Bethlehem Academy, Faribault, 1950-1956.

She also taught in the Diocese of Cheyenne at St. Mary High School, Cheyenne, 1956-1959 and 1969-1970.

In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Sister Marie Gerard taught at Dominican, Whitefish Bay, 1959-1969.

In the Archdiocese of Washington, the nun was a national teaching fellow in speech at Bowie State College (now University), Bowie, Md., 1970-1972, and was chairwoman of the newly formed department of speech and theater, 1972-1975.

She taught speech at Morris College, Sumter, in the Diocese of Charleston and retired as professor emerita.

Director of nursing sought

St. Joseph Residence, a 15-bed residential facility for individuals living with HIV and AIDS, is seeking a compassionate LPN or RN for its director of nursing.

Candidates must be able to handle the emotional, medical and spiritual issues of patients with a strong, caring heart. Experience in residential care a plus.

Mail resume to St. Joseph Residence, Attn: Joan Hayes, P.O. Box 6429, Tulsa, OK, 74148. Resumes can also be sent to jhayes@stjosephresidence.org or faxed to 587-3650.

First execution of 2006 scheduled

April 18 is the scheduled execution date for Oklahoma death row inmate Richard Alford Thornburg, Jr., 40, who would be the first prisoner executed this year.

He was convicted of the 1996 Grady County murders of James Donald Poteet, 51, Terry Lynn Shepard, 39, and Keith Alan Smith, 24. The three were shot to death and the house containing their bodies was set on fire after Mr. Thornburg tried to collect a drug debt.

Trial records state that on Sept. 28, 1996, Mr. Thornburg and accomplices Glenn Anderson and Roger Embrey abducted Marvin Matheson from his Grady County home and drove to the home of Mr. Poteet. There, Mr. Poteet, along with Mr. Shepard, Mr. Smith and Donnie Scott were held at gunpoint.

Mr. Thornburg gave Mr. Matheson a gun and ordered him to shoot Mr. Poteet, or Mr. Matheson himself would be shot. When Mr. Matheson refused, Mr. Thornburg shot Mr. Poteet. Mr. Matheson was then told to shoot Mr. Scott, again under the threat of death. He did so, wounding Mr. Scott in the chest. Mr. Thornburg and his accomplices then shot Mr. Shepard and Mr. Smith before setting fire to the house and driving away with Mr.

Matheson. Mr. Scott was able to escape the burning building.

Convicted in 1997, both Mr. Thornburg and Mr. Anderson received the death penalty. Mr. Embrey received one life sentence and two sentences of life without parole. Mr. Anderson's appeal is currently before the 10th U.S. Circuit Court. Mr. Thornburg has exhausted his state and federal appeals and is scheduled for a hearing before the state Pardon and Parole Board later this month.

He will be the first state death row inmate to be executed this year and the 80th since the state resumed the use of capital punishment in 1990.

If the execution takes place as scheduled, a prayer vigil will begin at 5 p.m. April 18 outside the front gates of the penitentiary in McAlester. Prayers will be offered for Mr. Thornburg and his victims, their families and the correction officers taking part in the execution.

The vigil is open to anyone who wishes to attend and will continue until the execution is carried out at 6 p.m. If your parish/community plans to host a prayer service to mark this execution, please contact Father Bryan Brooks, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Muskogee.

Food drive will benefit Charities clients

The Eastern Oklahoma Food Bank, which Catholic Charities uses weekly to provide food to needy clients, will be the recipient of Tulsa-area contributions to the National Association of Letter Carriers 14th annual food drive on May 14.

On that day, letter carriers across the country will pick up sacks of non-perishable food items that are left next to citizens' mailboxes or delivered to post offices. The second-Saturday-in-May event has become the largest one-day food drive in the United States.

Last year, a record 240,419 pounds of food was donated in the Tulsa metropolitan area and distributed to needy children and adults, said Ruth Odom of the Tulsa Area United Way, which is a co-sponsor of the event.

"We utilize the Eastern Oklahoma Food Bank weekly, and

our programs have significantly benefited from its efforts," said Kevin Sartorius, Catholic Charities' director of mission development. "The letter carrier food drive is a very worthy effort by the postal service to help those in need."

"We have a growing need in northeastern Oklahoma, and holiday food bank donations run out about now," said Cherry Lowther, food drive coordinator. "Thanks to the great giving spirit of people in this area, we're hoping to top last year's record, so we're asking people to mark their calendars now."

Whatever food is donated in a community stays in that community to serve local needs. Reasor's Grocery Store again will supply grocery bags that letter carriers deliver to many households a few days before the drive.

Tim Sullivan Family Life Director

Courage members heroically confront same-sex attraction

There are some modern-day heroes out there. You might have to look hard, but they're there. I've been communicating with some of them for the last year.

The heroes I'm talking about are members of Courage, a support group for men and women with same-sex attraction (SSA) who desire to live chastely.

There are more than 90 chapters of Courage around the country.

About a year ago, I became involved with an on-line group of Courage members who were studying the Theology of the Body, an approach to understanding sexuality developed by the late John Paul II. Rather than try to give you more information about Courage, I would prefer to let the words of the members speak for themselves. The following quotes are taken from our on-line discussions.

With regard to how SSA developed in their lives, several of the male members of our discussion group were sexually abused by their fathers. As one member wrote, "Due to my own issues of abuse, I still regard myself as lacking anything worth giving. And as far as God the 'Father' goes, I find myself choking on contempt and derision."

In response, another member says, "I went for YEARS refusing to say the Lord's Prayer. I think for my first five years as a Catholic, every time we came to the Lord's Prayer during Mass, I'd consciously keep my lips tight during the prayer while everyone else was reciting it." Just saying the words "Our Father" was too painful for both of these men.



Some members overcame their aversion to all fathers. As one man summarized his development, "I think I have to view my same-sex attraction as a temptation to re-experience my own childhood sex abuse. In seeking a 'new' Father, a 'new' Mother, I am given a chance to decline to participate in the past horror and the chance to accept God's invitation to be a member of a New Family. In so many ways I can say that I have found in the Church of Christ my true family."

With regard to accepting their same-sex attraction, group members eventually came to see that it was their unique cross, just as other people have their own special burdens in life. One man put it this way: "I'm not sure I'd like to have someone else's life. I might desire to have what someone else has, but to pay the price for it or exchange problems? I wouldn't know what the other guy is going through."

As for relationships with those of the opposite sex, there were different perspectives in our group. One man said he had to focus on overcoming the fears he had in his interaction with men before he could think about relationships with women. Along similar lines, another man wrote that the attraction to women is there "but dormant and obscured by the reality that the same-sex attraction person has never been enabled to grow up and be, in the core of his being, a man."

A third male had a different outlook, observing that "What I understand today is that missing part of me IS masculine but I can't find it or get it from another man. I need, with God's assistance, to finish His creation of me as a man among men. I believe that God will give me a woman who will love me, trust me, and teach me that there is another man deeper inside me

who can fulfill the promise of Genesis."

The members of our Courage discussion group clearly found great strength in their faith. One member wrote: "As a man with same-sex attraction and who has not, as far as I know, been called to mutual self-giving through matrimony, I think I am called instead to live out this self-giving through my relationship with Christ and with His Church."

In a very moving reflection, one participant said that he related more strongly to Jesus in Gethsemane rather than Calvary, because in the garden the night before He died, Jesus was so alone. This man wrote: "The isolation, the aloneness of Gethsemane, on my especially dark nights, that is, a night that speaks so passionately to me of our Lord's true experience of loneliness beyond all loneliness. And when I think of this suddenly I am myself not quite so alone."

Another Courage member echoes the thought: "In fact, I'm simply not alone. I am not alone in my pain or my suffering or my anything. I am one among many, many sons and daughters of God. Hey, I always wished I had a brother. Well, now I have a brother in Jesus. And now I have many, many brothers and sisters, in Christ, in Courage, in the Church, in which subsists the Body of Christ."

One of the Courage members who had a painful relationship with his earthly father found that "God in His mercy used the Church to introduce me to new images of fatherhood. Some of these images were saints. Above all there was St. Joseph."

Bishop *Continued from page 3*

have noted certain communities where the music at Mass has tended more toward entertainment than toward prayer. The choir or cantors consciously draw the attention of the congregation to their performance, and really stirring performances are rewarded by the congregation's grateful applause.

In this case, the placement of the choir, cantor or musicians in the most visible and prominent part of the sanctuary not only proves to be a distraction to the congregation, but provides a kind of center stage for a concert of religious music. When this happens, the music becomes the center of the experience, and the sacramental transformation of the worshipper is reduced to his or her being merely inspired, the liturgical action of the Mass becoming itself a distraction.

IV. I am insistent that our people be everywhere given the proper understanding of the Mass as a real sacrifice, by which the faithful are given access to share in the unique, unrepeatable and all sufficient historic sacrifice of Christ on Calvary.

(From the March 19, 2006 edition of the EOC)

We must be aware that musical entertainment is not the only thing which can compromise the prayerful integrity of the Mass. The Eucharist is just as compromised whenever we use the liturgy to highlight an agenda or cause other than the worship of the Father. This is true no matter how positive or useful the other causes may seem.

For this reason, I want to remind the faithful of the Diocese that the Mass stands alone as a complete action in itself.

It is that perfect sacrifice from which the Church derives Her life; thus the liturgy must never be used as an opportunity to teach, as the context for a history or an art lesson, as the

background for a concert of sacred music, neither to build community nor to foster parish identity. All these things are good, but all of them are either in support of the Mass or are derived from the Mass, and to use the Mass to foster something less is a serious abuse.

■ I want to discourage in the strongest possible way, those "teaching Masses" when the celebrant stops the sacred action in order to make an historic or theological point of explanation.

■ I also want to discourage any extraneous comments or commentaries on the readings or the parts of the Mass. The proclamation of the readings, for example, ought not to begin with an introductory comment provided by the lector, "In this morning's first reading, the Prophet Isaiah consoles the Israelites . . ."

It is incomplete to see the Mass only as a meal

(From the March 19, 2006 edition of the EOC)

If we lose our sense of personal sin, then gradually we lose our perception that the sacrifice of the cross - made present and real to us in the here and now of our daily struggles - is necessary for my redemption, and from these first two losses proceeds the more telling loss, our loss of gratitude for God's gift of His Son. This is the more telling loss, because gratitude is what impels us to holiness.

Hence it is critical for us as Catholics who are in the midst of a great struggle to recover our celebration of the Lord's Day to recover first our traditional and accurate understanding that individual holiness, our coming closer to God, depends directly on our appreciation of the sacrifice of the cross and the enormous gap between God's faithful redeeming love for me personally and my indifferent and inconsistent love for

Him. The crucifix reveals this stark contrast.

Intimacy with the Father comes through the cross

(From the March 19, 2006 edition of the EOC)

If you ask me how we come to a greater intimacy with God, I would have to tell you that by our own efforts we cannot even come to an awareness of our own sins, much less an appreciation of how their ugliness disfigures the soul. Should you ask me, I would warn you that you cannot start with yourself. If you do, you will end with yourself still in the center of your awareness, only more confused and more frustrated. Start instead with Christ on the cross.

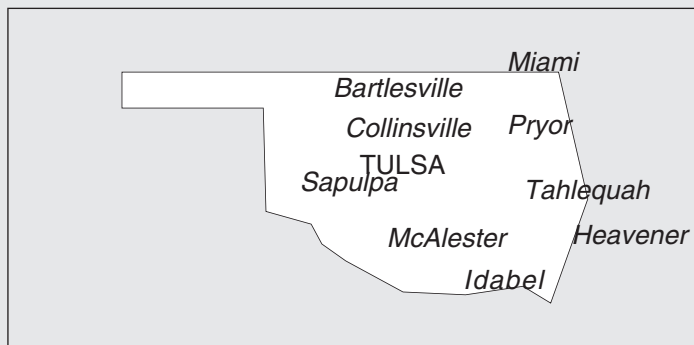
Come in silence before the image of the Crucified One and wait patiently there focused on the dying Christ, until your heart and mind have both grown silent and when you have finally found that peace, listen for the still, quiet voice of the Lord who will speak to you and try to convince you of His love. If you are patient, you will hear His voice.

■ I am asking that every Catholic church and chapel should have a crucifix prominently displayed on or above or near the Altar of Sacrifice. My hope is that by preserving the ancient tradition of a crucifix in every place we worship near to the Altar of Sacrifice, the faithful will be better able to experience the intrinsic unity between the Sacrifice on Calvary and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

■ I would also like to see every Catholic home graced with one or more images of Christ Crucified. There should be one displayed in the living room or den, set up where the whole family can see it.

■ And finally, I would suggest that every adult purchase a small notepad or notebook for jotting down the spiritual insights which come during his or her regular times of prayer.

MISAS EN LA DIÓCESIS EN ESPAÑOL



TULSA

Iglesia de Pedro y Pablo
1436 N. 67th East Ave.
P. Tim Davison, Párroco
Misa los Dom. 11:30 a.m. y
6:00 p.m.

Iglesia de la Resurrección
4804 S. Fulton
P. Steve Austin, Párroco
Misa los Dom. 1:00 p.m.

Xavier/ N.S. De Guadalupe
2434 E. Admiral Blvd.
P. Jose Maria Briones, Párroco
Misas Dominicales a las 7 a.m.,
10:30 am, 12:00 p.m.,
1:30, 5:00, 7:00 y 8:30 pm.

Iglesia de San Pio X
1727 S. 75th E. Ave.
P. Michael J. Knipe, Párroco
Misa los Domingos a las 5:00 p.m.

Iglesia de Santo Tomás Moro
2720 S. 129 E. Ave.
P. Carl Kerkemeyer, Párroco
Misa los Domingos a las 12:30 p.m.

BARTLESVILLE
Iglesia de San Juan Evangelista
715 S. Johnstone Av.
P. Festus Maliwa, Párroco
Confesiones a las 4:00 p.m.
Misa Domingos a las 4:30 p.m.

BOSWELL
Iglesia de San Judas
Rt. 70 E. 11 St.
Misa Bilingue los Domingos a
las 11:30 a.m.

COLLINSVILLE
Parroquia de Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús.
1009 N. 19th. St.
P. Patricio Bránquin, Párroco
Misa los Dom. a la 1:00 p.m.

DURANT
San Guillermo
802 University Boulevard
P. Valerian Gonsalves
Oficia P. Juan Manuel Guerrero
Misa los Sábados 1ro y 3ro del
mes a las 7 p.m.

IDABEL
San Francisco de Sales
13 S. E. Jefferson
P. Don Tramel, Párroco
Misa los Dom. 12:00 p.m.

McALESTER

Iglesia de San Juan
300 E. Washington
P. Leonard Higgins, Párroco
Misa los Domingo a las 12:00

MIAMI
Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús
2515 N. Main
P. W. Gregg Elliott, Párroco
Misa los Domingos a la 1 p.m.

MUSKOGEE
Iglesia de San José
321 N. Virginia St.
P. Bryan Brooks, Párroco
Misa los Sábados a las 7:00

OWASSO
Iglesia de San Enrico
8500 N. Owasso Expressway
P. Richard Bradley, Parroco
Misas Domingos del mes a las
1:00 p.m.

PRYOR
Iglesia de San Marcos
1507 S. Vann St.
Misa todos los Sábados las
7:30 p.m.

SAPULPA
Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús
1777 E. Grayson Ave.
P. Stuart Crevcoure, Párroco
Misa los Domingos a la 8 a.m.

STILLWATER
Iglesia de San Francis Xavier
623 S. West St.
P. Ken Harder, Párroco
Misa los Domingos
a la 1:00 p.m.

TAHLEQUAH
Iglesia de Santa Brigida
807 Crafton St.
Misa los Domingos; 1ro., 2do.
y 3ro del mes a las 5:00 p.m.

HEAVENER MISIÓN DE POTEAU
515 Main St.
P. Neil Pezzulo
Misas los Domingos 2do. y 4o.
del mesa las 7:00 p.m.

Comunicado de prensa de Monseñor Eduardo J. Slattery Obispo de Tulsa

Cuando consideramos la pregunta de la inmigración y el control de fronteras es imprescindible que la hagamos desde nuestra perspectiva como discípulos de Jesús, quien fue exiliado cuando niño y recibido con sus padres como un inmigrante en una tierra extranjera, aunque él no tuvo documentos y no podría obtenerlos.

Sus sufrimientos los vemos en centenares de millares de niños en nuestro medio, nacidos en familias que han cruzado la frontera de este país sin papeles o documentación, buscando sólo un mejor vivir y proporcionar salud y educación a sus hijos. La situación y el afán de millones de familias indocumentadas, viviendo en las sombras y presionados por su mentira y su temor a la deportación, debe ser tanto nuestra preocupación como lo es la necesidad de restaurar las normas legales en nuestras fronteras para proteger nuestra nación contra un ataque por infiltración.

Nosotros admitimos libremente que nuestro sistema actual de inmigración y el control de fronteras no funciona, y no ha funcionado por muchos años. Nuestras leyes actuales de inmigración son poco realistas e impracticables. Estas leyes ampliamente no responden a los mejores intereses ni de los Mexicanos ni de los Americanos. Quizás nunca lo hicieron. Pero ahora no es el tiempo de hacer esta situación intolerable, peor todavía, pasando a una legislación menos realista e impracticable, tal como está siendo considerado ahora en el Congreso de los Estados Unidos.

Los costos económicos y personales para aplicar algo de esta legislación sería catastrófico. La deportación de millones de nuestros amigos y vecinos traería a sectores enteros de la economía de nuestra nación a un estancamiento. Poco cemento sería derramado, pocos edificios se levantarían, la construcción y el techado disminuiría hasta un estancamiento y nuestras industrias de servicios se pararían. Al mismo tiempo, esta legislación tendría un efecto devastador en nuestras comunidades. Las familias serían divididas, los



padres serían separados y sus niños, ciudadanos naturalmente nacidos de este país, serían alejados del único hogar que ellos conocen. Esto es intolerable y como Obispo de Tulsa y Pastor de muchas de estas familias no lo puedo aceptar.

La severidad de esta legislación como ahora se considera es revelada propensamente por provisiones en esta ley que haría un crimen el proporcionar asistencia pastoral, social o médica para aquéllos que entre nosotros no puedan demostrar su condición legal aquí.

Los maestros, enfermeros, médicos y trabajadores sociales podrían ser acusados de un crimen grave por la simple ofensa de proporcionar ayuda aún básica a inmigrantes sin documentos.

Nuestra fe nos llama a servir a estos necesitados con la misma amor pronta respuesta y el mismo amor generoso que mostraríamos a Cristo si El mismo viniera ante nosotros enfermo o cansado o necesitado. Hacer de la caridad un crimen hará a los que la viven, criminales y si llegara a ser un crimen oír las confesiones de un católico que no tiene papeles, entonces yo llegaré a ser un criminal. Si llega a ser ilegal bautizar a los niños de los que han cruzado en este país ilegalmente, entonces yo llegaré a ser libre y alegremente otro ilegal. Cuando llegue a ser un crimen amar al pobre y atender sus necesidades, entonces yo seré el primero en ir encarcelado por este crimen, y yo pido a Dios para que cada sacerdote y cada diácono en esta diócesis tenga el valor de caminar

conmigo a esa prisión.

Seguramente esta nación, tan grande como lo es, y tan consciente como lo es de nuestras raíces en gran parte de inmigrantes, podrá proponer reformas justas que aseguren nuestras fronteras, restauren las normas de ley y nos protejan contra el terrorismo, mientras permita todavía a trabajadores entusiastas y vigorosos venir a nuestro país a construir nuestras ciudades y segar nuestras cosechas. Aliento a nuestros líderes de la nación a trabajar en conjunto con los líderes de México y Canadá para que propongan una reforma justa de inmigración que quizás permita al indocumentado cambiarse a un estatus legal a la vez que se proporcione un sistema seguro, ordenado y justo para recibir a los que desean trabajar aquí y contribuir al bienestar de esta nación.

Yo recuerdo la promesa de Nuestra Señora De Guadalupe quien ofreció su amor maternal a los que vivieran en paz en esta tierra. Coloco bajo su protección a todos esos trabajadores indocumentados de nuestra comunidad y le pido a su Hijo Jesús que nos dé la fe para buscar el Reino de Dios, la esperanza y el valor para creer en el amor del Padre por nosotros, y por la caridad verdadera por la cual el amor del Padre se revela y la Iglesia de Cristo se santifica.

Les doy mi bendición: en el Nombre del Padre y del Hijo y El Espíritu Santo.

(Traducción por Padre David Medina Director del Apostolado Hispano)

Confirmation student collects cleats for Nigerian youth

By JEANNE KRAWCZYK

BROKEN ARROW - Sarah Salazar, a competitive soccer player, has gone through a lot of cleats in the 12 years she has been playing soccer. She is fortunate that her family always has had the resources to provide her with all the equipment she needs to pursue her dream of playing soccer at the national level.

But when Sarah became aware of the lack of equipment for many other aspiring soccer players, she decided to do something about it. She collected 30 pairs of cleats to send to a priest in Nigeria who will distribute them to the young people of his parish.

"A close friend of our family who has been involved with soccer for many years had extra cleats that were not worn. My dad and I discussed the idea of collecting cleats and giving them to those in need," Sarah said.

The majority of the cleats were donated by Sarah's teammates and friends. "My teammates and friends have been very supportive; they have reached out to other friends to help out," Sarah said. "I shared the thought that the same pair of cleats I played soccer in will be on the feet of kids who are now playing in their bare feet."

Sarah's interaction with soccer coaches from other countries prompted her to think on an international scale. "I have become very close to my Nigerian soccer coach and trainer, Jesse Williams, and have also been influenced by other Nigerian and European coaches throughout my soccer career," she said. "This influence has opened my eyes to the importance of soccer in underdeveloped countries. The thought of helping kids on the

other side of the world who are less fortunate seemed really special."

Despite the kind gesture, there were roadblocks along the way as the Americans tried to ship the cleats to Nigeria.

Coach Williams has family in Nigeria, and he warned Sarah about sending the cleats through the regular postal service. Because of corruption in the Nigerian government, packages do not always reach their intended recipients.

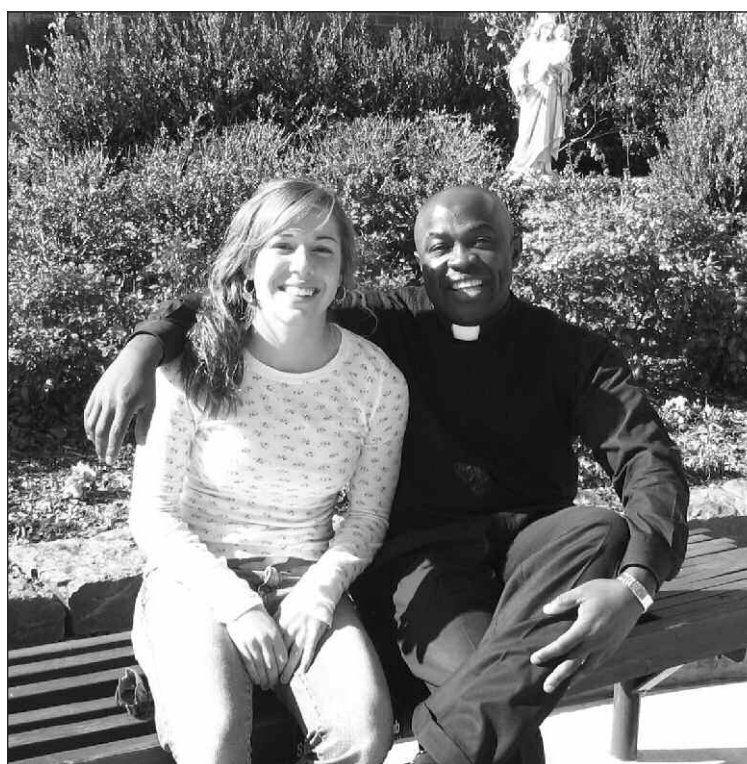
That's when Sarah approached Father Valentine Ndebelie, associate pastor at the Church of St. Benedict, where the Salazars are parishioners. "My dad, my brother and I met with him and asked him to help us find a contact in Nigeria so we could be sure the cleats would actually reach the kids," Sarah said.

Father Valentine, a former soccer player himself, put them in contact with Father Celestine Nwakwuo, a Dominican priest and pastor of St. Albert the Great parish in Obosi, Anambra State, Nigeria.

"He is a good soccer player who has played all his life. He's also a very good referee," Father Valentine said of his friend, Father Celestine.

Sarah's father, Ken, was in charge of shipping the package. Everyone grew frustrated when they realized it would cost \$745 to insure delivery of a 50-pound box to Nigeria. That is when they discovered a charitable program called Passback.

The program was created in 1989 by Brendan and Mike Moylan, founders of Eurosport. Passback collects used but still playable gear and sends it to



Sarah Salazar has developed a special friendship with Father Valentine Ndebelie, who helped her find a home for the soccer cleats she collected.

teams or organizations that cannot afford even the most basic soccer equipment. Last year it donated more than 30,000 cleats, shin guards, shorts, jerseys and socks.

The cleats were shipped through Passback at the end of March, but Sarah is still waiting to hear whether they have arrived. "The communication system is not as high-tech in Nigeria, so even though Father Celestine has e-mail, he can't send messages out regularly," Mr. Salazar said.

Sarah, a junior at Broken Arrow High School, will be confirmed on May 10. Her mom, Brenda, has been helping with the confirmation classes. The confirmandi had many discussions about how to reach out to others and share the gifts

God has given them.

These discussions helped solidify Sarah's plan to find a way to help others enjoy the game she loves. "My parents remind us that our family has been blessed with the game of soccer and the people in it. They have always stressed the importance of giving back to the game in other ways besides playing," she said.

The whole family helped with the project. "My brother and sister helped me collect and clean the soccer equipment," Sarah said. Her brother, Carl, and sister, Claire, are students at All Saints Catholic School, and they both share their sister's love for soccer.

The Salazar children are practicing or playing soccer usually every day of the week. "Some people call us the 'crazy

soccer family,' but it is the way we enjoy spending time together," Mr. Salazar said.

Balancing soccer and Church has not been an issue. "Actually, it has been a great opportunity for us to teach our children that God and family come before anything else in life," Mrs. Salazar said. "We have traveled to many states for soccer tournaments and have visited many different Catholic churches. We think this has enriched our children's faith."

Sarah recently was selected to the women's Under 17 national team and attended a training camp at the Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif., in March. In a game against Germany, Sarah scored a goal and helped her team defeat Germany 3-2.

She is one of only two soccer players from Oklahoma currently playing on a national team. She also plays soccer for her high school and was aggressively recruited by some of the country's top colleges. She recently made a verbal commitment to attend and play soccer at the University of California in Los Angeles. Its women's soccer team has made it to the NCAA finals the past two years.

Father Valentine said he is impressed with Sarah's accomplishments, and he is surprised by the number of girls who play soccer in the United States. "Back in Nigeria it is not such a popular sport for the girls."

While waiting for word on whether the cleats have reached their destination, Sarah continues to collect cleats for Father Celestine. She already has another 33 pairs, along with shin guards, socks, jerseys and shorts that she would like to send.

As movie release nears, PSI to offer 'Da Vinci' courses

In April and May, the Pastoral Studies Institute will offer several courses about the upcoming movie, "The Da Vinci Code," based on the best-selling novel by Dan Brown that is slated for nationwide release May 19. All classes will be at Church of the Madalene.

Father Jim Caldwell, associate pastor at Christ the King Church, will teach two classes on the book and movie. The first, "Debunking the Da Vinci Code," will be from 7-8:30 p.m. April 27. Prior to the movie's release, Father Caldwell will discuss the novel from a Catholic perspective and prepare potential movie-goers for inaccuracies in the book related to Catholic teachings.

Father Caldwell will offer another course from 7-8:30

p.m. May 30. In this class, he will lead a discussion of the film version of the book from a Catholic perspective. This class will be available on the ITV system, which allows non-Tulsa area parishes to participate in a live interactive discussion.

Father Jack Gleason, pastor of Church of the Madalene and director of vocations, will teach a class from 7-8:30 p.m. May 16. Father Gleason will try to prepare Catholics for what they will likely see in the film version of this work of fiction. This class also will be available on the ITV system.

Father Caldwell also will be a panelist for a discussion about the movie at 7:30 p.m. May 18 at Barnes and Noble bookstore on 41st Street east of Yale Avenue.

The novel has sold 40 million copies worldwide. Its premise is that the Catholic Church has engaged in a vast conspiracy to hide the "fact" that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, and they had a child whose blood line continues to the present day.

To counter claims made in the book and movie, a web site, www.jesusdecoded.com, was launched March 9 to provide accurate information about the life of Jesus, the origins of Christianity and Catholic teachings. The web site is sponsored by the U.S. bishops' Catholic Communication Campaign.

When the "Da Vinci Code" book came out, PSI offered four well-attended classes on the subject in 2004.

Education news briefs



Bishop Kelley seniors Ashley Hurney and Karina Tittjung prepare to cut the cake at their letter-signing April 4. The girls will play volleyball together at St. Gregory's University.

SGU signs two Kelley seniors

St. Gregory's University in Shawnee has signed two Bishop Kelley seniors to play volleyball beginning in the fall. This will be the school's second season to participate in volleyball at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) level.

Karina Tittjung and Ashley Hurney signed their letters of intent April 4. Karina graduated from All Saints School in Broken Arrow and is a parishioner of St. Anne Church. She was captain of Bishop Kelley's 5A state championship team in 2005. "I am so blessed to have this opportunity to further my Catholic education as well as play volleyball," Karina said.

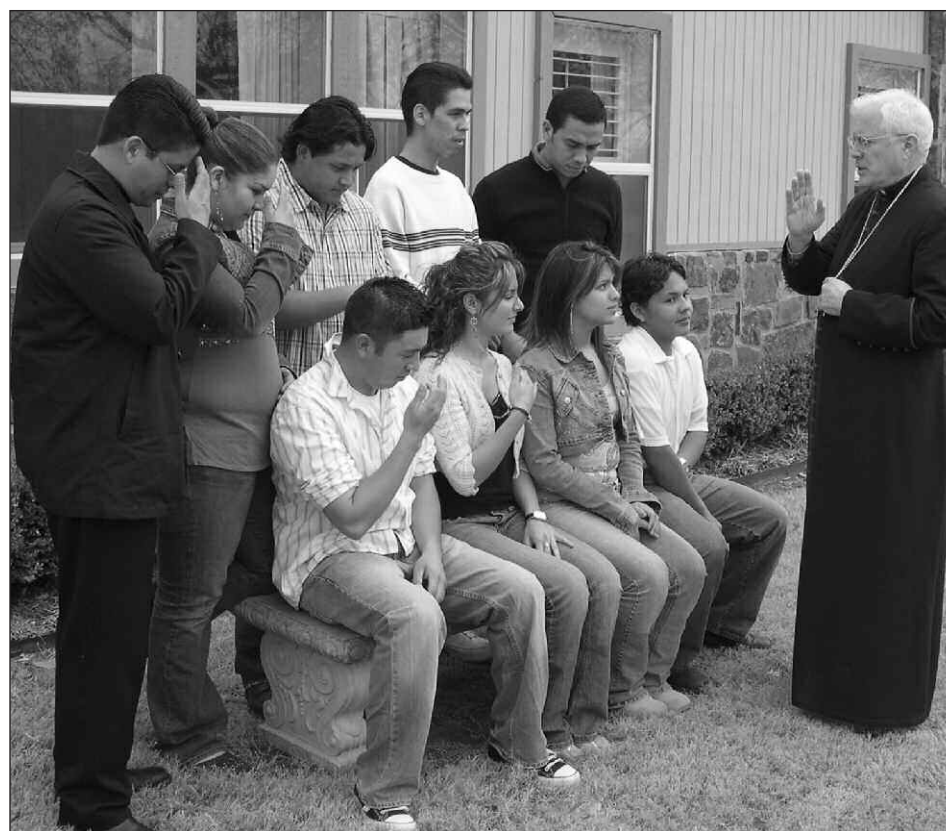
Ashley Hurney attended Holy Family Cathedral School before entering Bishop Kelley, and she is a parishioner at St. Bernard Church.

Marquette principal leaving

John Kraus, principal of Marquette Catholic School, announced March 15 he has accepted a position as president of schools/director of administration at St. Mary's-Colgan Catholic School in Pittsburg, Kan. Mr. Kraus will leave Marquette at the end of the school year.

His new position will include administration of the parish schools for Our Lady of Lourdes Church. About 550 students attend the parish's preschool, elementary school, middle school and high school.

Mr. Kraus said he will miss many things about Marquette, especially the faculty and students. "The snapshot I will keep is our students' faces as they eagerly rush up the hall to be the first one in the room at 7:45 a.m.," he said in a letter to Marquette families announcing his departure.



Bishop blesses young people

A youth group from Sts. Peter and Paul Church came to the Chancery to receive a blessing from Bishop Edward J. Slattery prior to leaving for a visit to Sacred Heart Mission in Heavener. Father David Medina, at left, director of the Hispanic Apostolate, said the young people want to make mission trips within the Diocese of Tulsa to serve needy people.

Study suggests fine-tuning needed for Church sex abuse prevention programs

Staff and CNS reports

WASHINGTON – A study to determine the main elements of child sex abuse prevention programs is among the recommendations made by the U.S. bishops' Office of Child and Youth Protection to fine-tune Church policies.

The results of the study would be shared with the 195 U.S. dioceses and Eastern-rite eparchies, said the recommendation.

The recommendations are contained in a report released March 30 on how dioceses and eparchies were implementing in 2005 the bishops' policies contained in the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People." The recommendations were made by the child protection office and approved by the National Review Board composed of 13 lay people and established by the bishops to monitor compliance with the charter.

Sex abuse prevention programs, also called safe environment programs, provide education to children, parents, clergy, Church employees and volunteers about child sex abuse and ways of preventing it.

"Here in the Diocese of Tulsa, since the implementation of the safe environment VIRTUS 'Protecting God's Children' for adults in February 2003, 7,640 adults have attended the educational training session," said Monica Skrzypczak, director of religious formation and coordinator of the VIRTUS program for the Diocese.

"We have offered 317 VIRTUS sessions in 66 different sites, and we have had a very supportive response from adults in both the parish and Catholic school

settings," Miss Skrzypczak said. "In fact, some of the most useful feedback comes from the adults who have taken the VIRTUS class."

"Some go in reluctant to sit through a three-hour session, but when it's over the facilitators receive many compliments and thanks," she said. "Several times, people who were abused as children - not necessarily by Church personnel - will step up and say this is the first time they were willing to admit what had happened to them."

She said the Diocese also offers a self-safety guidance program for children who attend religious education classes at parishes. "We are completing our second year of this program with optimistic numbers."

A third program is specifically designed to educate parents about talking with their children about self-safety issues. The "What Do I Say Now?" program is implemented at the parish level with trained facilitators. Approximately 1,000 parents have attended this program in the Diocese since 2004, Miss Skrzypczak said.

Such programs are required by the bishops' charter.

Nationwide, the 2005 audit showed that implementing the safe environment program was the biggest problem regarding compliance with the charter, as 21 dioceses and eparchies had not completed their training programs by the end of 2005.

The Diocese of Tulsa was found to be in full compliance with all the articles of the

charter.

Another recommendation asked dioceses and Eastern-rite eparchies to review the membership of their local review boards to assure that the majority of the voting members are not Church employees. The charter requires that a majority of voting members must be lay people chosen from the wider Church and civic communities.

No diocese or eparchy that participated in the audit was cited as violating this norm.

Local review boards board advise bishops on sex abuse prevention policies and on actions to take regarding clergy accused of child sex abuse.

Other recommendations include:

- Reviewing telephone response procedures in diocesan offices "to assure victims that they will receive a prompt response and that their calls will be handled confidentially."

- Developing procedures for when dioceses and eparchies are first informed about an abuse case through law enforcement or child protection agencies.

- Having future audits return to the on-site format rather than the 2005 rules which allowed many dioceses to self-report by answering a questionnaire.

- Establishing a uniform audit period for the 2007 audits.

- Conducting audit preparation workshops around the country.

- Developing a computer-use policy for people who use the computer systems of dioceses and eparchies.

Youth make pilgrimage to largest outdoor cross in U.S.

Texans like to brag that “everything is bigger in Texas.” In one particular instance, they might be right. On March 26, 13 youth from the Church of St. Benedict and their chaperones traveled to Texas to see the largest outdoor cross in the United States.

The group of pilgrims included David Alsbrook, Robbie Dale, Hannah Daniel, Emalie Hoar, Janine Jenkins, Will McIntosh, Kelleigh McIntosh, Erica Muncy, Boris Pallares, Ellen Peterman, Heather Rost, John Paul Stephan and Joseph Stephan. Adult chaperones included Deb Malcom, youth director at the Church of St. Benedict, Drew Daniels, Michael Stephan and Chris Walker.

They were joined by Father Michael Colwell, vicar general and vocations director for the Diocese of Amarillo, and five of his students who are discerning their vocation. Michael Stephan and his family met Father Colwell when they were living near Amarillo during the time the cross was being constructed.

The 190-foot cross, built in 1995, is located on Interstate 40, just west of Groom, Texas, and can be seen up to 20 miles away. It is estimated that about 10 million people pass by the cross each year, and there are about 1,000 visitors to the site daily. The cross, built by Steve Thomas and his wife, Bobby, weighs



Seventeen parishioners from the Church of St. Benedict traveled to Texas to see the largest outdoor cross in the United States. (Photo by Michael Stephan)

1,250 tons.

Surrounding the cross are the 14 Stations of the Cross. Each station features a life-size bronze statue, a plaque and Scripture verse. Father Colwell and his students led the group through the outdoor Stations of the Cross.

Janine Jenkins, a freshman at South Intermediate High School in Broken Arrow, had never participated in Stations of the Cross outdoors. “I felt God was closer to me out there. Walking through the stations really brought into perspective how much Jesus did for us,” she said.

The visitors spent about two hours at the site before continuing their pilgrimage by traveling about 40 miles to Amarillo, where they spent the night at the Pope John Paul II House of Discernment. They had time for recreation, including basketball and billiards, before having dinner prepared for them by the young men living in the house.

“I loved being at the house with these young men. They welcomed us with open arms and welcome hearts,” Janine said.

After dinner the group gathered in the basement and watched “The Passion of Christ.” Then Father Colwell celebrated Mass, and the young people reflected on their experiences.

“For me, the best part of the trip was the ‘mini-retreat’ led by Father Colwell,” said Mrs. Malcom. “He was able to lead our kids through the stations and connect them to scenes in the movie. He really got them to think about what Jesus went through.”

The site also features a replica of an empty tomb, a full size replica of the shroud of Turin, a gift shop and chapel, which is still under construction. The site is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is no admission fee. (For more information, visit www.crossministries.net.)

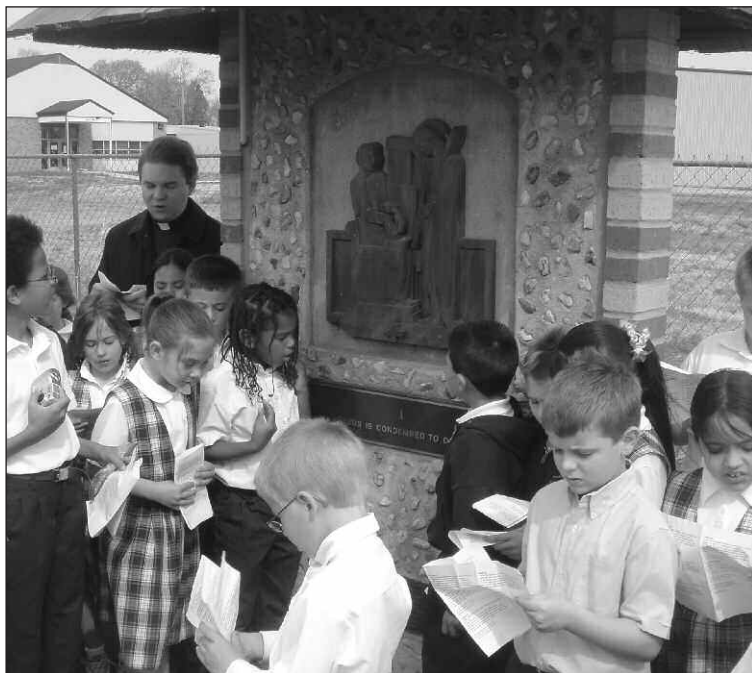
Holy Family students visit Via Dolorosa in B.A.

The first-, second- and third-graders from Holy Family Cathedral School visited the outdoor Via Dolorosa on the grounds of St. Anne Church in Broken Arrow April 5. The Via Dolorosa, Latin for “Way of Grief,” was built in 2003 and features the 14 Stations of the Cross.

The students prepared for their visit by learning about the Stations of the Cross in their religion classes. “Our Home and School Association purchased coloring and activity books for all the students who would be going to the Via Dolorosa,” said Michael Petzet, first-grade teacher. “For the week prior to our trip, we discussed each of the stations and its significance, giving the students an opportunity to color in their books.”

Father Michael Dodd, pastor of St. Anne Church and former associate pastor at Holy Family Cathedral, offered to lead the students through the stations after Father Matt LaChance, associate pastor of Holy Family Cathedral, had to leave town due to a death in the family.

The students reflected on each station and sang the “Stabat Mater



Father Michael Dodd leads students from Holy Family Cathedral School in the Stations of the Cross.

Dolorosa” as they walked between stations. The hymn reflects on the suffering of Mary during the crucifixion of Jesus. Its title translates from Latin as “The sorrowful Mother was standing.”

The children enjoyed a picnic lunch on the church grounds before returning to school. “It was a very

nice experience for all of us,” Mr. Petzet said.

The group was transported to St. Anne’s on a bus driven by John Santee, transportation manager at Cascia Hall. Father Bernard Scianna, headmaster at Cascia Hall, donated the use of the bus and driver.

Monte Cassino kindergartners make stage debut

Sharon McKee’s kindergarten class at Monte Cassino School put a lot of research and planning into their performance of “The Little Red Hen” March 31. Even by Hollywood standards, these budding actors went the extra mile to learn all they could about the story and their roles in the play.



Erin Milstlen, in her role as the Little Red Hen, plants grains of wheat, played by Aliye Hargett, Jacob Mailot and Nicholas Lucas, as their classmates look on.

“We read several versions of ‘The Little Red Hen,’ then compared and contrasted them to the play and each other,” Mrs. McKee said. The students also went on a field trip to Great Harvest Bread Co., where they made their own bread and learned how to grind wheat.

The students planted wheat, estimated and charted how long it would take to sprout. They measured and weighed wheat in the sensory and science center and learned that wheat is in most of their favorite snacks. The students even wrote and illustrated their own version of the story in their writing journals.

“This story is about cooperation, perseverance, sharing and kindness,” Mrs. McKee said. “It was such a fun play and a great learning experience for all of us.”

Parents, grandparents, siblings and fellow kindergarten students packed into the school’s performing arts center to watch the show. “The audience is usually almost full because we want the kids to experience performing in front of a crowd” said Janet Bassett, principal of the school’s Early Childhood Learning Center.

'God or the Girl' a surprisingly reverential treatment

By HARRY FORBES
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) - It's finally happened: Reality TV has found religion.

In the A&E cable channel's new five-part "God or the Girl," four young men with a calling to the priesthood must decide whether to enter the seminary or serve God as laypeople.

The series will air, appropriately enough, during Easter week, with the first two episodes premiering on Easter, April 16, 8-10 p.m. CDT. (The third and fourth hours debut Monday, April 17, 8-10 p.m. EDT, with the finale Sunday, April 23, 9-10 p.m.)

Apart from the slightly sensational title - actually a misnomer as none of these devout men would ever consider abandoning God - the series created by Darryl Silver, Stephen David and David Eilenberg and executive-produced by Mr. Silver and Mark Wolper offers a surprisingly reverential treatment of a profound life passage.

In its essentials, the series is as serious-minded as a public television documentary on the subject, albeit fitted out with all the trappings of "Survivor."

The four are a varied bunch. There's Joe Adair, a 28-year-old procrastinator from Ohio who has already been in the seminary twice but can't decide about a lifelong commitment, particularly when there's a warm and attractive girl who could be waiting for him in Germany. He's so infuriatingly indecisive, however, you may just want to shake your television set.

His frustrated mother Palma's disingenuously soft-pedal approach masks a fervent desire for her last available son to take the cloth.

There's Steve Horvath, a 25-year-old Virginian who chucked his lucrative consulting job, luxury home and girlfriend to become a campus missionary at the University of Nebraska. Steve is probably the most emotional of the four, his quivering sensitivity coming to the fore when he reluctantly accepts the challenge to go solo to Guatemala, where his worries range from the crime rate to his lack of Spanish. (Never mind that he'd be accompanied by a camera crew.)



Steve Horvath is one of four Catholic men with a calling to the priesthood featured in the new A&E reality series "God or the Girl." The five-part special will air beginning on Easter. (CNS photo/A&E Television Networks)

The 24-year-old Mike Lechniak from Scranton, Pa., felt a calling at age 17, but has such a natural rapport with sympathetic girlfriend Aly that it's clear why he's highly conflicted.

And finally there's Dan DeMatte, a 21-year-old Ohio Dominican University student with an obvious talent for youth ministry who lives with nine other celibate young men in a house they call "Fort Zion." His relationship with

girlfriend Amber is as amiable as Mike's is with Aly. The tug between collar and wedding ring promised by the title seems most vivid with Mike and Dan.

The series careens among all four, as Joe sets out for World Youth Day in Germany, hoping to contact 24-year-old Anne - though once there, days go by before he calls her.

Mike must make up his mind quickly when the opportunity for a good teaching position materializes, and goes on retreat to sort things out in his mind. You may wonder at the pressure techniques of Father Francis Pauselli, his mentor, who seems to push way too hard for his charge to ditch Aly and become a priest. ("The two of you can still be friends," he assures Mike.)

At one point, Steve must break the news of his calling to his fraternity chums, and then set off with great trepidation - especially after reading the government's security warnings - for a brief ministry in Guatemala. Despite the avuncular support of local missionary Father George Puthenpura, some, if not all, of his fears will be realized.

The sincerity of all four is never in doubt even if their respective worldviews sometimes border on the naive, as when Mike describes his occasional yearning to hug his girlfriend as "sick and disgusting."

The program touches only lightly on the sex abuse shadow. "Everyone will think you're a child molester," remarks Steve at one point, anticipating outsiders' reactions.

We won't ruin the surprise of which of the four (if any) actually decides to enter the seminary, but the filmmakers have done all in their power to hook viewers, with standard pre-commercial teases and cliffhanger closes. And if those methods build a large audience for such an atypically religious-based series, then why not?

The filmmakers shot footage on a fifth subject who will appear on the forthcoming DVD version only.

An occasional crass expression and a few sexually related words and innuendo are the only flags among otherwise unobjectionable content.

Harry Forbes is director of the Office for Film & Broadcasting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Vampire author Anne Rice turns to exploration of Christ's life

CHRIST THE LORD: OUT OF EGYPT

By Anne Rice. Knopf (New York, 2005) 322 pages, \$25.95.

Reviewed by CHARLOTTE MILLER
Catholic News Service

"Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt" by Anne Rice is a remarkable book. First, it is remarkable because the author is a popular writer of vampire novels who left the Catholic Church when she was 18.

Second, it is a riveting account of Jewish life in the first century in Egypt and Israel. Third, it is a mind-stretching exploration of Jesus, Mary, Joseph and their extended clan.

First, then, the author: In an afterword Ms. Rice explains how she researched the book. Readers should begin here because I cannot imagine reading the novel without first reading the explanation of her scholarship (absolutely meticulous and in-depth) and her testimony about her return to faith.

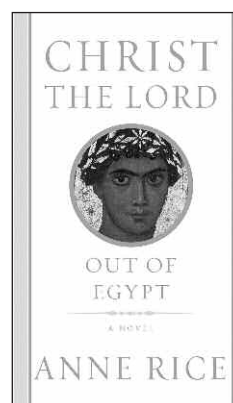
Ms. Rice's return was, in fact, facilitated by her study. She was curious about who Jesus was and is. In her pursuit of truth about Jesus, an academic and historical investigation,

she bumped into "the Truth." Like C.S. Lewis, her intellect led her to belief, and then her heart changed. Contrary to what some popular evangelists say, intellectual assent can precede the change (the metanoia) of the heart.

She expected the arguments of skeptical New Testament scholars would demonstrate "that Christianity was, at heart, a kind of fraud." Instead, she found that their arguments were "reached on the basis of little or no data at all."

I have tremendous respect for her willingness to examine so dispassionately, and then set aside a position with which she had been in fundamental agreement. She read, thought and concluded these writers were wrong; Jesus really is who the church has said he is. And she has consecrated her work to Jesus.

The first century historical setting gives a vivid picture of Jewish life with many new insights. (For example, Jewish homes, which I had previously imagined as one-room mud



bungalows, actually may have been quite lovely, with beautiful rugs on the dirt floors and decorative borders on whitewashed walls.)

Finally, and importantly, the characterizations of Jesus, Mary and Joseph are nothing short of inspired. With these three, as with the historical setting, my imagination had been limited to only what the Gospels relate. This book freed me to reflect upon what they might have been like (not as a matter of faith but as a matter of love).

Ms. Rice presents Jesus as a boy eager to understand himself, exploring who he was, knowing he was different, but required to grow up as a child.

There is so much more to say, but the bottom line is this: Believers (and nonbelievers) need to read the book. Believers will enjoy the narrative and maybe explore some new ways of thinking.

And nonbelievers? Well, as I think of their reading, I find myself doing what Jesus' Uncle Cleopas did throughout "Christ the Lord": I am laughing a low and happy - very happy - laugh.

Charlotte Miller is an English teacher at Mount St. Mary Academy in Little Rock, Ark.

By MARILYN DUCK

BROKEN ARROW - When she slipped on the ice this winter and fell into snow outside her small apartment at St. Anne Church, Felicia Miron had about half an hour to contemplate whether she might freeze to death. Not for the first time.

The 88-year-old has lived on the parish grounds of the Broken Arrow church since 1959. She came at the request of the late Father Robert Dabrowski, a survivor of the Dachau concentration camp who arrived in Oklahoma a decade earlier by invitation of Bishop Eugene J. McGuinness.

Like Father Dabrowski, Miss Miron survived the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939. But whereas the priest was liberated when the allies won the war, Miss Miron also endured the tyranny of the former Soviet Union. As a young woman, she and her family were deported from Poland to Siberia.

Neither Nazis nor Russians had any inclination to listen to Miss Miron's protest that she was an American citizen. It just gave rise to suspicions that she and her family were spies.

She was born in 1918 in Connecticut. Her parents had immigrated to America, but when Poland asked its emigrants to return home to help rebuild the newly independent Poland, devastated by World War I, Vincent and Justine Miron answered the call. "They did not ask me,"

said their daughter, who was 2 at the time.

She was sick the day the Nazis marched into the town in Poland where she grew up. Her family's house was close to the main road, and she remembers seeing a dead Polish soldier in the town cemetery. "The first night was terrible. The Germans stayed one month and gave the town to Russians. And they took over people's houses, my father's pension, my mother's business selling whiskey.

"I had to find some job because we didn't have any money. There was one girl, I remember, and I said, 'What are you doing?' She was a singer, and so

I was hired as a singer for those who belonged to the Communist Party. The girls all had to dress up like Ukrainians. We were in a government choir, we gave performances in different towns near the border (with Russia) to entertain the troops.

"I hated them."

In 1941, the Miron family was taken to Siberia on a train. The trip took a month. Her father, who suffered from asthma, died there; she and her mother survived, despite great hardship and severe illness. At one point, her mother was bedridden for a year after surgery, and she knitted garments that her daughter traded for potatoes.

After the war ended, the Polish government-in-exile in England demanded and obtained the release of Poles from the Soviet Union. Miss Miron and her mother left Russia on Good Friday and arrived in Poland on May 13, "someplace

In 1946, in Warsaw,
the U.S. ambassador
"came out to me and
took me to an
American flag right
there in the office,
and we recited the
Pledge of Allegiance."



Felicia Miron and Snowball

From America to Poland to Siberia to Broken Arrow

we said we never would return."

Three days later, Miss Miron was issued a ballot and was informed she was to vote for Josef Stalin, the dictator of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Refusing to vote could send her to prison for two years. "I was so scared. But I was an American citizen."

She made her way to the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw and demanded to see the ambassador.

Her initial requests were rebuffed, but as she continued, the ambassador somehow became aware of her presence. When he finally heard her story, "he came out to me and took me to an American flag right there in the office, and we recited the Pledge of Allegiance."

Remembering the moment brings tears. She collected

herself and said quietly, "Six months after, I came to America."

Poland's Communist government never granted her mother's request to return to the United States. After initially going to Boston, where Miss Miron's brother lived, she went to Chicago and finally to New York City - which was her mother's wish - because the family had many friends there from their time in Connecticut.

She met Father Dabrowski in the Polish-American community in Yonkers. She studied to become a licensed practical nurse; eventually the priest, a member of the Capuchin order, a branch of the Franciscans, came to the Diocese of Oklahoma, which suffered a shortage of priests.

Several years passed.

"Then Father wrote to me and said, 'I need a teacher for the kindergarteners.' I said, 'Father, I've gotten an apartment in New York, I have a good job, I just started working for a hospital.' And he said, 'But I need teachers.'"

"I didn't even ask how much he'd pay me. I came."

There she has remained. She has lived several different places on the church grounds and now lives in a tiny apartment in St. Francis Hall with Snowball, a cat who belonged to Father Dabrowski and may be as old as 26, according to Miss Miron. The priest passed away in 1996.

Miss Miron retired from teaching in 1972, after which she worked the night shift at a nursing home because she likes to be independent and wanted to pay her own way. "I always like to be with older people because I am getting old myself, and I understand them."

She has fond memories of many of her students, and former pupils frequently greet her at St. Anne's, where she attends daily Mass. She also likes to just sit in the church and pray. It was in preparation for one of these trips that she suffered the fall that could have taken her life this winter.

"Father Dodd saved me." On a Saturday, Miss Miron had gone out to clear ice so she would be able to get to church for Mass the next day. When she slipped and fell, she had nothing to hold onto to get the leverage she needs in order to stand.

"I couldn't get up for half an hour, and I kept praying, 'Mary, you are my mother, you must help me!'"

Finally, she scooted "on my behind" over to an old shelf in her small back yard and managed to stand, "I don't know how," walk to her door and enter the apartment. "I called Father Dodd, and I said, 'Father, I am at home, and I need help.' He said he'd be there right away, and he came running through the snow."

An ambulance took her to the hospital, where she was treated for hypothermia, and she was back in her apartment that night.

She is happy there, and content. Miss Miron said she pays no rent and doesn't spend money on anything except food and medicine. She simply doesn't see the need.

"After Russia, I am satisfied with anything."

"Father, I've gotten
an apartment in New
York, I have a good
job, I just started
working for a hospital.
And he said, 'But I
need teachers.'"

Connections

To let other parishes know what's happening in yours, please submit photos and news items to Connections, P.O. Box 690240, Tulsa, Okla. 74169-0240. Call us with news at 918-294-1904, fax us at 918-294-0920, or send e-mail to easterncatholic@dioceseoftulsa.org.

Another way to share the news is to add the EOC to your parish bulletin mailing list. We receive a few bulletins from outlying parishes, and it would be helpful to receive more bulletins to help us learn about news and provide a variety of information in Connections.

St. John will build senior housing complex

By **BARB HILGER**

COLLINSVILLE - St. John Health System announced April 3 that it will build a new senior citizen housing complex, named St. Teresa Villa, on the grounds of Francis Streitler Assisted Living, 523 N. 22nd St. in Collinsville.

The 41-independent living apartments with full kitchenettes will be built as part of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant, said Joy McGill of the St. John media relations office. The complex also will include an office, community room and laundry room.

The project, designed for low-income people age 62 or older, is to be completed in 2007. Individuals who wish to be considered for residency in St. Teresa Villa must complete a housing application and verify income status. When applications can be submitted is not yet known.

Coordinating the new center will be St. John Villas, the senior care branch of St. John Health System. "We are pleased to be the recipient of this HUD grant which will provide affordable housing for our elders," said Sister Catherine Hanegan, president of St. John Villas.

The villas carry on the mission of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother to continue the caring and healing ministry of Jesus Christ. St. John Villas currently operate at Francis Streitler in Collinsville, in Broken Arrow and Vinita.

The senior housing will be independent of St. Therese Catholic Church in Collinsville.

Busy Lent for Immaculate Conception, Poteau

By **BARB HILGER**

POTEAU - Immaculate Conception kicked off Lent with a lucrative fundraising dinner on "Fat Tuesday" Feb. 28, and the parish's youth group enjoyed an enriching Lenten retreat March 25.

The first annual spaghetti and meatballs fundraiser



Attending the Lenten retreat March 25 are, from left, Lillian Medina, Shelby Culver, Dannae Escota, Monica Gonzalez, Jorge Gonzalez, Teresa Marquez, Ramon Marquez, Alejandro Marquez. Top Row: Daniel Sanchez, Gabriel Sanchez, Susy Delgadillo, Christa Gonzalez and Darla Escota. Not pictured: Brooke Cox.

raised more than \$2,100 in about 11 days of tickets sales. Many volunteers and donations of food, money and time made the project possible and successful, organizers said.

"We started the day with a prayer and ended the day with a huge blessing," said Hilda Culver, a parishioner who had been awake since 4:30 a.m. eager to get the project under way.

"We began cooking and getting things ready at 8 a.m., and by 11 a.m., 101 spaghetti plates had been prepared and were on their way for delivery. The spirit and dedication of the volunteers was amazing. They set their eyes on the goal and went for it at unbelievable speeds," she said.

In a spirit of cooperation, members from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Spiro and St. Joseph Church in Stigler, mission churches of Immaculate Conception, also joined in and assisted. "This reflects a parish working together for a common goal," Mrs. Culver said.

The money raised will be used for the religious education and youth programs.

Several weeks later, the youth group's Lenten retreat included talks, a Biblical scavenger hunt, prayer, music, activities and a re-enactment of the Last Supper with an authentic Seder meal.

"The Last Supper was so cool," said Teresa Marquez. "I had never experienced anything like this before in my life," added Dannae Escota.

"The youth came in not knowing what to expect that Saturday morning. When they left at the end of the day, they left knowing the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of God," one parent remarked.

Krebs gears up for final phase of renovations

KREBS - Memory bricks are being sold at St. Joseph Church in Krebs in an effort to raise \$20,000 for the final phase of renovations to the 103-year-old church. St. Joseph's is the oldest Catholic Church in Oklahoma, and these

renovations are an effort to restore it to its original state.

The church has completed the first two phases of the renovation, which began in 2001. The building has a new roof and new carpet. The interior walls have been replastered, and the pews and altar rails have been refinished. Parishioners Elouise DeGriacomo and Jonathon Anderson repainted the statues and Stations of the Cross.

The final phase includes trim and window coverings for the original stained glass windows. Thirty years ago, the windows were covered with plexiglass for protection from the elements, but the plexiglass has crystallized and turned brown, making it impossible to see the stained glass.

Simon ton Windows in McAlester donated protective hard-tempered glass to replace the plexiglass coverings, an exuberant Father Leo Ahanotu said last month during a visit to the Chancery offices in Tulsa. The parish is looking for a carpenter to frame in the new glass.

A parishioner donated 500 bricks, and for \$30 donors may have up to three lines engraved on a brick, which will be placed in a walkway being laid between the church and the parish hall.

Money raised will help pay for the window trim, said Kay Smith, parish secretary.

Brick sales began in September, and 250 have been sold. Anyone interested in purchasing a brick or donating to the renovations may contact St. Joseph Church, P.O. Box 621, Krebs, OK, 74554.

The present church building was opened in 1903 and was built by Italian immigrants who came to the area to work in the once-thriving coal mines. Much of the restoration work has been paid for and performed by descendants of the early Catholics who built the sturdy red brick church.

The annual Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was begun by the early parishioners and continues to be one of the most colorful and festive of celebrations in the Diocese. Last year, Bishop Edward J. Slattery was on hand to help commemorate the 120th anniversary of St. Joseph's presence in Oklahoma.

Mass was first celebrated in a private home in Krebs in 1885 by Father Isidore Robot, O.S.B.



Children of St. Joseph Church in Krebs in traditional Italian dress process into church last summer for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The 103-year-old church is entering the final phase of its renovation project.