

# High praise for the Knights

## Claremore man, Tulsa teen honored at state convention

When a bishop needs help from lay people who are “both Catholic and patriotic,” he knows he can rely on the Knights of Columbus, Bishop Edward J. Slattery said in his homily at an April 30 Mass celebrated by Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran at St. Thomas More Church.

“There is no Catholic organization that I know of in the United States that has more influence on this country as Catholics than you, the Knights,” Bishop Slattery told a congregation that included many Knights of Columbus and their families. The Mass was held the weekend of the group’s 101st state convention in Tulsa.



Richard Schulte, Vice Supreme Master of the Fourth Degree, founded the Edmond Council in 1973.

Bishop Slattery and Archbishop Beltran joined the Knights and their wives for a banquet at the Radisson Hotel that included speeches and awards.

Bill Brasher of Claremore was named Knight of the Year. He and his wife, Marie, have attended St. Cecilia Church for more than 25 years and are affiliated with the parish’s Council #7395. He was selected for his “unselfish giving of his time” to activities that include a monthly breakfast and a candy drive for the mentally handicapped.

Jessica Harrison, a member of the Girl Scouts for 12 years and a parishioner of Church of St. Mary, was named Youth of the Year. She is a lector and helps choose music for Mass. Miss Harrison was nominated by Tulsa Council #13313, of which her father, Tom Harrison, is a member.

The Memorial High School sophomore told the audience that she “fell in love with what it means being Catholic, and I tell my Baptist friends they just don’t know what they’re missing,” a comment that drew strong applause. Miss Harrison will receive a \$1,000 college stipend from the State Council.

Archbishop Beltran, Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen, president of St. Gregory’s University, and Bishop Slattery all were given standing ovations.

Archbishop Beltran said the Knights of Columbus fulfill the ideals of the group’s founder, Father Michael McGivney, a 19th-century parish priest whose sainthood cause is under review by the Vatican.

Archbishop Beltran also reminded the Knights this is the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Oklahoma’s Father Stanley Rother in Guatemala and distributed special prayer cards. Bishop Slattery echoed earlier praise for the Knights and noted their history goes back to the “dark days” of the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Catholicism. “The Knights sit on the edge of your seats waiting to do the next thing that will be helpful,” he said, adding that the organization has “the strongest voice among the laity.”

He and Archbishop Beltran were presented with checks for \$2,187.48 for vocations. Bishop Slattery closed the banquet with a prayer.



Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran was the main celebrant at Mass.



Eric Robertson, a member of host Council #9668 and parishioner of St. Pius X, sings with his wife Donna during Mass.



At the altar, from left, are retired Deacon Jose Perez, who assists at St. Thomas More; Father Jim Caldwell, associate pastor of Christ the King; Bishop Slattery; Father Orencio Murrar, a Filipino priest who is new to the Diocese and is in residence at Sts. Peter and Paul; Archbishop Beltran; Father Marvin Leven, state Knights of Columbus chaplain; Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen, St. Gregory University president; Father Carl Kerkemeyer (behind the Abbot) pastor of St. Thomas More; retired Father Daniel Perlinski, a former state chaplain of the Knights, and Deacon Tony Tran of St. Pius X.

Father Jose Maria Briones, left, and Father David Medina spent a few moments in the garden just before the three-hour adoration began May 1.



The Linares family – Silvino, Areceli, Alejandra, Silvino Jr. and Jesus – stop on the steps.



Fathers Briones and Medina in the vesting room with Sister Gregoria Osorio, who prepared the candles that were distributed for adoration.



Altar server Oscar Rosales greets parishioners and hands them a program as they enter the church.

# After rally, Catholics gather to pray

Thousands of people who participated in the “Day Without Immigrants” rally spent the afternoon of May 1 at a public demonstration, but by twilight hundreds sought out the quiet of their Catholic church, praying for just immigration legislation.

Bishop Edward J. Slattery appeared during the second of a three-hour adoration and prayer service at St. Francis Xavier Church and Diocesan Marian Shrine and Expiatory Temple of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He delivered remarks in Spanish and also said the Rosary for Migrants.

Father Jose Maria Briones, St. Francis Xavier’s pastor, led the evening’s first hour, from 7 p.m.-8 p.m., followed by Bishop Slattery. Father David Medina, director of the Hispanic Apostolate, led the third hour, which concluded at 10 p.m. with a candlelight vigil.

Both pastors had spoken at the rally held at Tulsa’s City Hall that afternoon. Crowd estimates varied from 2,500 to double that figure.

Bishop Slattery, who did not attend the rally, said the priests reported to him that the atmosphere was “something more like a picnic atmosphere than a protest, with little children and babies in arms and people sauntering around with no hint of anger.”

At the adoration and prayer service that night, Bishop Slattery told the congregation the immigration issue is “more than

economic; it has to do with Americans embracing what the Mexicans and Hispanics can bring to this country, namely the exercise of their faith and their family values.”

The Bishop said the U.S. Constitution encourages people to exercise their faith publicly, and “I am urging the Mexicans not to be shy in executing their Catholic faith.”

The Catholic Church – nationally and locally – has been a vocal participant in the debate over how to fix the United States’ immigration system. Bishop Slattery and local pastors have followed the lead of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who oppose the most punitive legislation passed late last year by the House of Representatives. Several political analysts recently have said they think the House measure is probably moot.

The Congress is to return to the issue, but it is unclear what, if any, compromise may emerge.

Father Medina said that rumors of a massive roundup of illegal immigrants drove down Mass attendance at several churches, including St. Francis Xavier, St. Brigid Church in Tahlequah and St. Mark in Pryor the weekend of April 22-23, but rebounded by May 6-7, following broadcasts on Spanish radio that said the rumors were just rumors.