



## Even skeptics say pope won 'hearts, minds'

By CINDY WOODEN  
Catholic News Service

ISTANBUL, Turkey (CNS) - During his four-day trip to Turkey, Pope Benedict XVI, known for his precise and incisive words, showed he also was a master of the spontaneous gesture.

While his scholarly words in a September lecture in Germany offended millions of Muslims, his prayer in an Istanbul mosque surprised and delighted many of them.

### AN ANALYSIS

For papal watchers the contrast between the tones of his reference to Muslims and violence in Germany and his silent prayer in the Blue Mosque was not the only surprise. Pope Benedict was supposed to be the pope of strong words in contrast to Pope John Paul II, the pope of strong gestures.

The silent prayer facing Mecca, the site of

Islam's holiest shrine, also seemed to be in contrast to the predictions of pundits who assured the world that Pope Benedict would be more challenging than conciliatory with the world's Muslim believers.

Retired French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, a close aide to Pope John Paul and a member of Pope Benedict's entourage in Turkey, told reporters Dec. 1: "I would compare the visit

See POPE, page 6

### Christmas break

This 24th issue of the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic is the last for 2006. Publication will resume Jan. 7, 2007. The deadline for that issue is Dec. 29. The staff will spend December taking time away from work and also making plans for the new year. If necessary, breaking major news will be posted at [www.dioceseoftulsa.org](http://www.dioceseoftulsa.org).

In the meantime, we wish EOC readers a contemplative Advent and a joyous Christmas season.



Bishop Slattery greets parishioners of the new St. Joseph Church in Stigler prior to processing inside for the consecration of the building and celebration of its dedication Mass. (Photo courtesy Stigler News Sentinel)

## Stigler's first-ever Catholic church, St. Joseph, consecrated

By BARB HILGER

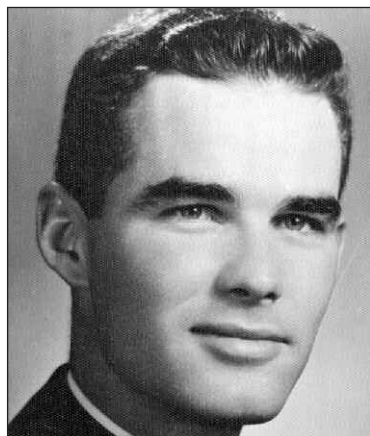
STIGLER - After nearly half a century of celebrating Mass in Stigler in a converted hardware store, the Catholics of LeFlore and Haskell Counties gathered Nov. 19 for the consecration of the first Catholic church Stigler has ever had. Bishop Edward J. Slattery consecrated St. Joseph Parish Church and its new parish hall and celebrated a nearly two-and-a-half hour Mass that featured so much incense the building's contractor feared the fire alarms would go off.

"Indeed it is a feather in my cap to stand before you today with a joy-filled heart and to thank God together with you for His countless blessings!" proclaimed Father

Charles Vincent, pastor of Immaculate Conception in Poteau as well as St. Elizabeth Seton in Spiro and St. Joseph in Stigler. He added: "We are privileged to celebrate this day and rejoice over it, because the Lord has done a marvelous thing through your cooperation and generosity."

Organizers had printed 80 programs for the Mass, expecting only that number of participants,

See CONNECTIONS, page 20



### 50 years

This Diocese of Tulsa priest is celebrating 50 years in the priesthood this year. For more about him, see Pages 10-11 and this year's promotion for the Retired Priest's Fund second Christmas collection.

## Sisters leave convent for rental houses, St. Clare's

The week after they celebrated Thanksgiving together in their dining room at Our Lady of Sorrows Convent, sisters moved out of the convent that has been home to the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Third Order of St. Francis, since 1964.

Six sisters have rented houses around the Tulsa metropolitan area and will continue their ministries in the fields of pastoral care, nursing, vocations and social services. Another six sisters moved into St. Clare Convent, an assisted living center located just west of the convent at 17600 E. 51st St. in

Broken Arrow.

"We don't want people to think we have left the Diocese," Sister Sylvia M. Egan, provincial, said Nov. 28. "We have six in active ministry and six who have retired."

Sister Egan will remain in the convent, along with Sister Jeanine Retzer, assistant provincial, until the province of the order, which covers all the United States and the Caribbean, relocates to Wisconsin in the spring. Also staying for now is Sister Mary Scheurer, who runs the office. "We have a mansion,"

See SISTERS, page 9

### IN THIS ISSUE

Turkey visit coverage .....Pages 6,7

Financial report ..... Page 8

Family-friendly Tulsa firm .....Page 19

# Calendar

## DECEMBER

### Keeping Christ in Christmas

**12** Holy Grounds will host Sister Marilyn Norwood from the congregation of the Benedictine sisters of the Sacred Heart at St. Joseph Monastery Dec. 12 at Double Shot Coffee Company, 18th Street and Boston Avenue, discussing what can be done to keep focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Social hour begins at 7 p.m., and speaker begins at 8 p.m. For more information visit [www.dioceseoftulsa.org/dyamc](http://www.dioceseoftulsa.org/dyamc).

### Religious ed day

**14** Catechetical Leaders Day will be held from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Dec. 14 at St. Bernard Church, 4001 E. 101st St. South. The day-long meeting for youth and adult education coordinators, principals and catechists includes prayer, Mass, guest speaker and group discussion. For more information contact the Office of Catechetical Services, 294-1904 ext. 128 or 133.

### 'Kids, computers and pornography'

**14** Kenneth Henderson will repeat his presentation, "A Wake-Up Call to Parents: Kids, Computers and Pornography" at 7 p.m. Dec. 14 at St. Benedict Parish, 2200 W. Ithica, Broken Arrow, in the St. Scholastica room. Sponsored by the Family Life Office; there is no charge, and child care will be provided. A free copy of the Pontifical Council for the Family document, "Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality" will

be given to all parents who attend. For more information call the Family Life Office, 294-1904 ext.140.

### Children's Chorus

**14** Tulsa Children's Chorus will present its annual winter concert at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 14 at Holy Family Cathedral, 801 S. Boulder Ave. The concert is free and open to all in the greater Tulsa community. The Chorus will present a repertoire celebrating both the Oklahoma Centennial and the holiday season. Member singers attend at least nine different parishes in Tulsa and the surrounding areas.

### Christmas concert

**15** The Christ the King Gallery Choir and members of the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra will present a concert of Christmas classics that includes Vittoria's "O Magnum Mysterium," Adams' "O Holy Night," selections from Handel's "Messiah" and sing-along carols accompanied by the orchestra and the church's majestic pipe organ. The free concert will be at 7 p.m. Dec. 15 at Christ the King.

### Christmas celebration

**15** All Christ the King parishioners - current and former - are invited to the parish's Christmas celebration hosted by the Men's Club at the Downtown DoubleTree Hotel. Cocktail reception starting at 6 p.m. Dec. 15 followed by dinner and dancing to the Star band. Child care provided. Call the parish office, 584-4788, for ticket information.

### Advent lessons, carols

**17** In observation of Gaudete Sunday, the Holy Family Cathedral choir will present a ceremony of Advent lessons and carols at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 17 at the Cathedral. All are invited to attend. For more information contact 582-6247.

### World Youth Day meeting

**17** An informational meeting about World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney, Australia, will be held for participants and parents from 1-5 p.m. Dec. 17 at Church of the Madalene, 3188 E. 22nd St.

### Comet baseball clinic

**27** Bishop Kelley Comets will hold winter baseball clinics

for players ages 5-15 over the Christmas break. Hitting, fielding and pitching clinics will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Dec. 27-29 at the Kelley field house. Enrollment forms are available on the baseball website at [bkelleyhs.org](http://bkelleyhs.org). Click on winter camps/baseball. For more information contact Coach Scardino at 627-3390.

## JANUARY

### Chorus auditions

**5** Tulsa Children's Chorus will conduct open auditions from 4-6:30 p.m. Jan. 5 at Harweldon, 2210 South Main Street. All are welcome to audition as the only requirement is a love of singing. Audition appointments can be scheduled by calling the chorus office at 295-7787 or emailing [office@tulsachildschorus.org](mailto:office@tulsachildschorus.org). For more information visit [www.tulsachildschorus.org](http://www.tulsachildschorus.org)

### Kelley placement test

**6** Bishop Kelley High School will administer the second placement test for incoming ninth graders for the 2007-2008 academic year from 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Jan. 6. A fee of \$15 is payable at the test but pre-registration is required. Question and answer session for parents and families will be held from 8-9 a.m. Online registration is available at [www.bkelleyhs.org](http://www.bkelleyhs.org), Admissions/Placement Registration Form. For more information, contact Jane Oberste, 609-7133.

### TEC retreat

The youth and young adult ministry office of the Diocese of Tulsa is sponsoring a three-day Together Encounter Christ retreat Jan. 13-15. Through Scripture, music, discussions, prayer, and liturgy, participants will leave joined together in celebrating a bond of renewed lifelong commitment shared by thousands of other young Catholic Christians. Cost is \$55 covering lodging, meals and materials. Registration deadline is Dec. 29. For more information contact the youth office at 294-1904.

### Natural family planning

The Couple to Couple League is having a natural family planning class from 1:30-5:30 p.m. Jan. 14 at Saint Francis Hospital taught by Dave and Anna Niles. For more information contact

449-8765.

## VOLUNTEERS

### Christmas volunteers

Our Lady of Clear Creek Monastery development office at 4720 S. Harvard Ave., Suite 204, needs volunteers for the Christmas season. Light office duties and data entry. Call 749-4449 and ask for Gretchen Murray or Ted King.

### Christmas help

Catholic Charities is seeking volunteers and parish choirs are being sought to help with food distribution of more than 1,000 families who will receive Christmas food baskets on Dec. 16 through Catholic Charities. The choirs can help brighten the day with traditional Christmas carols. Anyone interested in providing homemade cookies also may call to sign up. Please contact Rusty Starbuck at 918-585-8167.

### Reading tutors

San Miguel School is looking for caring adults to spend one hour a week reading with a struggling student during the independent reading time, from 8:15-9:20 a.m. or helping a student with homework during afternoon study hall, 3:15-4 p.m. For more information, call Principal Curt Adams, 671-9637 or at [adamscurt@yahoo.com](mailto:adamscurt@yahoo.com).

## EDUCATION

### Bilingual pre-school

Instituto Bilingue Guadalupano Pre-school and Kindergarten Bilingual Program at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe-St. Francis Xavier Church, is now accepting enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year. For additional information or to arrange a tour by appointment, contact Director Maria Ines Alcaraz at 592-9179, 402-2656 or 357-9094.

### St. Catherine alums

St. Catherine School is trying to organize its alumni data base and is seeking information from former students. Please email your full name, including maiden and married names, contact phone number, mailing address, the

## Bishop Slattery's public schedule

**Sunday, Dec. 10 - 10 a.m.**

Second Sunday of Advent  
Mass, Holy Family Cathedral

**Sunday, Dec. 10 - 2 p.m.**

Mass, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mission San Juan Diego, Stilwell

**Monday, Dec. 11 - 6 p.m.**

Mass, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dewey

**Tuesday, Dec. 12 - 7 p.m.**

Mass, St. Francis Xavier, Tulsa, for Our Lady of Guadalupe Apparition

**Wednesday, Dec. 13 - noon**

Wiseman Preaching and Lecture Series, First Presbyterian Church, 709 S. Boston Ave., followed by private meeting with ministers

**Sunday, Dec. 17 - 10 a.m.**

Third Sunday of Advent Mass, Holy Family Cathedral

**Sunday, Dec. 24 - 10 a.m.**

Fourth Sunday of Advent Mass, Holy Family Cathedral

**Sunday, Dec. 24 - midnight**

Holy Family Cathedral, Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

**Wednesday, Dec. 27 - 5:15 p.m.**

St. John Church, Bartlesville, Closing ceremonies for parish's centennial celebration

**Sunday, Dec. 31 - 10 a.m.**

Holy Family Cathedral, Feast of the Holy Family Mass

**Saturday, Jan. 6**

Episcopal ordination anniversary - On this date in 1994 Bishop Slattery ordained by Pope John Paul II in Rome

**Sunday, Jan. 7 - 10 a.m.,**

Holy Family Cathedral, Ehipany Mass, homily

names of both parents and the year of entry into St. Catherine School to [alumni@cox.net](mailto:alumni@cox.net) or phone Johnna Gresham at 918-447-1974. If you are not a St. Catherine alumni but know someone who is, please submit their information.

## CORRECTION

Due to an error by the company that prints the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic, what was supposed to be a two-page report on the Diocese of Tulsa's finances for 2005 and 2006 in the Nov. 26 newspaper was incomplete. The second page of the report was not printed at all, and the first page was printed twice, on both Pages 7 and 8. All the documents in the financial report are reprinted on Page 8 of this issue, and a story about the Diocese's financial standing is on Page 9.

**Edward J. Slattery** Bishop of Tulsa

## As year's end nears, summarizing vocation, fidelity of deacons

When we began these reflections a year ago, I remember looking at my uncluttered desk calendar and thinking about the unrestricted possibilities which the new year would bring us to discuss the Synod and its implementation.

I was so anxious to begin this conversation with you last January! I wanted so much to share with you my understanding of the insights which marked the continual progress of the Diocesan Synod because I was conscious of an overwhelming sense of gratitude to God for the marvelous way in which His Holy Spirit guided the work of the Synod, revealing all those places where the transforming power of God's grace was at work in our families, and through our families in our parishes and institutions as well. I wanted you to share in my sense of gratitude so that gratitude might be the common source of all our prayer and activity.



### Looking back on the year

Looking back on the year now almost past and re-reading these Synod articles of mine in the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic, I marvel when I consider how extraordinary was the brightness of that new year, how much hope and enthusiasm that bright new beginning brought to all our discussions.

It seemed to nurture the thoughts I was anxious to share and made it easier for me to get to the depth of what I wanted to communicate, so that as I look back it seems that through these reflections - and the conversations they have occasioned - we have continually encountered Christ, Our Lord, who has invited us to step outside of the narrow and restricted confines of our past mistakes and sins, to experience the abundant life which He promises, in a renewed context, with the purity of a new beginning and the hope that all things are capable of being restored in Christ.

More wondrous still, Christ has given to us the certainty that this restoration of our lives, of our families, and of the Church, has already been accomplished in His Paschal Mystery and merely waits to be revealed in us when we live in faith.

That our lives already have been renewed and restored by Christ is the single shining hope that has sustained me throughout these months of long exploration and discussion regarding the Synod, and I have returned again and again in my own personal prayer to rest in this hope and take courage from this certainty: No matter how often we have failed in our relations, or allowed our parishes and communities to grow cold because we have imposed false expectations or old expectations - we have been loved by God Who knows us as we are and loves us as we are.

### He loves us as we are

"... as we are." See? This is the key! So great is God's love for us that He is able to see through all the myriad ways our sins have disfigured us. He sees through the tortured twists of our lives, the innumerable ways we have been fractured by sin and left disfigured and broken, and He recognizes still - and loves with undiminished love - the person whom He made in His own image.

Nothing: No sin, no offense, nothing created and nothing which shadows existence, can change this great mystery. God loves His creation, and what He has made in His own image and likeness, He will love into redemption, His love in

### *Act of Hope and Confidence in God*

Act of Hope and Confidence in God

My God, I believe most firmly  
that you watch over all who hope in you,  
and that we can want for nothing  
when we rely upon you in all things.  
Therefore I am resolved for the future ...  
to cast my cares upon you ...

People may deprive me of worldly good and status.

Sickness may take from me my strength  
and the means of serving you.

I may even jeopardize our relation by sin,  
but my trust shall never leave me.

I will preserve it to the last moment of my life,  
and the powers of hell shall seek in vain  
to grab it from me.

Let others seek happiness in their wealth  
and in their talents

Let them trust in the purity of their lives,  
the severity of their mortifications,  
in the number of their good works,  
the number of their prayers;  
as for me, my Rock and my Refuge,  
my confidence in you fills me with hope,  
for you, my Divine Protector,  
alone have settled me in hope.

"This confidence can never be in vain.

No one, who has hoped in God,  
has ever been confounded."

I am assured, therefore, of my eternal happiness,  
for I firmly hope in it and all my hope is in you.

"In you, Oh loving God, have I hoped  
let me never be confounded."

I know too well that I am weak and changeable  
I know the power of temptation  
against the strongest virtue

I have seen stars fall and the foundations of my  
world crack;  
these things do not alarm me.

While I hope in you, I am sheltered from all  
misfortune,  
for I am sure that my trust shall endure,  
for I rely upon you to sustain this unfailing hope.

Finally, I know that my confidence  
cannot exceed your generosity,  
and that I shall never receive less  
that I have hoped for from you.

Therefore I hope that you will sustain me  
against my evil inclinations,  
that you will protect me

against the deceitful attacks of the evil one,  
and that you will cause my weakness  
to triumph over every hostile force.

I hope that you will never cease to love me  
and that I shall love you unceasingly.

"In you, Oh loving God, have I hoped;  
let me never be confounded."

*(Claude La Colombi're (1641-1682) was the spiritual director of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque to whom Jesus revealed the love of His Sacred Heart. The translation of this prayer is by John Veltri, and the prayer is reprinted from Hearts on Fire, edited by Michael Harter, S.J.; 1993, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis.)*

Christ becoming the source of our constant renewal and restoration.

Is this not the hope we have in Christ - the knowledge that God loves us as we are, loves us into redemption, and in loving us without limits reveals exactly what He intends us to be in Christ?

One of my favorite saints, the Jesuit priest Claude La Colombi're, included these lines in a meditation he once wrote on hope, and I want to share them with you since they seem to express so profoundly the truth of what we have discovered together in our conversations regarding the Synod:

Let others seek happiness in their wealth  
and in their talents.

Let them trust in the purity of their lives,  
the severity of their mortifications,  
in the number of their good works,  
the enthusiasm of their prayers,  
as for me, my Rock and my Refuge,  
my confidence in you fills me with hope.  
For you, my Divine Protector,  
alone have settled me in hope.

### **A last word about my sons, the permanent deacons**

Last week, I mentioned that I would use our final conversation this year in the EOC to explain how our new Deacon Personnel Board would serve the deacon fraternity

See BISHOP, page 9

Marilyn Duck EOC Editor

## Pope Benedict shines in Turkey; finding Christmas spirit

The morning Pope Benedict XVI arrived in Turkey, “Today” show co-host Matt Lauer introduced the program with a video clip of the pontiff walking down the steps of his airplane and in a voice-over announced the pope was “walking on eggshells today, November 27, 2006.”

Well, no he wasn't.

Pope Benedict XVI knows what's going on in the world, and he certainly knows the remarks he made about Islam and violence in Regensburg, Germany, in September touched off protests in many places, including large demonstrations in Turkey in the days before his arrival.

But this pope is not going to walk on eggshells in Turkey or anywhere else. He knows what he believes, and he believes what he knows. Others may assign motives to him he does not have, and perhaps, in his heart of hearts, the pope regrets the specific language he used back in September. But he has never apologized, and for good reason.

Anyone with a television set can see that the link between radical Islamists and violence is one of the grimmer realities of our world.

Benedict does want to reach out to Muslims, and in that he succeeded (see the analysis of the trip on Page 1.) His central purpose in coming – to strengthen ties with Orthodox Christians and heal a rift between West and East that dates nearly 1,000 years – didn't get as much media attention, but he made progress on that front, too.

Even though he swapped the Popemobile for an armored limousine, even though Turkish authorities were quick to



crack down and clear out any potentially dangerous demonstrators, Pope Benedict XVI received a remarkably warm welcome and seems to have helped build a spiritual bridge between Islam and the West that is as battered, in a metaphorical way, as if it, too, were under constant assault by roadside bombs.

His admonition that violence is never an appropriate religious response applies to Islam, but it's a message worth reflection here, too, as this predominantly Christian nation struggles to figure out what to do next about the war in Iraq.

It's especially appropriate as we prepare for Christmas, the season of peace.

Speaking of which . . .

While great events continue on the world stage and within the Church, the big news around here is Secret Santa.

Beginning Dec. 1 and continuing through Dec. 20, Chancery employees have entered a pact: “Make sure your pal knows that someone cares and wants them to have a wonderful Christmas season.”

In late November, everyone drew the name of a person we will shower with anonymous kind gestures, thoughtful small presents and touching and/or tacky gifts over the next three weeks.

Organizers have instructed that every day or two, Secret Santas are to leave a piece of candy, or a sheet of Christmas stickers, something home-cooked or whatever else comes to mind.

“It doesn't even have to cost. It could be cleaning their keyboard or monitor, sharpening all their pencils, washing their coffee mug, etc. The whole idea is to surprise your pal

and ‘make their day.’”

One employee, who has what could charitably be characterized as a “skeptical” nature that occasionally manages not to descend into cynicism, was not initially enthusiastic. But this has turned out to be fun. And a challenge.

It's easy to surprise family members or friends. You know who has a penchant for those dreadful chocolate-covered cherries that pop up around Christmas time and who never met a breakfast muffin she didn't like.

And most good Catholics give to people we don't know every year, whether it's through Catholic Charities, parish food drives, support for various missions here and abroad or, a personal favorite, the Diocese of Tulsa Priest's Retirement Fund (see Pages 10 and 11.)

But this in-office gift-giving is proving to be a bit problematic. We are Secret Santas to people we see every day and know. Kinda. But in plotting a Secret Santa strategy, the realization comes that we don't really know them all that well.

The easy way out is to make a trip to the Dollar Store and pick out a swarm of little gifts of little to no consequence.

But that's not enough when, as in this Secret Santa's case, I really like and admire the person whose name I drew. Making these secret day brighteners meaningful has prompted a lot of thinking on how to best prepare to make his/her day.

Besides being a kick, the exercise is proving helpful in trying to find and stay in Advent-appropriate mindset.

George Weigel

## San Antonio Cathedral is city's physical, spiritual center

Ever since the Church's first bishops gathered their priests and people around them for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Christians have thought of the cathedral – the church in which the “cathedra,” the bishop's chair, sits – as the center of a given city.

In San Antonio, that's literally true. For in front of the altar at San Fernando Cathedral is a bronze marker, indicating the position of the door of the original colonial church from which the cathedral grew. From that point, the settlement that became San Antonio was laid out, such that everything in town was measured by its distance from the church.

San Fernando Cathedral is the center of San Antonio, physically as well as historically and spiritually.

San Fernando was the first parish church in Texas, and it's seen a lot of history since its founding in 1731.

Over the ensuing 275 years, five flags have flown from what is now the oldest standing structure in the state: those of Spain, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the United States, and the Confederate States of America.

Canary Island emigres were the first parishioners, laying the church's cornerstone in 1738. When the Alamo ceased to be a church in 1793, its people became parishioners of San Fernando.

In 1831, Jim Bowie married Ursula de Veramendi in San



Fernando; five years later, after General Santa Ana had raised the “No Quarter” flag from the church's tower, Bowie died in the defense of the Alamo; and a hundred years after that, in 1936, the remains of Bowie, Davy Crockett, William Travis, and other Texas heroes were found beneath the sanctuary of the cathedral and re-interred in a marble sarcophagus which stands in the cathedral today.

San Fernando became a cathedral in 1874, when the Diocese of San Antonio was erected. President Lyndon Johnson attended Good Friday services at San Fernando in 1966, and Pope John Paul II visited the cathedral in 1987. A major restoration was undertaken in 2001-2003.

The nave of today's San Fernando is built out from the colonial church, which now forms a kind of grand apse for the entire cathedral. In the colonial part of the building, and thanks to the 2003 restoration, pilgrims and visitors can now find three stunning “retablos,” masterpieces of carving and gilding created to replace the original retablos lost in an 1828 fire.

The central retablo (a Mexican form of wooden reredos) is 24 by 16 feet, gilded in 24-carat gold, and dedicated to “Jesus Christ, Word and Sacrament;” it houses both the tabernacle and statues of the four evangelists.

The retablos to its right and left honor the patronesses of the settlers and soldiers who were San Fernando's first congregants. Thus the retablo to the right is dedicated to La Virgen de la Candelaria (Our Lady of Candlemas), to whom

the Canary Island emigres had a particular devotion. The left retablo is that of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and houses a 1770 painting of the Patroness of the Americas.

Done in an 18th-century style of wood-carving and gilding, these three retablos are among the world's finest contemporary examples of this art form.

For all its history, though, San Fernando should not be conflated with nearby historical sites like the four San Antonio Missions, found along the Mission Trail south of the city. Interesting (and touching) as these relics of the first American evangelization are, they speak of the past.

As Archbishop JosÈ Gomez and cathedral rector Father David Garcia told me, San Fernando takes that past and brings it alive in the present.

Five thousand people worship at San Fernando every weekend. Nine hundred baptisms, more than a hundred weddings, and just as many funerals are celebrated there each year.

Every day, visitors come in the hundreds to admire the architecture and the retablos, or to honor the remains of the heroes of the Alamo. Many, one suspects, are moved to prayer by the cathedral's beauty.

As well they might. For here, we touch the religious heart of the fastest-growing Catholic population in America.

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

# Forum

## Grave charges in conduct of Iraq war deserve attention

Editor EOC:

The very serious charge of war crimes has been raised against our national administration for violations of the Geneva Conventions. As grave as this charge is, it could be argued that our government is guilty of far more serious charges: crimes against humanity and even genocide.

Under international law, "crimes against humanity" include many acts. It encompasses acts which the U.S. military has committed systematically against the civilian population in Iraq: imprisonment, murder and torture.

Consider the crime of "genocide," found in Articles II and III of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

Destruction of only part of a group of people (such as its educated members, or members living in one region), is one kind of genocide.

What has our war brought to Iraq? Upwards of 600,000 dead (according to some estimates), and much of the educated class killed or forced into exile with no prospect of returning. From the viewpoint of international law, the United States could be indicted on many counts.

But what if we didn't have the Geneva Conventions? Wouldn't we still know that torture is an abomination? It shouldn't take fine legal definitions to bestir our conscience and our compassion and our outrage at what has been done and is being done in our names. Many readers of the EOC would welcome more coverage of the Catholic response to the war.

**Barbara Geary**  
Tulsa

*Editor's note: The tactic of targeting of the educated class of Iraqis, most notoriously the Nov. 14 abduction of between 55 and 150 men at the Ministry of Higher Education, has been carried out by insurgent forces, not U.S. military troops. Catholic News Service reported last month that 1.6 million Iraqis have fled their homeland since March 2003.*

### Fostering vocations

Editor EOC: Many thanks for the wonderful article and picture in the Nov. 12 EOC about Priesthood Sunday and the vocation committee at Resurrection Parish. Those of us on the committee are busy planning other activities related to vocations.

Three of the six members of the committee are also members of the Tulsa Club of Serra International, a worldwide organization whose mission is to "foster and affirm vocations to the ordained priesthood and religious life." Father Jack Gleason, diocesan director of vocations, has told me personally that the most important work Serra can do to help his vocation efforts is to do what we can to form vocation committees or vocation awareness groups in those parishes in the dioceses whose lay people are not active in this area.

If any of your readers need help getting started, they can call me at 585-3515, or any other local member of Serra. Peace and God Bless.

**Bob Pielsticker**  
Tulsa

### Birth control battle strategy

Editor EOC: I also have been disgusted by the incredible audacity of Planned Parenthood's billboard campaign, "Birth Control is Easy." I was happy to see in the Nov. 12 EOC that others are outraged by this latest assault. I must say, however, that (the slogan) "Birth Control is Harmful" seems a weak line of attack.

Its weakness as a battle strategy (not to be confused with the zeal of the combatants) lies in the fact that, although it is true that birth control is harmful, it is also true that birth control is easy. These two correct claims war on two different lines of attack, and the average drive-by citizen is not persuaded either way.

I believe a strategy worthy of those who feel the call to take up arms in defense of the defenseless (as most of us know we should) would run something like this.

The first objective is to acknowledge and validate the truth of the (birth control advocates') claim. I had lots of fun thinking of some other true things to say alongside Planned Parenthood's billboards and settled on these:

"Selfishness is Easy"

"Cowardice is Easy"

"Irresponsibility is Easy"

"Blame is Easy"

("Auto-genocide is Easy" was my favorite, but I eventually rejected it as requiring too much thought for people driving along the highway.)

The beauty of this line of attack is that it is in complete agreement with "Birth Control is Easy." We have made Planned Parenthood fight for our cause; their billboards are now a part of our message. The second objective is the counter attack. The second wave of billboards should read something like this:

"Courage is Hard"

"Responsibility is Hard"

"Loving is Hard"

"Family is Hard"

"Parenting is Hard"

On each of these second billboards should be some promise of the Catholic Church:

"We'll help you do it."

"We'll walk you through it."

"We actually like babies."

I don't know if our Bishop would approve of my approach. Nevertheless, this is the way I would wage a campaign on so serious a battlefield, and I would be happy to help anyone fight so worthy a cause.

**Jeremy T. Banes**  
Tulsa

*Editor's note: The Family Life Office, which has helped to coordinate the birth control billboard campaign, has welcomed anyone who has suggestions or wants to help defray the costs of its advertising. Director Erick Bell can be reached at 294-1904 or at Erick.bell@dioceseoftulsa.org.*

### 'Unsympathetic' editor

Editor EOC: Although I appreciate Marilyn Duck's battle with diabetes, I am appalled at her unsympathetic attitude toward others who suffer ("Accepting embryonic stem cell prohibition when it's personal," Nov. 12 EOC).

I realize that the Catholic Church will never back down from its pro-life doctrine enough to even consider condoning embryonic stem cell research. I would hope, however, that as Catholics we would be more sympathetic and compassionate toward those like Michael J. Fox and others who suffer.

As a parent of a healthy child and an elementary teacher, I would never dream of telling the parents of an ill child, "You'll get through it." Ms. Duck's message of "hope" came off to this reader as arrogant and far removed from the teachings of Jesus.

The following quote is from "Catechism of the Catholic Church."

"Christ's compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that He identifies Himself with them: 'I was sick and you visited me.' Christ invites His disciples to follow Him by taking up their cross in turn. By following Him they acquire a new outlook on illness and the sick. Jesus associated them with His own life of poverty and service. He makes them share in His ministry of compassion and healing."

I pray that Ms. Duck will continue to follow Jesus so she may acquire a new outlook on illness and the sick.

**Kristen Womack-Hayes**  
Sapulpa

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# Tradition of Mary's house in Turkey stems from nun's vision

By CINDY WOODEN  
Catholic News Service

EPHESUS, Turkey - Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims began making pilgrimages to the House of the Virgin Mary near Ephesus only after a bedridden, almost illiterate German nun had a vision of the house's location.

In an account attributed to Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich, who never left Germany, the house could be found high on a rocky hill above Ephesus, partially hidden in a grove of trees.

Pope Benedict XVI briefly went into the tiny house Nov. 29 before celebrating an outdoor Mass in honor of Mary.

Blessed Emmerich's description of her vision was published in "The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary" by the poet Clemens Brentano after the nun's death in 1824.

While Brentano claimed to have acted as a secretary, simply writing down what Blessed Emmerich described, the Vatican



Pope Benedict visits Mary's house Nov. 29. (CNS photo)

said the style raised enough questions over authorship that it did not consider the book on Mary or two other Brentano accounts of Blessed Emmerich's visions in the process that led to her beatification in 2004.

However, the book led a French priest to Turkey in 1881 in a search for the house.

According to articles from the Vatican newspaper distributed to journalists traveling with the

pope, Father Alexandre Govet "said he found the house, but he was not able to prove it."

Blessed Emmerich's vision was not the only clue that Mary may have lived in Turkey.

While it is generally accepted that St. John the Evangelist wrote the Book of Revelation on the island of Patmos, just off the coast of Ephesus, a strong and ancient tradition holds that he also lived in Ephesus and is buried there.

Since the Gospel says that, from the cross, Jesus entrusted his mother to John's care, many believe he would not have traveled without her.

However, the main Christian tradition has held that Mary ended her earthly life in Jerusalem. Catholics believe she was assumed body and soul into heaven; Orthodox describe her dormition, or falling asleep, in the city of Christ's death and resurrection before being taken into heaven.

Nevertheless, Orthodox

believers near Ephesus have held for centuries that Mary spent the last nine years of her life there and that the dormition took place there.

Despite Father Govet's failure to find the house or traces of it, Lazzarist priests from the nearby city of Izmir set out in 1891 to try to find the place Blessed Emmerich described, or, in the case of one of the priests, to demonstrate that Blessed Emmerich was wrong.

The Lazzarists spent two hot summer days looking around Ephesus, finding nothing. When their water ran out, they asked some local women where they could find a well and were directed up the hill to the "monastery."

They found a spring next to the ruins of a little chapel half hidden by the trees in a scene almost exactly as Blessed Emmerich had described.

Subsequent excavations led to the conclusion that the chapel was built no earlier than the

seventh century, but that part of it was erected on the foundation of a much older building, one constructed "with materials that the archaeologists said were similar to those used in the first centuries of our era," said an article from the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano.

The article, as well as one written by Archbishop Ruggero Francheschini of Izmir, also questions whether it was simply a coincidence that bishops from around the world met at the Council of Ephesus in 431 and proclaimed that Mary was the "Theotokos," the Mother of God, affirming at the same time that Christ was fully human and fully divine.

Archbishop Francheschini wrote that the fact that Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims - who honor Mary and believe that Jesus was born of a virgin - all make pilgrimages to pray at the house is further testimony to her presence in some way.

## Pope *Continued from page 1*

of the pope to the mosque to the gesture of John Paul II at the Western Wall," the Jewish holy site in Jerusalem where Pope John Paul in 2000 deposited a prayer asking God's forgiveness for the ways Christians had mistreated the Jews.

Pope Benedict's prayer at the mosque and Pope John Paul's prayer in Jerusalem "are two very important symbolic moments," Cardinal Etchegaray said. "In both cases, we did not expect it."

Judging simply by what Pope Benedict had said were his objectives in visiting Turkey, the trip was a success.

Setting off from Rome at the beginning of the Nov. 28-Dec. 1 visit, the pope said the point of the trip was the contacts he would make and the friendship and respect they would demonstrate.

While the pope received a warm welcome from the moment he got off the plane in Ankara, Turkey's capital, any remaining hesitation on the part of the Turkish people melted when the pope prayed in the Istanbul mosque on his last night in the country.

From the beginning, the trip was planned as an occasion for the

pope to pay his respects to Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. After a prayer service, two liturgies, private meetings and a lunch, the brotherhood the pope and patriarch publicly professed also appeared publicly demonstrated.

But given the tensions present before the trip with both the Turkish government and the country's Muslim majority, Pope Benedict's positive encounters with Muslims stole the headlines. Even the Turkish papers, initially lukewarm to the idea of a papal visit, were impressed.

The daily Hurriyet reported Dec. 1: "The pope, who earned sympathy with words in the spirit of an apology to Muslims, continued to surprise the world."

The paper, like much of the world, particularly was struck by his prayer alongside a Muslim cleric in the mosque.

Hurriyet reported the pope "turned toward Mecca and prayed like a Muslim."

The Dec. 1 English-language Turkish Daily News headline read: "The pope is winning hearts and minds."

And the article described the pope's visit as "a moment of reconciliation" with the country's majority Muslim population.

As he was setting off from Rome Nov. 28, the pope had told reporters traveling with him that they should not have exaggerated expectations of such a short trip.

"The value (of the trip) I would say is symbolic, the fruit of the encounters themselves, of encounters in friendship and respect."

When the trip was over Dec. 1, one would only have to look at photographs of the pope with government officials, Muslim representatives and leaders of the Orthodox churches to see that a connection was made.

After a 30-minute free-flowing discussion Nov. 28 with Ali Bardakoglu, the country's top Muslim official, the two appeared before reporters grasping both of each other's hands.

And after attending Patriarch Bartholomew's celebration of the Divine Liturgy at the Orthodox cathedral, the two blessed a small crowd together before the patriarch took the pope's hand and held it aloft as they waved.



Pope Benedict XVI visits the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey, Nov. 30. The pope prayed with a Muslim cleric during his historic visit to the mosque. (CNS photo/Pool via Reuters)

Even some of the obligatory gifts given during the trip seemed to conspire to carry a positive

message, particularly when they were coincidentally similar, as they were at the Blue Mosque.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, pointed out that doves - the symbol of peace - were the main feature on the blue tile Istanbul's grand mufti gave to the pope and on the mosaic Pope Benedict gave to the mufti.

And, before leaving Istanbul Dec. 1, the pope released four white doves from the courtyard of the Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

Father Lombardi told reporters late Nov. 30, "It seems we've gone well beyond expectations."

Not only were there no confrontations with Muslims over what the pope said in Germany in September, but the Germany speech seemed to give way to a new look at "the theme of relations between Christians and Muslims with serenity and depth, seeking to make important clarifications on both sides," Father Lombardi said.

"With this visit, this particular act in the mosque, I think we have taken significant steps forward," he said.

## At Divine Liturgy, pope, patriarch affirm commitment to unity

ISTANBUL, Turkey (CNS) - Claiming the brotherhood of their respective patron saints - the apostles Andrew and Peter - the spiritual leaders of the world's Orthodox and the world's Catholics joined together in prayer and solemnly affirmed their commitment to the full unity of their Churches.

Incense and ancient hymns chanted in Greek set the atmosphere as Pope Benedict XVI paid homage to the Orthodox Church by attending a Nov. 30 Divine Liturgy celebrated by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

The liturgy at the Orthodox Church of St. George in Istanbul marked the feast of St. Andrew, patron of the patriarchate.

The pope and patriarch greeted each other with kisses on the cheek, but then the pope moved to a raised wooden throne at the side of the church while the patriarch celebrated the solemn liturgy.

After the almost three-hour liturgy, Patriarch Bartholomew led Pope Benedict to a balcony overlooking a courtyard. They both blessed the crowd, then the patriarch took the pope's hand and held it aloft as they waved and smiled at the applauding crowd below.

"In the liturgy, we are reminded of the need to reach unity in faith as well as in prayer," the patriarch said in his homily.

"Therefore, we kneel in humility and repentance before the living God and Our Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious



Pope Benedict XVI stands with Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew during a visit to Holy Spirit Cathedral in Istanbul, Turkey, Dec. 1. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

name we bear and yet at the same time whose seamless garment we have divided," the patriarch told the pope and other members of the congregation.

"We confess in sorrow that we are not yet able to celebrate the holy sacraments in unity," Patriarch Bartholomew said. "And we pray that the day may come when this sacramental unity will be realized in its fullness."

As the Orthodox faithful processed up for Communion, they bowed to the pope before receiving the consecrated bread and wine.

But one little boy, dressed in a dark suit and tie, stepped out of

the line to kiss the pope's ring.

Although the Orthodox Church in Turkey has fewer than 5,000 members, Pope Benedict told reporters that the patriarchate's standing in the Orthodox world as the "first among equals" made a visit almost obligatory.

"Numbers, quantity, do not count," the pope told reporters Nov. 28 on the way to Turkey. "It is the symbolic, historical and spiritual weight that counts" and the fact that the patriarchate "remains a point of reference for the whole Orthodox world and, therefore, for all of Christianity."

Addressing the congregation at the end of the liturgy, Pope Benedict said the service was an opportunity "to experience once again the communion and call of the two brothers," Peter and Andrew, chosen by Jesus to be his apostles and sent to different cities to preach the same Gospel.

The fact that the brothers also had different roles within the Christian community, with Peter and his successors in Rome having a "universal responsibility," has "unfortunately given rise to our differences of opinion, which we hope to overcome, thanks also to the theological dialogue which has been recently resumed," Pope Benedict said.

While Orthodox generally recognize the importance of the Church of Rome, they object to the way in which popes have tried to exercise direct jurisdiction over all Christian communities.

Pope Benedict said he wanted to "recall and renew" the

### Greek Orthodox archbishop to visit pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens, spiritual leader of the Orthodox church of Greece, will visit Pope Benedict XVI Dec. 13-16, the Vatican announced.

"The archbishop will be received with warm ecclesial brotherhood and with the honor due to his position as primate of the Orthodox church of Greece," said the Dec. 4 announcement of the visit.

During the visit, the announcement said, Pope Benedict and Archbishop Christodoulos will participate in a ceremony at Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Pope Benedict will give the archbishop "part of the precious chain of St. Paul's imprisonment," which is preserved at the basilica built in his honor.

The basilica is built over the traditional site of St. Paul's burial. The chains believed to have held St. Paul during his imprisonment just before his execution are preserved in the basilica's Chapel of the Relics.

St. Paul preached in Athens before making his way to Rome, where he was killed.

While Archbishop Christodoulos came to Rome for the April 2005 funeral of Pope John Paul II, the December visit will be his first official visit to the Vatican and his first official meeting with Pope Benedict.

invitation issued by Pope John Paul II for a discussion among Christians on possible ways for exercising the papal ministry to serve the unity of all Christians.

"It is only through brotherly communion between Christians and through their mutual love that the message of God's love for each and every man and woman will become credible," the pope said.

Like the patriarch, he expressed his sadness at the fact that although they share the same faith and recognize the validity of each other's sacraments, Catholics and Orthodox cannot regularly share

each other's Eucharist.

"May our daily prayer and activity be inspired by a fervent desire not only to be present at the Divine Liturgy, but to be able to celebrate it together, to take part in the one table of the Lord, sharing the same bread and the same chalice," the pope said.

At the end of the liturgy, he gave Patriarch Bartholomew a chalice as a gift.

The patriarch, in turn, gave the pope a Book of the Gospels, expressing his hope that Catholics and Orthodox would be imitators of Christ and would allow love, unity and peace to prevail.

## Mexican bishops call for peace after president is sworn in

MEXICO CITY (CNS) - The Mexican bishops have called for peace and reconciliation between Mexico's political factions and citizens following the contested swearing-in ceremony of Mexican President Felipe Calderon.

"The new government needs generous and fraternal collaboration from all Mexicans, all political parties and all social actors," said a statement from the Mexican bishops' conference, released hours after Calderon took the presidential oath Dec. 1.

The statement also called for progress in relieving poverty, combating organized crime, reducing corruption and improving education. Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico City said Dec. 3 the new president

needs help if these problems are to be solved.

"It's the work of all Mexicans; a president of the republic can't just wave a magic wand to transform our reality," he said in a press conference following Mass in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City. "It requires us all."

The cardinal said if the nation's opposition parties want to be constructive they have to champion proposals.

Mr. Calderon, who beat his leftist rival, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, by half a percentage point, faces a nation still divided by the July 2 electoral outcome. Lopez Obrador's Democratic Revolution Party has accused Mr. Calderon of fraud and has refused to recognize his presidency.



Mexican lawmakers gesture and shout in Congress hours before Felipe Calderon was sworn in as the new president in Mexico City Dec. 1. (CNS photo/Reuters)

Financial report again

# Diocesan audit shows increases in revenues, programs

Fueled by rising contributions to the Diocesan Development Fund and an improved return on its investments, the Diocese of Tulsa's revenue increased about 16 percent and programs received 7 percent more money during the 2005-06 budget year, independent auditors said in a report released Nov. 17.

"Revenues, gains and other support" totaled \$5.6 million, up from \$4.7 million the previous year. Spending on program services was \$3.2 million, compared to \$3.06 million in 2004-

2005.

Meanwhile, the Diocese's net assets grew by \$1.16 million to \$19.3 million, an increase of about 6 percent.

"Because we had a nice increase in income, we were able to offer more services and enhance the ministries we have," said Tom Schadle, controller for the Diocese. The audit, he said, shows "we are demonstrating good stewardship of the funds that are available."

Bishop Edward J. Slattery said he was pleased with the audit's

findings and credited the work of his investment committee and finance council, composed of primarily lay Catholics who advise him on how to best utilize the Diocese's resources.

"I think we're in pretty good shape," said Sidney Swinson, who serves on both panels. "The audit was very clean, and it seems to get better every year. I think Tom Schadle is doing an excellent job," said the attorney with the Tulsa firm of Gable & Gotwals.

Mr. Schadle said the Chancery

continues to work to hold down administrative expenses, which rose about 6 percent, from \$1.13 million to \$1.21 million.

As for the increased expenditures on ministries and programs, Mr. Schadle said they came "generally across the board."

"Every parish probably has an idea or a need or a request or a desire," he said. Other ministries that continue to grow are the Hispanic Apostolate, Vocations, Family Life Office and Development, Stewardship and

Estate Planning.

The 2005-2006 annual appeal, the DDF, increased from \$1.57 million the previous year to \$1.78 million. Joan Dorney recently was named director of DDF and already is planning an even more ambitious appeal for next year, scheduling three workshops for pastors and parish DDF committee members in three parishes.

Last year, DDF teams led the seminars in Tulsa and McAlester and this year also will go to Bartlesville.

## Sisters

*Continued from page 1*

Sister Sylvia said, "and even a swimming pool."

Since 1926, the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother have operated St. John Health System, which purchased the convent in June and plans to provide medical services at the 120,000-square-foot building, which sits on 80 acres in fast-growing Broken Arrow.

Many of the older nuns, like most people their age, were reluctant to leave their home of many decades. Some of those moving out into the community are looking forward to new challenges, several sisters said.

Sister Theresa Gil, who is in vocations ministry, Sister Marydella Lichtenhahn, who is a chaplain and works in the Pastoral Care Office at St. John Hospital, and Sister Gabrielle Branco, a registered nurse at St. Clare's Convent, have rented a house in Tulsa they hope to establish as a House of Discernment. "That's a whole new ministry," Sister Sylvia said. "They have an extra bedroom" and can accommodate women who might be considering joining religious life.

Sister Loretta Hall has rented a house a couple of blocks from St. Benedict Church in Broken Arrow. She is studying to renew her nursing license and is continuing to hone her computer skills and exploring new media. (She put together a DVD commemorating Father John Wade's 50 years in the priesthood that is described in a story on Pages 10-11.)

Moving to St. Clare Convent are Sister Severina Kaestel, Sister Piniana Klein, Sister Sebasstiana Langecker, Sister Ida Nieberle, Sister Leonilda Nieberle and Sister Rosella Romero.

Father Wade and other retired priests who have celebrated Mass for the sisters in the main convent's chapel will continue ministering to the nuns in the chapel of St. Clare Convent, Sister Sylvia said.



Sister Felicidad Chavez, at right, offers a Thanksgiving toast to sisters gathered in the convent's dining room Nov. 23. At left is Sister Maria Vinton from Wisconsin.

## Bishop

*Continued from page 3*

and help make the changes I envision in their ministry practical and fruitful

But since then, I have thought that I would prefer to close this year with a summary of the reasons why I love the deacons of this Diocese, and why I look for them to play an ever-increasing role in the spiritual life of our people.

By the grace of Holy Orders, the Holy Spirit uses the deacon to go out to others and draw them to Christ, and ultimately to the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit is always with the deacon, conforming him to Christ, the Servant, so that the deacon always acts *in persona Christi*.

In the service rendered by the deacon, it is Christ who serves. Though it is the deacon

who walks among the poor, it is Christ who draws them to Himself; and though it is the deacon who preaches, it is the Lord Himself who speaks words of consolation to sinners and inspires hope among those broken by their own folly.

The deacon's life mirrors the public life of Jesus, who, as we read in the Gospels, serves by healing and curing, by consoling and blessing, sometimes by confronting or teaching, but always by loving.

The deacon's vocation as servant is to prepare Christ's people to accompany Him to Jerusalem, where they must pick up His cross and follow Him to Calvary. It is through the open, generous, and sacrificial participation of the Deacon in the mystery of his vocation that

the Holy Spirit opens the minds and hearts of the faithful to accept the cross, to encounter Christ, the Priest and Victim, and become one with Him.

In the gentle strength of the deacon, the people find Christ attractive and follow Him. In the charity and compassion of the deacon, the faithful find Christ eager to forgive, and so they trust Him. In the fidelity of the deacon, we find Christ who fulfills his every promise, and we learn to hope in Him.

To follow Christ, to find forgiveness in Him and to hope in His promise of eternal life; this is the heart of what it means to be converted, and this - above all - is the vocation of the deacon: to bring about in others a final conversion to Jesus.

# 'That Man is You!' helps transform men, marriages, families

By CHRIS BOULDIN

Every Wednesday morning, long before dawn, more than 100 Catholic men already have convened at St. Bernard of Clairvaux Church for a new program in the Diocese of Tulsa that aims to foster "a transformation of men, marriages and families."

"That Man is You!" has yet to reach its third birthday, but already the program has spread throughout the United States and Canada, and, as of this fall, the Diocese of Tulsa.

"We didn't have any idea what our numbers would be," said Deacon Dave Johnson, a member of the program's core team. "We had officially 150 guys enroll. We've had 135 who have come more than once. But of the those, we are getting 105 or 110 each morning session."

"That Man is You!" began in the summer of 2004 when a group of men in the Diocese of Houston began studying successful programs from various Christian denominations and corporate America, trying to find a Catholic method of teaching successful men's leadership.

What they developed was a 26-week, multimedia-driven interactive program combining research from secular science with teachings of the Catholic faith and wisdom of the saints to develop "the vision of a man fully alive."

Test programs ran in the Houston and Dallas/Ft. Worth areas and were "unqualified successes," according to the program's website, [thatmanisyou.com](http://thatmanisyou.com).

Last summer, a hastily called meeting with the program's founder, Steve Bollman, piqued the attention of Deacon Johnson and the pastor of St. Bernard, Father Bernard Jewitt. That seed eventually brought the program to the south Tulsa parish.

"What interested me was the fact that the program was centered on men's spirituality, which I feel has been neglected," Father Jewitt said. "The program allows men to apply their faith to home life and work and their relationship with God. It gives them a deeper insight into their faith and how it can be applied in their lives."

Deacon Johnson agreed. "The Catholic Church seems to have



Terry Colegrove, Jr., and Doug Ivins, both of St. Bernard Parish, take part in a small group discussion during a recent "That Man is You!" meeting.

programs for women, things for the family, but very few that solely focus on men."

At St. Bernard, "That Man is You!" convenes at 5:45 a.m. each Wednesday and ends by 7:30 a.m. on the dot so the men can get to work on time.

In addition to Deacon Johnson, core team members are Deacon Alan Mikell and Joe Guzman, a permanent diaconate candidate and fifth-year theologian.

"I feel like the program helps me focus more on my relationship with my family. It helps me think more about what I need to do as a husband," said Chad Taber, a St. Bernard parishioner. "The small

groups have helped me realize that all men experience the same problems, no matter their age."

The program is based at St. Bernard's, but welcomes all men in the diocese.

"There are seven parishes represented on a regular basis," Deacon Johnson said. "Our target market, so to speak, is the 36-45-year-old married man, because we talk about family and relationships. It would appeal more to married men and would have a huge impact on married men with children.

"We have all types: a number of retired folks, I am an empty-nester, and my son-in-law attends

with me. We have several intergenerational groups, fathers and sons who come. There is no man who couldn't get something out of it," he said.

"The program is a great way for men to learn how to re-claim their identities, not only as men, but also as husbands and fathers," said Craig Victor, also a deacon candidate and fifth-year theologian whose home parish is St. Therese in Collinsville.

"Too often we are faced with making unpopular decisions because it is counter-cultural, and too often we fail to make the right decision simply because it is not what TV or the media tells us is 'cool,'" he said.

Chris Victor, Craig's brother and a member of St. Bernard, said he has felt torn by the conflicts of secular vs. Catholic life for many years. "I always try to do the right thing but still wonder whether I am doing enough. This program is helping me figure that out."

The name of the program comes from the story of King David.

"Nathan the prophet comes to David and tells him a story about a man who has one possession, a ewe lamb. In that story, the king comes to the man and steals his only possession to slaughter for a banquet," leaving the man with nothing, Deacon Johnson said.

"Nathan asks David what he would have done to the man, and David replies that he would have him killed. Nathan looks at him and tells him, 'David, that man is

## Founder to talk in Tulsa

Steve Bollman, who founded the "That Man is You!" spirituality program, will visit the Diocese of Tulsa next year.

Mr. Bollman, who developed the program in the Diocese of Houston in 2004, will give a lecture on "A New Springtime for the Catholic Family" at 7



Steve Bollman

p.m. Feb. 8 at Church of the Madalene. His talk is presented by the Family Life Office and the Pastoral Studies Institute as part of their ongoing Family Life Lecture Series.

For information, call 294-1904.

you."

"In Nathan's prophecy," Deacon Johnson continued, "he says that there will be a failure in honoring God, family, children and society itself."

Those principles were the focus of the program in its first weeks.

"Everything ties back into showing successful male leadership and how God has responded to it and failed male leadership and how God has responded to it. Starting with the union with God, because without that, everything fails," Deacon Johnson said.

"We have discussed the psychological and physical differences between men and women, and every week for the rest of the semester will be built on the idea of successful male leadership, why men were predestined by God to be the leader of their families."

He said that all leadership rights come from God, and men carry not only physical but spiritual leadership responsibilities.

"Adam was given the charge to till the soil and to make things prosperous, so a man is charged to provide for his family, to protect against all evils, which could come in the form of drugs or infidelity, a lot of things."

## First semester concludes

The first semester of "That Man is You!" concluded Dec. 6, and the second will resume Jan. 10, 2007. Because of the comprehensive nature of the program, newcomers will have to wait until next fall to join the group, and Deacon Dave Johnson said the second year of the program already is in the planning stages.

"The Church of the Madalene sends five or six guys with the idea that they are going to become the core team and sponsor the next year's class."

St. Bernard doesn't intend to make the program a one-time-only event. "This is a three-year program," Deacon Johnson said. "What I envision is that Madalene will be the first-year location next year, and St. Bernard's will be the second-year location.

"We entered this really being led by the Holy Spirit and trusting that the Holy Spirit would lead us in the right direction. In virtually all communities, certainly in our community, to get 130 guys to agree on anything at any time, much less at 5 o'clock in the morning, that didn't involve beer or sports is really a blessing. It has been really well received."

For information about the men's spirituality group, contact Deacon Johnson at 299-9406. Men interested in the program can go to [www.thatmanisyou.org](http://www.thatmanisyou.org)

## Father Paul Donovan

# Who is it who took 'Christ' out of Christmas?

In the parlance of Wall Street and American retail stores, Black Friday is the day after Thanksgiving, the BIG day to start Christmas sales. This year it was Nov. 24. The TV, radio and newspapers were filled with advertisements of huge sales. My Friday morning Tulsa World was extra, extra large with many advertisements urging people to get to their stores early - 5 a.m., 6 a.m.



I left early for morning Mass at 8:45 a.m. so I could drive by our two largest shopping malls in Owasso. Sure enough, the parking lots were full at all the big stores: Target, Lowe's, Belk's, Walmart, Home Depot, plus at all the many smaller stores in the malls. We had traffic jams in the area at 8 a.m.!

Driving in to celebrate Mass, it seemed the readings seem to have been chosen by the Spirit of Christmas. The Gospel for Friday, 33rd week of Ordinary Time, Cycle B, was Luke 19:45, the passage of Jesus driving the money changers out of the Temple, declaring, "My Father's house is a house of prayer, you have made it a den of thieves!"

Today, our principal preparation for the Feast of Christmas doesn't take place in the church, but in the mall.

Reflecting on this has raised questions and more questions. We all decry the commercialization of Christmas. We hear "Let's put Christ back in Christmas," assuming He would want to come in.

We hear and reflect about secularism, letting the human, worldly material take over the spiritual, religious dimension of our life. Black Friday and Luke 19 might be an aid to

coming to grips with the secularization of Christmas.

There is nothing evil about retail stores. They are places where people invest money to make a profit, where men and women work to make a living. The problem as I see it is in invoking one of our holiest feasts, the celebration of the birth of Jesus, as a pretense of the way to prepare for the Feast, to worship the living God.

The problem is not the stores, the sales, the decorations. We, the customers are the problem.

Our secularization allows us - drives us - to act as if toys, gifts, wrapping paper and ribbons are the proper way for men and women and children of faith to celebrate the birth of our Savior. We might suggest that giving gifts is our way of showing love. That may well be, but not gifts we purchase and wrap up in ribbons.

Our love is not for sale or purchase and cannot be boxed or tied up.

What has happened, and what can be done? Obviously, modern technology has affected our thinking. When we watch TV, we can see what the richest people a few generations ago could not imagine. Our nation is blessed with prosperity, so most people don't worry about basic necessities.

Now we don't ask what do you need, but what do you want? That is a slippery slope.

We know greed is terrible and debilitating. Yet to ask what we want, even asking children what they want, is a possible step down that slope.

We are blessed with enough. Should not our question be what we do for others? Jesus was born, lived and died for

others, for you and for me. And He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." But the way we celebrate Christmas doesn't seem to reflect Him.

We need to confront ourselves. And yes, we need to confront our children, else we or they will never truly celebrate Christmas.

There will be misunderstandings, confusion and rejection. We can expect criticism. But is not the celebration of Christmas the celebration of the birth of the Crucified One?

I can hear you say, "What can I do? I am just one person, one family." My answer is I do not know. But I do know it's a question that should disturb us and make us uncomfortable.

As long as I am reflecting, let us go the the Feast of Christmas itself. When I was a child growing up in the oil fields in Seminole County, we had no Catholic neighbors. Good neighbors, good Christian people but not Catholic.

On Christmas, our family was the only one within several square miles who went to church. It was, for us, a religious day. I think that is important. Today, in many parishes, the largest Masses are the Vigil Masses. We get God and religion satisfied so we can enjoy Christmas.

I am not questioning the Church law regarding the legality of Christmas Vigil Mass. I am concerned about the secularization of Christmas.

My suggestion? Take your children to Mass on Christmas Day - and tell them why.

*Father Paul Donovan is pastor emeritus of St. Henry Church in Owasso.*

## Job opportunities

**Jobs in a Box, a service to readers of the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic, carries ads free of charge. Brief ads will run in two issues of the EOC. Please be specific when listing skills and/or experience offered or required for a particular job.**

### Write to:

Jobs in a Box, The Eastern Oklahoma Catholic  
P.O. Box 690240, Tulsa, OK 74169

Fax your information to 294-0920.

E-mail to [easternokcatholic@dioceseoftulsa.org](mailto:easternokcatholic@dioceseoftulsa.org)

**HOME/OFFICE CLEANING** - St. Ann's Domestic Services offers home and office cleaning, repair services, painting and more. Please call Laura at 402-5706.

**AFTERCARE SUBSTITUTE** - St. Catherine School is in need of aftercare substitutes from 3-5 p.m. Must be 21 years of age and have VIRTUS certification. Please call Julia at 446-9756.

**ADOPTION HOME STUDY PROFESSIONAL** - Catholic Charities' Adoption Services seeks to contract with licensed clinical social workers or licensed professional counselors to conduct domestic and international adoption home studies. Interested candidates must have current license, third party liability insurance and completed the "Adoption Home Study Preparation Course".

Previous experience is preferred. Please submit your resume, a copy of your license, certificate of attendance to the Home Study Course and insurance to: Mary Lee Ingram, LCSW, Director of Adoption Services, PO Box 6429 Tulsa, OK. 74148 or [MLIngram@CatholicCharitiesTulsa.org](mailto:MLIngram@CatholicCharitiesTulsa.org). For more information contact 585-8167 ext. 116.

**PRESIDENT** - St. Gregory's University, a Catholic liberal arts college located in Shawnee and Tulsa, invites applications and nominations for the position of president. Reporting to the university's Board of Directors, the primary responsibility is to serve as chief executive officer to ensure success of the university's mission, enrollment management, academic integrity, fiscal stability, fundraising efforts, personnel development and physical plant management. The successful candidate will be dedicated to the practice of the Catholic faith and will passionately promote St. Gregory's mission, identity, spirit and character. The individual will exhibit a proven record of successful leadership, managerial skills, exceptional interpersonal, communication and business management skills. A terminal degree is preferred, but success in a business or professional career will be strongly considered. Forward cover letter and resume to [sgu@colemanlew.com](mailto:sgu@colemanlew.com). For more information contact Ken Carrick, 704-377-0362.

**EVENT PLANNER/DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR** - This is a part-time position. Responsibilities include coordination of events (Society Dinner, Spaghetti Fest, Phone-a-thon) and

overseeing fundraising through various appeals and grant writing. The director works closely with the chaplain and board. Please submit your resume to St. Philip Neri Newman Center, 440 South Florence Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74104. For more information call 599-0204.

**SCANNING OPERATOR** - Thirty to 35 hours a week document imaging operator. Will train. OSBI/FBI thorough background check. Women-owned, mom-friendly. Perfect candidate will have excellent organizational skills, be computer savvy, 10-key, very reliable, easy to work with. Management experience a plus. Emails only; [Denise@aditulsa.com](mailto:Denise@aditulsa.com)

**ORGANIST/PIANIST** - Part-time professional organist/pianist position includes Saturday evening and Sunday morning Liturgies, Wednesday night choir rehearsal (during academic year) plus various associated events. Salary negotiable. New three manual Allen Renaissance organ. Submit resume and three letters of reference to Charlene Hayes Elston, Director of Music, Church of the Madalene, 3188 East 22nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74114-1822; FAX: 918-744-0024; email: [madaleneorganist@yahoo.com](mailto:madaleneorganist@yahoo.com)

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR** - Responsible for assisting students in skills development, encouraging campus-wide involvement and providing a variety of activities and events. Master's degree in student affairs or related field preferred. In addition, one to three

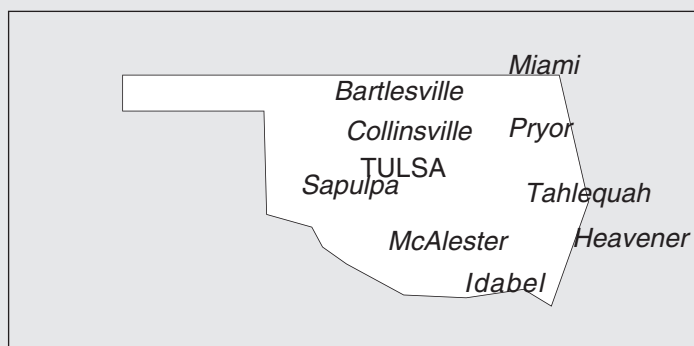
years experience in co-curricular program planning and student leadership development. Submit a current resume with names and telephone numbers for five recent professional references and salary expectations. Mail to Human Resources, St. Gregory's University, 1900 W. MacArthur, Shawnee, OK 74804. Email, [nrwalck@stgregorys.edu](mailto:nrwalck@stgregorys.edu). Position open until filled. EOE

**ACCOUNTING CLERK** - The ideal candidate would be an experienced, hands-on individual familiar with monthly accounting cycles of G/L, A/P, A/R and inventory in manufacturing, distribution and retail environments. Proficiency in using a PC with Word and Excel and automated accounting systems. Excellent problem solving and people management skills essential. We offer a competitive salary and benefits, including major medical and 401(k). Send, FAX or email resume and salary requirements to F.C. Ziegler Co., Attn: Human Resources, 415 E. 12th St., Tulsa, 74120; FAX 918-582-3233, email [hrdept@zieglers.com](mailto:hrdept@zieglers.com) with "Accounting Position" in the subject matter header.

**BJ's BETTER JOB CLEANING**- Residential and commercial service; free estimates, move-ins, move-outs. Call Julie, 902-1092.

**LAWN & GARDEN CARE** - Mowing, leaf removal, gutter cleaning, weeding, hauling, planting and dog waste removal. Please call William Clark at 437-3878 or email [we4clarks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:we4clarks@sbcglobal.net).

## 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. Chester Artysiewicz, Párroco  
Misa los Dom. 12:00 p.m.

### McALESTER

**Iglesia de San Juan**  
300 E. Washington  
P. Leonard Higgins, Párroco  
Misa los Domingos 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. Don Tranel  
Misa los Domingos  
a la 5:00 p.m.

## Head trauma deepens teen's desire 'to get to know God more'

As the beginning of the new Church year began and the end of 2006 approached, David Alberto Carvajal Casal wrote an essay explaining, "I did not want to finish off the year without telling you what I can accomplish with God in my life."

Last June 3, the 13-year-old Jenks Middle School eighth-grader was running with his dog, Chicha, and tripped over something in the street. He landed hard, striking the pavement head first. David was in a coma at St. Francis Hospital for 24 hours, and he also suffered convulsions, underwent special movement and speech therapies, had persistent headaches and for a time was plagued by uncontrollable nausea after every meal.

He doesn't remember much about the fall "or how it felt to have my head hit the ground or for my brain to move around in my head," David wrote in an essay his mother, Ginnett (Gigi) Casal, brought to the Eastern Oklahoma Catholic on Nov. 29.

"The one thing I do remember is how frightened I was after I woke up in the hospital thinking that I was not going to be the same person that I used to be: an active athlete, a student, a musician, an altar boy and helper of my church and a part of a great family?"

But the St. Francis Xavier parishioner did recover. After a stay in the hospital he had to spend several weeks at home in bed "reading and trying not to forget anything that I had learned and hoping not to have memory loss, which, thanks to God, was not one of the consequences."

When the school year began, David heard an announcement asking anyone who was interested to join the school cross country team. He realized he was interested. And he also realized that he was afraid.

"Before I ran, I prayed to God and asked Him to get rid of my fear of running and falling again." At his first meet, David didn't have proper running attire, so he ran in his school clothes, and he completed a mile-long race and "obtained a pretty good time."

Through the fall, he competed in six meets, running either the mile or two-mile, and he won medals, made friends, overcame his fear and "shared with my family, who supported me every step of the way?"

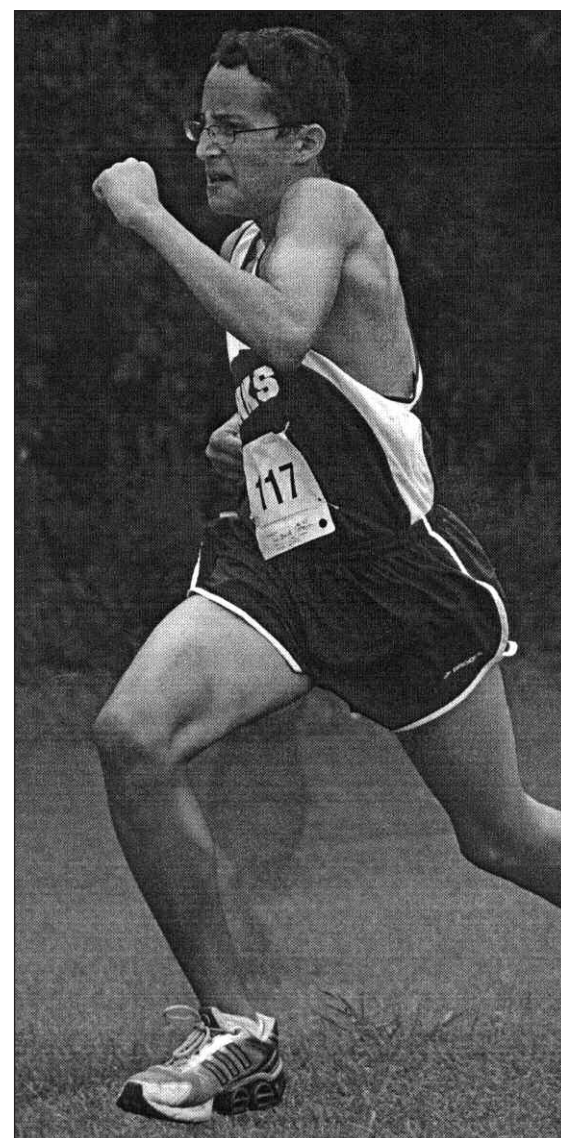
In the essay he dispatched to the EOC, which was submitted in English and in Spanish, David said he wants to dedicate "all of my medals, my plaque for most valuable runner and my award of achievement to the one and only God."

He concluded: "This season made me want to love God more, to give a better example to my brother and all of the young people of my generation and to serve Him more. But to serve God more, I have to get to know Him better, because He is our Father, and with Him, nothing is impossible."

David's little brother, Jesus, is 10 and in fifth grade. His 19-year-old sister, Isabel Carvajal Casal, is studying at Tulsa Community College and the University of Oklahoma and hopes to become a doctor.

It was the chance for her children to be able to live out their dreams that prompted Gigi Ginnet Casal to come to the United States from Venezuela eight years ago.

The mother is a native of Italy, but her children were born in Venezuela, a country plagued by poverty, violence and human rights abuses. As recently as



David Alberto Carvajal Casal won several cross country medals this fall for Jenks Middle School.

September, Venezuelan bishops renewed complaints against the rule of President Hugo Chavez, among them his penchant for using religious terminology in political speeches.

When the Venezuelan president called President George W. Bush a "devil" in a speech to the United Nations on Sept. 20, he made the sign of the cross and pressed his hands together with his fingers pointing upward to the sky as if he were praying.

In the past, President Hugo has referred to Venezuelan church officials as "the devil," "Judas" and "immoral." Ninety-six percent of the Venezuelan people are Catholic.

President Hugo first took office in 1998, the same year Ms. Casal brought her children to the United States, settling in the Tulsa area because she had friends here.

She said she is grateful her children are thriving in a place they are safe and free to live up to their potential and their dreams.

David ran in the Tulsa Run on Nov. 11 and also is again enjoying playing the violin and swimming. As part of his determination to strengthen his faith life, he hopes to attend the Southwest Liturgical Conference Jan. 17-20 in Oklahoma City.

## Christmas tradition wraps up for Pius X teacher, ex-students

This Christmas season concludes an eight-year tradition for a teacher at St. Pius X School and 13 of her former students.

Julie Schulz taught her first class of fourth-graders at St. Pius X in 1998, students who are now preparing to graduate from high school. Her first year of teaching, she gave each of her 18 students an apple Christmas tree ornament and told them they were very special to her.

"They were the class that started out with me," Mrs. Schulz said.

Because they were her inaugural class, she has followed them through the years and continued giving apple ornaments each Christmas. Now she teaches second grade at St. Pius X and still gives out the apple ornaments – but she has only maintained the ornament-giving tradition with her first class following them all the way to graduation.

Of her 18 original students, she has managed to keep track of 13. In May, 11 will graduate from Bishop Kelley and two from Cascia Hall.

The remaining five have moved away, and she has lost touch with them. One went to school in New York, and two moved after graduating from St. Pius X.

"It really shows how much she still cares about us for her to follow us and give us our apple ornaments every year," said Bishop Kelley Senior Marissa Jones.

When the students gathered this year to receive their ornaments, they commented on how odd it was to have everyone in the same room again. Several seniors announced

theirs was "her favorite class of all time." After reminiscing about childhood experiences as St. Pius X, including nostalgia for the uniform jumpers they used to wear, Mrs. Schulz informed them she has another special surprise for them, but they will have to come back to St. Pius X in the spring to pick them up.

The students began whispering to each other about the surprise being graduation gifts. Their former teacher was met with cheers when she told them she planned to attend

their graduation.

Mrs. Schulz grew up in Sapulpa and attended Oklahoma State University. She is now a parishioner of St. Pius X, and her daughter attends the school's kindergarten.

While she said it is mostly the girls that she hears from year after year, some of the boys respond, and she also hears from parents. "Their parents are tickled too," she said adding that when she sees either the parents or her former students, the ornaments are the first topic of conversation. Particularly at this time of year, the students are wondering if she is going to continue or if she has forgotten.

When asked if she will continue sending the ornaments to the University of (fill in the blank), she laughed and said no – "this is my last year."



Julie Schulz, back center, reunites with former students to give them their last Christmas ornament before they graduate high school. The students have received ornaments from their former teacher since 1998. From left at front are Michael Turner, Marissa Jones, Justin McAlpin, Kira Moss, Kelly Fuchik, Parker Frazier' on back row are Zach Weyland, Shane Hill, Mrs. Schultz, Emily Ortiz, Anna Charlton, Sarah Poole. Not pictured are Cascia Hall Seniors Deider Barrick and Andrea Cody.

## Kelley girls' basketball team, Christian athletes play Santa

Two little girls faced with a medical crisis still will receive Christmas presents thanks to the Bishop Kelley girls' basketball team and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

This year Athletic Trainer Brian Coley, who also leads the school's Fellowship, said he "dropped the ball" on the annual Shoebox Christmas Project the organization has conducted each year. However, he knew of a family in need and saw an opportunity for the athletes to make a difference in the lives of someone who is hurting.

"The 3-year old daughter in this family is suffering from major medical problems that have put a serious strain on the family, both financially and emotionally," Coach Coley said.

After conferring with other coaches and team members, the girls' basketball team, in conjunction with the Fellowship members, adopted the two daughters in the family, ages 3 and 6, and will provide them with Christmas gifts they otherwise would not receive. The team will have a group shopping trip to purchase gifts with their own money and deliver them by Dec. 12.

Coach Coley said the school has a history of helping people who are in need.

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes is beginning its 51st year ministering to student athletes in the United States and around the world. The organization has touched many athletes and coaches over its history and

continues to grow. Legendary coaches like the late Tom Landry of the Dallas Cowboys and Congressman Tom Osborne, former coach of the Nebraska Cornhuskers, are two men who believed in the Fellowship and what it seeks to do.

At Kelley, the Fellowship meets twice a month for Bible study, team-building and Christian socialization in what is known as "the huddle."

"I have two goals for our FCA huddle this year. One is to let the students know that FCA is not just for athletes but open to all students of every grade level. Secondly, I hope our kids grow closer to God," Coach Coley writes on the Kelley website.

### Education news briefs

#### Project boomerangs over \$13,000

The Baby Bottle Boomerang service project sponsored by the eighth-grade class at Monte Cassino began in October to benefit Emergency Infant Services, a non-profit organization meeting basic needs of infants and children through age five whose families are in crisis in the Tulsa area. Over 1,100 baby bottles were distributed to students, faculty and campus staff and when they were returned at the beginning of November, total funds raised exceeded \$13,000. Monte Cassino presented the check to Eileen Fisher of EIS Nov. 7 in the Marian Chapel.

#### Veterans receive Thanksgiving gift

Third-graders at St. John School in Bartlesville participated in their third annual service project collecting items for the Veterans Convalescent Center in Claremore. Through their efforts, and school-wide support, they collected 527 items such as Kleenex, socks, sweaters, stamps, and more that were delivered to the Center Nov. 21 by Mr. Tomlinson, third-grade teacher. He said that since the drive's inception, they have consistently collected such an amount each year.

## Catholic publishers introduce computer games for religious education

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Two Catholic publishers have announced the launch of new educational video and computer games designed to make learning about the Catholic faith and the Bible more fun.

“Classroom Jeopardy! Catholic Edition” — developed in cooperation with the makers of the award-winning television show — is now available from the Pflaum Publishing Group, a division of Peter Li Education Group.

“Gospel Champions,” a new series of educational computer games based on the Gospel

readings, resulted from a partnership of Catholic publisher Silver Burdett Ginn Religion with Third Day Games.

Game cartridges available for “Classroom Jeopardy! Catholic Edition” include Catholic Basics Level 1 and Catholic Basics Level 2, as well as language arts and math for grades three, four and five. All of the games (\$28 each) play on the “Classroom Jeopardy” base unit (\$499), also distributed by Pflaum.

The games can be used in traditional Catholic classrooms or in parish religious education, catechist formation and

confirmation programs or for retreats, community events, family game nights, church festivals or fundraising activities.

“With the launch of ‘Catholic Jeopardy,’ Pflaum brings a level of interactivity and enthusiasm to religious education tools that we’ve never seen before,” said Bret D. Thomas, president and publisher, in a statement. “Yet ‘Catholic Jeopardy’ is consistent with our vision of providing sound catechetical materials to help children learn about our faith.”

“Gospel Champions,” with three skill settings for children from

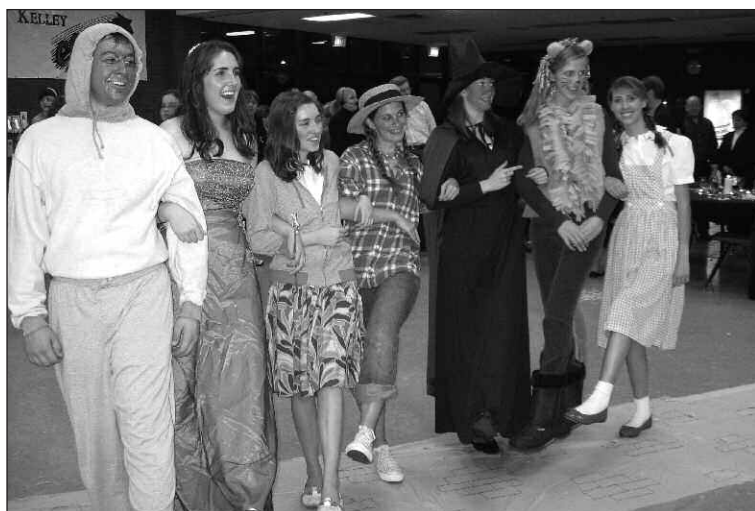
kindergarten to eighth grade, links Sunday Mass readings to the daily lives of students by integrating action/adventure game play with sequenced elements of Bible stories.

For an annual Web site license fee of \$125, “Gospel Champions” can be incorporated into the educational program of any parish or school. A new Gospel story is unlocked each month for students to play on their home computers.

The game software also enables parishes and schools to send personalized messages to children each time they play the game.

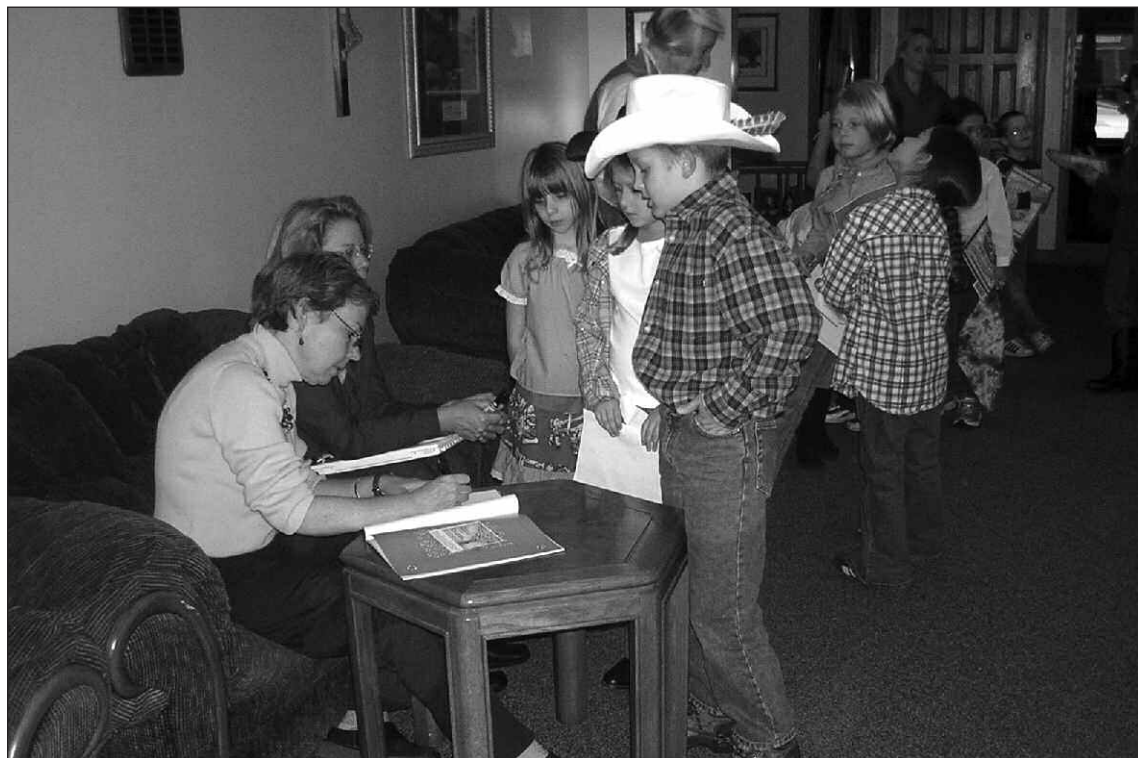
“The ‘Gospel Champions’ games will provide a parish or school with a low-cost, high-impact resource for connecting the home to the Gospel proclaimed at our Sunday Eucharist,” said Deacon Raymond Latour, president of Silver Burdett Ginn Religion, in a news release.

Brian Mitchell, president of Third Day Games and a religious education teacher, said the partnership with Silver Burdett Ginn Religion “is a significant step in realizing our goal of using the popularity of games to keep our children connected to the Catholic faith in their daily lives.”



### Drama supporters off to see the wizard

Bishop Kelley High School speech and debate team members, from left, Brennan Fox, Clare Gibbons, Elizabeth Morgan, Dylan Cleary, Katie Mailey, Laura Atherton and Kelsey Brittingham, perform “The Wizard of Oz” for family, friends and program supporters at Molly Murphy Night held Nov. 14. The fundraiser is fashioned after the restaurant, Molly Murphy’s House of Fine Repute, located in Tulsa and Oklahoma City which closed in 1996 after 20 years of success.



Second-grade students Daniel Anthamatten, Natalie Clonts and Savannah Cox visit with Oklahoma author Lisa Campbell Ernst as she signs copies of “Hannah Mae O’Hannigan’s Wild West Show” Nov. 17 at St. Catherine School. Students received free copies of her book from the Tulsa City-County Library.

## St. Catherine hosts children’s author

Oklahoma children’s author and illustrator Lisa Campbell Ernst visited St. Catherine School Nov. 17 celebrating National Children’s Book Week. Her visit and book signing was sponsored by the Tulsa City-County Library, Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation and the Tulsa World.

Ms. Campbell Ernst has written and illustrated more than 20 books including titles such as “The Gingerbread Girl,” “Tangram Magician,” “Sylvia Jean the Drama Queen,” “This is the Van that Dad Cleaned” and many more.

The author conducted a workshop in early September for teachers from St. Catherine’s and

then visited the school to speak with students in November. The visit originally was intended to be for the second-grade class but, Principal Vicky Adams said, because the school is small, all students in kindergarten through fifth grade were able to attend. The students wore cowboy and cowgirl attire in honor of the book that the library gave to each second-grader, “Hannah Mae O’Hannigan’s Wild West Show.”

Ms. Campbell Ernst was inspired to write the book by her time growing up in Oklahoma and later living in New York City. “The sense of ‘belonging’ to a place and fulfilling one’s dreams gave birth to

the character of Hannah Mae. She is very dear to my heart,” the author said on the Tulsa Library website.

“I liked hearing about the hamsters (in Hannah Mae O’Hannigan’s Wild West Show),” said second-grader Brianna McGowan. “I used to read all her books to my family when I was little.”

Ms. Campbell Ernst spoke to students about her journey to become an author and the process authors go through to create a book. She stayed afterward to autograph students’ copies of the complimentary title.

### DDF SUPPORTS



Clergy Development



# 'Picturing Mary' is illuminating documentary of depictions in art

By DAVID DiCERTO  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK - Perhaps no woman in the history of Western civilization has inspired more works of art than Mary. Her image has been venerated by emperors and peasants; loomed large in grand cathedrals and inconspicuously graced the smallest trinkets and led armies into battle, protected cities and stirred devotion throughout the centuries.

An illuminating documentary, "Picturing Mary," surveys her depiction in art over the past 2,000 years, encompassing painting, sculpture and mosaic, as well as more exotic mediums such as Aztec featherwork. Jointly produced by the U.S. Bishops' Catholic Communication Campaign and Thirteen/WNET, this companion film to 2001's "The Face: Jesus in Art" airs on public television stations starting in December (The film will air at 8 p.m. Dec. 22 on OETA-PBS Channel 11 in Tulsa.)

Narrated by Jane Seymour and her husband, James Keach, the program explores how the visual representations reflect the surrounding historical and cultural milieu.

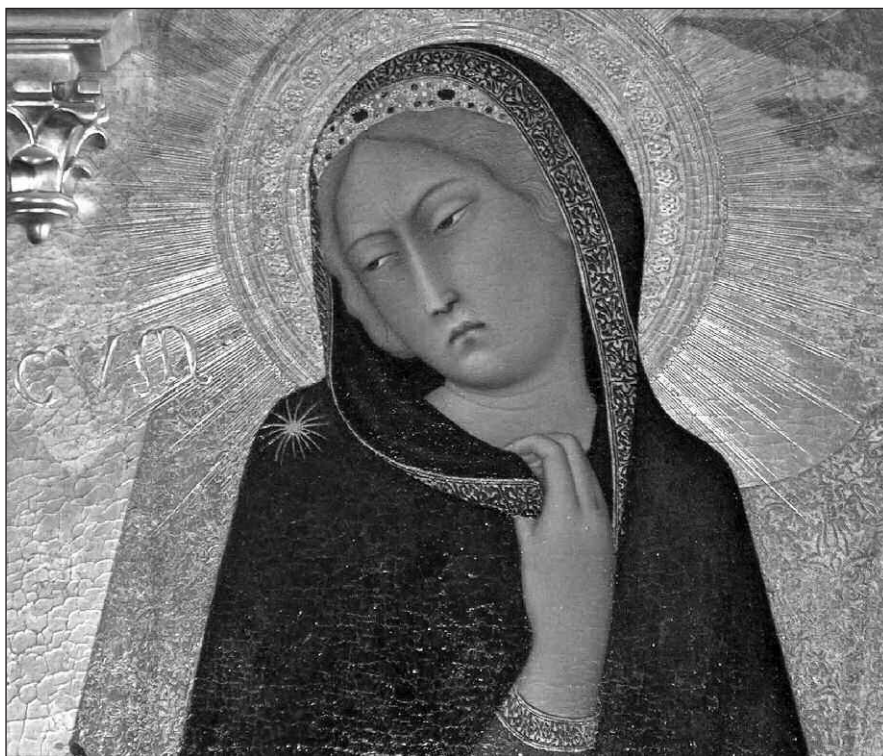
She is the humble handmaiden of the Annunciation in sublime works by Cimabue, Giotto, Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi. But she is also the "Theotokos," or "Mother of God," envisioned as the unconquered empress - so much for the alleged misogyny of early Christianity - whom cities implored for protection, as rendered in the jewel bedecked icon the "Panagia Nikoipoia" ("All Holy Bringer of Victory").

Director Martin Johnson and producer Rosemary Plum take viewers on a tour of (mostly) Renaissance treasures by Michelangelo - a marble relief he crafted at age 15, "The Madonna of the Steps," is magnificent - Titian, Duccio and Caravaggio. In addition to the predominantly Italian works, the sampling also includes pieces by northern masters like Rembrandt and Van Eyck, the latter's use of color and detail astonishing even by modern standards.

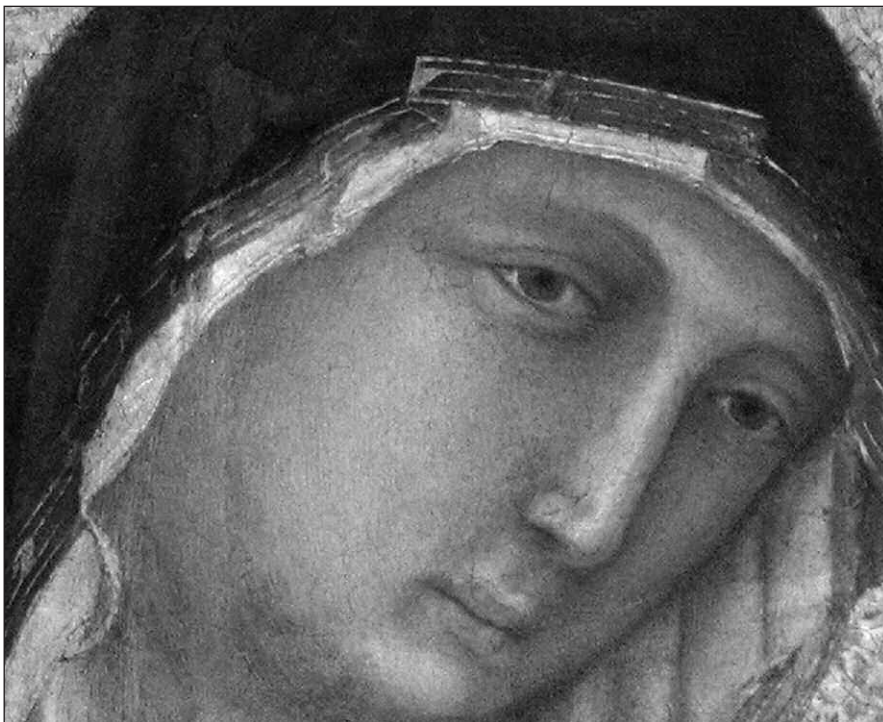
A segment at the remote monastery of Narga Selassie on an island in Ethiopia's Lake Tana demonstrates how the basic image of Mary ("endlessly varied, endlessly imagined") remains essentially the same around the globe.

Beyond an art history lesson, the film shows how, in earlier times when populations were largely illiterate, the frescoes, altarpieces, etc. served as pictorial catechisms, conveying theological truths and providing a virtual overview of Mariology.

At only an hour in length, there are omissions: There's no Asian, Celtic or East



Mary is seen in this detail from a painting by Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi. The image is among those featured in the new documentary "Picturing Mary," examining how Mary has been portrayed in art through the ages. The film will air at 8 p.m. Dec. 22 on OETA-PBS Channel 11 in Tulsa. (CNS photo/courtesy Rosemary Plum)



This is a detail from the Duccio painting "Madonna and Child." The work is among those featured in the new documentary "Picturing Mary." (CNS photo courtesy Catholic Communication Campaign)

European art (Poland's "Black Madonna" of Czestochowa, a national treasure that held special significance for Pope John Paul II, didn't make the cut).

And the most familiar New World image of Mary, Mexico's "Our Lady of Guadalupe," gets only cursory treatment. Two other minor quibbles: Mr. Keach's voice is monochromatic and the "morphing" effect, so inventively employed in "The Face," is hardly used at all here.

But overall, this rewarding if less ambitious follow-up is edifying in its contemplation of the meek Jewish maiden whom the poet William Wordsworth, as quoted in the film, called "our tainted nature's solitary boast."

The Catholic Communication Campaign also will provide a companion Web site at [www.picturingmary.com](http://www.picturingmary.com).

David DiCerto is on the staff of the Office for Film & Broadcasting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## Quality Catholic television programming steps up

By MARK PATTISON  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON - In the weeks and months ahead, Catholics looking for quality television programming that suits their moral and social sensibilities need look no further than programming supplied by the Catholic Communication Campaign.

"Our motto is 'How the Good News Gets Around,'" said CCC executive producer Ellen McCloskey. And as winter begins to set in, TV viewers will be able to get both warmth and light from their set.

The first CCC project is "Picturing Mary," which is being offered to public TV stations nationwide in December. The hourlong documentary looks at how artists depicted Mary from centuries ago to more modern times. The program will air at 8 p.m. Dec. 22 on OETA-PBS Channel 11 in Tulsa.

"It's a very good companion to 'The Face: Jesus in Art,' which continues to air on public TV stations at Christmas and Easter," Ms. McCloskey said. Some stations, she added, plan on showing "The Face" and "Picturing Mary" back to back. She offered her hopes that patrons of the new movie "The Nativity Story" will be inclined to tune in to "Picturing Mary."

In January, those same public TV stations will be offered "Lives for Sale," produced by Maryknoll Productions. The documentary looks at the immigration issue but pays close attention to human trafficking. "Traffickers will encourage women, 'Come to America and I'll give you a job,'" Ms. McCloskey said, although the ruse doesn't become apparent until it is too late. The issue will get its own cinematic treatment come spring with the film "Trade," starring Kevin Kline.

In February, another public-TV documentary that got partial funding from the CCC will air on selected PBS stations in time for Black History Month. "Sisters of Selma" examines the role nuns, many of whom were in the St. Louis area, played in the civil rights struggles of 40 and more years ago in Selma, Ala.

"It's very, very powerful," Ms. McCloskey said. Not only does the program examine Catholic advocacy in civil rights, it also "addresses some of the changes we were going through in the Catholic Church at the time," she added.

"Many of the sisters - the women who marched at the time - are still alive," Ms. McCloskey said. "There's a lot of good archival footage. Then you see them (the sisters) on the screen in the present day, and they look the same."

Catholics will also get a triple treat if they're watching TV on Christmas Eve after their late local news. ABC, NBC and CBS will each broadcast Catholic-themed programs.

ABC's entry is a CCC production, "Celebrating Light and Hope," from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, with Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan. CBS will air a Christmas Eve compilation of lessons and carols from St. Joseph Cathedral in Sioux Falls, S.D. It's the 10th anniversary of the program at the cathedral. While the show will contain the readings and hymns customary to the event, expect "a little more variety to it," Ms. McCloskey said.

## Catholic Digest takes young readers back to Mary's time

NEW LONDON, Conn. (CNS) - What was it like to grow up in Nazareth in Mary and Joseph's time? What did people eat for dinner? Did children go to school? What did people do for fun?

Through a new booklet produced by Catholic Digest, young Catholics can get answers to those questions and more as the national monthly magazine takes them on a journey back in time to explore daily life in Nazareth with young Mary.

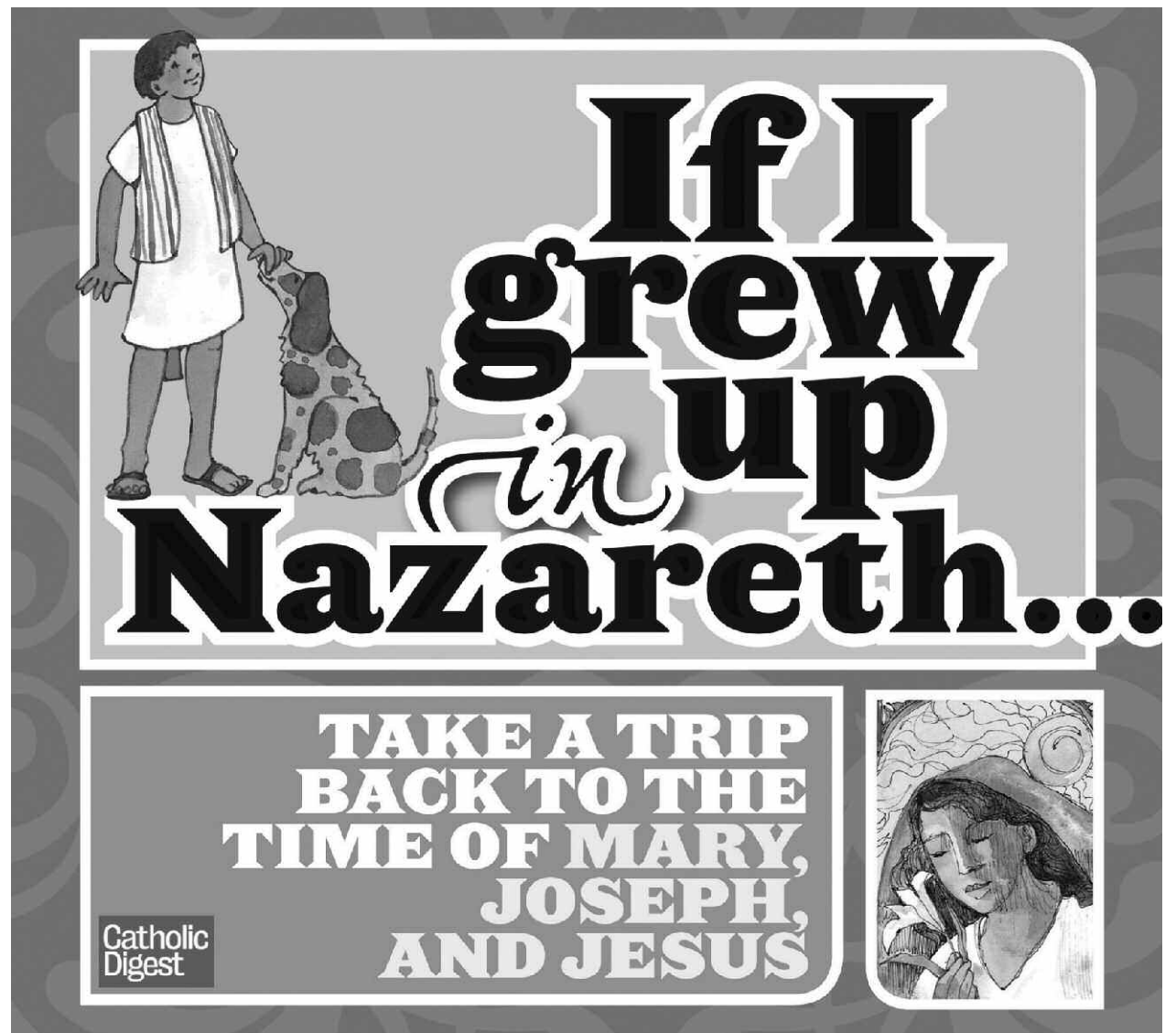
A 24-page booklet, "If I Grew Up in Nazareth ... Take a Trip Back to the Time of Mary, Joseph and Jesus," includes an interactive account of the life of the young Mary, packed with activities and crafts, vocabulary words related to the Catholic faith and educational writing exercises.

Geared for third- through seventh-graders, the colorfully illustrated booklet also features fun facts about "The Nativity Story," a movie filmed in 2006 about young Mary and Joseph.

"Catholic Digest offers young people an extremely useful and accessible tool to enter more personally into the character of Mary, to understand more clearly her world, and ultimately to appreciate more profoundly the woman God chose to bear his Son and our Savior," said Augustinian Father John Franck, former provincial of the Augustinians of the Assumption and chairman of the board of trustees at Assumption College in Worcester, Mass.

Catholic Digest launched a special Web supplement to the booklet, online at [www.catholicdigest.com/nativity](http://www.catholicdigest.com/nativity), where parents and teachers can find free additional chapters and activities that support both faith and education. There is also a free downloadable teacher's guide on the site.

*Editor's note: Copies of "If I Grew Up in Nazareth" may be ordered by phone at: 1-800-321-0411, or online at: [www.catholicdigest.com/nativity](http://www.catholicdigest.com/nativity). The booklet is 99 cents per copy and a minimum order of 10 copies is required.*



**If I  
grew  
up  
in  
Nazareth...**

**TAKE A TRIP  
BACK TO THE  
TIME OF MARY,  
JOSEPH,  
AND JESUS**

Catholic  
Digest

## Vatican officials give thumbs up for 'The Nativity Story'

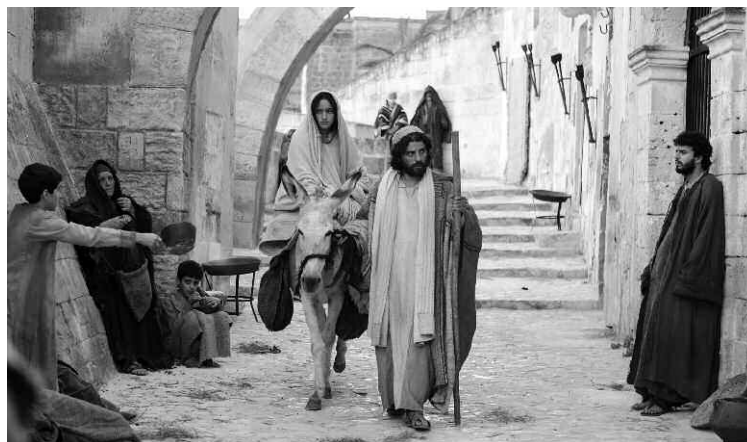
VATICAN CITY (CNS) - After hosting the film's world premiere Nov. 26, Vatican officials have given the latest Hollywood re-enactment of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth a thumbs up.

Praise for "The Nativity Story," released in U.S. theaters Dec. 1, came from the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano; the Vatican's secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, and the head of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, U.S. Archbishop John P. Foley.

"It's well done," Cardinal Bertone told journalists after seeing the film in the Vatican's Paul VI hall together with more than 7,000 other invited guests. Pope Benedict XVI, who was due to fly to Turkey less than 40 hours later, did not attend.

"It retells this event which changed history with realism but also with a sense of great respect of the mystery of the Nativity," said Cardinal Bertone.

The benefit event raised money to build two new schools in the



Israeli village of Mugar in Galilee. Christian, Muslim and Druze students will attend the elementary and middle schools.

Thunderous applause broke out several times during the film's 90-minute showing, with the most enthusiastic being during the scene of Christ's birth in Bethlehem.

Archbishop Foley said Rolf Mittweg, president of the film's distributor, New Line Cinema, told him he was "stunned, but happy" the film generated so much applause.

"I told him it was because they were pleased to see an affirmation of (the Christian) faith," the archbishop said.

In his opening remarks before the nearly full audience hall, Archbishop Foley said it was "nice to be able to have something religious for Christmas."

The film, which revives the true meaning of the season, comes at a time when "people are afraid of saying 'Merry Christmas'" and makes people "proud to say 'Merry Christmas,'" he said.

The archbishop told Catholic News Service he found the film to be "very moving" and thought "the part of Joseph was sensitively scripted and played."

Cardinal Bertone also praised the way the scriptwriter, Mike Rich, crafted "very beautiful dialogue" between the characters, especially in fleshing out Joseph and Mary's relationship and how "they together accepted the mystery of God's plan for them."

"In particular, Joseph is the example of how an honest and righteous man, who undergoes a humanly upsetting experience" - finding out his betrothed is pregnant - can still "abandon himself completely to God's plan."

Meanwhile, L'Osservatore Romano called the feature film "graceful and unpretentious," praising it for being a light, happy and imaginative retelling of the story of Joseph, Mary and Christ's birth.

About 30 U.S. bishops saw a preview screening Nov. 14 in

Baltimore with film producer Marty Bowen in conjunction with their fall general meeting.

"Oh, it was a fantastic experience," said Auxiliary Bishop Edward M. Grosz of Buffalo, N.Y., who saw the movie through the lens of his Mariology studies.

"I saw the beauty of the relationship between Mary and Christ and the mystery of salvation, which is one of the elements emphasized by the Second Vatican Council (Dogmatic) Constitution on the Church," Bishop Grosz told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview. "I thought the movie depicted that so beautifully."

Bishop Grosz said he was also impressed with the characterization of Joseph. "How often do we think of Joseph as having a sense of humor?" he asked, recounting the scene in which Joseph and Mary prepare to go to Bethlehem amid the scornful and shunning looks of their fellow villagers, who are aware that Mary became pregnant before marrying Joseph.

By AMANDA WILLIAMS

Two women, both of whom spent almost two decades in high-profile professional careers, have branched out to create a successful, family-friendly business venture that counts the Diocese of Tulsa among its clients.

Denise Brewer spent nearly 20 years in the television industry including Tulsa stations KTUL and KJRH covering health care, fitness, nutrition and women's issues. She also anchored nightly newscasts.

Her business partner, Monica Griffin, was a contract negotiator in the oil and gas industry, scheduling natural gas production, gas balancing and assisting engineers in acquiring producing properties.

The two professionals met when their children began kindergarten at St. Mary School and immediately became friends, sharing hobbies such as running and exercise. Their kids also are best friends. After each woman gave birth to her third child, they decided they needed to alter their professional lives to be more available to their husbands and children.

"As my kids got older, it was harder to explain why I had to be gone on Thanksgiving, Christmas or when any major event came up," Mrs. Brewer said. "When something scary happened like a tornado, I had to leave my family and go cover it."

Mrs. Griffin, also in a highly demanding position, felt the same way, so the women began brainstorming on a business they could operate that would allow them to keep family as their No. 1 priority.

Their joint efforts produced American Document Imaging of Tulsa. The document imaging company converts any paper documents into digital files stored on compact discs, saving companies paper and time. Mrs. Griffin said they thought, "How hard could it be to scan paper?" In the spring of 2004, the women left their prominent positions to embark on the mom-friendly business.

"We jumped in knowing nothing," said Mrs. Griffin. After extensive online research, selecting software and working with vendors, they hit the ground running. "Now we speak the industry language."

"Ignorance is bliss," Mrs. Brewer said.

The business was structured with the intention of hiring professional women who want to restructure their lifestyles around their families. ADI Tulsa is a flexible operation with non-full-time employees. The women are able to use their professional expertise and skills in a position that works around their families' schedules.

The office even has a kids' room for those times when schools are closed or a child is ill.

"It's not a question when your child is sick," said Mrs. Brewer. Family comes first.

The partners said business is booming. Some of their clients include The Bama Companies, Inc., Tulsa National Bank, McGraw Davisson Stewart Realtors, Bishop Kelley High School and the Diocese of Tulsa. Their contract with the Diocese entails archiving documents such as sacramental and transitional records dating back pre-statehood to present.

Mrs. Brewer explained this will enable the Diocese to find a baptismal certificate for someone from the 1800s by typing the name into a computer program and locating the document in a matter of seconds.

Father James D. White, the Diocese of Tulsa's archivist and historian, said ADI Tulsa has completed its scanning and indexing of about 20 parishes and has more than 100 to go, counting parishes that have been closed.

He said another advantage of the digital records is that it protects Church documents from dangers such as fire, which



Monica Griffin and Denise Brewer

## Family-first business booms

### *Professional women, professional moms*

has destroyed the records of several parishes over the years.

Father White also said he receives several calls a week asking about sacramental records. Typically, a caller might say, "I know I was baptized in eastern Oklahoma in such-and-such year, but I don't know where." Church law requires people who want to get married to produce an updated baptismal record.

Both women laughed about the unique tasks involved with scanning archived Diocesan records. "We had to pick up some Latin." Father White told them "Oh, it will be easy." Mrs. Griffin said after a while, even a novice really does get the hang of it. "They are typically words we already know that in Latin, end in -uus or -uum."

ADI Tulsa currently has eight employees, and the company is looking for more. Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. Griffin said they are seeking college-educated women with professional work experience who have chosen to stay home with their families vs. maintaining a demanding career.

"We are looking for a different caliber of woman," said Mrs. Brewer. They go by the woman's spirit and how she would fit in with the team. Both women expressed their support for a strong work ethic, explaining their expectations for high standards and quality employees.

All potential employees will go through a full OSBI/FBI background check because of the sensitive nature of the documents they handle. The firm also has a highly secure facility. "You can't come in unless we know you're coming," the business leaders explained.

They both believe professional moms make the best employees, and not enough businesses take advantage of the opportunity to employ them.

"Moms are efficient and excellent at multi-tasking," said Mrs. Brewer. "You give flexibility, and in return you gain a loyal, dedicated employee."

The women attributed their courage in venturing out on

their own to their faith and the strong Catholic community around them.

"Our community is wonderful, strong and supportive," said Mrs. Brewer. "They want everyone to succeed." The community also helps them have excellent employees referred to them. "When you're getting a reference from Father Jack Gleason or Carol Robinson, you know it's a good one." Father Gleason is pastor at Church of the Madalene and director of vocations for the diocese. Mrs. Robinson is coordinator of catechetical services.

ADI Tulsa's midtown office is purposefully unique, with a living room-like feel and relaxed environment. Crosses are found in many rooms; a children's room is equipped with books, art supplies, television and Bob the goldfish (their "token male"). Mrs. Brewer carries a bottle of holy water in her purse, and if a colleague is facing a particularly stressful appointment or task, they can bless themselves. Mrs. Griffin recently took her i-Pod home to reload it with Christmas music that will soon fill the suite.

Stewardship was part of their vision when Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. Griffin set out on their journey – and they were recently able to realize this vision by sponsoring a men's golf tournament at St. Mary's. Mrs. Brewer said being able to sponsor the charitable event helped fulfill their dream of "being successful, helping their family financially, keeping their families their first priority and giving back to the community."

"We are able to run a successful, mom-friendly, business, volunteer many hours and be there for our families," she said. "We couldn't do it all otherwise."

The mothers and professionals met because of their involvement at St. Mary's and said they both hold their faith very dear.

"What we have here is a gift – everyone's happy," said Mrs. Brewer. "Monica and I, we're like sisters."

# 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](mailto: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.

## Connections *Continued from page 1*

but were delighted to welcome nearly 140 prayerful participants. "It was an unbelievably high turnout of people from the community and from Poteau and Spiro," Barbara Morris said of the crowd which packed the church to overflowing for the historic event. "This was the second dedication I have been to. It was kind of long, but very impressive, and the attendance was so big we could hardly get everyone into the church," added parishioner Glenn Attebury.

Traveling to Stigler to concelebrate the dedication Mass with Bishop Slattery were three former pastors of St. Joseph, including Msgr. Patrick Gaalaas, now Vicar General of the Diocese and pastor of St. Benedict Church in Broken Arrow; Father James White, who - though retired - still serves the Diocese as archivist and historian, and Father Khiet



St. Joseph Church has about 6,000 square feet and is located on two acres near the high school in Stigler.

Nguyen, who presently serves Sacred Heart Church in Skiatook. Craig Victor, a deacon candidate and fifth-year theologian from St. Therese, Collinsville, assisted the Bishop as Master of Ceremonies.

Since 1962, the Catholics of Stigler had been celebrating Mass in a former hardware store in downtown Stigler. Unfortunately the condition of the building deteriorated drastically after a fire next door in 1998 and was becoming so contaminated with mold that it threatened to become a health hazard to the parishioners.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, Father Vincent suggested that the difficulty could be resolved if there were someone in the parish willing to begin thinking in terms of a new church. "I just once told the people if someone were ready to donate land in Stigler, our Diocese might build a church. It was a miracle that happened," Father Vincent said.

But in this case, the miracle had a name. It was Linda Alumbaugh, a parishioner, who stepped forward and



Bishop Slattery anoints the new altar with chrism. The altar was crafted and given to the church by an anonymous donor.

donated the land. Once the parishioners began to believe in the possibility of getting a new church other parishioners also stepped forward with generous gifts. Johnny and Barbara Morris donated the stone which covers the outside of the building and gives a sense of both beauty and permanence. An anonymous donor also fashioned by hand the altar, the ambo, the chair, plus the credence table and altar of repose. Speaking of these gifts, Father Charlie remarked on their "superb craftsmanship."

Currently there are 35 registered families at St. Joseph, but with the new church Father Vincent said it is his "hope and wish that the Catholic community might grow in numbers in the future." This was a sentiment echoed over and over again by the excited parishioners. "We've finally found a home," said parishioner Josephine McMahan, whose clipped British accent stands out in sharp contrast to the easy tones of her Oklahoma neighbors. "It means so much to me just to be in a new building where it will be dry!"

Parishioners were surprised both by the length and the beauty of the two-and-a-half hour consecration, which begins with the congregation gathered around the principal doors of the Church where Bishop Slattery received the symbols of his pastoral leadership and then solemnly knocked on the doors with his crozier to gain admission.

Processing inside, the congregation prayed with Bishop Slattery, who blessed the walls and the altar first with holy water and then later anointed the altar and the walls with the same chrism which is used to anoint sacramentally in Baptism, Confirmation and Ordination.



Parishioners knelt on the floor during the consecration of their new church.

Several parishioners compared the consecration of the building with baptism, pointing out that both the person to be baptized and the altar are first bathed with consecrated water and then anointed with chrism. As the newly baptized is clothed in a white baptismal robe, so the altar is dressed and crowned with flowers. Candles are even solemnly placed on the altar, recalling the ritual of Baptism when a lit candle is handed over with the command "Receive the light of Christ."

"I found the consecration to be a very powerful ceremony and saw what looked like intentional parallels with baptism," commented Deacon Candidate Craig Victor. "Consecrating the church makes it a place where God's actions can be made manifest. His mercy is made apparent in the building in the same way that His mercy becomes manifest in the recreation of a child at baptism."

St. Joseph's is the third church Bishop Slattery has consecrated during his nearly 13 years as Bishop of Tulsa. The others are Holy Cross in Wagoner and St. Therese in Collinsville.

Because of the extraordinary needs of the parish, Bishop Slattery was determined to help the parish build a new home, but given the relatively small size of the parish he knew that he would need his own miracle.

That came in the unexpected gift to the Diocese of the estate of Susan Elaine Randall, who left the Diocese \$550,000 upon her death in December 2004. Bishop Slattery portioned \$450,000 of her gift to the construction of the new St. Joseph Church in Stigler while another welcome grant of \$150,000 came from the Catholic Church Extension Society in Chicago. Bishop Slattery served as president of the Extension Society prior to his being named Bishop of Tulsa.

The 6,000-square-foot church and parish hall sit on two acres on Northwest Seventh Street in Stigler, near the high school. The project manager was Brandon Moore, whose Jenks firm is called Command Construction.

"Man!" he said with a smile, "I was worried that all that incense would set off the fire alarms in the building!"

But everything went off without a hitch, and afterwards the crowd celebrated in the parish hall, which Bishop Slattery also dedicated and consecrated.

"It is so good to be in place that is ours," Mrs. Morris said. "It is a big blessing for our parish, and we are so grateful."