Cultivate personal contact, pope tells new U.S., Spanish bishops

Oklahoman Peter Wells ordained archbishop

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY – Pope Francis, ordaining two Vatican officials as bishops, including Oklahoma’s Peter Bryan Wells, told them to remember that behind every letter they receive, there is a real person.

Archbishop Wells, the new nuncio to South Africa, and Spanish Bishop Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, were ordained by the pope March 19, the feast of Saint Joseph and the third anniversary of the formal inauguration of Pope Francis’ papacy.

“We are very proud of the archbishop! He and his family are well-known in the archdiocese. His parents, Larry and Dodie, are members of Saint Mary’s parish in Guthrie and his brother, Bill, is director of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Youth Camp. Archbishop Wells has been well-prepared through his years of service to the local Church and to the universal Church to assume these new and weighty responsibilities. I am grateful for his generous response to this call,” Archbishop Coakley said.
Archbishop Paul S. Coakley's Calendar

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By Sooner Catholic Staff

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Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

Put Out Into the Deep

Neawness itself must be renewed

"God of everlasting mercy, who in the very goodness of the past you have filled the hearts of the people you have made your own, cause your grace to be your priests, so that, by the gift of your Spirit they have been reborn, by whose grace they have been redeemed, so that all may grasp and rightly understand in what they have been made holy by the grace of the Church through baptism, conferring on them the grace of your Son. By his grace they have been reborn, by whose grace they have been redeemed." (Collect of the Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday)

Throughout the Easter season, the Church’s new members continue to reflect upon the meaning of their experience at the Easter Vigil when they were fully initiated into the mystery of Christ and his Church through baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist. The prayers of the Church’s liturgy during this paschal season express our praise and gratitude for the life of death and regeneration that we have received during the Easter Triduum and that we renew constantly in the sacraments.

"See, I make all things new!" (Rev. 21:5) During the Easter season, we remember our covenant with God, our newness of human nature, nor the inclination to sin" (CCC 1426). We carry this treasure of divine life in our lives. The so-called second conversion is an uninterrupted task for the whole Church that, though we may sometimes lose heart or long for a new birth, we cannot give up the struggle. For Christians, sin remains a possibility even after the Sacrament of Confirmation and the Sacrament of Penance, and so we continue to celebrate new life, the new covenant, during the Easter season. We celebrate the new covenant through the Sacrament of Penance, as the divine physician, Christ acts through His ordained priest to heal the wounds of sin and to restore our communion with God, the Church and the world. The Sacrament of Penance (reconciliation) is a precious gift that Christ has entrusted to the Church. The Jubilee Year of Mercy and thus this Easter season remind us to renew the practice of the Sacrament of Penance and indispensable sacrament of divine mercy.

The communal celebrations of the Sacrament of Penance in which many are accustomed to participate during Lent and Advent, though very beneficial, do not exhaust our need for this sacrament of mercy, nor the benefit we can derive from it. If we are struggling to overcome sin or desirously seeking holiness and the fullness of the Christian life, we have to make good use of all of the means that God places at our disposal to assist us, including this sacrament.

The more we open our hearts to divine mercy through our encounter with Jesus Christ in this sacrament, the more we will become instruments of his mercy in our world.

Only the experience of God’s mercy will truly reveal the mystery of sin for what it is: not merely the breaking of an external precept, but the rupture of a personal relationship with God who loves us beyond our imagination, even when we turn our backs on him. Though we may grow weary of asking forgiveness, God never grows weary of forgiving us.

"Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and those you retain" (Lk. 10:19).

On March 22, the priests’ council, local bishops and the Office of the Lord of Perpetual Help held the first of two sessions to recognize the work of Father Stephen Bird, pastor at the Church of the Epiphany in the Diocese of the Lord in Oklahoma City, with the Father Stanley Rother Faithful Shepherd Award. "Father Bird has tirelessly proclaimed the ideals of justice and peace, self-giving love, and genuine charity so enabling all to love as Christ loved the world," said Father Dan WOdahl. "Father Bird has served the people of the parish and the priests and the people of the archdiocese. He gave his life for the love of all of us." "Stephen's service to the people and the priests of the eparch and the archdiocese, to the people of the diocese is irreplaceable," said Bishop Stanley Rother Faithful Shepherd Award is honored in name of the late Reverend Father Stanley Rother, a priest of the Oklahoma City archdiocese who was murdered in Guatemala in 1981. The award was introduced in 2008 to recognize a priest who has exhibited an unyielding commitment to the spiritual lives of his parishioners.

"This is a good opportunity for both the priests and their bishop to recognize Father Bird for his faithfulness to his people," Archbishop Paul Coakley said. "Often faithful priests do not seek the limelight or even try to get it. To offer small gesture of recognition to them is very important."

Father Bird was ordained to the priesthood on June 25, 1976, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Oklahoma City. He was assigned as a priest to Holy Trinity Church and St. Patrick’s Church in Okarche, and Saint Patrick and Epiphany, Oklahoma City.

In these roles, he has helped plan many of the major liturgical celebrations of the archdiocese, including the installation of Archbishop Salazar, Archbishop Bisbal and Archbishop Coakley. Rites of Election, Christ Mass, ordinations, funerals, prayers for vocations and vigils for clergy events. He has done all of this with a quiet and unassuming demeanor.

"Through the years, I learned more about Father Rother and grew to appreciate his life. When I was assigned as pastor of Holy Trinity in Okarche, I was able to learn more about Father Rother as I ministered to his family and others who knew him when he was growing up. I was privileged to participate in a prayer service at the beautiful statue of Father Rother on the parish grounds. Now, I look forward to once again returning to Guatemala for the 35th anniversary of this summer," Father Bird said.

"Father Rother has been an example to me of faithful service and I am honored to receive this award named in his memory," Diane Clay and Cara Koenig contributed to this story.

Father Stephen Bird, holding the Faithful Shepherd Award, with Archbishop Coakley, Fr. Ray Asherman and Fr. Dan Wall. Photo Cara Koenig.
Leading lights of new evangelization for April summit in OKC

If you could sit at the feet of and learn from the priest who gave the Pope his reticule, would you? Because in April, young Father Johnathan Castellanos, presbyter to the papal household, will be one of several “leading lights of the new evangelizations” to speak at the International Summit on the New Evangelization, co-hosted by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City on April 15-16. In recent years, we’ve become deeply conscious of the gravity of the Church’s situation in the face of aggressive secularism in our culture. If you are concerned about how best to help the Church succeed in its mission in our complex world, it would be difficult to value the opportunity more. April’s summit offers the chance to imbibe from some of the most brilliant minds in the field. Other List subscribers might include Sherry Weddell, best-selling author of “Forming Intentional Disciples: The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus,” whose insightful book has sparked profound conversations in the Church in the USA and beyond; Christopher West, who has written 12 books and has presented his philosophy at Diocese of Dallas and Angela Rogner, co-author of the acclaimed discipleship bible and Catholic Christian Outreach. More than 5,000 people from across North America are expected to participate in this year’s Summit. Needless to say, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City would not have the resources to put on such an extraordinary conference on its own – our small church through the wonders of modern technology, the conference is being simulcast from Ottawa to more than 30 locations throughout North America, enabling us to offer access at a minimal cost of only $14 per person. The benefits of being edited and built up in faith by some of the leading thinkers and practitioners in the field are obvious. The conference also is a wonderful opportunity for the people on the frontlines of the effort in this archdiocese to gather together for fellowship and mutual encouragement. Please make sure that your parish is represented – your engagement in this conversation is critical!

By Carolin Brown

Director of New Evangelization

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EWTN founder Mother Angelica dies on Easter

The Catholic Church in the United States has lost a sister who changed the face of television in the United States and around the world. Mother Mary Angelica of the Annunciation,foundress of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), passed away on March 27 after a lengthy struggle with the aftereffects of a stroke. She was 92.

“Mother Angelica was an extraordinary woman of faith and the founder of one of the world’s largest religious multimedia empires. From a remote monastery in rural Alabama, she devoted herself to being used as God’s instrument to bring the voice of the Church to people all over the earth Dahlia Thayer, a Catholic

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EWTN founder Mother Angelica dies on Easter

maining to more than 264 million homes in 144 countries. What began with approximately 20 employ- ees has now grown to nearly 400. The religious network broadcasts terrestrial and shortwave radio around the world, operates a religious goods catalog and publishes the National Catholic Register and Catholic News Agency, as well as other publishing ventures. On Feb. 12, Pope Francis sent his greetings to Mother Angelica from aboard his papal plane to Cuba. “To Mother Angelica with my blessing, and I ask you to pray for me, I need it,” the Holy Father said. “God gives you, Mother Angelica.”

To learn more about Mother Angelica, her famous quotes and her life early, go online to www.ewtn-news.com.

By Sister Colleen Nolan, O.P.

Seminarians,

Sister Colleen Nolan, O.P., celebrates jubilee

Seminarians, friends, family and the community joined April 24, 2016, for an evening of prayer and celebration to celebrate the 50th jubilee of the religious profession of Sister Colleen Nolan. The event was free, seating is limited. For reservations, contact the FIDE Office at (405) 878-5352, fogel@gregory.edu.

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Reverend Denis G. Hanrahan

Father Denis Hanrahan, 80, died March 20 in Oklahoma City. Born Aug. 9, 1935, in Tulla, County Clare, Ireland, Father Hanrahan knew from an early age that he wanted to be a priest. Father Hanrahan once remarked that he grew up in a parish where the priesthood was a popular vocation among the young men and their dedication inspired him. Ultimately, he followed his vocation to holy orders. He was ordained by Bishop Michael Hanrahan to the priesthood on May 3, 1961.

Father Hanrahan attended parochial schools in the Philadelphia area before entering the U.S. Army Air Corp where he served as a gunner on a B-29 “Flying Fortress” until his honorable discharge in 1946. Following his military service, he entered Maryknoll Seminary and School in Ossining, N.Y., where he received a bachelor’s degree in 1950. After working in the private sector for a few years, he entered Mount Saint Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., and was ordained at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia for the Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa. He served as associate pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi, Oklahoma City; Saint Mary, Tulsa; and Saint Joseph Old Cathedral, Oklahoma City. He was named associate pastor of Saint Francis Assisi, Oklahoma City; Saint Mary, Tulsa; Saint Joseph Old Cathedral, Oklahoma City; Saint Mary, Midway; Saint Joseph Old Cathedral, Oklahoma City; and Saint Mary, Armorel, and missions where he retired in 2001.

He also served as Assisting Casacpt in Colegiate and missions, and Saint Ann in Elinos and missions while pursuing graduate studies at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. where he received a master’s degree in social work. Father Hanrahan never stopped learning, receiving a master’s degree in public health and a doctorate of philosophy from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, a doctorate of ministry from Phillips University in Enid; and a master’s degree in liberal studies from OU in Norman.

Father Hanrahan served as Promoter of Justice/Defender of the Bond, a teacher of religion at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School and Mount Saint Mary High School; interim director of Associated Catholic Charities and chaplain to the Catholic Daughters of America; G.A.R. George Noah, proclaimed May 9, 1986, as Father Louis J. Lamb Day. Father Hanrahan also was a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 30 at The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception with interment following at Saint Mary Cemetery, Ardmore, next to his brother Father Michael Hanrahan.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Saint Mary Church, 411 North Elm Street, Guthrie, OK 73044.
Holy Week

Thousands of people across the United States were welcomed into the Catholic Church on Easter Vigil, March 26. Among them, many dioceses around the country are welcoming entire families who, inspired by each other, want to receive the sacraments. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City welcomed 326 catechumens and 390 candidates at Easter.


Fr. Carson Kittelbrink prays at the Good Friday service at St. Robert Bellarmine in Jones. Photo Cara Koenig/Sooner Catholic.

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Fr. Carson Kittelbrink prays at the Good Friday service at St. Robert Bellarmine in Jones. Photo Cara Koenig/Sooner Catholic.

Students at the University of Oklahoma carry the cross across campus on Good Friday. The Stations were led by Zak Beezian, seminar-ian for the archdiocese. Photo Chris Porter.

Fr. Carson Kittelbrink prays at the Good Friday service at St. Robert Bellarmine in Jones. Photo Cara Koenig/Sooner Catholic.

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Fr. Carson Kittelbrink prays at the Good Friday service at St. Robert Bellarmine in Jones. Photo Cara Koenig/Sooner Catholic.
“The Church is a synthesis of evangelization, teaching and prayer,” he writes in his new book “A Deeper Vision.”

This wide-ranging exploration of Catholic Church in the 20th century considers philosophers, theologians, scholars and poets to examine the intellectual transformation of the Church and its role in the world.

Joining “non-specialists” to the book considers both skilled and inspired thinkers, including well-known names such as Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar as well as many lesser known like Christopher Dyer, John Bainton and Michael Sturm.

Though the process was often rough and unorthodox, this is the story of progress in the last century, albeit unresolved. The narrative of the 20th century is lost before it is marked by paradoxes and contradictions.

Romano Guardini, a noted theologian, called these “tensions” and distinguished between true contradictions and where it was merely difficult to reconcile “two truths.” Within the Church, perhaps the great tension is in the relation between abstract theology and the narrative of God acting in history. There also is a tension between the Church’s duty to protect the deposit of faith and to engage current scholarship.

The great minds of the 20th century, explored and argued fiercely over, these issues. This book offers a network of informants to keep Rome aware of new ideas. From the Council of Trent and tested through the scholastics, the 17th and 18th centuries, the 19th century, the 20th century and beyond, the process of change and development continues. The Catholic Church in the 21st century is far from finished.

“Syllabus of Errors,” a rather confusing list of doctrine extended well beyond the church doors. “The Church is no longer able to speak with one voice,” Balthasar said. “Protestant, Jew, Moslem and all those who believe in the God of Israel are also members.”

“The Church and its themes are different in every time, every place and every person,” Rahner said. “The challenge is to gather the insights from all of them.”

Aimed at “non-specialists,” the book considers the “really heavy responsibility” God gave him within the Church.
La novedad debe ser renovada

El papa Francisco bendice la cura de las enfermeras en un acto de la Tercera Obra de Misericordia Espiritual.
President – Cristo Rey
Oklahoma City High School
Cristo Rey Network is seeking a president for its new high school in Oklahoma City that will be part of the national Cristo Rey network. The new school is focused on providing work study programs that will prepare students for lifelong learning and success in the workplace. We are working with diverse Catholic church leaders, educators, and philanthropists. For more information and to apply, visit www.cristoreyokc.org. Applications are due on Friday, April 14, at 4 p.m.

St. Gregory’s University
St. Gregory’s University is seeking a Vice President for Development to join our leadership team. This position is full time with benefits. Responsibilities include: fund-raising for the university, enrollment management, development of partnerships with schools and community organizations, and collaboration for global cause initiatives. World-renowned violinist, Andrea Echeverria, will perform “For Mercy’s Sake Benefit Concert,” on Saturday, April 16 at 6 p.m. Silent auctions, games, an open bar and a live band (DJ). Tickets are $30 per person. Contact Broker Box Hall at (405) 596-4660.

Oklahoma City High School
President – Cristo Rey
Oklahoma City High School is accepting applications for its new high school president for its new high school. The school will open to its inaugural freshmen work experiences. The school will be part of the Cristo Rey Network. For more information, visit www.cristoreyokc.org. Applications are due on Friday, April 14, at 4 p.m.

St. Gregory’s University
St. Gregory’s University is seeking a Preceptor for Religious Formation to join our leadership team. The position is part time with benefits. Responsibilities include: direct the religious education and formation programs at the university. Contact Fr. Stephen Bird at stgregorys.edu or call (405) 721-8000 ext. 351, by Wednesday, April 6. Please indicate if you are in need of making reservations.

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Admonish the sinner, correct the erring

By Alvaro Marull-Meléndez
Associate director, Office of Hispanic Ministries

The first three Spiritual Works of Mercy keep a close relationship with each other. So much so that these three words could be interchangeable, “teach,” “admonish” and “correct.” But, each has its own purpose.

What specifically does it mean to correct? This word comes from the Latin “corrigere,” which means “completely straighten” put right, direct, govern.

And, the community of Galatia: “Brothers, if anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him that you also may not be tempted” (Gal 6, 1).

In the Old Testament it says, “Admonish your friend, he may not have done it; and if he did, that he may not do it again. ... Admonish your neighbor before you break with him” (Sirach 19, 13, 17).

“Reprove your neighbor openly so that you do not incur sin because of that person” (Lev 19, 17).

In the New Testament, our Lord commands us to practice this work of mercy, “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother” (Mt 18: 15).

“Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him” (Lk 18: 15).

“Your patient could die of pain. As the Holy Father reminds us: “Along with charity, it is necessary to tell the truth and never say something that isn’t true.”

Secondly, the Holy Father reminds us: “Along with charity, it is necessary to tell the truth and never say something that isn’t true.”

Many times in our communities things are said to another person that aren’t true: they are libelous. Or, if they are true, however, they harm the reputation of that person.”

The Holy Father insisted on speaking truth with love and avoid gossip and rumors. Because “rumors wound, they are insults to a person’s reputation, they strike at a person’s heart. ... Truth is always needed, even if at times it isn’t pleasant to hear. In every case if the truth is told with charity and with love, it is easier to accept. This is why it is necessary to speak truth with charity: this is how one must speak to others about their faults.”

Thirdly, Pope Francis insisted that one must correct with humility: “If you must correct a tiny flaw, consider that you have so many that are greater. The Lord says this effectively: first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck from the eye of another. Only in this way will you not be blind and will you see clearly to truly help your brother.

Thus, humility is important in order to recognize that “I am a greater sinner than him, a greater sinner than her.”

To correct someone, help them become aware of a failure, a weakness, a mistake and even a sin, the Church has understood this correction or admonishment as a right and a duty. Those who are parents understand the consequences of correction in a timely and appropriate manner to our children. Much of the family crisis may be due to the breach of this duty. It is more comfortable not having conflicts so some erroneously do not correct. Some children believe their parents don’t care or are indifferent to their wellbeing when they are not corrected. Jesus teaches compassion when correcting. The adulteress is brought into the light of free-dom when she is invited to govern herself by her conscience (Jn 8:11). May we imitate the Lord in this.

Third Spiritual Work of Mercy

By Diane Clay
The Sooner Catholic

Since the building was dedicated in 1962, Saint Patrick Catholic Church has been a beacon of spiritual and architectural beauty.

Parishioners want to share that beauty with those throughout the archdiocese and among all faiths with a free presentation and architectural tour on Sunday, April 10.

Over the past 54 years, Saint Patrick’s has been recognized for its unique design with walls of angels and inspiring statues.

Some of the awards received by Saint Patrick include:

- 1963 Church Architecture Exhibit, Maynooth, Ireland
- 1970 Design Excellence Award, Oklahoma City Arts Council
- 1991 25 Year Award for Excellence, Okla. Council of Architects
- 1999 Top Twenty Most Important Buildings in Oklahoma City
- 2000 Top Five Favorite Sites for OKC Architecture at its Finest
- 2002 Ten Architecturally Significant Religious Buildings in OKC
- Ten Best Buildings in Oklahoma, American Institute of Architects
- Young American Architects Exhibition, Milan, Italy

Award-winning Saint Patrick hosts architecture tour