Welcome

BISHOP EDWARD J. WEISENBURGER
Seventh Bishop of Tucson

Remembering an ‘Angel’ among us - See page 9
Pope assigns Kansas Bishop Weisenburger to Tucson

By CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE
WASHINGTON — Pope Francis named Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger of the Diocese of Salina, Kansas, since 2012, as the Seventh Bishop of Tucson.

In doing so on Oct. 3, the pope accepted the resignation of Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas.

Bishop Kicanas, who had served in Tucson since 2001, is a former vice president and former secretary of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is 76. Canon law requires bishops to turn in their resignation when they reach age 75 and Bishop Kicanas had complied.

The changes were announced in Washington Oct. 3 by Msgr. Walter Erbi, charge d'affaires at the Vatican's nunciature in Washington.

Bishop Weisenburger will be installed as the Seventh Bishop of Tucson Nov. 29. Bishop Kicanas serves as administrator of the Diocese until his successor's installation.

“ ”

Catholic Outlook photo by Michael Brown

‘I would like to invite you to a short meeting tomorrow…’

That’s how Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas began an email sent to the staff at the Bishop Moreno Pastoral Center at 12:25 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 2.

The entire message was as follows:

“I would like to invite you to a short meeting tomorrow morning at St. Augustine Cathedral beginning at 7 a.m. at which I will make an announcement. You are welcome to bring others with you. No need to rsvp.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Most Rev. Gerald F. Kicanas, D.D.
Bishop of Tucson”

It had been more than a year since Bishop Kicanas had submitted his letter of resignation to the Vatican, as required by Church law, upon reaching the age of 75.

Less than 15 hours after the email, the Vatican announced that it had accepted the bishop’s letter and appointed the Seventh Bishop of Tucson.

At 3 a.m. Pacific time on Oct. 3, the announcement was only available in Italian: “Il Papa ha nominato Vescovo di Tucson (U.S.A.) S.E. Mons. Edward Joseph Weisenburger, finora Vescovo di Salina.”

Curious local Catholics, priests and Internet searchers discovered that their new leader was Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger of Salina, Kansas.

Diocesan staff, along with faithful showing up expecting a morning Mass, met their new leader just as the old one had promised, at 7 a.m., in the center aisle of the Diocese’s venerable cathedral.

Catholic Outlook photos by Steff Koeneman

From top, clockwise: Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger embraces his predecessor Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas during the former’s introduction to the diocesan staff early in the morning on Oct. 3; staff and well-wishers applaud as Bishop Weisenburger praises Bishop Kicanas; and Msgr. Thomas Cahalane, pastor of Our Mother of Sorrows, greets the new bishop.
BISHOP WEISENBURGER
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distances,” he said. “I would rather
go to them than have them come to
me.”

Spread over nine counties and
nearly 43,000 square miles, the
Diocese of Tucson is the fifth largest
diocese in the country by size.

Bishop Weisenburger offered
some remarks in Spanish at the
news conference and earlier that
morning when he was introduced to
diocesan staff.

He also reiterated his support
for the plight of immigrants in
the country without documents
and for the 800,000 youths and
young adults whose status has been
endangered by the elimination of
the Deferred Action for Childhood
Arrivals, or DACA, unless Congress
moves to preserve the program.

“I very much want America for
them, but I also really want them for
America,” he said. “Their gifts, their
talents and their dedication reveal to
us the very best of what it means to
be an American.”

Edward Joseph Weisenburger was
born in Alton, Ill., Dec. 23, 1960. He
spent two years of his childhood in
Hays, Kansas, but grew up primarily
in Lawton, Okla., graduating from
high school in 1979.

He attended Conception
Seminary College in Conception,
Mo., where he graduated with
honors in 1983. He then attended
the Catholic University of Louvain
in Belgium, where he earned a
bachelor’s degree in theology
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Ordained a priest of the
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Dec. 19, 1987, he was parochial
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licentiate in canon law.

When he returned to the
Archdiocese in 1992, then-Father
Weisenburger was appointed Vice
Chancellor and adjutant judicial
vicar. He also provided weekend
parish and prison ministries from
1992-95 and served as an on-site
chaplain for rescue workers in the
weeks following the April 19, 1995,
bombing of the Murrah Federal
Building in Oklahoma City.

In addition to chancery duties,
he worked in parish and prison
ministries from 1992-95, often
celebrating the sacraments in
Spanish.

In 1996, he was appointed Vicar
General of the Archdiocese. He
remained with the archdiocesan
Tribunal for almost 20 years
and served in various capacities
including promoter of justice for the
sainthood cause of Father Stanley

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Considering Cremation?
Do you know our Church’s teaching?
We do!
Call us for information

Sacred places of prayer and remembrance
A ministry of the Diocese of Tucson

Catholic Outlook photo by Michael Brown

Bishop Weisenburger is introduced by Bishop Kicanas after the press conference to diocesan Catholic School Superintendent Sheri Dahl.

Catholic Outlook photo by Michael Brown

Salpointe Catholic High School
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#LightTheWayForLancers

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New bishop meets the local media

Bishop Weisenburger's first press conference took place at 9 a.m., in the pastoral center’s Duce Maria room, as the images of all his predecessors looked on from the wall behind him. He spoke Spanish to a local Spanish-language television affiliate, and English to the others.

Francis Rother, who was beatified Sept. 23. He served as pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Okarche, Okla., 1995-2002, and was pastor of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 2002-12. On Feb. 6, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI appointed him the 11th Bishop of Salina. His episcopal ordination and installation was May 1, 2012.

A Chicago native, Gerald Frederick Kicanas was born Aug. 18, 1941. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Chicago April 27, 1967, and for 25 years, he served in various capacities in the archdiocesan seminary system. In 1984, he was appointed Rector of Mundelein Seminary and held seminary postings that included Rector, principal and dean of formation at the former Quigley Seminary South.


Bishop Kicanas currently serves on the US Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Catholic Education and Communications committees and the USCCB Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs, and is a consultant to the Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs. He has been chairman and served on several other USCCB committees.

He is a board member of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, known as CLINIC. He also is the former chairman of the board of directors of Catholic Relief Services, the US bishops’ overseas relief and development agency.

At the news conference, Bishop Kicanas said his successor was “a staunch advocate for social justice, caring for all human life from conception to natural death. He is a bishop who has a deep sensitivity and compassion for migrants and refugees.”

Bishop Weisenburger also “understands the struggles of rural communities” and works of behalf of the people facing those struggles,” the retiring bishop said.

“For more than a year, we have been praying for Pope Francis and for the Holy Spirit to send us a loving and caring pastor and shepherd for the Diocese of Tucson. The Spirit has heard our prayers, and then some,” Bishop Kicanas added.

Invitation to welcome Bishop Weisenburger

Catholics are invited to join in welcoming Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger as the seventh Bishop of Tucson. All are invited to the Vesper Service on Nov. 28 in St. Augustine Cathedral, 192 S. Stone Ave., Tucson, at 7 p.m.

The Installation Mass the next day is by invitation only because of the size of the Cathedral. Each parish will receive a small allotment of tickets. Bishop Weisenburger is planning to travel to outlying vicariate after his installation and will visit with members of the Catholic community who could not attend the Installation Mass. The Installation Mass also will be streamed live via the Internet. More information can be found on the diocesan website diocesetucson.org as it becomes available. Parishes with the capability of streaming and hosting the Installation Mass are encouraged to do so.

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DIOCESAN EVENTS

Renewal Ministry to heal family trees
601 E. Fort Lowell Rd., Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, Tucson
The Diocese of Tucson Renewal Ministry will host a Mass for the healing of the family tree, celebrated by Father Liam Leahy. The liturgy will be followed by healing prayers. Participants are encouraged to bring a friend and a Bible. For more information, call Gloria (520) 237-7060, or visit tucsoncrr.org.

Diocesan Seminarian collection coming up
On the weekend of Dec. 9-10, the Diocese of Tucson will have a second collection to support its Seminarian Education Fund. The Diocese needs additional support as available grants and scholarships for seminarian education are diminishing. Please consider giving to this cause: vocations to the priesthood are much needed.

PIMA NORTH VICARIATE

St. Mark’s hosts Women’s Prayer Breakfast
2727 W. Tangerine Rd., Nov. 4, 8:45-11 a.m., St. Mark Parish Hall, Oro Valley
St. Mark’s will hold its first Women’s Prayer Breakfast sponsored by Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Guest speaker is Franciscan Sister Joneen Keuler on “Confessions of a Catholic Nun: Life, Informed, Faith.” For more information call the parish office, (520) 469-7835, ext. 303.

PIMA CENTRAL VICARIATE

Sts. Peter and Paul parents schedule Fun Day
1946 E. Lee St., Nov. 4, noon-10 p.m., Stts. Peter and Paul Parish, Tucson
The Parents Association at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School is sponsoring its 45th Annual Fun Day for friends and neighbors. All are welcome. Events include a silent auction, entertainment, food and beverages, a cake walk, beer and wine gardens, a photo booth, carnival games, a zip line, cornhole tournament, music and a talent show.

PIMA SOUTH VICARIATE

St. Margaret Mary CDA holds bazaar
Sunday, Dec. 3, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., St. Margaret Mary Parish Hall and Courtyard, 801 N. Grande Ave., Tucson
The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 2685, will hold an arts and crafts bazaar. Interested vendors should call Penny Kuehl at (520) 884-3470.

PIMA WEST VICARIATE

Immaculate Conception hosts ‘Jamaica’ event
Saturday, Nov. 18, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Immaculate Conception Parish, 101 Rocalla Ave., Ajo
Immaculate Conception will hold “Jamaica,” its annual parish fundraiser featuring entertainment, various dance groups and musicians, food and baked goods, crafts, a white elephant table and a raffle. For more details, please call the parish office at (520) 387-7049.

SANTA CRUZ VICARIATE

San Martin de Porres to hold annual fiesta
15440 S. Santa Rita Rd., Nov. 4-5, noon-8 p.m., San Martin de Porres Parish, Sahuarita
The annual parish fiesta will feature food, games, music and a raffle. For more information, call the parish at (520) 625-1154.

COCHISE VICARIATE

Fall Festival of the Arts at Holy Trinity Monastery
Mile marker 302.5, Route 80, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 11-12, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Most Holy Trinity Monastery, St. David.
The monastery will host the annual gathering of Arizona artisans offering home décor and unusual gifts, along with refreshments.

Daughters of Isabella to decorate veterans’ graves
The Daughters of Isabella Circle 1443 is working with the Wreaths Across America program to place wreaths on the graves of veterans at Holy Hope Cemetery on Dec. 16. The group seeks help with purchasing the wreaths, which are available for $15. Deadline to purchase wreaths is Nov. 24. Proceeds will benefit Diocese of Tucson Vocations Department.
Alison Smith, from the Daughters, said that the wreaths can be bought online at wreaths.fastport.com, using the search AZ0086P. Checks payable to “Wreaths Across America” can also be sent to Sts. Peter and Paul Rectory, 1946 E. Lee St., Tucson, 85719.
For more information, call Smith at (520) 349-9457 or Sarah Groves at (520) 327-6015 ext. 102.

Four Salpointe students named National Merit Scholarship semifinalists
Salpointe Catholic High School students Hayden J. Hilkemeyer, Peyton R. Lewis, Samantha A. Marquez and Christopher J. O’Connor were named National Merit Scholarship semifinalists Sept. 19.
The announcement came from the National Merit Scholarship Program, which recognizes the highest scorers of students taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, PSAT/NMSQT, a standardized test from the previous spring.
The test was administered to approximately 1.6 million students, with the designation as a semifinalist awarded to students in the top one percent. In February finalists are announced, with about 7,500 selected in mid-June as winners. The award amounts vary and are based in part on academic record, test scores, written recommendations, the student’s activities and leadership and a student essay.

Advertising

U of A students and faculty only invited to discussion series
The St. Thomas More Catholic Newman Center is looking for Catholic science faculty and students from the U of A to share their experiences as scientists of faith as part of a new discussion series. We are kicking off with an outreach event on Saturday, November 18th, from 11AM to 2PM, called “Celebrating Our Catholic Roots in Faith and Science.” The event will involve a Mass celebrating St. Albert the Great (Patron Saint of the Sciences), a reception/discussion time with faculty and students, and a talk by Dr. Katie Hirschboeck, Catholic Climate Ambassador and Emerita Associate Professor of Climatology at the U of A.
You can register by emailing uanewmanscienceandfaith@gmail.com or by filling out the registration form found at https://tinyurl.com/uansaf.

Criteria for IN YOUR AREA

1. Open to the public.
2. Sponsored by a parish, school or group listed in the Diocesan Directory.
3. Is of interest to multiple people or groups, and to the Catholic community in southern Arizona.
4. Consistent with the Catholic mission.
5. Subject to the discretion of the publisher.
6. Should be submitted no later than the 15th day of the month prior to the event.
7. Should be sent by email to parishevents@diocesetucson.org with a public contact person listed.
Refugee stories kickoff Share the Journey campaign

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

One fled ISIS; another, war in Sudan; a third spent a decade in a refugee camp in Zimbabwe.

Linda Hussein, Majok Dong and Jean Pascal Ngoie were among the dozen speakers who shared their stories or offered prayers or reflections at an interfaith service Sept. 27 to kick off locally the Church’s global Share the Journey campaign.

Nearly 400 people gathered at St. Cyril Church to hear the former refugees tell their stories, to reflect on the mandate of the Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions to welcome refugees, and to celebrate their successful resettlement with music and prayer reflecting the area’s cultural and religious diversity.

“Tonight, it is a great joy to welcome you here,” said Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas. “We are one family, brothers and sisters.”

The bishop had invited faith leaders throughout the area to join in the call to encounter and accompany refugees and migrants fleeing violence, poverty and dire conditions. Share the Journey was launched earlier in the day by Pope Francis at the Vatican and continues through January 2019.

As a girl, Linda Hussein escaped an ambush by ISIS militants with her family, moving through Syria and Iraq before eventually coming to America.

For Dong, currently a student at Salpointe High School, he fled Sudan even as members of his community were being killed during flight. He and his family made it to America, and he has found Salpointe to be like “another family” for him.

Ngoie said that since resettling in Tucson with the help of Catholic Community Services, he has come to appreciate the freedoms many Americans take for granted. “They have no idea what a refugee goes through. America provides many opportunities to start off fresh.”

Among the leaders who spoke were Rabbi Thomas Louchheim from Congregation Or Chadash; Connie Phillips, president of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest; Sheikh Watheq Aloabidi, imam of the Islamic Center of Tucson; Jesuit Father Sean Carroll, executive director of the Kino Border Initiative; the Rev. Dottie Escobedo-Frank, senior pastor at the Catalina United Methodist Church; and Rev. Tom Dunham of Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church.

Catholic Relief Services is one of the national groups supporting Share the Journey. Norma Valdez is the Relationship Manager for the regional CRS office in San Antonio, Texas. “There are so many stories I could tell you,” she said, after recounting the journey of a Salvadoran refugee who migrated here twice before finding a home at a parish in Wisconsin.

“Whatever we can do, we have to do,” she said.

Share the Journey with refugee
Fade Slame

On Sept. 27, Pope Francis began an international campaign called “Share the Journey,” aimed at accompanying refugees and migrants on their way to new lives and to build stronger and more inclusive communities. The Catholic Outlook interviewed three recent refugees receiving help from Catholic Community Services in Tucson.

This is the story of Fade Slame. CCS’ Fadi Iskandar served as a translator from Arabic to English.

Where were you born? Syria.
What was it like there? I was employed in Damascus as a driver, but I lived far away and every day I had to drive there and go back. There were many checkpoints when you are driving. Three times they took my car. They took my car and did other things. Three times they arrested me because there is some other guy with the same name and the same father’s name wanted by the government.

It takes a long time to clear my name and I was very afraid because they held a gun to my head each time. By that last time, it was too much.

When did you leave? In 2012.
Did you have to leave your family behind? No, my family came with me. We went to Jordan, even though my father and my mother still lived in Syria. My children and my wife came with me.
How long were you in Jordan? Four years. We rented an apartment.
Why didn’t you stay in Jordan? I could have been deported at any time to go back to Syria. We went from Jordan to the US. We stopped in Chicago and then came to Tucson in July of 2016.

Did you know anyone in Tucson before you arrived here? No.

What have you done since you arrived here? I am a refugee here now. I am working to become a citizen. I have a job working in the laundry of a local hotel.

How old are your children? We have three boys, ages 18, 13 and 2, and three girls, ages 15, 11 and 7.

How old are you? 42.
Does your wife work? She cannot work because we have a very big family with six children.

How are you doing learning English? I am attending English classes at Pima Community College, in adult education, a special class for refugees. My biggest challenge is making the adjustment to the new culture. It’s like being a newborn and having a new life.

At the beginning, it was very hard for me, but over time, it has gotten easier. The older children are in school and learning English there.

Where would you like to be in five or 10 years? The biggest goal for me is for my kids’ success, because for me, there was no life in Jordan. I want a new life for them here. There is no other future for them in Jordan.

Would you want to go back to Syria? No, no. There is nothing for me in Syria.

What would you want readers of the Catholic Outlook to know about you? I want to thank the people of the US because they accepted us. Most of the Arabic countries, they refused to take us. Thank you.
CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

WORKING ON THE MARGINS

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Ben Palazzo
Branch Manager, Senior Vice President/Investments
(520) 209-7400 | (877) 879-3156
4380 N. Campbell Avenue, Suite 201 | Tucson, Arizona 85718
palazzob@stifel.com | www.stifel.com

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NOVEMBER 2017 - JMT EVENTS

11/1 JMT Office Closed
11/3 Confirmation Retreat (St. Cyril)
LI-1: Social Mission of the Church 2: Catechetical Process & Role of the Catechist (St. Charles, San Carlos)
11/9 Parent Enrichment (SEAS)
11/10 JMT Office closed
11/10-11/12 CFP
11/12 Parent Enrichment (SEAS)
11/13-11/14 Laudato Si (Redemptorist Renewal Center)
11/23-11/24 JMT Office closed
12/1 LI-1 Safe Environment (St. Charles, San Carlos)
12/1-12/3 CFP
12/7 Spirituality of Aging (Redemptorist Renewal Center)

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32 years
Church needs to listen to us better, say teens and young adults

Input gathered over the summer to be sent to US bishops

By Michael Brown
Managing Editor

Youths and young adults want the Church to listen to their questions, opinions and ideas more, according to the listening sessions conducted in the Diocese of Tucson last summer.

The listening sessions were conducted in anticipation of the 2018 Synod of Bishops on Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment. The goal of the sessions was to collect the opinions of youths and young adults, ages 16-29, and the circumstances that kept them involved — or led them away from — the Church.

Listening sessions in the Diocese of Tucson were conducted May through September at various locations, with more than 300 people attending. Figures were compiled and the subsequent report of findings was released Sept. 14, to meet the deadline set by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

An additional listening session took place Oct. 7. Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Ministry Director Joe Perdreauville said the last session continued to provide diocesan leaders with feedback and information that will be helpful for ministry development.

He encouraged parish leaders to conduct their own listening sessions, especially inviting those youths and young adults who are not active in the practice of their faith, as a way of building relationships and inviting them to the parish.

Sessions lasted about two hours and participants used smart phones to text responses to questions, providing immediate results. In general, the results shown were weighted beginning with the most popular, but the results did not break down the percentage of people in their responses to each question.

“The majority of our respondents were those already involved in their parish or Catholic school communities,” according to the report. “We encouraged participants to invite their non-active Catholic friends, but had an extremely low rate of participation” by that group.

When asked, “Does the Church listen to the lived situation of young people?” three quarters of the respondents chose the option, “It depends on the situation.” Most respondents agreed that they would feel more welcome if the Church listened more and that they would be more likely to be more involved in the life of the Church if it did.

Most respondents also said they wanted more “acceptance and inclusion” from the Church.

The Church succeeds in drawing young people through service organizations; local, national and international events such as World Youth Day; retreats; and youth groups.

Perdreauville noted that 19 youths and adults from the Diocese of Tucson are attending the National Catholic Youth Conference Nov. 16-18 in Indianapolis. At the invitation of Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger, they will be joining delegates from the Diocese of Salina, Kansas, for the event.

Currently, the respondents said, there are opportunities in their parishes, but they do not feel they are being invited or welcomed to participate in their parishes.

“I see this as an important opportunity for parish leaders to reach out to the youths and young adults in their area,” Perdreauville said. “It’s all about relationship-building.”

He suggested using the sacraments as a doorway into their lives. Parish leaders could use Confirmation as a stepping stone to establish relationships through high school, and weddings and baptisms as opportunities to welcome back young couples and parents, Perdreauville said.

Report findings cited service opportunities as one aspect of Church ministry that appealed to respondents, and liturgical ministries - such as Mass readers, musicians and singers, ushering or altar servers - as other appealing aspects.

The Church was most attractive to youths and young adults for “love,” “family,” “vulnerability, fear of trust,” “fear of marriage were “divorce,” “not being able to marry, raise a family, have kids,” “pressure to live a proper life,” “they are all older – young people won’t fit in,” “lack of a social life” and “professional aspirations.”

Marriage as a vocation was more appealing, with respondents listing the following reasons for being attracted to it; “love,” “family,” “happiness” and “full acceptance by another person.”

The “hesitations” of entering marriage were “divorce,” “vulnerability, fear of trust,” “fear of the unknown” and “media/society seems to be against marriage.”

The most popular source of information about the Church was “family,” followed by “Websites, including the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, magazines,” “Church bulletins” and “Mass attendance.”
Remembering an ‘Angel’ who walked among us
Santa Cruz Parish formally installs a picture of the late long-serving Carmelite Brother Angel

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

Parishioners at Santa Cruz Parish are seeing more of Carmelite Brother Angel Brinqué Fransi, even as plans proceed to consider a cause for his sainthood.

Brother Angel was born in Pobella, Lerida, Spain, on Oct. 26, 1898. He joined the Carmelites in 1916 and traveled to Arizona three years later. After assignments in Morenci, Tucson and Tombstone, he came to Santa Cruz in 1934. He remained there, except for six years in the 1950s, as cook and sacristan until his death from pneumonia on Sept. 29, 1993. He is buried in Holy Hope Cemetery.

Annie Lopez, 87, is a lifelong Santa Cruz parishioner and still works in music ministry at the parish. She remembers Brother Angel from when she was a young girl. “He was a saint, a beautiful man.”

“He said he never wanted to be a priest,” Lopez recalled, explaining why Brother Angel never sought ordination. “He just wanted to be a servant.”

Her memories were of seeing him smiling, and frequently praying in church. “You would see him in a little corner in the sanctuary,” Lopez said. “He kept the sacristy very, very clean, especially all the vestments.”

Sometimes, she added, she would see him buying groceries, although “he hardly went anywhere.”

When he died, the community was heartbroken. “We all loved him very much. They said ‘Es un santo.’ ‘He’s a saint.’”

Lopez is not the only parishioner to feel that way. In 1995, Santa Cruz Catholic School Principal Judy Stanton facilitated the renaming of the Carmelite convent building to “The Brother Angel Center.”

Carmelite Father José Luis Ferroni helped organize the dedication of a picture of Brother Angel placed in the church sanctuary during a special Mass Sept. 29. He said there is growing sentiment to open a cause for sainthood for Brother Angel.

“I believe he is a strong candidate and we will see where God takes us as devotion to him grows,” Father Ferroni said.

“After the installation of Brother’s picture in the church, we have begun in our parish to invoke his name during Mass and during the rosary. Parishioners are talking about him, especially to the newer generation or newcomers to Santa Cruz, and making him known. The image of Brother Angel in our parish is a step toward the right direction,” Father Ferroni said.

In a letter announcing the Mass, Father Ferroni cited how Brother Angel’s “extraordinary simple and humble demeanor gained for him the friendship and love of many families over the years. He was solicited frequently by many to hear from him a word of consolation or advice. He was sought by past bishops, most notably Bishop (Francis J.) Green. By the time he celebrated his diamond jubilee of religious profession of vows in 1979, he was widely known for his sanctity.”

In the Sept. 23 parish bulletin, Brother Angel received the following testimonial, written by Father Ferroni:

“He was a happy man and believed that he had a good life. He once said, ‘I enjoy everything.’

His day began at 5 a.m. He was responsible for opening the church at 5:30 a.m. and by 6:30 a.m., he rang the bells for the Angelus and awakened the priests. He worked in the sacristy preparing for the first Mass of the day. After Mass, Brother Angel joined the priests for the morning prayer. He began the day very much. They said ‘Es un santo.’ ‘He’s a saint.’”

After an audience with Pope Pius XI during an ad limina visit in 1929, Brother Angel, at far left, and other members of the delegation, including several members of Bishop Daniel J Gercke from the Diocese of Tucson, pause for a formal photo. From left are Brother Angel, Carmelite Father Stanislaus Caralt, Father Constant Mandin, E.S. Gercke, Bishop Gercke, George Gercke and his unnamed wife, and Daniel Murray.

Catholic Outlook photo from Diocesan Archives

Catholic Outlook photo by Steff Koeneman

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 14
Eva Maria Kicanas, mother of bishop, died Oct. 3

PALATINE, Ill. — Eva Maria (Abdella) Kicanas, 105, mother of Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas, died Oct. 3.

Born June 27, 1912, in St. Paul, Minn., to the late Abraham and Anna (Sadie) Abdella, she married the late Fred J. Kicanas, on Aug. 22, 1937, in the Cathedral of St. Paul. They were married for 48 years.

She is remembered as an exceptional wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, and as a master of Lebanese cooking and pumpkin chiffon pies. She was a dedicated Catholic who lived her faith through her family.

Besides Bishop Kicanas, she is survived by daughters Kathryn Kerwin and Barbara Yarbrough, six grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Visitation, the rosary and a Mass of Christian Burial were celebrated Oct. 9, with Bishop Kicanas as the main celebrant, at the Little Sisters of the Poor-Palatine. Interment followed in All Saints Cemetery in Des Plaines, Ill.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Eva Kicanas’ honor to Little Sisters of the Poor-Palatine at 80 W. Northwest Hwy., Palatine, Ill. 60067 or at littlesistersofthepoorpalatine.org/donations/.

Franciscan Father Nicholas Widhammer, 81, who served in Rio Rico, died Oct. 3

Franciscan Father Nicholas Widhammer, 81, who served in Most Holy Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Rio Rico, died Oct. 3.

Born Dec. 8, 1935, in Milwaukee, Wis., to Franz and Celia Widhammer, he was invested at the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph in 1954 and perpetually professed in 1958. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1963.

He was a recruiter at St. Lawrence Seminary, Mount Calvary, Wis., 1964-79, and as the province’s vocation director for a year. He subsequently served in pastoral assignments in Wisconsin, Minnesota and in Saudi Arabia. In 2004, he began pastoral ministry at Most Holy Nativity, Rio Rico.

He is survived by his sister, Rita Crabtree of Holman, Wis., and his Capuchin brothers with whom he lived, ministered and prayed for the past 63 years.

A memorial Mass was celebrated Oct. 18 at Our Lady of the Valley Parish, Green Valley.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent in his memory for the building fund for a new church at Rio Rico, to Most Holy Nativity Parish, PO Box 4024, Rio Rico 85648.
Couples mark more than a millennia of (mostly) marital bliss

St. Augustine Cathedral hosted 174 couples gathered Oct. 15 to renew their wedding vows in the annual diocesan Celebration of Marriage Anniversaries. With five couples marking 70 years or better, and another 21 at 60 or better, the event celebrated more than 1,000 years of married life which, Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas, summed up by saying, “Marriage is amazing, and also hard, very hard.”
Fresh look at old objections leading away from vocations

Following is the ninth and final story in the Sacrament series published by the Catholic Outlook. This article focuses on Holy Orders.

BY FRANCISCAN FATHER DON MILLER
Used with permission

Having served as a vocation director for 12 years, I have heard most of the excuses for not answering a vocational call. Let me share a few.

One of my favorites is, “I’m not worthy.” (Or from a parent, “He’s not worthy.”)

My favorite response was, “You are (or he is) not, so get over it.”

This always stopped the conversation in its tracks, but I was partly serious in my answer. None of us, including Jorge Bergoglio, is worthy of the priesthood. It is a gift from God, and what a gift it is! All we can do is marvel that the Lord is generous and loving enough to let us share in his priesthood.

Any popular response is “I can’t. I’m a sinner.” My answer, “Welcome to the human race.” Aren’t we all sinners? If that were an obstacle, we would have no priests or bishops.

Another response: “I like girls.” This is normal. Priests do not hate women or dislike sex. However, God has called them to a different expression of their love. It is an expression that focuses beyond one individual; its attention is for all people.

A fourth response goes like this: “I want to get married and have a family.” The parental version of this is, “I want to have grandchildren.” Again, this tells me that a man is healthy and has a healthy attraction toward others. That desire is not the obstacle; it is normal. However, the Lord calls some to a bigger family: the Church (cf. “Catechism of the Catholic Church,” 1579).

Fifth: “My parents want me to be a doctor, a lawyer or a pharmacist.” My response to this is twofold: “What do you want to do with your life?” and “You cannot live your parents’ dream. Your life-mission must be your own.” Most parents want the best for their children. If the Lord is calling him (or her), you may be bucking the Holy Spirit. Many of the great saints were not fulfilling their parents’ dreams for them. Parents must let their children go.

A thornier response is “I’m gay.” That needs to be considered very discreetly. The Church’s ban on homosexuals in religious life or priesthood is very carefully worded and talks about a “deep-seated gay orientation.” A 2005 document states that the Church “cannot admit to the seminary or to Holy Orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called ‘gay culture.’” (cf. “Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in view of their Admission to the Seminary and to Holy Orders,” Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education). Most religious communities and many dioceses take this prohibition seriously, but do not consider it the final word in all cases.

Excuses abound, but if the Lord is truly calling a man or a woman to religious life or priesthood, he or she needs to listen and respond for the sake of the Church and for his or her own happiness and fulfillment.

If the Lord is truly calling a man or a woman to religious life or priesthood, he or she needs to listen and respond for the sake of the Church and for his or her own happiness and fulfillment.

How can a priest be returned to the lay state when the Sacrament of Holy Orders leaves such an indelible mark?

When I was in the Southwest on assignment, I had the burden of administering a dispensation to a fellow priest/religious. After many months of discernment and legal work, it was finally time to finalize the process of laicization. The papers had to be signed and notarized and returned to the Diocese to be sent to Rome.

This was the first set of dispensation papers I had ever seen and I found something very interesting. The wording was along this line: With this signed document, the Church will no longer hold the man responsible for the external observation of his ordination.

The document very carefully avoided any reference to the man’s one-on-one relationship with the Lord. That was (and is) between him and God, and the Church wasn’t about to touch it.

The reason for this careful distinction has to do with the permanence of ordination - once a priest, always a priest for all eternity. The Church has no jurisdiction over that reality because it is God who ordains and grants the privilege of ministering to his people. However, the Church can say that God’s people will no longer look to this man for the kind of witness and ministry appropriate from a priest. He is excused from the external aspects of his ordination.

The dispensation from the promise of celibacy is a separate matter. If the priest is dispensed from celibacy and his ordination vows, he is perfectly free to marry in good standing within the Church.

Once again, it becomes very clear that the sacraments are public matters and, in this case, the community’s right to demand and expect certain ministry and witness is a part of every ordination. A

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 13
Fear of God only works in context of love

As a theologian, priest and preacher, I often get asked: “Why isn’t the Church preaching more fear of God anymore? Why aren’t we preaching more about the dangers of going to hell? Why aren’t we preaching more about God’s anger and hellfire?”

That’s not hard to answer. We aren’t preaching a lot about fear because to do so, unless we are extremely careful in our message, is simply wrong. Admittedly, fear can cause people to change their behavior, but so can intimidation and brainwashing. Just because something is effective doesn’t mean it is right. Fear of God may only be preached within a context of love.

Scripture seems to give us a mixed message. On the one hand, it tells us that “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” It also tells us that virtually every time God appears in human history, the first words from God are always: “Don’t be afraid!” That phrase, coming from the mouth of God or from the mouth of God’s messenger, appears more than 300 times in Scripture. The first words we will hear every time God appears in our lives are: “Don’t be afraid!” That’s why we must be careful when we preach fear of God: Fear of punishment is not the real message when God enters our lives.

How are we to understand fear of God as the beginning of wisdom? Are we wise and on the right path when we stand before the mystery of God (and of love) with our shoes off, namely, in reverence, in awe, in respect, in unknowing, without undue pride, humble before an infinity that dwarfs us, and open to let that great mystery shape us for its own eternal purposes. That is far different - almost the opposite - from the fear we experience when we are frightened of someone or something being mercilessly exacting or as arbitrary and punitive.

There is a healthy fear of God that’s felt in our fear of violating what’s good, true and beautiful in this world. Jesus, for his part, invites us to stay alive; others deform and imprison you.

There are things in life that you need to fear. A playground bully or the arbitrary tyrant can kill you, even if they are all wrong. Lots of things can kill you, and they merit fear.

God is not one of those things. God is neither a playground bully nor an arbitrary tyrant. God is love and a perpetual invitation to intimacy. There is much to be feared in this, but nothing of which to be afraid.

Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website ronrolheiser.com.
CCHD collection: Diocese gets more than it gives

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

When Catholics are being asked to be generous for the second collection Nov. 18-19 for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, they should know that organizations in the Diocese get back much more than they give to the campaign.

CCHD began in 1970 as a long-term solution to eliminating poverty. It funded voter registrations, community organizing, minority-owned cooperatives and job training programs, among other movements to help grassroots organizations become empowered economically and politically.

“Today, CCHD can point to hundreds of CCHD-funded organizations which have grown to hundreds of CCHD-funded programs, among other movements,” said the CCHD website, usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/grants/index.cfm. “CCHD is committed to supporting organizations led by low-income individuals as they work to break the cycle of poverty and improve their communities.”

The 2016 collection yielded $49,118.69. Twenty-five percent of that stays in the Diocese to help fund local efforts. That meant that $36,139 went to the national CCHD office for national grants.

Three groups have been receiving grants for several years: Pima County Interfaith Council – Southern Arizona Interfaith, Pima County Interfaith Civic Educational Organization and Pinal County Interfaith.

This year, Southern Arizona Interfaith received $50,000, PCIC received $60,000 and Pinal County Interfaith received $30,000. In addition, the diocesan offices of Hispanic Ministry and Human Life and Dignity received $1,000 to promote social ministry at the parish and diocesan levels.

PCIC Lead Organizer Kevin Courtney cited examples of how CCHD funding led to systemic change.

The Pima County Interfaith Civic Educational Organization successfully advocated for an increase in county and city funding for the Job Path Program, which helps put people back into the work force.

With an increase of $100,000, it helped train and place 25 more people into sustainable jobs, Courtney said.

At Southern Arizona Interfaith, funds helped organize the community around St. John Parish in Tucson to advocate for a city ordinance and state law barring the legal sale of the drug “spice.”

Shops that had opened in neighborhoods around St. John’s were forced to close, and there was a sharp decline in the number of emergency calls involving youths ingesting the drug, touted as “synthetic marijuana.”

By passing those laws, hundreds of lives were saved last year, he added.

Melanie Beikman is the organizer with Pinal County Interfaith, and said the CCHD funds earlier were invaluable in helping educate and organize local community groups against a 2016 referendum legalizing marijuana. This year’s funding will continue those efforts, with a similar referendum expected to be up for a vote in 2018.

In the 2015-16 funding cycle, Southern Arizona Interfaith received $50,000, PCIC received $45,000 and Pinal County Interfaith received $46,000.

REMEMBERING AN ‘ANGEL’ continued from page 9

answering the door and attending to parishioners and visitors, and doing various tasks around the church rectory and grounds.

‘My job is to take care of the community, take care of the church and to take care of the house. I’m not a priest,’ he continued, ‘just a lay brother. My job is not much important. I do the shopping, take care of the sacristy and the like, and I try to make the job for the priest easier.’

A humble, quiet worker, he was a short man with a full set of gray hair. He wore a brown habit and thick glasses. His face was without wrinkles. He spoke clearly and softly. Brother always wore a quiet smile. Laughter came easily for him, and it was soft as well. He said of himself, ‘I have very little to say.’ ...

Brother loved the Los Angeles Dodgers. They were his favorite; he said of them: ‘They were the first team to come West.’ It was the nearest baseball team to Tucson at the time.

Brother Angel’s total dedication to the service of the People of God of Santa Cruz Parish and school won the admiration and hearts of all who knew him during his 70 years of presence, prayer and work here in our church. Even in his advanced years, he continued to be faithful in his spirit of service and to do all he could for the people and for the Glory of God. ...

By acclamation of the people of the People of God of Santa Cruz Parish and School, Brother Angel’s life of holiness has been an inspiration for many generations during his life and after his death. Still fresh in our memories and in our prayers, he is very much alive among us; he never left us. Inspired by our love for Brother Angel, we humbly dedicate a place of honor in the church and among the people he loved.”
Santa Cruz instala retrato del difunto Hno. Carmelita Ángel, servidor de toda una vida

Por MICHAEL BROWN  
Director Editorial

Los feligreses de la Parroquia Santa Cruz siguen aprendiendo acerca del Hermano Carmelita Ángel Brinque Fransi, mientras avanzan los planes de la causa para proclamarlo santo.

El hermano Ángel nació en Pobellá, Lérida, España, el 26 de octubre de 1898. Se unió a los carmelitas en 1916 y tres años después viajó a Arizona. Después de cumplir con puestos en Morenci, Tucson y Tombstone llegó a Santa Cruz en 1934. Con excepción de seis años en la década de 1950, permaneció en Santa Cruz como cocinero y sacristán hasta que falleció de neumonía el 29 de septiembre de 1993. Está sepultado en el Cementerio Holy Hope.

Annie López, de 87 años, ha sido feligresa de Santa Cruz toda su vida y todavía colabora en el ministerio parroquial de música. Ella recuerda haber conocido al Hermano Ángel desde que era niña. «Era un santo, un hombre maravilloso», rememora López, explicando por qué el Hermano Ángel en ningún momento procuró la ordenación. «Él solamente quería ser un servidor».

En sus recuerdos, ella lo ve sonriente, rezando en la iglesia frecuentemente. «A menudo lo veíamos en un rinconcito del santuario», dijo López. «Era un hombre feliz, satisfecho con su vida, que una vez comentó: “Todo me agrada”».

El Padre Carmelita José Luis Ferroni ayudó a organizar la dedicatoria de un retrato del Hermano Ángel que fue colocado en el santuario de la iglesia en una Misa especial celebrada el 29 de septiembre. El Padre habló de un creciente deseo de iniciar la causa para proclamar santo al Hermano Ángel.

«Yo creo que él es un candidato meritorio; ya veremos adónde nos encamina Dios a medida que la devoción al Hermano Ángel crece», dijo el Padre Ferroni.

En la carta de anuncio de la Misa, el Padre Ferroni comentaba: «...con su manera de ser, extraordinariamente sencilla y humilde, el Hermano Ángel se granjeó la amistad y el amor de incontables familias en el correr de los años. Eran muchas las personas que con frecuencia acudían a él para oír una palabra de consuelo o un consejo. También buscaban su guía los obispos, entre quienes se destacaba el Obispo Francis J. Green. Para cuando se celebró el jubileo de diamante de sus votos religiosos en 1979, el Hermano ya era ampliamente conocido por su santidad».

En el boletín parroquial del 23 de septiembre, el Hermano Ángel recibió el siguiente homenaje, escrito por el Padre Ferroni:

«Era un hombre feliz, satisfecho con su vida, que una vez comentó: “Todo me agrada”».

Su día comenzaba a las cinco de la mañana. Él era responsable de abrir la iglesia a las cinco y media. A las seis y media tocaba las campanas del Angelus y despertaba a los sacerdotes. Luego trabajaba en la sacristía preparando la primera Misa del día, y después de la Misa se reunía con los sacerdotes para las oraciones matutinas. Durante el día, el Hermano Ángel atendía a los feligreses y visitantes que se acercaban a la iglesia y realizaba diversas tareas en la rectoría y en la propiedad en general.
El papa designa al obispo Weisenburger de Kansas a Tucson

Por CNS, Noticias Católicas

El obispo Kicanas, quien ha servido en Tucson desde el año 2001, es exvicepresidente y exsecretario de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos (USCCB). Él tiene 76 años y, en conformidad con requisitos del derecho canónico, había presentado su renuncia al cumplir los 75.

Los cambios fueron anunciados en Washington el 3 de octubre por Mons. Walter Erbi, encargado de negocios de la Nunciatura del Vaticano en Washington.

El obispo Weisenburger será investido como Séptimo Obispo de Tucson el 29 de noviembre. El obispo Kicanas funge como administrador de la diócesis hasta la investidura de su sucesor.

«Es una bendición que nuestro Santo Padre el papa Francisco haya nombrado como séptimo obispo de la Diócesis de Tucson a un pastor solicto y amoroso para guiar a nuestra comunidad», dijo el obispo Kicanas en una declaración.

«Él caminará con nosotros, nos escuchará y nos defenderá. Sus numerosos dones proveerán del liderazgo pastoral que necesitamos», añadió. «Colaborará con el personal diocesano, los líderes de las diferentes religiones y todos aquellos con responsabilidades en esta vasta diócesis».

«Con gran humildad seguiré los pasos de un pastor que ha sido servicial y generoso durante muchos años», dijo el obispo Weisenburger, de 56 años. «El Obispo Kicanas ha colaborado al servicio de la Iglesia católica en varias capacidades en el plano nacional y goza de gran estima. Saber que él continuará residiendo en nuestra diócesis es confortante para mí y una bendición para nuestro pueblo».

En una conferencia de prensa realizada en Tucson el día de su nombramiento, el obispo Weisenburger dijo que era su primera visita a la diócesis. Comentó que para después de su investidura tiene pensado viajar por la diócesis ofreciendo Misas en las zonas más distantes para las personas que no hayan podido asistir a la Misa del 29 de noviembre.

«Estoy acostumbrado a viajar grandes distancias», dijo. «Prefiero acercarme a ellos a que ellos tengan que venir a mí».

Con una extensión de 43.000 millas cuadradas que abarca nueve condados, la Diócesis de Tucson es la quinta diócesis más extensa del país.

El obispo Weisenburger hizo algunos comentarios en español en la conferencia de prensa y durante su presentación al personal diocesano a primera hora del día.

También expresó su apoyo a la causa de los inmigrantes que viven en este país sin documentos, y a los 800.000 jóvenes cuyo estatus peligra por la eliminación de la Acción Diferida por Llegada en la Infancia, o DACA, a menos que el Congreso tome medidas para preservar el programa.

«Verdaderamente quiero que Estados Unidos sea para ellos, pero así mismo los quiero a ellos para Estados Unidos», dijo. “Sus dones, sus talentos y su dedicación nos revelan lo mejor de lo que significa ser estadounidense».


Ordenado sacerdote de la Arquidiócesis de la Ciudad de Oklahoma el 19 de diciembre de 1987, fue vicario parroquial en la Iglesia Sta. María, de Ponca, Oklahoma, hasta que lo asignaron a la Universidad de San Pablo en Ottawa, Canadá, donde obtuvo una licenciatura en derecho canónico.

¿Qué significa ser discípulo de Jesús?

Jesús decía a los judíos que creían en él: “Ustedes serán verdaderos discípulos míos si perseveran en mi Palabra; conocerán la verdad, y la verdad los hará libres.”(Jn. 8:31-32) Con estas palabras, Jesús nos enseña que si permanecemos en la Palabra de Dios y nos mantengamos fieles a sus enseñanzas nos convertimos en sus discípulos. La palabra “discípulo” implica aprender o ser aprendiz del maestro. También implica seguir las enseñanzas de alguien. Como cristianos, lógicamente seguimos las enseñanzas de Jesús, llevándolas en el corazón. Es un proceso continuo de seguir y obedecer, aplicando el ejemplo del amor a nuestra vida cotidiana.

Desde su origen en la tradición oral, la Palabra de Dios nos comunica que Dios nos ama y respondemos a su gran amor con fe. Al perseverar y permanecer en su Palabra, nos damos cuenta de la verdad: que Cristo es el Salvador que nos une a Dios. Confesar la fe en Jesucristo, la verdad, la libertad, la reconciliación, la fe, el amor, el perdón, la vida eterna, la vida después de la muerte, la vida espiritual, la empresa de Dios, el amor a nuestro prójimo, el amor a Dios. Y esto es lo que significa ser verdaderamente discípulos de Jesús.
School leaders get update on ESAs, tips on courting Latino students

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

It started with money and ended with funny.

The diocesan Catholic School Convocation gathered principals, pastors and presidents from Catholic schools at the Doubletree by Hilton, Reid Park Sept. 25.

Presentations began with Arizona Catholic Conference Executive Director Ron Johnson talking about the current status of Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, and possible future outcomes; continued with Catholic Tuition Support Organization Executive Director Gracie Quiroz Marum reminding school leaders about available scholarship opportunities; and concluded with an enthusiastic and hope-filled address by Holy Cross Father Joseph V. Corpora, director for University-School Partnerships for the Alliance for Catholic Education at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind.

Erin Vu, principal of Our Mother of Sorrows Catholic School, Tucson, said she appreciated the enthusiasm and humor Father Corpora brought to the topic “Making Catholic Schools Affordable, Accessible and Available to Latino Students and Families – Tips for Pastors and Principals.” However, Johnson’s update on the state ESA program, currently tied up in court, also was very helpful.

“Ron Johnson’s presentation gave us a lot to think about, and Father Corpora’s zeal for getting kids into Catholic schools was really powerful,” she said.

Theresa A. Dolan-Dixon, principal of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School, Tucson, said she was very impressed by Father Corpora’s advice on building relationships within a parish and the local community. “The Catholic school represents the future of the Catholic Church,” she said. “We want to be able to provide a seat for everyone.”

Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas closed the day with a Mass. During his homily, he thanked school leaders for helping to “draw out the light present in your students’ lives.”

He also told them not to be discouraged by setbacks and obstacles. “God will never abandon us. He promised to always be at our side.”

Johnson of the Arizona Catholic Conference, began the day describing the role of the Catholic conference in shaping legislation, and the legislative history of ESAs. He said that a voter initiative had temporarily stopped the implementation of expansion of the scholarship program, but noted a pending court date will challenge the legitimacy of the initiative.

He encouraged school leaders to continue to rely on Tuition Support Organization and the ESA programs in tandem to get as much scholarship money as they could for their students.

Quiroz Marum reviewed current CTSO programs and reminded the leaders of the emergency funds available if a hardship case should suddenly arise.

Father Corpora provided school leaders with a copy of “A Catholic School Principal’s Guide: 30 Proven Strategies to Serve the Latino Community and Increase Enrollment in Catholic Schools,” a book based on the collected knowledge and wisdom of annual trainings for school leaders at Notre Dame.

He focused on several of those strategies during his talk, but acknowledged that some of those required innovative approaches to school administration.

One example was offering reduced or free tuition to a family that could not afford to send a child. “Negotiate tuition to fill seats,” he said. “There should be no reason for having an empty seat in a Catholic school.”

Father Corpora acknowledged that schools need to have enough full-tuition students in their seats to pay the bills, but after hitting a break-even point, costs don’t change, and – given the statistics showing students in Catholic schools are more likely to enter religious life or be leaders in the Church – the reward is worth the risk.

“I say this everywhere I go. I get tired of saying it,” he said.

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Movie tells emotional story of changing Bethlehem

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

The journey that began for Leila Sansour in 2005 in Bethlehem in the Occupied Territories is coming Dec. 2 to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Gymnasium.

“Open Bethlehem,” is an film that tracks the return of Sansour, a Catholic native of Bethlehem, to her hometown for what was supposed to be a year but that turned into five and a campaign to save what she calls “the magic of Bethlehem.”

The local chapter of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher is sponsoring the event, which includes a screening of the 90-minute movie, a question-and-answer period with Sansour and reception. The order has the traditional mission of serving Christians in the Holy Land.

The film was released in 2014 in Great Britain and has had a limited US run as part of Amnesty International’s Roaming Film Festival.

The backdrop to the film is this: Sansour left home as a teenager and vowed never to go back because it was “too small and provincial,” according to the film synopsis in the online press kit. However, after establishing herself as a successful filmmaker, she decided to return to make a movie in honor of her late father, who helped found Bethlehem University. About the same time, the decision by the Israeli government to build a wall to enclose the Palestinian community increases tensions. Sansour’s cousin, the last remnant of her family there, convinces her to create a film that highlights the humanitarian crisis.

The movie led to a movement that advocates for keeping Bethlehem open to Palestinians and Israelis, Muslims and Christians, and issues Bethlehem “passports” granting honorary citizenship to the town. Among those who have received the honor include Pope Benedict XVI and President Jimmy Carter.

Karen McEwen is a member of the order’s committee sponsoring the event. She relayed this statement from the committee:

“As Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, our mission is to support Christian presence in the Holy Land. The film ‘Open Bethlehem’ provides unique insight into the lives of Christians living in the Holy Land. ‘Open Bethlehem’ tells the story of the construction of the wall and its effect on the Palestinians with lands being confiscated, means of livelihood eliminated and freedom of movement restricted. Our goal is to educate people on the wall and how it has affected so many lives.”

The statement continued: “A Bethlehem Passport acknowledges a supporter’s contribution and confirms their pledge to act as an ambassador for the city. The passports will be available for a donation as well as DVDs of ‘Open Bethlehem’ for sale.”

LEILA SANSSOUR

CNS photo by Ammar Awad, Reuters
Palestinian protesters run for cover from tear gas fired by Israeli troops in clashes last May 15 during a protest in the West Bank town of Bethlehem marking the 69th anniversary of their uprooting.
Groups settle HHS contraceptive mandate lawsuit

By CAROL ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Dozens of Catholic groups that challenged the contraceptive mandate of the Affordable Care Act have reached a settlement with the US Justice Department, they announced late Oct. 16.

The groups, including the Archdiocese of Washington and the Pennsylvania dioceses of Greensburg, Pittsburgh and Erie, were represented by the Cleveland-based law firm Jones Day.

Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl wrote an Oct. 16 letter to archdiocesan priests saying the “binding agreement” ends the litigation challenging the Health and Human Services’ mandate and provides a “level of assurance as we move into the future.”

The Washington Archdiocese was one of dozens of groups challenging the mandate, which went to the Supreme Court last year in the consolidated case of Zubik v. Burwell. Although it was most often described as the Little Sisters of the Poor fighting against the federal government, the case before the court involved seven plaintiffs and each of these combined cases represented a group of schools, churches or church-sponsored organizations.

Pittsburgh Bishop David A. Zubik, whom the case is named for, said he was grateful for the settlement “has been resolved successfully” with the government that secures and reaffirms the constitutional right of religious freedom.

In an Oct. 17 statement, the bishop said the Diocese’s five-year-long challenge to the mandate “has been resolved successfully” allowing Catholic Charities in the Diocese and other religious organizations of different denominations to be exempt from “insurance coverage or practices that are morally unacceptable.”

He said the settlement follows the recent release of new federal regulations that provide religious organizations with a full exemption from covering items that violate their core beliefs.

On Oct. 6, the Trump administration issued interim rules expanding the exemption to the contraceptive mandate to include religious employers who object on moral grounds to covering contraceptive and abortion-inducing drugs and devices in their employee health insurance. The same day, the US Department of Justice issued guidance to all administrative agencies and executive departments regarding religious liberty protections in federal law.

Cardinal Wuerl said in his letter to priests that the new guidelines and regulations were extremely helpful but that the “settlement of the Zubik litigation adds a lessening of certainty moving forward. It removes doubt where it might otherwise exist as it closes those cases.”

“The settlement adds additional assurances,” he added, “that we will not be subject to enforcement or imposition of similar regulations imposing such morally unacceptable mandates moving forward.”

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