

## **Learning About God From Nature** *Deacon Tim Sullivan*

In this modern era when we are so immersed in technology, it's important for families to foster an appreciation for nature. There is a very strong connection between nature and faith.

In Romans 1, St. Paul writes that "the attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what God has made." From the Book of Wisdom, Chapter 13, we learn that "From the greatness and beauty of created things, their original author, by analogy, is seen."

One of the most favorite activities of our family has been visiting the Wichita Mountains in southwest Oklahoma. We have a script for the entire day. After lunch at the Meers Restaurant, we go to the visitors' center, check out the prairie dog village, then climb Elk Mountain. The view from Elk Mountain makes Oklahoma look like Montana. We do some more hiking, then end up at Mount Scott, where we watch the sunset. The setting sun dramatically exposes numerous peaks which are not visible until the sun goes down.

Once we took a family of five which was very heavy into video games to the Wichita Mountains. The father told me later that it was the best day his family had ever had.

One of the foundational principles of the Christian faith is that, by applying human reason to the order of the universe, we can discern not only the existence of God but also the moral principles which should govern human activity. As Pope Benedict XVI once said, "We do not live in a random universe." So our children should all be students of nature.

*Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound; let the plains be joyful and all that is in them. Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice before the Lord who comes, who comes to govern the earth, to govern the world with justice and the peoples with faithfulness. Psalm 96*