

Utah Catholic bishop becomes key face in interfaith scene

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The first Philippine-born Catholic bishop in the U.S. has developed a partnership with Mormon leaders and become a key face in Utah's interfaith scene during his first year in the role.

Oscar A. Solis was installed as the 10th bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City in March 2017, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

Since that time, the 64-year-old has visited the state's 50 parishes and most of its missions and schools. He has also conducted hundreds of confirmations and preached countless sermons.

Solis was ordained as a priest in the Philippines, and he came to the U.S. some 30 years ago. He worked with parishes in New Jersey, Louisiana, and California before coming to Utah.

"I came with an open mind and heart," Solis said. "My first impression was that there is a beautiful community of faith in



INTERFAITH ADVOCATE. Catholic bishop Oscar A. Solis looks through the order for mass on the third Sunday of Lent. March 7 marked the first anniversary of his installation as the tenth bishop of Salt Lake City. (Scott Sommerdorf/The Salt Lake Tribune via AP)

Solis has encouraged people of his faith to step out of their comfort zones and strive to help people in need. He has also commissioned a survey, aiming to better understand how parishes teach about building faith.

He has taken an advocacy role as well, speaking up on issues close to his heart and writing opinion pieces for newspapers.

He led a 40-day "dignity of life" initiative, urging Catholics to pray for an end to abortion and the "less-than-charitable attitudes emerging in some quarters toward the poor, the homeless, immigrants, refugees, and the mentally challenged."

The bishop has also spoken up for the rights of young immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children.

Utah, not just Catholics."

Solis has met and worked with leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"I have a high regard for them and the tremendous good they do for the community," Solis said. "They've treated me well."

Cherry blossoms, tulips, and lilacs: Flower festival time

By Beth J. Harpaz
AP Travel Editor

We're coming up on cherry blossom festivals, tulip time, and lilac season. Here's a look at some of the places that celebrate spring flowers with festivals and other events.

Tulip time

You could go to the Netherlands to see the Keukenhof gardens in Lisse, which are planted with 7 million flowering bulbs — tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and more — blooming March 22 to May 13.

Or you could visit Holland, Michigan, which hosts a Tulip Time Festival from May 5 to 13. The city planted 100,000 tulips back in 1929, and the annual celebration of the tulip now includes entertainment, costumes, parades, and activities.

Pella, Iowa, has also been hosting a Tulip Time celebration for decades. Pella's event is held May 3 to 5 and includes parades, Dutch costumes and performances, a craft and vendor fair, and quilt and flower shows, in addition to the tulip gardens.

The Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, based in Mount Vernon in the state of Washington, is scheduled for April 1 to 30, though the festival's website notes that the tulips are expected to bloom during the last week of March.



BEAUTIFUL BLOOMS. Members of the traditional Japanese ensemble Taiko Masala perform during a preview of the Sakura Matsuri festival at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York, in this April 22, 2014 file photo. The festival features performances, demonstrations, and exhibitions from Japanese culture. (AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews, File)

"pinkest party" on earth.

In Japan, the cherry trees are expected to begin blooming around March 24 in Tokyo and March 27 in Kyoto, according to a forecast on the Japan National Tourism Organization website.

Flower fests elsewhere

In Rochester, New York, the annual Lilac Festival is May 11 to 20. Organizers say the event draws more than 500,000 people to see not just the largest lilac collection in the U.S., but also music and comedy shows, art exhibits, a race, and more. Another lilac festival is held on Mackinac Island in Michigan, June 8 to 17.

Bluebonnet season brings out locals and visitors alike in Texas Hill Country. Typically they bloom the last week of March through April, though as with all flowers, it can be hard to predict.

Walt Disney World's Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival also runs through May 28 with display gardens, entertainment, and more at the theme park just outside Orlando, Florida.

Cherry blossoms

In Washington, D.C., the projected peak date for cherry blossoms along the Tidal Basin began March 17 and ends about March 20, with the National Cherry Blossom Festival running March 20 to April 15. The festival marks the 1912 gift of 3,000 cherry trees from a Tokyo mayor to the U.S. capital city.

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York City also celebrates the blooming of cherry trees that were a gift from the Japanese government. A two-day festival

called *Sakura Matsuri* is planned this year April 28 and 29 with some 60 events, including performances by taiko drummers. The garden features a Japanese pond and garden as well as an esplanade lined with some of its 200 cherry trees.

Macon, Georgia, claims to be home to 350,000 cherry trees, a phenomenon that began with one tree in the backyard of a local businessman in 1949. A celebration of the trees began March 16 and ends March 25, in what local residents bill as the

South Korean ski federation bans two mogul skiers for life

By Kim Tong-Hyung
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's skiing federation has banned for life two male mogul skiers who competed at the PyeongChang Olympics for harassing and assaulting two female teammates at a recent World Cup event in Japan.

The federation notified Choi Jae-woo and Kim Ji-hyun of their bans in mid-March, an official from the Korea Ski Association said.

Choi and Kim can appeal the bans to the Korean Sport and Olympic Committee within a week, said

Teen & man who often got her out of school located in Mexico

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Authorities say a missing Pennsylvania teenager and a 45-year-old man who frequently signed her out of school without her parents' permission have been located in Mexico, and the man has been arrested.

The Allentown *Morning Call* reports U.S. and Mexican authorities found Kevin Esterly and 16-year-old Amy Yu in Playa del Carmen. They are being returned to the U.S.

Esterly was taken into custody and will face a charge of interference with the custody of a child when he arrives in Pennsylvania.

The newspaper reports police have told Amy's mother that her daughter was found unharmed.

Esterly and Yu went missing March 5. Police issued a missing person alert and filed a warrant for Esterly's arrest. They believe she went willingly.

the official, who didn't want to be named, citing office rules.

The federation, after interviews with athletes and coaches, confirmed that Choi and Kim harassed and assaulted the women for refusing to have drinks with them on March 3 while they were at the World Cup event at the Lake Tazawa resort in Japan, the official said.

The women also took the case to the police, who are investigating Choi and Kim, the official said.

Choi advanced to the final round of the moguls at the Olympics last month, but did not complete his second run. Kim was eliminated in qualifying.

Cellist Yo-Yo Ma to speak at MIT about the role of culture

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — World-famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma is set to give a lecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

The school says Ma is visiting the campus to deliver a talk titled "Yo-Yo Ma: Culture, Understanding, and Survival" as part of a lecture series featuring figures in modern thought.

Ma is a prolific performer who has recorded more than 100 albums and worked to promote collaboration among artists from different cultures. He was born in Paris and became a child prodigy after learning the cello at age four. He has won 18 Grammy awards, the National Medal of the Arts, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The event features a lecture by Ma and a conversation between the cellist and MIT president L. Rafael Reif.

Body of wife of Nobel-winning professor found at landfill

ROCKFORD, Ill. (AP) — Authorities in northern Illinois are investigating the death of the wife of a Nobel Prize-winning chemistry professor whose body was found at a landfill hours after the couple was reported missing in Indiana.

The Ogle County Sheriff's Office said in a news release that deputies found 80-year-old Sumire Negishi's body and the couple's car at Orchard Hills Landfill outside Rockford shortly after they found 82-year-old Ei-ichi Negishi walking nearby.

The sheriff's department says foul play is not suspected, but wouldn't discuss autopsy results. The release says the husband is hospitalized.

The two were reported missing from their home about 200 miles away in West Lafayette, Indiana, where Ei-ichi is a Purdue University chemistry professor. The Japanese scientist won a Nobel Prize in chemistry in 2010.

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