

THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

Vol. 55, No. 2

February 18, 2022

Ignite! capital campaign begins with first wave of parishes

The goals: Build on momentum of \$12 million already raised

By Alejandro Morales
Contributing Writer

After a year of planning, the “Ignite!” campaign is launching its parish phase, with 12 par-

ishes participating in the first of three “waves” unfolding throughout 2022 and eventually reaching all 80 parishes in the Diocese.

The \$45 million campaign will have a wide-ranging impact on Catholics throughout

southwest Iowa.

Campaign goals include the establishment of a \$25 million endowment for tuition assistance, a key component of the Diocese’s long-term vision for sustainable and thriving Catholic schools.

The campaign also aims to secure \$5 million for seminarian education, \$2 million for priest retirement, \$3.5 million for parish vibrancy and renewal, and \$7.5 million returned directly to parishes for their own local needs.

The parish phase begins with incredible momentum thanks to the generosity and vision of Catholic leaders throughout the Diocese of Des Moines. Shepherded by Bishop William

Continued on page 10

Seeking God

As they continue their faith journey, college students find strength and support in each other, in inspiring speakers and in celebrating Mass together.



Celina Feldhake, Kathrine Skovnal, Ruben Botal, Ezra Orey, Timothy Schwartz, of Loras College in Dubuque.



Lilly Creighton of Granger, Julia Kock of Avoca, Alexa Brinck of Carroll, Laurel McGonegle of Urbandale, and Grace Miller of Cedar Rapids.



Maggie King of Council Bluffs; Megan Welden of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale; Kelly Keen of Minneapolis; Julia Hejkal and Mary Pane of St. Anthony Parish in Des Moines.



Photos by Rev. Jim Kirby

College students prayed a multilingual rosary on Feb. 4 during the Seek22 conference at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines. About 500 college and university students gathered to grow in their faith.

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

About 500 college students from around the state gathered in Des Moines on a cold February weekend to step away from the busyness of life and step into a deeper relationship with God.

They were among 22,000 college students from 20 countries taking part in Seek22, a conference specifically for young adults that was coordinated by Fellowship of Catholic University Students, also known as FOCUS.

Students who attended enjoyed meeting other like-minded young adults while hearing nationally known speakers such as Father Josh Johnson and Father Mike Schmitz, of the well-known podcast “Bible in a Year.”

“It was an amazing experience,” said

Jessica Vedane, of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale. “It’s a place where I really got to see Christ’s face, got to experience his love and communicate with people who think the same as me and love Jesus.”

A sense of community also drew Maddie Uhl, a student at Iowa State University who is originally from Nativity Parish in Sioux City.

“I think one of the coolest things is seeing the community of young Catholic students come together,” she said. “Especially in college, it can feel like there’s not too many of us around.”

She brought her boyfriend, Cody Goedken, also an ISU student from the St. Francis Xavier Basilica in Dyersville.

Father Johnson’s talk made Goedken think about how he talks to God, how he can be a better friend with God and talk with him more

Continued on page 7

Doctors (and nurses, and all health professionals)' Mom

Long-time Des Moines physician and St. Ambrose Cathedral parishioner Dr. Richard Deming was honored recently when MercyOne Medical Center dedicated its new Cancer Center in his name. Dr. Deming never expected this state-of-the-art locus of cancer treatment and holistic care to be named after him while he is living, let alone still practicing medicine. His own endearing humanity is evident in every clinical encounter; former patient and retired priest Father John Bertogli spoke of how Dr. Deming accompanied him through his bout with cancer, respecting his human dignity every step of the way. Father John observed, "Your medical expertise, compassionate spirit, and sense of humor are gifts only God can give."

Dr. Deming attributes his dignifying approach to the practice of medicine in large measure to the rather inhumane treatment his own mother, Odetta, suffered when she was diagnosed with lung cancer in the 1970s. The care she did not receive in her ordeal spurs him to make amends on behalf of the medical community; he is cited as saying, "I know now that what I have become is in part because of her invisible, steady hand on my back, guiding me to where I am today."

Though deceased, Dr. Deming's mother remains a mediator accompanying her son. More than any white coat with his name stitched on it, the mantle of medical and human wisdom that he wears was purchased in part by her suffering, and is sustained by the bond between them through which she mediates good counsel, healing, unflagging hope, and grace to his patients.

I write this on the heels of our Church's commemoration of the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, which is also celebrated annually as the World Day of the Sick. In 1858, the Blessed Mother revealed to St. Bernadette both that she is the Immaculate Conception and pointed to the living springs of water flowing through this sacred site. The waters of Lourdes bring spiritual cleansing, sometime miraculous healing,



By
Bishop
William
Joensen

revived faith and trust in God, and deepened connection among all God's children on our pilgrimage to eternal life.

Holy Mary assures us that the incursions of sickness and disease and the attending temptation to felt isolation and despair will not prevail. In his most recent World Day of the Sick message, Pope Francis draws from Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas to describe this dynamic: "Pain isolates in an absolute way, and absolute isolation gives rise to the need to appeal to the other, to call out to the other." The Holy Father elaborates upon the malignant fears and uncertainties that can ensue, where patients question whether life has any meaning at all.

In this crucible of illness, how vital is the vocation of all health care professionals. The pontiff recalls how many people during the pandemic spent the "last part of their earthly life in solitude, in an intensive care unit, assisted by generous healthcare workers, yet far from their loved ones." How much more cherished are those witnesses to God's presence and charity, who in the spirit of Jesus and his Mother, pour out mercy and hope upon wounded souls.

While we cannot know fully the cost to doctors, nurses, and all allied health care professionals, we have some sense of the

exhausting demands and corollary temptations they face that impinge upon their own act of profession. We are awed by their remarkable courage, stamina, and transparency in acknowledging their own weakness and vulnerability. We are profoundly grateful for their sacrifices, their commitment to their mission to heal as much as possible, but always to care. As members of the faithful, we frequently pray for them to God, that they might know they are not left to their own devices; they, too, have a mother who "has their back," who watches over them, offering guidance and encouragement: Blessed Mary, the Mother of Jesus. And as we accompany one another through trials and triumphs, life and death, we compose another spiritual mother who mediates life, healing, and hope: Mother Church.

As grueling as the pandemic has been for medical teams, for families and society at large, there is another serious challenge looming that impinges upon the healthcare mission of the Church that began when Jesus first walked the earth. The mighty acts and tender mercies that flowed from the hands and heart of Christ when he began his public ministry have been sustained by the apostles and their successors, by those who practice the healing arts, including historic communities of religious women and men whose vocations were dedicated to the charism of treatment and care, all the way to present-day lay professionals. Faithful physicians and their colleagues believe that the inherent, God-given dignity of the human person entails guiding principles, opportunities, and limits about what they should and should not do as they practice their scientifically-grounded art.

Supreme Knight of Columbus Patrick Kelly recently spoke to a number of us bishops about the looming new federal rule that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has signaled will be issued this coming April. This rule will effectively disregard the existing Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and will dismiss the conscience rights of health care professionals to refuse to perform certain objectionable procedures with the threat of costly penalties and sanctions for them and their sponsoring Catholic institutions. This prospective rule will negatively impact the religious freedoms and mission of Catholic healthcare providers who presently serve over 15% of patients in this country.

Provisions of the pending HHS rule include: (1) reimplementation of mandates for hospitals and insurance plans to include coverage for/performance of contraception, abortion-causing drugs, and sterilization; (2) addition of mandates to cover/perform surgical abortion and a wide range of gender transition affirming procedures; (3) mandates to cover/perform fertility services that do not respect our God-given natures and that assert human technological mastery over the inherent goods of marriage, natural conception, and the rights of children.

This rule speaks to the intent of the administration to remake not only healthcare and the divinely-appointed mission of Catholic health providers, but our very humanity, according to their own image of what we should do and not do in the sacred space of our clinics and hospitals. It will constitute an overreach of massive proportion that violates the vocations and consciences of dedicated women and men to

serve and lay down their lives for their sisters and brothers in accord with God's will and dominion over life and death. It is a naked assault and attempt to "cancel" persons of faith and the Church herself from the healthcare arena.

Surely, the Church will support various forms of legal recourse against this unjust rule. We will definitely support, pray for, and call all Catholics and persons of good will to respect and abide by the guiding norms and goods that reason and faith illuminate, especially those on the front lines delivering medical care and the administrators and staff who stand by them. We are to keep calm heads and hearts, be of good humor, and trust ever more deeply that God's providential care and the resources of the Spirit can be mobilized for exactly this sort of challenge, should we humble ourselves, and call upon our Lord and his Blessed Mother.

Mary may not be a "tiger mom" in the conventional sense, but she has a special place in her heart for those who have committed themselves to nurture life, to accompany and heal as God allows, and to stand firm as witnesses against those who would try to suppress faith and sever us from one another. She is the "mom" for all persons in healthcare who respond to the promptings of grace, and will enlighten and strengthen them as we ask her to intercede on their behalf. With such a mom, the gates of the netherworld will not prevail against her Son's Body, which is all of us who place ourselves under her mantle of wisdom and protection.

Madre de Doctor (y Enfermeras y de todo el Personal de Salud)

El afamado médico de Des Moines y miembro de la parroquia de la Catedral de San Ambrosio, el Doctor Richard Deming fue galardonado recientemente cuando el Centro Médico MercyOne dedicó su nuevo Centro de Cáncer que lleva su nombre. El Dr. Deming nunca se imaginó que este centro de primera clase para el tratamiento del cáncer y de cuidado holístico fuera a llevar su nombre estando aún en vida, menos aún, cuando sigue practicando medicina. Su propia humanidad calurosa es evidente en cada encuentro clínico; un paciente suyo y ahora sacerdote jubilado, el Padre John Bertogli, habló de cómo el Dr. Deming le acompañó durante su batalla contra el cáncer, respetando su dignidad humana a cada paso del camino. El Padre John remarcó que, "su experiencia médica, espíritu compasivo y sentido del humor son dones que solamente Dios puede dar."

El Doctor Deming atribuye su estilo de dignificación en la práctica de la medicina en gran parte al tratamiento relativamente inhumano que sufrió su propia madre, Odetta, cuando le diagnosticaron cáncer de pulmón en los años setenta. El cariño que no recibió en su experiencia lo impulsa a buscar enmiendas a nombre de la comunidad médica; se le ha escuchado decir, "Yo se ahora que en lo que me he convertido es en parte a su mano invisible y firme en mi espalda, guiándome hasta donde estoy el día de hoy."

Aunque ya falleció, la madre del Doctor Deming continúa siendo un mediador que acompaña a su hijo. Más que cualquier bata blanca con su nombre bordado, el manto de la sabiduría médica y humana que él viste la compró en parte con el sufrimiento de su madre y se sostiene con el lazo entre ellos por medio del cual ella le da buen consejo, sanación, una tenaz esperanza y gra-

cia para con sus pacientes.

Escribí esta columna al inicio de la conmemoración de nuestra Iglesia de la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes, la cual se celebra también anualmente como el Día Mundial de los Enfermos. En 1858, la Santísima Madre reveló a Santa Bernardita que ella era la Inmaculada Concepción y señaló al manantial de agua viva que corría en ese sagrado sitio. Las aguas de Lourdes nos traen limpieza de espíritu, sanaciones en veces milagrosas, una fe y una confianza revividas es Dios y una profunda conexión entre todos los hijos de Dios en nuestro peregrinar hacia la vida eterna.

Santa María nos asegura que no prevalecerán las circunstancias de malestar y de enfermedad que se acompañan de la tentación de sentirse en el aislamiento y la desesperación. En su más reciente mensaje del Día de los Enfermos, el Papa Francisco cita al filósofo judío Emmanuel Levinas para describir esta dinámica: "El dolor aísla de una forma absoluta, y del aislamiento absoluto surge la necesidad de pedir a los demás, de buscar a los demás." El Santo Padre desarrolla sobre los crueles temores y certidumbres que pueden surgir, en donde los pacientes se empiezan a preguntar si la vida tiene significado alguno.

En este predicamento de enfermedades, qué vital es la vocación de los profesionales de la salud. El pontífice recuerda en esta pandemia de cuánta gente pasó "la última parte de su vida terrenal en soledad, en una unidad de cuidado intensivo, atendidos por generosos profesionales de la salud, pero aún lejos de sus seres queridos." Qué más valiosos son esos testimonios de la presencia y caridad de Dios quien, en el espíritu de Jesús y su Madre, derraman misericordia y esperanza a las almas convalecientes.

Aunque no podemos saber precisamente el costo total de médi-

cos, enfermeras y todos los demás profesionales de la salud, tenemos algún sentido de las demandas exhaustivas y las tentaciones consecuentes que ellos enfrentan y que se imponen en su propio rol de cómo actuar en su profesión. Nos sorprende su notable valor, estamina, y transparencia al reconocer sus propias debilidades y vulnerabilidades. Estamos profundamente agradecidos por sus sacrificios, su compromiso con la misión de sanar lo más que sea posible, pero siempre con cariño. Como miembros de los fieles, le pedimos a Dios frecuentemente por ellos, para que puedan saber que nos dependen solamente de sus propios instrumentos; ellos también tienen una madre que "les cuida las espaldas"; que los cuida, ofreciéndoles guía y ánimo: la Santa María, la Madre de Jesús. Y al acompañarnos unos a otros en las pruebas y los éxitos, la vida y la muerte, formamos parte de otra madre espiritual que media entre la vida, la sanación y la esperanza: la Madre Iglesia.

Con la dureza que la pandemia a azotado a los equipos médicos, tanto a las familias como a la sociedad en general, existe otro serio reto en el horizonte que amenaza la misión de cuidado de la salud que la Iglesia comenzó desde que Jesús empezó a caminar en la tierra. Los maravillosos actos y tiernas misericordias que fluían de las manos y del corazón de Cristo cuando comenzó su ministerio público se mantuvieron por parte de los apóstoles y por sus sucesores, por aquellos que practican el arte de la sanación, incluyendo históricas comunidades de hombres y mujeres religiosas cuyas vocaciones se dedicaron al carisma del tratamiento y cuidado, hasta el día de hoy con los profesionales laicos. Los médicos de fe y sus colegas creen que la dignidad inherente que ha dado Dios a la persona humana consiste en guiarse de principios, oportunidades y límites

sobre lo que deben y no deben hacer en la práctica de su arte que se basa en lo científico.

El Caballero Supremo de los Caballeros de Colón, Patrick Kelly, habló recientemente ante un grupo de obispos sobre la amenazante nueva regla federal que el Departamento de Salud y de Servicios Humanos de los Estados Unidos (HHS por sus siglas en inglés) ha señalado que pondrá en práctica este próximo mes de abril. Esta regla va a ignorar efectivamente la existencia de la Ley de Restauración de Libertad Religiosa, y va a desconocer los derechos de conciencia de los profesionales de la salud para que puedan rehusarse a llevar a cabo ciertos procedimientos cuestionables bajo la amenaza de costosas multas y sanciones tanto para ellos como para las instituciones católicas en las que laboran. Esta prospectiva regla tendrá un impacto negativo en la libertad religiosa y en la misión de profesionales de salud católicos quienes actualmente atienden a más del 15% de los pacientes de este país.

Las provisiones de esta regla pendiente del HHS incluye: (1) reimplementación de mandatos a los hospitales y planes de seguro para que den cobertura y lleven a cabo prácticas de contracepción, medicamentos que provocan el aborto y esterilización; (2) añadir mandatos de cobertura y prácticas de abortos quirúrgicos y una gran variedad de procedimientos para reafirmar transición genérica; (3) mandatos para cobertura y prácticas de servicios de fertilidad que no respetan nuestra naturaleza dotada por Dios y que establecen un dominio de tecnología humana sobre los dones inherentes del matrimonio, la concepción natural y los derechos de los hijos.

Esta regla habla sobre la

Continued on page 14

THE CATHOLIC

MIRROR

Bishop William Joensen
Publisher

wjoensen@dmdiocese.org

Anne Marie Cox
Editor

acox@dmdiocese.org

Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

kcollins@dmdiocese.org

The Catholic Mirror (ISSN 0896-6869) is published monthly for \$25 per year by the Diocese of Des Moines, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines. POSTMASTER: Send changes to THE CATHOLIC MIRROR, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

PHONE: (515)237-5046

EMAIL: mirror@dmdiocese.org

DIOCESAN WEBSITE:

www.dmdiocese.org

Fun for Catholic Schools Week



Photo by Kelly Mescher Collins

Students at St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale glazed crosses during art class as part of their Catholic Schools Week activities. The finished crosses will be extremely vibrant and shiny and distributed to St. Pius X parishioners at the beginning of Lent. Pictured left to right: Madeleine Shimerdla, Ivy Brafford, Ainsley Mentzer, Hayden Downs, and Gianna Huegerich.

School regional effort takes a big step forward

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Bishop William Joensen accepted in late January a proposal from Des Moines metro area pastors to move forward with creating a regional Catholic system.

The idea of a regional school system for the 11 Catholic grade schools and one high school in the Des Moines metro area has been in discussion for a few years, beginning when a study and strategic plan suggested greater cooperation among parishes and schools. Pastors have been meeting monthly since September 2021 to explore how they could work together to build on the schools' strengths and address the challenges they all face.

"We can be better by working together," Bishop Joensen wrote to school families and educators. "Regionalization of the 12 Catholic schools in the Des Moines area will position us for a successful and sustainable future."

Catholic schools are strong in offering an excellent academic experience in a faith-filled environment, said diocesan Schools Superintendent Donna Bishop.

The challenges they face range from inequities in teacher compensation, attracting and retaining teachers, and trying to raise tuition assistance. In addition, there is a duplication of business operations, with each school acting independently, she said.

"We're going to adopt this model of regionalization that we've seen succeed in other parts of the country. It's proven to be a win-win for students and their families, along with educators, pastors, and parishes," she said.

Students and their families won't see any changes in the near future as a nonprofit organization is created for the Diocese of Des Moines Metro Region

Catholic School System.

Dr. Dan Ryan, president of Dowling Catholic High School, has been named interim president of the regional system. A governance structure will be established to help guide policy, ensure high academic performance among the participating schools and sustain a strong Catholic identity within the system.

On a more local level, each school will maintain its individual identity with uniforms, faith activities, athletic teams and other aspects that make them unique.

The diocesan Catholic Schools Office will continue to provide professional development for teachers, ensure that a top-notch curriculum is in all of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines, and ensure a strong Catholic identity is in each school.

The 12 schools that will be a part of the new regional system include the Des Moines schools Christ the King, Holy Family, Holy Trinity, St. Anthony, St. Augustin, St. Joseph, and St. Theresa; the West Des Moines schools Sacred Heart, St. Francis of Assisi, and Dowling Catholic High School; St. Pius X in Urbandale; and St. Luke the Evangelist in Ankeny.

Parents and parishes will be kept updated on the progress of the establishment of the regional school system through a monthly email, parish bulletins, and the website dsmrcsplan.org. It has a frequently asked questions section and an option for sending in questions.

"We have been entrusted with a share of God's Kingdom mission where we assist parents by providing an education where our young people flourish and come to maturity in Christ," wrote Bishop Joensen. "I ask that you keep our school communities and those working on this initiative in your prayers."

MercyOne unveils new cancer center

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

MercyOne Des Moines unveiled a new, \$16 million, state-of-the-art cancer treatment center named for a doctor who has become renowned for his compassionate care, advocacy, and research.

The MercyOne Richard Deming Cancer Center, at the MercyOne downtown campus, 411 Laurel St. in Des Moines, will be a hub of comprehensive, multidisciplinary, patient-centered compassionate cancer care.

The center will provide cancer care along with a number of other services – such as acupuncture, massage therapy, music as therapy and art as therapy – to treat the whole person.

It will also provide services for survivors of cancer so they can not only check for cancer but cope with the psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of disease.

Deming, a radiation oncologist, said when people come to the cancer center, they'll know

they'll receive care in the philosophy he's developed with the help of many others.

That philosophy consists of a team that sees medicine as both a science and an art. Patients will experience the latest in technology, clinical trials, and a patient-centered approach.

As an example, doctors will come together to meet with patients and their families rather than having patients run from one doctor to another.

It will have a survivorship clinic that addresses the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of what it means to be a cancer survivor.

"Having incurable cancer is not the same as having terminal cancer," Deming said. "Patients may live with modern therapy for years. How do we help each person find joy each and every day in the midst of a journey that may



Dr. Richard Deming

ultimately lead to their death?"

MercyOne has a long history of providing cancer treatment. The new center continues the mission of compassionate care begun by the Sisters of Mercy 125 years ago.

There's much to learn from patients, Deming said.

"As a cancer physician, I've learned so much from my patients and their families," Deming said.

"Cancer reminds us that we are mortal. It reminds us what we already know, that we're going to die some day even if it's not because of cancer," he said. "It also reminds us of something we forget: We are alive today and life is a blessing each and every day. Cancer can help us live our lives, discover purpose, passion, and compassion."

Deming has served Des Moines for the last 30 years, the last 12 as the medical director of the MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center. In 2011, he founded the nonprofit Above and Beyond Cancer, which offers various physical, mind, and spirit wellness activities and transformational journeys.

Make the Choice. Get Vaccinated.



Alondra Melendez shares her COVID-19 story and why she chose to get vaccinated in the continuing video series produced by the Iowa Catholic Conference and the Dioceses of Iowa.

Alondra and her family live in Storm Lake, Iowa where she attends Buena Vista University. College age students report feeling more isolated and lonelier, saying COVID has directly affected their education, yet less than 50% of college age students in Iowa have been vaccinated.

It's not too late to make a difference.

Find resources and Iowa video stories at iowacatholicconference.org/getvaccinated.



Young, single Catholics: Friendships and community await in new group



The Young Catholics of Des Moines Singles Group started in June 2021. The group meets monthly for fun, socializing and community. Learn more about their monthly events at the Young Catholics of Des Moines Facebook page, facebook.com/YCDesMoines.

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

When Josh Danilson considered moving back home to Des Moines he knew he'd be closer to family.

But before taking the leap, he wanted to ensure he could be involved with a Catholic community of like-minded young people.

"One of the key determining factors was if I could find a young adult group to get involved with," said Danilson, who was active in the Catholic community of young adults in Jacksonville, Florida. "And so I looked on the diocesan website and I found out about the Young Catholic of Des Moines Singles Group and the Young Catholic Network."

He also found out about the Young Adult Bible Study, which meets every Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines.

He wanted to be close to his family, but a Catholic community was essential.

"That was definitely one of the key parts – I didn't want to move back and have my faith suffer because there was no one else around here that cared," said

Danilson, who joined the singles group first and foremost to make friends with people that share his faith and values.

"If [a dating relationship] happens – cool," Danilson said. "But that's really not why I am there. At my age, 32, a lot of people my age are married. There are fewer and fewer things we have in common. [It's tough] finding people in a similar age group who are also not married."

Danilson is glad he made the move.

"It's been great," he said. "I'm continuing to get involved in the Diocese. I just joined a praise and worship band at St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale... I'm finding a way to use my gifts to get involved...."

Joanna Bugarino, a member of St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines, is the volunteer leader for the Young Catholics of Des Moines Singles Group.

She moved to Des Moines several years ago for her job – she was born and raised in California. She met many people through the Young Catholics of Des Moines and the YCDM Singles Group.

"We officially started the singles group in late June 2021," Bugarino said. "We had a picnic

and it went great. The first event got 35 people."

They try to create a welcoming atmosphere and offer variety, including a picnic in the park, apple picking in the fall, a bonfire, Halloween party with costume contest, a Christmas gift wrapping party for families in need, board game night and more. Their next event is a Mardi Gras potluck on Thursday, Feb. 24 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center at 601 Grand Ave. in downtown Des Moines. All events can be found on the Young Catholics of Des Moines Facebook page facebook.com/YCDesMoines.

The group is what you make of it, Bugarino added.

"Some people think singles events are awkward or weird," she said. "I tell people, 'Look, we're a community of friends. You might meet someone there. You never know how the Holy Spirit is working... Just go in with good expectations and it will be good.'"

The YCDM Singles Group has averaged about 25 people per event.

"We still have a lot of regulars, but we see people who haven't been at previous diocesan

Continued on page 7

Pray with us

For the last year, Bishop William Joensen and the Diocese of Des Moines have been praying to renew Eucharistic faith and worship among God's people and to ask the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance for the Diocese of Des Moines.

As a strategic visioning process continues, Bishop Joensen invites everyone to join him in praying that we will fulfill our share of God's mission in Southwest Iowa, so that every person might encounter Jesus Christ and experience his call to friendship and communion.

Diocese of Des Moines Visioning Prayer

O God, you share with your people, your church, the mission to be the saving love of your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

As a people of faith in southwest Iowa, send the Holy Spirit to ignite in us:

Sincere conversion to see, hear, think and act as Jesus;

Greater unity and bonds of peace;

Missionary zeal to spread good news that will spark a world aflame with love;

Genuine care for each other, especially those feeling lost or left out; and

Willingness to bear together the yoke that Christ makes light.

May our strategic visioning in the Diocese of Des Moines make us ever more focused, discerning, and free to fulfill our calling as a people made whole by the Heart of your Beloved Son.

Accompany us along the Way that leads to heaven, surrounded by Holy Mary, Joseph, and all the saints with whom we hope to dwell forever in communion with you,

+Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen



Diócesis de Des Moines Oración de Visión

Oh Dios, tú compartes con tu pueblo, tu Iglesia, la misión de ser el amor salvador de tu Hijo y nuestro Salvador, Jesucristo.

Como un pueblo de fe en el suroeste de Iowa, envía al Espíritu Santo para que encienda en nosotros:

una sincera conversión para ver, oír, pensar y actuar como Jesús;

una mayor unidad y lazos de paz;

un afán misionero para compartir la buena nueva encendiendo al mundo con amor;

un genuino cariño unos con los otros, especialmente con aquellos que se sienten perdidos o excluidos; y

el deseo de cargar juntos con el yugo que se hace ligero con Cristo.

Que nuestra visión estratégica en la Diócesis de Des Moines nos haga aún más enfocados, discernientes y libres para cumplir con nuestro llamado como pueblo que encuentra plenitud por el Corazón de tu Amado Hijo.

Acompáñanos en el Camino que nos lleva al cielo, rodeados de la María Santísima, José y todos los santos con quienes esperamos habitar por siempre en comunión contigo,

+Padre, Hijo, y Espíritu Santo. Amén.



We're close in all the ways you need.

Yes, we are located nearby for your convenience.

Through the years, we have formed close relationships with the families we serve.

As neighbors, we are there when needed most.

With a skilled and caring staff.

With a warm and comforting atmosphere.

With answers and options few funeral homes can offer.



Iles Funeral Homes

Celebrate Life the Way You Lived It
www.IlesCares.com

RCIA volunteers feel blessed to accompany newcomers

Walking the journey with those who want to enter the Catholic Church is a rewarding ministry.

**By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer**

A Sunday reading from the Book of Amos caught Meg Dunlop's attention a few years ago.

The late Father David Smith, her pastor at St. Mary Parish in Panama, explained that Amos believed he didn't have the knowledge to do what God asked of him. But God and the Holy Spirit persuaded him that, with God's help, he could do it.

Inspired by the story and relying on the Holy Spirit's help, Dunlop and her husband, Larry, joined with Franciscan Sister Joyce Blum in leading their parish's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, also known as the RCIA process.

Each year, more than 100 people come into full communion with the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Des Moines through the RCIA process. Some, called candidates, have already been baptized into a Christian tradition where the minister uses both water and the Trinitarian formula but don't have their initiation sacraments of Eucharist or confirmation. Others, called catechumens, have never been baptized.

Dunlop and other RCIA volunteers across the Diocese say that accompanying newcomers into the Catholic faith has borne bountiful blessings from growth in their own faith to the joy of welcoming new members to the Church.

"The biggest blessing is to us," Dunlop said. "We've made new friends, watched God work miracles, seen the Holy Spirit come on these folks and saw that they're so excited to join the Church."

Mary Sue Lone has coordinated the RCIA program for more than 30 years at St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale.

"It's such a blessing and a humbling experience to accompany someone on their faith journey to find God if they've never had that experience before or to grow in their relationship with God, which is very true for most

of them," she said.

Deacon Kevin Heim remembers when his wife, Rhonda, entered the church at a time when the process consisted of private meetings with the pastor. He attended, too, and enjoyed the process.

The Heims have been helping their parish's RCIA process for about 25 years.

"It keeps renewing our excitement in our faith," Rhonda said. "We've had people from all walks of life and all ages. This year, we have a young class; our candidates and catechumens are from ages 21 to 26."

Beth Wilson, of Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, began helping her parish's RCIA program around 2000.

"I have just loved it so much because I love our faith so much," she said. "I can be a little excited and I think I pass that along."

She learned how to lead the program from mentor Maureen Kruse, who recently retired from the ministry after about 25 years of service.

What's most fascinating is watching people change over time, Kruse said.

"You can see people's lives changing and not because of what we do but because of what they're allowing God to do," she said. "I didn't really worry necessarily about who called each year to start the process. The Holy Spirit sends us who needs it."

Anna Martinez is relatively new to the ministry at Corpus Christi Parish.

"I think that's a call that I have from God, from the Holy Spirit. I feel it in my heart," she said.

She realized her Hispanic community members needed help receiving their sacraments because of a language barrier. Initially, she served as a translator and as a sponsor.

This year, she guides 12



Longtime RCIA volunteers say its a special ministry to walk a spiritual journey with those who consider, question and commit to coming into full communion with the Catholic Church. Some are catechumens, who have never been baptized, and some are candidates, who have not received First Eucharist or confirmation. Above: Shane Elbert (candidate), Beth Wilson, & Daryl Hatfield (catechumen), at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs. At right, Rhonda Heim, of St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines reviews the readings of the week with her parish's candidates and catechumen. Below, Mary Sue Lone, of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale, at the March 1, 2020 Rite of Election with Bishop William Joensen and Chris Ayers.



participants in Spanish through the process.

"I've been helping at the church for quite a while. I tell people I'll be there for them," she said.

Tim Kautza used to lead the RCIA program at his parish, St. Mary/Holy Cross in Elkhart, a few years ago. For those who would consider helping their parish's program, he encourages them to review the Jan. 30 Sunday readings from Jeremiah and St. Paul.

"When called to serve the Lord in love, delivers us amidst our limitations and weaknesses without failure," he said.

"Many times, questions arose during RCIA sessions that I did not know the answers to, and I would ask team members present to reply and, if there was confusion, I would later utilize the abundance of resources available to determine the answer for the next session," he added. "There were candidates who had deeper relationships with God than me and team members and sponsors who knew new more about the

Catholic tradition than me. A little humility goes a long way with RCIA coordinators, especially when just starting out."



**St. Anthony K of C
FISH FRY**

Dine in or Pick Up
\$10 per person
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Parish Hall

Baked potato, green beans,
dinner roll and dessert.
Fridays, March 4 - April 8
15 Indianola Rd., Des Moines

HAMILTON
LAW FIRM, P.C.
DES MOINES - STORM LAKE - SIOUX CITY

Established in 1876, we're one of Iowa's most experienced law firms.
515.309.3536, 12345 University Ave., Clive, IA 50325

Divine Treasures Catholic Books and Gifts

Shop Local

5701 Hickman Road
Des Moines, IA 50310

www.DivineTreasuresInc.net
515-255-5230

A FANTASTIC SHOPPING EVENT

IOWA'S LARGEST ARTS & Crafts SHOW

Over 250 Exhibitors

March 4-6

VARIED INDUSTRIES BLDG.
IOWA STATE FAIRGROUNDS
DES MOINES, IOWA
Fri. 5-9; Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4

ADM. Just \$7.00
(10 & under free)
FREE PARKING - Free Shuttle Bus Service from North Parking Lot on Both Friday & Saturday.

"Where You Can Buy That Quality, Handmade Product At An Affordable Price."
Garden Art, Oak Furniture, Paintings, Ceramics, Jewelry, Metal Art Sculptures, Pet Products, Etched & Stained Glass, Yard Art, Pottery, Blown Glass, Candles, Clothing, Floral Wreaths, Toys & Dolls, Baskets, Rugs, Glassware, Purses, Ornaments and Food.
NOTE: The CDC Recommends Wearing A Face Mask To All Indoor Events.

To Purchase Discounted Advance Tickets and For A Chance To Win \$50 Gift Certificates, Visit Our Facebook Page at Callahan Promotions, Inc.

Around the Diocese

Feb. 20 Sunday Sunday Brunch

MASSENA – Everyone is invited to join St. Patrick Parish in celebrating its new renovations at a brunch from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Free-will offering will go toward completing the renovation with new flooring in the church.

Feb. 27 Sunday Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner

CHURCHVILLE – All you can eat Italian spaghetti and meatball dinner will be at Churchville Assumption Shrine Hall, 870 West St., from 11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$8/adults and \$4/children ages 5-10. Carry out is available.

Feb. 27 Sunday Staley's Chicken Dinner

NORWALK – St. John the Apostle is hosting a fried chicken feast in the parish hall on from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Everyone is invited. Cost is \$10/adults, \$5/children ages 6-12, kids under 5 eat free.

Auction items include a lawn mower, hand made quilt, designer cake and more. For more information, contact Gary and Mary Haselton at 515-321-3873 or the parish office at 515-981-4855.

March 2 Ash Wednesday

Check with your local parish for Mass and ash distribution

times. This is a day of fasting and of abstaining from meat.

March 5 Saturday

COUNCIL BLUFFS – Rite of Election at St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs at 10:30 a.m. with a reception following.

March 6 Sunday

WEST DES MOINES – Rite of Election at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines at 4 p.m. with a reception following.

March 5 Saturday

Catholic Women's League Mass of Remembrance

DES MOINES – Catholic Women's League will celebrate a Mass of Remembrance and luncheon with Father Nick Stark at Christ the King Catholic Church. Lunch will be catered by Tumea and Sons. Catholic Women's League is a social organization which focuses on Catholic literacy and Catholic education with a history of giving and service to the community.

April 2 Saturday

DCCW Conference

ATLANTIC – All Catholic women are invited to join the 93rd annual conference of the Des Moines Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, to be held at Ss. Peter and Paul Parish hall in Atlantic. Featured

speaker is Maureen Hoffmann. Bishop William Joensen will be joining us for Mass. Please register at desmoinesdcccw.org or facebook.com/desmoinesdcccw. Information on this event has been sent to each parish. For more information, contact Connie Sampers 712-623-2369.

April 8 Friday

Chrism Mass

DES MOINES – Chrism Mass will be at St. Ambrose Cathedral at 5 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

May 1 Sunday

Catholic Daughters of the Americas

FORT DODGE – The CDA is sponsoring an event featuring a papal Missionary of Mercy at 402 N. 8th St. in Fort Dodge. Registration is at 8 a.m. with Mass at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will follow with the following speakers: Sherry Nilles, CDA national regent; Monsignor Ed Girres, state chaplain; and Father Jim Sichko as the keynote speaker. There will also be entertainment. Father Sichko is a full-time preacher, evangelist and motivational speaker based in the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. In 2016 Pope Francis commissioned him as one of the papal Missionaries of Mercy. To see more about him go to frjimms.com.

Diaconate candidates prepare for service



The permanent diaconate formation class recently got some hands-on training around the altar from Father Trevor Chicoine, diocesan director of the Worship Office. From left to right are: Steve Tatz of the Basilica of St. John Parish in Des Moines; Oran Struecker and Dan Dombrosky of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines; Dan Maxcy of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines; Father Chicoine; Eric Pugh of St. Joseph Parish in Winterset; and Steve McGee of St. Joseph Parish in Des Moines.



Photos by Mary Houston

Permanent diaconate candidates and their wives: Eric & Monica Pugh, Steve Tatz, Vivian & Steve McGee, Kelly & Dan Maxcy, Evette & Dan Dombrosky and Marilyn & Oran Struecker.

Lenten fish fry dinner calendar

The following are parish Lenten fish fry dinners on Fridays during Lent, March 4 to April 8 except where otherwise noted.

Altoona, Ss John and Paul

Dinners will be available for dine in or drive through from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$13/ages 13-adults; \$6/children ages 6-12; free/children ages 5 and under. Drive through cost is \$11. Alternate: Cheese pizza; mac and cheese.

Ankeny, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart

Dinners will be available for drive through only on March 11, 25 and April 8 from 5-7 p.m. Cost is free-will donation. Alternate: Grilled cheese & tater tots.

Ankeny, St. Luke the Evangelist

Dinner will be served on April 8 from 5-7 p.m. Cost is free-will donation.

Atlantic, Ss Peter and Paul

Dinners will be available for dine in or carry out from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$15/meal or \$75/family of 6. Alternate: Mac & cheese w/ green beans for \$10.

Audubon, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5 p.m. -7:30 p.m. Cost is \$12/meal.

Avoca, St. Mary

Dinners will be served on March 11 and March 25 from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$15/adults and \$10/children

Carlisle, St. Elizabeth Seton

Dinners will be served on March 11, 25 and April 8 from 5-7 p.m. Cost: suggested donation of \$12. Alternate: mac and cheese. Drive through is available.

Corning, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served on March 4 and March 18 from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is free-will donation.

Council Bluffs, Corpus Christi

Dinners will be served from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost not available at this time.

Council Bluffs, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served on from 5-7 p.m. Cost \$14/adults; \$7/children age 10 and under. Alternate: Shrimp on March 18 and April 8.

Creston, Holy Spirit

Dinners will be available for dine in and drive up on March 11 and April 1 at St. Malachy School

from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$10/adults; \$6/children ages 12 and under.

Granger, Assumption

Dinners will be served dine in or drive up from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is free-will donation. Alternate: Cheese pizza

Harlan, St. Michael

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$15/adults; \$5/children ages 4-10; free/children under age 3 and under. Alternate: Mac and cheese. NEW for 2022 – now serving beer.

Indianola, St. Thomas Aquinas

Dinners will be available for dine in or take out from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults; \$5/children ages 6-12; free/children age 5 and under.

Neola, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults; \$6/children ages 5-10; free/children under 5. Alternate: Grilled cheese sandwich

Norwalk, St. John the Apostle

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$8/adults; \$6/seniors; \$3/children ages 12 and under; Alternate: Cheese pizza

Perry, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. at St. Patrick School. Cost is \$10/adults; \$5/children ages 5-10; free/children ages 4 and under; maximum \$30 for family with children; shrimp is \$3 extra. Alternate: Fish tacos

Red Oak, St. Mary

Dinners will be served on March 11, 25 and April 8 from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$10/adults; \$8/children ages 5-11; free/children under 5.

Waukee, St. Boniface

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults, \$7/children ages 3-10; \$45/family. Alternate: Cheese pizza, spaghetti

West Des Moines, Sacred Heart

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$10/ages 11-adults; \$5/children ages 3-10; free/age 3 and under; \$40 family maximum. Alternate: Cheese pizza.

West Des Moines, St. Francis of Assisi

Dinners are served from 5:30-7:15 p.m. Cost is \$10/13-adults; \$5/children ages 6-12; free/children under 6. Alternate: Cheese pizza and mac & cheese.

DES MOINES

All Saints

Dinners will be served from 5-6:45 p.m. Cost is \$10/person. Alternate: Mac and cheese.

Basilica of St. John

Dinners will be served from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$10/adults, \$3/children ages 4-10; \$40/family maximum.

Christ the King

Dinners will be served from 5-6:45 p.m. Cost is \$10/adults, \$5/children. Alternate: Cheese pizza

Holy Trinity

Dinners will be available for carry out only on March 4, 25 and April 8 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Cost: See Holy Trinity website.

St. Anthony

Dinners are available for dine in or pick up from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Cost is \$10/person.

St. Joseph

Dinners are available for dine in or drive through from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$10/adults; \$5/children; \$40/family max. Alternate: Mac & cheese, cheese pizza.

St. Mary of Nazareth

Dinners are available for in person dining on March 4, 11, 25 and April 1 from 5-6:30 p.m. and for carry out only on March 18 and April 8 from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$13/adults and \$5/children under 12. Alternate: Mac & cheese

St. Theresa

Dinners are available for drive through only from 5:30-6:45 p.m. Cost is a free-will offering. Alternate: Cheese pizza and mac & cheese.

Young, single Catholics gather

Continued from page 4

san events. Some people come and go, but each event gets about four to five new people who haven't been seen before," she added. "It's funny – their Moms and Grandmas tell them about it – they are our best promoters by far."

The YCDM Singles Group sent a survey out a few months ago to get feedback.

"One of the questions was: 'What do you find to be the biggest struggles?'" Bugarino said. "By far the issue was that people were lonely.

Young Catholic adults find that as they start getting older, their friends are marrying off. They often say: "I didn't think I'd still be single," "My friends have changed," "I don't know where I fit in" and "I don't feel like the church has a spot for me."

Alli Haag of St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines is grateful for YCDM Singles.

She tried online dating through mainstream websites.

"There's so many different apps that people are on," Haag said. "Sadly, most people online

are not looking for relationships in real life."

Haag appreciates the group and meeting new people, especially last year when many things were shut down.

She encourages young Catholic singles to check the group out.

"If you don't meet anybody in the first three gatherings, [don't worry] – that's not what the group is about," Haag said. "We're having a community of single people supporting and understanding each other. It's really hard to date nowadays and [find people] with the same morals as we have."

The group is a strong community of like-minded individuals.

Danilson encourages fellow young adults to get involved – meet others, deepen their faith and be a positive witness to their peers.

"I think it's incredibly important because with the way our culture is trending, the religious 'nones' is growing at an exponential rate," Danilson said. "Many lose [their faith] entering college and don't get it back."

Seek22 draws 500 college students to Des Moines

Continued from page 1

intimately.

As Laurel McGonegle, an Iowa State University student, looks toward graduation and the uncertainties that lie ahead, she wanted to be reminded of God's plan for the future. The St. Mary of Nazareth parishioner said she was looking forward to hearing Father Schmitz.

Abigail Barnes, who recently returned to the Catholic Church at Sacred Heart Parish in Maquoketa, said she truly enjoyed Mass.

"It's just mind-blowing," she said. "I've never seen Mass like that before, all that incense."

Brendan Weed, a clinical psychology graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa, said he hadn't been as involved in



Photo by Rev. Jim Kirby

Deacon Mark Campbell uses incense before proclaiming the Word of God at Mass for college students.

his faith as he'd like.

"This was an opportunity to get away and take part in everything Catholic," he said.

Des Moines Bishop William Joensen celebrated Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral on Feb. 5 and hosted a breakout Q&A session on Feb. 6 for the students.

It was nice that Seek22 could be experienced in Iowa, said FOCUS missionary Sarah Fowle.

"I just love the energy and the atmosphere of having all these Catholic young people together," she said. "It makes it easier to be Catholic. Then you can go back out into the world and you can say 'I know there are other people like me, who dance like me, who talk like me.' Then, it makes it so much easier to bring that faith back to the college campus and live it every day."



LENTEN FISH FRY

SS John and Paul Parish
1401 First Ave. S, Altoona

Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus

- Dates:** Feb. 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1, 8
- Time:** 4:30-7:00 p.m.
- Cost:** Dine in and carry out is \$13 for adults; \$6 for children (ages 6-12); free for children 5 and under.
Cost for drive thru: suggested \$11 free will offering
- Menu:** Fried and baked fish, baked potato, green beans, coleslaw, mac & cheese, cheese pizza.

Germany and Austria

Visit CollinsTravel.biz and click on "Pilgrimages"

or contact Jason at Jason@CollinsTravel.biz or call 309-781-5757

Space limited to 20 people



Cost: \$4,699 includes airfare, hotels, Passion Play tickets, all travel in Europe, entrance fees, breakfast, supper and tips

Hosted by Father Andrew Windschitl pastor of St. Mary / Holy Cross Parish, Elkhart
Celebrant of trip's daily Mass

Jason Collins, Founder of Collins Travel and Pilgrimages and member of St. Francis Parish, WDSM
Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus

Join us for this Incredible Journey of Faith and Adventure to Germany and Austria July 15-25, 2022!

Things we'll see in Germany:

- World-renowned "Passion Play" - held every 10 years
- Historic Munich city center named after the Blessed Mother
- Beautiful, ornate Catholic Churches, many of which survived WWII
- Dachau Concentration Camp and Hitler's Eagle's Nest
- Neuschwanstein Castle

Things we'll see in Austria:

- Eucharistic Miracle location, Seefeld
- Salzburg Cathedral, survived bombing during WWII, and other churches
- Ancient salt mine on tour
- Spots of filming and inspiration on "Sound of Music" Tour
- Take tram ride into Austrian Alps
- ... and much more!



the Bash

ON BUFFALO

Saturday April 9th

LIVE & SILENT AUCTION - MOBILE BIDDING

\$5,000 RAFFLE DRAWING

Visit dowlingcatholic.org/events or call

Carolyn at 515.222.1095 for more information.



2022 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL

Annual Diocesan Appeal

Our parishes and Catholic schools are our faith families through their traditions and strategic visions that sustain the future. The blessing of your gift to...

Supporting Local Communities of Faith

Diocese offers help for deaf community

The Diocese of Des Moines is supporting a service to the deaf community in Council Bluffs and is looking to bolster service to the deaf community in the Des Moines metro area.

Since last December, an American Sign Language interpreter has been assisting at a Saturday morning Mass once per month at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, with coffee and donuts afterward.

The hope is that this ministry will grow, given the Iowa School for the Deaf is in Council Bluffs, and that interpretation for faith formation is available.

The monthly interpretation of the Mass, funded through the Diocese, has been greatly appreciated, said Father Jake Epstein.

"It's a great gift for the community and it's something we wouldn't be able to do without the support of the Diocese," he said. "It really helps them try to connect to the life of the church in this way and so I'm really grateful for that."

In Des Moines, a couple of sign language interpreters have moved away. Finding someone fluent in sign language is challenging, said Patty Origer, coordinator of the diocesan Disabilities Ministry. There's a lack of interpreters nationwide.

In collaboration with the local deaf community and longtime ASL interpreters like Peggy Chicoine, the Diocese is exploring alternatives such as using remote interpreters or sharing with interpreters who are not Catholic the

meaning of the Mass so they're more comfortable providing sign language at a Mass.

It's a mistake to assume the hearing impaired could rely on lip reading to pray along with the celebration of the Mass, said Dee Cordero, of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Des Moines. She and her husband, Gus, are deaf and have worked throughout their lives to serve the deaf.

"American Sign Language interpreters are crucial to our being able to be involved in Mass," she said.

"Speech-reading depends on an auditory memory, meaning that having auditory words in your memory gives you clues to help with the guesswork of speech reading. Very, very few people can successfully lip read



Father Jake Epstein blesses a child.

and at best, it only provides less than 30 percent of information spoken. The rest of the information has to be gleaned from guessing and visual cues and re-

quires a one-on-one scenario. The potential for error is immense," she said. "Fortunately, our Diocese upholds the needs of diverse language speakers, praise be to God."

Helping People in Need

Parishes support the mission of Catholic Charities

The mission of Catholic Charities to empower individuals and strengthen families requires many partnerships.

Catholic Charities relies on many groups, entities, and individuals, from grant funding to a donated kitchen table to make programs and services possible. A key group of donors, volunteers, and supporters are the parishes and parishioners within the Diocese of Des Moines.

"We are truly grateful for the support parishes continue to bestow on us," said Catholic Charities Executive Director Barbara Decker. "From donating to the disaster fund to driving a refugee family to an appointment, we could not complete our mission without their help."

There are so many beautiful examples of support. Here are just a few.

With the influx of Afghan refugees to Iowa over the last five months, Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement has

been assigned 277 individuals so far for resettlement. That is more than a typical 12 months of resettlement! Thanks to parishes like St. Pius X collecting a regular supply of household goods and supplies for our clients, the team has been able to keep up with the intense pace. Tom and Amy Donnelly use the St. Augustin van to help transport families to appointments.

On a visit to the Catholic Charities Food Pantry, you will regularly find parishioners from around the metro stocking shelves, creating food boxes, and distributing food at the walk-up window. Some are one-time volunteers, and some have committed to regular volunteer hours throughout the year. Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Bread Ministry, St. Catherine of Siena's Drake student group, and St. John the Apostle's monthly infant formula donation are just a few great examples of parish support.

Each spring, Catho-

lic Charities Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program in Council Bluffs gets their garden replanted by volunteers and funding from Corpus Christi parish and Knights of Columbus.

The program has an annual drive-through baby shower for first-time and low-income mothers each October during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Catholic Charities was referred to Mary's Helping Hands at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines through another organization. On short notice, the group generously provided 50 sets of baby care items for the event in 2021. There are plans for the partnership to grow in the coming year.

At Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter, meals are provided to guests every day throughout the year. St. Theresa, St. Mary of Nazareth, St. Mary - Holy Cross in Elkhart, St. Elizabeth Seton in Carlisle, and St. Francis of Assisi, are just a few

of the parishes who contribute meals regularly to the shelter. Some of those contributing parishes are through internal groups like Knights of Columbus.

Clearly, parish partnerships, contributions, and volun-

teers are vital to the success of Catholic Charities. If you or your parish is interested in learning more, go to catholiccharitiesdm.org and find out how to get involved.



Volunteers from St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Student Center/Drake Newman Community plant a garden to support those who receive help from Catholic Charities.



2022 ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL

THIS IS YOUR FAITH IN ACTION:

44% Supporting Local Communities of Faith

80 parishes with ministry and administrative services

1,765 employees with managed benefit plans

35,000 hispanic Catholics with outreach and ministry needs

21,695 employees and volunteers undergo screening and training to ensure a safe environment for our children

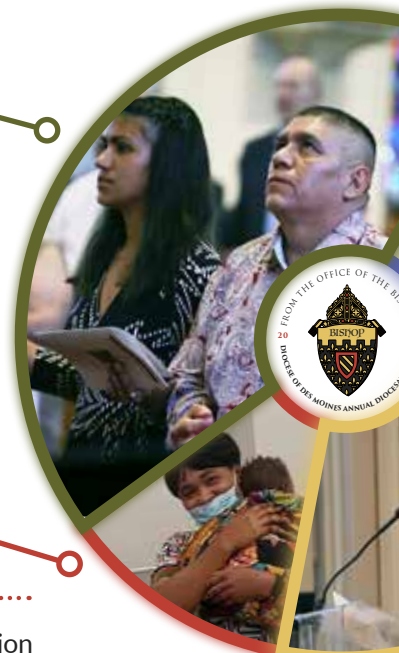
12% Helping People in Need

\$87,000 in disaster relief assistance

25,000 individuals served by Catholic Charities

277 refugees resettled

4 Catholic hospitals offering Mass, Communion and Anointing of the Sick



Appeal strengthens our families of faith

through which we share and communicate the joy of the love that God has for us. We are able to put forth ministries to serve our young people, support marriages, form seminarians, and care for priests. The Annual Diocesan Appeal, no matter the size, is life giving for our diocesan family.

Encountering Christ

Resources available for shift to family-focused formation

Once per month, families come to St. John the Apostle Parish in Norwalk for a meal, a teaching from the pastor, and fun activities.

These Parish Family Nights are intended to help parents, the primary teachers of the faith, to grow and share their faith with their children.

The parish tapped resources at the Diocese of Des Moines as it shifted from a classroom model to a family-focused model of religious formation.

"I'll tell you, since I became a director of religious education years ago, John Gaffney and the Office of Evangelization have always been really important to me," said Melissa Hill Garcia, director of religious education. "John has given me lots of

really valuable information over the years. He has quite a library of all different curriculum that you can borrow and try out. Anytime he doesn't know an answer, he will guide me in the direction to find an answer."

The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis also hosts monthly meetings for catechetical leaders so they can learn from each other and hear speakers sharing new ideas.

"It's a time when we can collaborate and really throw things back and forth and just talk about what's working and what's not working," Hill Garcia said. "It's really making people feel part of something larger. We're Catholic. We're universal. We're united. We really believe in being part of a greater whole, and the

Diocese helps us with that."

By moving to a family-based formation program, it becomes open to the whole parish, said Father Dan Kirby

It also builds a stronger sense of community.

"Anytime we come together, form community, love our faith, and celebrate our faith, it's a win/win. It's a grace," he said.

He encouraged the faithful to support the Annual Diocesan Appeal, which provides the funds for the Diocese to assist parishes with programs like family-focused religious education.

"It gives people throughout the diocese of southwest Iowa an opportunity to be a part of the mission of the Diocese," he said.



Shepherding the Faithful

New priests focus on offering pastoral care

Father Litto Thomas has traveled the world to help people live holy lives.

Originally from the farm fields of India, Father Thomas studied in Italy, served a Diocese in Spain and then came to the Diocese of Des Moines.

He arrived the day after Christmas in 2019, facing a new culture to which he wasn't accustomed and a lack of credit that would enable him to get a car or a cellphone. Plus, he didn't have a winter coat.

The Diocese of Des Moines took care of all of his needs so that he could focus on offering pastoral care. He has served Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, St. Patrick Parish in Lenox, St. Patrick Parish in Corning and now ministers at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines.

Shortly after arriving in Iowa, Father Thomas received



Father Litto Thomas, originally from India, finds family in his faith community.

funds from the Diocese to get winter clothing.

"It's a family and the

Diocese acts like a mother who takes care of her children," he said.

Though he's far from his own family, he's found a home here.

"Once we believe in the Catholic faith, it's a family," said Father Thomas. "So wherever you go, you feel belonged to a family. Whether you work in Des Moines, whether you work in Spain, whether you work in Italy or in India, you belong to the great family called the Catholic Church."

And because of his faith family, he doesn't feel alone.

"Whenever you come to know that Jesus is with you, you are not alone. That fills our life with an unexplainable joy and happiness that helps us to lead a holy life."

Father Thomas enjoys his time at Sacred Heart Parish: "I feel happy to help our parishioners here to grow in holiness and happiness."



21% Encountering Christ

- 1,335 new members of the faith through Baptism
- 9,185 children encounter Christ in parish faith formation
- 1,735 communicants received the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time

23% Shepherding the Faithful

- 109 deacons and candidates with training, education & support
- 36 retired priests with medical care and retirement income
- 53 active priests with medical insurance provided exclusively by the Diocese

- 390 engaged couples undergoing marriage preparation
- 35,000 households receive the Good News in *The Catholic Mirror*
- 16 Catholic schools with professional training, supervision and oversight

- 15 seminarians with formation & tuition expenses
- 19 international priests with US citizenship and immigration services

The Annual Diocesan Appeal provides more than \$4.5 million in essential support and 64% of ministry and operational needs on an annual basis.

VISIT DMDIOCESE.ORG/GIVING FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE ADA AND CHARITABLE GIVING.

SCAN HERE TO GIVE ONLINE!

Get your message out to 30,000 Catholic households in central and southwest Iowa by advertising in The Catholic Mirror. Call 515-237-5054 or email kcollins@dmdiocese.org for details.



EXCEL MECHANICAL CO., INC.
 AIR CONDITIONING • REFRIGERATION • HEATING
 COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS • MED GAS • BUILDING AUTOMATION
 CERTIFIED BACKFLOW TESTING • PLUMBING
www.excelmechanical.us
 (515) 288-1450

Capital campaign launches

Continued from page 1

Joensen and committed clergy and lay leaders, over \$12 million in gifts the campaign has already secured, with particular focus on building the endowment for Catholic schools.

Wave one parishes and campaign staff hosted leadership orientation meetings throughout January. Currently, parish leaders are primarily focused on building volunteer teams that will be instrumental in the success of the campaign.

In the months ahead, volunteer teams from these par-

ishes will attend orientation meetings and trainings that will equip them to be campaign ambassadors within their parish. Campaign staff will also be working closely with each parish to develop customized communications.

Public campaigning for the first wave will begin after Easter through a series of “kickoff weekends” and will end in June through a series of “commitment weekends.”

For additional information about the campaign, visit the campaign website, dmdiocese.org/ignite.

First capital campaign wave begins

The following parishes are participating the first wave of the Ignite! capital campaign.

- All Saints – Des Moines
- Basilica of St. John – Des Moines
- Holy Trinity - Des Moines
- Our Lady of the Americas – Des Moines
- Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart - Ankeny
- Sacred Heart – West Des Moines
- St. Ambrose Cathedral – Des Moines
- St. Anthony – Des Moines
- St. Francis of Assisi – West Des Moines
- St. Patrick – Dunlap
- St. Peter Vietnamese Community – Des Moines
- St. Theresa – Des Moines

Madre de Doctor (y Enfermeras y de todo el Personal de Salud)

Continued from page 2

intención de la administración de remodelar no solamente los servicios de salud y la misión de origen divino de los profesionales de salud católicos, sino nuestra humanidad misma, de acuerdo con su propia imagen de qué es lo que debemos hacer y qué es lo que no debemos hacer en el sagrado espacio de nuestras clínicas y hospitales. Esto va a constituir una invasión de gran escala que viola las vocaciones y consciencias de hombres y mujeres dedicados a servir y a poner sus propias vidas en la línea a favor de sus hermanos y hermanas de acuerdo con la voluntad de Dios y de su dominio sobre la vida y la muerte. Es una clara afrenta y un intento por “cancelar” a las personas de fe y a la Iglesia misma del área de servicios de salud.

De seguro la Iglesia apoyará varias formas de repercusión legal en contra de una regla injusta. Nosotros ciertamente apoyaremos, oraremos y llamaremos a todos los católicos y personas de buena voluntad para que se respeten y se sigan las normas directivas razonables e iluminadas por la fe, especialmente por aquellos en el frente que procuran los servicios de salud, así como a los administradores y personal que les apoyan. Debemos mantener nuestras cabezas y corazones en calma, tener buen humor, y confiar aún más profundamente que el cuidado providencial de Dios y que los recursos del Espíritu puedan movilizarse exactamente para este tipo de retos, que seamos humildes y que pidamos la presencia de nuestro Señor y su Santísima Madre.

María no es probablemente una “mamá tigre” en el sentido de la palabra, pero ella tiene un lugar especial en su corazón para aquellos que se han comprometido a sí mismo a nutrir la vida, a acompañar y sanar hasta donde Dios lo permita, y a mantenerse firmes como testimonio en contra de aquellos que tratan de suprimir la fe y de dividirnos. Ella es la “mamá” para todas las personas en los servicios médicos que responden a los llamados de gracia, y les iluminará y fortalecerá ante nuestro llamado para que interceda por ellos. Con tal mamá, las puertas del infierno no prevalecerán en contra del Cuerpo de su Hijo, que somos todos aquellos que nos ponemos bajo su manto sabiduría y protección.

Family FAITH Resources

As parents and grandparents, we want the best for our children and grandchildren. As Catholics, we believe that a living faith — one lived in relationship with Jesus and to the Church — plays a big part in helping our kids reach their potential for living a joyful life. But how to bring a child to embrace faith for themselves is not clear and easy!

To support your family in this important effort, the Diocese of Des Moines is now offering new online resources. *Family Faith Resources* seek to help parents grow their own faith, as well as provide: language to share Catholic faith with their kids, and meaningful and fun practices to help it come alive in day-to-day family life.

The growing collection can be found on the diocesan website: dmdiocese.org Go to *Ministries & Faith Formation* > Religious Education > Parent Tools.

Our 2022 Lenten resources will soon be posted at dmdiocese.org/lent or scan:



Be sure to share this with family & friends. Together we can strengthen Catholic faith in our homes & diocese!

A FANTASTIC SHOPPING EVENT

IOWA'S LARGEST ARTS & Crafts SHOW

March 4-6

Over 250 Exhibitors

\$1 OFF ADM. WITH THIS AD

VARIED INDUSTRIES BLDG. IOWA STATE FAIRGROUNDS DES MOINES, IOWA Fri. 5-9; Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4	ADM. Just \$7.00 (10 & under free) FREE PARKING - Free Shuttle Bus Service from North Parking Lot on Both Friday & Saturday.
---	--

"Where You Can Buy That Quality, Handmade Product At An Affordable Price."

Garden Art, Oak Furniture, Paintings, Ceramics, Jewelry, Metal Art Sculptures, Pet Products, Etched & Stained Glass, Yard Art, Pottery, Blown Glass, Candles, Clothing, Floral Wreaths, Toys & Dolls, Baskets, Rugs, Glassware, Purses, Ornaments and Food.

NOTE: The CDC Recommends Wearing A Face Mask To All Indoor Events.

To Purchase Discounted Advance Tickets and For A Chance To Win \$50 Gift Certificates, Visit Our Facebook Page at Callahan Promotions, Inc.

Don't *choose* to suffer with neuropathy

Don't suffer any longer. Vero Neuropathy can help. Learn more by attending one of our **FREE** seminars.



Free Neuropathy Lunch or Dinner Seminar

Seating is limited.
 Call NOW to reserve your space!
515-644-VERO or text PAINLESS to 21,000

Discover a life free of pain!

Vero Neuropathy

5525 Mills Civic Parkway, Ste 120
 West Des Moines, IA 50266
VeroNeuropathy.com
 We accept Medicare and most other health insurances.
Board Certified in Neuropathy

Ready for Lent? March for Life

The Lenten season kicks off on March 2 with Ash Wednesday, beginning a period of 40 days of practices intended to move the faithful to a true inner conversion of heart to follow Christ more faithfully in order to more fruitfully celebrate the great feast of the Lord's resurrection at Easter.

During Lent, the Catholic Church encourages the faithful to practice three pillars: pray, give alms to the poor, and fast.

For prayer and reflection opportunities, go to theemmas house.org. Located in Urbandale, Emmaus House offers spiritual resources including spiritual direction, retreats, days of recollection and more.

Giving alms means donating money or goods to the poor and sharing God's gifts of time and talents. Go to CatholicCharitiesDM.org for service opportunities. Catholic Charities also offers the CRS Rice Bowl, a Lenten tradition that gives people an opportunity to support the work of Catholic Relief Services.

Catholics are called to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and abstain from meat on all Fridays during Lent. The faithful also are called to self-discipline and fast in other ways. Exodus 90 is a program that outlines various practices to help people tune out distractions and focus on their relationship with God. Learn more at exodus90.com.

To help families find ways to deepen their faith during Lent, the Diocese has created resources with ideas that are age appropriate for young children. Find them at dmdiocese.org/lent.

Going to the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. last month was a "God moment" for Dowling Catholic High School junior Nicole Pedersen.

"It was kind of a God moment for me that he brought everyone here for this cause and to fight this injustice that's hap-

pening on our society," she said.

The prolife march drew nearly thousands of people on Jan. 21 to walk down Constitution Avenue to the U.S. Supreme Court, which is considering a case that could overturn the 1973 Roe v Wade decision.



Dowling Catholic High School students Nicole Pedersen, Taylor Tallman and Briella Osborn traveled with Pulse Life Advocates to join thousands of people in a prolife witness at the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

PULSE
life ADVOCATES

FREE ONLINE WEBINAR



"The Holy Family"

The 'Soul' Solution For a Wounded World

FEATURING:
Bishop William Joensen, Msgr. Frank Chiodo,
Bill Donaghy, Dr. Ray Guarendi, Joe Stopulos
Maggie DeWitte, Tom Quiner

LEARN MORE / REGISTER TODAY:
www.pulseforlife.org

Scrapbooking rejuvenates friendships



St. Joseph Church in Winterset held its 14th annual Holy Crop craft event recently.

What started out with 20 scrapbookers and stamper has evolved into a major, fun event where up to 80 people scrapbook, stamp, sew and more.

There are meals, games, prizes, craft projects

and even a massage professional comes to pamper the participants. Groups attending have fun names such as Snow Angels, Holy Rollers, Heavenly Hosts, Crazy Cantors, Father's Favorites and Scrappin' Sisters.

The event takes place the second full weekend in January each year.

Director of Child & Family Faith Formation, St. Boniface Catholic Church, Waukee, Iowa

Do you have a passion for helping children and families grow in faith? Are you called to guide and support parents as they introduce Jesus to the kids in their lives?

St. Boniface is seeking a Director of Child & Family Faith Formation for our growing parish of 1,800 households. The position will plan, lead, implement, and evaluate formation programs for families with children ages PreK through 8th grade, as well as oversee family-based preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

This position will work collaboratively with other team members in the parish Evangelization & Faith Formation Office, as well as with all parish staff and our outreach ministry leaders.

The ideal candidate will have a depth of reflective spirituality, as well as proven experience inviting and forming parents and other adults as catechists and core team members. Must be a practicing Catholic, have a degree in Theology or certificate in religious education or Diocesan catechetical training/certification, or have experience in a related field with a minimum of three years coordinating parish child and family formation.

Desired start date is May 2022 or earlier. Full position description and application instructions are available at <https://stbonifacechurch.org/employment>



Join us for our Lenten Fry-Day Nights Fish Fry

Friday 5:00pm – 6:30pm

March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1, 8

Adults: \$10; Children 4-10 years: \$3



Basilica of St. John

1915 University Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa
Call (515) 244-3101, ext. 0

CALDWELL PARRISH FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY

*Caldwell Parrish: Caring about your loss and your faith.
Des Moines' Only Catholic-Owned & Operated Funeral Home!*

**You don't need to settle.
Funeral preferences change.**

You are not obligated to fulfill your service with the funeral home where you purchased your pre-plan. If you have pre-planned with another funeral home and they are no longer what you have in mind, take comfort knowing that Caldwell Parrish honors all existing pre-arrangements. There's never a fee for the transition to our funeral home. Make an appointment today to discuss your options.



URBANDALE
8201 Hickman Rd.
Urbandale, IA 50322
(515) 276-0551

ADEL
735 South 14th St.
Adel, IA 50003
(515) 993-4240

WINTERSET
1823 N. John Wayne Dr.
Winterset, IA 50273
(515) 462-4080

www.CaldwellParrish.com

Ancient tradition comes alive, brings peace

Every night without fail while I'm rocking my toddler before bed, my 10-year-old son comes up to me in the darkness of the room and says, "Mama, please don't forget to pray over me, okay?"

It is endearing that even though I do it every night, he cherishes our nightly ritual so much that he must not let his mama forget! The same is true for our girls, though they react with tears if we so much as walk past their bedroom door without popping in to lay our hands on their heads!

The "Parental Blessing" is an ancient tradition, stemming all the way back to the patriarchs in the Old Testament. In fact, we see just how important the blessing is in Genesis 27, when Jacob tricks his father, Isaac, into giving him the firstborn blessing. As parents, we have the authority and the responsibility to bless our children. Blessings can take place before bed, as they depart for school, on birthdays, before a long trip and any other time.

Marriage and Family Life

By Kara Storey



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has fond memories of his own parents blessing him. In "The Spirit of the Liturgy" he writes: "I shall never forget the devotion and heartfelt care with which my father and mother made the sign of the cross on the forehead, mouth, and breast of us children when we went away from home, especially when the parting was a long one. This blessing was like an escort that we knew would guide us on our way."

There is no one "right way" for a parent to bless a child. My husband and I each have different styles of blessing our children. It can be as simple as making a sign of the cross on the child's forehead

with holy water and saying, "God bless you." Sometimes I say the blessing from Numbers: "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you. May the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace." Or, for a child who is going through a spat of bad dreams, I'll often use the St. Michael prayer.

However, my favorite way to bless my children is through extemporaneous prayer. First, I ask the Father to send his Holy Spirit upon my child and thank him for the gift of his or her life. I pray that they'll always remain in the heart of the Church, united to Christ through fidelity to faith, the sacraments and ecclesial communion. I ask Christ to give my child the courage to discern their vocation in life. Finally, I end by asking Mary to wrap them in her mantle, keeping them happy, holy, healthy and safe.

I'm genuinely surprised at how

even on the rough days, when we've been forced to give more consequences than we'd like or butted heads with our kids about chores or schoolwork, they still come to us, asking for a blessing. It's in these moments as they settle their bodies and bow their heads that they'll often whisper, "I'm sorry, Mama." It's in these moments that I'll also feel the tension around my heart relax as the Lord reminds me once again that these children are really his children, made in the image and likeness of God.

"You may not be rich; you may be unable to bequeath any great possessions to your children; but one thing you can give them [is] the heritage of your blessing," said St. Ambrose. "And it is better to be blessed than to be rich."

Kara Storey is a freelance writer who worships at the Basilica of St. John, Des Moines.

Love is in the air

Faith That Conquers

By Kelly Mescher Collins



Insert the part where the Holy Spirit taps at my heart, encouraging me to write about my own experiences to make sure young adults know they are not alone. And, perhaps increase awareness of their plight.

Valentine's Day is probably one of the most hated days of the year for single people – a painful reminder of their relationship status. I remember those days.

I have many not-so-great memories of dating. I had many dates and even a few short-lived relationships with guys I met on mainstream dating websites. But I eventually swore them off after realizing the expectations most of these guys seemed to have about quick and easy hookups.

After our fifth date, one "suitor" told me he'd never had this many dates with a woman and not slept with her – insinuating something was definitely wrong with me. I told him of my Catholic values and we were done.

You might be just as shocked as I was. Sadly, I believe these expectations are the norm nowadays.

Social media only seemed to amplify the fact that everyone around me was engaged, married and having kids.

But as it turned out – that wasn't entirely true. Just when I'd thought it was impossible to find a nice guy with a strong faith, I ran into an old Catholic friend while out on a Friday night.

After catching up, I finally asked him: "How do you meet people? I mean – good quality people who share our values and faith? It's extremely hard to meet people."

He told me about a Catholic community of young adults and their weekly Bible study at St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines. They had social events as well. I was so grateful I ran into that old friend. And thankful for the camaraderie and friendships with like-minded people of faith I found in this group.

Soon after, in 2008, I met my husband at the Bible study. We were just friends at first. The group always went out for food, drinks and socializing after Bible study. Soon we all began hanging out on other occasions, too. These people became my community.

One of the guys in that community, Jason, became more than a friend and

we married in 2010. Deacon Dave O'Brien, who lead our Bible study at the time, gave the homily at our wedding. Still today most of our friends are people we met through St. Francis.

I felt God calling me to write this column. I'm sure most young adults reading this can relate all too well. Being single in this secular, sex-crazed world is extremely difficult – especially for those who want to live their life in line with the Catholic faith. Finding young, single people who share a dedication to the Catholic faith can feel like searching for a needle in a haystack.

I have several friends who finally turned to the Catholic websites, Catholic Match and Ave Maria Singles, in order to find their spouse. Two married and moved to their husband's cities – one now lives in Boston, another in Cincinnati. A third is newly engaged to a young man from Virginia – he relocated to the Midwest for work.

Young adults, I know it's tough. You are definitely not alone. Though I may not know you, I see you. And I'm rooting for you.

Kelly Mescher Collins is a multimedia journalist for the Diocese of Des Moines. She can be reached at kcollins@dmdiocese.org.

Frost fair: creating something new in the dead of winter

Twentysomething

By Christina Capecchi



The latest book by Sam Usher stopped me in my tracks. I've devoured the children's books brilliantly illustrated by this Chicago dad, and the title of his new release immediately drew me in: "A Night at the Frost Fair."

The cover art felt at once familiar and mystical. Here in Minnesota, my family's winter nights are spent skating under moonlight, like the children he illustrated. But they skate on London's River Thames, in the shadow of the cathedral, and their story takes place two centuries ago.

It's set during the Little Ice Age, the period from the 13th to 19th century when the North Atlantic region experienced particularly cold winters. During that time, the River Thames froze over at least two dozen times. Old London Bridge, which was made of 19 arches, slowed the river's currents, making it more likely to freeze.

Boatmen who could no longer ferry people across the river but needed to generate income converted their boats to sleds and swings, and the Frost Fair was

born. The river became a magical street filled with music and torches, booths and brightly painted swingboats. One year an elephant was led across the river.

A season of isolation became a time for merriment. The freezing cold made it possible.

This feels like a metaphor – and a relevant one for the seemingly interminable winter we find ourselves in. It is dark and cold; we are sick and tired. We still have not overcome Covid-19, and it's getting harder to imagine a future without it.

How can we, in our weariness, throw together a Frost Fair of our own design?

The answer is hinted at in the song "Blankets of Snow," a winter anthem by the bluegrass duo The Okee Dokee Brothers. They sing: "Let the milk and cocoa simmer on the heat. Don't you know the bitter cold makes the bittersweet."

The older I get, the more clearly I see the beauty of winter, spinning lace on every tree branch. I also see the adventure it offers. As a kid, I frolicked in fresh snow sheerly for the fun of it. As an adult, I embrace it as a way of life – a noble, Nordic resilience.

If it's above zero, we bundle up and head to the neighborhood pond, our sled filled with ice skates and firewood. We roast more marshmallows in the winter than the summer. That's when we need the fire.

I'm reading Katherine May's bestseller "Wintering," which chronicles a period she calls "wintering," when she and her husband experienced serious health problems and their son's anxiety peaked. Katherine mines meaning out of a season many consider dormant, worthless. But she

does so with gentle realism.

"If happiness is a skill," she writes, "then sadness is too. ...As adults, we often have to learn to hear the clarity of its call. That is wintering. It is the active acceptance of sadness. It is the practice of allowing ourselves to feel it as a need. It is the courage to stare down the worst parts of our experience and to commit to healing them the best we can. Wintering is a moment of intuition, our true needs felt keenly as a knife."

This concept feels encapsulated in our Catholic faith, which delivers healing through sacraments we cannot find elsewhere. The priest doesn't say Mass; he celebrates it. In the dead of winter, the Eucharist nourishes us.

Our faith gives us the lens to see the bittersweet in the bitter cold. It draws us around the fire.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

Eucharist exemplifies God's love for us

The Eucharist is a necessary means of salvation. This amazing gift given to us by God is what keeps me going each week, and it's difficult to imagine life without it. The transformation of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood is a miracle that happens every day in multitudes of churches around the world, and it is the supreme way that God shows his love to us, because it re-presents in our midst the death of his only Son upon the cross.

Imagine what would happen if you stopped eating altogether. Pretty soon you would be facing starvation. This is what happens, spiritually, when I stop receiving the Eucharist. Without that divine gift, my spiritual life starts to wither. The Eucharist has been an essential part of my life since I received my first Holy Commu-

Food for the Journey

By Madeline Marr



nion at age seven, and the grace contained within it has helped lead me along the path to heaven.

Since that time, nearly every week, I approach the altar in order to receive the nourishment I need. If I miss a week, whether because of sickness or because I haven't been able to make it to confession, I can sense a difference in what I think and do and not one for the better. The

Eucharist is something I cannot live without.

The Eucharist is a profound miracle. Sometimes I fail to appreciate the Blessed Sacrament for what it is, but when I pause and think about it I'm awed. Through the ministry of the priest each day, Christ is made present to us. Theologians have given the name transubstantiation to the miracle that takes place on the altar. The bread still looks like bread and the wine still looks like wine, but truly they are the body and blood of Our Lord. When the bells ring and the host is raised, I feel immense joy. God is working through the priest to bring us closer to him.

This sacrament is a re-presentation of Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary. When Jesus died on the cross, he opened wide

the gates of heaven so that we might enter. Nothing that we could do on our own could ever have accomplished this. Our Lord suffered so much for each and every person who has ever lived. The Eucharist brings these things to my mind and makes me stop and think of how much God loves each one of us—so much that He sent his only Son for our salvation.

The Eucharist means the world to me. This miracle starts my week off on a high note and is truly a great example of God's infinite love for us. Thank you, God, for this most precious of gifts!

Madeline Marr is a first-year student at St. Thomas Classical Academy. In her free time, she enjoys knitting, reading novels, and playing board games with her siblings.

Theology and spirituality – Writing about it, or writing it

Father Ron Rolheiser



In the world of the arts, they make a distinction between persons who create an artifact, an artist, a sculptor, or a novelist, and persons who write about artists and their works.

We have novelists and literary critics, artists and art critics, and both are important.

Critics keep art and literature from bad form, sentimentality, vulgarity, and kitsch; but it's the artists and novelists who produce the substance; without them critical assessment has no function.

For example, the book *The Diary of Anne Frank* is a masterpiece. Countless books and articles have been written about it, but these are not the masterpiece, the substance, the artifact that so deeply touched the soul of millions. They are commentaries about the artifact.

Of course, sometimes a person can be both, a novelist and a literary critic, an artist, and an art critic, still the distinction holds. These are separate crafts and separate disciplines.

That same distinction holds true within the area of theology and spirituality, though it is often not recognized.

Some people write theology and others write about theology, just as some people write spirituality and others write about spirituality. Right now, I'm writing about theology and spirituality rather than actually doing theology or spirituality.

Perhaps an example can help. Henri Nouwen was one of the most popular spiritual writers in the past seventy years.

Nouwen wrote spirituality; he never wrote about it, he wrote it. He was not a critic; he wrote spiritual texts. Many people, including myself, have written about Nouwen, about his life, his works, and why he influenced so many people. Strictly speaking, that's writing about spirituality as opposed to writing spirituality as Nouwen did.

Truth be told, we don't have an abundance of spiritual writers today the caliber of Nouwen. What we do have, particularly at an academic level, is an abundance of critical writings about spirituality.

I offered the example of a contemporary spirituality writer, Henri Nou-

wen, but the distinction is perhaps even clearer when we look at classical spiritual writers.

We have in fact created a certain "canon" of spirituality writers whom we deem as classics: the Desert Fathers and Mothers, the Pseudo-Dionysius, Julian of Norwich, Nicholas of Cusa, Francis of Assisi, Dominic, Ignatius, John of the Cross, Theresa of Avila, Francis de Sales, Vincent de Paul, and Therese of Lisieux, among others.

None of these wrote works of criticism in se, they wrote spirituality.

Countless books have been written about each of them, critically assessing their works. As valuable as these books are, they are in the end not spirituality books, but books about spirituality.

The same is true for theology.

We have infinitely more books written about theology than we have books that are actual theology. The word "theology" comes from two Greek words, Theos (God) and logos (word). Hence, in essence, theology is "words about God". Most theology books and courses on theology contain some "words about God", but these are generally dwarfed by "words about words about God."

This is not a criticism, but a clarification. I have taught and written in the area of theology and spirituality for nearly fifty years and am blissfully unaware of this distinction most of the time, mainly because we need both and the two simply flow in and out of each other.

However, there is a point where it becomes important not to confuse or conflate the critical assessment of an artifact with the artifact itself, and in our case to recognize that writing about theology and spirituality is not the same thing as actually doing theology and doing spirituality.

Why?

Why highlight this distinction? Because we need the artist and the critic to speak to different places inside of us and we need to recognize (explicitly at times) where we need to be fed or guided.

The artist speaks to the soul with one kind of intent, namely, to inspire, to inflame, to deepen, to bring new insight, and to move us affectively.

The critic speaks with a different intent: to guide, to keep us balanced, sane, robust, clear-headed, and within the bounds of decency, community, proper aesthetics, and orthodoxy. Both are important.

One saves the other from unbri- dled sentimentality and the other saves the

other from simply being an empty exercise.

In a vast over-simplification, we might put it this way. Critics define the rules of the game and hold the players to the rule; but art, theology, and spirituality are the game. Games need to be refereed or they quickly degenerate.

In our churches today there is often a tension between those who are trying to create new insight, generate new enthusiasm, and speak more affectively to the soul, and those who are guarding the castles of academia, orthodoxy, liturgy, and

good taste.

Academic theology is often in tension with devotional life, liturgists are often in tension with pastors, and popular spiritual writers are often in tension with critics.

One or the other may irritate us, but each is ultimately a friend.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com. Now on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser



I've Been Wondering...

Father John Ludwig

Q. I am a faithful Mass attendee not just because it is obligation but because I like going to Mass. I am going on a cruise. I asked if Mass was available, they said because we were in port they would PROBABLY be able to help me find a Mass on shore. What is the church's attitude about something like this?

A. Jesus said, "Do this in memory of me." If no Mass is available on a given Sunday – like the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic – there is no obligation to attend and participate.

Some cruise lines provide a chaplain. The Catholic ministry is called the Apostleship of the Sea.

If no priest is aboard and you are in a port, and there is a Catholic church nearby, you can join them for the celebration of the Eucharist.

There is no need to be heroic about this. As you say, you ordinarily are a faithful attendee. That's what matters the most.

(These questions are from the seventh grade class of Holly Cleghorn at St. Francis of Assisi School in West Des Moines.)

Q. Can you go to heaven if you don't know about God or faith? -JP

A. Yes. But we have a responsibility to share our understanding of

God and faith with others. That's what missionaries do. We can be missionaries in our own time and place.

Q. Is it a sin to be a preacher (from another religion) who does not attend Catholic Mass on Sundays? -OM

A. No. There are wonderful preachers or pastors or reverends from other denominations who share the good news of Jesus with people. We should be happy that they do.

Q. If Jesus was Jewish, how did we become Catholic? -OM

A. The followers of Jesus, the apostles and other disciples established the structures and makeup of what we know to be Christianity and Catholicism.

All of it comes from Jesus, of course, but the everyday framework has developed over the centuries.

The word "catholic" means universal – it means that everyone can be part of this mission.

Father John Ludwig is a retired priest of the Diocese of Des Moines. Do you have a question for him? Send it to communications@dmdiocese.org or mail it to The Catholic Mirror, Diocese of Des Moines, 601 Grand Ave., De Moines, Iowa 50309.

Vietnamese community celebrates new year



Photos by Rev. Jim Kirby

The St. Peter Vietnamese Catholic Community in Des Moines celebrated the Lunar New Year, the year of the tiger, on Feb. 6. At left, Madison Huynh approaches for communion. At center, Alan Nguyen reaches for a small paper scroll on which a Bible verse is printed. Each person was encouraged to take a scroll and use the Bible verse for reflection and as a guide for the coming year. At right, Dao Thu participates in a Mass.

Special Invitation to All Fun Loving Catholics!

Join us at this unique event produced by the Iowa Catholic Radio Foundation to benefit Iowa Catholic Radio Network.

BENEFITING THE IOWA CATHOLIC RADIO FOUNDATION

CELEBRATE COUNTRY CONCERT

JULY 24 at 7pm

IOWA EVENTS CENTER MAIN BALLROOM
Opening performance by Allie Colleen
celebratecountry.org

Des Moines, IA

Iowa Catholic Radio Network

You can participate in one of three ways:

- ~ Be a VIP: Enjoy pre concert festivities and great seats
- ~ Be a Sponsor: Your company will enjoy a special benefits package based on three option levels to choose from
- ~ Be a Guest: Purchase general admission tickets early to get the good seats

For more information, place your phone camera on this QR code to visit our website, celebratecountry.org or contact Belle@iowacatholicradio.com.

© Iowa Catholic Radio Foundation 2022

Rivals rally for priest battling cancer

By Lindsay Steele
Contributing Writer

BURLINGTON — Rival schools came together on the basketball court earlier this month to cheer on Father Marty Goetz, a diocesan priest who is battling breast cancer.

Fans of Notre Dame-Burlington and Holy Trinity-Fort Madison wore pink and purchased fundraiser items during their basketball matchup Feb. 1 to raise cancer awareness and to help offset the priest's medical expenses.

"The prayers and support of others through all of this has been inspiring and humbling to me," said Father Goetz, pastor of Divine Mercy Parish in Burlington/West Burlington and St. Mary Parish in Dodgeville since 2010.

Father Goetz received his diagnosis last summer after struggling with excruciating back pain. "It got to the point where I could hardly walk — or genuflect." His orthopedic doctor prescribed physical therapy, but when that didn't help, Father Goetz sought a second opinion. "A bone scan and CAT scan showed I had breast cancer that had spread to my bones."

The diagnosis came as a shock to the Notre Dame community, with whom Father Goetz has grown close over the last 12 years, said Principal Bill Maupin. "He celebrates Mass, participates in special events and is very active in the school and with the kids," he said.

"All the students at Notre Dame adore Father Marty, including myself," said Student Council President Maisey Belger.

At the time of the diagnosis, Father Goetz asked the school community for prayers, and they responded by making the Hail Mary a part of daily announcements. Holy Trinity also prays the Hail Mary for Father Goetz. He has a connection to the school through his brother, John

Goetz, who serves as athletic director and teacher, and John's wife, Kim, who also teaches there.

"I think it says a lot about (Father Goetz) that the only thing he asked for was prayers," Maupin said.

In August, Father Goetz had surgery to stabilize a femur (upper leg) bone affected by the cancer. He began oral chemotherapy treatments in September. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that about 1% of all breast cancer diagnoses occur in men.

Notre Dame wanted to support Father Goetz by hosting a fundraising and cancer awareness event, but he was reluctant to accept the offer. Eventually he gave Notre Dame the OK to host "Strike Out Cancer Night," asking that Holy Trinity be involved due to his connections there.

As the home team, Notre Dame organized a raffle and bake sale. Members of Divine Mercy Parish donated food items.

These fundraisers brought in about \$1,700 to help offset Father Goetz's medical expenses. Notre Dame is also selling T-shirts and towels with "Strike Out Cancer" printed on the front and Father Goetz's two mottos/hashtags, #iwon'tbackdown and #onlyicandoitbutnotalone, printed on the back.

"The generosity and prayers of so many people at both Notre Dame and Holy Trinity mean a lot to me," said Father Goetz.

His health is improving. "This past month is the best I have felt since last May. I'm walking 95 percent of the time without a cane. I can celebrate Mass and be in the office and minister — and genuflect at the altar again. God is so good!"

He said it is the power of prayer and faith, along with the support of others, "that will see me through all this."

Reprinted with permission from *The Catholic Messenger*, of the Diocese of Davenport.

Reach 30,000 households by placing an ad in
The Catholic Mirror.

Contact Kelly Mescher Collins at kcollins@dmdiocese.org
to learn more.

Pope: People have the right to life, needed health care

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- People have a right to life, not to death, which must be welcomed but never provoked, Pope Francis said.

"The right to care and treatment for all must always be prioritized, so that the weakest, especially the elderly and the sick, are never discarded," he said Feb. 9 during his weekly general audience.

The pope's remarks were part of his series of audience talks about St. Joseph and his role as the patron saint of a "happy" death, a term used to describe a last stage of life that is peaceful and full of faith and hope.

His remarks came just days before the 30th anniversary of World Day of the Sick, instituted by St. John Paul II. Pope Francis asked that all people experiencing illness be guaranteed health care and spiritual accompaniment.

He urged people to pray for those who are ill, their families, health care and pastoral workers, and everyone who helps care for their needs.

Pope Francis expressed gratitude for advances in medicine.

"Let us thank the Lord for the progress that medical science has made, especially in recent times; new technologies have made it possible to prepare therapies that are of great benefit to the sick; research continues to make a valuable contribution to eliminating old and new pathologies; rehabilitation medicine has greatly expanded its expertise and skills," he said in his annual message for World Day of the Sick.

"Even when healing is not possible, care can always be given," he said. "It is always possible to console, it is always possible to make people sense a

closeness that is more interested in the person than in his or her pathology."

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the reality of death back into focus, he added in the weekly general audience. So many people "have lost loved ones without being able to be near them, and this has made death even harder to accept and process."

The Christian faith is not about removing the fear of death; "rather, it helps us to face it" with trust in Christ's promises, he said. Christians know for certain, he said, that Christ is risen and "awaits us behind that dark door of death."

"We cannot avoid death, and precisely for this reason, after having done everything that is humanly possible to cure the sick, it is immoral to engage in futile treatment," the pope said, referring to the Catechism of the Catholic Church's teachings on the legitimacy of refusing "over-zealous" treatment not to cause death but to accept it (paragraph 2278).

When it comes to the experience of death itself, of pain or of suffering, he said, "we must be grateful for all the help that medicine endeavors to give, so that through so-called 'palliative care,' every person who is preparing to live the last stage of their life can do so in the most human way possible."

However, the pope warned against confusing such care with unacceptable interventions that lead to killing people. "We must accompany people toward death, but not provoke death or facilitate assisted suicide."

This ethical principle, he said, applies to everyone, "not just Christians or believers."



Dr. Ann Narmi, an interventional cardiologist at CHI Health Clinic Heart Institute - Mercy in Council Bluffs, reviews a test with Laura Cool, a cardiovascular stenographer.



Father John Owusu Agyemang at UnityPoint in Des Moines.




Family practice physician Dr. Sheran Fernando spends time with patient Kris Richey at CHI Health Mercy in Corning. Both are parishioners of St. Patrick Church in Corning.



Chaplain Patrick Bliss and a MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center nurse visit. In his message for World Day of the Sick, Pope Francis said: "It is always possible to console, it is always possible to make people sense a closeness that is more interested in the person than in his or her pathology."

DO YOU WANT TO
CONNECT PEOPLE WITH CHRIST?
FEBRUARY 21-25
TUNE IN!
Care -A- Thon



**IOWA
CATHOLIC
RADIO.COM**

1150 AM • 88.5 FM • 94.5 FM • 90.9 FM



OR DOWNLOAD THE IOWA CATHOLIC RADIO APP IN YOUR APP STORE!

Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas

El Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas es un empleado de Polk County Victim Services. Ella ayuda a víctimas de abuso sexual por parte del clero durante el proceso de la queja y buscando servicios de apoyo y consejería. Pueden comunicarse al 515-286-2028 o en advocate@dmdiocese.org.

Victim Assistance Advocate

The diocese's Victim Assistance Advocate is a staff member at Polk County Victim Services. He helps victims of abuse of minors by clergy through a complaint process and in seeking support and counseling services. He can be reached at 515-286-2024 or Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov.



Make your resolution this year to do something for someone else. Membership in the Knights of Columbus is about serving others.

Your act of service will also benefit you through enhanced relationships with your family, neighbors and Church.

We are Catholic men who lead, serve, protect and defend. We share a desire to be better husbands, fathers, sons, neighbors and role models who put charity and community first.

**Our world needs more Knights of Columbus.
Our world needs YOU to join today!**

**Scan the code below or go to kofc.org/joinus to register
Use the code **MCGIVNEY2020** for 1 year trial membership***

**Membership in the Knights of Columbus is open to men 18 years of age or older who are "practical" Catholics*



Walker Bormann
Assistant General Agent
563-219-5800
Eastern Iowa



Dan Ginther
515-460-3411
Carlisle, Altoona,
Elkhart and
Des Moines



Donnie Kenkel
712-579-9066
Council Bluffs, Atlantic,
Red Oak, Glenwood,
Avoca/Walnut,
Shenandoah &
Portsmouth



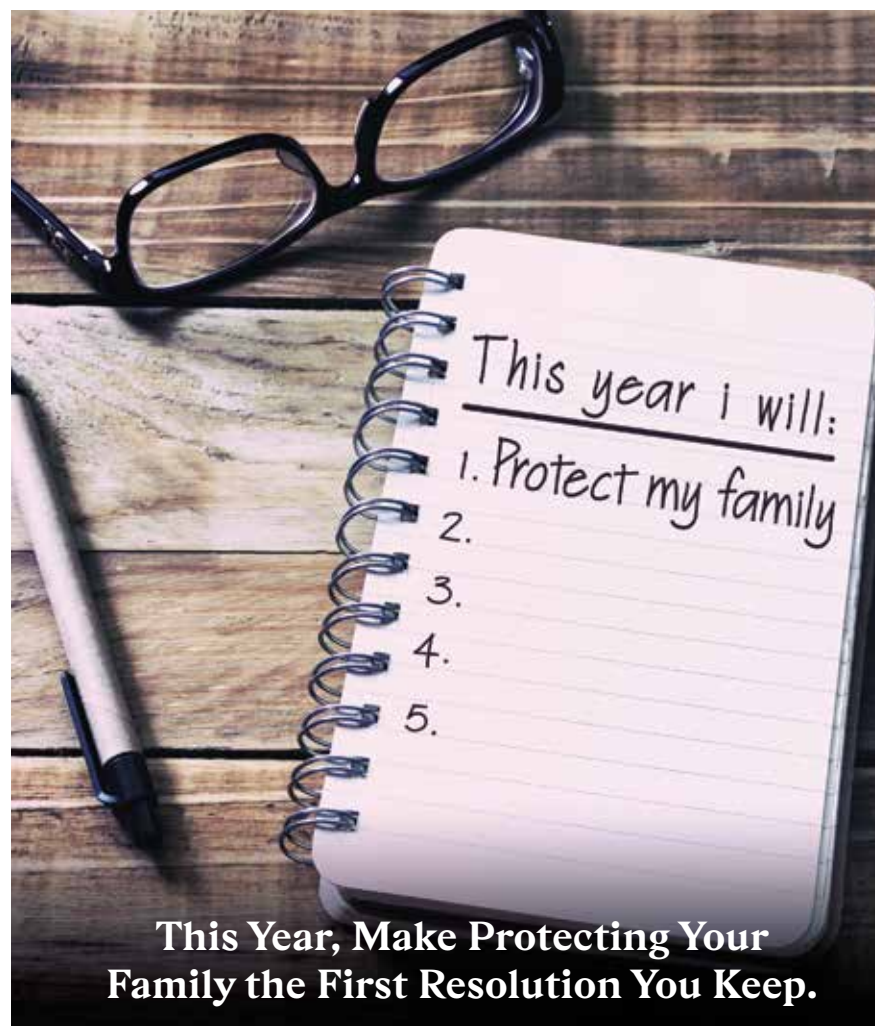
Rob Ryan
515-490-8753
WDM, St. Francis
& Sacred Heart,
Grimes, Clive,
Johnston & Ankeny



Pete Seuntjens
712-880-0044
Harlan, Earling,
Audubon, Dunlap
& Logan



Gregory Waddle
515-218-3550
All Saints,
St. Augustin,
St. Anthony's
and Christ the King



This Year, Make Protecting Your Family the First Resolution You Keep.

LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE • LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES



Neil Pfeifer
General Agent
Northeast Nebraska/
Western Iowa
402-379-0180
neil.pfeifer@kofc.org



Mike Bormann
General Agent
563-689-6801
michael.bormann@kofc.org

