

THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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Prayers, help needed for Turkey, Syria *Earthquake death toll reportedly tops a staggering 33,000*



OSV News photo/Kemal Aslan, Reuters

Rescuers carry Mehtez Farac, an 8-year-old Syrian boy, who survived after he was pulled from the rubble Feb. 8 in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake in Hatay, Turkey. The powerful 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked areas of Turkey and Syria early Feb. 6, toppling thousands of buildings and killing tens of thousands of people. See story on page 15.

Ignite! Campaign eclipses \$35 million for multiple needs *Campaign enters the homestretch*

The Diocese of Des Moines' Ignite! Campaign surpassed \$35 million in January, a testament to the generosity of thousands of families and the vibrancy of the Church in Southwest Iowa.

For Bishop William Joensen, this is a defining moment in the campaign, and he is extremely grateful to all the families and individuals who have supported this initiative through their gifts and prayers.

"I am humbled by the devoted spirit of countless families in our Diocese," he said. "In light of the bracing challenges of the past few years, this is a remarkable achievement. The Holy Spirit's inspiration and guidance is evident in the response by so many who have had to make choices and sacrifices on behalf of priorities in their lives. Our mission and vision will be amplified for years to come."

A culminating moment

Today's campaign progress is the culmination of several years of careful planning and work. In 2020, the Diocese undertook a comprehensive planning study that surveyed 1,200 parishioners. The study yielded positive results, indicating the potential to raise \$35 million to \$45 million.

Planning study results also showed broad support for the campaign's five initiatives, which include funding a Catholic Schools Endowment to provide financial assistance to more families, supporting seminarians and retired priests, creating a smaller endowment for parish renewal projects, and reserving funds for parishes so they can fund local projects. Each of these initiatives aims to bring meaningful change and improvement to the Diocese.

Fundraising began in 2021 with a silent phase led by Bishop Joensen and a dedicated team of lay and clergy leaders. They

raised \$12 million with over \$10 million designated toward the Catholic Schools Endowment.

Thanks to strong and early support for the endowment, the public phase launched in 2022 and featured "regional case statements," meaning that funds raised at each parish were allocated to campaign initiatives based on their proximity to a Catholic school. For example, parishes with schools in the Des Moines metro allocated 50% of their funds to the endowment, while rural parishes without access to a school allocated 10%.

Maureen Kenney, director of Stewardship, is impressed with the level of leadership, organization and support displayed by parishes throughout the public phase.

"The campaign's public phase was a complex undertaking, made possible by dozens of pastors and parish leaders, and hundreds of volunteers, all work-

ing together with their eyes set in the same direction," she said.

By the end of 2022, nearly all 80 parishes in the diocese participated in the campaign through one of three parish "waves." The campaign garnered over 6,000 gifts in that time. The lone exception is St. Pius X, which kicked off its campaign in late January of this year.

ADA due to begin

Just around the corner is the kick-off of the Annual Diocesan Appeal March 4-5. The annual fundraiser is distinct from the Ignite! Campaign as it makes possible diocesan ministries and outreach on an annual basis. The ADA supports a diocesan-wide disability ministry, funds priest health insurance premiums, and provides direct support to Catholic Charities among a multitude of other needs. Both the Ignite! Campaign and the ADA work

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Lent is just days away

Ash Wednesday on Feb. 22 kicks off the season of Lent, when Christians focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Everyone is welcome to any of the Catholic churches in the Diocese to receive ashes, a sign that we are mortal and must repent.

Lenten Guidelines

Keep in mind that as Catholics prepare for Jesus' death and resurrection, they fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In doing so, only one full meal is consumed with two smaller meals on those days. Catholics also abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all of the Fridays during Lent.

Family Faith Resources

As the faith community prepares to begin Lent, the Diocese of Des Moines is unveiling two new resources to help families live Lent more deeply. Both were created in collaboration with the St. Joseph Educational Center in West Des Moines.

The first resource, found at dmdiocese.org/lent2023, offers a wealth of prayers and family friendly activities that help young children, teenagers and parents find creative ways to live Lent as a family.

Find a four-page "how-to" guide for families, a series of reflection questions to spark family conversations based on the weekly readings during Lent, a printable aid to help plan Lenten practices for families, information on key feast days within Lent, and seven meatless soup recipes. The web page includes a children's activity called "Hiding the Alleluia," a colorful chart to check off how families experience the Corporal Works of Mercy, and a family almsgiving project planner.

Why Mass?

The second resource was created in the spirit of the Eucharistic Revival national initiative. Go to WhyMass.org to find a five-part video series focusing on why we do what we do at Mass. The series invites

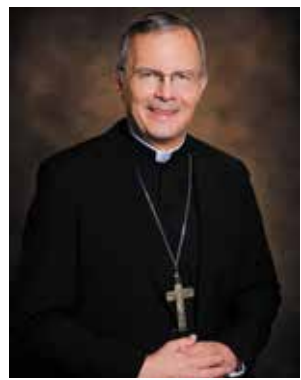
Continued on page 4

Sowing seeds in science and faith

In February we mark both Black History Month and the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22. I was struck recently by the correspondence of science and faith in the lives of two men from very different historical periods and backgrounds: George Washington Carver and St. Francis de Sales. Both of them can inspire us to integrate head and heart in more graceful fashion, and to go deeper in our respective vocations as disciples of Jesus who witness to his saving truth during Lent and beyond.

Professor Carver, the famous agricultural scientist and environmentalist, was a staunch advocate for use of crops other than cotton to prevent soil depletion—particularly peanuts and sweet potatoes. Born a slave in Missouri in 1864, he eventually gained his freedom and attended school in Kansas before moving to our Diocese when he matriculated to Simpson College in Indianola, majoring in piano and art. A teacher there encouraged him to study botany at Iowa State Agricultural College in Ames, where he earned a master's degree and became the first black member of the faculty; Carver Hall is named after this pioneer researcher. Most of his academic career was then spent heading agricultural research at the Tuskegee Institute.

Much revered, Albert Einstein once remarked, "I should appreciate it very much if the mem-



By Bishop William Joensen

ory of the great scientist George W. Carver would be honored." Carver was not a Catholic but was a man of deep Christian faith; he observed, "A personal relationship with the Great Creator of all things is the only foundation for the abundant life. The farther we get away from self, the greater life will be." He embraced a rule of life that involved both rigor and self-renunciation in the quest for truth and the desire to mentor young people. He helped them realize their professional passion and he sought to benefit both people living at a subsistence level and the planet in the same spirit championed by Pope Francis in his encyclical, *Laudato Si'/On Care for our Common Home*. And he continued to behold the beauty of creation in his painting.

We can take note of Carver's personal connection with some of

the young people he mentored such as Jim Hardwick, a student at Virginia Tech whom Carver met at a Blue Ridge YMCA conference. The poet Marilyn Nelson recounts their exchange in a letter entitled, "My Dear Spiritual Boy"—which might make us cringe at the term 'boy' employed in 1923, though it comes from a black man addressing a white student-athlete and not vice versa. Carver reflects, "My friend, I love you both for what you are and what you hope through Christ to be. I am by no means as good as you believe me. I am sorely tried so often, and must hide away with God for strength to overcome. I have suffered to do the job he's given me in trust to do. But now he's given you to me to give me strength, when I needed you most, confirming my faith in humanity."

How wonderfully Carver captures the vocation of a teacher, and offers what we hope would be a prime model for relations with young people as he sowed seeds of science and faith. With slight modification, he also reflects the relationship between Jesus and his disciples: tired so often, suffering to carry out the mission entrusted to him, but drawing strength both from personal faith and prayer with God, AND from those followers who "get it" through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Together, they help confirm our faith in human endeavors such as

science, in humanity itself, and in God, the source of abundant life when we slip beyond ourselves.

Turning to St. Francis de Sales, I will be much briefer. Pope Francis marked the 400th anniversary of de Sales' death at the end of this past December with his apostolic letter, *Totum Amoris Est/Everything Pertains to Love*. This seventeenth century humanist, trained in both civil and canon law, was an apologist for the faith in the wake of the Catholic Counter-Reformation and served as spiritual director to so many souls, including St. Jeanne de Chantal, with whom he co-founded the Visitation Order. He was not a scientist in the customary sense, though his own critical mind and theological erudition fueled his penetrating and sometimes poetic insights into the mystery of God's Love, and the devotion and charity that are to compose our response to love's invitation.

This "Doctor of Divine Love" drew from the more modest botanical knowledge of his day to describe the spiritual cultivation of our own hearts that underlies the Lenten summons to close our doors and pray, fast, and give alms in stealth and in secret. To one of his directees, Francis de Sales writes:

"Men engaged in horticulture tell us that if a word is written on a sound almond seed and it is placed again in its shell, carefully

wrapped up and planted, whatever fruit the tree bears will have the same written word stamped on it. For myself. . . I cannot approve the methods of those who try to reform a person by beginning with external things, such as bearings, dress or hair. On the contrary, it seems to me that we should begin inside. 'Be converted to me with your whole heart', God said. 'My child, give me your heart'.

"For this reason. . . I have wished above all else to engrave and inscribe on your heart this holy, sacred maxim, LIVE JESUS! I am sure that your life, which comes from the heart just as the almond tree comes from its seed, will after that produce all its actions—which are its fruit—inscribed and engraved with this sacred word of salvation."

May we offer the Lord Jesus the chance to inscribe his personal word on our hidden hearts this Lent. May his call to turn from ourselves in more deeply devoted prayer, in personal sacrifice translated to alms supporting others and fasting from frivolous wastes of time and energy, inspire us to adopt a more disciplined and devoted rule of life adapted to our own vocational demands. Then, come Easter, may our integrated spiritual hybrid of head and heart help confirm some and attract others to the faith, and bear great fruit for those in our circle of life, our parishes and Diocese!

Sembrando Semillas de Ciencia y de Fe

En febrero celebramos tanto el Mes de la Herencia Afroamericana y el inicio de la Cuaresma el Miércoles de Ceniza, el 22 de febrero. Me llamó la atención recientemente la similitud entre ciencia y fe en las vidas de dos hombres de dos períodos históricos y an-

tecedentes muy diferentes: George Washington Carver y San Francisco de Sales. Ambos pueden inspirarnos a integrar la cabeza y el corazón con mayor gracia y de ir más profundamente en nuestras respectivas vocaciones como discípulos de Jesús que dan testimonio de su verdad salvadora durante la Cuaresma y más allá.

El Profesor Carver, el famoso científico agrónomo y ambientalista, era un firme promotor del uso de cultivos además del algodón, para prevenir la erosión del suelo — particularmente maní y camotes. Nacido como esclavo en Missouri en 1864, logró eventualmente su libertad y asistió a la escuela en Kansas antes de mudarse a nuestra Diócesis cuando se matriculó en Simpson College en Indianola, estudiando piano y arte. Un maestro le animó a estudiar Botánica en el Colegio de Agricultura del Estado de Iowa, en Ames, en donde sacó una maestría y se convirtió en el primer miembro de la facultad de raza negra; Carver Hall lleva el nombre de este pionero investigador. Pasó la mayor parte de su carrera académica dirigiendo investigaciones agrícolas en el Instituto de Tuskegee.

Muy respetado, Albert Einstein dijo en una ocasión, "Apreciaría mucho si se honrara la memoria del gran científico George W. Carver." Carver no era católico, pero era un hombre de una profunda fe cristiana; él observaba que, "una relación personal con el Gran Creador de todas las cosas era la única base para una vida abundante. Mientras más nos alejemos de nosotros mismos, la vida será mejor." Él acogió una regla de vida que consistía en rigor y auto renuncia en la búsqueda de la verdad y el deseo de ase-

sorar a los jóvenes. Él les ayudaba a descubrir su pasión profesional y buscó beneficiar tanto a la gente a vivir a un nivel de subsistencia como al planeta en el mismo espíritu promovido por el Papa Francisco en su encíclica, *Laudato Si'/Sobre el Cuidado de la Casa Común*. Y él continuó admirando la belleza de la creación en sus pinturas.

Podemos tomar nota de la conexión personal de Carver con algunos jóvenes a quienes asesoró tales como Jim Hardwick, un estudiante de Virginia Tech a quien Carver conoció en una conferencia en la YMCA de Blue Ridge. El poeta Marilyn Nelson recuerda su intercambio en una carta titulada "Mi Querido Muchacho Espiritual" — la cual nos avergonzaría mencionando el término "muchacho" como se utilizaba en 1923, a pesar de que viene de un hombre negro refiriéndose a un estudiante atleta blanco y no viceversa. Carver reflexiona, "Amigo mío, te quiero tanto por lo que eres y por lo que esperas ser por medio de Cristo. No soy de ninguna manera tan bueno como crees que soy. Estoy adoloridamente cansado tan frecuentemente, y debo esconderme con Dios para recuperar mis fuerzas. He sufrido haciendo el trabajo que él me ha confiado a llevar a cabo. Peor ahora él me ha presentado contigo para que me des fuerza, cuando te necesitaba más, confirmando mi fe en la humanidad."

Qué maravillosamente captura Carver la vocación de maestro, y ofrece lo que esperamos sea un gran modelo de relaciones con jóvenes al sembrar semillas de ciencia de fe. Con una pequeña modificación, también reflexionó sobre la relación entre Jesús y sus discípulos:

frecuentemente agotado, sufriendo por llevar a cabo la misión que se le ha confiado, pero obteniendo fuerzas tanto de la fe personal como de la oración con Dios, Y de aquellos seguidores que lo "entienden" por medio de la inspiración del Espíritu Santo. Juntos, ellos pueden confirmar nuestra fe en los asuntos humanos tales como la ciencia, en la humanidad misma, y en Dios, la fuente de vida abundante cuando vamos más allá de nosotros mismos.

Al referirnos a San Francisco de Sales, seré mucho más breve. El Papa Francisco marcó el aniversario 400 de la muerte de Sales a finales de este diciembre pasado en su carta apostólica, *Totum Amoris Est/Todo Pertenece al Amor*. Este humanista del siglo diecisiete, entrenado tanto en ley civil como en ley canónica, fue un apologista para la fe en el despertar de Contra Reforma Católica y fungió como

director espiritual a tantas almas, incluyendo a Santa Juana de Chantal, junto con quien fundó la Orden de la Visitación. "el no era un científico en el sentido común, aunque su propia mente crítica y conocimiento teológico animaron sus profundas y en ocasiones poéticas visiones hacia el misterio del Amor de Dios, y la devoción y la caridad que deben componerse en nuestra respuesta a la invitación del amor.

Este "Doctor de Amor Divino" obtuvo del más modesto conocimiento botánico de sus días para describir el cultivo espiritual de nuestros propios corazones que sirven de base para los llamados Cuaresmales a cerrar nuestras puertas y orar, ayunar y hacer obras de caridad en sigilio y en secreto. A uno de aquellos a quienes daba dirección, Francisco de Sales escribió:

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Official

Bishop William Joensen made the following appointment effective Feb. 21, 2023.

Rev. Livinus Anweting to canonical administrator, St. Patrick Parish in Corning, and St. Patrick Parish in Lenox.



Faithfully in Christ,
Most Rev. William Joensen, Ph.D.
Bishop



Jason Kurth
Chancellor

Students across the world find common ground

By Kevin White
Contributing Writer

St. Albert Catholic School's award-winning robotics team, Thunderstruck, took part in a unique experience Jan. 25 when team members shared a Zoom call with Starburst, the robotics team at the diocesan girls' school in Hong Kong.

Senior Abby French, who serves as the social media manager for Thunderstruck, said she occasionally receives direct messages from teams around the world via Instagram. Usually, she

is skeptical.

"But I saw their message and I looked at their team and I was like, 'This looks legit. Their team is around the same level as ours.'"

Messages were exchanged and hope for growing a connection rose, especially when Thunderstruck learned that Starburst's team is fluent in English.

Next came the matter of navigating the time difference. Hong Kong is 14 hours ahead of Council Bluffs. Thunderstruck received special permission to be in the school at 8 p.m. Wednesday night, which was 10 a.m.



The robotics team at St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs found they had much in common with a robotics team in Hong Kong.

Thursday in Hong Kong.

Conversation began slowly, French said, no different than any first conversation among strangers.

"We were all shy at the beginning, but they had a presentation for us, and after they presented that we warmed up to each other," she said.

It was something special to witness, said Dr. Andrea Barnes, the co-head coach for Thunderstruck.

"I think they were just really excited to talk to a team from so far away," she said. "It was just two groups of teenagers talking. Our kids were well informed and asked good questions. They

have kind of the same problems, the same ways of thinking about things. Yet they are still having a lot of fun. Everybody was laughing and talking. I'm so proud of these kids."

While Thunderstruck is nearing the end of its season, Starburst is just beginning its season. That allowed the Council Bluffs team to offer some words of wisdom to their counterparts.

"We were telling them problems we've had at matches so far, and what to look out for," French said. "We were talking about ideas. One of their ideas was a turntable on a robot. Sammy (Horvath) said, 'That was our idea, but we were told by one of our

mentors that it probably wouldn't be the best idea.'

"Sammy thought it was really cool that they had the same idea and that was exactly what their team was having struggles with," French said.

The Zoom call proved that teenagers are teenagers, even if they're thousands of miles apart and seemingly separated by numerous cultural and logistical barriers, French said.

"I guess I hadn't thought of a team from another country being so similar to us, having the same issues, the same strengths and even the same ideas," she said. "I just thought it was interesting how similar we were."

Vocations celebrated at Shelby Co. Catholic School



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Father Clement Owusu, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Harlan, enjoys lunch with a student at Shelby County Catholic School on Jan. 26, when the school celebrated vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

CLADD Retreat



Catechetical leaders from across the Diocese gathered in West Des Moines on Feb. 2-3. Led by Deacon Matt Halbach, Ph.D., the leaders explored seeing things as God sees them. Pictured at left are: Jill Faust, of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs, Jane Ann Becicka, of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines and Melissa Hill, of St. John the Apostle Parish in Norwalk

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SAVE THE DATE
April 22, 2023
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Annual Conference

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WIDE OPEN HEARTS
ALL CATHOLIC WOMEN ARE INVITED



Our keynote speaker is Nell O'Leary from Blessed is She



Our bonus speaker is Fr James from Council Bluffs - St Patrick. We're hoping he's bringing his guitar.

Look for Details & Registration Info in the Spring:
The Catholic Mirror ❖ DesMoinesDCCW.org
Des Moines Diocesan Council of Catholic Women on FaceBook
♥ Renee Carney 712-310-2922 call or text ♥



Spring Fundraiser

February 27th - March 3rd

IOWA CATHOLIC RADIO NETWORK



PARISH FISH FRY DINNERS

The following are parish Lenten fish dinners on Fridays during Lent, Feb. 24 to March 31 except where otherwise noted.

Afton, St. Edward

Dinner will be served from 6-7:30 p.m. on Feb. 24 and March 10 in the Afton Community Center. Cost is free will donation.

Altoona, Ss. John and Paul

Dinners will be available for dine in, carry-out or drive thru from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$14/ adults; \$6/children ages 6-12; free/children ages 5 and under. Alternate: cheese pizza; mac and cheese; add a skewer of grilled shrimp for market price.

Ankeny, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart

Dinners will be served on March 3, 17 and 31 from 5-7 p.m. Cost is free-will donation. Alternate: grilled cheese & tater tots.

Ankeny, St. Luke the Evangelist

Dinner will be served from 4:30-7 p.m. on March 3, 17 and 31. Cost is free-will donation. Alternate: mac & cheese.

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. Alternate: mac and cheese or Alfredo with no shrimp for \$10.

Audubon, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5-7:30 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults \$6/children under 10; free/PK children.

Avoca, St. Mary/St. Patrick, Walnut

Dinners will be served on March 3 and March 17 from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Legion Hall in Avoca. Cost is \$12/adults and \$6 /children age 10 and under.

Carlisle, St. Elizabeth Seton

Dinners will be available for dine in or drive thru on Feb. 24, March 10 and 24 from 5-7 p.m. Cost: suggested donation of \$12. Alternate: mac and cheese.

Chariton, Sacred Heart

Dinners will be served from 5-6:45 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults; \$6/ages 6-17; and free /children ages 5 and under. Alternate: grilled cheese.

Corning, St. Patrick

Dinners will be available for eat in or carry out on Feb. 24 and March 10 from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is free will donation.

All Saints

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$10/person; \$5/Children ages 5-12; free/children age 5 and under. Alternate: mac and cheese. There will be live music.

Basilica of St. John

Dinners will be served from 4:45-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults, \$5/children ages 4-10; free/age 3 and under.

Christ the King

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$13/adults, \$5/children. Alternate: cheese pizza.

Holy Trinity

Dinners will be available for carry out only on Feb. 24, March 3, and 31

OUTSIDE DES MOINES

Council Bluffs, Corpus Christi

Dinners will be available for dine-in or carry out from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost \$14/adults and \$7/children ages 10 and under.

Council Bluffs, St. Patrick

Dinners will be available for dine-in or carryout from 5-7:30 p.m. Cost \$15/adults; \$7/children; free/children ages 5 and under. Alternate: shrimp.

Council Bluffs, St. Peter

Shrimp boil dinners will be served on March 3 and 24 from 5-7:30 p.m. Cost \$20/adults; \$10/children.

Earling, St. Joseph

Dinners will be served on Feb. 24 and March 10 from 5:30-8 p.m. in the parish hall. Cost is \$15/adults; \$10/children ages 2-10; free/ages 2 and under.

Glenwood, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary

Dinners will be available for dine-in or carry out beginning at 5 p.m. until it is gone. Cost is \$13/adults; \$4 children. Alternate: mac & cheese.

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.

Greenfield, St. John

Dinners will be served on March 31 from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is free will donation. Cost: Free-will donation. Alternate: cheese pizza.

Harlan, St. Michael

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. Drive thru is available. Cost is \$15/adults; \$5/children ages 4-10; free/ age 3 and under. Alternate: fish tacos (dine-in only), mac and cheese.

Indianola, St. Thomas Aquinas

Dinners will be available for dine in or take out from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$13/adults; \$6/children ages 6-12; free/children age 5 and under.

Logan, St. Anne

Dinners will be available for dine-in, drive thru or carryout from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$14/adults; \$7/children ages 5-12.

Missouri Valley, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. in the parish hall. Cost is \$10/adults; \$8/senior citizens; \$5/children

DES MOINES

from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost: \$12/adults, \$6/children ages 5-11. Alternate: mac and cheese.

St. Ambrose Cathedral

Lunches will be served from 12-2 p.m. Cost is \$6/person.

St. Anthony

Dinners will be available for dine in or drive thru from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$12/person.

St. Augustin

Dinners will be served on March 3 and 31 from 5:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$15/adults; \$8/children ages 5-15; free/children under 5; \$50/family max. Alternate: cheese quesadillas, grilled cheese sandwiches; mac and cheese.

ages 6+; free/children age 5 and under. Alternate: salad bar; peanut butter & jelly sandwich.

Neola, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$15/adults; \$5/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 \$10/adults; \$8/children; free/ages 5 and under. Alternate: cheese pizza.

Perry, St. Patrick

Dinners will be served on Feb. 24 and March 31 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 available for dine in or carryout on Feb, 24, March 3, 17 and 24 from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults; \$7/children ages 12 and under.

St. Marys, Immaculate Conception

Dinners will be served on March 3, 10, 17 and 24 from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$12.50/adults; \$5/children under 12; \$30/immediate family.

Waukee, St. Boniface

Dinners will be served from 5-7 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults, \$7/children ages 5-10; free/children age 4 and under; \$45/immediate family. Alternate: cheese pizza, spaghetti.

West Des Moines, Sacred Heart

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. in the school. Cost is \$13/adults; \$7/children ages 3-10; free/age 3 and under; \$42 family maximum. Alternate: mac and cheese, cheese pizza, fish tacos.

West Des Moines, St. Francis of Assisi

Dinners are served from 5:30-7:15 p.m. Cost is \$15/adults; \$6/children ages 6-12; free/children under age 5 and under; \$40/family cap. Alternate: cheese pizza and mac and cheese.

Winterset, St. Joseph

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. on Feb. 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24. Cost is free-will offering. Alternate: cheese pizza, mac & cheese.

St. Joseph

Dinners are available for dine in or carry out from 4:30-7 p.m. Cost is \$13/adults; \$5/children; \$40/family max. Alternate: mac and cheese, cheese pizza.

St. Mary of Nazareth

Dinners will be served from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$13/adults, \$25/couple and \$7/children. Alternate: mac and cheese.

St. Theresa

Dinners will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. in the school. Cost is a free will offering. Alternate: shrimp taco, cheese pizza and mac and cheese.

Fish fry date night leads to love



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Tony and Kori Jordan thank a Knights of Columbus fish fry for bringing them together. Their friendship turned to love and marriage. Now, the couple spends much of their time involved in St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs or their Knights of Columbus chapter.

By Anne Marie Cox Staff Writer

So, what's going on Friday night in Council Bluffs, Kori Gruber asked her friend, Tony Jordan. "Fish fry," he said.

He invited her to come over from Omaha for one. She thought it was a dinner out.

But he put her to work helping to serve and clean at the parish event.

And that's how Kori and Tony Jordan began dating – by volunteering at a Lenten fish fry dinner at Corpus Christi Parish, Queen of Apostles site, in Council Bluffs.

"The Knights of Columbus really made us," Tony said. "We were just friends until she came up to work with me at the fish fry. That's what did it. It brought us together."

Their dates included spaghetti meals or chicken dinners served at St. Peter, Our Lady of Carter Lake, St. Patrick and Corpus Christi Parishes.

Tony studied genetics in college, left Iowa to work for an oil company, and eventually returned to Council Bluffs.

Kori went to Holy Cross Catholic preschool in Omaha, Omaha Christian Academy for

kindergarten, Good Shepherd Lutheran grade school and Mercy High School in Omaha. Growing up, she had trouble with clique-type issues.

"Getting involved in the Knights made a difference. I felt like I belonged," she said. "We've had our ups and downs, but you know, now we're at St. Pat's. Father James (Ahenkora) and Father Max (Carson) are phenomenal. Father Jacob (Epstein, at Corpus Christi Parish), as well. If it wasn't for those three priests, I don't think we'd be sitting here. They've been an influential part of our relationship and our marriage."

Kori became Catholic and she and Tony married last June 25. Instead of wedding gifts, they asked for food donations for Micah House. They brought 2,000 pounds of food to the shelter, Tony said.

They both work at Amelia Place and their hobby is volunteering.

"That's the basis of our entire marriage and dating life," Tony said. "We spent all of our time doing volunteer work together and Knights of Columbus work together. That's what's been very, very easy about our marriage: It's work, church and kids." "And we love it!" she said.

Lent is just days away

Continued from page 1

newcomers to the faith to learn more, and longtime practicing Catholics to renew their understanding of the Mass.

Mass nourishes worshippers for all of life's demands and for

the mission Jesus shares with us: to go out to all the world and proclaim the Good News and God's love. Nationally known author and speaker Jon Leonetti, host of Iowa Catholic Radio's "The Catholic Morning Show" draws viewers in as the narrator.

March for Life carries a sense of hope for protection of life

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Pulse Life Advocates took two busloads of Iowans to the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., this time celebrating the U.S. Supreme Court decision that ended a right to an abortion.

"It was kind of a celebration, and also of the understanding that we still have work to do," said Maggie DeWitte, executive director of Pulse, formerly known as Iowans for LIFE.

"Roe v Wade was overturned and that was a good first step. But we have lots of work

to do to continue to create a culture of life and eliminate abortion from our society," she said.

There is a sense of hope within the prolife movement, she added.

"We finally achieved something and yet we still have things that we need to do. But it was such a great first step and it's given people a renewed sense of hope that we can finally achieve a culture of life," DeWitte said.

Phillip Grothus went on the march for the first time with his daughters. The communications coordinator for St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines said he was inspired by their com-

mitment and that of those who attended the march.

"It affected me, seeing it through the lens of my children, how much it affects them, and how much they're willing to stand up for what they believe in," Grothus said. "Seeing that makes me want to step up my game through their leadership."

A group from Dowling Catholic High School in West Des Moines, joined with groups from Assumption High School in Davenport, St. Wenceslaus Church in Iowa City, a group from Boone and students from Iowa State University.

Walking with Moms in Need started at cathedral parish

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

A small group at St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish is working its way through a process called Walking with Moms in Need, an effort to raise awareness of resources for pregnant and parenting moms.

The process, launched by the U.S. bishops last year, helps parishioners know what resources are available so if anyone should learn of a woman facing a pregnancy or a parenting mom in need, the parishioners will know how to help that mom find resources. The resources might be

pregnancy centers, or places for maternity or baby clothes, diapers or food.

The project will take about a year to complete, and then the St. Ambrose core team will need to consider how to get the information they find out to the parishioners, said Marilyn Sharp.

"The purpose is to let our parish members know that there are resources out there so if they know someone who is pregnant or a parenting mom, the parishioners can help those mothers access resources," she said.

Sharp has a background leading another prolife outreach called the Gabriel Project – Des

Moines while she was at Christ the King Parish. For a number of years, she met one-on-one with mothers in need throughout the Des Moines metro area as did other volunteers from several parishes.

Her hope is that the list of resources the St. Ambrose group compiles can be posted on the parish website for all to see and know.

Parishes that are interested in learning more about how to launch the Walking with Moms in Need process for their parishioners should contact Adam Storey at 515-237-5056 or astorey@dmdiocese.org.

Prayer for Life rally



Photos by Anne Marie Cox

Bishop William Joensen (top) and Pulse Life Advocates Executive Director Maggie DeWitte (above) pray that legislative and cultural advances are made to protect life from conception to natural death. They attended a prayer rally at the Iowa Capitol on Feb. 6.



dmdiocese.org/Lent2023

Find family-friendly resources to help you truly live the Lenten season. Find children's activities such as Hide the Alleluiah, or flash cards for learning the Hail Mary, to a family almsgiving project planner, stories about the feast days within Lent and seven meatless soups for Lent. Produced by the Diocese of Des Moines and the St. Joseph Evangelization Center.



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O blessed Joseph who died in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me, I beseech you, the grace of a happy death.

In that hour of dread and anguish, assist me by your presence, and protect me by your power against the enemies of your salvation.

Into your sacred hands, living and dying, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I commend my soul.

Amen

John & Mark Parrish,
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Around the Diocese

Feb. 21 Tuesday

OLIH Special Needs Ministry

ANKENY— RISE is an inclusive ministry that provides young adults and teens with or without disabilities the opportunity to grow in friendship while engaging in service and social activities. RISE meets 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Registration is requested, and inquiries can be directed to Mary Sankey at marys@olih.org or 515-964-3038 ext. 118. Please visit the OLIH special needs webpage <https://www.olih.org/special-needs-1> and click on “RISE-sign-up” to register. The cost is free, and open to all denominations.

Feb. 22 Wednesday

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are fast days for all Catholics age 18-59 which means one regular meal, two snacks not equal to a meal and no meat. All the Fridays are days of abstinence (no meat) for all Catholics age 14 and older.

Feb. 23 Thursday

Nourish for Caregivers

URBANDALE – The Nourish for Caregivers support group will meet at St. Pius X Parish at 6 p.m. Questions? Contact Deacon Dan Maxcy at danm@holytrinitydm.org.

Feb. 25 Saturday

Silent Retreat Days

URBANDALE -- Emmaus House is offering a silent retreat day from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We gather as a group for a few minutes at the beginning and end of the day for a brief period of prayer, reflection, and optional sharing. The rest of the day is yours to spend as you desire in silence in one of our quiet spots to pray, reflect, journal, and rest with God. Cost is

\$40 (scholarships available). To learn more and register, go to our website theemmaushouse.org.

Feb. 26 Sunday

Spaghetti & Meatball dinner

CHURCHVILLE – All you can eat dinner will be served from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Assumption Shrine Hall, 870 West St. in Churchville, located two miles northwest of Martensdale. Cost is \$8/adults and \$4/children ages 5-10. Carryout is available. There will be a silent auction and raffle.

March 4 Saturday

Dingman Peace Award

DES MOINES – Catholic Peace Ministry will have its 25th Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award celebration after a three-year break due to the pandemic. A reception with food and drink begins at 6 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. The honoree will be former Des Moines resident, educator, and social activist Carla Dawson. The keynote speaker is Johnny Zokovitch, the executive director of Pax Christi USA. For more information, contact Kathleen McQuillen at 515-710-9902.

Shamrocks & Shenanigans

DES MOINES -- Join us for 2023 Shamrocks & Shenanigans supporting Catholic Charities at Izaak Walton League. Tickets on sale now shamrock2023.givesmart.com. Music, food and drink, games, prizes, and of course, lots of shenanigans.

Sponsor Couple Training

DES MOINES -- The Diocese is hosting a sponsor couple training at the Catholic Pastoral from 1-4 p.m. Participants can join this training in person or via Zoom. This training will equip couples to assist the en-

gaged as they prepare for marriage. Couples must register for this training, and can do so directly with Adam Storey at 515-237-5056 or astorey@dmdiocese.org. To participate virtually, couples must be registered by Feb. 17 so that materials may be mailed in advance.

Catholic Women's League

DES MOINES -- The Catholic Women's League and Bishop William Joensen will celebrate a Mass of Remembrance at Christ the King Church at 11 a.m. Lunch follows for a small fee. RSVP to Cweyer1030@hotmail.com.

March 9 Thursday

Better than Ok

WEST DES MOINES – All parents with children with disabilities are invited to Sacred Heart Church to hear author and mother Kelly Mantoan as she talks about themes in her book *Better Than Ok – Finding Joy as a Special Needs Parent*. Free family dinner at 5 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m. Register by March 1 for the meal and/or childcare. Contact Sherri at 515-237-5058 or ssimmer@dmdiocese.org.

March 17-19 Friday-Sunday

Book Sale

DES MOINES – Christ the King is having its parish library book sale. Donation only. The times of the sale are: Friday 4:30-7 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. New, near-new, and gently used books. Inventory includes children's, religious (Catholic and non-Catholic), fiction and non-fiction, history, classics, home and garden, inspirational, some poetry, travel, sports, and more. All are welcome. All proceeds go to our parish library.

Happy New Year!



St. Peter Vietnamese Catholic Community in Des Moines celebrated the Lunar New Year, also known as the Tet festival, on Jan. 22. Top photo: Anderson Vi holds the cross and Hien Nguyen holds the candle just before the start of Mass. Bottom left: Canh and Thuan Le take a picture with Bishop William Joensen. Bottom right: Deacon Quan Tong preaches the Gospel.

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.



DCCW annual conference planned for April 22

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is having its annual conference on April 22 featuring keynote speaker Nell O'Leary, from Blessed is She, a Catholic women's ministry.

All Catholic women are invited to the day of prayer, inspirational speakers and Mass with Bishop William Joensen.

Watch for details in The Catholic Mirror, DesMoinesDC-CW.org, or on the Facebook page for Des Moines Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.

Questions? Call Renee Carney at 712-310-2922.

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Living 'Laudato Si' in central Iowa

By Elizabeth Williams
Contributing Writer

Parishioners at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic church in Indianola have taken to heart the theme of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*, *Caring for our Common Home* that encourages dialog about ways to be better stewards of God's creation.

On Jan. 24, the parish's Creation Cares committee hosted a panel of area farmers to discuss practical ways farmers can improve the environment.

"We know that our farmers are the backbone of our state and an invaluable resource for our community," said parishioner Rita Bresnan. "We were really looking forward to hearing their views on practical conservation practices and concerns that they have."

Ranging in age from 33-year-old Drew Tegtmeyer, who farms with his father-in-law, Mike Penick, to 87-year-old Del Johnson who farms with his son, Jeff, the Warren County farmer panel explained how they have switched to no-till farming, installed tile and terraces, planted trees on river banks, built ponds and established pastures on highly erodible land. The other two panel participants, Duane Ohnemus and Bart Brummer farm alone, with part-time family help.

Brummer is a strong proponent of no-till farming.



Photo by Rita Bresnan

A panel of central Iowa farmers shared how they protect the environment and the challenges they face during a gathering at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianola.

"The last time I tilled anything was 30 years ago," said Brummer. No-till farming improves soil structure, adds organic matter, helps the soil absorb rainfall which reduces run-off and erosion, especially on sloped fields, and saves on equipment and fuel.

Another farming practice encouraged by environmentalists to control erosion and build soil structure is planting fall cover crops. But the panelists explained that cover crops currently don't work for all farm operations.

"I tried cover crops before it was cool," said Brummer. "My cows grazed on the cereal rye, but the ground got rutted up by the cows so it was hard to plant. The elevator guys were three days late

[to apply chemicals to kill the rye in the spring]. The rye grew to two and a half feet tall. I finally got the corn planted, but when it got six inches tall, it turned yellow because the rye had tied up all the nitrogen in the soil. I had to spend more money and apply more fertilizer."

From a practicality standpoint, Brummer said, he would need two more employees to make cover crops a viable option on his farm.

"There's a lot of pull for cover crops from groups who are not paying the bills and not taking the risk," Brummer noted.

Ohnemus agreed about the difficulty in using cover crops.

"We can barely get our [corn and soybean] crop out in the fall.

There has to be a break in the harvest to plant a cover crop. I plant some cover crops, but I wouldn't do it without cost-sharing and being able to use it for grazing for my cows."

Tegtmeyer admits farming with cover crops takes extra labor. He and his father-in-law plant 300 acres of cover crops on their 2,200 acres of row crops.

"We own our own sprayer which helps. But rye is competitive with corn so you need to kill it early in the spring," he said. "This year was tough because it was so wet. The rye was tall when the corn was planted and we need to apply extra fertilizer for the corn [which adds to the cost of production]."

Johnson saw the benefit of

cover crops when hauling corn north of Des Moines.

"On that flat land, you could see the black soil covering the snow in the ditches across from fields without a cover crop. But where there was a cover crop, the snow was as white as can be," he said.

Johnson is looking into trying cover crops, but his chemical sales rep advised him to try it on only 20 acres at first and learn to do it right and then go from there.

The panel led to a good discussion on concerns, frustrations and successes on what each of us can do to help improve the environment.

Safe Haven Sunday slated for March 19

From bicycle helmets to child safety locks, families take all sorts of steps to protect their children. This Lent parishes across the Diocese will help families address the challenging, and at times uncomfortable, issue of internet safety.

The Diocese of Des Moines has designated March 19 Safe Haven Sunday, a time when parents can consider how they can talk with their spouses and children about preventing pornography from coming into the home, and how they can take precautions to make their home a safe place.

Safe Haven Sunday focuses on education, prevention and healing related to pornography and internet safety.

"Pornography is a silent scourge that wounds individuals, marriages and families," said Adam Storey, diocesan director of the Marriage and Family Life Office. "It's our hope that, by participating in Safe Haven Sunday, we're giving couples and families an opportunity and resources to address pornography and the struggles it creates so they can live in the freedom, joy and integrity that Jesus wills for us."

The U.S. bishops addressed pornography with a statement in 2015 called "Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography." The document reminds readers that "The Church as a field hospital is called to proclaim the truth of the human person in love, to protect people — especially children —

from pornography, and to provide the Lord's mercy and healing for those wounded by pornography."

There is help for prevention and healing.

The Des Moines Diocese created a web page with a list of resources.

Covenant Eyes provides online filtering and accountability by monitoring computer and mobile devices and screen usage. This independent company provides resources for individuals, families, clergy, churches and communities including articles, courses, videos and e-books.

Integrity Restored is a Catholic ministry that offers help to with those struggling with pornography as well as conferences and other events to help educate and break free.

Resources for women and families include Be Broken Ministries, which offers podcasts, videocasts, webinars and online courses to offer healing for men, women and families. Another is called Educate and Empower Kids, which helps parents and educators with meaningful family communication and intentional parenting.

Got a story
idea?

Who inspires you with the way he/she lives their faith? Who goes the extra mile or has overcome the odds strengthened by their faith?

Contact Anne Marie Cox at 515-237-5057 or acox@dmdiocese.org.



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Drawing young people into deeper communion

Diocesan support smooths planning for NCYC

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Long before teenagers and chaperones climb aboard buses for the biennial trek to India-

napolis for the National Catholic Youth Conference in November, Justin White and Jessica Hernandez are working behind the scenes to make the trip a seamless event.

For the 400-plus participants from more than 25 parishes who are already signed up to go from the Des Moines Diocese, White and Hernandez are in charge of logistics. White is the diocesan director of Youth Ministry and Young Adult Ministry, and Hernandez is the coordinator of Hispanic Youth Ministry.

They're arranging transportation, hotel accommodations, tickets and more.

Contributions to the Annual Diocesan Appeal support their work so local parish youth ministers can focus on laying the catechetical foundation for the teens.

"Preparing for NCYC is about bringing all the parishes together for a common goal, which is providing the youth with an opportunity to encounter Christ," Hernandez said. "No matter what parish your group is from, down there we are all one from the Diocese."

Gathering with 20,000 other teens is a unique experience.

"I think the primary benefit

for the teens is seeing first-hand what the larger Church looks like," White said. "It's a unique setting to see tens of thousands of their peers in adoration, going to reconciliation, and celebrating Mass. It's an experience they won't see anywhere else. NCYC offers teens support and encouragement when the secular world tells them no one believes what they believe."

Putting in the hard work now for a successful trip also benefits youth and parishes in the long run.

"The participants aren't just going there and leaving. They prepared so that they can continue that discipleship for their community when they get back home," White said. "For many, it sparks a journey afterward and that's key."

Parishes are helping youth fundraise now to help families defray the cost.

"We make sure that there are no limitations, especially financial, to youth being able to have a pilgrimage experience," Hernandez said.

By supporting the work of White and Hernandez through contributions to the ADA, parishioners free up parish youth lead-



Cool Corn Guy, played by Paul Wilwerding, represents Iowa and the Diocese of Des Moines at the 2019 NCYC.

ership to focus on formation and growth of the teenagers in their care.

Going to NCYC is a valuable experience for youth.

White said: "There are many different faces in the Church. It opens up horizons for our teens. They experience the Church in new ways while being reminded at the same time it's the same as the church in their hometown."



Representatives of the St. Thomas More Center, home of Catholic Youth Camp, had a booth at the 2019 NCYC in Indianapolis.



Thousands of youth and chaperones gather every other year at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis for the National Catholic Youth Conference.

Preparing disciples for the domestic church

Sponsor couples are the backbone of marriage prep

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

In helping an engaged couple prepare for marriage, a sponsor couple asked the engaged man and woman to separately draw a picture of how they envisioned their life in 10 years.

The woman drew a picture of a house, a driveway and four children.

The man drew a picture of a house, a driveway and a boat.

The exercise was an ice-breaker that illustrated that each person had a different vision for their future and it was something the couple needed to talk about, said Adam Storey, diocesan director of Marriage and Family Life.

Sponsor couples are the backbone of the Diocese's marriage preparation, helping engaged couples prepare for the sacrament. Just about every parish has at least one sponsor couple, though there are a few cluster parishes that share a sponsor couple.

Preparing sponsor couples for their ministry is a service of the Diocese funded through the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

"The sponsor couple program is a real manifestation of

Pope Francis' call to accompaniment," said Storey.

In a series of three to five meetings, the sponsor couple helps the engaged couple talk about issues they may not have discussed, understand the sacramentality of marriage and how the Church views marriage.

"Marriage preparation provides effective catechesis and formation happens in the context of relationships," Storey said. "The sponsor couple is meant to be that place of connection between the engaged couple and the parish. They help cultivate that relationship with the engaged couple so the couple connects with the faith community."

A married couple that feels called to prepare engaged couples and beyond should talk with their pastor. With his approval, they can take part in a training on March 4 at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Des Moines.

The training equips sponsor couples to use a tool called FOCCUS (Facilitate Open, Caring Communication, Understanding and Study). Covering an inventory of 156 questions, FOCCUS prompts discussions on a myriad of important issues couples face throughout their lives together: communication, family

of origin, commitment, sacramentality, finances, raising children, and more.

"It fosters a deeper understanding of marriage and a deeper appreciation of each other," Storey said. "It helps engaged couples identify and navigate the kind of challenges that every couple faces."

The FOCCUS tool helps eliminate what some call the "halo effect" in which engaged couples assume everything they have not talked about, they agree on, he said.

Some sponsor couples gather together to explore enrichment opportunities so that they can grow in their ministry.

Engaged couples wanting to marry in a church are encouraged to contact the pastor nine months prior to the wedding.

"Effective marriage preparation requires an investment of time, of attention, of doing the work to communicate about important things," Storey said. "We ask them to invest in this because we think it matters and we think it will help them thrive."

To register for the sponsor couple training, contact Storey at 515-237-5056 or email astorey@dmdiocese.org. Register by Feb. 17 to participate by Zoom.

Inviting and welcoming people

All are welcome

The Diocese of Des Moines is assisting parishes to invite and welcome people with special needs into their faith communities through the diocesan Disability Ministry.

"At the heart of this ministry is the gospel truth of the dignity of every human being made in the image and likeness of God," said Bishop William Joensen.

One example and model for inviting is a sensory Mass. Last May, one was held at St. Ambrose Cathedral, and last October one was held at Sacred Heart Church in Chariton.

At the Mass, which was open to all people including those with special needs, tools

were provided such as picture missals, silicone rosaries that could be used for dual purposes of prayer and fidgeting, and noise-cancelling headphones.

All parishes are invited to adapt a sensory friendly Mass on one of the normal weekend Masses on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Another example of the diocesan effort to help families feel welcome is the upcoming presentation by Kelly Mantoan, a Catholic author, wife and mother of five children, two with profound disabilities. Mantoan will be at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines on March 9. A free dinner will be at 5 p.m. and presentation at 6 p.m. with free childcare during the presentation.

Register by March 1 for the meal and childcare by emailing ssimmer@dmdiocese.org or calling 515-237-5058.

Mantoan penned *Better Than Ok – Finding Joy as a Special Needs Parent*. She'll

talk about finding support and joy with special needs children.

The Annual Diocesan Appeal supports this effort through the work of Patty Origer, coordinator for Persons with Disability Ministry. She helps parishes bring a perspective of disability to their faith communities and collaborate to find better ways of welcoming and belonging. One in four adults in the United States has some type of disability, she said.

Persons with disabilities "want to belong. They want to become part of the faith. They want to share their gifts," Origer said. "It's essential that they are able to fully and actively participate in our faith communities. We are truly one body in Christ."



Patty Origer



To register for the Kelly Mantoan event, use this QR code.

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28 international priests with US citizenship and immigration services

22,662 employees and volunteers undergo screening and training to ensure a safe environment for our children

28% CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

29% DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATION

80 parishes across 23 counties with ministry and administrative services

1,760 employees with managed benefit plans

Consecrated religious renew vows



Bishop William Joensen blesses consecrated religious priests and sisters who renewed their vows on Feb. 9. The Diocese is blessed with a number of sisters born, raised and who ministered in central and southwest Iowa as well as international priests and sisters who serve here.

Eucharistic Revival preacher shares his passion for the Truth



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

In the spirit of the national Eucharistic Revival initiative, high school teacher, author and speaker Anthony Digmann, from the Archdiocese of Dubuque, shared his enthusiasm and passion for history and the true meaning of the Eucharist Feb. 6-7 at St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines.

Genocide survivor to share message of forgiveness, hope

In 1994, members of the Hutu tribe in Rwanda took up arms against the Tutsi tribe.

In just 100 days, they killed more than 800,000 Tutsis using only spears, clubs and machetes.

It was genocide, and few Tutsis survived.

Immaculee Ilibagiza was one of the few.

In the years since then, Ilibagiza has come to grips with what happened, and what she can do about it. She wrote a book, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Genocide*, and has been telling her story in venues around the world.

She will bring her message of faith and forgiveness to a daylong retreat at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Earling in Shelby County on April 1. All are welcome to attend.

Doors open at 8 a.m. with the presentation beginning at 9 a.m.

The parishes of Shelby County are working together to offer this opportunity.

Karen Chamberlain, of St. Joseph Parish in Earling, read about how Our Lady of Kibeho had warned of danger if Rwanda would not open its heart to God and embrace his love. She feels the world is not listening to God's message for today's time and perhaps hearts will open by hearing Ilibagiza's story.

"We need to listen," Chamberlain said.

She and her husband went to Nebraska to hear Ilibagiza and, while there, they saw five women from various parishes of Shelby County there as well. Together, they agreed to try to bring Ilibagiza to their community.

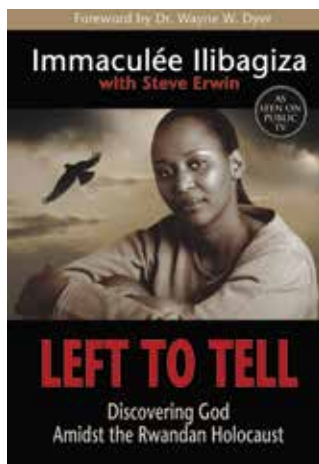
"They were great and fully willing to help," Chamber-



Immaculee Ilibagiza

lain said.

To purchase tickets, go to immaculee.com. On the right top margin, click on Shops/Events, then click on Ilibagiza's photo next to Earling, Iowa retreat. Cost is \$57 per person, two for \$76 and includes lunch at the Earling hall. Free golf cart transportation will be provided between the church and the lunch site for those who need assistance.



Pax Christi director slated for Des Moines peace, justice talk

Johnny Zokovitch had been the executive director of Pax Christi, a Catholic peace and justice movement, for only a few months and was scheduled to come to Des Moines for the annual Bishop Dingman Peace Award in 2020.

But the pandemic closed down public gatherings and the celebration was put on hold.

After a three-year hiatus, the Bishop Dingman Peace Award celebration will return on March 4 at Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines.

Longtime peace and justice advocate Carla Dawson will receive the Bishop Dingman Peace Award.

Keynote speaker Zokovitch leads the U.S. branch of Pax

Christi after having worked in Brussels with Pax Christi International as the senior communications officer.

For nearly 15 years, he lived at and co-directed the Gainesville, Florida Catholic Worker House, serving the homeless, addicted, impoverished, and mentally ill.

Zokovitch holds a master's degree in theology from the University of Notre Dame.

The event begins at 6 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres and the presentation begins at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$50 each and can be obtained at the door or by emailing catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com or 515-803-1152. Proceeds will support local peace and justice efforts through the independent Catholic Peace Ministry.

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Catholic Schools Week



Catholic Schools Week celebrated the top-notch education students receive in a faith-based environment. Top photo: Bishop William Joensen celebrates Mass with students and staff at Dowling Catholic High School. Above left, teachers at Sacred Heart School in West Des Moines get ready to cheer on students. Above middle: Students at St. Joseph School in Des Moines dressed up for career day as a police officer and a doctor. Above right: Students at St. Malachy School in Creston wrote postcards to area veterans.

Long-sought bill helps nonpublic school families

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

The Iowa legislature approved a proposal to create education savings accounts to help fund nonpublic school education.

Gov. Kim Reynolds signed the Student First Bill on Jan. 24 surrounded by supporters of school choice.

“It is with great excitement that we celebrate a win for children in Iowa – the ability for families to choose the school that best fits their child’s needs,” said Donna Bishop, Des Moines diocesan superintendent of schools.

Parents who opt to enroll their children in an accredited nonpublic school will receive funding based on the average of what the legislature decides public schools will receive per pupil, estimated at \$7,600, said Tom Chapman, executive director of the Iowa Catholic Conference, which lobbied for the bill. This applies both to those who already have students in private schools and those who transfer their children to private schools.

The funds will be transferred from the state’s general fund directly into a special state savings account, said Chapman. The parent will use the account

to pay approved vendors such as accredited nonpublic schools. Balances in student accounts will remain in their account until high school graduation or age 20.

The new law will be phased in over three years beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

- The first year, the program is open to all kindergarten students, all public school students and all private school students at or below 300 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level, or an income of less than \$90,000 for a family of four.

- The second year, 2024-2025, the program would be open to all kindergarten students, public school students and private school students at or below 400 percent of the 2024 federal poverty level, which will be updated in January 2024.

- In year three, 2025-2026 and beyond, the program will be open to all kindergarten-12th grade students in Iowa regardless of income.

The legislation will not change the core mission of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines. The schools will be collaborative communities of spiritual formation and academic excellence where students grow in faith and wisdom and emerge as responsible citizens dedicated

to lifelong discipleship.

“The Student First Bill was written to maintain the independence of our Catholic schools,” said Superintendent Bishop. “This bill will not restrict or make changes to the current Iowa core and faith-based curriculum we offer today as accredited schools in the state of Iowa. Faith will continue at the core of all we do and who we are as we remain rooted in Christ.”

There will still be a need for the Catholic Tuition Organization grants and tuition assistance provided to families through the Diocese.

Donors to the CTO are encouraged to continue to support tuition assistance for families that want a Catholic education for their children, and families in need of financial help are encouraged to apply. There were 397 donors who contributed more than \$3.4 million in 2021 for children’s school tuition this academic year. Thirty seven percent of the student population in Des Moines Diocese’s Catholic schools received tuition assistance this school year.

For more information, visit <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/education-savings-accounts>.

Child care center awarded



Sheryl K. Johnson Child Care Center Director Don George and Jessica McGinnis with some of the children in their care.

The Sheryl K. Johnson Child Care Center, at St. Albert Catholic School, was selected for the 2022 Best of Council Bluffs Award in the day care center category by the Council Bluffs award program.

Each year, the award program identifies companies that it believes have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and the community.

“We’re honored to have

been selected for this award,” said Don George, director of the early childhood care center. “This award is shared by all of the staff. We appreciate what they do every day to make everybody’s lives a little better – getting parents to work and kids to learn and grow.”

St. Albert Catholic President Anne Rohling said, “We are thrilled for our Sheryl K. Johnson Child Care Center to be recognized for what we already know – that they provide an incredible service to our community.”

Tuition Assistance Available!

The first qualification for families to receive tuition assistance is income. Compare your income with the “maximum income” for your family size as shown in the chart below. If your household income is LESS THAN the amount shown, you meet the current financial eligibility requirement for the Catholic Tuition Organization (CTO) or funds available through the NEW Diocesan Tuition Assistance (DTA) established with the Ignite Campaign.

*Family Size	**CTO MAXIMUM Income	**NEW DTA MAXIMUM Income
2	\$ 78,880	\$ 98,600
3	\$ 99,440	\$124,300
4	\$120,000	\$150,000
5	\$140,560	\$175,700
6	\$161,120	\$201,400
7	\$181,680	\$227,100
8	\$202,240	\$252,800
	Add \$20,560 for each additional dependent	Add \$25,700 for each additional dependent

* Family size includes parent(s)/guardian(s) and total number of dependents plus others living in household
** Families/households are eligible for tuition assistance if their total income is at or below the above listed maximum income levels as reported on Line 9 of federal income tax form

Volunteer “English as a second language” teachers needed

Volunteer English as a second language teachers are needed to increase English proficiency in the Des Moines community. Patience and kindness are more important than experience.

Contact Jim Supina at 515-961-2026 for more information.

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The benefits to knowing our limits

The hours of 6-8 p.m. are often the most challenging of my day.

During this time, my family is often cleaning up after supper, I'm mulling over one or another work project that I ought to leave at the office, my five children are proposing various games we should play, and I know that the clock is ticking before I have to enter the fray of the dreaded bedtime, when there will be tears (only occasionally mine).

While I'm in this window of time I'm usually lamenting my lack of energy, or the plethora of incomplete tasks, or daydreaming about the blessed peace of 8:30 p.m. But lately, I've tried to see these challenges in a new light. The hours of 6-8 p.m. are when I experience most acutely my limitations.

Marriage and Family Life

By Adam Storey



Slowly but surely, I'm trying to cultivate gratitude for these limits and see the gift that limits truly are.

Being limited (by time, by ability, by energy) often doesn't feel like a gift, and yet it is through limits that we can discover the foundational meaning and dignity of our lives.

While we're often tempted to think that meaning and dignity come from "do-

ing," limits remind us that our true value is rooted in "being." Just as I delight in my children, not because of what they do but because of who they are, so God delights in me.

And the more time I spend trying to earn God's approval, the harder it is to see the fact that he cherishes me independently of my list of accomplishments.

Being limited also teaches us to rely on others, which in turn helps us recognize that we are made for communion. As Christians, we are very good at helping others but I worry that sometimes we fail to accept help, to be vulnerable and to admit our weakness, and to seek support from others.

Parenting small children has certainly taught my wife and me to rely on each

other, and our love grows in service, both given and received.

I can't say that I've perfectly embraced my limitations, but I have slowly begun to recognize them as the gift they are. I've seen how limits help me recognize my true dignity, and draw me into communion. All of us have limits, and if you are like me you can chafe under them.

My prayer this Lent is that we can all appreciate them a bit more, and recognize the deeper meaning behind them.

Adam Storey is the diocesan director of the Marriage and Family Life Office. He can be reached at astorey@dmdiocese.org or 515-237-5056.

Heroes of Ukraine appreciate our Diocese's donations

By Father Jim Kirby

As we left the van and made our way back into the Premier Hotel Aurora in downtown Kharkiv, the sounds of artillery could still be heard in the distance and sometimes in the not too far distance. The Premier Hotel is a beautiful and elegant hotel, but sadly, due to the war, it stands empty. Tourism is not on anyone's mind as this once beautiful city has been sucked into this horrible, evil war.

Earlier, we had left all of the suitcases full of donations in the corner of the hotel lobby. Joining me in the van were members of the Rotary Club Kyiv-Sophia and also members of the Rotary Club Kharkiv-Nadiya. We had been delivering other supplies to the town of Saryi Saltiv, located an hour east of Kharkiv and 30 kilometers south of the Russian border. The town had been practically leveled by shelling and most of the population, those who could, had fled.

As we gathered in the lobby, three members of the Ukrainian military joined us, friends of the Rotary Club and representatives of Ukrainian military who had come to collect the donations of thermal socks, sleeping bags and other essentials donated for the soldiers at the front. Most of the donations given to the soldiers were from members of the parishes St. Anne in Logan, St. Patrick in Missouri Valley, the Emmaus House and others.

The three soldiers at that time were on a short leave from the fighting at the front, which wasn't all that far away. They came to Kharkiv to relax a little before heading back to the battle. For me, it was not easy to relax in Kharkiv, being in the shadows of the destroyed building and the constant sound of the battle ever present. I suppose, compared to the front, Kharkiv must seem

like a peaceful oasis.

After loading the donations into a military vehicle, the soldiers, members of the Rotary Club and myself, sat down in one of the rooms off the lobby of the hotel for coffee and conversation. The three soldiers were impressive with their physical size, their full military uniforms, body armor and attached accessories. But most of all, they were impressive with their quiet confidence and strength. They always carried their rifles, AK74s and their vests were filled with ammunition clips. They were stoic, with the standard 1,000-yard stare that most soldiers acquired after being in battle.

The members of the Rotary Club and soldiers conversed in Ukrainian at first, but I didn't mind. I was just honored to be with the soldiers and members of the Rotary Club. One of the soldiers, a drone engineer, spoke to me in broken English.

"Ask me anything," he offered. I asked him about the rotation they served regarding how much time at the front versus time away.

He asked me what the Americans thought of Ukraine. I said we are learning and we are learning to appreciate the situation with the war and the need for American support. He asked me about American politics and those who opposed Ukraine. Trying to be diplomatic, I explained that there are those who question the wisdom of financially supporting Ukraine, but the majority of Congress and the president supported Ukraine. I told him how I felt and how much I love Ukraine.

As the conversation went on and became more relaxed, there was a sense of mutual appreciation, a connection in a common goal, a concern for each other's wellbeing.

I admit it was rather emotional say-



Father Jim Kirby, on the far right, delivered donations to Ukraine recently.

ing good-bye to these brave defenders. We looked each other in the eye as we shook hands and I said "thank you" and "God bless you" to each soldier, wondering about their survival as they went back to the frontline. The Ukrainian people are so proud of their defenders who, against all odds, were not only standing toe to toe with the presumed second largest military in the world but even more, advancing against them. I had a similar feeling being with these defenders. I felt admiration, appreciation and just being proud to be with them even for a short time.

I hope that the support for Ukraine will grow in the United States and I hope the people of our country grow to appreciate and love this country the way I have come to. Judging by the reaction of the pa-

rishioners in their donations and the generosity of friends and family, it seems like support is growing. I hope so. For me, it is a no brainer and fundamental to being a disciple of Jesus: the basic caring for those in need, the least of God's Kingdom.

Once we had delivered all of our donations, it was time for the Kyiv folks and me to head for the train station for our six-hour train ride back to Kyiv. Another sign of why Ukraine will win the war is that even in the midst of horrible evil and violent destruction, the trains still run on time.

Father Jim Kirby is a priest of the Diocese of Des Moines.

Bread of life

The book of Deuteronomy is one of those books in the Old Testament known mostly by its name but many of us could hardly say what it is about. Deuteronomy is literally 'the second law' because it is when Moses reminded the people of God's faithfulness to them and his desire for them to follow his commandments in covenant with him. This stands in contrast to their former generation who broke their covenant with God with unbelief and disobedience to his commandments

In chapter 30 of Deuteronomy, having recalled the commandments of the Lord, Moses, speaking for God, offered the people two choices: life or death; and they must make a decision between the two. Life and death in this Classical Period were realities taken much more seriously and less literally. Life was not sim-

Food for the Journey

By John Huynh



ply being alive, but it was living out one's existence in fruitfulness, in blessing, and in the protection of God. Death was not simply a physical end to one's worldly life, but it was living out one's existence in a barren land, time, and void of God's blessings and favors. Life was a blessing; death was a curse.

And so Moses offered life and death to the people, and he urged them to choose

life – not only for their sake, but for the sake of their children (Deut. 30:19-20). The choice was both restrictive and urgent. It was restrictive in the sense that they had to make a choice between the two; there was no third option. It was urgent because every action they made thereon would be an action that either drew them toward life or pushed them toward death. Most importantly, the choice was theirs and not God's to make. God's faithfulness was never a problem; it was the fickleness of the Israelites that constantly led them to unfaithfulness to God.

Jesus, often seen as the new Moses, offered those following him these very same options. However, he was not just offering the Law as Moses did, he offered his very flesh. He told them that he is the Bread of Life (Jn 6:35) and in order for

them to choose life they must partake in this eating of his flesh (Jn 6:51). Some of them chose Life while others abandoned him for it was too difficult a thing to believe (Jn 6:60, 66).

But Jesus did not simply offer his flesh to those of his time; he has offered himself now and until he comes again. He offers himself to us now in the sacrifice of the Mass so that in consuming his flesh and blood we are choosing life over death. Like the Israelites and Jesus' disciples we, too, have a choice to make. May we be people who choose life and come to consume the Bread of Life weekly, if not daily.

John Huynh is the diocesan director of Faith Journey. He can be reached at jhuynh@dmdiocese.org or 515-237-5006.

The power of just one Hail Mary

My Mom has always been my go-to for my prayer requests.

In fact, I have this laughable phrase I say to her when I really need help: "It's time to break out the *big beads*, Madre!" (Big beads, as in, major rosary work.)

It's no coincidence that our heavenly mother, the Virgin Mary, is also my go-to for my spiritual needs.

And so when I recently stumbled across this video on social media about the power of just *one* Hail Mary, I was so astounded I just had to share this story.

The priest telling the story, Father Joe Freedy of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, is seated in the pew of a church while sharing the dramatic experience of his friend, John, on camera.

John is "just a normal guy – just a really good dude," said Father Freedy.

The video cuts to John jogging down the street while the priest continues telling the story.

"He's jogging around a neighborhood he doesn't usually jog around," the priest said. "And he sees an ambulance in somebody's driveway. And he's a good guy, so

Faith that Conquers

By Kelly Mescher Collins



he says: 'Should I stop? Should I see if everything is OK?'

"And then he just thought – I'm not a doctor, I don't know whose driveway this is."

Recounting the story later to the priest, John said, "Father Joe, I just kept running and I prayed one Hail Mary. And I didn't think anything of it."

The video again shows John running down the street with voiceover from Father Freedy.

"The next week he's jogging around the same neighborhood," Father Freedy said. "And he hears a woman call for him."

John kept running, Father Freedy said, because he did not know anyone in that neighborhood. Finally, the woman

catches John's attention and approaches him with some life-altering words.

"You saved my life," the woman said to an incredulous John, who had never laid eyes on her before.

"No, I recognize your face," she continued. "Last week, I was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance. And I was dying. And I *knew* I was dying. And Jesus appeared to me and he held out his hand. And your face was on the palm of his hand. And Jesus said, 'You were gonna die, but because of the prayer of this man, you're gonna live.'"

"So that's the power of one Hail Mary," Father Freedy said with a chuckle.

The video cuts to John on the street in his running clothes.

"What a jolt that was for not only my prayer life, but my family's prayer life," John said, his voice cracking with emotion. "Our outlook on prayer itself. And especially prayers of intercession. When somebody asks you to pray for them or you volunteer to pray for somebody, you never know. You never expect how it's going to work out. Because in the end, it's always

God's will."

"But in a case like this," John continued, "to have something that dramatic and profound – somebody come up to you and tell you something like that was more than enough to take me back and draw me even that much more closer to praying to the Blessed Mother. Because as we all know, she is the direct line of intercession to her son Jesus Christ in answering all prayers for everyone."

You can watch this video, called "The Rosary Series: The Power of One Hail Mary" on YouTube or their website, TheRosarySeries.com, which offers a whole host of material and videos.

If you're still looking for a way to make this Lenten season impactful, here's one powerful option.

Kelly Mescher Collins is a multimedia journalist for the Diocese of Des Moines. She can be reached at kcollins@dmdiocese.org or 515-237-5054.

Let the light of Christ radiate into the world

Our world seems so dark and gloomy these days.

What difference does the light that may come from me make?

The light the Scriptures speak of is the Light of God's presence in us. Each of us possesses this light; and each of us has the responsibility to share this light with others.

We make this light known when we live as God wants us to live. Micah, a prophet who was a contemporary of Isaiah, named our task simply; act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with God (Micah 6).

Isaiah helps us know how we can do that; share our bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed, clothe the naked; in essence, live the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Yes, when we do these things, not

Dr. Cheryl

By Cheryl Fournier, Ph.D.



only does our light shine, but the Light and Love of God shines through us!

Through our baptism we share in the Light of Christ. When the candle given to our godparents or directly to us is lighted from the Paschal Candle, we are indeed handed a share of the Light of Christ.

It is not a light that we are to hold on to for our own sake. Rather, it is given to us so that we may share it with others.

In the Gospel from Matthew, we are told not to put our light under a bushel bas-

ket. Sadly, sometimes we do...we hide the love of God that dwells in us.

For some reason we shield it from the view of others. Perhaps we lose sight of the power of that light in us; perhaps we forget the power of that light. Sometimes it is difficult to fathom how any light I may possess can make a difference for anyone else.

Then, I remember the power of one candle lit in the darkness of night. It can lead and guide one along the way. One single candle can add warmth to a cold, stalled car, or the tent of a homeless person.

And, when single candles are joined with other candles, the light and the warmth are even greater.

As lay members of the Church, our task, our responsibility, our vocation is to be the Light of Christ in and for the world in which we live. We are called to make

the world holy by our living in it. And we do this by living out the works of Christ; feeding the poor, tending the widow(er) and orphan, supplying the needs of those who are without.

Let's let the Light of Christ shine through us in all our works of mercy! Let us reach out to each other with justice, tenderness, and humility. And in the words of the song our children know so well, "Put it under a bushel, NO! I'm gonna let it shine! Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!"

Cheryl Fournier, Ph.D., is the pastoral associate director at St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale. Her column is based on readings from Feb. 5. Isaiah 58:7-10; Psalm 112:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Matthew 5:13-16

To fall in love

Father Ron Rolheiser



To fall in love! We use the expression to cover many things. You can fall in love with a baby, a sports team, a city, a job, or another person. However, we reserve the prime analogate for this expression for one thing, emotional infatuation, that intoxicating feeling we first get when we meet someone who we sense as a soulmate.

Iris Murdoch once wrote that the world can change in fifteen seconds because that's how quickly you can fall in love with someone. She's right, and falling in love emotionally can literally paralyze us with a grip so strong that even death seems preferable to losing the one with whom we have fallen in love. Countless heartaches, broken hearts, depressions, clinical breakdowns, suicides, murders, and murder-suicides testify to this. Emotional infatuation can be a deadly addiction, the most powerful cocaine on the planet. Where does it come from? Heaven or hell? And, what's

its meaning?

Ultimately, God and nature are its author and that tells us that it is a good thing. We are built for this to happen to us. Moreover, it is a healthy thing, if properly understood, both in its intoxicating power and in its innate failure to be a sustaining power in love.

What happens when we fall in love so powerfully with someone? Are we really in love with that person or are we more in love with being in love and the feelings this brings us? As well, are we really in love with that person or are we in love with an image of him or her we have created for ourselves, one that projects a certain godliness on to that other?

Let me risk some answers. Imagine a man falling deeply in love with a woman. Initially, the feelings can be overpowering and literally paralyze him emotionally. However, inside of all this, a certain question begs to be asked: with whom or with what is he really in love? His feelings? The archetype of femininity the woman is carrying? His image of her? She herself?

In reality, he is in love with all of these: his feelings, his image of her, she herself, and the divine feminine she is carrying. All of that is of one piece inside of his experience. As well, all of this can be healthy at this stage of love.

God invented emotional infatuation, just as God invented honeymoons. We are not meant to be drawn to each other by cold analytics alone. But, this kind of falling in love is an initiatory stage in love (albeit a delightful one) that needs to be understood exactly for what it is, an initiatory stage, nothing more, one that invites us into something deeper. Emotional infatuation is not yet a mature stage in love. Unless one dies in its grip, as did Romeo and Juliet, it will one day lose its hold on us and leave us disillusioned. When Iris Murdoch said that we can fall in love in fifteen seconds, she might also have added that, sadly, we can also fall out of love in fifteen seconds. Emotional infatuation can be that ephemeral, both in its birth and in its dying.

So falling in love (in this emotional way) comes fraught with certain dangers. First, there is the adolescent proclivity to identify this with deep love itself. Consequently, when the powerful emotional and psychosexual feelings let go, the person easily concludes that he or she is no longer in love and moves on. Next, more subtly, there is this danger. When we are in this initial gripping stage of love, our image of the other carries with it a certain godliness. What's meant by that?

St. Augustine coined this timeless dictum: You have made us for yourself,

Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Hence, nothing in life can ever really be enough for us. We are always restless, always yearning for something more. However, in this initial phase of love, when we have fallen into the grip of emotional infatuation, for a time the other is enough for us. That's why Romeo and Juliet could die happy. At this stage of love, they were enough for each other.

However, the hard truth is that infatuation does not last. The other person, no matter how wonderful he or she might actually be, is not God and can never be enough (and we are unfair to him or her when we unconsciously expect them to be enough). For a while, they are able to carry that godliness for us, but that illusion of godliness will eventually break and we will realize that this is just a person, one person, wonderful perhaps, but finite, limited, and not divine. That realization (which is ultimately meant to be the ground for mature love) can, if not understood, jeopardize or sour a relationship.

God invented falling in love! In it, we get a little foretaste of heaven, though, as experience tells us, that is not without its dangers.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.

Legislative roundup

By Tom Chapman
Contributing Writer

There are a number of bills being considered at the Iowa legislature that the Iowa Catholic Conference – the public policy arm of the Catholic Church in Iowa – is watching.

E-verify

House Study Bill 105 has passed a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee. The ICC opposes the bill, which would mandate the use of E-verify by businesses in Iowa. E-verify is a federal program intended to make sure that only those authorized to work in the U.S. can do so.

The overall goal is good, but the U.S. bishops' position is that a mandatory expansion should only take place if undertaken in the context of positive immigration reform. This would include: legalization for undocumented persons, a reduction in error rates in government databases, a reduction in opportunities for employer misuse of the program, and fair and meaningful opportunities for workers to correct false positives.

The ICC encourages you to contact your Senator in opposition to the Iowa Senate's version of the bill, Senate File 108.

Pro-life

A couple of bills supporting

the adoption process are advancing in the Iowa House.

House File 67 passed out of Ways and Means subcommittee. The bill increases the state Adoption Tax Credit from the current maximum of \$5,000 for each qualified adoption to \$7,500 for tax year 2024 and to \$10,000 after that. In 2021, 220 tax credits were claimed for adoptions.

House File 114 was passed unanimously by the House Judiciary Committee and will be eligible for debate on the floor. The proposal requires employers to treat adoptive parents in the same manner as biological parents for family leave purposes.

The ICC opposes a section of HSB 91 legalizing over-the-counter contraception. Different types of birth control pills contain powerful levels of hormones and are currently prescribed according to a women's health profile. Under this new proposal, a pharmacist would rely on a questionnaire that may not be answered accurately by the patient, which could make it more difficult to adequately assess a patient's risk.

MOMS program

House Study Bill 91 passed a House subcommittee last week. The good news is it includes the Iowa MOMS program (More Options for Maternal Support), which would help new mothers through pregnancy counseling

centers. Opponents of the pregnancy counseling centers called them "fake women's health clinics" but ICC staff defended them as places doing good work with people in crisis.

We encourage legislators to provide \$2 million for the Iowa MOMS initiative and appropriate additional funds for the governor's proposed fatherhood engagement program.

SNAP benefits

The bills creating a new problematic asset test for food stamps (HF 3 and SSB 1105) are being reviewed by key legislators both in the House and Senate. We are hopeful a better solution can be found for any concerns regarding the verification of a person's eligibility for benefits.

Under the original proposals, households with more than one vehicle would be especially at risk of being kicked off SNAP (food stamps). Having a vehicle can be the difference between finding employment or not, especially in rural areas of the state without public transit. Even children's savings accounts would count toward the asset limit for the household.

For an update on legislation or news from the Iowa Catholic Conference, go to IowaCatholicConference.org.

Tom Chapman is the executive director of the Iowa Catholic Con-

Bishop sentenced to 26 years in prison

MEXICO CITY (OSV News) -- Bishop Rolando Álvarez was convicted and sentenced by a Nicaraguan court to 26 years in prison Feb. 10 -- barely a day after the outspoken prelate defied President Daniel Ortega by refusing to go into exile.

The court convicted Bishop Álvarez on charges of conspiracy to undermine national integrity and spreading false information after a secret trial in which he was denied a lawyer of his choosing.

He was also stripped of his Nicaraguan citizenship and prohibited from holding elected office or a public position.

Bishop Álvarez was not present as Judge Octavio Rothschild delivered the decision Feb. 10 over state-controlled media. The bishop's conviction follows the Ortega regime sending 222 political prisoners to the United States, including six clergymen also convicted of conspiracy and spreading false information. Bishop Álvarez refused to board a Feb. 9 flight carrying more than 200 political prisoners to the United States, according to Ortega,

Capital campaign eclipses \$35 million

Continued from page 1

together to meet the needs of the Catholic Church in southwest Iowa now and in the future.

"Last year we worked hard to emphasize how Ignite! and the ADA are different endeavors. The ADA funds the annual needs of our people, parishes and ministries, whereas the Ignite! Campaign is a long-term investment in the future," Kenney said. "It's

been incredible to see how the Diocese has responded with open hearts to these initiatives."

Fundraising for the Ignite! Campaign will continue through the end of March with a focus on seeking support from foundations, sweep mailings, and the ongoing campaign at St. Pius X.

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

Sembrando Semillas de Ciencia y de Fe

Continued from page 2

"Los hombres que participan en horticultura nos dicen que si se escribe una palabra en una firme semilla de almendra y se coloca de nuevo en su cascarón, envuelta cuidadosamente y se planta, cualquier fruto que surja de ese árbol tendrá la misma palabra escrita en él. Por mí mismo... no puedo aprobar los métodos de aquellos que tratan reformar a una persona comenzando con cosas exteriores, tales como influencias, vestuario, o el peinado. Por el contrario, a mí me parece que debemos comenzar por adentro. 'El convertirte hacia

mí de todo corazón, Dijo Dios. 'Hijo mío, dame tu corazón'.

Por esta razón... he deseado antes que nada el grabar e inscribir en su corazón esta santa y sagrada máxima, ¡VIVA JESÚS! Estoy seguro que su vida, la cual viene del corazón así como el árbol de almendra viene de su semilla, luego de producir todas sus acciones – las cuales son su fruto – estará inscrita y grabadas con esta palabra sagrada de salvación."

Que podamos ofrecer al Señor Jesús la oportunidad de inscribir su palabra personal en nuestros corazones ocultos esta Cuares-

ma. Que su llamado a convertirnos hacia una oración más devota, en sacrificio personal traducido en actos de caridad que apoyen a los demás y en ayunos de frívolos desperdicios de tiempo y energía, nos inspiren a adoptar una regla de vida más disciplinada y devota que se adapte a nuestras propias demandas vocacionales. Entonces, cuando llegue la Pascua, ¡que nuestra híbrida integración espiritual de mente y corazón puedan confirmar a algunos y atraer a otros hacia la fe y dar abundante fruto para aquellos en nuestro círculo de vida, nuestras parroquias y nuestra Diócesis!

Victim Assistance Advocate

The diocese's Victim Assistance Advocate, Sam Porter, is a staff member at Polk County Victim Services. He helps people who are or were minors when they were victims of abuse by the clergy through a complaint process. He also helps them seek support and counseling services. Porter can be reached at 515-286-2024 or Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov.

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.

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For more information on dates for later shows in Iowa, visit our Facebook page at Callahan Promotions, Inc. 563-357-1986.

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U.S. Catholics urged to aid, pray for quake victims

WASHINGTON (OSV News) -- Reacting to "heart-breaking scenes" of death and destruction in Turkey and Syria, the chairman of the U.S. bishops' international policy committee urged U.S. Catholics and all people of goodwill to pray for the victims of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that rocked the two countries Feb. 6 and to give generously to those in need.

According to The Associated Press Feb. 13, the death toll had risen more than 33,000 and about 75,000 others were injured.

"I join with our Holy Father Pope Francis in praying for the souls of the departed as we mourn the loss of so many lives," Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, said in a Feb. 8 statement.

"We pray for those injured and the many others suffering, and we also pray for the safety and protection of emergency personnel working to save lives and tending to those in need in the wake of this disaster," he said.

Rescue workers were still "trying to free people from rubble and those alive are facing freezing conditions as they try to salvage their belongings and seek shelter," Bishop Malloy said. "In a region that has experienced much conflict and hardship, these heartbreaking scenes call out to us to provide aid and assistance to our brothers and sisters in need."

The bishop urged U.S. Catholics "to give generously" to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) to



OSV News photo/Kemal Aslan, Reuters

A member of a Syrian family carries children in Kahramanmaras, Turkey on Feb. 9, after his house in Turkey was destroyed in the deadly Feb. 6 earthquake. The family had moved to Turkey sometime after their house in Syria was destroyed during the war.

support their efforts to provide emergency humanitarian relief.

"I also call upon the U.S. government to provide much-needed assistance and to work in conjunction with Catholic aid organizations to deliver effective assistance to those most in need," he said.

CNEWA, an agency of the Holy See, is looking to aid over

2,000 families in Syria's Aleppo and Hama regions -- already long ravaged by conflict -- by providing bedding, food, medicines, infant formula, diapers and clothing. Donations can be made online at <https://cnewa.org/work/emergency-syria>; by phone at 800-442-6392; or by mail to CNEWA headquarters, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022. CRS, the U.S. Catholic Church's overseas relief and development agency, also is accepting donations through its website, crs.org. CRS is partnering with Caritas Turkey, Caritas Syria and Caritas Anatolia -- members of Caritas Internationalis, a global confederation of Catholic relief organizations -- to shelter displaced victims while ensuring access to food, clean water and hygiene supplies.

At least one U.S. archdiocese has announced its parishes will take up a special collection for quake victims -- the Boston Archdiocese.

"Recognizing the growing need for assistance," a Feb. 9 archdiocesan statement said, Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley has asked that the collection be taken at Masses during the weekend

of Feb. 18-19. The "funds raised will help to provide safe shelter, and access to food, clean water and hygiene supplies" through CNEWA and CRS, it said.



OSV News photo/Kemal Aslan, Reuters

Volunteers share an emotional moment in Hatay, Turkey on Feb. 8 as they take part in a rescue operation following an earthquake. The powerful 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked areas of Turkey and Syria early on Feb. 6, toppling thousands of buildings and killing thousands.

Join us online for a holy hour every Monday at 5 p.m.
[Facebook.com/dmdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese)

DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

Our Lady of Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood, Iowa is looking for a full time, salaried Director of Faith Formation for preschool through High School programs. This would include sacramental preparation, family, and youth activities and forming catechists. This is a vibrant parish nestled in the Loess Hills close to the Omaha metro. For more information, contact Father Dan Siepker at 712-527-5211. To apply for the position, send resume with recommendations to holyrosarych@msn.com.

We're looking for story ideas. If you know of an inspiring faith program in your parish, or someone who is truly living their faith, contact us at communications@dmdiocese.org.

Ways to give

Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. Catholic Church's overseas relief and development agency: crs.org.

Catholic Near East Welfare Association, an agency of the Holy See: <https://cnewa.org/work/emergency-syria>; by phone at 800-442-6392; or by mail to CNEWA headquarters, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation

St. Thomas Aquinas Church and Catholic Student Center in Ames, Iowa is looking for a disciple of Jesus with a heart on fire to passionately serve as full-time Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation. This person would gather children and adult parishioners to an encounter with Christ that will transform their hearts so that they may be sent as disciples into the world. This position is a call to evangelize those who do not know Christ, direct adult faith formation opportunities as well as children's/family faith formation. For more information about St. Thomas Aquinas parish visit staparish.net. For a position description: staparish.net/information/DirectorE:FF.pdf To apply for the position send resume and two letters of recommendation to: search@staparish.net

Director of Music and Liturgy

Would you like to use your skills in music and coordination to keep our St. Ambrose Cathedral liturgies beautiful, meaningful, and high quality? Would you embrace our unique opportunities to involve parishioners and music of many cultures in our liturgy? For more information, please visit our website at: <https://www.saintambrosecathedral.org/community-news/>

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