

# THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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## New strategic plan charts a path forward

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff writer

You spoke.

Early in a three-year visioning process, parishioners in the Des Moines Diocese shared through focus groups, surveys, and interviews, their priorities and concerns about the future of the Church in southwest Iowa.

We heard you.

A visioning committee consisting of parishioners and clergy soaked in the feedback, prayed on it, and felt led by the Holy Spirit to identify from the data six themes as top priorities. Since the faithful said they wanted the Diocese to lead in these areas, the visioning committee evolved into the Diocesan Pastoral Council, to assist with implementation. The

DPC formed six parishioner-led commissions or working groups for each priority and toolkits were created by each commission.

Pentecost, the birthday of the Catholic Church, is a perfect time to announce the results of the visioning process, and the birth of a clear path forward as articulated in the guiding mission and vision: **We are sowing God's Spirit so that we may cultivate**

**connections in Christ through encounter, friendship, and communion.**

"This Pentecost, the pulse of the Holy Spirit guiding the Diocese of Des Moines quickens as we implement the mission and vision we believe God has bestowed on us," wrote Bishop William Joensen.

**Read about this pivotal**

**shift for the Diocese on pages 8-9.**

Bishop Joensen said: "I personally believe with all my heart that God anoints this bold venture of faith and mutual accompaniment with his Holy Spirit – the same Spirit that came down upon those gathered together at the first Pentecost."

## Catholics in shattered town feel lowans' embrace

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff writer

It started with a phone call.

Jerome and Mary Michels, parishioners of St. Patrick Parish in Neola, were home in Minden when their son, Matthew, urged them to take shelter. The storm heading their way was "the real deal."

"I'm in a wheelchair. He didn't want us just procrastinating like we usually do (during a storm)," Jerome said. "I can get into the basement by going outside and through the garage. Then we watched TV in the basement. It got very close. Then the electricity went off."

Within five or 10 minutes, they could hear a roaring noise.

"It's just as they describe it" Jerome recalled. "It sounded like a plane or a jet engine right outside the window.

The sound got louder.

Then even louder.

Their ears popped.

Their grandson, Jacob, who lives with the couple while he attends college, huddled them in a corner.

They heard glass breaking.

Furniture moving.

And then...silence.

Jacob ran outside. It looked like the town was gone.

The Michels' home, built 121 years ago, was damaged but still standing. Jerome was trapped in the basement because his wheelchair couldn't get around the debris.

"You're just awestruck that, in only three minutes, your whole world is upside down. We get subtle reminders all the time, but it was a real reminder that we're not in control of our lives as much as we think," he said.

Across the alley lived the Rings. Nick Ring died of his injuries. His Mass of Christian Burial was held a few days later at nearby St. Patrick Parish in Neola.

As Minden residents emerged from their shelters,



BEFORE



Photos by Jacob Ferris

**A picture of an alley in Minden taken April 24 on the left compares to the same alley shown shortly after an April 26 deadly EF3 tornado swept through Pottawattamie and Shelby Counties. The alley is near the home of Jerome and Mary Michels, who survived the tornado with their grandson. Their neighbor, Nicholas Ring, suffered fatal injuries.**

shocked by what they saw, people began to come: friends, families, and strangers of goodwill.

"They would help you do anything you asked. It's so good," said Jerome "We always suspect those people are out there. You just don't hear about them. They don't get acknowledged, but there's many good people out there in the world."

Indeed, as soon as the coast was clear, St. Patrick Parish sprung into action.

"As a parish family, there was this massive support, this massive love that went out," said

Father Julius Itamid.

Originally from Nigeria, he had never seen destruction from a tornado until now.

"It was heartbreaking," he said.

He found one parishioner's home completely gone, another with damage and the garage destroyed. Others had windows blown out.

"It was just awful. Never in my life have I seen that," said Father Itamid. Yet he witnessed his parish family come together.

Immediately after the tornado, parishioners started calling

friends, family and parishioners, especially the elderly. Those who could not be reached by phone were visited by someone from the parish checking in on them, said Shannon Nye, the parish's director of religious education.

The Michels, who have belonged to St. Patrick Parish for 50 years, got a call from several parishioners and Father Itamid to see if they needed a place to stay.

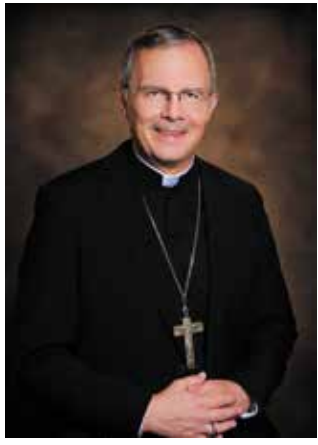
Parishioners opened their homes, even if they didn't have electricity, to the tornado victims so anyone who had a spare bed could offer a safe place to sleep,

said parish council chair Matt Brummett. And they collected

Continued on page 14

### Ordinations

Two men will be ordained priests at a Mass beginning at 5 p.m. on Friday, June 21 at St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines. All are welcome to celebrate with the candidates: Deacon Michael Mahoney and Deacon Luisito Cabrera.



Bishop William Joensen

In last month's column I introduced the heralded document, "Infinite Dignity," (hereafter identified as 'DI') released by the Vatican this past April 2, which happens to be the death anniversary of the apostle of life, St. John Paul II; it also follows the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. DI situates the recognition of the ultimate value and worth of every human being simply by virtue of holding membership in the human species. It traces the awareness of the immense goodness each human being possesses and distinct part he or she is to play in society—by nature and by grace.

We are all meant to participate here-and-now in the communion of saints-in-the-making, each with the vocation to one day see God face-to-face. Our personal history is woven into a social history that by God's design is ultimately the history of salvation. Pope Francis is cited: "Human beings have the same inviolable dignity in every age of history, and no one can consider himself or herself authorized by particular situations to deny this conviction or to act against it" (DI n. 6).

Tragically, human history is rife with insults and gross denials of human dignity that are recounted in DI. After first recalling the catalogue of human rights violations identified both in Vatican II's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" and echoed in St. John

Paul's "Gospel of Life," there are few surprises in the list of violations DI details: extreme poverty, war, the disregard for migrants, human trafficking, sexual abuse, violence against women, abortion, surrogacy, euthanasia and assisted suicide, marginalization of people with disabilities, contemporary gender theory and sex change, and digital violence.

As promised last month, I would like to focus upon the practice of slavery in our country both as a historical fact and lingering affliction that affects our contemporary culture and consciousness. I previously mentioned that just before this past Holy Week, I participated in a "Bishops' Lenten Experience" with five bishops and others on a pilgrimage of

*Our personal history is woven into a social history that by God's design is ultimately the history of salvation.*

prayer and encounter in the cities of Montgomery and Selma, Alabama. There we traced the sobering, sordid legacy of slavery and racism in our country that has left us with deep-seated wounds and soul-searing matter for reflection. We confronted the gains and ongoing gaps in social justice (particularly in connection with current criminal justice practices). We were also spurred to honestly face how our Church has responded—in ways both repugnant and redemptive—over the past 150 years in particular.

Our Alabama experience vividly revealed the horrendous scope of evil that spilled onto the shores of the American continent through the slave trade organized by largely Catholic Christian European countries. This is a history that should be familiar to every schoolkid and adult in our country, but can be easily relegated to the dustbin of the past or dismissed as the resurgent rants of "woke" consciousness.

Our guides, Bishop Joseph Perry of Chicago and Archbishop

Shelton Fabre of Louisville, led us in prayer and reflection surrounding our visits to the Legacy Museum, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, the Freedom Monument Sculpture Park, the former home of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s family as he pastored what is now the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church.

We also celebrated Mass and toured the City of St. Jude, now a predominantly Black Catholic parish on the outskirts of Montgomery. The St. Jude complex was originally founded by Passionist Father Harold Purcell as part of his inspiration to provide education and health care ministries to Southern Black communities. We visited the complex of human services and spiritual formation at the Edmundite mission in Selma that is impressively thriving to this day.

We engaged Ms. JoAnn Bland, a survivor of the 1965 civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery (where participants had their own "passover" through the Bloody Sunday atrocities near the Edmund Pettis bridge) and traced the path of this famous march.

The most compelling images that will remain etched in my consciousness were supplied at the site where we began our two-and-a-half days together: the Legacy Museum. Here we were graphically confronted with the "wave" of 12 million slaves captured in Africa (two million of whom perished at sea in ships en route). We followed the plaintive cries of children wrenched from their parents and spouses from one another by slave traders once they landed.

In silence, we pondered what seemed to resemble a columbarium of cremated remains, an array of soil gathered in hundreds of apothecary jars drawn a corresponding number of lynching sites. Following the Civil War, for more than half a century it was not uncommon in communities through the South and Midwest for church-going white folk, including women and children, to gather for the public spectacle of beatings, burnings, lynchings and dismemberment of mostly Black

men.

We read the personal pleas composed by some of these victims who prior to their mob execution experienced their own Garden of Olives moments crying out for mercy and deliverance from their Creator—to no avail. I can only liken the emotions I experienced to the times I have accompanied young adults as a priest chaplain touring the Nazi death camps at Auschwitz.

My friend and brother bishop who chairs the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Domestic Justice and Human Development, Ukrainian Archbishop Borys Gudziak of Philadelphia, has witnessed firsthand the atrocities committed by Russian soldiers in Ukraine. He commented after our visit to the Legacy Museum: "I found it not easy to fall asleep after this experience. It is imperative that every American become acquainted with this history; it is a history that every American needs to know."

The trajectory of our pilgrimage was not intended to leave us wallowing in remorse or self-recrimination; it was meant to foster awareness of how the residue of racism has been translated into policies and practices in our criminal legal system. Our conversation with the founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and author of Just Mercy, attorney Bryan Stevenson, reminded me of Pope Francis' adage, "All it takes is one good person to restore hope."

For me, some concrete action steps that I intend to pursue following our late Lenten pilgrimage to Alabama are (1) do more concerted advocacy for an end to the federal death penalty; and (2) through the agency of the Iowa Catholic Conference, work for restorative justice practices to be adopted in our criminal justice system and inscribed by legislation that frames these practices. (If you are interested in learning more about the latter, I commend your participation in the "Introduction to Restorative Justice" virtual session sponsored by the Catholic Mobilizing Network on June 17: [catholicmobilizing.org/](http://catholicmobilizing.org/)

intro-restorative-justice.)

As a Diocese, we will also collaborate with Pastor Jonathan Whitfield of Corinthian Baptist Church in Des Moines, who has secured a grant to analyze and respond to "environmental injustice." This form of injustice occurs when persons of color and other vulnerable persons suffer inordinately long-term effects in terms of housing and economic impact from weather-related and other natural disasters—including the recent spate of tornadoes that struck our state.

The cynic might wag his tongue and say, "Oh, Bishop Jo-

*As a Diocese, we will also collaborate with Pastor Jonathan Whitfield of Corinthian Baptist Church in Des Moines, who has secured a grant to analyze and respond to "environmental injustice."*

ensen is now woke." I would respond: the Spirit of truth promised by the Risen and Ascended Lord both convicts and calls us to ever clearer vision through the experiences God affords us. The Spirit stirs us to more ardent advocacy in recognition of past abuses of human dignity that may have receded, but continue to taint our perceptions and social practices. As DI concludes, "In political activity, we should remember that 'every person is immensely holy and deserves our love and dedication'" (DI n. 65 citing Pope Francis, Fratelli tutti, n. 195).

Personally, as one who desires to be a champion of human dignity and pastor of souls, any "conversion" I experienced should advance my own agency as a minister of reconciliation and hope. I pray to join and be joined by so many of you who are already passionate defenders of human life and dignity.

## THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

Bishop William Joensen  
Publisher  
wjoensen@dmdiocese.org

Anne Marie Cox  
Editor  
acox@dmdiocese.org

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**Bishop's column in Spanish is on page 15.**

**La columna de Bishop en español está en la página 15.**

## Making It Personal With Bishop Joensen

Catch up on the latest radio shows hosted by Bishop William Joensen on Iowa Catholic Radio and Spirit Catholic Radio Network.

<https://iowacatholicradio.com/making-it-personal/>


## OFFICIAL




Bishop William Joensen has made the following appointments effective July 11. The appointments are for six years unless otherwise noted.

**Rev. George Nyarko** – From Parochial Vicar of St. Boniface Parish, Waukee and St. Theresa Parish, Des Moines to Parish Administrator of Holy Trinity Parish of S.E. Warren County (Milo/Lacona) and Immaculate Conception Parish, St. Mary's, for a six-year term effective July 11, 2024.

**Rev. Eze Umunnakwe, C.S.Sp.** - From Pastor of Holy Trinity Parish of S.E. Warren County (Milo/Lacona) and Immaculate Conception Parish, St. Mary's to the Des Moines Metro Unity-Point Hospital Chaplaincy.

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

  
Jason Kurth  
Chancellor

# Family history ties first Eucharistic Congress to upcoming event in Council Bluffs

By Jennifer Willems  
Contributing Writer

One Iowa family is giving thanks for the gift of faith that started with an ancestor in France and the very first International Eucharistic Congress.

The family is reflecting on its legacy as preparations are underway for the St. Junipero Serra Route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage that will travel through the Diocese of Des Moines next month.

The seeds for that first congress, held on June 28, 1881, in Lille, France, were planted by Mary Tamisier, who had a great devotion to the Eucharist, according to Dennis Shea, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs and a member of the pastoral care team at CHI Health Mercy Council Bluffs.

Mary's first cousin, Jean Tamisier, would bring that love for the faith to America, settling

in Missouri Valley. He changed the family's name to Tamisiea and his first name to John to protect them from the Huguenots that chased him out of France, and they thrived in southwest Iowa. Shea's great-grandfather, Victor, was John Tamisiea's son.

The first thing Shea thought about when he heard the Blessed Sacrament would be carried through Council Bluffs, Glenwood, Imogene and Shenandoah June 23-25 as part of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, was his family's history and how he might take part.

"In a very humble way, it makes me proud that someone from our family lineage was a catalyst for such a truly Catholic



Dennis Shea

effort to elevate the very center of our faith, the Eucharist, to a higher level so that the world can visibly see and adore," Shea said.

## Perseverance pays off

Before she died at 100, Irene Tamisiea Fox, the family historian, had told Shea that Mary Tamisier – also known as Marie-Marthe-Baptistine – demonstrated a great deal of perseverance to get her idea of an International Eucharistic Congress to be taken seriously. It received a lukewarm reception from her pastor and a visiting American bishop at first.

Bishop Claude M. Dubuis of Galveston, a native of France, eventually took up her cause and presented it to Pope Leo XIII at a meeting in Rome. The pope reportedly was enthusiastic about the idea and pursued it.

At that point, Mary Tamisier felt her work was done and let events unfold as the pope saw fit, according to Shea.

Information from the National Eucharistic Congress website notes that International Eucharistic Congresses were also held in 1926 and 1976. The gathering planned for July 17-21 in Indianapolis will be the 10th National Eucharistic Congress of the United States.

## Revival needed

The Eucharist has continued to play a vital role in Shea's



<https://www.eucharisticcongress.org/legacy>

**The first Eucharistic Congress, held in Lille, France in 1881, was international in scope, appropriately themed "The Eucharist Saves the World." This launched a movement of Eucharistic Congresses worldwide, inspiring Catholics to unite in worship around the Eucharistic table.**

life.

He said it was his work with Gabriel's Corner, a pregnancy resource center in Council Bluffs, where the Eucharist is reserved in the chapel, that helped to "re-awaken" his faith, along with daily Mass. Taking Communion to his elderly mother and his aunt Irene Tamisiea Fox also provided the bridge to his family's story of faith.

John Tamisiea, who died Dec. 4, 1869, rests in St. Bridget's Cemetery in Honey Creek, Pottawattamie County.

Despite their strong witness, Shea sees the need for a Eucharistic revival.

"I see even in my own fam-

ily that tradition has been broken or lost in some corners of the family. Although there are splinters of the truth that were passed down, which is better than no splinters of the truth," he said.

"I think that this is a time that inspires gratitude for the faith that was gifted to us by God's will for us that we have an opportunity to embrace more deeply and appreciate our Catholicism that our parents and ancestors have carried forward to us," Shea said.

For more information on the local route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and its path through southwest Iowa, visit [dmdiocese.org/eucharistic-pilgrimage](http://dmdiocese.org/eucharistic-pilgrimage).

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## Experience the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

On June 23 - June 25, 2024, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will be making it's way through the Diocese of Des Moines. During these 3 days you are invited to journey with Jesus in the Eucharistic processions, celebrate Mass, and participate in Holy Hours and overnight adoration.

You are invited to attend as many events as you interested in and able to. All events are **FREE** to attend, but registration is encouraged to allow parishes to plan for food at lunch/dinner and overall attendance.

### June 23rd

Council Bluffs

- ◆ Bilingual Sunday Mass @ Tom Hanafan's River's Edge Park
- ◆ Eucharistic Processions from Omaha to Corpus Christi
- ◆ Fellowship Dinner
- ◆ Holy Hour
- ◆ Overnight Adoration (7PM to 8AM)

### June 24th

Glenwood & Imogene

- ◆ Holy Mass @ Corpus Christi
- ◆ Eucharistic Procession on the Wabash Trace Nature Trail (8 miles)
- ◆ Fellowship Lunch & Dinner
- ◆ Holy Hours (afternoon & evening)
- ◆ Overnight Adoration (7PM to 8AM)

### June 25th

Shenandoah

- ◆ Mass with Bishop Joensen @ St. Patrick (Imogene)
- ◆ Solemn Eucharistic Procession (1 mile)
- ◆ Holy Hour
- ◆ Fellowship Lunch

## Catholic Rural Life celebrates centennial anniversary

Catholic Rural Life, formerly known as the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Catholic Rural Life began in 1923 as the result of a shared concern by bishops, priests and laity about rural life. In particular, there was a concern about rural areas being underserved in terms of priests, churches, hospitals and Catholic schools.

In the 1920s, they focused on religious education for rural Catholics.

In the 1930s, the Great Depression focused their attention on the price of farm products.

In the 1940s, Monsignor Luigi Ligutti became the first full-time executive director. Msgr. Ligutti, a priest of the Des Moines Diocese, established a national office in Des Moines. He purchased a large home at 3801 Grand Ave., where Catholic Rural Life operated until 1979.

By the time Msgr. Ligutti left as executive director in 1959, he had become the most important spokesman for Catholic rural life.

Bishop Maurice Dingman served as president of the group from 1976 to 1979 and played a leading role in developing a pastoral letter called "Strangers and Guests: Toward Community in the Heartland." It was signed by 44 Midwestern bishops in 1980.

Ten years ago, Catholic Rural Life moved its office from a home on Beaver Avenue in Des Moines to Minnesota.

Today, CRL focuses on ethical food and agriculture, rural outreach and ministry, and stewardship of creation.

Catholic Rural Life has been instrumental in helping the rural Catholic community.

## REMEMBERING FATHER JIM KIERNAN



*"Don't Just Make The Sign of The Cross. PRAY IT!"*

Passed into eternal life on May 15, 2016

# Father Leto celebrates 70 years of priesthood

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff writer

On a Saturday morning in May in 1954, six men were ordained priests by Bishop Edward C. Daly, OP, at St. Ambrose Cathedral.

Father Nelo Leto was among them. On May 15, Father Nelo Leto will quietly celebrate his 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priesthood.

To double the celebration, Father Leto will turn 95 just a few days later on May 19.

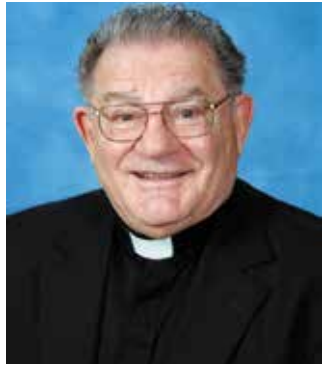
Father Leto, the fifth of seven children, was born in 1929. He had a sister born just 15 months before him who became a religious woman, Humility Sister Mary Anne Leto.

His parents, Ignazio and Josephine (Collo) Leto, emigrated from Italy. Father Leto grew a passion for cooking Italian meals for family and friends, said his niece Mary Treanor.

"He loves his family and their unwavering faith in God," she said.

He attended St. Anthony Catholic School, Dowling High School and Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri.

He was ordained with Fathers Daniel Clark, Michael Churchman, John Lorenz, John



Nemmers, and Jerome Schnitker.

Father Leto is known for his carpentry skill and work with refurbishing statues.

"He was always a handyman in that regard," said his cousin, Father Frank Palmer.

Monsignor Larry Beeson agreed.

"There were many plaster statues where a hand was broken off or a finger and he repaired it," he said.

Father Leto is a selfless person, said Msgr. Beeson.

"My mother died the year I was ordained in 1960. She died of cancer," he said. He offered to hear her confession but she declined. Father Leto came and heard her final confession.

"I was always so thankful to him for doing that," said Msgr. Beeson.

Father Leto served the people of central and southwest Iowa

for 45 years before retiring.

"Throughout the years, he never lost his sense of humor and is a very strong-willed person who walks through life by living in the light of God," said Treanor.

His assignments have included: Christ the King, St. Ambrose Cathedral, Basilica of St. John, Visitation (now Our Lady of the Americas) and St. Anthony in Des Moines.

He also served: Ss. Peter & Paul in Atlantic, Assumption in Granger, St. Patrick in Perry, St. Patrick in Lenox, Sacred Heart in Bedford, St. Mary in Guthrie Center, St. Cecilia in Panora, St. Ann in Woodward, St. Clare in Clarinda, Sacred Heart in Bedford, St. John in Greenfield, St. Mark in Orient, St. Peter in Defiance, St. Joseph in Earling, and St. Elizabeth Seton in Carlisle.

In addition to his care of the faithful in parishes, Father Leto is known as the founder and first director of Catholic Youth Camp, based at the St. Thomas More Center in Panora.

He retired on July 8, 1999, and continued to serve the Catholic Daughters of the Americas and Mercy Hospital as a chaplain until 2011.

Father Leto currently lives at the Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston.

# Msgr. Chamberlain marks 60 years of priesthood

By Jennifer Willems  
Contributing writer

As a boy growing up in Shelby County, Robert Chamberlain thought about two things: entering the priesthood or becoming a farmer. Both were strong calls, but he couldn't deny one of them.

On June 2, Monsignor Chamberlain will celebrate the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood at the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Theresa Church in Des Moines. An open house will follow from noon to 2 p.m. in the parish hall. All are welcome.

That evening he will join the other priests of the Diocese of Des Moines at their annual retreat at Conception Abbey in Missouri.

That is only right. After all, it was the strong, prayerful example of the priests and seminarians, and the faith-filled Benedictine Sisters from Mount St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kansas, that fostered his vocation.

Born on July 3, 1938, between Panama and Portsmouth, Msgr. Chamberlain was one of Irvin C. and Agnes (Petsche) Chamberlain's nine children. He claims Panama as his hometown and St. Mary of the Assumption there as his home church. After graduating from the parish school and high school, he and his father went to see Msgr. M.B. Schiltz, pastor, about pursuing the priesthood.

"He was the only pastor I knew. He came long before I was born and stayed on as the pastor of Panama," Msgr. Chamberlain said. "He was just a kind, very gentle, very prayerful man."

The other strong influences were his longtime teacher, Benedictine Sister Mary Jane, and his family.

## Three assignments, many roles

Bishop Edward C. Daly, OP, sent the young man to St. Pius X Seminary at Loras College in Dubuque for general studies and philosophy. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree and teaching certificate there, Msgr. Chamberlain completed his studies for the priesthood at Mount St. Bernard Seminary, also in Dubuque.

As a transitional deacon, he was sent to The Catholic University of America for courses in American history and audiovisual. "It was the best experience of my life," he said.

Msgr. Chamberlain was ordained by Bishop Daly on May 31, 1964, at St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines.

In over six decades of priesthood, he has had just three assignments, but served in many different roles.

The first was at Dowling High School, where he taught and was assistant registrar and then registrar from 1964 to 1986. While there, he assisted with the merger of Dowling, a school for boys, and St. Joseph Academy, a school for girls, in 1972.

Next came St. Albert School System in Council Bluffs, where he was coordinator from 1986 to 1993. Msgr. Chamberlain's final assignment was as pastor of St. Joseph Parish and School in Des Moines, from 1993 to 2010.

He has been retired since 2010, but he hasn't stopped serving others.

## Never far from education

While at Dowling, Msgr. Chamberlain spent four summers earning a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Loras College, which he has used along the way. He also has experience in the field of chemical dependency and was the cosponsor of an Alateen group for 10 years, helped with interventions, and offered programs and days of instruction to the Dowling staff on the subject.

In addition, he served on the Diocesan Health and Wellness Committee.

"I've never been far separated from education," he said. "The best part in the whole education area was getting to know quite a number of students and their families and activities that are going on."

Msgr. Chamberlain assists at St. Theresa Parish, where he celebrates one Mass on the weekends and helps with the sacrament of reconciliation as needed.

Those who wish to send cards may write to Msgr. Chamberlain at 739 33rd St., Des Moines, IA 50312, or at St. Theresa Church, 1230 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines, IA 50311.



Watch the June edition of *The Catholic Mirror* for stories on Father John Ludwig and Msgr. Stephen Orr, who both celebrate their 50th anniversary of priesthood this summer.

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# Two to be ordained priests in June

## Answering God's call to priesthood



Deacon Mike Mahoney with Bishop William Joensen and his parents, Celia and Tom.

By Ryan Johnson  
Contributing Writer

During adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, God spoke to Mike Mahoney. The message: "Mike, I want you to be a priest."

That was 2010. Since then, God has called Deacon Mike Mahoney, of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, again. He will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Orders as he is ordained to the Catholic priesthood by Bishop William Joensen on June 21, at 5 p.m. at St. Ambrose Cathedral.

### Raised Catholic

Deacon Mahoney was raised in a Catholic household and attended Catholic elementary and middle school at Sacred Heart and St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines. He continued his education at Dowling Catholic High School.

When Deacon Mahoney was younger, he recalled his parents asking him if he ever considered a vocation to the priesthood. At the time, he dismissed the suggestion, thinking he was called to a different vocation as an adult.

During his sophomore year in high school, he attended the National Catholic Youth Conference. It was during adoration there that he recalled receiving a message from God about serving the Church as a priest. But he wasn't quite ready ... yet.

### First Minnesota, Then California

After graduating from Dowling Catholic High School in 2012, he attended St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, where he studied religion. While he was there, he continued to live out his faith life through campus ministries.

"I was still trying to lean into my faith," he said.

In 2016, Mike earned an education degree in social studies with a double minor in secondary education and theology. His next step was a move to California to pursue a master's degree in education at Santa Clara University while teaching middle school social studies and religion at a nearby small Catholic school.

"I thought teaching would be my life," he said. "I thought I would get married and have children. I had this great vision

for what my life was going to be like."

It became clear to him that his vision for his future may not have been what God was calling him to do.

### Answering the Call

Following a trip home for Easter, Deacon Mahoney recalled his earlier calling to the priesthood.

"I knew a life change had to happen," he recalled. "The voice that called me in 2010 started coming back. The thoughts of the priesthood. I thought 'It's time.'"

Under the guidance of then Vocations Director Father Joseph Pins, Deacon Mahoney began his seminarian studies in the fall of 2017. He spent the first two years at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. His next step was major seminary in Italy, where he enrolled at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

During his formation, Deacon Mahoney was assigned to St. John the Apostle Catholic Church in Norwalk, where he worked for eight months with Father Dan Kirby, the pastor.

"The parish became one of Deacon Mike's best formation experiences," said Father Kirby. "He was able to learn what the priesthood is all about from his greatest professors of all, the parishioners of St. John the Apostle. Through his time in the parish, Deacon Mike grew in confidence in his vocation and that he would be able to minister to the faithful in a wide variety of different pastoral situations."

Deacon Mahoney looks forward to being able to walk with others on their faith journey.

"I have always been service-driven and feel that the priesthood will allow me to share my gifts," he said.

Father Kirby believes Deacon Mahoney is also ready to share his spiritual gifts with a parish.

"I have no doubt that Deacon Mike will serve the people of God very well as a parish priest," said Father Kirby. "His strong work ethic, his desire to grow in his spiritual life, and his desire to teach the faith to both old and young. I know that whatever parish he is assigned will be blessed with a priest who always wants to serve."

## 'God will show me what to do'

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff writer

The third time considering a vocation to the priesthood must have been the charm for Deacon Luis Cabrera.

He will be ordained June 21 at St. Ambrose Cathedral with Deacon Mike Mahoney in a fulfillment of a vocation that first entered Deacon Cabrera's mind back when he was growing up in the Philippines and was a teenager.

"That was the start of my vocation and I think it never left me," he said.

He loved the Salesians of Don Bosco at his school. Although he went to a seminary for his first two years of college, he moved to New York City. There, he joined the Capuchin Franciscans and again thought about the priesthood. He graduated from St. John's University in New York City with a degree in communications and journalism.

He discerned religious life was not for him at that point. He was 24 years old, drove a taxi during the day and taught ballroom dance at night when he first met Rae, a 21-year-old actress who was hired to teach dance at the school.

A native of Des Moines, Rae had many small acting roles and she loved it.

They married after four years of dating. They backpacked through Europe in the summers, and lived two blocks from Times Square where one of their favorite things to do was to attend Mass, then go to a diner and spend hours

reading The New York Times over coffee or brunch. Married 25 years, they had no children and dreamed of retiring, buying a boat and sailing from one tropical island to another.

His career in publishing was taking off and he had worked for the United Nations.

While he was in California, where his mom was recovering from surgery, he got a call from his sister-in-law. She said Rae had suffered cardiac arrest.

"I was numb when she died. Processing that information was difficult those weeks after she died," he said. "You're just numb. Everything was a blur."

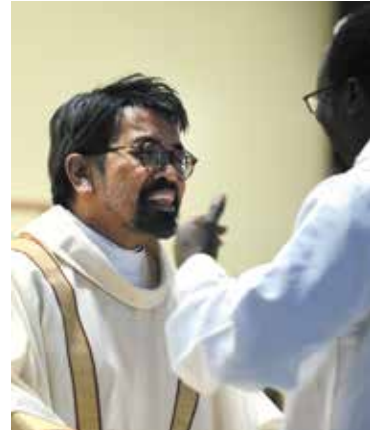
Rae left on the bed a beloved teddy bear. It made Deacon Cabrera realize that everything people feel is precious "means absolutely nothing. Only one thing matters and that is your relationship with God. People say life is short, best live it.

"Eternity is long, best prepare for it," he said. "Her death made that very poignant for me. Eternity is long. I'd like to see her in it. I know that her death helps prepare me for that and the fact that I'm going to become a priest.

"God works in very, very strange ways. I met my wife, we got married. I thought my vocation (in religious life) was done with. That part of my life was over. But it wasn't. God had other plans that I couldn't see at the time."

After Rae died, seminary was the furthest thing from Deacon Cabrera's mind.

"But after she died, you go through a period of mourning. I found myself going to pray for



Deacon Luis Cabrera at his diaconate ordination.

her at my home parish, Christ the King in Des Moines. One of the permanent deacons who was there told me, 'Why don't you become a permanent deacon?' I said 'What a great idea!'"

As he was reflecting on it, he thought, why not go all the way?

"I think that was the moment when God said, 'Hey, I want you to come back. I need you to come back.'"

Deacon Cabrera, now 62 years old, will be ordained a priest.

"The question comes, 'Am I really called to this life?' After having been there and done that, so to speak, that question changed. The question was no longer whether I am called to this life. The fact is I'm here. The question has turned into, 'This is the life that God calls me to be in. How do you want me to do this?'"

He said: "I trust that God will gradually, in his own good time, show me what he wants me to do."

## CARING ABOUT YOUR LOSS AND SHARING IN YOUR FAITH

### Prayer to St. Joseph for a Happy Death

*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,  
parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi

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## Around the Diocese

### May 23 Thursday

#### St. Vincent de Paul Golf Outing

DES MOINES – Chip in Fore Charity benefit for St. Vincent de Paul will be held at Copper Creek Golf Club in Pleasant Hill. Registration is at 8:30 a.m. and shotgun start is at 10 a.m. For more information contact Randi Radosevich at [resourcedirector@svdpdsm.org](mailto:resourcedirector@svdpdsm.org). To register go to [svdpdsm.org/news-events/golf-fundraiser/](http://svdpdsm.org/news-events/golf-fundraiser/)

### May 27 Monday

#### Memorial Day Mass

DES MOINES – The annual Memorial Day Mass in the Des Moines metro area will be celebrated at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines at 10 a.m. on Memorial Day. If it rains, the Mass will be celebrated at St. Theresa Church at Merle Hay Road and University Avenue.

### June 1 Saturday

#### Eucharistic Procession

CRESTON – Holy Spirit Church invites you to join them for a Eucharistic. Mass will be at 10 a.m. with the procession at 11 a.m. A lunch will be served at 12:15 p.m.

### June 2 Sunday

#### Corpus Christi Processional

DES MOINES – St. Augustin Parish's procession with bagpipes begins at 4 p.m., dinner to follow in the parish hall, everyone is welcome to join us as we process through the neighborhood. All area Knights of Columbus are invited to dress in their regalia and First Communion classes

invited to come in their First Communion attire. Golf cart assistance will be available to those with difficulty walking.

### June 2 Sunday

#### 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination

DES MOINES – Father Bob Chamberlain will celebrate his 60th anniversary of ordination with 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Theresa Parish. Everyone is invited to the Mass and an open house in the parish hall from noon – 2 p.m.

### June 6 Thursday

#### Catholic Charities' Centennial Trivia

DES MOINES – Catholic Charities presents a Centennial Trivia night 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. to benefit the Catholic Charities' Food Pantry. Join us as we continue celebrating the organization's 100th year of service to those in need in our community. Register a team or be paired with a team on game night and enjoy a fun-filled evening of food, drinks, and trivia at 601 Grand Ave. Details and registration available online here: [catholic-charitiesdm.org/events/](http://catholic-charitiesdm.org/events/).

### June 19 Wednesday

#### Tee Off For St. Mary's

SIDNEY – St. Mary Parish in Shenandoah is sponsoring a golf tournament at the Freemont County Golf Course. It will be a four-person scramble with a 10 a.m. shotgun start and lunch is included. Cost is \$200/team plus \$22 for a cart if needed. Sponsorship op-

portunities include \$100 for a hole sponsor which includes company name and logo signage on each tee box. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary Catholic Church and mailed to Joella Travis, P.O. Box 542, Sidney, IA 51652.

### June 21 Friday

#### Presbyteral Ordination

DES MOINES – Deacon Luis Cabrera and Deacon Mike Mahoney will be ordained to the priesthood at 5 p.m. at St. Ambrose Cathedral. All are welcome.

### June 29 Saturday

#### Retreat

CRESTON – Holy Spirit Church will be hosting a day retreat, "Let's Talk Roses." It begins at 8 a.m. with Mass and lunch is provided. Come explore the numerous gifts and deep joy of the rosary, what Scripture says about roses, and the saints of roses. Cost is \$30. For more information contact Holy Spirit Church at 641-782-5278.

### July 8-11

#### National Catholic Musicians

KANSAS CITY – Music ministers are invited to attend the National Association of Pastoral Musicians annual convention. Join fellow music ministers from across the country for a ministry and faith formation booster designed for cantors/singers, music directors, priests, instrumentalists, and accompanists. Go to [NPM.org](http://NPM.org) for details. Contact local NPM Chapter at [desmoinesia.npm.org](http://desmoinesia.npm.org).

## Women honored for accompanying people on their faith journey



Attending the Des Moines Diocesan Council for Catholic Women's conference April 20 were Father Joel McNeil, Catherine Schroeder, and Bishop William Joensen. Father McNeil is the spiritual advisor for the DCCW board. Schroeder is the executive director of Gabriel's Corner in Council Bluffs.




Several women were honored by the Des Moines Diocesan Council for Catholic Women for their effort to accompany parishioners on their faith journey. See the list of names below.

Bishop William Joensen joined women of the Diocese at the 95<sup>th</sup> annual Women's Conference sponsored by the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs on April 20.

"Each year, we ask each parish to honor a special woman in their midst who has contributed her time and talent and her love to build relationships among the people in her parish and community, and to walk with them on their journey as they grow closer to Christ," said Renee Carney.

Those honored were: Kathy Lovell of St. Anne Parish in Logan; Stephanie Summers of St. Edward Parish in Afton; Jackey Arrick of St. Patrick Parish in Missouri Valley; Judy Podliskar of St. Mary Parish in Red Oak; Kristen Finn of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale; Gerry Bolan and Kellie Stewart, both of Our Lady of Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood; and (not pictured) Barb Waters of St. Timothy Parish in Cumberland.

A collection at Mass that garnered more than \$1,000 was given to St. Thomas More Center in Panora for scholarships to its annual summer Catholic Youth Camp.




# FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

MASS AND EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION  
SUNDAY JUNE 2, 2024  
11:30AM  
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### 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

# Biking for Babies marks 15th anniversary

By Clare Heinrich  
Contributing Writer

Life is a journey. Biking for Babies takes this sentiment literally, inspiring others to uphold the dignity of human life from conception to natural death.

Biking for Babies empowers missionaries and lay individuals to hop on their bikes for charity, donating to pregnancy resource centers and maternity houses.

Des Moines native Jimmy Becker and his college friend Mike Schaefer began Biking for Babies in March 2009, biking 600 miles to fundraise for pregnancy centers in southern Illinois. After raising over \$14,000, they realized they and many others had a vocation to raise awareness for and make accessible these life-saving resources for women and families.

Celebrating their 15th an-

niversary this year, Biking for Babies has aided 127 pregnancy centers by raising over \$1.6 million. There are more than 200 rider and support crew missionaries involved, biking routes of 600-700 miles. Crews build a habit of "endurance and commitment" which applies to both their ride as well as their pro-life mission. Even those not participating in the rides themselves can provide support, purchasing supplies and hydration equipment.

"Everyone plays a role in renewing a culture in support of life," said Nikki Biese, Biking for Babies' executive director.

This is a mission one cannot accomplish alone.

Biking for Babies trains young adults to become missionary disciples of Jesus Christ through a six-month virtual formation program. These missionaries become riders and support crew. In addition to missionaries, Biking for Babies hired its first

full-time staff member in 2018, expanding personnel to manage both local and national rides, oversee recruitment, and maintain their marketing and media presence.

On June 29, Biking for Babies will be hosting the Central Iowa Ride for Life. This fundraiser will support local pregnancy resource centers and maternity housing in central Iowa, like InnerVisions HealthCare and Martha's House of Hope. There are multiple options for ride lengths, ranging from 5- to 23- to 48-mile rides. Teams will gather at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church for Mass at 7 a.m. before kicking off the programming.

On July 10, Biking for Babies' National Ride team will be traveling through Des Moines, gathering at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines. The 2024 National Ride will take place from July 7-14; this year, 92 missionaries will traverse across the country on nine routes to be visible pro-life witnesses.



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Bishop William Joensen and Biking for Babies cofounder Jimmy Becker begin a ride in 2021 in Ankeny.

Throughout the ride, missionaries will pause at "touchpoints" in local communities and churches across America, including two Celebration of Life events in St. Louis, Missouri, and Arlington, Virginia, respectively.

"Transformation... starts on our knees and in our hearts. By grace and with generous hearts, we will succeed not only in defending life, but even more to renew the culture of life... one pedal stroke, one pregnancy resource center, and one individual at a time," says Becker, Biking for Babies' chairman.

To learn more about Biking for Babies and support their mission, visit [bikingforbabies.com](http://bikingforbabies.com). For more information, to make donations or register for the Central Iowa Ride for Life, visit [givebutter.com/b4b-dsm](http://givebutter.com/b4b-dsm).

## Pastoral Minister

Now hiring a Pastoral Minister for Divine Mercy Catholic Parish whose main office is located in Algona, Iowa. The duties of this position include the following:

- Collaborate with the pastor and other staff to plan spiritual and sacramental formation
- Visit the sick and elderly at the hospital, care facilities, and homes
- Prepare families for baptisms and funerals
- Answer emergency calls after hours
- Assist people in need with counsel, prayer, and community resources
- Lead public prayer occasionally
- This is a twelve-month position with benefits.

Contact Fr. Matthew Solyntjes at [solyntjesm@dmparish.org](mailto:solyntjesm@dmparish.org)

## Deacon Mason dies

Deacon James Mason, of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs, died May 3. He was 82 years old. His Mass of Christian Burial was May 13.

Deacon Mason was ordained by Bishop Joseph Charron, C.P.P.S. on Aug. 10, 2011.

His obituary can be found here: [legacy.com/us/obituaries/nonpareilonline/name/james-mason-obituary?id=55045267](http://legacy.com/us/obituaries/nonpareilonline/name/james-mason-obituary?id=55045267)

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# Sowing God’s Spirit: Cultivating Connections in Christ

By Bishop William Joensen

This Pentecost, the pulse of the Holy Spirit guiding the Diocese of Des Moines quickens as we implement the mission and vision we believe God has bestowed on us.

This pivotal moment comes after over three years of listening to one another, praying, identifying strategic priorities, and crafting concrete means of realizing our mission. Overall, we have humbly opened ourselves to what God’s will asks of us. We are a people of faith who recognize there are many among us still searching for God in central and southwest Iowa. Our considerable investment of spiritual resources, human inspiration and practical wisdom is a labor of love for God and our neighbors. I personally believe with all my heart that God anoints this bold venture of faith and mutual accompaniment with his Holy Spirit—the same Spirit that came down upon those gathered together at the first Pentecost.

I am pleased to share with you the fruits of this concerted listening, learning, mutual respect, and transparency. We are offering our parishes a bundled “basket” with an array of resources and a proposed means of engagement. This basket of the Spirit’s fruits is served up to our parish leaders and persons of all ages living out their baptismal call to grow faith and deepen their connection with Jesus Christ and one another—including each of us, I hope!

## OUR STRATEGIC MISSION AND VISION

Like Jesus himself, who often spoke in parables using images drawn from the ordinary experiences of people and nature, the harmony of Scripture and our

*When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. There appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. . . .*

*Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded.*

—Acts of the Apostles 2:1-7a

own local diocesan culture—with the sense of the faithful, the signs of our own times, and a strong

unifying ethos of agriculture—contribute well to our guiding mission and vision: **“Sowing God’s Spirit: Cultivating Connections in Christ through Encounter, Friendship, and Communion”**

The six toolkits in this bundled “basket” are a robust collective resource correlated with our six identified diocesan strategic priorities. Together, they beckon for patient and selective discernment and deliberation by each of our parishes. In no way are the toolkits and the visioning process intended to be a top-down mandate from on high, let alone a theoretical ‘programme’ from me, your Bishop, that you are obliged to simply passively obey and enact. To view the toolkits and the vision in such a dim light is a surefire recipe to stymie and deplete the Spirit’s potential among us.

Rather, I have great confidence and trust in the power of the Spirit working in every baptized and confirmed member of the faithful—and even beyond the bounds of our established parish communities. When we believe in the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit and engage and collaborate in this prophetic endeavor, we sow seeds of God’s Spirit. We cooperate with the Lord of the harvest by gathering the produce

of the Kingdom realized in the mysterious presence of the Risen Lord among us.

## PRIORITIES & PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

*For the one God sent speaks the words of God. He does not ration his gift of the Spirit.*

*The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him.*

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.”*

—John 3:34-36

*“You know what to do with your farm, and does God not know what to do with you, his servant?”*

—St. Augustine, cited in Haggerty, Conversion, p. 109

On page 9, you can see the priorities of the Diocese, each of which has a toolkit for parishes.

Below is our timeline for beginning a cyclical process for how we will live into this process over the next five years.

At about tis time next year, your parish leadership will share with you what progress your faith

community has made, and begin the process of discerning needs, our parish mission, and toolkits available to help your parish with the next step.

## CONCLUSION: COMMENDATION OF THIS VISION AND PLAN TO MARY

*Mother of the Evangelizing Church*

*We now embark with abiding trust and holy boldness upon the implementation of this Strategic Visioning plan in the lives of the people of Central and Southwest Iowa. We know that from the “first seed” of the Christian community today many fruits, many new seeds of the Spirit have sprung forth and are entrusted to us to sow generously throughout the many local communities and the parishes that compose our Des Moines Diocese.*

*We take heart that Mary continues to accompany her Son’s Church and intercedes on our behalf. Like her Son, Mary is forever “for us” and will never forsake us. With the evangelical energy and good counsel of the Holy Spirit guiding our discernment, we enlist the practical wisdom and common sense of priests, deacons, religious, parish leaders, and lay persons of faith and good will who accompany us now, and who will soon, we pray, join our mission of Sowing God’s Spirit.*

*We may not put a hand to a physical plow, but we invest our hearts and minds in this Kingdom project of allowing God to save souls through us, drawn in hope by our common vision: “Cultivating Connections in Christ through Encounter, Friendship, and Communion.”*

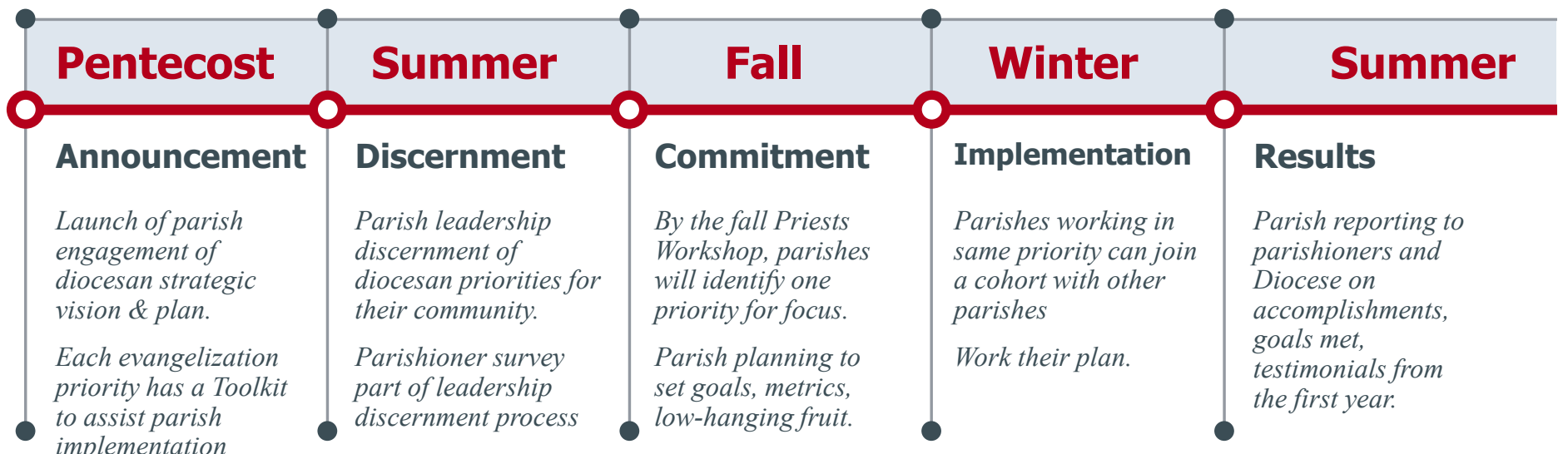
*Come, Holy Spirit! Come ignite our hearts and seal the bonds of friendship and communion that are to be found in Christ, in union with Mary, who is Mother of the Evangelizing Church and Spouse of the Holy Spirit!*



## Strategic Plan Implementation: Parish Engagement

Year 1

*Sowing God’s Spirit By Cultivating Connections in Christ*







## Cultivating Connections in Christ

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES



### Creating a Culture of Welcome and Care in our Parish Communities

A welcoming parish is a reflection of Christian hospitality. Once we are welcomed, it is important to know we are cared for, that we matter to the life the parish.

### Inviting People into an Encounter with Jesus Christ

Jesus invites all of us to have a personal relationship with Him. The work of evangelization is an invitation into an encounter with Jesus which transforms us, our families, our parish, and our communities.



### Accompanying our Youth into Discipleship with Jesus Christ

Walking with youth means meeting them where they are. Our youth are interested in making connections with their peers and forming lasting relationships.

### Engaging our Young Adults into Full Participation

We seek to connect young adults with Jesus Christ, the Church as a welcoming Christian community, the mission of the Church in the world, and a peer community where faith is nurtured and strengthened.



### Preparing Disciples for the Domestic Church

The family is placed at the heart of discipleship and mission. It is the privileged place for evangelization, catechesis, and spiritual growth.

### Communicating our Message Boldly and Clearly

Good communication is at the core of helping people know and love God. It is the lynchpin in a thriving, active parish.



Download the parish toolkits by visiting [dmdiocese.org/toolkits](http://dmdiocese.org/toolkits)

# New logo evolves as Diocese rolls out new vision

A new logo was created for the Diocese of Des Moines as it lives into its vision of cultivating connections in Christ.

The logo was created by St. Pius X School and Dowling Catholic High School alumna Elizabeth Merchut and her firm View Marketing & Creative, based in Chicago.

The new logo is an evolution of the Diocese's logo of 45 years, which was designed for the visit of St. John Paul II in 1979. That logo incorporated seasons, fields, and seeds with a cross in the center. It was created by John Buscemi, who served as art director for the papal visit. Buscemi was an art instructor from Holy Name Seminary in Madison, Wisconsin.

Fifteen people sewed the design into a large quilt that was hung in the back of the sanctuary at the historic outdoor Mass with St. John Paul II at Living History Farms. The quilt now hangs in the Catholic Pastoral Center.

The new logo represents who we are as people of God. The center of the new logo has a cross, which is central to the Catholic faith. In three of the corners, there is an outline of a leaf, similar to the long-time logo and in keeping with the style of a logo used by the diocesan Schools Office. There are three leaves reminding us of the Holy Trinity. The leaves are green (closest to the ground or at the bottom), orange, and blue (representing the sky). These three colors help us remember our call to protect God's creation.

The new logo says who we are and what we're about. In the lower right corner of the image are the words "Cultivating Connections in Christ" and below that is "Diocese of Des Moines."

## Diocesan Pastoral Council assists the Bishop in charting a path forward

The new diocesan strategic plan began with a process led by a diocesan Strategic Visioning Steering Committee.

Leaders from across the Diocese met throughout the fall of 2021, and reviewed feedback from research, surveys, interviews and focus groups.

In the summer of 2022, commissions for each of six major themes consulted with regional and national experts in the areas of communication, welcoming, youth and young adult ministry and adult faith formation.

Bishop William Joensen penned the mission and vision statements that set a path forward: The Diocese of Des Moines is sowing God's Spirit so we can cultivate connections in Christ through encounter, friendship, and communion.

The diocesan Strategic Visioning Steering Committee evolved into the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Like a parish Pastoral Council, the DPC advises the Bishop on strategic initiatives of the Diocese.

Membership represents various points in central and southwest Iowa. Members are:

- Father James Ahenkora, of St. Patrick in Council Bluffs
- Deacon Mike Carney, of St. Patrick in Missouri Valley
- Father David Fleming, Vicar General
- Dan Kinsella, of St. Patrick in Imogene (DPC Vice Chair)
- Jason Kurth, chancellor of the Diocese and a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines
- Maria Matamoros, of St. Boniface in Waukee (DPC Chair)
- Erika Mendez, of Our Lady of the Americas in Des Moines
- Tom Quinlan, of St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines and director of the St. Joseph Evangelization Center
- Daniel Rosmann, of St. Boniface in Westphalia
- Catherine Swoboda, of St. Ambrose in Des Moines
- Jeff Vorwerk, of Ss. John and Paul in Altoona

## 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](mailto:advocate@dmdiocese.org).

# An Emmaus moment: National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

By Chenele Shaw

OSV News

As the calendar inches closer to summer, my excitement for the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage reaches new heights. This pilgrimage, set to commence the weekend of May 17-19, Pentecost Sunday, is not just an event but a profound journey of faith, community and spiritual transformation.

What makes this pilgrimage particularly special to me is not only my role as the route coordinator for two routes but also my personal journey of faith that was ignited years ago on a pilgrimage much like this one.

The theme of this year's pilgrimage, "The Road to Emmaus," resonates deeply with the essence of our spiritual journey.

Just as the disciples walked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, unaware of his presence until their hearts were opened, this pilgrimage invites participants to walk together in faith, discovery and communion.

Reflecting on my own journey, I recall the pivotal moment when I embarked on my first pilgrimage as a high schooler. It was a humble beginning, fueled by a spark of curiosity and a longing for something more profound in my spiritual life. Little did I know that this journey would become a cornerstone of my faith.

One of the most memorable aspects of that pilgrimage was the generosity of local parishioners who supported us along the way. From Florida to Alabama, their kindness and hospitality sustained our spirits, reminding us of the interconnectedness

of the body of Christ. It was during this pilgrimage that I experienced a deep sense of renewal and encountered the profound presence of the Blessed Sacrament at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Now, as a coordinator for two of the pilgrimage routes, I am blessed with the opportunity to facilitate a similar transformative experience for others.

The beauty of this pilgrimage lies not only in its structured events but also in the spontaneity of encounters and shared experiences along the way. As participants come together from diverse backgrounds and regions, there is a palpable sense of unity and shared purpose, echoing the disciples' realization on the road to Emmaus that they were in the presence of the risen Christ.

For those interested in joining this pilgrimage of faith and renewal, the website [eucharisticpilgrimage.org](http://eucharisticpilgrimage.org) provides information about public events, routes and ways to participate.

May this pilgrimage be a source of that burning passion for all who embark on this sacred journey, and may it lead us closer to the heart of Christ.

For those eager to join this transformative pilgrimage, visit [eucharisticpilgrimage.org](http://eucharisticpilgrimage.org). Let's make this journey a collective step toward spiritual renewal and connection with God. Together, we'll walk in the footsteps of faith, igniting hearts and souls along the way.

Learn more about the local pilgrimage at [dmdiocese.org/eucharistic-pilgrimage](http://dmdiocese.org/eucharistic-pilgrimage)

## What does the term 'monsignor' mean?

*Q. Whatever happened to priests being named monsignors?*

A. The term monsignor means literally "my lord." In some countries it is common to address bishops as monsignor. In the United States and some other countries, we usually refer to a bishop as "bishop" or sometimes, "your excellency." The title monsignor has also been given to certain priests whom the local bishop wishes to honor or give special recognition. Only the pope can designate a priest as monsignor, but it is almost always at the recommendation of the priest's own bishop.

Several years ago, Pope Francis began restricting the nomination of priests to become monsignors. Only those who are over the age of 65 would be named. The pope said that he didn't want to encourage clericalism or to reward some who might be considered "climbers." Those who have already been given the title monsignor continue to retain that title.

*Q. In the days of John the Baptist, what did it mean for the people to be baptized? Were these people Jews or outside the Jewish faith?*



*I've Been Wondering...*

Father John Ludwig

A. Baptism in the Christian tradition is the sacrament by which a person becomes a member of the Church. The word comes from the Greek which means to dunk or to dip or to immerse. John's baptism was not conferred primarily on Jews. His baptism was called a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. John asked for a confession of sins and a manifest conversion. His baptism was provisional, and he expected someone to surpass him who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

When Jesus asked to be baptized by John it did not indicate Jesus' sinfulness, but rather his union with sinful humanity.

The synoptic gospels see John's baptism as the beginning of the messianic mission of Jesus. St. Paul sees Christian baptism as dying with Christ so that we may rise with Christ.

*Q. Can you tell me what the Easter Duty refers to?*

A. Well, it almost seems ridiculous, doesn't it? If it's a duty, it is certainly a duty which the followers of Jesus are happy and privileged to carry out. The Easter Duty is the obligation to receive the Eucharist at least once a year during the Easter time, during the seven weeks following Easter Sunday.

Over the centuries, the ordinary believer didn't receive communion very often. Part of it was due to the fact that Mass was celebrated in a language that many didn't know, and so the faithful were very passive. It also was due to the fact that many people felt obligated to go to confession every time they intended to receive communion.

Beginning in the early 1900s Catholics were encouraged to receive commu-

nion more regularly. In parishes, the Holy Name Society and the Altar and Rosary Society held "communion breakfasts" to urge the faithful to celebrate Mass and receive communion as a group.

Today, most Catholics expect to receive communion whenever they attend Mass. It wasn't always so. The communion fast today asks Catholics to refrain from food and drink for one hour before receiving communion. (Water can be taken any time.)

Earlier in the 1900s, Catholics were obliged to fast from food and liquids (even water) from midnight until communion time.

Later on, that was reduced to three hours before communion. Now it's just one hour. You can see why so many people in those earlier times didn't receive communion frequently.

*Father John Ludwig is a retired priest of the Diocese of Des Moines. Send questions to [communications@dmdiocese.org](mailto:communications@dmdiocese.org).*

## An invitation to a liturgical prayer

We are all priests from our baptism, and with that comes an invitation, namely, *to pray for the world as a priest through the prayer of Christ and the Church.*

What does that mean exactly?

Everyone who is baptized as a Christian is baptized into the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The priesthood is given to all baptized Christians and is not just the prerogative and responsibility of those who are officially ordained for ministry, and with this comes an invitation to all adult Christians.

This invitation is something very concrete. We don't have to think about what we are meant to do or invent something. Rather, we are invited to join in a practice that began in the early apostolic community and has come down to us today, that is, the practice of daily praying two sets of prayers out of a ritual set of prayers that are variously called: The Divine Office of the Church, The Liturgy of the Hours, The Canonical Hours, or The Breviary. Since the time of the earliest Christian monastics, these prayers have been a key element in the prayer of the Church, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

There are eight such sets of prayers, each meant to be said at a different time of day and linked to the mood and light of the hour. The eight sets of these prayers are: Lauds (prayed as morning prayer); Prime and Terce (prayed at various times during the morning); Sext (prayed at noon); None



By Father Ron Rolheiser

(prayed mid-afternoon); Vespers (prayed as the workday ends); Compline (prayed as a night prayer); and Vigils (prayed sometime during the night). Note the appropriateness of the name, The Liturgy of the Hours.

While there are eight sets of these prayers, only monks and nuns inside contemplative orders pray all eight of these. Priests, deacons, men and women in religious orders that are fully engaged in ministry, Protestant and Evangelical ministers, and laity who pray these "hours", normally pray only two of them, Lauds (Morning Prayer) and Vespers (Evening Prayer).

And these prayers need to be distinguished from our private prayers. These are not private meditations, but are what is called public prayer, liturgical prayer, the Church's prayer, the prayer of Christ for the world. Ideally, they are meant to be prayed, indeed celebrated communally, but they are still the public prayer of the Church even when they are prayed alone. The intent in praying them is to join the official prayer of the Church and pray a prayer that is being prayed at that same

hour by thousands (perhaps millions) of Christians around the world who, as the Body of Christ, are praying Christ's priestly prayer for the world.

Moreover, since these are the prayers of the Church, and not our own prayer, we are not free to change them or substitute other prayers for them according to our temperament, piety, or theological taste. These prayers don't have to be personally meaningful to us each day. We are praying as priests, offering prayer for the world, and that is deeply meaningful in itself, independent of whether it is affectively meaningful to us on a given day or even during a whole period of our lives. Fulfilling a responsibility isn't always affectively meaningful. In praying these prayers, we are assuming one of our responsibilities as adult Christians, that is, to pray with the Church, through Christ, for the world.

The two hours (Lauds and Vespers) that we are invited to pray each day follow a simple structure: three psalms, a short scriptural reading, an ancient Christian hymn (the Benedictus or the Magnificat), a short series of petitions, the Lord's Prayer, and a concluding prayer.

So, this is the invitation: as an adult Christian, as a priest from your baptism, as a woman or man concerned for the world and the Church, I invite you to join thousands and thousands of Christians around the world and each day pray the Church's

morning prayer (Lauds) and the Church's evening prayer (Vespers). Then, like Christ, as a priest, you will be offering sacrifice for the world. Subsequently, when you watch the world news and feel discouraged and helpless in the face of all that isn't right in the world and ask yourself, what can I do? Well, you will be doing something that's very real, praying with Christ and the Church for the world.

Where do you find these prayers, Lauds and Vespers? Books containing them can be purchased from almost any religious publishing house, Catholic or Protestant. Indeed, they need not even be purchased. Today they are available (free) online. Simply engage your search engine and type in The Liturgy of the Hours or ibreviary and you will find them.

In praying these prayers each day, whether alone or (ideally) with others, you will be assuming a special power and a responsibility given to you in your baptism and will be giving an important gift to the world. And you will never again have to struggle with the question, how should I pray today?

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website [ronrolheiser.com](http://ronrolheiser.com). Also at [Facebook.com/ronrolheiser](http://Facebook.com/ronrolheiser).*

# Scrupulosity: A psychological affliction

This article may be a difficult topic to read about, yet I write this because it is a subject that is quite unknown, often misunderstood, and at times wrongly dealt with. We know that physical pain is interpreted and formed in the brain but sourced in the body. How insulting it is when people with physical pain are told, "It's all in your head!" I remember when a doctor told me that same statement about my back pain years ago. I think I have forgiven him. But this particular affliction is sourced in the conscience of the mind. It stabs the conscience with the judging knives of fear, doubt and guilt.

In our relationships, we long to be understood by others because being understood comforts us. Nobody likes to be misunderstood; it hurts. Nobody likes to be thought of wrongly; it offends. Nobody likes to be falsely accused; it frightens. But the affliction that stabs the conscience with the full force of a guilty conviction is called scrupulosity. The scrupulous thoughts are not merely painful, they are dangerous. If they are believed by the suffering person, they can cause immense mental and emotional damage. This damage is not only within the internal nature of the one suffering, but it most often flows into their personal relationships.

## What is scrupulosity?

In Latin, the word scrupulis means "a

## Let's Get Psyched!

By Deacon  
Randy Kiel



small, sharp stone." Scrupulosity is a psychological disorder that is primarily characterized by a distorted sense of guilt and obsession. Like a small but sharp stone, it feels as though it lives within the conscience of the person. It is usually accompanied by compulsive moral dilemmas and unattainable religious practices. It is rooted in obsessive compulsive disorder. As a disorder, it is not a spiritual matter or a sin problem, but to the contrary, scrupulosity looks for sin where sin is not. This suffering will commonly speak messages to the person that they are at risk or are already in a state of mortal sin and must be more penitent. The problem then shows itself by an obsession of guilt that is unable to release the compulsion to repent because "There must be something wrong!"

The scrupulous person will have extreme difficulty making decisions and choices or being flexible with others because of the internal rigidity of fear that lives within the conscience of the person. Above all else, they deeply desire to please

God. While the desire to please God is good, this ability is unattainable by the one who suffers with this condition because in the midst of their mind's obsessive-compulsive loop, therein lies the terror of eternal damnation which may be lurking around every corner.

Catholics are not the only group of people with the risk of scrupulosity. It can affect all religions as well as other highly rigorous systems, but within religion, scrupulosity lives with a raging internal battle between holiness and sin, righteousness and failure, heaven and hell. It resides between rigidity and self-judgment.

Commonly, people don't realize that they have this condition because, as from its root of OCD, the rituals which are sought are seen commonly in Catholic practice and are often held with a high spiritual value. This makes the distinction between disorder and devoutness quite difficult. A penitent soul seeking sainthood by living a devout life may have no sign of scrupulosity or this same person may be consumed with scrupulosity. It takes time and relationship with a person to distinguish the difference. Our catholic impulses and conventional knee jerk reactions to spiritualize these matters, such as encouraging the person to go to confession or pray the rosary, will not aid the person, but will most likely further the psychological trappings of this affliction.

## What to do?

Because religion is not the cause of scrupulosity, it likewise will not be the way toward resolve. Since it is within the psychology and possibly even the biology of the person, it must be dealt with as a psychological mental health matter. While it may affect the person's spiritual life, it is not rooted as a spiritual matter or condition of sin.

If clergy are to be of assistance, their knowledge of the accuracy of Church teachings may be helpful, but beware, the scrupulous person may be more well-versed in Church teachings than many clergymen.

What is known so far for help, is that the combination of certain medications and the strong relationship with a professional mental health counselor and a spiritual director that is studied in this disorder, most often lead people to a much lighter sense of personal existence with reduced suffering.

This suffering penitent needs accompaniment, not controls and fixes, let alone isolation and abandonment. "Lord, may we be granted your patience as we walk with one another, not to control, but merely to accompany."

*Deacon Randy Kiel serves Our Lady of the Americas Parish in Des Moines. Connect with him at [randy@kardiocounseling.com](mailto:randy@kardiocounseling.com).*

# Stop scrolling, start creating: a wake-up call

The latest admonition comes from a 60-year-old social psychologist whose book hit the No. 1 spot on The New York Times' hardcover non-fiction best-seller list.

Using a smartphone threatens a child's mental well-being, Jonathan Haidt believes, and he makes the case in his book "The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Using an Epidemic of Mental Illness." His advice: no smartphones before high school, no social media before age 16.

Because social-media platforms design "a firehose of addictive content" that prods kids to forgo the social for the solitary, Haidt writes, they have "rewired childhood and changed human development on an almost unimaginable scale."

Adults are also addicted, which means we too must take a long, hard look in the mirror.

I speak from experience. I dropped my iPhone on Thanksgiving, and it landed with an ominous thud. The blinking neon in the upper-right corner looked like blood at a crime scene.

My phone was mostly dead.

## Twenty Something

By Christina  
Capecchi



Periodically I could coax it back to life with an unrepeatable series of taps and a certain angle on the charger, but it never lasted. I limped along in this state for more than a month as I ensured it was properly backed up on iCloud.

Meanwhile, I learned to live without a smartphone.

Being excused from text messaging brought surprising relief. I missed other functions of my phone: the flashlight, the alarm, the navigation. (I borrowed my parents' GPS a few times. What a dandy!)

But the biggest void was the lack of aimless online scrolling. When I climbed into bed at night, I stared at the ceiling. My mind went blank. And though the quiet masqueraded as boredom, I soon recognized it for what it was: a safe space.

I learned to accept the emptiness,

trusting it to renew me, to lead me down interesting new paths. This is what it feels like to clear your mind! This is how you evaluate your day and talk to God and come up with ideas!

The black space held infinite potential.

I had been freed from an onslaught of videos, images and text, and I was returning to the driver's seat. Shouldn't I be the one who gets to decide what I think about? Am I willing to let their algorithm become my agenda?

Mostly I thought about the imagination. Do I want to create or consume? So often we have to pick one. Though I'm a writer by trade with a host of creative interests, I'd been defaulting to consumption day after day, shackled to a small glowing screen.

Now I'm writing fiction, which feels like swinging a bat with my left hand. I'm experimenting with rhyme. I'm doodling with a pencil. And I created a folder on my desktop titled "Imagination File" for fresh ideas untethered to paychecks or deadlines.

If Christians are called to imitate the Creator, then we are called to create. This means we must guard our sense of

wonder, filling up on beauty like heaping bouquets of lilacs. We must open our eyes and use our hands, making something out of nothing – with words, with a paintbrush, with a half-empty fridge.

St. John Paul II issued this summons in his 1999 letter to artists, writing: "You are invited to use your creative intuition to enter into the heart of the mystery of the Incarnate God and at the same time into the mystery of man."

That's as epic as it gets. But it can't happen if you're busy watching TikTok.

Earlier this spring I spotted the perfect bench in Lower Manhattan's Washington Square Park. It was beneath a cherry-blossom tree in full bloom. I sat down and gazed upward, absorbing the outstretched pink. Then I noticed the woman beside me, a 60-something clasping a Danielle Steel paperback and beaming. We smiled and congratulated each other on our good fortune at finding the premiere seat in the house and our good sense to embrace it.

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

# Finding gratitude in what is given

By Effie Caldarola  
OSV News

One morning, I was half-listening to National Public Radio as I quickly prepared for an appointment. Into the shower, grab the coffee, find the toothbrush and in the midst of this, bits and pieces of the day's news.

Then, "StoryCorps" was playing. An independent nonprofit, StoryCorps exists to let people tell their stories. According to their website, since 2003, they've helped "nearly 700,000 people across the country have meaningful conversations about their lives." These stories are housed in the U.S. Library of Congress.

The people who tell their stories are ordinary people, if any child of God on this earthly pilgrimage qualifies as "ordinary."

My ears perked up when I realized the family talking in the story was journeying through the terminal illness of the family's husband and father, who we learned at the end had died shortly after the recording was made.

His wife remarked that people would tell her they were hoping for a miracle. She resisted this, because she said, "My whole life has been a miracle," referencing her relationship with this man she loved.

That line captured my attention, and her comment infiltrated my whole day. I saw in her words the spirituality of grati-

tude.

Because true gratitude, a very deep well, is profoundly spiritual.

Our consumer culture tempts us to glide over the richness and depth of real gratitude and to feel thankful for material things and the completion of our ambitions.

Years ago, I belonged to a Jesuit parish on a university campus. Our beloved young pastor, Jesuit Father Pat Malone, was quite ill. Because of treatments that had negatively affected his immune system, the day came when he could no longer celebrate Mass for us. I will never forget a Sunday morning, walking down the sidewalk to Mass, when we saw Father Malone, standing on the hill above us, alone outside

the Jesuit residence, where he could wave good morning but keep a safe distance. It wasn't long before he died, but in my memory, he stands there still, a solitary figure wanting to be one with his flock. After his death, a compilation of his writings and homilies was published.

There was one line that I have carried with me ever since: "It is gratitude that ultimately asks one thing, but at a great price: fall extravagantly in love with what is given."

*Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master's degree in pastoral studies from Seattle University.*

# Iowa bishops opposes state's migration enforcement

The Iowa bishops through the Iowa Catholic Conference issued the following statement on migration on May 1, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker.

On this feast day of St. Joseph the Worker, we want you to know of our concern for the health and safety of all migrants and their families, no less than the other residents of our state. Pope Francis has said that chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel, which calls us to welcome the stranger, is "a constant admonition to see in the migrant not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door." We are ready to serve in accordance with our sincerely held religious beliefs, following the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The situation at the southern border has engendered fear and a resolution by many to look for local solutions. At the state level, we have opposed migration enforcement measures such as SF 2340 because they place a disproportionate emphasis on punitive sanctions, undermine family unity, reduce humanitarian protections, and provide no viable solutions for long-time residents without legal status. Nor can the State of Iowa simply "remove" people to another sovereign nation without that country's permission.

It is especially problematic that SF 2340 would explicitly allow state officials to prosecute an individual for state immigration

crimes, even if that person's application for immigration relief is pending before federal authorities or they have actually received federal authorization to be present. Further, state and local officials have little training in interpreting federal immigration law. We ask officials to ensure the protection of human rights and dignity of the persons involved. Families should receive special consideration and not be separated.

We also express our solidarity with Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso and the Texas bishops, who insist that the dignity of migrants be respected while our country exercises its right to maintain its borders.

While Catholics may disagree within the limits of justice on the specific approach to reforming the immigration system, we ask lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to resist easy answers and do their job. As the Iowa Catholic Conference said decades ago, we again ask for "border protection policies that are consistent with humanitarian values and with the need to treat all individuals with respect, while allowing the authorities to carry out the critical task of identifying and preventing entry of terrorists and dangerous criminals."

As we remember our history as immigrants in Iowa, let us work together towards a fair and compassionate resolution of our challenges with migration.

## Declaración del Obispo sobre Inmigración

En esta Fiesta de San Jose Obrero, queremos que sepan de nuestra preocupación por la salud y la seguridad de todos los migrantes y sus familias, no menos que los demás residentes de nuestro estado. El Papa Francisco ha dicho que el capítulo 25 del Evangelio de Mateo, nos llama a dar la bienvenida al extranjero, es "una advertencia constante para ver en el migrante no solo a un hermano o hermana en dificultad, sino a Cristo mismo, que llama a nuestra puerta". Estamos dispuestos a servir de acuerdo con nuestras creencias religiosas sinceras, siguiendo las enseñanzas de Jesucristo.

La situación en la frontera sur ha engendrado temor y la decisión de muchos de buscar soluciones locales. A nivel estatal, nos hemos opuesto a las medidas de imposición de la ley migratoria SF 2340 porque ponen un énfasis desproporcionado en las sanciones punitivas, debilitan la unidad familiar, reducen las protecciones humanitarias y no brindan soluciones viables para los residentes de largo tiempo, en EEUU, sin estatus legal. Tampoco puede el Estado de Iowa simplemente "remover" a las personas a otra nación soberana sin permiso de ese país.

Es especialmente problemático porque el SF 2340 permite explícitamente a los fun-

cionarios estatales enjuiciar a un individuo por delitos estatales de inmigración, incluso si la solicitud de alivio migratorio de esa persona está pendiente ante las autoridades federales o si han recibido autorización federal para estar presente. Además, los funcionarios estatales y locales tienen poca capacitación en la interpretación de la ley federal de inmigración. Pedimos a los funcionarios que garanticen la protección de los derechos humanos y la dignidad de las personas involucradas. Las familias deben recibir una consideración especial y no deben ser separadas.

También expresamos nuestra solidaridad con el obispo Mark Seitz de El Paso y los obispos de Texas, quienes insisten en que se respete la dignidad de los migrantes mientras nuestro país ejerce su derecho a mantener sus fronteras.

Si bien los Católicos pueden estar en desacuerdo dentro de los límites de la justicia sobre el enfoque específico para reformar el sistema de inmigración, pedimos a los legisladores en Washington, D.C., que se resistan a las respuestas fáciles y hagan su trabajo. Como dijo la Conferencia Católica de Iowa hace décadas, nuevamente pedimos que las "políticas de protección fronteriza sean consistentes con los valores humanitarios y con la necesidad de tratar a todas las personas con respeto, al mismo tiempo que permitan a las autoridades llevar a cabo la tarea crítica de identificar y prevenir la entrada de terroristas y criminales peligrosos".

Al recordar nuestra historia como inmigrantes en Iowa, trabajemos juntos hacia una resolución justa y compasiva de nuestros desafíos con la migración.

### Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund

Do you have an upcoming Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA? Do you have a donor advised fund? The Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund is a 501c(3) non-profit. Your donations would be used to support the hospitality ministry of the Des Moines Catholic Worker House by providing food and other necessities to the homeless population of Des Moines.

Donations can be sent to:  
**Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund**  
**P.O. Box 1386 Ankeny, Iowa 50021**

Or go to link below and select  
"Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund"



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## Seminarian installed as Lector, a major step on the path to priesthood



Seminarian Luke Mohan (first row, third from the left) was installed as Lector on April 22. Installation as Lector is the first of the two ministries major seminarians receive before ordination to the diaconate, the other being acolyte. Bishop William Joensen was invited to preside at the installation. Mohan attends St. Joseph Seminary and College in Yonkers, New York.

## Woman recalls praying for hostages, meeting Terry Anderson, and the power of prayer

By Jennifer Willems  
Contributing Writer

Michaelene Zawistowski of Des Moines will never forget the time she met Terry Anderson, the AP correspondent who was held hostage for nearly seven years in Beirut.

It was four years after he was freed, but the power of prayer had brought them together long before that.

She has been remembering that time in both their lives since his death on April 21.

Anderson had been abducted by Shiite Muslims, backed by Iran, in March 1985. He would become one of the longest-held American hostages by the time he was released in December 1991.

Zawistowski doesn't recall the first part of that story. It was a 1989 newspaper article about nine of the hostages and their photos, along with some basic biographical information, that made her take notice while "living my little life" in St. Paul, Minnesota. Thinking she would lose her mind under similar circumstances, she did the only thing she could do: pray.

Zawistowski committed to praying daily for the hostages in April 1989, holding their photos as she did so. In June she pon-

dered Ezekiel 34:12-13: "I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered during the mist and darkness. I shall bring them out of the countries where they are; I shall gather them together from foreign countries and bring them back to their own land."

"I was just amazed that my eyes fell on those words from Ezekiel. I almost burst out in tears because it was so plain," she said. "By this time I could not give up. I had to keep going."

Zawistowski reached out to Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani with a letter seeking to establish common ground between the cultures and values of Iran and the United States.

The letter, which was also sent to President George H.W. Bush, sought the freedom of hostages Thomas Sutherland, Frank Reed, Joseph Cicippio, Edward Tracy, Robert Polhill, Alann Steen and Jesse Turner, as well as Anderson.

Zawistowski doesn't know if her letters reached either world leader. Her prayers and the prayers of thousands of others were answered, however, and the hostages were eventually released.

Anderson returned to the United States in 1991. When he visited the University of St.

Thomas in St. Paul in 1995, Zawistowski made sure she was part of the audience. She brought with her the Time magazine published after he was freed, which he signed, and a letter and prayer card about the power of prayer.

When they looked at each other, she said, "It's like our eyes just penetrated into our souls. At that moment, it was just a very deep and complete understanding of the power of prayer."

She returned to her native Des Moines in 2018 to be closer to her father, Michael Zawistowski, who had entered a care center. A member of St. Theresa Parish, Zawistowski said her experience had taught her that prayer is a necessary, daily communication with God.

"But we can't be the person who writes the script," she said. "We have to let God do his work."

## Pastoral musicians encouraged to attend conference

Delores "Dodie" Bauman has been going to the National Association of Pastoral Musicians' conventions for years and can't wait for this summer's gathering July 8- 11 in Kansas City, Missouri.

"It's something I look forward to every year and plan and save for," she said.

The longtime organist at St. Joseph Church in Des Moines said she's been to nine of the last 10 conventions.

"They're very uplifting and thought provoking," she said.

She brings home music from publishers, meets new people from all over the country who are involved in church music, and enjoys sessions that take a spiritual approach to how music enhances the worship experience for parishioners.

"Some sessions are geared toward our call to a greater spirituality or a greater service to our communities," she said.

Bauman remembers telling her parents when she was seven years old that she wanted to be a church organist.

"I was really fascinated by the sound," she said.

Her dad purchased a small Thomas organ from the Iowa State Fair and, she said, "the rest is history."

When she was in eighth grade, she asked her principal if she could start playing the organ for Mass. The principal introduced her to religious woman who mentored Bauman, letting her sit on the bench as she played and showing her how to do it.

"I started out playing one or two hymns and over the years became familiar with everything so I could play an entire Mass by myself," she said.

Over the years, parishioners have told Bauman that music helps them worship God.

"The musical line itself, let alone the text, I have always felt helped lead to a deeper spiritual connection," she said.

Bauman serves as the secretary for the Des Moines chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. She's looking forward to connecting with other church musicians and those interested in enhancing worship during the summer convention in Kansas City.

In particular, she likes when new music is shared.

For more information on the convention, go to [npm.org](http://npm.org) or reach out to Julie Curry, director of the Des Moines chapter, at [redflutejc@gmail.com](mailto:redflutejc@gmail.com) or 515-491-4201.



Delores "Dodie" Bauman, an organist at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Des Moines, says the National Association of Pastoral Musicians conference this summer in Kansas City will invigorate music ministers.



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# Iowans embrace tornado victims

Continued from page 1

blankets and pillows, bringing them to the Neola Area Community Center.

The next day, parishioners prepared a meal and served it at the gathering center for all the workers who rushed in to help.

“This community is amazing,” said Nye. “Neola, Minden, Underwood, they branched together, like in the sermon today (in which Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches.”). Branches take care of each other. This is the best place to be for that.”

Just two days later, Bishop William Joensen was at St. Patrick Church to celebrate confirmation. He invited the parish to let him and the Diocese know if there was anything they could do to help.

Nye asked parishes of the Diocese to pray for those affected by the tornados.

Parishes in Missouri Valley and Logan began collecting items to donate.

Bishop Joensen called on all

parishes in the Diocese to hold a special collection for all those who suffered catastrophic damage from Pottawattamie and Shelby Counties down to Creston, Osceola, and Tingley at the southern border, and Pleasant Hill. (You can still give at [dmdiocese.org/giving](http://dmdiocese.org/giving))

RaeShelle Jensen was amazed at the kindness of others shown in the hours and days after the tornado.

“It’s not just Minden. It’s all the surrounding towns and communities. The overwhelming help and the organizations that have come out with food and help, it’s just ... You see it on TV but you never see it in person. It’s amazing how the people have helped out.

Mary and Jerome Michels, who ran the Minden grocery store for many years before retiring, are grateful they survived and for all the assistance they’ve received.

She said: “A lot of people experience the worst of humanity but we got to see the very best of humanity.”



Photo by Jacob Ferris

Jerome and Mary Michels heard glass break and furniture moving as they sheltered in their basement during the April 26 tornado that tore through Minden.



Photo by Bobbi Munch

The Neola Area Community Center filled with donations from people throughout southwest Iowa following the EF3 tornado that damaged many homes and farms.

## Catholic school students feed the hungry



A small group of St. Pius X Catholic School middle school students worked with Principal Alex Baranosky and a parish group to provide a food pantry on campus.

Each Friday during Lent, students joined the Urbandale Community Action Network, also known as UCAN, and the St. Pius X parish group to distribute food to those in need.

When the pastor, Father Matthew Luft said the food pantry would be set up in the parish basement, Baranosky knew it was an opportunity for students.

“As a product of Catholic education, my strongest faith-filled memories are those rooted in service to others,” he said. “After meeting with some teachers, I shared a sign up with middle school parents and immediately filled the 10 open spots. Each week, the students and I gather together to unload, set up, and distribute the food

He said: “We are no doubt living the mission of our parish to love God, love others, make disciples, and restore all things in Christ.”



Photos by Anne Marie Cox

A farm just west of Harlan suffered extensive damage. This farmer lost a grain silo, a barn, and a two-car garage. Debris was scattered through his newly planted farm fields. At right is a beam at his garage’s foundation that was snapped off.



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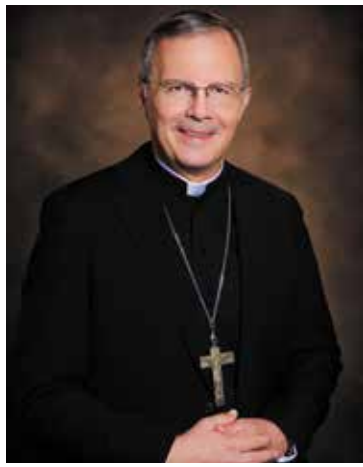
# Más de Dignidad Infinita

En la columna del mes pasado introduje el celebrado documento, “Dignidad Infinita,” (el cual de aquí en adelante se identifica como ‘DI’) publicado por el Vaticano el pasado 2 de abril, que coincide con la fecha de muerte del apóstol de la vida, San Juan Pablo II; también sigue el 75to. aniversario de la Declaración de los Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas. DI sitúa que el reconocimiento del valor de fundamental y dignidad de cada ser humano se basa simplemente en la virtud de ser miembro de la especie humana. Marca la conciencia de la inmensa bondad que tiene todo ser humano y del papel distintivo que juega en la sociedad – tanto por naturaleza como por gracia.

Todos fuimos creados para participar aquí y ahora en la comunión de los santos en proceso, cada uno con la vocación de ver algún día cara a cara a Dios. Nuestra historia personal esta tejida en una historia social que por diseño de Dios es la historia misma de la salvación. El Papa Francisco es mencionado: “el ser humano tiene la misma dignidad inviolable en cualquier época de la historia y nadie puede sentirse autorizado por las circunstancias a negar esta convicción o a no obrar en consecuencia.” (DI. Párrafo 6).

Trágicamente, la historia de la humanidad está plagada de insultos y de negaciones flagrantes de dignidad humana y que se mencionan en DI. Luego de recordar al principio el catálogo de violaciones a los derechos humanos que se identifican tanto en la “Constitución Pastoral Sobre la Iglesia en el Mundo Actual” del Concilio Vaticano II y haciendo eco a la encíclica de San Juan Pablo “Evangelio de Vida,” son pocas las sorpresas en la lista de violaciones que señala DI: pobreza extrema, guerra, el descuido de los migrantes, tráfico de personas, abuso sexual, violencia contra las mujeres, aborto, subrogación, eutanasia y suicidio asistido, marginalización de personas con discapacidades, teoría contemporánea de género y cambio de sexo, y violencia digital.

Como prometí el mes pasado, me gustaría enfocarme en sobre la práctica de la esclavitud en nuestro



Bishop William Joensen

país tanto como un hecho histórico y como una continua afectación que tiene impacto en nuestra cultura y conciencias contemporáneas. Mencioné previamente que antes de esta pasada Semana Santa participé en una “Experiencia Cuaresmal para Obispos” con cinco obispos y otras personas en un peregrinaje de oración y encuentro en las ciudades de Montgomery y Selma, en Alabama. Ahí seguimos el solemne y sórdido legado de esclavitud y racismo en nuestro país que nos ha dejado con profundas heridas asuntos que desgarran el alma sobre las cuales debemos reflexionar. Enfrentamos las ganancias y las continuas brechas en la justicia social (particularmente referente a las prácticas presentes en la justicia criminal). Se nos alentó también enfrentar honestamente el cómo ha respondido nuestra Iglesia – tanto en formas repugnantes y redentoras – particularmente durante los últimos 150 años.

Nuestra experiencia en Alabama reveló claramente la terrible gama de mal que llegó a las costas del continente americano por medio del comercio de esclavos, a manos principalmente de países europeos cristianos y católicos. Esta es una historia que debe ser familiar para todos los niños en edad escolar y de todo adulto en nuestro país, pero que puede relegarse fácilmente al basurero de la historia o ignorarse como las resurgentes protestas de la conciencia ‘woke.’

Nuestros guías, el Obispo Joseph Perry de Chicago y el Arzobispo Shelton Fabre de Louisville, nos guiaron en oración y reflexión basadas en nuestras visitas

el Museo del Legado (Museum of Legacy), el Memorial Nacional para la Paz y la Justicia (National Memorial for Peace and Justice), el Parque de Monumentos de Esculturas a la Libertad (Freedom Monument Sculpture Park), la antigua casa de la familia de Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. cuando él era pastor en lo que hoy es la Iglesia Bautista Memorial King en la Avenida Dexter.

También celebramos Misa y visitamos la Ciudad de St. Jude, que ahora es una parroquia predominantemente para católicos negros en las periferias de Montgomery. El complejo de St. Jude lo fundó el Padre Pasionista Harold Purcell como parte de su inspiración de ofrecer ministerio de educación y de servicios médicos a las comunidades negras del sur. Visitamos el complejo de servicios humanos y de formación espiritual en la misión Edmunda en Selma, la cual es impresionantemente próspera hoy en día.

Hablamos con la Srta. JoAnn Bland, sobreviviente de la marcha por los derechos civiles de Selma a Montgomery en 1965 (en donde los participantes tuvieron su propia “pascua” a causa de las atrocidades del Domingo Sangriento cerca del puente Edmund Pettis) y caminamos la ruta de esta famosa marcha.

Las imágenes mas impactantes y que permanecerán grabadas en mi conciencia las vi en el sitio donde comenzamos nuestros dos días y medio juntos: el Museo del Legado. Aquí nos enfrentamos gráficamente con la “ola” de 12 millones de esclavos capturados en África (dos millones de los cuales murieron en el mar en las embarcaciones que les transportaban), seguidos por los quejosos llantos de niños arrebatados de sus padres y esposos separados por los traficantes de esclavos una vez que desembarcaban.

En silencio, meditamos sobre lo que parecía semejar a un columbario de restos cremados, una gama de tierra reunida en cientos de jarrones de farmacias que se obtuvieron de un número correspondiente de sitios de linchamiento. Luego de la Guerra Civil, por más de medio siglo, no era raro que en las comunidades

en todo el sur y medio-oeste, que personas blancas que asistían regularmente a la iglesia, incluyendo mujeres y niños, se reunieron para los espectáculos públicos de golpizas, quemas, linchamientos y desmembramientos de hombres, en su mayoría negros.

Leímos las súplicas personales que compusieron algunas de esas víctimas quienes previo a sus ejecuciones por turbas vivieron sus propios momentos de Monte de los Olivos suplicando misericordia y liberación por parte de su Creador –sin respuesta. Solamente puedo comparar las emociones que viví con las que tuve las veces que acompañé como sacerdote capellán a adultos jóvenes a los campos de muerte Nazi en Auschwitz.

Mi amigo y hermano obispo quien preside el Comité de Justicia Doméstica y Desarrollo Humano de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, Arzobispo Ucraniano Borys Gudziak de Filadelfia, ha visto de primera mano las atrocidades que han cometido los soldados rusos en Ucrania; él comentó luego de nuestra visita al Museo del Legado: “Fue difícil para mi el poder dormir luego de la experiencia. Es imperativo que todos los americanos se familiaricen con esta historia; es una historia que todo americano debe conocer.”

La trayectoria de nuestro peregrinaje no tenía la intención de dejarnos lamentándonos en arrepentimiento o autoculpa; tenía la intención de promover una conciencia de cómo el residuo del racismo se ha convertido en políticas y prácticas en nuestros sistemas de justicia criminal. Nuestra conversación con el fundador de la Iniciativa por Igualdad de Justicia (Equal Justice Initiative) y autor de Solo Misericordia (Just Mercy), abogado Bryan Stevenson, me recordó de dicho del Papa Francisco, “Toma solamente una buena persona para recuperar la esperanza.”

Para mí, algunos pasos concretos que pienso tomar luego de nuestro peregrinar en Alabama a fines de la Cuaresma son (1) hacer una promoción más establecida buscando el final de la pena de muerte a nivel federal; y (2) a través de la agencia de la Conferencia Católica de Iowa, trabajar

para que nuestro sistema de justicia criminal adopte prácticas de justicia restaurativa y se inscriban en legislación que establezcan el margen de estas prácticas. (Si usted tiene interés de aprender más sobre esta última, le recomiendo participar en la sesión virtual “Introducción a la Justicia Restaurativa” que patrocina la Red de Movilización Católica el 17 de junio: [catholicmobilizing.org/intro-restorative-justice](http://catholicmobilizing.org/intro-restorative-justice).)

Como Diócesis, también vamos a colaborar con el Pastor Jonathan Whitfield de la Iglesia Bautista Corintia en Des Moines, quien ha obtenido un estipendio para analizar y responder a la “injusticia ambientalista.” Esta forma de injusticia sucede cuando las personas de color y otras personas vulnerables sufren efectos fuera de lo ordinario a largo plazo en términos de vivienda y de impacto económico a consecuencia de desastres relacionados con el medio ambiente u otras causas naturales – incluyendo la reciente racha de tornados que golpearon nuestro estado.

El cínico podría morderse la lengua y decir, “el Obispo Joensen se ha vuelto woke.” Yo le respondería: el Espíritu de la verdad que prometió el Señor Resucitado y Ascendido nos convence y nos llama a tener una visión cada vez más clara por medio de las experiencias que nos da Dios. El Espíritu nos motiva a ser cada vez promotores más ardientes al reconocer los abusos pasados contra la dignidad humana que tal vez hayan disminuido, pero que siguen manchando nuestras percepciones y prácticas sociales. Como concluye DI, “en la actividad política, debemos recordar que ‘cada uno es inmensamente sagrado y merece nuestro cariño y nuestra entrega’” (DI párrafo 65 citando al Fratelli tutti párrafo 195 del Papa Francisco.)

Personalmente, como alguien que desea ser campeón de la dignidad humano y pastor de almas, cualquier “conversión” que hay tenido debe aumentar mi propia agencia como ministro de la reconciliación y de la esperanza. Mi oración es que se me unan muchos de ustedes que ya son apasionados defensores de la vida y dignidad humana.

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Eastern Iowa



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neil.pfeifer@kofc.org  
Western Iowa



**Walker Bormann**  
Assistant General Agent  
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walker.bormann@kofc.org  
Eastern Iowa



**Jeremy Borchers**  
Assistant General Agent  
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jeremy.borchers@kofc.org  
Western Iowa



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Field Agent  
712-579-9066  
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Field Agent  
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