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Mirror

# THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

Vol. 57, No. 7

July 19, 2024

## From milestone moments...

*Des Moines Diocese part of a national pilgrimage highlighting the Real Presence of Jesus*



Bishop William Joensen accepts the Blessed Sacrament from Omaha Archbishop George Lucas (pictured to the left) on June 23 in Council Bluffs and begins a three-day pilgrimage through four parishes in the southwest part of the Diocese — Corpus Christi in Council Bluffs; Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Glenwood; St. Patrick in Imogene; and St. Mary in Shenandoah — before it continued its cross-country trek to Indianapolis for the historic national Eucharistic Congress.

## ...to a Eucharistic movement

*Three-year Eucharistic revival culminates in historic celebration of faith*

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff writer

About 180 people from across the Des Moines Diocese are with tens of thousands of others at the historic national Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis this week.

"It's going to be a great experience, I just know it is," said Steve Cashman, of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines.

Three years ago, the U.S. bishops launched a Eucharistic Revival focused on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The revival culminates with the Eucharistic Congress at Lucas Oil Stadium July 17-21.

Cashman is excited and hopes the enthusiasm continues long after the Eucharistic Congress.

"This is a renewal on steroids for all us Catholics and those who've been a little lackluster in our faith," he said. "You can't get

together with 60,000 Catholics and not come away excited for Jesus and our Church."

No matter how much one has studied about the Eucharist, "there's always something new when it comes to the Lord," Cashman said. "There's always an additional experience one can have that enhances not only our Eucharistic devotion but our spirituality in general."

Deacon Mark Campbell, of the Basilica of St. John Parish in Des Moines, hopes the four national Eucharistic pilgrimages across the country culminating with the Eucharistic Congress will draw people who've strayed from the faith back into the fold.

"My hope and prayer is that this is just what the Church needs to set ablaze a love for the Eucharist that brings those who have fallen away or rejected the true presence of Christ back to his Church," he said.

Gail Johll, also of the basilica parish and whose sister Diane Mahoney penned the theme song for the gathering, called the congress a monumental event that will elevate the awareness of the mystery of the body of Christ.

"The gift of the Eucharist is priceless and I am looking forward to celebrating the Lord's presence at this tremendous gathering," she said.

Attending the Eucharistic Congress will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience to share time with like-minded individuals, said Mary and Gary Haselton, of St. John Parish in Norwalk.

"It's something to help deepen our faith and our understanding of the Eucharist," said Gary.

The couple will go with two other couples with whom they share travel and faith experiences.

"I feel like this will be Christ Our Life on steroids," Mary said of the local biennial faith con-

ference coming up Sept. 28-29 at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines. "I look at it like any other relationship. You have to put some time and effort into it. It's an opportunity to go and share time with God and learn."

The Haseltons are leaving a day early to stop in Peoria, Illinois to see the exhibit for Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen, who was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Peoria and became an evangelist using television and radio.

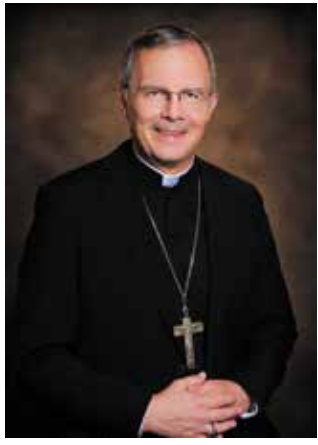
The couple prepared for the Eucharistic Congress by taking part in the cross-country pilgrimage that began in San Francisco and ran through the western part of the Des Moines Diocese before heading to Indianapolis. They went to the stops at St. Patrick in Imogene and St. Mary in Shenandoah.

"That was wonderful," Mary said.

Following the Eucharistic Congress, when the faithful encounter the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the year of mission begins. The faithful will be called to go forth and share God's love and compassion with others.

"My hope is that this once-in-a-lifetime spiritual opportunity is a catalyst for transformation of our Diocese and country," said John Gaffney, diocesan director of the Evangelization and Mission team and local coordinator for those going to Indianapolis.

"May we become a conduit of God's grace, love, and mercy to those in our communities who are broken, without hope, lost, and feel that no one cares. That this spiritual moment becomes a movement where we are a people of encounter, friendship, and communion," he said.



Bishop William Joensen

The late Catholic physician and novelist Walker Percy in his essay, “The Loss of the Creature,” ponders the challenge of allowing ourselves to really behold the world as it is without imposing preconceived notions or expectations upon the scene or objects we encounter. He poses this example and question: “García López de Cárdenas discovered the Grand Canyon and was amazed at the sight. It can be imagined: One crosses miles of desert, breaks through the mesquite, and there it is at one’s feet. Later the government set the place aside as a national park, hoping to pass along to millions the experience of Cárdenas. Does not one see the same sight from the Bright Angel Lodge that Cárdenas saw?”

He answers his own question, “No.” “Why is it impossible to gaze directly at the Grand Canyon under these circumstances and see it for what it is—as one picks up a strange object from one’s back yard and gazes directly at it? It is almost impossible because the Grand Canyon, the thing as it is, has been appropriated by the symbolic complex which has already been formed in the sight-seer’s mind” (excerpt from “The Loss of the Creature,” in *Being Human*, ed. Leon Kass, pp. 541-52, and 542-43).

Following Percy, we all carry our own personal “postcard collection”—or today, perhaps, the memory bank of “selfies” that others have shared with us—and

employ these as the gauge by which we measure our experience, often waiving our personal capacity to see and sense nature and human cultures as they actually are in lieu of what we have supposed them to be—which is most unfortunate. When we succumb to this tendency, then inevitably we reduce God’s and humans’ creations, making them more inaccessible, boring, inauthentic. True being eludes us when we elevate our imaginative constructs over the more modest, receptive, and contemplative capacity to simply watch and wonder at the world, letting what is reveal itself to us on its terms rather than flexing our own prerogative as knowers. We remain tourists rather than pilgrims set on a mysterious encounter with a destination and goal that discloses itself in graced moments we cannot orchestrate.

And, as Pope Francis has cautioned in his critique of “spiritual tourism,” this phenomenon can happen not simply among explorers of national parks and other treasures nature holds in store, but even within the spiritual and religious realm where excursions and events become constricted by the limits of our subjective “I,” rather than by a bold foray where we humbly submit to the “what” and “Who” that await us.

The Catholic Percy proposes his own strategies to slip beyond our reductive tendencies, but I turn here to what was for me, ironically (given my own presumptions), a most surprising source: the atheist social psychologist-professor and prolific author Jonathan Haidt. In one of his most recent works, “The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness,” Haidt documents and diagnoses the causes of the precipitous decline in teen mental health that has taken place since 2010 with the advent of smart phones and their four foundational harms: sleep deprivation, social depriva-

# Tourist or pilgrim?

“If you’ve been privileged to pause for a few hours, or even a few days or more to claim some time for leisure and holiday, how ‘awe-filled’ have these experiences been?”

tion, attention fragmentation, and addiction.

There is much to consider and be concerned about in Haidt’s analysis, including his recommendation that access to phones during the course of a normal school day be pretty much unilaterally curtailed; I commend your own reading of *Anxious* and anticipate serious conversations with our Catholic school educators and parents and guardians in the months ahead.

Yet Haidt also offers some positive counsel aimed toward self-transcendence that can conduct us to genuinely spiritual (albeit not inherently religious) experience that quiets the “profane mode network” of cognitive circuits that social media capitalize upon. They habituate us to “think about yourself first; be materialistic, judgmental, boastful, and petty; seek glory as quantified by likes and followers” (The *Anxious Generation*, pp. 208-9).

Haidt, in concert with another social psychologist, Dacher Keltner, author of the 2023 book, “Awe”, coaches us to cultivate a sense of awe that opens us outward rather than reinforcing the domination of an egocentric view. Keltner’s catalogue of awe experiences is sorted into “eight wonders of life”: “moral beauty, collective effervescence, nature, music, visual design, spiritual and religious awe, life and death, and epiphanies (moments in which a new and grand understanding dawns).”

Both Keltner and Haidt assign their students to take “awe walks” that may not totally step beyond urban settings, but which locate the oases of nature lurking in parks and other human-friendly spaces such as those designed or inspired by Frederick Law Olm-

sted, Sr. (which, besides Central Park in New York City, closer to home include Grandview, Greenwood, Union, and Water Works Parks in Des Moines).

Student reflections on their experiences testify to the awakening of the sense of beauty and wonder that contemplation of both nature and people can elicit, likened to “sparks” that resonate with our “biophilic” attraction to mingle and “affiliate with other forms of life.” There is a therapeutic, restorative effect that quiets anxiety and stress—but only if we set aside both our phones and our preconceptions. A new habit of being begins to take precedence that obliges investment of our own sweat equity, yet quickly leads us to acknowledge that what we receive far transcends our own initiative and effort.

In contrast to full-fledged awe, Haidt compares the experience where you “see a photo of Victoria Falls, taken from a drone that gives you a better view than you could ever get in person, and yet, because the entire image is displayed on a screen the size of your hand, and because you did no work to get to the falls, it’s just not going to trigger as much awe as you’d get from hiking up to a much smaller waterfall yourself” (*ibid.*, pp. 212-15). Percy, I contend, would heartily agree.

How’s your summer awe quotient doing? If you’ve been privileged to pause for a few hours, or even a few days or more to claim some time for leisure and holiday, how “awe-filled” have these experiences been? Were you more ‘tourist’ or ‘pilgrim’? If you anticipate participating in RAGBRAI as it traverses and stops in four towns within our Diocese, do you look to cultivate a contemplative spirit in the early watch-

es of the morning as the sunrise breaks over the verdant fields of corn and forests adjoining creeks and rivers, or do you look more to be awash in suds and street celebrations? And will the ability to behold beauty and the awe it stirs as it presents itself to us speak for itself, or will the experience only be validated when one takes the requisite selfie?

In terms of my own personal awe-quotient, I got to have my cake and eat it on at least two occasions recently: the first was the June 24 morning of the Serra National Eucharistic Procession that proceeded along the Wabash Trace Trail from south of Council Bluffs to a point shy of Glenwood. The focus upon the Monstrance bearing our Eucharistic Lord carried in turn by another priest and myself surrounded both by faithful followers who alternately sang and quietly contemplated the love of the incarnate Lord sacramentally present under the cathedral ceiling of shade trees lining the trail was—pardon the colloquialism—truly “awe-some.”

And I also was blessed recently by the chance to join my brother Mark, his son and other friends at an ocean bay shore locale for days where I could simply sit and meditate upon the crashing waves advancing and receding with the tide at various hours of the day—before joining our group for another scrumptious meal, courtesy of Mark’s culinary artistry. It was a graced chance to slip beyond myself and the sometimes constraining yoke of cares and concerns that I can tend to pull down upon my soul before again turning to the mysterious Author in whom all things were created.

Only when I allow the Spirit to nudge me and call me to my true senses am I again converted from tourist to pilgrim—and at the same time, receive the peace, the energy, the desire to press on toward the Light that lies just across the canyon whose immense scale and luminosity no photo can fully capture.

## THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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## ¿Turista o Peregrino?

El fallecido médico y novelista católico Walker Percy, en su ensayo, “La Perdida de la Criatura,” medita sobre el reto de permitarnos el realmente contemplar el mundo tal y como es sin la predisposición de conceptos o expectativas impuestas ante los escenarios u objetos con los que nos encontramos. Él nos pone el siguiente ejemplo y cuestiona: “García López de Cárdenas descubrió el Gran Cañón y estaba maravillado ante la vista. Se puede imaginar: uno cruza millas de desierto, se abre camino entre los mesquites y ahí está a los pies de uno. Luego el gobierno establece el sitio como parque nacional, esperando que la experiencia de Cárdenas la puedan compartir millones. ¿No tiene alguien la misma vista de los que vio Cárdenas desde el Albergue Bright Angel?”

Él responde su propia pregunta, “No.” “¿Por qué es imposible el observar el Gran

Cañón directamente bajo estas circunstancias y verlo por lo que es — como cuando alguien levanta un objeto extraño en su propio jardín y lo observa directamente? Es casi imposible porque el Gran Cañón, como es, ha sido apropiado por el complejo simbolismo que se ha formado en la mente del visitante” (tomado de “La Perdida de la Criatura,” en *Siendo Humano*, edición Leon Kass, págs. 541-52, a la 542-43).

Siguiendo a Percy, todos tenemos nuestra propia “colección personal de postales” — u hoy en día, el banco de memoria de “selfies” que otros han compartido con nosotros — y que utilizamos como la marca con la cual medimos nuestra experiencia, frecuentemente renunciando a nuestra propia capacidad de ver y de sentir la naturaleza y las culturas humanas como son realmente en vez de lo que suponemos que son — lo cual es muy desafortunado. Cuando

caemos ante esta tendencia, reducimos inevitablemente las creaciones de Dios y de los humanos, haciéndolas menos accesibles, aburridas y sin autenticidad. El verdadero ser nos elude cuando elevamos las construcciones de nuestra imaginación sobre una capacidad contemplativa más modesta, receptiva y contemplativa, en vez de simplemente observar y maravillarnos del mundo, dejando que lo que se revela por sí mismo ante nosotros bajo sus propios términos, en vez de someterse a nuestra propia prerrogativa como concededores. Quedamos como turistas en vez de ser peregrinos fijándonos en un encuentro misterioso con un destino y una meta que se revelan a sí mismas en momentos de gracia que no podemos preparar.

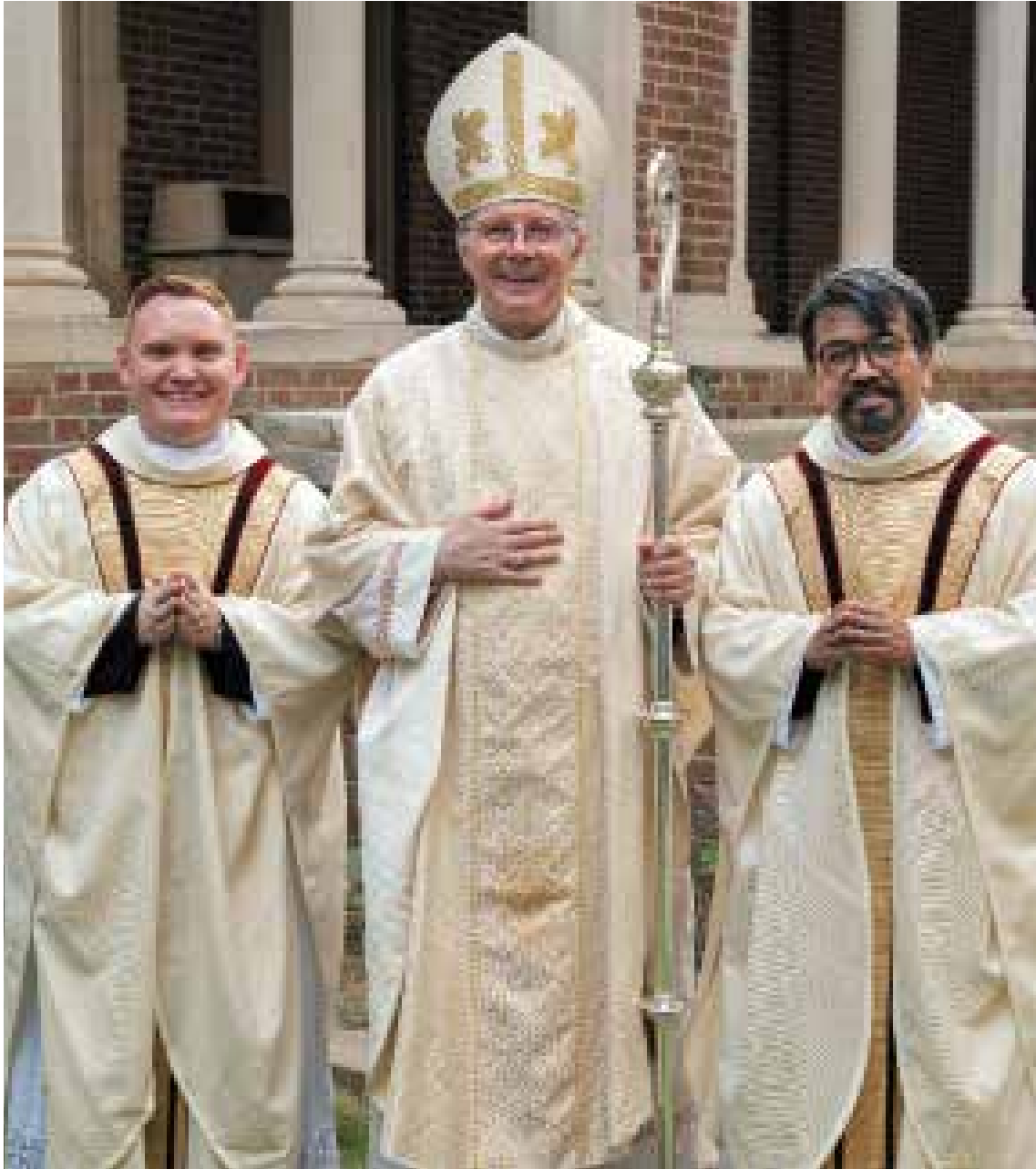
Y como lo previene el Papa Francisco en su crítica la “turismo espiritual,” este fenómeno puede que suceda no solamente entre

quienes exploran los parques nacionales y otros tesoros que nos tiene guardados la naturaleza, pero incluso en los ambientes religiosos y espirituales, en donde las excursiones y eventos pueden restringirse por los límites de nuestros “yo” subjetivos, en vez de una amplia injerencia en donde nos sometemos humildemente al “qué” y al “Quién” que nos espera.

El católico Percy propone sus propias estrategias para escaparnos de nuestras propias tendencias reductivas, pero aquí volteo a ver lo que para mí era, irónicamente (dadas mis propias presunciones), una fuente sorprendente: el profesor de psicología social, prolífico autor y ateo Johnathan Haidt. En uno de sus más recientes trabajos, *La Generación Ansiosa: Cómo el Gran Recableado de la Niñez está Causando una Epidemia de*



# Blessings abound with two new priests



Bishop William Joensen with the Diocese's newest priests ordained June 21: Father Michael Mahoney and Father Luisito Cabrera.

Photo by Ben Friedman



Bishop William Joensen lays hands on Father Luisito Cabrera, who is originally of Christ the King Parish in Des Moines. He will serve at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs.

Photo by Wilfrido Matamoros

Father Michael Mahoney, originally of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, will serve St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines.



Photo by Ben Friedman

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# Ministry of the sick restarts; volunteers needed

*“I was sick and you visited me.” (Matthew 25:36)*

**By Ryan Johnson  
Contributing Writer**

Catholic patients at the UnityPoint hospitals in Des Moines and West Des Moines will once again be able to receive Holy Communion from volunteers.

Paused during the COVID-19 pandemic due to health precautions, a group affiliated with the Diocese of Des Moines is resurrecting the program. The goal is to minister to Catholic patients, including bringing them Holy Communion. This is in addition to an existing ministry for Cath-

olic patients at MercyOne in the Des Moines area.

Lyrio Cloma-Read is the volunteer coordinator for the Hospital Eucharistic Ministry or HEM. A member of Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines, she’s excited to resume the ministry after a nearly five-year absence.

Resuming the ministry requires a significant number of volunteers. Each day, Catholic patients at UnityPoint hospitals wait for visitors and fellowship. Hospital Eucharistic Ministry volunteers receive a list of patients at the hospitals and can visit their local Catholic church

to receive the Eucharist to take to the patients.

It’s not only delivering Holy Communion, but also a ministry to serve the patients. Volunteers spend time with them. How much time depends on the volunteer and the patient.

“We are there to listen to them and how they’re doing,” said Cloma-Read.

### About the Ministry

Hospital Eucharistic Ministry in the Catholic Church refers to the support provided to individuals who are ill, suffering or facing serious health challenges. It should not be confused with the sacrament of the sick (Anointing

of the Sick), which is celebrated by ordained priests.

In the Diocese of Des Moines, the Hospital Eucharistic Ministry is completed by lay ministers who visit patients at UnityPoint hospitals to offer companionship, prayer and support.

As a volunteer in the program before the pandemic, Cloma-Read remembers visiting patients at Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines.

“I did most of my visits at Broadlawns because there were very few who could go there,” said Cloma-Read. “That’s where the need was.”

### Gathering Stage

In an effort to restart the ministry in the Diocese of Des Moines, Cloma-Read is collaborating with local parishes to gather the names of interested volunteers.

“We are currently in the gath-

ering stage,” said Cloma-Read

Once enough volunteers are identified, a Hospital Eucharistic Ministry training session will be held in August. At the training, volunteers will learn more about the ministry and can begin discernment about participating in the program.

There’s no shortage of patients at local hospitals, and Cloma-Read says she hopes volunteers can be active, as much as possible.

“As often as they can, because in the past, there were people who went twice a week, three times a week,” said Cloma-Read. “I call them ‘heroes’ because they are bringing the Lord to these patients.”

If you’re interested in learning more about being a lay minister, contact Cloma-Read at lyriocread@yahoo.com for more information.

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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 or [Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov).

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*O blessed Joseph who died in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me, I beseech you, the grace of a happy death. In that hour of dread and anguish, assist me by your presence, and protect me by your power against the enemies of your salvation. Into your sacred hands, living and dying, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I commend my soul.*

Amen

John & Mark Parrish,  
parishioners of St Francis of Assisi

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# National Eucharistic pilgrimage draws crowds

The national Eucharistic pilgrimage route that began in San Francisco and worked its way east to Indianapolis made stops June 23-25 for an outdoor Mass and adoration in Council

Bluffs, a holy hour at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Glenwood, adoration and Mass at St. Patrick in Imogene, and a holy hour at St. Mary in Shenandoah.



Hundreds gathered on a sweltering day to celebrate Mass at a park by the Missouri River, then process with the Blessed Sacrament to Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs.



Fathers Jacob Epstein and Luis Mejia follow the Blessed Sacrament as it leaves Corpus Christi Church in Council Bluffs.



A procession on the Wabash Trace trail in Council Bluffs heading to Glenwood.



Father Dan Siepker, pastor of Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood, gave a reflection during a Holy Hour.



Holy Rosary parishioners offered a bountiful lunch for tired pilgrims before a holy hour in the church.



St. Patrick Parish in Imogene welcomed the Blessed Sacrament and all of the pilgrims with tours of the historic church, dinner, adoration, an Irish band, and fireworks the night before a Mass and procession.



St. Mary Parish in Shenandoah warmly welcomed the pilgrims for a holy hour and a meal.

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Sharing our stories

# Emmaus House celebrates 50 years

By April Young  
Contributing Writer

In telling of the history of Emmaus House, I could tell you that it was founded when Bishop Maurice Dingman called a meeting in 1973 with the chancellor, Monsignor Ed Pfeffer, Jesuit Father Gene Merz, and other Jesuits to begin a house of prayer.

I could tell you of the three different locations over its 50 years. I could offer you a Gospel of Matthew-style litany of the Jesuits, religious women, diocesan priests, and lay people who have served in leadership roles.

But in my years of experience of Emmaus House, both in receiving and giving its ministry, that is what tells the Emmaus House story: our experiences.

We were named for the story in Luke 24, when the disciples walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. For 50 years, we've likewise walked with each other, belonging to each other, in this pilgrimage on earth.

With our hearts burning within us, we've recognized Christ in

the breaking of the bread. In contemplative, intimate community we've celebrated the Eucharist and discerned how to become what we receive.

We've been built not only with bricks, but with trust, earning it one sacred story at a time, holding each with profound reverence. Our foundations have been laid with secure footings and stewarded finances, as well as deeply spiritual leaders formed in the Ignatian tradition.

We have curated and nurtured a precedence of hospitality, dating back to Sister Mary Dingman's beef soup and carried into today with a disability-accessible space to ensure everyone can participate. These past 50 years have been time-marked by schedules and calendars, dates and times of retreats and spiritual direction appointments, but always with the intention that we allow enough time and space so that all who come feel safe, valued, and heard.

The spirit and history of Emmaus House is beyond what can be captured in dates, facts, wood, or stone. It echoes through every heart that has graced us with

the privilege of companionship, prayer, song, or sacred silence.

The official, unofficial anthem of Emmaus House has long been "All Are Welcome" by Marty Haugen. It is particularly the final verse that gives praise to the spirit of our community: "Let us build a house where all are named, / Their songs and visions heard / And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word. / Built of tears and cries and laughter, / Prayers of faith and songs of grace, / Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: / All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place."

All are welcome to join in celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an open house, Wednesday, July 31 from 4-7 p.m. at 3315 70<sup>th</sup> St. in Urbandale.

*April Young is the associate director of Emmaus House.*

*theemmaushouse.org/  
sharing-our-stories*

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April Young



## Around the Diocese

### July 21

#### Sensory-Friendly Mass

ALTOONA – A sensory-friendly Mass will take place at Ss. John and Paul Parish at 10:30 a.m. Bring materials that can assist with comfort during the liturgy: noise-cancelling headphones, wiggle seats, fidgets, etc. Contact Jenni Lihs at [jlhis@ssjohnpaul.org](mailto:jlhis@ssjohnpaul.org) with any questions or go to [ssjohnpaul.org/sensory-friendly-mass](http://ssjohnpaul.org/sensory-friendly-mass).

#### Pray a Monthly Rosary

DES MOINES -- Join fellow Iowans to pray the rosary the third Sunday of every month at 1:30 p.m. (rain or shine) at the Iowa State Capitol, west side steps. For more information call Diana at 515-974-7691 or Jeff at 515-778-6087.

#### Rosary in Shelby County

DEFIANCE – All are invited to attend the monthly Rosary for Life at 1:30 p.m. in Defiance at St. Boniface Church.

### July 25-27 Thurs.-Sat. OLIH Rummage Sale

ANKENY – Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish will have its annual rummage sale. Go to our website for more information, [olih.org/church-events/rummage-sale](http://olih.org/church-events/rummage-sale).

- July 25 4-8 p.m. (\$5 early bird entrance fee from 4-5 p.m.)

- July 26 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

- July 27 8 a.m.-Noon

### July 31

#### Emmaus House

URBANDALE – Join Emmaus House in celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Emmaus House is a ministry rooted in Ignatian Spirituality with the exercises, retreats, and spiritual direction. Open house from 4-7 p.m.

### Aug. 4 Sunday

#### Chicken Dinner

ST. MARYS - The 79th Annual Chicken Dinner will be held at the Immaculate Conception Church Hall in St. Marys, Iowa. Opening prayer will be at 12:30 p.m. with serving hours from 12:30-5:30 p.m. Carry out dinners available. Cost is adults/\$15, children ages 3-10/\$5.

### Aug. 10 Saturday

#### Mary's Meals

NORWALK – Mary's Meals summer concert series features Steve Angrisano in concert and adoration at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Parish with a BBQ at 6 p.m.

### Aug. 11 Sunday

#### Mary's Meals

DES MOINES – Mary's Meals summer concert series features Steve Angrisano at St. Theresa Parish, 5:30 p.m. meal and social time, and 6:15 p.m. concert and adoration. The Des Moines chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians invites all music ministers in the Diocese to meet and greet at the supper before the concert. Questions? Contact [desmoinesia@npm.org](mailto:desmoinesia@npm.org).

#### St. Lawrence Gathering

NORWALK – The Vocations Office will host a St. Lawrence Gathering at 2 p.m. at St. John

the Apostle Catholic Church. BBQ lunch will be provided by the Knights of Columbus. This is an opportunity for men (30 years or older) who would like to investigate the permanent diaconate. The men (and their wives, if married) will have a chance to ask questions, learn more about life as a deacon and hear others share their vocation stories. Contact [vocations@dmdiocese.org](mailto:vocations@dmdiocese.org) or 515-237-5034 with questions.

### Aug. 11-12

#### Rummage Sale

DES MOINES – St. Joseph Rosary Society is having its annual garage sale at 3300 Easton Blvd from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Aug. 12 from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Drop off times for donations are Aug. 6 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. and Aug. 7-9 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. We will not accept TVs, computers, or exercise equipment.

### Tuesday, Aug. 13

#### Mary's Meals

DES MOINES – Mary's Meals summer concert series features Steve Angrisano at Holy Trinity Parish, 5:45 p.m. dinner and 6:30 p.m. concert.

### Aug. 17 Saturday

#### Annual Ignatian Retreat Day

DES MOINES – Jesuit Father Larry Gillick will join us for the Ignatian Retreat Day, from 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at St. Mary of Nazareth in Des Moines. For more information and to register, visit our website: [theemmaushouse.org/ninth-annual-ignatian-retreat](http://theemmaushouse.org/ninth-annual-ignatian-retreat).

### Aug. 18 Sunday

#### Rosary in Shelby Co.

WESTPHALIA – Rosary for Life will be at 1:30 p.m. at St. Boniface Parish and is the occasion of our "30th year" of praying the rosary in Shelby County for life. All are invited and a reception will be held in the church hall following the prayers.

### Aug. 24 Saturday

#### Celebration of Schools

WEST DES MOINES – Join Bishop William Joensen in celebrating Catholic schools with 4:30 p.m. Mass followed by a social hour, and at 6:30 p.m., dinner and an awards presentation at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Bishop's Celebration of Catholic Schools will recognize special honorees, educators, administrators, and volunteers for their impact on our Catholic schools. This year's event will feature a keynote address from the Schweizer family, including Olympian Karissa Schweizer. To reserve your tickets visit [dmdiocese.org/giving/bishops-celebration-of-catholic-schools](http://dmdiocese.org/giving/bishops-celebration-of-catholic-schools) or email [lholms@dmdiocese.org](mailto:lholms@dmdiocese.org).

### Aug. 18 Sunday

#### Concert for Mary's Meals

HARLAN – Steve Angrisano and Mary's Meals summer concert series will be at St. Michael. A food truck will be open at 4:30 p.m. the concert and adoration begins at 6 p.m.

Look for the latest news and events in the Diocese of Des Moines online at:  
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# Priest serves parishes, community

By Ryan Johnson  
Contributing Writer

Sitting idle is not something Father Greg Leach does well. Instead, he remains active, even during his retirement as a Catholic priest for the Diocese of Des Moines.

Born and raised in Des Moines, Father Leach has served the diocese for 43 years as a priest.

Before being ordained, he developed a hobby of umpiring baseball games. He's been umpiring behind the plate for 46 years.

When he's not on a baseball or softball field, he regularly helps at St. Augustin Catholic Church in Des Moines, where he has been celebrating Mass for the past four years.

"I was baptized there, so I've gone full circle," he said. "Most of my life has been up and down 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Beaver Avenue [in Des Moines]."

Father Leach attended minor seminary at Loras College in Dubuque. After completing his undergraduate studies, he moved on to major seminary at St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland. After taking a brief break from seminary, he finished his studies at Sacred Heart Seminary in Milwaukee and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Des Moines. This September will be his 44<sup>th</sup> ordination anniversary.

## Why Umpiring?

Father Leach's dad, Vern, was an avid New York Yankees fan, and Father Leach grew up enjoying sports. His challenge was not being good enough to play competitively.

"I enjoyed the game and knew I did not have the skills to be a good player," he said. "Instead, I worked at being a good umpire."

He belongs to the Greater Des Moines Umpire Association, and he regularly umpires Little League games in Johnston in April and May. When that season ends, he moves on to high school

umpiring, which he's done for 39 years.

You can find Father Leach umpiring games four to five nights a week. He avoids weekend games because he's busy presiding over Mass.

## Volunteer Firefighter

If he wasn't busy enough as a young priest, he also spent 23 years as a volunteer firefighter. His first assignment as pastor was at St. Joseph Parish in Earling. There, he was talked into joining the local volunteer fire department. He continued serving as a volunteer firefighter throughout his priestly assignments in the Diocese, including for nine of his 10 years as pastor at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny.

"When I was [assigned] in Ankeny, I averaged 400 to 600 calls a year," he said.

Like other firefighters, he was required to complete the physical requirements to maintain his status as a firefighter. That included putting on 50 pounds of gear and completing simulations.

He gave up serving as a firefighter when he moved to St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines.

"That's more for the 20-year-olds than the 60-year-olds," he said.

Today, Father Leach is still a chaplain for the Des Moines Fire Department. He said serving as a Catholic priest and a firefighter had similarities.

"You get invited into people's lives at critical times," he said. "As priests, we're involved in the baptisms, weddings, funerals ... the significant times, you get invited into these people's lives. Life and death, literally."

What does a 75-year-old priest do to stay in shape for umpiring dozens of games each spring and summer: 20,000 steps a day. Nearby trails provide the perfect opportunity for him to get his steps in and enjoy Iowa's four seasons.



Father Greg Leach and another chaplain with the Des Moines Fire Department Chief John TeKippe.



Father Greg Leach umpires a game at Principal Park.

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The trip price per person is tentatively \$6,559\* and includes topnotch accommodations for 9 nights (based on double occupancy), breakfast and dinner daily, ground transportation within France, all gratuities, entry tickets to iconic monuments and sights, and expert guides provided by our travel partner. *Pricing will be finalized 6 months prior to departure (due to airfare).* Trip insurance is not provided by the travel agency, but is strongly recommended.

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## ¿Turista o Peregrino?

Continued from page 2

Salud Mental, Haidt documenta y diagnostica las causas de la precipitosa caída en la salud mental de los adolescentes que ha tomado lugar desde el 2010 con la llegada de los teléfonos inteligentes y sus cuatro daños fundacionales: falta de sueño, aislamiento social, fragmentación de la atención y adicción.

Hay mucho que considerar y de qué preocuparse del análisis de Haidt, incluyendo su recomendación de que el acceso a los teléfonos durante el curso normal de un día escolar sea restringido de manera unilateral; les recomiendo que lean Ansiedad por su propia cuenta y que anticipen serias

conversaciones con nuestros educadores, padres y tutores en las escuelas católicas en los próximos meses.

De igual forma Haidt ofrece un consejo positivo dirigido hacia la propia trascendencia que nos lleve a una experiencia genuinamente espiritual (aunque no inherentemente religiosa) que silencie el “modo profano en red” de circuitos cognitivos bajo los cuales se capitalizan las redes sociales. Estos nos acostumbran a “pensar primero sobre nosotros mismo; a ser materialistas, críticos, presumidos y mezquinos; buscando gloria como algo cuantificado por el número de seguidores y de marcas de ‘me gusta’” (La Generación Ansiosa, págs. 208-9).

Haidt, concertadamente con otro psicólogo social, Dacher Keltner, autor del libro del 2023 Asombro, no entrena para cultivar un sentido de asombro que nos abre hacia el exterior en vez de reforzar el dominio de un punto de vista egocéntrico. En el catálogo de experiencias asombrosas de Keltner está ordenado en “ocho maravillas de la vida”: “la belleza moral, la efervescencia colectiva, naturaleza, música, diseño visual, asombro espiritual y religioso, vida y muerte, y epifanías (momentos en los cuales nace un entendimiento nuevo y grandioso).”

Ambos Keltner y Haidt asignan a sus estudiantes a tomas “caminatas de asombro” que no necesariamente les lleven más allá de establecimientos urbanos, pero que puedan encontrar los oasis de la naturaleza que surgen en parques y otras instalaciones accesibles para las personas, tales como las que diseñó o inspiró Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. (los cuales, además del Central Park en la ciudad de Nueva York, más cercano a casa incluyen los parques Grandview, Greenwood, el Union, y Water Works Parks en Des Moines).

Las reflexiones de sus estudiantes sobre sus experiencias daban testimonio al despertar de los sentidos de belleza y maravilla que surgen de la contemplación tanto de la naturaleza como de personas, similar a las “chispas” que resuenan con nuestra atracción “biofílica” a entrometernos y a “relacionarnos con otras formas de vida.” Hay un efecto terapéutico y restaurador que calma la ansiedad y el estrés – pero solamente si dejamos de lado nuestros teléfonos y nuestros prejuicios. Un hábito comienza a tomar el precedente que obliga a invertir

de nuestra propia equidad del sudor, y que rápidamente nos lleva a reconocer que lo que recibimos trasciende por mucho nuestros propios esfuerzos e iniciativas.

En contraste al asombro pleno, Haidt compara la experiencia en donde “vemos una foto de las Cataratas Victoria, tomada desde un dron y que nos da una mejor vista de lo pudiéramos ver en persona, y, aun así, como la imagen completa se muestra en una pantalla del tamaño de nuestra mano, y como nosotros no trabajamos para llegar a las cataratas, no va a generar tanto asombro como el que tuviéramos por caminar a una catarata mucho más pequeña por nosotros mismo” (ibid., págs. 212-215). Percy, sostengo, estaría completamente de acuerdo.

¿Cómo vas u grado de asombro este verano? Si han tenido el privilegio de hacer una pausa por algunas horas, o incluso por algunos días o más para recuperar un tiempo de ocio y de descanso, ¿cómo han sido estas experiencias de asombro? ¿Ha sido más ‘turista’ o peregrino? Si anticipa participar en el RAGBRAI en su recorrido y paradas en cuatro poblados dentro de nuestra Diócesis, ¿busca usted cultivar un espíritu contemplativo en las horas tempranas de la mañana cuando la salida del sol se asoma sobre los verdes campos de maíz y en los bosques de las cañadas y ríos adyacentes, o buscan más el empaparse de los baños y celebraciones en las calles? Y ¿hablará por sí misma al presentarse la posibilidad de observar la belleza y el asombro que genera, o se validará solamente cuando alguien se tome la respectiva selfi?

En término de mi propio nivel de asombro, debo tener mi propio pastel y comerlo, al menos en dos

ocasiones recientes: la primera fue en la mañana del 24 de junio en la Procesión Eucarística Nacional Serra que procedió a lo largo de la ruta de Wabash Trace Trail del sur de Council Bluffs hasta un punto cerca de Glenwood. El enfoque en la Custodia que portaba a nuestro Señor Eucarístico, que nos turnábamos otro sacerdote y yo y estando rodeados de fieles seguidores que tomaban turnos en cantar y en contemplar en silencio el amor del Señor encarnado sacramentalmente y presente bajo el techo catedrático de la sombra de los árboles que se alineaban en el camino y que fue – perdonando el coloquialismo – verdaderamente “asombroso.”

También fui bendecido recientemente con la oportunidad de unirme a mi hermano Mark, a su hijo y otros amigos en un local en la orilla de la bahía del océano por algunos días en donde pude simplemente sentarme y meditar sobre las quebrantes olas que se acercaban y alejaban con la marea por varias horas del día – antes de regresar con nuestro grupo para disfrutar de otra deliciosa comida, cortesía de la habilidad culinaria de Mark. Fue una gran oportunidad para ir más allá de mí mismo y del yugo de asuntos y ocupaciones que tienden a desgastar mi alma antes de volver hacia el misterioso Autor por quien fueron creadas todas las cosas.

Solamente cuando permite que el Espíritu me llame a mis verdaderos sentidos y me transformo nuevamente de turista a peregrino – y al mismo tiempo, recibo la paz, la energía, el deseo de seguir adelante hacia la Luz que está al otro lado del cañón y que, su inmensa escala y luminosidad no pueden ser captadas con una fotografía.

## Candidacy Mass



Bishop William Joensen formally accepts seminarians Matthew Johll, of the Basilica of St. John Parish in Des Moines, and Kyle Rowan, of Sacred Heart Parish in Bedford, into the candidacy phase of the seminary program, a major step in their journey to priesthood.

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“I invite you to join me in subscribing to our monthly newspaper for inspirational stories and spiritual reflections of hope, to obtain the latest news on the Church in central and southwest Iowa, and to become aware of ways to support others in need,” said Bishop William Joensen.

To subscribe, mail \$30 to The Catholic Mirror, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50309 or go to [dmdiocese.org/giving](http://dmdiocese.org/giving).

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# Bags to Mat project serves others while building community



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Shirley Herbst and Betty Foxhoven, both of St. Joseph Parish in Earling, examine a mat created out of plastic bags that will be donated for the homeless.

**By Anne Marie Cox**  
Staff writer

Over and under, over and under.

Shelby County Catholics have undertaken a new project that recycles plastic bags by making them into sleeping mats for the homeless. In addition to recycling and helping the needy, they're building community as interested parishioners at nearby parishes join in.

It started when Betty Foxhoven, of St. Joseph Parish in Earling, read an article about another church making the mats.

"I thought, what a nice way to use plastic bags that everybody accumulates in their house," she said. "It's been a good project. All

of a sudden, we're getting other people coming in and asking if they could learn how to do that."

The effort began during Lent as a corporal work of mercy.

"In Lent, we should do almsgiving for the poor," Foxhoven said. "In every way, this is our almsgiving for the poor."

Parishioners from St. Joseph in Earling and St. Peter in Defiance started the effort. Then a group from St. Mary in Portsmouth came with plastic bags. It takes about 480 plastic grocery bags to make one mat. The mats will be donated to New Visions in Council Bluffs.

On one spring day, a group worked on a window frame that was used to hold the pieces in place while they weaved the bags into a mat. Another mat was being

made on an old quilting frame.

"I came up to the fish fry and they had it displayed in the corner," said Zita Smith, of Portsmouth. She brought a big bag of plastic bags.

"It's really neat. I just thought, anything we can do to help. It takes a long time to make one mat and there's a lot of homeless. I thought this is something they can use."

## Are you Called to Serve in the Catholic Church?

In an effort to encourage diaconal vocations within the Diocese of Des Moines, the Vocation Office is hosting a St. Lawrence Gathering, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. We invite all interested men of the Diocese of Des Moines to attend.

The St. Lawrence Gathering will offer men that are called to diakonia (to service) an opportunity to investigate the Permanent Diaconate. The men (and their wives if married) will have a chance to ask questions in a relaxed atmosphere, learn more about life as a deacon and hear others share their vocation stories. Deacon Jim Houston, Director of the Permanent Diaconate, along with other deacons will be present to share their experience of being an ordained Deacon, answer questions, offer support and encouragement for the men and their wives as they follow the Lord's call.

BBQ Lunch will be provided by the Knights of Columbus Council 7556, St. John, Norwalk

Priests and Deacons if you know men that might be interested in the Permanent Diaconate, please invite them and plan to attend with them.

**St. Lawrence Gathering:**

St. John the Apostle Catholic Church,  
720 Orchard Hills Dr.

Norwalk, Iowa.

August 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.

So that we know how much food to prepare, please reserve a spot at St. Lawrence Gathering, email [vocations@dmdiocese.org](mailto:vocations@dmdiocese.org) or call, 515-237-5034.

Please contact the Vocations Office with questions: [vocations@dmdiocese.org](mailto:vocations@dmdiocese.org) or 515.237.5034



Diaconate Formation Cohort XVII- Aspirancy Retreat June 2024 - Creighton Retreat Center



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# Do you hear what I hear?

Christmas in July?

What would be your vote?

For some reasons, I'd vote "yes" and others "no." No, due to endless hours of taking Christmas down (never as fun as putting Christmas up) as well as the omnipresence of our culture's contemporary versions of Christmas hymns. I highly doubt that a baby in a manger was the intent of "All I Want For Christmas..." Yet, even in July, I could say "yes" to listening to songs such as Silent Night, Joy To The World, Drummer Boy and Do You Hear What I Hear.

"Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy, 'Do you hear what I hear?'"

To be heard is so important to God that he gave us priests, prophets and kings. He also gave us Scriptures, oral traditions, Gospels, and his Son, Jesus.

He then gives us grace to hear him a second time in case we did not hear him the first time. These are called second, third, fourth, etc. chances. These are called grace.

While hearing happens through the senses, listening is the result of an internal disposition of the mind and heart. The best disposition for good listening is called active listening.

The skill of being a good listener is

## Let's Get Psyched

By Deacon Randy Kiel



something that everyone can develop and ought to put effort towards. It can actually become an art form as well as a spiritual act of hospitality. To listen to another is a charitable work. Yes, it takes work to listen well. There are five areas that are required for quality active listening: be still, have faith, give care, use sight, restate the message.

- Be still. To still oneself is not easy. Multi-tasking while another is talking ALWAYS reduces the comprehension of someone's message.

- Have faith. This is another act of grace. Assume the positive intent of the speaker rather than doubt and suspicion. Can't you feel the sense of "never mind" when someone isn't fully listening to you?

- Give care. Empathy for the person speaking is essential for successful communication. This comes more easily

for some than others, but we can usually increase our empathy by checking in on our personal motive... "Am I listening because I care?"

- Use sight. See the whole person who is speaking to you. Recognize that inside all of us is vulnerability, difficulty and fear. These elements warrant the need for dignity of acknowledgment, not oversight. To fully see another is to reflect the dignity of God's greatest creation, mankind.

- Restate the message. Restating verbatim what was said saves tremendous difficulties especially when speaking of critical and delicate matters. It prevents the dispute of "That's not what I said!" Avoid the risk of re-interpreting the person.

The five common areas that produce poor listening are fatigue, distractions, disinterest, apathy, and wrongful interpretation. I will resist elaborating on these words because I believe that if we simply examine ourselves in "the mirror" we will see how we have acted upon all five of these at some time with someone.

The book of Proverbs tells us that a fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only takes pleasure in his opinion. And later again, Proverbs states that if a person gives an answer before he hears the mes-

sage, it is his folly and his shame.

Let's explore how to use active listening in our prayer life.

First, see God as an active listener. In seeing God as an active listener, we realize that he sits still when we speak to him. We experience his good faith in what we are trying to say. We feel the depth of his care. A strong sense of validation will be gained because of his seeing us fully. And he is able to restate exactly what we are saying to him.

Second, consider how to use active listening in our prayers. To actively listen to God means that we will be still before him. We will have faith that he sees us positively vs. shamefully. Our sense of being cared for as his child becomes more secure. We will feel more known because we offer ourselves over to be fully seen, and also fully heard. He will not only hear our words, for we also entrust our souls to fully engage with the soul of Christ.

"O Lord, may you and I actively hear one another. May my soul's delight be lifted as I more fully hear you as you always fully hear me."

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## What did it mean for people to be baptized?

*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?*

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 hu-



Father John Ludwig

## I've Been Wondering...

manity. 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. In Luke, the angel tells Mary "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." In Matthew, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream saying Mary's child was conceived through the Holy Spirit. Was this terminology (Holy Spirit) known to Jewish people? -M.Z.,*

*Des Moines*

A. Only two of the four gospels speak of the birth of Jesus: Matthew and Luke. These are often referred to as the "infancy narratives." The gospels of Mark and John begin with Jesus as an adult, beginning his public ministry. Matthew gives his attention to Joseph, while Luke gives his attention to Mary. While we often look to the scriptures for concrete historical information, the gospels often con-

centrate on the person and the character of the individual. Only Matthew gives us the story of the Magi coming from the East and their encounter with the wicked King Herod. Only Luke gives us the appearance of the angels to the shepherds tending their flocks. Both gospels try to set the stage for the development of the rest of their gospel - Who is this Jesus? How did we come to know him? How was he received? There are many similarities in the gospels, but there are also important differences.

The Hebrew word for Spirit (Ruach) is also the word for "breath." Trinity as we have come to know it was not part of the Jewish tradition.

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

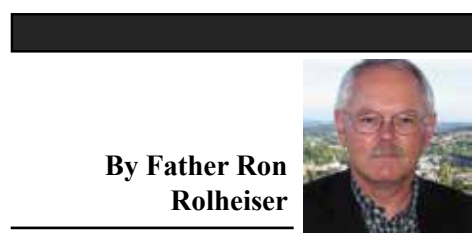
## Praying when it seems useless

Prayer is most needed just when it seems most useless. Michael J. Buckley, one of the major spiritual mentors in my life, wrote those words. What does he mean by them?

In the face of so many problems, we can get the feeling that praying about them is useless. For example, in the face of the discouragement and helplessness we feel before some of the mega problems in our world, it is easy to feel that praying about them is useless. What will my prayer do vis-à-vis the wars raging in different parts of the world? What's the value of my prayer in the face of injustice, famine, racism, and sexism? What will my prayer do vis-à-vis the divisions and hatred now dividing our communities? It is easy to feel that praying about these situations is useless.

The same holds true about how we often feel about the value of prayer when serious illnesses beset us. Will prayer bring about a cure for someone with terminal cancer? Do we really expect a miraculous cure? Mostly, we don't, but we continue to pray despite the feeling that our prayer won't in fact change the situation. Why?

Why pray when it seems useless to do so? Theologians and spiritual writers have given us various perspectives on this which are helpful, though not adequate. Prayer, they say, is not meant to change



By Father Ron Rolheiser

the mind of God, but to change the mind of the person who is praying. We don't pray to put God on our side; we pray to put ourselves on God's side. As well, we have been taught that the reason it might seem that God doesn't answer our prayers is that God, like a loving parent, knows what is good for us and answers our prayers by giving us what we really need rather than what we naively want. C.S. Lewis once said that we will spend a lot of time in eternity thanking God for those prayers that God didn't answer.

All of this is true and important. God's ways are not our ways. Faith asks us to give God the space and time to be God, without having to conform to our very limited expectations and habitual impatience. We can indeed be grateful that God doesn't answer many of our prayers according to our expectations.

But still, still ... when Jesus invited us to pray, he didn't do so with a caveat: but you need to ask for the right things if you

expect me to answer your prayer. No, he simply said: Ask and you will receive. He also said that some demons are only cast out by prayer and fasting.

So, how might the demons of violence, division, hatred, war, hunger, global warming, famine, racism, sexism, cancer, heart disease, and the like be cast out by prayer? How is prayer useful in any practical way in the face of these issues?

In brief, prayer doesn't just change the person who is praying, it also changes the situation. When you pray you are in fact part of the situation about which you are praying. Sincere prayer helps you become the change you are praying to bring about. For example, praying for peace helps you to calm your own heart and bring a more peaceful heart into the world.

While this is true, there is also a deeper reality at play. More deeply, when we pray there is something happening that goes beyond how we normally imagine the simple interplay between cause and effect. By changing ourselves we are changing the situation; yes, but in a deeper way than we normally imagine.

As Christians, we believe that we are part of a body, the Body of Christ, and that our union there with each other is more than some idealized corporate community. Rather, we are part of a living organism in

which every part affects every other part, just as in a physical body. Because of this, for us, there is no such a thing as a private act - good or bad. I hesitate to suggest that this is analogous to the immune system inside the human body because this is more than an analogy. It's real, organic. Just as in a human body there is an immune system which protects the health of the overall body by killing off cells and viruses that are endangering its health, so too inside the Body of Christ. At all times, we are either healthy cells bringing strength to the immune system inside the Body of Christ or we are a virus or cancerous cell threatening its health. Praying about an issue makes a difference because it helps strengthen the immune system inside the Body of Christ - precisely as it is dealing with the issue about which we are praying.

While on the surface prayer can sometimes feel useless, it is doing something vital underneath - something most needed precisely when we feel that our prayer is useless.

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



# Iowa Supreme Court upholds state's 'heartbeat' abortion law

By Barb Arland-Fye  
Contributing Writer

DES MOINES — Iowa's Catholic leaders praised the Iowa Supreme Court's decision June 28 upholding the constitutionality of a state law prohibiting abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected, as early as the sixth week of pregnancy.

In a 4-3 vote, the Supreme Court reversed a Polk County District Court judge's decision that blocked enforcement of the statute and sent the case back to the district court to dissolve the temporary injunction against it.

"When that happens in the near future, the law will go into effect," said Tom Chapman, executive director of the Iowa Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of Iowa's bishops. Abortion has been legal in Iowa up to the 20th week of pregnancy.

The state's bishops and diocesan administrator for the Davenport Diocese expressed their appreciation in a statement issued June 28 through the ICC:

"We celebrate that the Iowa Supreme Court has recognized there is no right to an abortion to be found in the Iowa Constitution and, in so doing, has lifted an injunction against the law

that would prohibit abortions after a heartbeat can be detected. As Pope Francis has said, 'Let us respect and love human life, especially vulnerable life in a mother's womb.' For us, this is a question of the common good and human dignity.

"Human life is precious and should be protected in our laws to the greatest extent possible. As a state and as a society, we should commit ourselves to working for the protection of all vulnerable populations from violence — wherever individuals and groups are at risk. We urge people of good will in Iowa both to work for an end to the practice of abortion and to join us in tireless, unrelenting and compassionate solidarity with pregnant women in distress, with the men who fathered these children, and with families in need."

The statement's signers are Dubuque Archbishop Thomas Zinkula, Des Moines Bishop William Joensen, Sioux City Bishop Walker Nickless, and Davenport Diocesan Administrator Father Ken Kuntz.

In its ruling, the Iowa Supreme Court said, "We have previously held that abortion is not a fundamental right under the Iowa Constitution. ... Applying our established tiers of scrutiny,

we hold that abortion restrictions alleged to violate the due process clause are subject to the rational basis test. Employing that test here, we conclude that the fetal heartbeat statute is rationally related to the state's legitimate interest in protecting unborn life."

Signed into law in 2023, the statute prohibits physicians, with certain exceptions, from performing an abortion after detecting a fetal heartbeat. The statute includes exceptions that allow an abortion after detection of a fetal heartbeat if a medical emergency exists or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. The medical emergency exception allows an abortion to "preserve the life of the pregnant woman whose life is endangered by a physical disorder, physical illness, or physical injury, including a life-endangering physical condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy," the Iowa Supreme Court said.

Gov. Kim Reynolds applauded the ruling in a statement June 28. "There is no right more sacred than life, and nothing more worthy of our strongest defense than the innocent unborn," she said.

*Barb Arland-Fye is the editor of The Catholic Messenger, Diocese of Davenport.*

# Ohio pastor named bishop of Davenport

DAVENPORT, Iowa (OSV News) -- Bishop-designate Dennis G. Walsh, who believes that "before you can lead, people have to trust you," will become the 10th bishop of the Diocese of Davenport.

Pope Francis named the priest of the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio, as Davenport's new shepherd. The appointment was publicized in Washington June 25 by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

A native of Lima, Ohio, Bishop-designate Walsh, who turns 59 July 16, will be ordained and installed Sept. 27 at a location and time to be determined, diocesan leaders said. He succeeds now-Archbishop Bishop Thomas R. Zinkula of Dubuque.

After six years as Davenport's shepherd, Bishop Zinkula was named to head the Iowa archdiocese July 26, 2023.

Father Kenneth Kuntz, diocesan administrator, introduced the bishop-designate to diocesan staff and the news media. "For the past eight months we have prayed a diocesan prayer awaiting a new bishop. In part it prayed for 'a pastor who will please you by his holiness and will show us your watchful care,'" Father Kuntz said. "Today I can announce that our prayers have been answered" with the appointment of Bishop-designate Walsh.

The Diocese of Davenport, established in 1881, covers 11,438 square miles in southeastern Iowa and has a Catholic population of over 83,000 out of a total population of about 787,000.



OSV News photo/Lindsay Steele, The Catholic Messenger  
Bishop-designate Father Dennis G. Walsh speaks to staff of the Diocese of Davenport at St. Vincent Center in Davenport on June 25.

# Flooding hits Sioux City Diocese hard

By Dawn Prosser  
Contributing Writer

Numerous communities throughout the 24-county Diocese of Sioux City in northwest Iowa were affected by historic flooding due to heavy rains in mid-June, resulting in swollen rivers and lakes.

The enormous amount of water has flooded and closed roads, destroyed homes and businesses, and affected the lives of thousands of people.

Seventeen counties within the diocese were included in Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds' disaster declarations.

The National Weather Service's forecast area of southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa and southwestern Wisconsin saw record 48-hour rainfall over the weekend of June 22-23, according to a report from KROC 1340 AM, a radio station in Rochester, Minnesota. On June 16, severe storms, flooding, straight-line winds, and tornadoes began to occur in the region.

On June 23, the Iowa Department of Transportation recommended against travel to several counties. Dozens of roads in northwest Iowa are closed, making travel difficult or impossible. The Red Cross set up shelters in northwest Iowa for those who evacuated their homes -- several communities or parts of communities are still underwater.

"As numerous areas of our diocese have been devastated by historic flooding, we have thousands of people in need. We re-

alize that homes, vehicles, possessions and perhaps livelihoods have been lost. People of all faiths are suffering. The faithful of the Diocese of Sioux City and I are praying for those affected by the flooding and will help in any way we can," Bishop Walker Nickless of the Diocese of Sioux City said in a statement.

The bishop held a relief drive

for flood victims. The diocesan office of Catholic Charities is receiving funding from Catholic Charities USA to provide direct financial assistance to flood victims in the area.

*Dawn Prosser is the editor of The Lumen, Diocese of Sioux City.*

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St. Ambrose University seeks a part-time (20 hrs/wk), August 1-May 31, energetic, relationship oriented person of faith to direct music ministry through the Catholic Campus Ministry department. Reports to Director of Campus Ministry, responsibilities include: leading and forming the student choir and musician team to provide music for Sunday liturgies, prayer services, retreats and Praise & Worship nights; and maintaining a ministerial presence for students. Preferred skills include experience with social media and digital outreach, music notation software, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and/or Publisher. Successful candidate will have at least a Bachelor's degree in theology, music, or a related field (Master's degree preferred), along with experience in ministry, Catholic liturgy and liturgical music, choir direction, and accompaniment for liturgy (piano experience necessary). Ability to work evenings and weekends required. Open until filled. At St. Ambrose University, we are more than an institution of higher learning; we are a beacon for those seeking to impact the world significantly. Guided by our foundation beliefs and values, our mission and vision reflect our dedication to fostering an inclusive, ethical, and dynamic learning environment. As an equal opportunity institution, St. Ambrose actively seeks applications from members of underrepresented groups. Please apply online at <https://stambroseuniv.applicantlist.com> and submit a letter of interest, resume and contact information for three professional references. EOE

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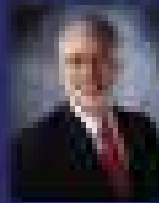
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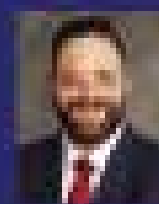
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