



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

PRESSRELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: Nov. 16, 2010
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Diocese of Des Moines kicks off yearlong celebration of its 100th anniversary

On Sunday, Nov. 21, the Diocese of Des Moines will launch a year of jubilee for its 100th anniversary with the theme “On a Journey Together Celebrating Evangelization: Past, Present and Future.” The year will conclude on Nov. 6, 2011 with a celebration and Mass at Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines.

Parishes have been invited to participate on a local level. For example, St. Patrick Church in Imogene plans to have trumpet players at the 8:30 a.m. Mass and read a proclamation for the centennial from the choir loft. At a dinner later in the day, the parish will have a drawing for a \$100 bill and cookies that say “100 Years” as part of the kick-off.

Parishes are celebrating their own anniversaries in conjunction with the diocesan centennial. In December, Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny will sell commemorative Christmas ornaments for the parish’s 50th anniversary, and St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines is planning a celebration Dec. 7/8 for its 60th anniversary as a parish.

A diocesan Centennial Steering Committee has worked for the past 18 months to a craft multifaceted plan. To honor the past, a nationally known church historian will

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write a comprehensive history of the diocese. A committee has put together a series of cultural events. Youth from diocesan schools and parish religious education programs throughout the diocese are making visits to St. Ambrose Cathedral to be with Bishop Richard Pates for Mass and a tour of the grounds. In addition, the diocese continues to identify needs and look to the future. Plans for parish expansion, a Cristo Rey school, and senior housing are currently underway. A Spanish immersion program for elementary school children began at St. Anthony School in Des Moines as a result of planning for the diocesan centennial.

The spiritual groundwork for the centennial was laid more than a year ago, when over 8,000 people in the diocese's 82 parishes began a four-season program called "On a Journey Together." People have gathered in small faith-sharing groups to share their knowledge and love of God and talk about how they live the Gospel every day.

This process of "On a Journey Together" will culminate on Nov. 6, 2011, when Archbishop Harry Flynn, archbishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, is keynote presenter at the celebration and Mass concluding the centennial.

History

In the early 1800s, the Diocese of Des Moines was a small part of the Diocese of Louisiana, which was comprised of the territory from the Gulf of Mexico up to Canada and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

With the expansion of the Catholic Church in the West, the Diocese of St. Louis was created, and from that came many other dioceses, including the Diocese of Dubuque which was created in 1837. At the time, the Dubuque diocese included not only all of what is now Iowa but much of the western United States.

Iowa became a state in 1846, and growth continued with German and Irish settlers.

By 1911, when Pope Pius X established the Diocese of Des Moines, there were 54 parishes, 28 missions, 68 priests, and 17 Catholic schools within its boundaries.

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In 1925, Bishop Thomas Drumm announced the creation of the Des Moines Catholic Charities and the founding of the Christ Child Home, which offered a temporary home and refuge for children for 41 years.

On Oct. 4, 1979, Pope John Paul II accepted a request by farmer Joe Hays, of Truro, Iowa, to visit Iowa. He spent 42 minutes at St. Patrick Church near Irish Settlement and then celebrated a Mass before the largest crowd in Iowa history. A logo representing the seasons, fields and seeds planted was created for the event and continues to be the diocesan logo used today.

Since the 1970s, the Diocese of Des Moines has become home for many refugees and immigrants. They have come from Vietnam, Laos, Bosnia, Sudan and other African countries. Currently, refugees from Afghanistan are being helped by the diocese. In addition, the diocese has worked to meet the pastoral and social needs of immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala and other Central American countries.

The Diocese of Des Moines today serves about 130,000 people, including newly arrived Hispanic Catholics, in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa.

We invite you to join with us in celebration of our journey together, past, present and future on Nov. 6, 2011 at Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines.

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The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic includes 82 parishes in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa.