

Bishop issues first pastoral letter

In this issue of The Catholic Mirror, Bishop Richard Pates introduces his first pastoral letter to the diocese. The topic is adolescent catechesis. The young church of Des Moines is of great importance to Bishop Pates. In the letter he addresses the youth and expresses to them his desire for them to continue to grow in relationship to and with God and grow in knowledge of the Church.

The letter outlines the gift of adolescent catechesis that is being introduced as a component of our centennial celebration. It speaks to the youth, to their parents and to the parishes of the diocese. To the youth, Bishop promises his support and prayer. Bishop Pates reminds parents of their role as the primary teachers of the faith as well as the partnership the Church shares with them in bringing children up in the faith. Addressing the parishes of the diocese, Bishop notes that the process will offer our young people the best that catechesis and youth ministry together have to offer.

"A Commitment to Adolescent Catechesis: An Important Stage in Lifelong Catechesis in the Diocese of Des Moines" clearly states the priority of pastoral care for the young church in south west Iowa. The document is the outgrowth of the Bishop's own reflection on current cultural realities that tear down family and church. It also serves as a catalyst for addressing the faith education and formation needs of our young people.