

# THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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## *Pope moved by registry of nighttime adoration*

By Junno Arocho Esteves  
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis said he was “moved” by a photo of an old registry that showed his participation as a young man at sessions of overnight Eucharistic adoration at a basilica in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The pope was sent a photo taken by Argentine journalist Lucas Schaerer of the registry from the Basilica of the Blessed Sacrament that featured his name, along with that of his brother Oscar and their neighbor, Gonzalo Bargiela.

In a letter sent to Schaerer and published April 8 in the Spanish Catholic weekly *Alfa y Omega*, the pope recalled his visits to the basilica between 1954 and 1955. At the time, Jorge Mario Bergoglio was 18-19 years old. He had already had what he called his “San Jose de Flores experience” – the experience of God’s mercy during confession on Sept. 21, 1953 – felt called to priesthood and was living what he described to Schaerer as “a normal Christian life.”

The nocturnal adoration, where participants took turns praying before the Blessed Sacrament throughout the night, had begun at the basilica in 1917. The future pope was registered as the 9,195th person to take part.

Adoration began about 9 p.m. after Spanish Sacramentine Father José Ramón Arísti preached, the pope recalled. “When it was your turn, the person before you would wake you up with the phrase, ‘Venite adoremus’ (‘Come, let us adore him’), and from there you go for

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## Welcome! Bienvenidos!



Photo by Wilfrido Matamoros

**Armando Quintana was baptized by Father Fabian Moncada on Easter Vigil at Our Lady of the Americas Church in Des Moines. He is among 150 people who entered into full communion with the Catholic Church this past Easter. Quintana started his path two years ago in RCIA. At the vigil, he received his baptism, confirmation, and First Communion and also celebrated his marriage with his wife, Daisy.**

**A Armando Quintana lo bautizó el Padre Fabián Moncada en la Vigilia Pascual en la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de las Américas en Des Moines. Él es uno de las 150 personas que entraron en plena comunión con la Iglesia Católica esta Pascua. Quintana comenzó su trayecto hace dos años en RICA. En la Vigilia, él recibió su bautismo, su confirmación y Primera Comunión y a la vez celebró su matrimonio con su esposa Daisy.**

## Bishop makes new priest assignments, effective in July

Bishop William Joensen has made the following priest appointments effective July 8:

**Father Raphael Assamah** is moving from his role as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Shenandoah and St. Mary Parish in Hamburg to become pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines.

Father Assamah was born and raised in Ghana, and studied at seminary in Ghana and Pontifical Urban University in

Rome. He holds a master of art in theology and Christian Ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville and currently is pursuing certification with The John Maxwell Leadership Team emphasizing mentoring and



**Father Raphael Assamah**

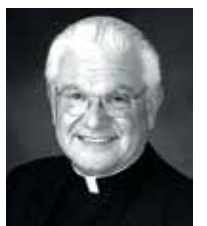
coaching leadership. Ordained in 2008, he served as the youth chaplain at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

In 2014, he answered a need for priests on the island of Jamaica in the Caribbean, by serving at Ss. Pius X and Peter Claver Parishes in the Archdiocese of Kingston. He came to the Diocese of Des Moines in 2016 to serve southwest Iowa.

**Father John Bertogli**, the rector of St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish, will retire. In retirement, he will continue his service as canonical administrator of Holy Family School in Des Moines. He’ll also continue as chaplain to the St. Vincent de Paul society in the Des Moines metro area.

Father Bertogli went to Loras College in Dubuque, St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee,

and Creighton University in Omaha where he earned a master’s degree in spiritual direction. He was ordained in 1977 by Bishop Mau-



**Father John Bertogli**

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# A Family of Families

I must admit that when I heard that Pope Francis had declared that not only is this a Year of St. Joseph, but also a Year of the *Amoris Laetitia* (Joy of Love) Family, I sighed a bit and thought to myself, “Can’t we focus on one thing and not stack celebrations on top of each other?” But as I reflected last month, to think of St. Joseph is to be naturally led to think of Holy Mary and her Son. As briskly as the month of May begins with the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker and then yields to a whole month of Marian devotion, I don’t think St. Joseph minds sharing the limelight not only with his spouse and family, but with families of all stripes and situations.

There will be plenty of opportunity to unpack the ‘Joy of Love’ Family throughout this spiritual year that extends until June 26, 2022, when the World Meeting of Families will take place in Rome. Here I get the ball rolling with a few thoughts about our cultural context and how the Church challenges us not to lose sight of some beautiful truths about how God draws us into the fold of his own family of persons.

A family is a natural society in the order of creation and as with all things God creates, is to be recognized and received as good in the midst of all the joys, pains, and sorrows that stretch our hearts. “The family images God, who is a communion of persons.” The Risen Christ gathers and restores within families this image and likeness of the Holy Trinity, “the mystery from which all true love flows” (AL n. 71). A couple who is open to love and life is a “true, living icon—not an idol” who reveals that God in his deepest identity is not alone, but a family,” for he has within himself



By  
Bishop  
William  
Joensen

fatherhood, sonship and the essence of the family, which is love. That love, in the divine family, is the Holy Spirit” (AL n. 11).

The uniqueness of the divine family and the love of the three persons enfolds all families in their own array of present and absent relationships. An ideal family is an abstraction, for we all know hopes that are frustrated and factors that go beyond our natural capacities to remain patient, to tender mercy and forgiveness, to be consistently good for each other. Yet the incursions of unexpected pregnancies, divorce, death, sibling rivalry, narcissism, and erosion of trust that confront us do not mean that we are left to our own devices to determine what a family is apart from our discernment of God’s intentions and invitation.

God desires our peace, happiness, and salvation. If we make our own desires and feelings paramount without seeking to gracefully harmonize God’s will with our own, we fashion an artificial solitude for ourselves. We weaken the “glue” of charity and reconciled diversity among members that not only keeps individual families together, but is the foundation upon which greater society depends. Absent reverent love for God and one another, we mask our capacity to be icons, and instead inevitably make our-

selves idols.

Noelle Mering is a Catholic author, wife, and mother who reflects on our contemporary “woke” culture that initially might rouse people to acknowledge social injustice and respond accordingly. But “wokeness” goes sour as it traffics in perpetual anger, victimhood, rejection of authority, and the elevation of group ideologies and identity politics at the expense of personal dignity. Agents of wokeness both advocate and celebrate “the dissolution of the family as the primary cell of human society, the rejection of sexual mores that served to protect the health and integrity of the dynamics between men and women, and the uncompromising support for abortion” that leaves women and men alike with wounds that might not even be acknowledged.

The woke culture rejects the sense of any intelligible insight into human nature—including our essential identity as body-soul unities—and instead regards these insights as the perpetuation of antiquated norms that should have long been discarded. Mering observes that for apostles of wokeness, “In order to say that I can be *anything*, I have to in fact mean *nothing*, for to be *something* always excludes being something else.” Further, “The effort to detach ourselves from the meaning of our bodies is exhibited in trans-activism, in the meaningless of sex, and also in the elimination of the significance of male and female difference.” Our autonomy trumps our biology.

In *Amoris Laetitia*,

Pope Francis emphasizes that “biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.” The Holy Father alerts us to an ideology of gender that “denies difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences. He further opposes the mindset that human life and parenthood are “separable realities, subject mainly to the wishes of individuals or couples.” The pope cautions us not to isolate our “I” from the organic composite that is our personal reality: “Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. . . . Creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift” (AL n. 56).

The family in which joyful love takes root and flourishes relies on both mothers and fathers. As St. Thomas Aquinas observes, “Mothers, who are those who love the most, seek to love more than to be loved” (AL n. 102). No elaboration of personal rights is complete without including a child’s right “to receive love from a mother and father; both are necessary for a child’s integral and harmonious development.” The complementary contributions of a mother and father allow for “a certain flexibility of roles and responsibilities,” taking into account the concrete circumstances each family experiences. “But the clear and well-defined presence of both figures, female and male, creates the environment best suited to the growth of the child” (AL nn. 172, 175).

The Church holds up the family as a sanctuary where all members might mature in Christ.

We want to be good for individual families and accompany and support them in the Diocese of Des Moines, so that as a local church we can truly be “a family of families” (AL n. 87).

While not a blanket categorization, there are some persons within the Black Lives Matter movement who in their “wokeness” have committed themselves to the dissolution of the nuclear family as a patriarchal relic and Western tool of oppression. How encouraged I was when I heard a dissenting voice at the protest rally on the steps of the Iowa Capitol last June in the wake of George Floyd’s death. State Rep. Ako Abdul-Samad, a Muslim man whose very bearing evokes a sense of God-given authority, stepped up to the microphone and gave a stirring challenge to young men in the crowd, calling them to respect women for who they are and not objectify them on the basis of their bodies. He enjoined them to not live like a bundle of self-centered desires, but to step up and fulfill their responsibilities as a real man should a pregnancy occur in or out-of-wedlock.

In the month when Father’s Day is observed, Rep. Abdul-Samad called biological fathers to become full-fledged, natural and spiritual fathers. He may not have used these words, but he was acknowledging that all social justice is founded on something greater than itself. And if liberty and justice are to be for all, then we need to heed the call to be true to our own humanity, so that we can hope to someday become one family, one people, one nation under God.

## Official



Bishop William Joensen has made the following appointments effective July 8.

- Rev. Raphael Assamah**, from pastor of St. Mary Parish, Shenandoah, and St. Mary Parish, Hamburg, to pastor of St. Theresa Parish, Des Moines.
- Rev. John Bertogli**, from rector of St. Ambrose Cathedral, to retirement while continuing to serve as canonical administrator of Holy Family School.
- Rev. Timothy Fitzgerald**, from pastor of Ss. John and Paul, Altoona, to retirement.
- Rev. Christopher Fontanini**, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianola and Immaculate Conception, St. Mary, renewed for one-year term.
- Rev. Enrique Garcia-Elizalde**, from parochial vicar, Corpus Christi, Council Bluffs, to pastor, Corpus Christi, Council Bluffs.
- Rev. Chris Hartshorn**, pastor of Sacred Heart, West Des Moines, renewed for six-year term.
- Rev. Raymond Higgins**, from pastor of St. Theresa Parish, Des Moines (effective April 11, 2021), to pastor of St. Mary Parish, Guthrie Center; St. Patrick Parish, Bayard; and St. Cecilia Parish, Panora.
- Rev. George Komo**, from parochial vicar of Christ the King, Des Moines, to administrator of St. Elizabeth Seton, Carlisle; at-large campus ministries; and sacramental assistance to St. Catherine of Siena Student Center and Christ the King Parish.
- Rev. Mark McGeary**, from parochial vicar of St. Francis of Assisi, West Des Moines, to pastor of Ss. John and Paul, Altoona.
- Rev. Christopher Pisut**, pastor of St. Augustin, Des Moines, renewed for six-year term; continues as diocesan judicial vicar.
- Rev. Vincent Rosonke**, interim canonical administrator of St. Theresa Parish, Des Moines (effective April 11, 2021 to July 8, 2021).
- Rev. Nipin Thakidipurathu Scaria**, from parochial vicar of Sacred Heart, West Des Moines, to rector of St. Ambrose Cathedral, Des Moines.
- Rev. Thomas Thakadipuram**, from pastor of Corpus Christi, Council Bluffs, to pastor of St. Mary, Shenandoah, and St. Mary, Hamburg.

+ *Wm. Joensen*

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

*Jason Kurth*

Jason Kurth  
Chancellor

Join  
Bishop William  
Joensen every  
Monday at 5 p.m.  
at St. Ambrose  
Cathedral  
for a Holy Hour.  
Livestreamed at  
[Facebook.com/  
dmdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese).



## THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

Bishop William Joensen  
Publisher  
wjoensen@dmdiocese.org

Anne Marie Cox  
Editor  
acox@dmdiocese.org

Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer  
kcollins@dmdiocese.org

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# RCIA program unifies family's faith

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

Aaron Elliott grew up in the small Kansas town of Atchison, known for its Catholic college, Benedictine.

He was raised with a strong Christian upbringing, though not Catholic.

"I always went to youth camp, which was very impactful," Elliott said. "Being around that spiritually – first and foremost – and just understanding that God is real and the impact he has in our lives were huge in my upbringing."

He met his wife, Lauren, a native of Winterset, while she was attending Benedictine. The two were married in 2019 at St.

Mary Parish in St. Joseph, Missouri.

"I was very touched by the ceremony and the priest who we met with," Elliott said. "We didn't do a sponsor couple – we just met with him, which was so encouraging for us and our drive to want to have faith in our lives."

The two also did a Catholic marriage preparation retreat weekend together in Kansas City, called Thrive, which helped spark their spiritual journey.

The two eventually moved to Des Moines.

Elliott spent time researching the Catholic faith and learning more about the few obstacles he had before and after their wedding. But it was upon finding out that a baby was on the way last fall that prompted Aaron

to make a decision more quickly.

"I immediately contacted Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines to join RCIA," Elliott said. The RCIA director invited him to their next class on Sunday night.

"I say this a lot, but it's the people I have encountered there. I feel like the Holy Spirit has been in each and every one of them that have welcomed me."

Receiving the Eucharist for the first time was one of the things Elliott was looking forward to most at the Easter Vigil.

Aaron and Lauren are overjoyed to be united in faith as a family.

"She's due at the end of May," Elliott said. "And that will be exciting."



Father Chris Hartshorn, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines, with Aaron Elliott, who entered the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil.

## Una Familia de Familias

Debo admitir que cuando escuché que el Papa Francisco había declarado que este año no sería solamente el Año de San José, sino también el Año de la Familia Amoris Laetitia (Gozo del Amor), suspiré un poco y me dije a mí mismo, "¿Podríamos enfocarnos en una sola cosa y no empalmar una celebración sobre la otra?" Pero en la reflexión del mes pasado, el pensar sobre San José nos lleva naturalmente a pensar en Santa María y su Hijo. Tan rápidamente como el mes de mayo comienza con la fiesta de San José Obrero se abre el mes dedicado a las devociones Marianas, no creo que a San José le moleste compartir la atención no solamente con su esposa y su familia sino con familias de toda clase y situación.

Ya tendremos suficiente oportunidad para desempacar la Familia 'Gozo del Amor' en todo este año espiritual que se extiende hasta el 26 de junio del 2022, cuando se lleve a cabo el Encuentro Mundial de las Familias en Roma. Aquí hecho el balón a rodar con algunos pensamientos sobre el contexto cultural de cómo la Iglesia nos reta a no perder de vista algunas verdades hermosas sobre cómo Dios nos atrae al rebaño de su propia familia de personas.

La familia es una sociedad natural en el orden de la creación y que, como todas las cosas que crea Dios, debe reconocerse y recibirse como algo bueno en medio de todos los gozos, dolores y sufrimientos que sienten nuestros corazones. "La familia es imagen de Dios, quien es una comunidad de personas." El Cristo Resucitado reúne y restaura dentro de las familias esta imagen y semejanza de la Santísima Trinidad, "el misterio del que brota todo amor verdadero" (AL #71). Una pareja que está abierta a la vida es una "verdadera escultura viviente – no un ídolo" que revela que Dios en su misterio más íntimo, no es una soledad, sino una familia, puesto que lleva en sí mismo paternidad, filiación y la esencia de la familia que es el amor. Este amor, en la familia divina, es el Espíritu Santo" (AL #11).

Lo especial de la familia divina y el amor de las tres personas envuelve a todas las familias en su propia forma de relaciones presentes y ausentes. Una familia ideal es una abstracción, porque todos sabemos de los sueños que quedan frustrados y de los factores que van más allá de nuestras capacidades naturales de ser pacientes, de perdonar y de ser misericordiosos, de ser consistentemente buenos unos con otros. Y aun así el surgimiento de embarazos no esperados, divorcios, muerte, rivalidad entre hermanos, narcisismo y desgaste de la confianza que nos enfrenta no significa que somos abandonados a nuestra suerte para determinar lo que es una familia más allá de nuestro discernimiento de las intenciones e invitaciones de Dios.

Dios desea nuestra paz, felicidad y salvación. Si hacemos que nuestros propios deseos y sentimientos sean lo más importante sin buscar dentro de la gracia el poner la voluntad de Dios en armonía con la nuestra, creamos una soledad artificial para nosotros mismos. Debilitamos el "pegamento" de la caridad y de la diversidad reconciliadora entre los miembros, la cual no solamente mantiene unidas a las familias, sino que es el fundamento sobre el cual depende la sociedad en general. Con la ausencia de un amor reverente hacia Dios y de unos hacia otros, disfrazamos nuestra capacidad de ser ídolos y por otro lado nos hacemos inevitablemente ídolos de nosotros mismos.

Noelle Mering es una escritora católica, esposa y madre quien refleja sobre nuestra cultura contemporánea de "despertar" la cual inicialmente lleva a la gente a reconocer las injusticias sociales y a responder adecuadamente. Pero el "despertar" se convierte en amargura al transitar en constante enojo, sentimiento de victimización, rechazo a la autoridad y la elevación de ideologías de grupo y políticas de identidad a costo de la dignidad personal. Los agentes del movimiento despertar promueven y celebran "la disolución de la familia como la célula principal de la sociedad humana, el rechazo de las normas sexuales que han servido para proteger la

salud y la integridad de las dinámicas entre hombres y mujeres, y el apoyo incondicional por el aborto: que deja igualmente a hombres y mujeres con heridas que pueden no ser reconocidas siquiera."

La cultura del despertar rechaza el sentido de cualquier percepción comprensible en la naturaleza humana – incluyendo nuestra identidad esencial como unidades de cuerpo y alma – y por otra considera estas percepciones como la perpetuación de normas anticuadas que debieron haber sido descartadas hace mucho tiempo. Mering observa que, para los apóstoles del despertar, "para que yo pueda ser cualquier cosa, debo de hecho no tener significado, porque el ser algo siempre excluye el ser algo más." Más aún, "el esfuerzo de desconectarnos a nosotros mismos del significado de nuestros cuerpos se exhibe en el activismo trans, en la insignificancia del sexo y también en la eliminación del significado de la diferencia de masculino y femenino." Nuestra autonomía derrota nuestra biología.

En Amoris Laetitia, el Papa Francisco hace énfasis que "el sexo biológico y el papel sociocultural del sexo (género), se pueden distinguir, pero no separar." El Santo Padre nos advierte sobre una ideología de género que "niega la diferencia y la reciprocidad natural de hombre y de mujer, concibiendo una sociedad sin diferencias de sexo. Él se opone más delante a la idea de que la vida humana y la paternidad son "realidades componibles y descomponibles, sujetas principalmente a los deseos de los individuos o de las parejas." El papa nos advierte a no aislar nuestro "yo" de la composición orgánica que es nuestra realidad personal: "No caigamos en el pecado de pretender sustituir al Creador. ... Lo creado nos precede y debe ser recibido como don" (AL #56).

La familia en la cual el gozo del amor echa raíz y florece depende tanto en las madres como en los padres. Como lo dice Santo Tomás Aquino, "las madres, que son las que más aman, buscan más amar que ser amadas" (AL #102). Ninguna elaboración de derechos individuales está completa sin in-

## Oils, Chrism blessed for sacraments



Bishop William Joensen blessed and consecrated oils on March 26 at Chrism Mass, which was celebrated at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Imogene. The oils will be used in sacraments throughout the diocese in this year.

cluir el derecho de un niño a "recibir el amor de una madre y de un padre, ambos necesarios para su maduración íntegra y armoniosa." Las contribuciones complementarias de una madre y un padre permiten que "haya roles y tareas flexibles, que se adaptan a las circunstancias concretas de cada familia, pero la presencia clara y bien definida de las dos figuras, femenina y masculina, crea el ámbito más adecuado para la maduración del niño" (AL #172, #175). La Iglesia sostiene que la familia es un santuario en donde todos los miembros pueden madurar en Cristo. Queremos ser buenos con las familias individuales para acompañarlas y apoyarlas en la Diócesis de Des Moines, para que la iglesia local pueda ser verdaderamente "una familia de familias" (AL #87).

Sin hacer generalizaciones, hay algunas personas dentro del movimiento de Black Lives Matter quienes en su "despertar" se han comprometido con la disolución de la familia nuclear como una reliquia patriarcal y una herramienta de opresión de occidente. Qué motivado me sentí cuando escuché una voz disentera en la manifestación de protesta en los escalones del Capitolio el

pasado mes de junio a causa de la muerte de George Floyd. El congresista estatal Ako Abdul-Samad, un hombre musulmán cuya presencia misma evoca un sentido de autoridad conferida por Dios, tomó el micrófono y lanzó un desafiante reto a los hombres jóvenes en la multitud, llamándolos a respetar a las mujeres por quienes son y que no las vieran como objetos solamente por sus cuerpos. Él les ordenó a no vivir como un montón de deseos centrados en sí mismos, pero a levantarse y cumplir con sus responsabilidades como hombres de verdad si enfrentaran un embarazo dentro o fuera del matrimonio.

En el mes que se celebra el Día del Padre, el Representante Abdul-Samad llamó a los padres biológicos a convertirse en verdaderos padres naturales y espirituales. Él puede no haber utilizado estas mismas palabras, pero estaba reconociendo que toda la justicia social parte de algo más grande de sí misma. Y si la libertad y la justicia deben ser para todos, entonces debemos poner atención al llamado de ser fieles a nuestra propia humanidad, para que podamos tener la esperanza de que un día seremos una familia, un pueblo, una nación bajo Dios.

# Priests say appreciation for the Eucharist has grown

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

There appears to be a greater appreciation for what was lost and now found.

When Masses were suspended in March 2020 due to the pandemic, a sense of shock and loss spread.

Public celebration of the Eucharist was suspended throughout the country to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Church doors in the Diocese of Des Moines remained open so people could privately pray at their parishes.

Loss of the Eucharist was heartbreaking for many, said Monsignor Frank Chiodo, pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Des Moines.

Throughout the pandemic, Eucharistic adoration was offered daily at St. Anthony Catholic Church in Des Moines with social distancing in the church.

The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist offered a sense of connectedness with the Lord, who offered the faithful security and hope at a time of desperate need, said Monsignor Chiodo.

The faithful rejoiced when Mass and reception of the Eucharist was offered again publicly.

“Not a few tears were

shed when Mass once again was offered,” Monsignor Chiodo said. “The absence of public Mass did make so many hearts grow fonder of the value of a Mass. Many continue to watch the streamed Mass but so many have told me that they are praying for the day that they can feel safe enough to return.”

Sometimes people don’t recognize how precious something is until it’s absent, said Father Trevor Chicoine, diocesan director of the Worship Office and pastor of parishes in Atlantic and Anita, and canonical administrator of parishes in Griswold and Reno.

“I think in a way, perhaps we had all just assumed that in this country we would always have access to frequent reception of Holy Communion,” he said. “We know that such frequent reception and ease of access has in fact not been the case for most Catholics and Christians for most of history, and in many parts of the world such frequent access remains only a dream.

“I think we better understand what a gift it is to assist at Holy Mass, receive communion, and be with each other,” Father Chicoine added.

The community of Southwest Iowa pulled together to support the church.

“Thanks to the help of



Monsignor Frank Chiodo, pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Des Moines, during the consecration. (Photo taken before the pandemic.)

one of our local radio stations, we were able to livestream Mass the very Sunday morning Masses were suspended,” Father Chicoine said.

“I’ll never forget that first Sunday going back to the rectory and seeing the line of cars full of folks who were pulling up to our new parish dropbox to drop tithes. This wasn’t merely just a heartwarming moment for a pastor who was worrying about

parish bills, but a huge symbol: All these folks had been at home watching Mass and wanted to tangibly participate in the only way they could at the moment.”

Publicly celebrated Masses and the Eucharist brought hope to people suffering from the pandemic.

“One person said to me ‘Well, maybe we will make it through this after all,’” said Father Chicoine.

That sentiment seems to be widespread. Recently Father Chicoine was able to celebrate Mass at a retirement community for the first time since the pandemic began.

“For many of the folks who reside there, it had been over a year since they received Jesus in Holy Communion – an unthinkable separation for these faithful Catholics,” he said. “Tears were shed all around.”

## Vaccine clinic



Wilfrido Matamoros, above, gets his first COVID-19 vaccine dose at a clinic at Our Lady of the Americas Parish, where 500 doses were to be distributed.



Teresa Cooley, a parishioner of All Saints Parish in Des Moines, was a longtime parishioner of Our Lady of the Americas Parish when it was formerly known as Visitation Parish. She was happy to return to help vaccinate members of the community. “I’m thrilled to be here,” she said.

## One year of pandemic marked with schoolwide virtual rosary



St. Pius X Catholic School fifth grader William Riesberg joined classmates in a virtual rosary on March 22 commemorating the start of the pandemic that in Iowa has infected more than 357,000 people and killed more than 5,800 people.

The Catholic Mirror is looking for stories of faith and inspiration. Contact Kelly Mescher Collins at [kcollins@dmdiocese.org](mailto:kcollins@dmdiocese.org) with a story idea for the Diocese of Des Moines.

## Church safety measures adjusted as public health improves

Bishop William Joensen adjusted the COVID-19 mitigation policy by allowing for every pew to be used for seating in the 80 churches in the Diocese of Des Moines effective April 1.

Households are still asked to observe social distancing between other households within each pew, and when possible between pews.

Additionally, baptismal fonts and holy water fonts could be refilled after the Easter Vigil, and scholas of four to five singers at safe distance from the congregation are now permitted.

Masks will continue to be required on church property.

“These adjustments are in response to our improving public health situation, which includes declining hospitalizations, a low percentage of positive COVID tests, and the increased vaccination rate” said Bishop Joensen.

“The adjustments are also a part of an incremental approach that will unfold over time. This approach allows us to respond to positive developments and yet remain vigilant, knowing that we have not yet emerged from this pandemic,” he said.

Two concerns are the virulence of new strains of COVID-19 and the impact of spring break travel.

“Because of this reality, while we are relaxing the above practices, we are also extending the mask requirement for the foreseeable future; as the unknown factors are manifested, it will again be reviewed,” said Bishop Joensen. All other mitigation practices will remain in place.

The adjustments were made based on the input of diocesan priests, consultation with a regathering team, and most importantly, consultation with local medical experts. The medical experts have helped the diocese discern the proper timing and ordering of relaxations.

The Diocese is monitoring the public health situation on a daily basis, and if conditions continue to remain stable or improve, relaxations will continue in an incremental way. Alternatively, if the conditions significantly deteriorate, the Diocese may find it necessary to reinstate previous guidelines.

“I recognize that the pandemic has left many of us feeling weary and frustrated,” said Bishop Joensen. “Let us continue to pray for one another.”

## Virus victims remembered at memorial Mass



Anita Pinkerton (left photos) sat in the back of Sacred Heart Church in West Des Moines last month while holding a family photo of with her late brother, Joseph Perez, who died Feb. 7 of COVID-19. He is among more than 5,800 Iowans who lost their lives to the virus. Pinkerton attended a March 22 memorial Mass celebrated by Bishop William Joensen for all those who died in the pandemic. Mary Eure (center photo) handed out paper cranes in memory of the deceased. Each crane was folded and prayed over by parishioner Pam Douglas, who made one for each Iowan who died from the virus. The cranes hung in the sanctuary and around the church before Easter, creating a visual display (right photo) of the toll the pandemic has taken on the state.

In his homily, Bishop Joensen said: “COVID-19 is not the last word. Jesus, the Way and the Word offers us his body and makes us worthy of himself no matter how weak we feel or how we wonder and fluctuate in our faith. Grace and mercy are with his holy ones. His care is with his elect. We have chosen to be here this evening to be in communion with those in heaven, with those on their last legs of completing their purification, and those who are with us in this body. May God anoint you all with consolation, peace and strength to gracefully press on. May God anoint you with the love that lives forever.”

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Make a gift that costs you nothing during your lifetime	<b>Gifts through your Will or Trust ("Bequest")</b>	Include a gift of cash, property, or a share of your estate through your will.	A gift that does not affect your cash flow, and you can adjust your gift as circumstances change.
Make a gift while avoiding capital gains liability	<b>Gifts of appreciated stock or securities.</b>	Give us appreciated stocks, bonds or mutual funds to sell and use the proceeds.	Make a significant gift; receive an immediate income tax deduction; pay no capital gains.
Make a gift and receive a "paycheck" for life	<b>Charitable Gift Annuity</b>	Donate cash or securities in a plan where the remainder comes to us upon your death.	Diversify assets, avoid or defer capital gains tax, receive charitable tax deduction, secure often greater income and possible inflation protection.
Make a gift and receive a steady income for life	<b>Charitable Remainder Unitrust, Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust</b>	Share your assets with us in a plan that gives you an income for life and where the remainder comes to us upon your death.	Make an extraordinary contribution that costs you nothing now and can be achieved by simply signing your name.
Make a large gift at little cost	<b>Gift of Life Insurance</b>	Donate a life insurance policy you no longer need or name us in an existing one.	Take a tax deduction now; take possible future deductions through gifts to pay policy premiums.
Plan a future gift in the simplest way	<b>Gift the balance of your account (POD or TOD)</b>	Designate the balance of your bank or brokerage account, retirement plan, annuity or life insurance policy to us.	Make an extraordinary contribution that costs you nothing now and can be accomplished with a signature.
Make a gift that preserves your assets for your heirs.	<b>Charitable Lead Trust</b>	Use appreciating assets to create a trust that will pay us income for a period of years and then will pass the assets back to you or your heirs.	Shelter your growing assets and benefit us immediately; reduce or eliminate gift and estate tax.

For more information on any of the gifts or information listed above, please call the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa at 515-237-5044



# Follow Iowa Catholic Conference for latest legislative proposals

By Tom Chapman  
Contributing Writer

As members of the General Assembly approach the final stage of the legislative session, the Iowa Catholic Conference has issued new action alerts on critical issues. Go to [iowacatholicconference.org/voter-voice](http://iowacatholicconference.org/voter-voice) for these alerts.

## Protect Life

The Iowa Senate has amended the House version of the

Protect Life Amendment (HJR 5) and sent it back to the House. It's time to contact your representative and senator and ask them to complete work on the amendment.

In June 2018, the Iowa Supreme Court identified a fundamental right to abortion in the Iowa Constitution. We believe almost no existing or future regulation of abortion can survive a court challenge in Iowa. The Protect Life Amendment would clarify that Iowa's Constitution does

not contain a right to abortion. We recognize that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Direct attacks on innocent persons are never acceptable. This is why abortion is such an important issue.

## Recently at the state Capitol

A bill to provide authorities with additional resources to complete investigations of trafficking in humans, HF 452, passed the Senate on April 6 and was sent back to the House.

The House Education Appropriations Committee has introduced the budget bill for the Department of Education. There is a proposed increase in funding for textbooks used in nonpublic schools to \$772,000, compared to \$652,000 last year. The bill also includes status quo funding for nonpublic school students to take community college classes.

## Redistricting

Drawing new lines for legislative districts takes place every 10 years, and 2021 is one of those years. The process has typically been accomplished by the legislature in a nonpartisan way.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Census Bureau may not be able to deliver data for the redistricting process in Iowa until the September deadline is past.

The Iowa Supreme Court announced that if the General Assembly is not able to meet the constitutional deadline, the court is prepared to meet its constitutional responsibility by implementing a process which permits, to the extent possible, the redistricting framework set forth in Iowa law.

*Tom Chapman is the executive director of the Iowa Catholic Conference.*

## Around the Diocese

### Monday, April 19

#### Holy Hour

DES MOINES – Join Bishop William Joensen for a Holy Hour at 5 p.m. at St. Ambrose Cathedral, livestreamed at [Facebook.com/dmdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese).

### Tuesday, April 20

#### Beyond the Book

DES MOINES – The Center for Social Ministry hosts Beyond the Book, an in-depth look at a book focusing on social justice and a speaker engaged in that social justice work. Behold the Dreamers, by Imbolo Mbue will be the book, Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice is the featured group. For more information, go to [centerforsocialministry.org](http://centerforsocialministry.org).

### Monday, April 26

#### Holy Hour

DES MOINES – Join Bishop William Joensen for a Holy Hour at 5 p.m. at St. Ambrose Cathedral, livestreamed at [Facebook.com/dmdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese).

### Monday, May 3

#### Holy Hour

DES MOINES – Join Bishop William Joensen for a Holy Hour at 5 p.m. at St. Ambrose Cathedral, livestreamed at [Facebook.com/dmdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese).

### Saturday, May 22

#### Men's Conference

DES MOINES – Iowa Catholic Men's Conference at the Embassy Suites hotel features Gary Dolphin, voice of the Iowa Hawkeyes, and

Tim Jameson. Cost is \$20 per person. Register at [IowaCatholicRadio.com/events](http://IowaCatholicRadio.com/events).

#### Listening Sessions

The Diocese of Des Moines is inviting Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, and Pacific Islander Catholics to participate in an opportunity to share their thoughts, perspectives, experiences, and feelings on racial justice in the Church and society with Bishop William Joensen, leadership at the Diocese of Des Moines, and Catholic Charities. Dates for listening sessions are to be determined. If you or someone you know is interested in participating, please contact Mark Schmidt, coordinator of Racial Justice programming, at 515-259-0171 or [catholicracialjustice@gmail.com](mailto:catholicracialjustice@gmail.com).



*I've Been Wondering...*

*Q. Please clarify the timeline regarding the gifts of the Magi and the Presentation in the Temple. If Mary and Joseph received such costly gifts (Mt 2:11), then why didn't they offer more than a pair of turtledoves or pigeons (Lk 2:24)?*

**A. WE OFTEN LOOK** at the four gospels as one unit. However, that's not the case. Each of the authors presents the story of Jesus in a particular way.

Only St. Matthew and St. Luke speak of the birth of Jesus (often referred to as the infancy narratives). St. Mark and St. John begin their gospels with Jesus as an adult. There is no mention of angels, Magi, dreams, or shepherds in their gospels.

Many New Testament students see St. Matthew's gospel as directed toward a Jewish audience -- a group that would be familiar with the traditions of the Old Testament.

St. Luke's gospel is part one of a two volume work -- the Acts of the Apostles is the second volume. Only St. Matthew has the story of the Magi. Matthew does not mention the shepherds in the field. Matthew relates the dreams that Joseph has: 1) that he need not fear to take Mary as his wife; 2) that he should take Mary and the infant to Egypt to escape the wicked King Herod; and 3)

that it had become safe for them to return from Egypt and to settle in Nazareth.

In St. Luke's gospel we hear about shepherds in the field, but no mention of the visit of the Magi. There is no mention of the evil King Herod seeking the death of all the male children under two years of age. At the time of the Presentation in the Temple, Mary and Joseph offer the sacrifice of turtledoves. Matthew is silent about the Presentation.

There is no evidence that Matthew and Luke consulted with each other on the stories that they narrated. Clearly, Joseph and Mary and Jesus did not belong to the upper class financially. So it makes sense that their sacrifice in the Temple would be a modest one.

It's important to read each gospel as a separate story, emphasizing certain things about who Jesus is. Take a few minutes and read the first two chapters of Matthew and the first two chapters of Luke. You'll see how different they are from one another.

*Father John Ludwig is retired in the Diocese of Des Moines. If you have a question for Father Ludwig, send it to [communications@dmdiocese.org](mailto:communications@dmdiocese.org) or The Catholic Mirror, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, 50309.*



News & Events for Faithful Listeners

## Iowa Catholic Men's Conference

May 22, 2021

Embassy Suites, Downtown DSM

\$20 per person

### Speakers:

**Gary Dolphin, voice of the Iowa Hawkeyes,  
and Tim Jameson.**

Register [www.IowaCatholicRadio.com/events](http://www.IowaCatholicRadio.com/events)

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## 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).

## Voice of Iowa Hawkeyes also a voice for the faith

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

The voice of Iowa Hawkeye football and basketball, Gary Dolphin, will be a keynote speaker at the Catholic Men's Conference on May 22.

Dolphin will be joined by Tim Jameson, of St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines, in pumping up men to be strong leaders and witnesses of the Catholic faith for their families and their communities.

Iowa Catholic Radio personalities Jon Leonetti and Joe Stopulos will emcee the event.

A former altar boy and graduate of a Catholic high school, Dolphin surprised Stopulos by talking about faith during the radio show "Man Up." While organizers of the conference had long wanted Dolphin as a guest, the conferences had previously been February or March when the sports announcer's schedule was busy.

"We're really excited to get him to talk about his faith," Stopulos said. "He's a very on-fire Catholic."

Jameson also will inspire men, Stopulos said.

"He's just got such an inspirational story. We just knew he would be able to give a perspective on a relationship with God that no one else I know can," he said.

The conference builds community. It will give men an opportunity to gather as the pandemic wanes.

"Following the trend of the virus as the number of cases went down and the vaccines went up, we knew it was time," Stopulos said.

The conference also will educate and inspire men to live their lives in accord with the Gospel.

And, the conference will highlight the role of fatherhood in this, the Year of St. Joseph.

"We felt called to make sure we're giving guys a platform to grow in relationship with St. Joseph," Stopulos said.

The last conference, held at the start of the pandemic, drew 700 men, according to organizer Leslie Teeling.

Doors open at the Embassy Suites hotel in downtown Des Moines at 7 a.m. and the event kicks off with Mass with Bishop William Joensen at 7:30 a.m. The conference begins at 9 a.m. and ends at noon. Tickets are \$20 each and can be obtained at [iowacatholicradio.com/events](http://iowacatholicradio.com/events).

## Priest celebrates 60 'fantastic' years of service

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

Father Paul Koch remembers when he was in the seminary and Boston Cardinal Richard Cushing put out a call.

The cardinal was founding the Society of St. James, an international organization of diocesan priests who would be missionaries, and he was looking for priests to join.

Shortly after his ordination May 28, 1961, Father Koch received permission from Des Moines Bishop Edward Daly to join the fledgling society.

Father Koch celebrates his 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination to the priesthood this year. The bulk of his priestly ministry was in service to the people of Bolivia.

"We were parish priests who volunteered for the St. James Society to work in Latin Amer-

ica mostly, in parishes without priests," said Father Koch. "That was my work all of those 46 years as a parish priest. I'm not famous for having founded anything or any big idea. I was just a simple parish priest who loved it dearly."

Born in Panama in Shelby County, a graduate of Loras College and Mt. St. Bernard Seminary in Dubuque, Father Koch followed his inspiration and big brother, the late Father Eugene Koch, into religious life.

After ordination, he taught for two years at Dowling High School before leaving Iowa. He served five years in a high-altitude farming area in western Bolivia, five years in the mining town of Oruro and then went to Santa Cruz in the tropics, where he was a pastor of a parish with 35 missions.

"It was really challenging and, of course, it was just fantastic!" he said.

When he returned home



Father Paul Koch baptizes a child at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs in 2010.

to Iowa, he was asked to settle in Council Bluffs and work with the budding Hispanic community in that city. Now, he lives in Harlan with Father Clement Owusu.

Father Koch has no

plans to celebrate his anniversary, but says he's grateful for his vocation.

"It was fantastic," he said. "I wouldn't trade it for anything."

## Travel to South Africa with Bishop Joensen

### Blessman International Catholic Pilgrimage

September 16-29, 2021

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# Honoring 250 years

**Five priests are celebr**

*On May 29, 1971, an estimated 2,000 people  
of Fathers Michael Hess, Larry Hoffm*

*Also celebrating*

## Father Hess on priesthood: 'It's a wonderful life'

Father Michael Hess remembers being a student at Dowling Catholic High School, when many of the teachers were priests.

"I think it was their example of dedication and service that led me to consider priesthood," he said. "Their example helped me a great deal."

His 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination is May 29, though he's not picked a celebration date yet because of the pandemic.

"I can't believe 50 years have passed," he said.

He was ordained by



Bishop Maurice Dingman at an auditorium in Harlan.

After graduating from Dowling, he went to Immaculate Conception Seminary in Con-

ception, Missouri; Loras College in Dubuque; Aquinas Institute of Theology in Dubuque; Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans; and Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

After ordination, Father Hess served St. Michael Parish in Harlan and St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish in Des Moines. In 1972, the year Dowling merged with the St. Joseph Academy, he began teaching at the school. Four years later, he became the president and led the school for 24 years. In honor of his dedicated service to the school, the

south wing of Dowling Catholic is named the Father Michael N. Hess Convocation Center.

He received the title monsignor in 1989, but prefers to be called Father.

In 2000, he became pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines, where he served until he retired in 2015.

The most rewarding parts of his life as a priest have been "serving God's people. In whatever function whether it's a classroom, in administration or as a pastor or spiritual advisor, those are the rewarding moments," he

said.

He continues to serve as the chaplain for the West Des Moines Police, Fire and EMS departments and assists at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny on weekends.

"It's been a wonderful life," he said. His advice to those discerning a vocation to the priesthood: "You have great support and contact with people just because you are a priest, which means you can influence them or assist them on their faith journey. That's a very rewarding thing to be able to do."

## Father Hoffmann a vehicle for Christ's work

As Father Larry Hoffmann reflects on 50 years as a priest, he sees Christ working through him to help people in the Diocese of Des Moines.

Perhaps it began with a mistake in his sacramental preparation at his childhood parish of St. Mary in Panama that led him to strongly desire receiving Jesus in the Eucharist.

He went through the preparation for receiving his First Communion, only to learn as the special day approached that his birthday was later than that of fellow students. He wasn't old enough for his First Communion, and as a result, he had to wait a year and do the preparation a second time.

"By then, this was just really important to me," he said. "That whole thing sort of really heightened my interest in and feeling about faith and Jesus and his presence."

Having grown up in Shelby County, a fertile area for vocations, becoming a priest was as real a possibility as becoming a doctor or lawyer.

When he got older, Father Hoffmann entered the seminary. Just before he was ordained a transitional deacon, he questioned his vocation, fearful of having to give sermons. He went on a retreat and, "somewhere along the line, I heard the Lord say, 'That's right. You can't do it, but I can do it in you.' I went



on and got ordained. Through the years, God has done through me all kinds of things."

Educated at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri; Aquinas Institute in Dubuque; and St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, he was or-

dained May 29, 1971.

His ministry has taken him to rural and urban parishes: St. Joseph in Des Moines; team ministry based in Leon; St. Anne in Logan; Holy Family in Mondamin; Queen of Apostles in Council Bluffs; St. Anthony in Des Moines; and St. Theresa in Des Moines.

During his team ministry in Leon, one of the things he learned was to be a go-getter.

"One of the things that touched me was when Father Jim McIlhon said, 'If you sit around here in the rectory waiting for the door or the phone to ring, it isn't going to happen. If you want something to happen, you have to go out and make it happen. You

have to go out.'"

He was the founding pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Ankeny before retiring in 2018. While retired, he was asked to serve as co-vicar general for six months.

What has been satisfying as a priest has been simply being with people.

"You were there, you were consulting with them, consoling them. So often, they wouldn't really hear what you said. They were going through their experience. Being with people during those tragic circumstances is very important," he said.

## Variety is the spice for Father Gross's life

A young priest planted an important seed for Father Ken Gross.

While Father Gross was in high school, he got to know Father Ralph Goeser, who served at St. Boniface Parish in Westphalia.

"He was interested in the things I was interested in, like baseball and basketball and some of the sports," said Father Gross. "He seemed like a regular guy. It really helped me to know that priests aren't just sacramental priests but they're also with the people. That made quite

an impression on me."

Though Father Goeser died just 10 years after ordination, he planted a seed that went on to bear fruit with Father Gross, who is celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination this year.

Father Gross studied at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri; Aquinas Institute of Theology in Dubuque; and St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

His ministry centered on parish life. He served at: St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines; St. Augustin in Des Moines; St. Mary in Anita; St. John in Adair; St. Joseph in Casey; St. Clare in Clarinda; St. Joseph in Villisca; Sacred Heart in Bedford; All Saints in Des Moines; Holy Family in Council Bluffs; St. Mary in Red Oak; St. Patrick in Imogene; St. Patrick in Massena; and St. John in Greenfield.

Serving in rural communities was natural for Father Gross, whose parents and 12



siblings farmed 160 acres.

"I've always been one who felt God in nature," he said. "The whole family connection with the farm and with faith, those are things that were just pretty basic and also helped in my decision to pursue the seminary and priesthood."

He liked the variety each day brought him in the parishes.

"You never knew what was going to present itself," he said.

And when outreach was challenging, he also saw as opportunities for growth such as serving those in hospitals, prisons or working through addictions.

While he'd like to have a celebration for his anniversary, he's waiting a while to plan it with hope that the pandemic will wane.

An avid bike rider, Father Gross is enjoying retirement by helping in parishes both inside and outside of Des Moines and exploring the bike trails.





# of faithful service

**celebrating 50 years each of ordained ministry.**

**gathered at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Harlan for the ordination of Father Bob Aubrey, Ken Gross, Wayne Gubbels and the late Father Jim Polich.**

**50 years of service is Father Bob Aubrey.**

## 21 parishes blessed with Father Gubbels' leadership

About the only area Father Wayne Gubbels hasn't served in the Diocese of Des Moines is the far southeast part.

Nineteen parishes, one school, and the diocese have been a part of his ministry.

Next month, Father Gubbels is marking his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. Originally the family was planning to celebrate, but because of the pandemic, they are postponing and may possibly celebrate in the fall.

He grew up in Shelby County, which has produced a number of vocations to the religious life and priesthood. He attended St. Boniface Grade and High School in Westphalia; Conception Seminary at Conception, Missouri; Mt. St. Bernard's Seminary and Aquinas Institute in Dubuque; and St. Mary's Semi-

nary and University at Baltimore, Maryland.

Bishop Maurice Dingman ordained him on May 29, 1971 at Veterans Auditorium in Harlan.

Father served the following parishes: Holy Trinity in Des Moines; Sacred Heart in Woodbine; St. Anne's in Logan; St. Bridget in Magnolia; Holy Family in West Harrison County; Assumption Granger and St. Ann's in Woodward; St. Anthony in Des Moines; St. Mary in Shenandoah; St. Mary in Hamburg; St. Patrick in Neola; St. Columbanus in Weston; St. Mary in Anita; St. John's in Adair; St. Joseph in Casey; Immaculate Conception in St. Marys; Assumption in Churchville; St. Patrick in Irish Settlement; St. Patrick in Audubon; Holy Trinity in Exira; and St. John's in Adel.

In addition, he was on the faculty at St. Albert High School in Council Bluffs for one semester, and served as the associate vocation director for three years. He was moderator for the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women for several years, and chaplain for the Serra Club of Des Moines for a time.

Many of the parishes he served took on building or renovation projects. They were opportunities to draw upon the strengths, gifts, and talents of the parishioners involved in those projects.

"One of the gifts was helping people to recognize their gifts and talents, and helping to empower and enable them to share those gifts for the building of the faith community," he said.

He enjoys and appreciates breaking open the Word of



Christian Initiation of Adults, more commonly known as RCIA, by which unbaptized adults are prepared for baptism and baptized adults are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

"There were several times over the course of the years of seeing adults just really grow and deepen and the lightbulbs go on," Father Gubbels said. "That was very affirming, very positive kinds of experiences."

Father Gubbels retired in 2015. He continues to celebrate Mass and is involved in various parishes in the diocese, meets with people for spiritual direction, and also serves as a volunteer hospice chaplain for Myrtue Hospice.

God in the Scriptures and tries to see how it applies to daily life.

As part of a diocesan task force 25 years ago, Father Gubbels helped develop a plan for the Diocese to emphasize adult faith formation.

He advised this Parish Development Task Force on implementing lifelong faith formation for all Catholics. This included promoting the Rite of

### *Father Aubrey finds fulfillment in accompanying others on their faith journey*

One of the most rewarding aspects of Father Bob Aubrey's 50 years as a priest has been the opportunity to be with people during their most difficult days.

"I feel extraordinarily blessed to be called to serve God's people in this way," he said. "I have a phrase that occurs often in my homilies: 'Though I am dust and ashes, I have learned that the Lord loves me. I don't understand it. I don't understand it at all, but I've just come to believe it.'"

As he marks a half-century since his priestly ordination, he reflected on the years he's shared God's love as a parish priest and a 26-year ministry to the sick at MercyOne Des Moines.

Born in Philadelphia, Father Aubrey went to St. Charles College and St. Mary's Seminary, both in Baltimore. He was ordained by Bishop George Guilfoyle on May 22, 1971, in Camden, New Jersey.

He came to the Diocese of Des Moines in 1982, and served St. Patrick Parish in Massena, St. Timothy Parish in Cumberland, and Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood.

In 1994, he studied clinical pastoral education and in 1995, he began serving St. John Parish in Cumming while working part-time at MercyOne.

In 2001, he began city hospital chaplaincy at the following hospitals: Methodist, Methodist West, Broadlawns, Lutheran and Blank.

While serving as a chaplain, he ministered at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart in Ankeny; St. Theresa in Des Moines, St. Mary Parish

in Jamaica, and St. Patrick in Bayard. He retired in 2011.

A few aspects of ordained ministry stand out as being most rewarding for him.

Leading worship and preaching allows him to be a bridge builder, connecting people with God.

"It's a privilege to lead in prayer," he said. "That has been powerful."

Serving as chaplain, he had a unique opportunity to accompany people during difficult times in their lives.

"They would tell me stuff they might not tell their spouse," he said. "Just the privilege of being able to walk in other people's inner gardens is something that I never took for granted."

One-on-one support and offering reconciliation were also highlights of priestly ministry for Father Aubrey.

"I just feel honored and privileged to be called the way that I have been, to be a vehicle for God's grace," he said.

While his ordination anniversary is next month, he's not setting a celebration date just yet because of the pandemic. But when he does, his celebration will likely be at his parish, St. Joseph in Des Moines.



## Cathedral Holy Hours



Join Bishop Joensen at St. Ambrose Cathedral for an hour of Adoration & Prayer

5-6 PM each Monday

Evening Prayer will be livestreamed on the Diocesan Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/dmdiocese/](http://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese/)



For information about a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, go to [vocationsonline.org](http://vocationsonline.org) or [vocations@dmdiocese.org](mailto:vocations@dmdiocese.org).

# Hamburg parish hoping third time's the charm

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

In 2019, parishioners of St. Mary Parish in Hamburg were about to launch a capital campaign to take down an old building and replace it with a new multifunctional one.

Then a devastating flood swept through the town. The building effort took a back seat to the immediate work of restoring the church's flooded basement, businesses, homes and farm fields that were inundated by the Missouri River.

The next spring, parishioners felt the time was right to

try again and were prepared for a Commitment Sunday in March to launch the capital campaign.

Then the pandemic hit.

This spring, St. Mary parishioners are hoping finally they'll be able to get their project off the ground.

"Hamburg is a small community and has been through so much," said parishioner Teresa Jamison. "The people are on the road to recover. We fall into that. Our church is a pillar. I think it's an important sign to show we are here and still alive to the rest of the community."

A white two-story building that has served the parish for more than 125 years no longer meets the needs of the parish. If

parishioners wanted to fix it up, it would cost half as much or more as a new building, said parishioner Cheryl Phillips.

The building sits next to the church on land that is several feet below the floodplain. The new building will have a lobby that's at ground level, and then have a lift that will take people up to the main part of the building, said architect Rick Emswiler.

A concrete base around the building will protect it from floodwater, he added.

The new building will have five classrooms for the parish's 42 religious education youth. Two of the classrooms can be made into larger areas, an office, a small kitchenette, and restrooms. The building can be added onto if needed in the future, said parishioner Rick Jamison.

"We want it to look like the church, not a Morton building," said parishioner Carolyn Maher. "We're a small parish, but we have a lot of kiddos and we want to make sure we have the best facility to serve them."

The pastor, Father Raphael Assamah, has been supportive of the parish's determination to replace its classroom space.

"He's a real supporter of our parish," said Phillips.



Photo by Anne Marie Cox




Photo supplied by Rick Emswiler, architect

This year marks the third time St. Mary Parish in Hamburg, in the far southwest corner of the Diocese, has tried to take down a 125-year-old house, shown in the top photo, and replace it with a new facility, shown in an architectural rendering in the bottom photo. Parishioners are hoping nothing stands in their way this time.

It's been a rough couple of years.

"We certainly have had challenges. But we work together to get things done," said parishioner Carolyn Maher.

Jamison added that the parish slogan is "a small parish with a big heart. I think that has definitely been demonstrated in this parish."



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## Volunteers become hands and feet of Christ to serve the poorest

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

When a homeless man was found dead in early February in Des Moines, temperatures had dipped to nearly 6 degrees below zero.

Joe Stevens, co-founder of Joppa, a non-profit assisting homeless in Des Moines, said though volunteers with his group did not know the homeless man personally, they had seen him at Joppa events. The pain of his death cut deep.

"It was very sad and a sense of a deep loss," said Stevens. "We lost one of our folks – and what could we have done differently to help prevent that?"

Joppa helps the homeless access resources, transitional housing, peer support, food, and much more.

The organization receives a large amount of volunteer support and donations from members of St. Boniface Parish in Waukee and Assumption Parish in Granger.

Every December, Joppa holds its annual memorial service outside the Capitol to honor those who died homeless. The service is followed by a Christmas party and dinner in the East Village, run by a small army of volunteers from Assumption Parish.

Assumption parishioner and volunteer Joe Henkels said the parish raises money to purchase the turkey, stuffing, all the fixings, and dessert.

"We do all of the cooking, the serving, and everything," Henkels said. "Our biggest dinner was 570 meals.

"It's so rewarding," Henkels said. "Joppa is the equivalent of the washing of the feet. You're helping people you may never see again. They need a hand and you can do your part."

Henkels loves the personal interactions.

"There's such a stigma. You get to meet them and understand that they are regular people with a different situation," he said.

Because of COVID-19, Assumption parishioners dropped off turkey and stuffing burritos for volunteers to deliver to encampments at Thanksgiving.

Tracy Wilson, a member of St. Boniface Parish in Waukee, said she and her daughter in high school, Jade, find meaning and fulfillment through their work with Joppa.

"Some people try to justify [not getting involved] and say they are lazy," Wilson said. "But knowing there's so much more [to the story behind homelessness]. And now everywhere you go you see it.... You can't un-see it."



Volunteers from Assumption Parish in Granger prepared, cooked, and served the entire Christmas dinner for Joppa's annual Christmas party for the homeless.

The Wilsons help by offering support and delivering food to those in Joppa's transitional housing through the Circle of Friends program.

Stevens is grateful for the volunteers and parishes who help with their homeless ministry.

In the past 5-10 years, volunteers contributed 30,000-40,000 hours annually. Because of the pandemic, the number of volunteers was cut in half, but time donated in 2020 was still at 33,500 hours.

Volunteers support the work of Joppa by rescuing food (over 100,000 pounds per year) to volunteering at one of their five annual events, gardening, IT work, or writing.

Their faith is central to everything they do.

"We used to talk about how we were totally dependent on God – and we still do that," Stevens continued. "We know we are doing things beyond our own means and we wouldn't be able to achieve what we are doing

[by ourselves]. I couldn't sleep at night if I didn't just turn it all over to God.

"This is a calling," Stevens said. "We feel that God revealed his purpose for [my wife and son's] lives, and this is the reason why we were born."

Learn more about volunteering, making a gift and more at [Joppa.org](http://Joppa.org).

## Joppa's Circle of Friends is key to helping homeless

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

When Joppa encounters homeless individuals who want help getting off the streets, the non-profit forms a client relationship and helps them create a plan, said Joe Stevens, Joppa co-founder.

This includes finding transitional housing, providing a welcome basket with personal care items, assisting them in finding a job, and/or improving their skill set, and helping them access resources available to them, including transportation to and from the offices they need to visit to make that happen.

Joppa then forms a Circle of Friends for that individual to offer friendship, support, and regular interactions with people who care.

Parishioners at St. Boniface Parish in Waukee have been heavily involved in the Circle of Friends and welcome baskets. They also have many volunteers crocheting mats out of plastic bags for the homeless.

"I must say that the soul of St. Boniface exists for others," said Father Devaraj Chinnapan, pastor. "There's something about St. Boniface – if I mentioned a need, there was always somebody who stepped out and said, 'We'll help that person.' Even during the pandemic."

Getting a parish involved often just takes the courage of one or two people to step out and get the ball rolling, said Joe Henkels, Joppa volunteer from Assumption Parish in Granger.

Learn more about volunteering at [Joppa.org](http://Joppa.org).

## From regular guy to homeless



Scott Rupe was a regular guy who found himself homeless. He credits Joppa for helping him out of homelessness. Read and watch his story at [joppa.org/featured\\_story/reunited-and-restored/](http://joppa.org/featured_story/reunited-and-restored/).

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# Begin again on the road to follow Jesus

For the past few years, my family has had backyard chickens.

We've established a pattern of adding a few new birds to the flock every couple of years, and we always go out and buy the chicks on Easter Monday. For the first few weeks we keep the chicks in our basement, and I have to say it's fun to hear their chirps throughout the house and to see my kids name them and watch them with delight.

Even I can admit the chicks are ridiculously cute. There are many days when I might get frustrated with our chickens, like when I have to clean the coop, or chase down an escaped chicken, or try to learn veterinary skills with sick birds.

But on Easter Monday, watching these little birds and the joy they bring my

## Marriage and Family Life

By Adam Storey



kids, they become for me a sign of hope, and new life, and the wonder of creation.

This Easter Monday, as my family and I drove to Bomgaars to once more begin the journey of raising new little chicks, my wife and I were discussing Pope Francis' Easter Vigil homily. In it, he invites us to "begin again" on the road of discipleship, just like the disciples had to go back to the "beginning," to meet the risen Christ

in Galilee (Mark 16:7).

This past year has been hard. There has been the fear of uncertainty, the loss of loved ones, loneliness and division. And yet, the Easter season reminds us that death does not have the last word. There is always the hope of new life, or in our case, new chicks! As Pope Francis pointed out in his homily, it is by following Jesus that we "learn to be amazed by the Lord's infinite love, which opens new trails along the path of our defeats."

While I need to be reminded of this reality often, my kids are a powerful witness to this truth on a daily basis. Their Easter explosion of joy - admittedly aided by candy, new books and eight baby chicks - is a sign of their freedom and openness to God's grace; it is the childlike disposition

that Jesus says is necessary to receive his Kingdom (Luke 18:17).

We remain in the Easter season until May 23, and during this time I recommend that all of us take the time to read Pope Francis' Easter Vigil homily, for it is quite powerful.

I also pray that during this season we may all more deeply experience the Easter promise. Pope Francis said that "the Lord goes ahead of you, he always walks before you. And, with him, life always begins anew."

*Adam Storey is the diocesan director of Marriage & Family Life. He can be reached at 515-237-5056 or astorey@dm diocese.org.*

# Horse, buggy, and a history of faith

"A few daring pioneers were the first Halbur Catholics to travel by foot and horseback to Mt. Carmel, the site of the only Catholic church in Carroll County."

Those were the words written in the history book of my very small hometown of Halbur, Iowa.

I love thinking about these faith-filled people mounting horses or traveling by foot nearly 13 miles in the elements to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. A 26-mile round trip was much longer in those days, and I'm inspired by their dedication to the Catholic faith.

But it prompted me to wonder: How daring and bold are we Catholics today? How far are we willing to go for our faith - both literally and figuratively?

In 1875, a Catholic church was built in Hillsdale, situated amongst beautiful, hilly terrain about 3.5 miles east of Halbur - a closer travel option for Mass. Most families traveled by horse and buggy to Mass in Hillsdale (known my entire life as Roselle).

In 1901, the town of Halbur, now on railroad lines for both passenger and

## Faith that Conquers

By Kelly Mescher Collins



freight trains, sent a delegation to see Archbishop James J. Keane of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, bishop of the Halbur territory at that time. (Today Halbur is part of the Sioux City Diocese.)

The people requested two things: a pastor and to have Halbur proclaimed a parish. The Archbishop granted their requests and sent Father John Beaumler to town.

When Father Beaumler arrived, the people "formed in procession on foot, horseback and carriages to welcome their first pastor" before escorting him to the school, which had been prepared for Holy Mass.

I love it.

The first St. Augustine Catholic

Church in Halbur was built in 1904. In 1973, the original church was torn down and the new St. Augustine church that stands today neared completion. My older sister Jody was the first baby to be baptized there in 1973 - the pews weren't even in yet.

Before the original church was demolished, the parish auctioned off items, including the nearly 7-foot-tall crucifix. My uncle Jerry purchased and hung the crucifix in his machine shed, where he could see it every day on the family farm just outside Halbur.

After Jerry passed in 2015, my aunt Sharon prayed about what to do with the over 100-year-old crucifix, now showing its age. She called our alma mater, Kuemper Catholic High School in Carroll, wondering if they could make good use of this piece.

"Jerry loved high school," Sharon said. "That was some of the best days of his life, and I just felt like it needed to go to Kuemper."

The crucifix was restored by another Kuemper alum with experience in this special work.

The cross then returned to its original home, St. Augustine in Halbur, for viewing and reflection before moving it to Kuemper. It was blessed on March 25, 2021, by Kuemper's chaplain, Father Patrick Behm, as it hung in its new location in the school gym.

The plaque hanging below it says: "Crucifix of Our Lord, St. Augustine Catholic Church, 1904-1973."

It also reads: "Sharon asks that students, in viewing this crucifix, say a prayer for Jerry's soul, and that they be reminded how much God loves us, for He gave us His only Son to atone for our sins and open the gates of heaven to us."

It's a reminder of how far Jesus went for us - all the way - unto a horrific death on the cross.

May we respond generously to Jesus' giving of his very self and take our faith "all the way" for him.

*Kelly Mescher Collins is multimedia journalist at the Diocese of Des Moines. She can be reached at kcollins@dmdiocese.org.*

# Black voices on Black lives

Iowans for LIFE ran a unique series during Black History Month titled "Black Voices on Black Lives." The series looked at the impact abortion has had on black women.

Abortion has a disparate impact on the African-American community: Blacks represent less than 13% of the U.S. population, but 36% of all abortions, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Forty-seven percent of black pregnancies end in abortion nationally (UrbanCure.org report to Congress), and Black women are four to five times as likely to abort as white women, according to the Guttmacher Institute. As a result, the African-American total fertility rate in 2018 was only 1.792 nationally (Statista), well below the 2.1 replacement level.

With that as background, Iowans for LIFE provided a platform for Black women to share their experience on this sensitive subject. One writer, Amina Stack,

## Guest Column

By Maggie DeWitte



said the aftermath of her abortion was difficult:

"Abortion offers no practical healing to the post-abortive mother who struggles from the physical trauma a procedure has left on her body, or the mental trauma a procedure has waged on her mind. Gas to the fire is when many in society will tell her the pain she is experiencing is not real and nothing to be ashamed of."

Erica Day thought she was pregnant when she went in for an abortion, only to discover she wasn't as she lay on the abortionist's table. The impact was just as

devastating as if she did have an abortion: "Even though I didn't actually murder my child, I felt like I did, because that was my intention. I went home and slept for the rest of the day. I felt horrible inside. Guilty. Just as if I actually had killed my flesh and blood. To this day, I still sometimes feel it."

Tami Thomas is a devout Christian. But when an unintended pregnancy occurred when she was 19, she and her boyfriend decided to abort the child until God interceded:

"The night before I was to go in for my appointment, I had a very vivid dream. I heard God's voice speaking to me, telling me not to kill my baby. He told me he loved my baby and had great plans for my baby's life. Then I saw my baby in the future. I saw that he was a boy. A curly haired, beautiful boy. He went on to tell me to name him Caleb Joshua and that he loves him and that I didn't have the right to take his life from him. Even now, all these

years later, I am in tears and in awe of what happened that night."

Rita Davenport grew up in a Black church and said pro-life teaching was lacking:

"Churches that do not correct the attitude of 'my body, my choice' are perpetuating miseducation and permitting the lie to flourish. Godliness means the self is last. Obviously, any church that does not teach this basic tenet of Christianity is doing a disservice to the flock. I believe this lack of teaching the application of biblical principles to our lives is happening in a majority of mainstream denominations and churches. It's not just an issue in predominantly Black churches."

You can read the series, "Black Voices on Black Lives," in its entirety at IowansForLife.org.

*Maggie DeWitte is executive director of Iowans for LIFE.*

# God sends comfort in flaps of wings and streaks of light

It can be hard to wrap our minds around the fact that God is always with us.

My grandfather and I were always two peas in a pod. Since I was a little girl we'd laugh, joke, and goof around constantly.

In the summer of 2019, I was getting ready to leave for Catholic Youth Camp. I looked forward to that week every year as the highlight of my summer.

That year was different.

The week I was leaving for camp, my grandfather went to the hospital.

The morning I was set to be dropped off at CYC, my parents and I stopped at the hospital to visit my grandfather. We walked in and were quickly stopped by my uncles and grandmother. We went to a different room, not his, and talked a bit.

I remember my father talking about funeral plans. Tears began swelling in my eyes, but my mom told me I had

## Guest Column

By Anastasia Siebrecht



nothing to worry about and that I was going to have an amazing week at camp.

As we were leaving the hospital and passing my grandfather's room, I felt a call to stop in and tell him goodbye. However, with the rush of CYC excitement, I didn't get that chance.

The first morning of Catholic Youth Camp I was called into the office by my parish priest, Father Ross Parker. I knew in my heart that something was wrong. He told me of my grandfather's passing. I broke down crying. I couldn't believe I had acted so selfishly and didn't

give my grandpa a "goodbye" when I knew I should have.

For the next few hours, I stayed in the chapel praying. I remember begging God: "Why now? Why here? This is supposed to be the best week of summer and now it's the worst week of my life."

After a few hours, my best friend came up into the chapel and asked me to go on a walk. As we walked and talked, a swarm of butterflies surrounded us.

My grandfather loved butterflies. He even created a special habitat for them on his land.

At this moment, I knew God and my grandfather were both with me. I can still remember the huge weight that was lifted off my chest. It was truly a sign from God telling me that I was at CYC for a reason. God knew with my grandfather's passing that I needed to be surrounded by my best friends in my favorite place.

After a very emotional day, everyone at camp went to the outdoor chapel.

As the prayer service began, I looked up to the gorgeous sky God had created. While gazing into the stars I thought of my grandfather. I also thought of God sending me to CYC to help cope with the loss. Suddenly, as I was processing the day's events, a sparkling star went shooting across the sky. I had never seen a shooting star before that night. I knew God was sending me another message of his presence. I knew I was safe and watched over by God.

It is almost two years later and I am still in awe of God's presence. I know he is with me at all times. Whenever I find myself questioning my faith, I always think back to this day.

The day that was supposed to be the worst day of my life actually ended up being the most insightful and important. God is always with us. We are being watched over by him.

*Anastasia Siebrecht is a parishioner of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Des Moines.*

## Finding spiritual peace on a hospice bed

After retiring from law enforcement 11 years ago, I became involved in hospital ministry.

I worked part-time as a chaplain for Mercy Hospital in Council Bluffs and Creighton Hospital in Omaha. Through conversations with Deacon Jean Plourde I became interested in his ministry as a hospice chaplain. In December of 1996, I joined Deacon Jean as a chaplain for St. Croix Hospice. Working out of the Council Bluffs office, I had an 80-mile radius, covering the communities of Portsmouth, Harlan, Atlantic, Clarinda, Shenandoah, and points in between.

"Hospice" often brings up anxiety and resistance due to misconceptions about what hospice care actually includes. Hospice is so much more than end-of-life care benefiting both patients and their families.

Far from "giving up" in the face of an advanced illness, choosing hospice can help patients and families make the most of their time together when a cure is no longer an option. Those involved

## Guest Column

By Deacon Monty Montague



in hospice focus on helping patients and loved ones maintain quality of life during the time they have together. Hospice care can be provided for anyone with a life expectancy of six months or less, and it may be continued as long as a patient is qualified.

Nothing compares to the joy of helping someone find spiritual peace – and knowing it is Christ working through me. My most profound moment of hospice involved Marilyn from Red Oak. Marilyn was a Protestant, and though she attended church occasionally, she doubted her salvation. During the course of my visits I shared the parable of the Prodigal Son.

It's a powerful story of God the Father's infinite mercy.

After taking time to reflect more on the Father's mercy with Marilyn, I invited her to rededicate her life to the Lord. To pray, to ask for God's forgiveness of her sins and to profess Jesus as Lord and Savior of her life. She was guided through the Sinner's Prayer and she professed Jesus as her Lord and Savior.

After prayer, I asked how she felt. She replied, "I feel very good, like a weight has been lifted off of me." I quoted a passage from St. Luke to her, "The angels rejoice over each repentant sinner." I confirmed for her that the angels were celebrating for her in heaven.

About a month after her profession of faith, I found myself at her bedside. It was just the two of us. She was at the end of life. I found her to be non-responsive to my voice or touch. I began to read and reflect on various passages of Scripture from the book *Pastoral Care of the Sick*. As I prayed her breathing was becoming more

and more shallow. Feeling compelled to pray the Anima Christi prayer, I began to pray, "Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me..." As I neared the end of the prayer, Marilyn opened her eyes, raised herself on to her left elbow and looked toward me... but beyond me. After a moment or two, she lowered herself back onto her pillow, took a couple of breaths and was gone.

The feeling that welled up in me was of great joy. I know in my heart that she had gone to be with our Savior Jesus Christ. I couldn't wait to call and talk with Deacon Jean to share my excitement and to let him know that the angels in heaven were rejoicing over one repentant sinner coming home.

*Reprinted with permission from Diakonia, a newsletter for deacon couples of the Diocese of Des Moines. Deacon Monty Montague serves Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs.*

## What Dorothy Day saw in 'the Little Flower'

One of Dorothy Day's favorite saints was Therese of Lisieux, Therese Martin, the saint we call "the Little Flower."

At first glance, this might look like a strange affinity. Dorothy Day was the ultimate activist for justice, protesting in the streets, being arrested, going to prison, and starting a community and a newspaper, the Catholic Worker, in service of the poor. Therese of Lisieux was a contemplative nun, hidden away in an obscure convent in a small town in France. Indeed, during her whole life, except for one brief trip to visit to Rome with her family and parish, she never left her small town and, at her death, was probably known by fewer than 200 people. Moreover, in her writings, one finds precious little that might be considered explicitly prophetic in terms of social justice. She wrote as a mystic, with a focus on the interior life and on our personal intimacy with Jesus. Not exactly the stuff of protests in the streets.

So why did Dorothy Day, whose life looks so different, have an affinity for this young recluse?

Dorothy Day was drawn to Therese's spirituality because she understood it beyond its popular misconception. Among all known saints, Therese of Lisieux stands out as one of the most popular saints of all time and as one of the most

## Guest Column

By Father Ron Rolheiser



misunderstood saints of all time, and her popularity is part of the problem. Popular devotion has encrusted her person and spirituality in an over-simplistic piety that generally serves to hide her real depth. Therese termed her spirituality "the little way." Popular piety, for the most part, thinks of her "little way" as a spirituality that invites us to live quiet, humble, simple, anonymous lives wherein we do everything, especially the small humble tasks asked of us, with fidelity and graciousness, unassuming, childlike, grateful to God just to be of service. While there is a lot of truth in that understanding, it misses some of the depth of Therese's person and spirituality.

To understand Therese's "little way" and its connection with justice for the poor, we need to understand certain things in her life that helped constellate the vision that lay behind her "little way."

Therese of Lisieux had a very complex childhood. On the one hand, her life was touched by deep sadness, not least the death of her mother when Therese was

4 years old and several bouts of clinical depression from which she nearly died. She did not have an easy walk through childhood. On the other hand, she had an exceptionally graced childhood. She grew up in family of saints who loved her deeply and honored (and often photographed) her every joy and pain. She was also a beautiful young girl, attractive and graced with a disarming warmth and sensitivity. Her family and everyone around her considered her special and precious. She was much loved, but this did not make for a spoiled child. We can never be spoiled by being loved too much, only by being loved badly. Her family loved her purely, and the result was a young woman who opened her heart and person to the world in an exceptional way.

Moreover, as she matured, she began to notice something. She noticed how when she was a child her every tear was noticed, valued, and honored, but that this was not the case for many other people. She recognized that countless people suffer heartbreaks and injustices, endure abuse, are humiliated, live in shame, and shed tears that no one notices and no one cares about. Their pain is not seen, not honored, not valued. From this insight, she articulated this ground metaphor that undergirds her "little way".

Her words: One Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the Cross, I was

struck by the blood flowing from one of his divine hands. I felt a pang of great sorrow when thinking this blood was falling on the ground without anyone's hastening to gather it up. I was resolved to remain in spirit at the foot of the Cross and to receive its dew. ... I don't want this precious blood to be lost. I shall spend my life gathering it up for the good of souls.

From this, we see that her "little way" is not about privatized piety, but about noticing and responding to the pain and tears of our world. Metaphorically, it is about noticing and "gathering up" the blood that is dripping from the suffering face of Christ which this face is presently suffering in our world in the faces of the poor, the faces of those who are bleeding and shedding tears because of heartbreak, injustice, poverty, lack of love, and lack of being deemed precious.

Dorothy Day walked the streets of the poor, noticing their blood, drying their tears, trying in her own way to gather them up. Therese did the same thing mystically, deep inside the body of Christ. It is no surprise that Dorothy Day took her as her patron saint.

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through ronrolheiser.com.*

# Pope fondly remembers his time at adoration

Continued from page 1

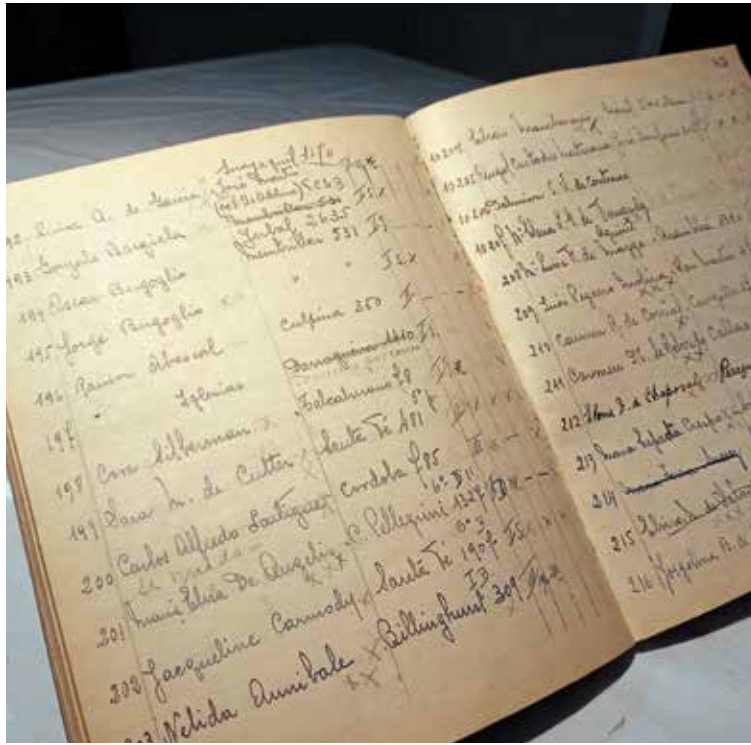
an hour of adoration.”

Pope Francis had spoken in the past about his admiration for Father Aristi, his confessor who died when the future pope was serving as vicar general of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires.

During a 2014 meeting with parish priests of the Diocese of Rome, the pope recalled paying his last respects to Father Aristi in the crypt of the church where the late priest’s body lay.

After adorning Father Aristi’s coffin with flowers, “I looked at the rosary in his hand. Immediately that robber that is in each of us came out and while I arranged the flowers, I picked up the cross of the rosary and with a little effort, I pulled it off. I looked at him and said, ‘Give me half of your mercy,’” the pope said.

He put the crucifix in his breast pocket and carried it there until his election as pope March 13, 2013. “But a pope’s shirts don’t have pockets,” so now he carries it in a cloth pouch under his cassock. “And when I start having a bad thought about someone, I always put my hand here,” he said, showing the priests where the crucifix is.



CNS photo/Lucas Schaerer

The name Jorge Bergoglio, the future Pope Francis, is seen in a registry for overnight Eucharistic adoration at the Basilica of the Blessed Sacrament in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The pope said he was moved by this photo showing his participation in adoration as a young man between 1954 and 1955, when he was 18-19 years old

## Bishop, priests hope new document will deepen faith, spur evangelization

PHOENIX (CNS) -- Holy Week is a spiritual marathon of sorts, packed with liturgies, solemnity and tradition. This year, it also included a powerful document on the Eucharist issued by Phoenix Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted April 1, Holy Thursday. Titled “Veneremur Cernui -- Down in Adoration Falling,” it captured the attention of clergy and faithful alike in the days leading up to Easter. Bishop Olmsted hopes the faith of practicing Catholics in the Eucharist will be deepened and fortified, propelling them into giving witness to others. “The primary evangelizers we especially need now are laypeople who are so grateful for their faith,” Bishop Olmsted said. The wonder and awe engendered by the Eucharist, he said, spurs these evangelizers who “just can’t help but tell somebody once in a while, ‘I can’t live without going to daily Mass, I couldn’t live without doing adoration.’ That’s what I’m especially hoping for: personal witness of the Eucharist,” Bishop Olmsted said. Father John Muir, director of the diocesan Office of Worship and pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Avondale, Arizona, echoed those thoughts. Bishop Olmsted “is calling people who love their faith and are highly engaged to really see their own responsibility to reach out to people in their circle and say, ‘Hey, come with me to daily Mass, come with me to eucharistic adoration, come with me to Sunday Mass,’” Father Muir told The Catholic Sun.

Read the pastoral letter here: <https://dphx.org/veneremur-cernui>  
En español: <https://dphx.org/veneremur-cernui-veneremos-inclinados>

## Obispo y sacerdotes esperan que un nuevo documento profundice la fe y que estimule la evangelización

PHOENIX (CNS) – La Semana Santa es un tipo de maratón espiritual, lleno de liturgias, solemnidad y tradición. Este año incluyó también un poderoso documento sobre la Eucaristía redactado el 1 de abril, Jueves Santo, por el Obispo de Phoenix Thomas J. Olmsted. Con el título “Veneremur Cernui – Veneremos Inclinados,” el documento captura la atención tanto del clero como de los fieles en los días que nos llevan a la Pascua. El Obispo Olmsted espera que la fe que los católicos practicantes tienen en la Eucaristía se profundizará y se fortalecerá, motivándoles a dar testimonio a los demás. “Los primeros evangelizadores que se necesitan especialmente en este momento son los laicos que son tan agradecidos por su fe,” dijo el Obispo Olmsted. La maravilla y el asombro que genera la Eucaristía, dice, estimula a esos evangelizadores quienes “no pueden evitar decirle a alguien de vez en cuando ‘no puedo vivir sin asistir a la Misa diariamente, no puedo vivir sin ir a adoración.’ Eso es lo que estoy esperando: testimonio especial de la Eucaristía,” dijo el Obispo Olmsted. El Padre John Muir, director de la Oficina de Culto de la diócesis y párroco en la parroquia de Santo Tomás Aquino en Avondale, Arizona hizo eco de tales expresiones. El Obispo Olmsted “está llamando a la gente que ama su fe y que está muy involucrada a que vean verdaderamente su propia responsabilidad de llegar a aquellos dentro en sus círculos y decirles, ‘ven conmigo diariamente a Misa, ven conmigo a la adoración eucarística, ven conmigo a Misa el domingo,’” dijo el Padre Muir al diario The Catholic Sun.

Lea la carta pastoral en español en: <https://dphx.org/veneremur-cernui-veneremos-inclinados>

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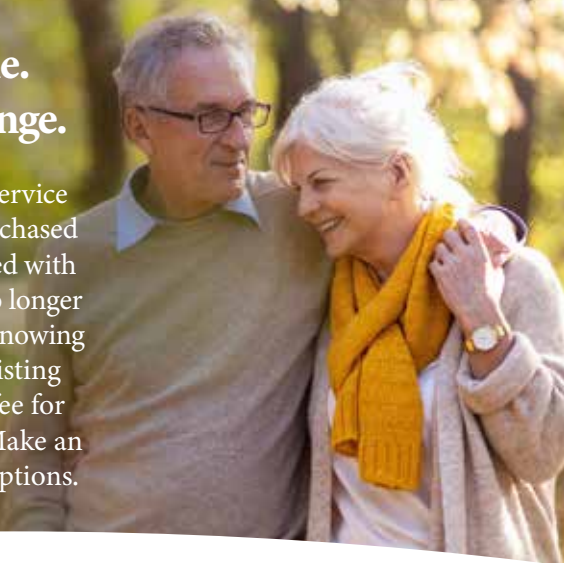
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The diocese’s Victim Assistance Advocate is a staff member at Polk County Victim Services. He helps victims of abuse of minors by clergy through a complaint process and in seeking support and counseling services. He can be reached at 515-286-2024 or [Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov).

# New priest assignments kick in this July

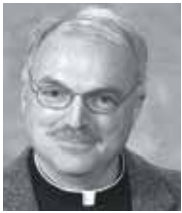
Continued from page 1

rice Dingman, then served in education and in parishes.

He went to his alma mater in the 1980s to serve on the faculty and as chaplain at Dowling Catholic High School.

His parish ministry took him to multiple churches: Sacred Heart in West Des Moines; St. Patrick Parish in Corning; St. Patrick Parish in Lenox; Assumption Parish in Churchville; St. Patrick Parish in Irish Settlement; Immaculate Conception in St. Mary's; St. Patrick in Council Bluffs; and for the last 16 years at St. Ambrose Cathedral.

**Father Timothy Fitzgerald** is moving from serving as pastor of Ss. John and Paul in Altoona, to retirement.



**Father Timothy Fitzgerald**

He attended Dowling Catholic High School, Loras College in Dubuque, Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium, St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, and the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

He was ordained by Bishop Dingman in 1975.

Father Fitzgerald served in education, parish life, and administration.

In education, he served as resource theologian at St. Joseph Educational Center in West Des Moines and served at the Center for Pastoral Liturgy at the University of Notre Dame.

In parish life, he served St. Peter in Council Bluffs; St. Pius X in Urbandale; St. Clare in Clarinda; St. Patrick in Lenox; St. Joseph in Villisca; Sacred Heart in Bedford; St. Edward in Afton; Holy Spirit in Creston; Our Lady's Immaculate Heart in Ankeny; and Ss. John and Paul in Altoona.

In administration, he served as the director of Adult Faith Formation and Lay Ministry, and the director of Worship for the Des Moines Diocese.

**Father Christopher Fontanini's** service as pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianola and Immaculate Conception Parish St. Mary has been extended for one year.

Educated at Dowling Catholic High School, Iowa State University, St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis,

Missouri, he was ordained in 1997 by Bishop Joseph Charron, C.P.P.S.

He served briefly as the chaplain at Dowling Catholic High School. His years of ministry have focused on parish life, particularly in rural areas, and in working with those discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

Father served at St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines; St. Catherine of Siena in Des Moines; Immaculate Conception in St. Mary's; St. Patrick in Irish Settlement; Assumption in Churchville; St. Patrick in Audubon; Holy Trinity in Exira; St. Mary in Guthrie Center; St. Cecelia in Panora; St. Patrick in Bayard; St. Joseph in Jamaica; St. Joseph in Earling; and St. Peter in Defiance before taking on his current role in Indianola and St. Mary.

He served as chaplain at the St. Thomas More Center and at Dowling Catholic High School.

Father Fontanini ministered as the diocesan director of Vocations and later as the vicar for newly ordained priests.

**Father Enrique Garcia-Elizalde**, associate pastor at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, is going to be the pastor of that parish.

Father is originally from Mexico and was ordained in 2001. He came to the United States in 2010 to serve the Hispanic population.

He began his ministry in the United States by educating seminarians at Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri, where he taught Spanish and Hispanic culture classes. He also served as spiritual director to young adults, held small faith group gatherings and facilitated Cursillo retreats and other apostolic movements.

In 2014, he began assisting Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Des Moines. He assisted with organizing the V Encuentro and lay formation classes, retreats, Masses, confessions and more.



**Father Christopher Fontanini**

He began assisting Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs full time in 2020.

**Father Christopher Hartshorn's** service as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines has been extended for an additional six years.

Father Hartshorn attended Norwalk High School; Northwest Missouri State; St. John Vianney in St. Paul, Minneapolis; North American College in Italy; and Catholic University in Washington, D.C., where he received a degree in Canon law.

He was ordained in 1994 by Bishop Joseph Charron, C.P.P.S.

Father Hartshorn's service has included parish life, administration, and the Tribunal.

His parish ministry has included both urban and rural areas of the diocese: Sacred Heart in West Des Moines; St. Mary in Anita; St. John in Adair; St. Joseph in Casey; St. Joseph in Winterset; St. Patrick in Irish Settlement; and St. Augustin in Des Moines.

Father Hartshorn served the administration of the Diocese as vicar general for nearly five years. He also has served the Tribunal for nine years.

**Father Raymond Higgins** is leaving his role as pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines beginning April 11 and will become pastor of St. Mary Parish in Guthrie Center, St. Patrick Parish in Bayard, and St. Cecilia Parish in Panora.

Father Higgins attended Indianola High School, Iowa State University, Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri, the College of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota and Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

He was ordained in 1993 by Bishop William Bullock.

Father Higgins has served at urban and rural parishes including St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines; St. Anthony in Des Moines; St. Patrick in Perry; Immaculate Conception in St. Mary's; Assumption in Churchville; St. Patrick in Irish Settlement; All Saints in Stuart; St. John in Adair; and St. Theresa in Des Moines.

In 2014, he began serving as co-vicar for religious.

**Father George Komo** is shifting from parochial vicar of Christ the King Parish in Des Moines to serve as the adminis-



**Father Christopher Hartshorn**

trator of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Carlisle, while also helping with campus ministries, and providing sacramental assistance to St. Catherine of Siena Student Center and Christ the King Parish.

Father Komo attended college in Nairobi, Kenya, and completed theological studies at Mundelein Seminary in Illinois. He was ordained by Bishop Richard Pates in Des Moines in 2009.

He served in parish life, education, and the military.

After ordination, he served Corpus Christi in Council Bluffs; St. Francis in West Des Moines; Immaculate Conception in St. Mary; and Christ the King in Des Moines.

He ministered as the chaplain at St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs and for two years in the military.

**Father Mark McGeary** is moving from St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines to pastor of Ss. John and Paul Parish in Altoona.

Educated in California, he received his theological formation at Mundelein Seminary in Illinois and was ordained by Bishop Richard Pates in 2019.

After ordination, he began serving at St. Francis Parish.

**Father Christopher Pisut's** service to St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines has been extended for six years while he continues to serve the diocese as a judicial vicar.

Father Pisut attended Dowling Catholic High School, Iowa State University, Mundelein Seminary, and Catholic University of America, where he earned a degree in Church history and Canon law.

He was ordained by Bishop Joseph Charron, C.P.P.S. in 2003.

Father Pisut has served several parishes including St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines; Sacred Heart in Chariton; St. Francis in Corydon; St. Brendan in Leon; and St. Augustin in Des Moines.

**Father Vincent Rosonke**, who is retired, will become the interim canonical administra-



**Father George Komo**

tor of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines from April 11 to July 9.

Father Rosonke attended New Hampton Community High School, Loras College in Dubuque, and St. Thomas Theological Seminary in Denver before his ordination by Bishop Maurice Dingman in 1975.

He served in both rural and urban parishes including Holy Spirit in Creston; St. Mary in Portsmouth; team ministry in Portsmouth, Panama, and Westphalia; Christ the King in Des Moines; Ss. John and Paul in Altoona; Sacred Heart in West Des Moines; and St. Boniface in Waukee.

After retiring in 2019, Father temporarily served at St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines.

**Father Nipin Thakidipurathu Scaria** is moving from Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines to St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines, where he will be the rector.

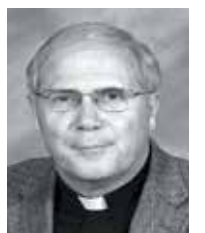
Father Scaria, who is originally from India, was ordained in 2016 by Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal.

He came to the Diocese of Des Moines to serve Sacred Heart Parish in 2019.

**Father Thomas Thakadipuram**, pastor of Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, is going to be the pastor of St. Mary Parish in Shenandoah and St. Mary Parish in Hamburg.

Born and raised in India, Father Thakadipuram moved to the United States to earn a doctoral degree in organization learning and development from the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. While there, he served as the spiritual director and formation director. He served as pastor of a parish in St. Paul, Minnesota, concurrently.

Father Thakadipuram returned to India to serve as president of St. Claret College in Bangalore. He moved to northern Wisconsin where he served several parishes before coming to the Diocese of Des Moines in 2016, when he began serving Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs.



**Father Vincent Rosonke**



**Father Nipin Thakidipurathu Scaria**



**Father Mark McGeary**



**Father Raymond Higgins**



**Father Christopher Pisut**



**Father Thomas Thakadipuram**

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