Deacon built life around faith, family

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Deacon Pat Kirkman was a builder.

He and his wife of 51 years, Christine, raised a family with five children. He built a business, a home and a life that centered on God.

“[Deacon] Pat was to love a man who knew how profoundly lacking and meaningless his life had been before (God) and how profoundly everything changed after that,” said his pastor, Father PJ McManus of Christ the King Parish in Des Moines.

Now, Father McManus envisions his parishioners building a mansion in heaven for those who will follow him.

Deacon Kirkman died June 2. He was 78.

Born in Des Moines in 1942, he served in the U.S. Army and served as a Des Moines fireman and emergency medical technician for five years. He was a carpenter by trade and owned his own construction company before managing property.

In 1997, he was ordained a deacon.

“He was ordained a deacon and appropriately so because he had a servant’s heart,” said his good friend, Monsignor Frank Chiodo.

The pastor of St. Anthony Parish recalled a time when he was serving in Leon and was supposed to go to the airport but a snowstorm prevented him from getting there. Deacon Kirkman drove from Des Moines to Leon and back to get his friend to the airport on time.

“That’s the kind of guy he was. If somebody had a problem, he would help,” said Monsignor Chiodo.

Deacon Kirkman used his carpentry skills to help the needy, said Deacon Dave Barrettes.

“Several years ago, I became aware of a structural problem at one of The Catholic Church’s buildings. I asked him how I could help and he said, ‘What do you know about carpentry?’ I told him I knew a little bit and he sent me to Des Moines to fix it,” said Barrettes.

The Feast of Corpus Christi, June 3, celebrates the Real Presence of Jesus, Body and Blood, in the Eucharist. Parishes celebrated with neighborhood processions to publicly witness their faith as a community. Top: Deacon Kurt Heinrich carries a monstrance with the Eucharist for St. Augustine Parish in Des Moines. Top right: Father Jose Reynaldo Hernandez, of three Des Moines parishes - Christ the King, St. Anthony and the Basilica of St. John - carries the Eucharist at St. Anthony’s procession. To far right: Fathers Chris Hartshorn and Nipin Scaria, of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines. Right middle: Father Fabian Moncada, of Our Lady of the Americas, begins a procession. Right bottom: Father Dan Kirby, of St. John the Apostle Parish in Norwalk, holds the Eucharist high for his parishioners to see.

Bishops appoint priest to focus on national Eucharistic Revival

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Ahead of the bishops’ spring assembly, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington has appointed Father Jorge Torres, a priest of the Diocese of Orlando, Florida, to help implement a planned multyear National Eucharistic Revival.

Msgr. Jeffrey D. Burke, USCCB general secretary, announced the appointment of Father Torres as a specialist for the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis in celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Father Torres joins the conference as the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis begins the promotion of a National Eucharistic Revival, known in the Diocese of Des Moines as Eucharistic Renewal, to renew the church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

In his new role, effective July 12, Father Torres joins the conference as the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis begins the promotion of a National Eucharistic Revival, known in the Diocese of Des Moines as Eucharistic Renewal, to renew the church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

This Eucharistic initiative is part of the USCCB’s 2021-2024 strategic plan, “Created Anew by the Body and Blood of Christ: Source of Our Healing and Hope.” Planning for the national Eucharistic Revival has been tak-
El físico que luego se convertiría en sacerdote, Mons- 
señor Lorenzo Albacete, advirtió a los jóvenes sobre el peligro es-
risco de tomar la ruta más fácil.

Albacete enfatizó que no queremos dejar pasar la oportunidad de convertirnos en personas amorosas y profe-
ticas, que se inundan de creatividad y alegría. La relación con Jesús debe ser un viaje de amor, y no un simple acto rutinario.

"La relación con Jesús, el amor en su verdadero sentido, es el acto central de nuestra existencia. Ella nos permite encontrar el sentido de nuestra vida, nos da significado y nos lleva a ser personas de valor", declaró Albacete.

La relación con Jesús no debe ser pasiva, sino activa. Debemos estar dispuestos a tomar decisiones difíciles, incluso si significan sacrificar nuestra comodidad o nuestras propias aspiraciones. La verdadera relación con Jesús es una danza de amor, una danza que nos lleva a realizar sacrificios por él y para él.

"El amor es la receta secreta de la vida. Cuando reconocemos a Jesús como nuestro único amor, nos encontramos con su verdadero poder para transformar nuestra vida", sostiene Albacete.

La relación con Jesús no sólo es un acto personal, sino que también implica compartir esta relación con otros. Al compartir nuestra fe con otros, estamos ayudando a otros a encontrar el amor y la verdad que tanto necesitan.

"Cuando compartimos nuestro amor con otros, estamos ayudando a otros a encontrar el amor de Jesús en su vida. Y eso es lo que verdaderamente importa", concluye Albacete.
Queridos Amigos en Cristo,

Este próximo 25 de julio, el Décimo Séptimo Domingo se reinstaura en la Diócesis de Des Moines la obligación de la Misa dominical y de días de guardar. El 25 de julio, el Evangelio en las Misa Dominicales tendrá un significado especial debido a las palabras que Jesús pronunció sobre el Pan de Vida (Lucas 22:19). Jesús bendijo el Cuerpo y el Sangre para nosotros: “Tomad, coman y háganlo en memoria mía”. Esta es la obligación dominical que nos obliga a participar en la Eucaristía Dominical y de días de guardar, un ritmo más ordinario de nuestras vidas que nos nutre y nos sustenta en todas las temporadas de nuestras vidas. Que podamos crecer en nuestro amor a la Misa y en la observación de sus rituales y prácticas. Al preparar a las asambleas comunitarias para el próximo Domingo 25 de julio, invitamos a los fieles a participar en la Misa Dominical y de días de guardar. Este es un tiempo de reflexión sobre la vida, que nos permita apreciar a nuestra Diócesis y a su historia, que nos permita reflexionar sobre el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo, que son el vínculo entre Dios y nosotros.

Fundamentalmente, nuestra participación en la Eucaristía es un acto de compartir el Pan de Vida, un acto de unión y participación en el cuerpo de Cristo. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe, de amor y de entrega. Es un acto de conexión con Dios y con otros. La Eucaristía es un acto de solidaridad y de responsabilidad. Es un acto de rendición y de humildad. Es un acto de gratitud y de alegría. La Eucaristía es un acto de esperanza y de paz. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza. La Eucaristía es un acto de unión y de comprensión. La Eucaristía es un acto de gratitud y de bendición. La Eucaristía es un acto de amor y de misericordia. La Eucaristía es un acto de fe y de esperanza.
Hawkeye sports commentator Gary Dolphin was the keynote speaker for the Iowa Catholic Men’s conference.

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

Sports commentator and devout Catholic Gary Dolphin, voice of the Iowa Hawkeyes, gave the keynote address at the Iowa Catholic Men’s Conference on Saturday, May 22 at the Embassy Suites in downtown Des Moines.

“I love the belief and the teachings of the Catholic Church and my day starts with daily Mass – everyday,” Dolphin said.

Born and raised in the small town of Cascade in eastern Iowa, Dolphin had a rude awakening to the harsh realities of life at just age 14 age when his dad suddenly passed away.

“The oldest of seven kids, Dolphin suddenly found himself the “man” of the house. “I had some questions for God,” Dolphin said.

He vividly remembers answering the door the next day and representatives from Catholic Charities were standing on his doorstep with bags full of food and clothing.

“That left a lifelong impression on me,” Dolphin said. “That’s why I am always willing to volunteer, schedule permitting.”

He also never misses sending in his annual donation to Catholic Charities, knowing first-hand the good they do.

During his keynote, Dolphin talked about the Iowa Hawkeyes and shared personal anecdotes from his years of sports commentary.

He also talked about the value and importance of good character.

“Be a Christian for your family and your neighbors,” he said. “And remember, it’s how you treat people. I’m big on treat- ing people the way they should be treated – with respect and digni- ty.”

Tim Jameson, a member of St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines, was also a presenter and encouraged men to lead a holy life focused on prayer and to be cour- ageous in witnessing for Jesus and his church.

Bishop William Joensen, who celebrated Mass for the men at the beginning of the conference said: “Any time men in Christ can gather to be spiritually fed by Mass and by some inspiring speakers who helped us trace the voice of both the Holy Spirit and the unfriendly spirits, and who can help us integrate our voca- tions in the world with our witch to Jesus, is time well spent.”

“Tim Jameson and Gary Dolphin were compelling in calling us to not sit back but to step up now for the sake of the Gos- pel,” Bishop Joensen continued. “Gary’s humor helped the mes- sage go down well. And the in- formal conversations helped us to get to know one another bet- ter, to encourage each other and strengthen our bond as brothers in faith in the Diocese of Des Moines.”

Catholic schools

During the last day of the session lawmakers passed HF 847, which includes:

• An increased tax credit to it’s 75% for donors to School Tuition Organizations, which would increase to $20 million.

• Tax credits available to $20 mil- lion (from $15 million) starting next year

• The legislative session ended with resolutions on sever- al issues of interest to the Iowa Catholic Conference.

Catholic schools

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• Abortion

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to take up an abor- tion case about a Mississippi law that bans most abortions after 15 weeks. However, even if the court would limit federal consti- tutional protections for abortion, it wouldn’t make a difference in Iowa because of a decision by the Iowa Supreme Court which made abortion a fundamental right in the state.

That’s why it’s so im- portant that the Iowa legislature passed HJR 5, the “Protect Life Amendment.” The provision would clarify that Iowa’s consti- tution does not contain a right to an abortion. If passed by the legis- lature again in 2023 or 2024, the amendment will go to a vote of the people of Iowa.

Taxes

The legislative passed a tax reform bill, SF 619, which moves that the timeline for income tax cuts and shifts non-Medicare mental health funding to the state instead of from county property taxes. The Iowa Catholic Con- ference supported a few specific pieces in the bill:

• Sales tax exemption for equipment purchased by food banks

• Payment parity for coun- seling centers offering services by telehealth (including Catholic Charities)

• Tax credit increase for affordable housing projects and the creation of disaster recovery housing/eviction prevention programs.

Human Services

The legislature passed HF 302, a long-time priority which phases out the loss of eligi- bility for families to childhood assistance when the family’s in- come goes up.

In the human services budget bill, HF 891, the Family Development and Self-Sufficien- cy (FaDSS) program received a $1 million increase to $4.3 mil- lion. The program is home-based and intended to connect families to resources such as housing, food and energy assistance, transporta- tion, counseling, and parent edu- cation.

A few final thoughts

It’s expected that the General Assembly will return late this summer to pass a plan which redraws Iowa’s legislative dis- tricts.

Go to https://vote.iowa.gov/ and contact your representative and senators in opposition to elim- inating the Hyde Amendment from the federal budget. Without the Hyde Amendment and relat- ing projects, each taxpayer dollar could be used to pay for abortion in the United States and throughout the world.

Tom Chapman is the executive di- rector of the Iowa Catholic Con- ference, the official public policy voice of the bishops of Iowa.
Deacon Kirkman remembered for kindness

Continued from page 1

Worker houses in Des Moines. The problem was well beyond my capability and would be too expensive to hire a contractor,” he said. “Pat met me at the home the next day, evaluated the situation, proposed and executed a solution within a week. That’s the Pat Kirkman I knew. He was a man who understood his skills and a man who would share those skills with others when needed.”

“Deacon was a man you rarely see these days: A man of honor, strong conviction, and strength,” said friend Lois Brookhart. “He loved Jesus, his family and he seemed to know no stranger. He would give you the shirt off his back if he thought you needed it.” During the funeral Mass, Father PJ McManus reflected on the foundation upon which Deacon Kirkman built his life.

“Marriage and family life, work and, of course, ultimately ministry as a deacon in the Church, it was entirely dependent on this relationship with God that meant everything in the world. And the relationships that meant the most to him took their meaning, shape and form from Him,” said Father McManus.

Though he suffered successes and failures both professionally and personally, Deacon Kirkman wouldn’t let pain define him.

“Instead, he defined himself by victory, the victory of the Lord Jesus on the cross conquering sin and death, the promise of eternal life not only after death but right now,” said Father McManus.

“Whenever he did a kindness for me or my family, which was often over our years of friendship, I would say ‘God bless you, Deacon.’ His response was always, without fail, ‘He has!’” - Lois Brookhart

In the final words of Mass, a deacon says, “Go and proclaim the Gospel of the Lord.” Deacon Kirkman did that in many ways, not only in the context of the Mass, but by bringing healing and hope to others, said Bishop William Joensen.

Brookhart said: “Whenever he did a kindness for me or my family, which was often over our years of friendship, I would say ‘God bless you, Deacon.’ His response was always, without fail, ‘He has!’” - Lois Brookhart

Deacon Nick Smith, of St. Augustin Parish in Des Moines, and Deacon Rodrigo Mayorga Landeros, of St. Bernard Parish in Osceola, were ordained to the transitional diaconate on June 11.

Congratulations to the new ordained deacons

Thank you!

Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa would like to extend a thank you to these seven individuals.

These hardworking volunteers have served on our Board of Directors since our inception in 2012 and have paved the way for the Catholic Foundation for years to come.

Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa
June 21 Monday

DES MOINES — All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen at St. Ambrose Cathedral on Mondays at 3 p.m. for an hour of Eucharistic adoration. Evening prayer will be livestreamed at Facebook.com/dmdiocese.

June 28 Monday

DES MOINES — All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen at St. Ambrose Cathedral on Mondays for an hour of Eucharistic adoration. Evening prayer will be livestreamed at Facebook.com/dmdiocese.

July 14 Wednesday

Start Consecration Prayers

Begin 33 days of prayer in preparation for consecration to St. Joseph, through which we adopt St. Joseph as our spiritual father and try to live his virtues. A Mass and consecration will be at 4 p.m. on Aug. 15 at St. Patrick Church in Irish Settlement. Pray with Iowa Catholic Radio at 3:20 p.m.

Bishop William Joensen will be the main celebrant. Questions? Contact Deacon Mark Campbell at Campbell.markh@yahoo.com

July 12 Monday

Holy Hour

All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen at St. Ambrose Cathedral on Mondays at 5 p.m. for an hour of Eucharistic adoration. Evening prayer will be livestreamed at Facebook.com/dmdiocese.

July 23 Friday

Summer Fundraising Dance

Family Support Group

The Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph invites Des Moines diocesan families with children with disabilities to join a new online support group.

Every Monday, Noon - 1 p.m.

Send an email to lcarollo@charities.com to register. Send the email by Monday morning (9 a.m.) the day of the gathering. A link to the group will then be sent to you after you register. Questions? Contact Lisa Wagner-Carolla, lcarollo@charities.com OR (816) 659-8262. For more information, contact Patty Origer at poger@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5057.

dmdiocese.org/disabilityministry

We're close in all the ways you need.
Yes, we are located nearby for your convenience.
Through the years, we have formed close relationships with the families we serve.
As neighbors, we are there when needed most.
With a skilled and caring staff.
With a warm and comforting atmosphere.
With answers and options few funeral homes can offer.

Iowans for LIFE

For Life: a Catholic Community of Conscience for the Unborn

The Diocese of Des Moines commits to supporting pro-life initiatives.

Iowans for LIFE provides support to Catholic parishes, schools, and non-profit organizations of faith throughout the state of Iowa. Through our ongoing ini

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Established in 1972, we’re one of Iowa’s most experienced pro-life teams.
Reach 35,000 households by placing an ad in The Catholic Mirror.

Find rate sheet and deadlines at dmdiocese.org/catholic-mirror. Contact Kelly at kcollins@dmdiocese.org to place your ad.
InnerVisions HealthCare celebrated its 10-year anniversary on June 3 at its annual gala. More than 1,000 guests attended the event, highlighted by keynote speaker, Benjamin Watson (pictured left), former NFL tight end and Super Bowl champ. He spoke on the importance of “Being the One” to get involved in the life-affirming work of empowering at-risk, pregnant women and saving unborn babies. Since InnerVisions’ founding, more than 1,230 undecided pregnant women have changed their minds and have chosen parenting or adoption as a result of receiving free medical services at InnerVisions. For more information or to get involved as a volunteer, visit www.ivhcare.org.
Cabins blessed, Pates Plaza built in time for summer camp

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Summer began with a blessing of new cabins, outdoor Mass and expression of gratitude to the donors who raised $2.86 million for the much-needed improvements at the St. Thomas More Center in Panora.

Bishop William Joensen thanked supporters for their help upgrading the home of Catholic Youth Camp and retreat center. Joining him was retired Bishop Richard Pates, who came to see the new Pates Plaza, a shaded outdoor patio that will be used for everything from arts and crafts to faith programming, and science experiments. The plaza’s name honors the Diocese’s former shepherd, who advocated for the camp during the capital campaign.

“Bishop Pates made Catholic Youth Camp a priority and his guidance and vision played a huge role in the success of our capital campaign and the transformation of our campus,” said Alex Kautzky, executive director of the camp and retreat center.

Support continues to come in. A local group called 10 Squared Women of Guthrie County gifted the St. Thomas More Center $10,500 to run water from a pipe near a road to the Pates Plaza.

The new patio is about a quarter of a mile from the nearest water source so running water to the site will reduce the chances of kids getting dehydrated and allow the site will reduce the chances of them involved for years. Their three children attended CYC from the time they were young. They counseled, worked as staff or directed. He built the Marian shrine, helped build the office, and served as an owners representative for the construction of Charron Hall. He serves on the advisory board.

When Kim asked her children how she should advocate for the camp with the women’s group, she said, “Each of them said, aside from family, their faith formation occurred at St. Thomas More. I have a lot to thank them for because I’ve got some pretty great kids.”

Camp registrations are expected to reach capacity in the next few weeks, Kautzky said. Kids are excited about using the new cabins and they have pent up energy from the pandemic, she said.

Planned giving benefits
parish, school, organization

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

When Dick Ahlberg, a longtime member of Christ the King Parish in Des Moines, passed away, a portion of his assets were gifted to his beloved parish.

This planned gift of $5,740 will help Christ the King.

The pastor, Father PJ McManus, said Dick and his wife, Marilyn Ahlberg, were “pillars of the parish – they were always here.”

Their son Dave said his father had a big influence on his Catholic upbringing.

“He made sure we all went to Mass as a family,” Ahlberg said. “He made sure we kids could attend parochial school. We all went to Christ the King and then Dowling and St. Joseph Academy.”

Dick was a charter member of Christ the King.

In addition to the sum of money, Dick also donated a grandfather clock to the rectory and a car, with the request that it be donated to a family that was in great need.

“We donated it to a recently arrived immigrant family from Africa that attends Christ the King,” Father McManus said. “She was thrilled.”

He was very frugal, yet generous,” Ahlberg said. “In his later years, he gave $500-800 a month to charity. His donations went to Food for the Poor, Smile Train, Doctors Without Borders, Mercy Ships, St. Joseph Indian School, Mercy Home, CARE, World Vision, Sisters of Charity and others.

He said he has everything he needed and was willing to give away to those who didn’t,” the son added. “He got a kick out of buying goats, chickens and bags of rice for people in Africa.”

Sue McEntee, executive director of the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa, says parishes, schools and other organizations benefit greatly when individuals take advantage of planned giving.

“Many believe you have to be ‘wealthy’ to make a planned gift,” McEntee said. “In reality, all it takes is a simple, even small percent beneficiary designation on a life insurance policy to your favorite not for profit and you are a planned giver!”

The foundation stands ready to help.

Legacy, or planned gifts, provide the foundation for your parish, school or Catholic organization within the Diocese of Des Moines. Estate planning is the process of caring for yourself and your assets while you are living and planning for the orderly transfer of assets to other persons and organizations – both during your life and after.

Through estate planning, you ensure the wealth you have accumulated over your lifetime goes exactly where you want it to go. Learn more about how the foundation can help with planned giving by going to CFSWIA.org or calling 515-237-5044.

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 Diocese Facebook page: www.facebook.com/dioceseiowa/

Visit dmdioocese.org/Parishes to find out about your parish’s opportunities for Adoration and Holy Hours

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Many nursing homes went into lockdown in March 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Deacon Joe Cortese’s mother was living there. Her health had been declining for several months. But then in May it took a turn for the worse. Because of COVID, they were not able to visit her until she was “actively dying,” Deacon Cortese said.

He arrived at the nursing home at about 6 p.m. on May 18, 2020. He and his brother prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet for her.

“And then she very quietly slipped away at about 8 p.m.,” he said.

The funeral for his mother, Kathryn Mary Marasco Cortese, a member of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines, has been on hold ever since because of the pandemic.

“My older brother lives out in Connecticut, and my other brother lives out in Connecticut, and they didn’t want to be exposed to COVID while they were traveling. Those were two major reasons for the wait. “And we still haven’t scheduled it yet,” he continued.

Though restrictions across the country are lifting, many are still wary and taking precautions. “My brother in Connecticut wants to wait a little longer,” he said.

While the funeral has been on hold, the family is grateful to Caldwell Parrish Funeral Home in Des Moines, where the cremated remains have been kept during this time of uncertainty.

“They checked with us a couple of times just to make sure we didn’t forget about it and I told them we needed more time,” Deacon Cortese said. “They were very gracious about that.” The urn will be buried next to their father’s in Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines after the funeral.

Mark Parrish, owner and funeral director at Caldwell Parrish, said families are now reaching out to plan funerals for family members that passed away during the pandemic.

“We are starting to see some of those families that held off on having services come back and wanting to schedule those now,” Parrish said. “Maybe they didn’t do a funeral Mass or service at the time. Or maybe they just did a private family Mass. Now they are coming back and having a full evening visitation and Mass the next day,” Parrish added.

Others have decided not to reschedule.

“We are seeing some families that were planning [something for a later date] and now it’s been six, eight, 12 months have gone by and they have just decided not to do anything else,” he added.

Livestreaming, a hallmark of the pandemic, was implemented at Caldwell Parrish to allow family and friends to safely participate from home. The feature is here to stay for those who want it.

“Families have really appreciated and liked it,” Parrish said.

Mike Hoy, owner of Hoy-Kilnoski Funeral Home in Council Bluffs and Omaha, said streaming was actually an option already in place at his funeral home. But the pandemic prompted them to add even more camera-ports.

“We did purchase two portable devices to stream from church and cemeteries and we will keep those activities going forward,” Hoy said.

The uncertainties of 2020 were good reminders for us all that we are not in control, Deacon Cortese said.

“We were praying about the unknown and asking God for guidance on what to do,” Parrish said. “We were leaning a lot on our faith and trying to make the right decisions.”

Grief and loss compounded the roller coaster of emotions people felt hearing they would not be able to honor their loved ones in a traditional manner due to COVID restrictions.

“It was dealing with the anger on top of the sadness,” Hoy said. “Maybe we were the easiest ones to cast that anger and sadness and just trying to navigate that and not take it personally.”

Faith got them through, though not without trial. These men are like thousands of other Catholics who acknowledge the challenges of attending Mass via livestream.

“To not be present and receive the sacraments and Eucharist – it was difficult and also made me deepen my faith,” Parrish said. “And I’m going to Mass a little bit more now, too.”

Families now planning funerals postponed due to COVID
By Beth Gibbins  
Contributing Writer

What positive impact occurred as a result of the pandemic?

This question was asked during a recent Catholic Charities staff meeting. Answers in finding a “silver lining” from the pandemic ranged from more time with family to starting a dream garden from seed over the winter.

In the midst of the pandemic, Catholic Charities also demonstrated its ability to operate and offer services despite COVID-19. The staff in four facilities already maintained a high degree of safety and health protocols. Clients quickly transitioned to heightened standards of care with the addition of masks, distancing, and sanitizing stations.

“The office staff rapidly adapted to working from home, while direct services staff continued to provide efficient 24/7 service.” said Barbara Decker, executive director. “With the collaboration from each staff member, we had a smooth transition and responded to those difficult situations as we encountered them in a professional and caring manner.”

Refugee staff and counselors continued sessions over Zoom and telephone calls. The Council Bluffs abuse shelter used hotel rooms, when necessary, to maintain social distancing. The food pantry transformed an existing delivery window into a direct service window that works better than previous systems.

Not only do Catholic Charities programs remain open, but they are also providing needed disaster relief. Special collections resulted in hundreds of small grants through VISA gift cards to help COVID-19 and derecho victims, and provide rental and utility assistance.

“Parish members continued to be generous during quarantine,” said Debra Powers, director of development. “We thank them for making these grants possible.”

Not all outcomes were positive. The pandemic did take its toll on Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities is part of your best table giving, fundraising events, and volunteer time. Make Catholic Charities through charitable giving, fundraising events, and volunteer time. Make Catholic Charities part of your best pandemic story.

Campus Ministry boosted with new missionaries

The Diocese’s Campus Ministry program welcomes two new members to the FOCUS mission- ary team. FOCUS, which stands for Fellowship of Catholic University Students, serves primarily in a campus outreach role at Drake University and integrates with Campus & Student Ministry at St. Catherine Parish in Des Moines. Aurelia Isenbart is the new FOCUS team director for the upcoming academic year. Colin Flat- tery is a first-year mission- ary. They will join Bridget Dunn and Bryan Warday who will each return to Drake for a second year.

Making it Personal with Bishop Joensen

Check out all of Bishop Joensen’s episodes featuring these guests and many more at iowacatholicradio.com/making-it-personal

The Catholic Mirror is looking for stories of faith and inspiration.

Contact Kelly Mescher Collins at kmcollins@dmdioocese.org or call 515-237-5054 with your ideas!
The world needs a father’s heart

By Adam Storey

The June celebrations of the Sacred Heart and Father’s Day, this year also set within the Year of St. Joseph, have got me thinking about a father’s heart. Musing on such a heart, I reread Patris Corde, Pope Francis’ apostolic letter which accompanied his proclamation of the Year of St. Joseph (Dec. 8, 2020, to Dec. 8, 2021).

Patris Corde, which means “with a father’s heart,” is a beautiful letter in which Pope Francis communicates to us the fatherly love of St. Joseph for Jesus, as well as what this love means for all of us. What resonated most with me is the simplicity with which St. Joseph presents a father’s heart. St. Joseph is one of the greatest and humblest saints in our Catholic tradition. He is the patron saint of the entire Catholic Church, in a sense, did not start a religious order, or launch a powerful apostolate - we don’t even have any of his quotes! Instead, as Pope Francis writes, that this translates into “powerful” fathers, a sort of machismo that doesn’t actually serve the Kingdom of God.

The heart of St. Joseph, and the heart of Jesus, show us a different model. I am convinced that my most important work as a dad is letting my kids know that I love them and that I’m proud of them. I try to say it ad nauseam. When I get eye rolls and exasperated sighs I know I’m doing it right! I also know that I need to waste time with my kids, even when there is nothing to do or say. They’ll pain- fully admit that I’m virtually impervious to their complaints of boredom! These small and simple things are at the heart of fatherhood, and so I try to focus on them, even though I do so very imperfectly.

As a dad, the moments I most regret are when I try to “take charge” and impose my will on my family through yelling, or a cutting remark, or closing myself off from my wife and kids. Yet, even these moments can be redeemed.

“The history of salvation is worked out ‘in hope against hope’ (Rom 4:18), through our weaknesses,” writes Pope Francis. “All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty.”

The world today needs strong fathers, and it also needs what Pope Francis has often called a “revolution of tender- ness.” During this Year of St. Joseph, I hope you’ll take the time to read, or reread, Patris Corde and by God’s grace I hope all of our hearts can more fully be conformed to the hearts of Jesus and his foster father, Joseph.

Adam Storey is the diocesan director of Marriage & Family Life. He can be reached at astrorey@dmdiocese.org or 515-237-3567.

Reflections

The Catholic Mirror June 18, 2021

What gives you peace of mind?

By Jeff Miller

St. Albert Catholic School

By Guest Column

St. Albert Catholic School

By Dr. Udaya Kabadi

By Guest Column

St. Albert Catholic School

The Catholic Mirror June 18, 2021 www.dmdiocese.org

Philanthropy

Helping the needy has become a big part of my life since I espoused St. Francis prayer, ‘make me an instrument of your peace.’

The prayer inspired me to put others before self. St. Teresa of Kolkata (Mother Teresa) became my role model about selfless giving with no expectation of return. I wish I could give one tenth of what she did. I try. The last place can be summarized in one word ‘Joy.’ Jesus first, others next and you (I) last.

In summary, the only way to be at peace is to share talents, treasures and time; follow the principle ‘to live is to love.’

Dr. Udaya Kabadi is a member of St. Fran- cis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines.

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In summary, the only way to be at peace is to share talents, treasures and time; follow the principle ‘to live is to love.’

Class of 2021 is ready to serve

By Guest Column

St. Albert Catholic School

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We are ready to listen to wisdom from those who have gone before and step into the future confident and composed, ready to take on the challenges of tomor- row.

Finally, I would like to leave you all with the following promise from God found in the book of Isaiah.

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand; those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Congratulations and job well done, Class of 2021.

Jeff Miller received the Spirit of St. Albert award along with fellow senior Grace Garrigan.

Miller, Garrigan and Anna Schewe were honored speakers at the St. Albert Catholic School graduation May 21.
I love a rainy night

Faith that Conquers

By Kelly Mescher Collins

One summer night my Mom was driving us home after a softball game and the song “I Love a Rainy Night” by Eddie Rabbit came on.

“Oh, I love this song!” my Mom exclaimed, pointing to the volume and singing along. Of course, she reminded us that kids needed to pray for rain.

I should point out that my Mom rarely cranked up the radio. But it just reflected her level of enthusiasm and hope in the Lord that he would provide.

Much of Iowa is in a drought right now. Even we had some 80 degree days in April. But then suddenly the rain came in May— a stretch so long that even farm kids like me were also silently hoping for some sunshine on the side.

There were many times during this long, overcast rainy stretch where I found myself thinking: “I bet there are a lot of farmers out there praying for rain.”

Even in retirement, my Dad was a Farmall-loving, RDF-TV watching farmer through and through. Though his days of plowing and planting were long gone, he often enjoyed checking up on the fields. His drives led him to search for some aerobic and water-hungry fields, participating in God’s cooperative work of feeding the world.

Last spring my Dad’s health took a turn for the worse and my Dad had to be placed on a calendar day near the winter solstice (when the days are shortest in a year).

It was while praying for my Dad that I felt a nudge by the Holy Spirit to check the calendar of Catholic feast days.

Unaware of what I might find, I discovered the Feast Day of St. Isidore, the patron saint of farmers, was just a few days away. I knew the end was near.

May 15, the feast day of St. Isidore, ended up being my Dad’s last full day on earth—he passed away the morning of May 16, 2020.

Upon reflection, it all made sense. A farmer doesn’t quit until the job is done. I remember many summer evenings waiting for the hours for my Dad and brothers who were outside well into the dark planting fields, clearing stumps, fixing fences, tending to frozen water troughs—whatever duty called.

But the next day, God gave my Dad rest.

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

The Binding Power of Hatred

Guest Column

By Father Ron Rolheiser

Whatver you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 

When a person loves, it works for love. Does it also work for hatred?

Payback, Mary Gordon poses that question. Her story centers on two women, one of whom, Agnes, has hurt the other, Heidi. The hurt had been unintentional, and accidental, but it had been deep, so deep that for both women it stayed like a poison inside their souls for the next 40 years.

The story traces their lives for those forty years, years in which they never see each other, do not even know each other’s whereabouts, but remain obsessed with each other, one nursing a hurt and the other a guilt about what they have done.

The story eventually culminates with Heidi seeking out Agnes to confront her for some payback. It was an ugly, pure hatred, a curse, promised to last until death, ensuring that Agnes will never be free from it for the rest of her life.

Agnes doesn’t know what to do with that hatred, which dominates her world and poisons her happiness. She wonders if it will also color her eternal life—“Her last meeting with Heidi had troubled her. In the end, for love like love we are permitted to follow us into eternity. Some hated him, and some loved him. Some of us will try to love, and others will try to hate. For the rest of his life, blood and of Christ are not celebrated on a calendar day but a number of days after Easter (a feast which changes from year to year, and is ALWAYS on a Sunday). Hence those feast days have also been transferred to Sundays.

Q. Why are some Holy Days transferred to Sunday, but others are not? Why not transfer the Assumption, et al. to Sunday? I understand that Christmas can’t be transferred.

A. ACTUALLY CHRISTMAS could conceivably be transferred to a Sunday, just as the other feasts have been transferred to the following Sunday. We simply don’t know what actions Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but that feast was placed on a calendar day near the winter solstice (when the days are shortest in a year).

It is contrasted with the feast of the birth of John the Baptist on a calendar day near the summer solstice (when the days are longest in a year). Those feasts are about six months apart.

In the gospel, John the Baptist said about Jesus, “He must increase while I must decrease.” So Jesus’ story of “lives given to bring life” and “lives taken for life.”

We know this works for love. Can someone’s hatred follow us, even into eternity? In her recent novel, Payback, Mary Gordon poses that question. Her story centers on two women, one of whom, Agnes, has hurt the other, Heidi.

Since Heidi had come back into her life, Agnes, had for the last few years, been terrified to dare this meeting. She had to make herself believe that the love of those who loved her would surround her always … keep her from the hatred and ugliness that Heidi has shown her. She had to believe it; otherwise, the otherwise was too unbearable even to name.

Gabriel Marcel correctly states that to love someone is to ensure that this person can never be lost, that he or she will always be there (as long as we choose). If someone hates you, can that touch you eternally and contaminate some of the joy of heaven? If someone’s love can follow us for all eternity, can someone’s hatred do the same?

This is not an easy question. Binding and loosing, Jesus spoke of the extraordinary, not the always ways, with love and hate. It is the rule that we make friends and enemies, bless and curse, according to our intentions.

We cannot make someone stop hating us, but we can refuse to hate him or her. At that moment, hatred loses its power to bind and punish us. Granted, this isn’t easy, certainly not if we are a failure. In the end, hatred tends to have a sick, devlish grip on us, paralyzing us in the very strength we need it to fight. That in our case, there is still another salveimg thing. God can do for us that we cannot do for ourselves.

Thus, in the end, in the light of Jesus’s teaching (and as our faith in God’s compassion and understanding lets us know) all will still be well, hated notwithstanding.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. Reach him at ronrolheiser.com.
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con la estimulación especial que
de buscar una amistad con Jesús,
despierta un afán más profundo
moines. Más que nada, el CYC
fe dentro de la Diócesis de Des
gratitud por nuestra familia in-
bien diseñada pero arriesgada
a quienes admirar, de creatividad,
grupos de fe, de mentores jóvenes
y de una gran variedad de emo-
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Pope: Prayer is like music, gives life melody

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis greets people during his general audience in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican June 9.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- People need to find harmony between prayer and the demands of everyday life, Pope Francis said.

"It is inhuman to be so absorbed by work that you can no longer find the time for prayer. At the same time, prayer that is alienated from life is not healthy," the pope said June 9 during his weekly general audience.

"The time dedicated to being with God revives faith, which helps us in the practical realities of life, and faith in turn nurtures prayer without interruption," he said.

The audience was held in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace, where the pope spent the first 30 minutes chatting at length with individuals, blessing them or objects they had brought, signing books and greeting children. While the pope was maskless, attendees were obliged to wear masks, but many ignored social distancing rules when they crowded along the barricades to greet and speak with Pope Francis.

In his main audience talk, the pope continued his series on prayer by looking at the importance of perseverance and praying unceasingly.

How is it possible to remain in a constant state of prayer, especially when people’s lives are busy or filled with disruptions or distractions?, the pope asked.

One tradition offers something called a “prayer of the heart” that is based on repeating with faith the words, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner,” until these words match the rhythm of breathing and it is spread throughout the day, he said.

"Indeed, we never stop breathing, not even while we sleep, and prayer is the breath of life," he said.

Having a heart in a constant state of prayer, he said, is like having a flame perpetually lit even while carrying out daily tasks, taking a walk or standing in line. Even short, brief prayers, like “Lord, have pity on us” or “Lord, help me” are enough, he added.

"Prayer is a kind of musical score, where we put the melody of our lives," he said.

Prayer, then, is not meant to clash with everyday duties and obligations because it acts as “the place where every action finds its meaning, its reason and its peace,” he said.

It is not easy to do, Pope Francis said, but just remember that “God, our Father, who must take care of the entire universe, always remembers each one of us. Therefore, we too must always remember and find time for him. Work and prayer are complementary, he said, like the symmetry of the human body with its two hands, eyes and ears.

So, while it is inhuman to have to work so much that it leaves no time for prayer, he said, it is likewise harmful to live a life of prayer alienated from real life. In that case, prayer becomes "spiritualism, or worse, ritualism."

Remember, he said, that Jesus did not stay forever in his glory on Mount Tabor but came down from the mountain with his disciples to resume his daily journey.

"That spiritual experience remained in their hearts as the light and strength of faith and a light and strength for the days of trial that were coming, the pope said.

Prayer revives faith, which supports daily life and nurtures prayer, making a positive feedback loop keeping "alight that flame of Christian life that God expects of us," he said.

Worshiping mustards

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Catholic Church can break new ground in a prayer dialogue in the often-polarizing space of the digital web, said participants in a Vatican communications initiative.

The initiative, “Faith Communication in the Digital World,” was sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Communication and brought together 16 young communication specialists from around the world to address "how the church can and should be present online."

To strengthen that 12-month program is designed to develop proposals that will address “the main problems and issues users currently face with the internet.”

“COVID-19 crisis has led to an increased sense of urgency felt by many in the church to learn an effective communication approach and to ensure a social media presence that witnesses to an evangelical style,” the dicastery said. The Catholic Church can help to ease tensions by “encountering and accompanying one person at a time on their journey of faith in digital media,” said John Grosso, director of digital media for the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

"Pope Francis has been opening our eyes and refocusing our orientation, not changing anything," he’s calling us back to the call of the Gospel," especially in serving the needs of the poor and the vulnerable, said Alexandra Carroll, communications manager for social mission for the U.S. bishops’ Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development. Grosso told CNS that being near the pope made him feel near to someone who “radiates holiness just with his smile and affection” but also someone who is “carrying a heavy burden, the heavy burden of the church and of the world.”

Vatican works to make digital space a place of encounter

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"Pope Francis greets people during his general audience in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican June 9."

Hope comes from noticing God at work even in small things

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- For those who learn to look carefully, the world is filled with signs of God’s presence, and noticing those signs is the best way to get over feelings of disappointment, Pope Francis said.

Before praying the Angelus June 13 with hundreds of visitors in St. Peter’s Square, the pope spoke about the day’s reading from the Gospel of Mark and its parable of the mustard seed that grows into a sturdy shrub.

"Through the parables, the pope said, Jesus “teaches us that even everyday things, which at times all seem the same and which we carry on with distraction or effort, are inhabited by God’s hidden presence; that is, they have meaning."

So, we too need attentive eyes to be able to see and find God in all things," he said.

"The story of the mustard seed is, he said, is an encouragement to look beyond initial appearances, beyond the seemingly insignificant mustard seed, in order to discover the presence of God who, as humble love, is always at work in the soil of our life and history."

This is our confidence, this is what gives us the strength to go forward every day, patiently, sowing the good that will bear fruit," the pope said.

Private/family gardens and community/church gardens.

Entries for the contest will be divided into two groups: Private/family gardens and community/church gardens.

The deadline for entries is July 26. Entries can be submitted at https://www.museumoffamilyprayer.org/mary-garden-contest2021. More details about the contest can be found at the website.

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We follow the example of St. Joseph to showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about. It means caring for one another in our families: husbands and wives first protect one another, and then, as parents, they care for their children, and children themselves—in time—protect their parents. It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness.

—Pope Francis

The bond of sincere friendship can be found in our Band of Brothers—the Knights of Columbus. Go online and start the easy process at kofc.org/joinus. See what we can do together to protect God’s gifts.

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