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# THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

Vol. 55, No. 7

July 16, 2021

## Blessed beyond measure

Diocese of Des Moines celebrates the ordination of five new priests



Photo by Demian Tejeda-Benitez



Photo by Demian Tejeda-Benitez



Photo by Nancy Hanstad



Photo by Larry Murphy



Photo by Kelly Mescher Collins



Photo by Demian Tejeda-Benitez



Left: The crozier carried by Bishop William Joensen during the ordination Mass belonged to Bishop Edward Celestin Daly, OP, the fourth Bishop of Des Moines.

The chalice used by Bishop Joensen at the Mass belonged to Father Woodrow Elias, founding pastor of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church.

Five priests were ordained June 25 at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny. The liturgy is resplendent with rich symbolism in word and gesture. Top row starting at left: Father Brad Robey promises respect and obedience to Bishop William Joensen and his successors; the men prostrate themselves before the altar during the singing of the Litany of the Saints as a sign of their submission to God and the Church in humble service; invoking the Holy Spirit, Bishop Joensen lays hands on the Father Nick Stark; Bishop Joensen hands to Father Jake Epstein the bread and wine. Above: newly ordained Father Reed Flood concelebrates the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Above right: Newly ordained Father Max Carson distributes the Eucharist.

## Gentle giants Two priests die within 10 days

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

Known by friends as a "gentle giant," Father Dan Gehler unexpectedly passed away at his residence on June 29.

His funeral Mass was scheduled to be celebrated by Bishop William Joensen on Thursday, July 15 at St. Joseph Parish in Earling.

Father Gehler was serving as pastor of St. Michael Parish in Harlan, St. Peter Parish in Defiance and St. Joseph Parish in Earling when he died. He was also canonical administrator of Shelby County Catholic School in Harlan.

Before that, Father Gehler served as parochial vicar at St. Anthony

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By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

Father David Smith, a Jesuit pastor of three parishes in Shelby County, died July 9 at the age of 67.

Born and raised in Nebraska, he was a 1972 graduate of Creighton Prep and entered the Society of Jesus in 1974. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1985 and made his final vows in 1991.

Father Smith served at Holy Rosary Mission and taught school at Red Cloud Catholic

Continued on page 8

## Diocese begins new visioning process

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

The Diocese of Des Moines is launching a strategic visioning process that will inspire and guide its ministry for years to come.

Three goals underlie this initiative: Revitalize the Church and the people of the Diocese; chart and refine a sense of mission and direction; and inspire the next generation of leadership in the local Church.

Bishop William Joensen

is enlisting author, teacher and organizational strategist Dan Ebener, of Quad City Leadership Consulting, to facilitate this endeavor.

Ebener has 45 years of experience working for the Church. He teaches leadership and strategic planning at St. Ambrose University in Davenport and serves the Diocese of Davenport as director of strategic planning. He assisted the Davenport Bishop Thomas Zinkula in his diocese's Vision 2020 planning initiative, which focuses on evangelization, also known as

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# A Gentle and Ordinary Revelation

Chef Mark Peel rose through the culinary ranks in the kitchens of famous restaurants in Paris, West Hollywood, and other hotspots before opening La Campanile with his then-wife Nancy in Los Angeles in the early 2000s. He wrote some popular cookbooks and won the James Beard award for outstanding American restaurant. Chef Peel did not earn his reputation with exotic dishes but by his farm-to-table approach and his special grilled cheese sandwich and tuna noodle casserole made with gruyere cheese, along with other 'unglamorous' dishes such as meatloaf and chicken pot pie. He once commented, "You can take the simplest recipe, do it with care, good ingredients and love, and it's a revelation."

God's self-revelation is rarely like a fireworks display bursting at uncomfortably close range. His tender care and love most often wells up from within our midst, amid the network of relations that compose our everyday circle of life. Just as for Jesus who grew to adulthood in Nazareth, God relies on the familiar ingredients of an ordinary life, including our families, our local communities, our day job and the simple pleasures of enjoying one another's company in a relaxed setting—which, God willing, includes our parish and the small groups with whom we are renewed and refreshed in Catholic faith. Faith is not simply a grace note that is in addition to whatever God decides he wants to do. Faith is a vital ingredient in the collaborative kitchen of God's



By  
Bishop  
William  
Joensen

kingdom plan. We may pray especially before meals (even though we might be a bit hesitant to do so in public settings, thereby missing a chance to give witness to others), yet we must bring faith to the table in all the varied settings that compose our life's mysterious menu.

Still, like the folks at Nazareth who encountered Jesus' wisdom and mighty works, we may hold out for a God who is more like a three-star Michelin chef, who brings power, fame, and dazzle to our lives. If we never win a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, we may want a God who does. The crucial question posed to persons of faith, according to Trappist monk Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis, is: Do we want to be dazzled or saved? In a similar vein, Fabrice Hadjadj sagely observes: "Every miracle that comes from the One who created the ordinary course of things is not there to turn us toward the extraordinary, but to bring us back with wonder to the ordinary."

We can "ooh" and "ahh" at fireworks bursting in the night sky, but their sizzle is temporary. How childlike and blessed to gaze with contemplative reverence at the fireflies afloat in the fields. We can't ultimately control God's gift in nature—unlike what I tried

to do as a boy at the summer picnic when I caught a bunch of fireflies and put them on a bench under upturned Mason jars. We capture and control what God creates with all his wisdom and generosity, only to suffocate the mystery if we don't trust enough to receive and let go, let breathe with the freedom and detachment that faith makes possible.

Chef

Mark Peel was 66 years old when he died in mid-June. Our beloved Father Daniel Gehler was only 61 years old when he did not show up for daily Mass on June 30 at St. Joseph Parish in Earling, and was found dead in his residence by parishioners to whom he ministered as pastor, along with St. Peter Parish in Defiance and St. Michael Parish in Harlan. Then, barely ten days later, Father David Smith, SJ, pastor of St. Mary, Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Portsmouth, St. Boniface in Westphalia, and St. Mary of the Assumption in Panama, also did not show up for Mass; he was taken to the hospital in seemingly stable condition, but then suddenly declined and died within a few hours. He was 67. God has taken these two Shelby County shepherds from our Des Moines diocesan family in a way that seems wrenchingly abrupt, even violent. We grieve and will continue to miss them dearly.

Father Dan was born and raised on a farm in northwest Iowa, and though he even-

tually had a secular career where his work involved travel to both coasts, he called Iowa home and preferred to stay put. His servant's heart was evident to the people of St. Joseph Parish on the east side of Des Moines long before he entered formation for the

It is in the household of Mary and Joseph, and in our own homes, where the mystery of our redemption is revealed, and all the needed ingredients are in the cupboards of our hearts.

permanent diaconate. Upon ordination to the diaconate, the earlier stirrings to priesthood were still there, but it was not until receiving what he called his "two-by-four" moment of losing his job that he heeded the encouragement of his spiritual director and his diaconal classmates to apply for seminary studies for the priesthood. He was ordained to the priesthood in St. Ambrose Cathedral on June 3, 2016, and eventually realized his desire to be a rural pastor in Shelby County as a "young priest" who the day before he died was light-heartedly declared by Father Dan Kirby to have "graduated" after five years in the newly-ordained priest program.

Father David Smith's path to the priesthood led him to join the Wisconsin Province of the Jesuit religious order. He particularly relished his time spent serving Native American peoples at the Red Cloud Indian School at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota before being assigned to our Diocese to direct the Creighton University Retreat Center in Griswold. He became pastor in Shelby County in 2014 and hoped to remain as long as

his health allowed.

Both Father Dan Gehler's and Father David Smith's faith, like their personalities, was nothing flashy. Their unswerving dedication to the people with whom they were present, just like their smiles, could light up a room. They were—and remain so—ordinary in the best of senses, and for that reason, they were warmly embraced by parishioners and their brother priests. Their weaknesses, such as their willingness to care for everybody but themselves, were also evident, but these were also endearing, for they revealed how grace is sufficient, for then God's presence and power are all the more on display. And now, God has lifted the Mason jars so both Father Dan's and Father David's lights can rise to the heavens.

Both priests will remain gentle and ordinary figures in the narrative history of the Des Moines Diocese. We honor them with the rites of the Church and our continued prayers, as well as in the stories and tributes that will continue to be recalled. But we honor Father Dan and Father David most by living our ordinary, familiar faith, day-in, day-out, which is anything but dull; it is the great adventure God's grace affords us. We do not seek to be dazzled but saved by the God-man who came from Nazareth, Jesus Christ. It is in the household of Mary and Joseph, and in our own homes, where the mystery of our redemption is revealed, and all the needed ingredients are in the cupboards of our hearts.

## Una Renovación Gentil y Ordinaria

El Chef Mark Peel se elevó en los rangos culinarios en las cocinas de restaurantes famosos en París, West Hollywood y otros lugares de moda antes de abrir La Campanile en Los Ángeles junto con su entonces esposa Nancy a inicios de los años 2000. Él escribió algunos libros de cocina muy populares y se ganó el premio James Beard por ser un restaurante americano extraordinario. El Chef Peel no se ganó su reputación a base de platos exóticos sino por su estilo de granja-a-la-mesa y su sándwich especial de queso fundido y cazuela de fideos con atún hechos con queso gruyere, a la par de platillos nada glamorosos tal como pastel de carne y pastel de pollo. Él comentó una vez, "puedes tomar la receta más sencilla, hacerlo con cariño, buenos ingredientes y amor, y se vuelve una revelación."

Las revelaciones de Dios mismo son rara vez un acto de fuegos artificiales que explotan a una distancia demasiado cercana. Su cariño tierno y su amor frecuentemente surgen dentro de nuestro interior, en medio de nuestra red de relaciones que forman parte de nuestro círculo de vida diaria. Así como Jesús quien creció en Nazareth para convertirse en un adulto, Dios confía en los ingredientes comunes de la vida ordinaria, incluyendo nuestras familias, nues-

tras comunidades locales, nuestros trabajos diarios y los placeres simples de disfrutar la compañía de los demás en un ambiente relajado — el cual, con el favor de Dios, incluye nuestra parroquia y los grupos pequeños con quienes nos renovamos y nos refrescamos en nuestra fe católica. La fe no es una simple nota de gracia que se nos da además de todo aquello que Dios quiere que hagamos. La fe es un ingrediente vital en la cocina de colaboración en el plan del reino de Dios. Podemos orar, especialmente antes de las comidas (incluso cuando no estemos muy seguros a hacerlo en lugares públicos y por lo tanto perdiéndonos de la oportunidad de dar testimonio a los demás), pero debemos traer la fe a la mesa en todas las diversas maneras que forman el misterioso menú de nuestras vidas.

Aún así, la gente de Nazaret que veía la sabiduría y las grandes obras de Jesús, podríamos esperar a un Dios que se pareciera más aun chef Michelin de tres estrellas, quien tiene poder, fama y sorpresa a nuestras vidas. Si nunca nos ganamos una estrella en el Paseo de la Fama de Hollywood, tal vez nos gustaría un Dios que sí se ganara una. La pregunta importante que se presenta a las personas de fe, según el monje Trapista Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis, es: ¿Queremos que nos maraville

o que nos salve? De la misma manera, Fabrice Hadjadj nos dice audazmente: "Cada milagro que viene de aquel que creó el curso ordinario de las cosas, no está allá para hacernos voltear a ver lo extraordinario, pero para volver a hacer que nos maravillemos con lo ordinario."

Podemos decir "oh" y "ah" cuando explotan los fuegos artificiales en el cielo nocturno, pero su explosión es temporal. Qué tan infantil y bendecido es el observar con reverencia a las luciérnagas flotar en los campos. A final de cuentas no podemos controlar el don de Dios en la naturaleza — como cuando trataba en mi niñez, en los días de campo en verano cuando atrapaba muchas luciérnagas y las ponía en un frasco de vidrio en una banca. Podemos capturar y controlar lo que Dios crea con toda su sabiduría y generosidad, para solamente sofocar el misterio si no confiamos lo suficiente para recibirlo y dejarlo ir, dejarlo respirar con la libertad y el desprendimiento que solamente la fe puede hacer posible.

El Chef Mark Peel tenía 66 años cuando murió a mediados de junio. Nuestro querido Padre Daniel Gehler tenía 61 años cuando no se presentó a Misa diaria el 30 de junio en la parroquia de St. Joseph en Earling y que luego los miembros de su

parroquia a quienes servía como párroco, además de las parroquias de St. Peter en Defiance y de St. Michael en Harlan, lo encontraron muerto en su residencia. Después, apenas 10 días después, el Padre David Smith, SJ, párroco de Santa María, Nuestra Señora de Fátima en Portsmouth, St. Boniface en Westphalia y Santa María de la Asunción en Panama, tampoco se presentó a Misa; fue llevado al hospital en condición aparentemente estable, pero de pronto decayó y murió a las pocas horas. Tenía 67 años. Dios se ha llevado a estos dos pastores del condado de Shelby de nuestra familia diocesana de Des Moines de una forma que parece dolorosamente abrupta, incluso violenta. Vivimos nuestro duelo y les seguimos extrañando con cariño.

El Padre Dan nació y creció en una granja en el noroeste de Iowa y aunque eventualmente tuvo una carrera secular en donde su trabajo significaba viajar a ambas costas del país, él tenía su hogar en Iowa y optó por establecerse. Su corazón de servicio era evidente para la gente de la Parroquia de St. Joseph en el este de Des Moines mucho antes de que empezara su formación para el diaconado permanente. Al ordenarse al diaconado, aún estaban allí los anteriores

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THE CATHOLIC

MIRROR

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The Catholic Mirror (ISSN 0896-6869) is published monthly for \$20 per year by the Diocese of Des Moines, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines. POSTMASTER: Send changes to THE CATHOLIC MIRROR, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

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# Graduates attended institute to learn about faith, ministry and provide outreach to Hispanic faith community



Bishop William Joensen celebrated Mass for those graduating from the Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral in June before handing out certificates.

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

Carlos Arreola, 22, moved to Des Moines five years ago.

He and many family members and relatives moved to Des Moines because crime and murder rates are high where they lived in Salinas, California.

“Everybody one by one came to Iowa...,” Arreola said. “More than 40 people are here now.”

Since coming to Des Moines, his faith has blossomed.

“I’ve gone from a Sunday only churchgoer to being really active in church,” said Arreola. “I joined a couple ministries and I’ve been putting my talents



Carlos Arreola and Andrea Rodriguez of Christ the King Parish in Des Moines

and skills to practice full time at church.”

Following in his parents’ footsteps, he and girlfriend, Andrea Rodriguez, both members of Christ the King Parish, embarked on a 18-month journey of learn-

ing more about ministering to others and their faith by enrolling in the Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral, offered through the Diocese of Des Moines and taught by the University of St. Mary of the Lake / Mundelein Seminary.

Last month they celebrated with Mass and a graduation ceremony at St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines. Bishop William Joensen handed a certificate to each graduate.

“Today we celebrate the great action of grace in the lives of this cohort of 31 persons who are commissioned for our local Church, the Diocese of Des Moines,” Bishop Joensen said in his homily. “They have come to greater maturity as disciples of Jesus. They are more committed and equipped to carry the Gospel

message of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ into the lives of families, to parishioners.

“They are to also reach out to our neighbors, who do not yet know the love of Jesus or have found their place in the body of Christ, his Church,” Bishop Joensen continued. “We give thanks for you, dear graduates; you are a gift sent by God to us! And you are a gift we gladly share with others.”

It’s a big moment for the graduates, said Mayra Moriel de Bañuelos, coordinator of Hispanic ministry.

They reflect pride and accomplishment processing into church wearing their cap and gown, she said.

One couple who graduated four years ago said this mo-

ment had a profoundly positive impact on their children, motivating them to go to college.

“Every time a cohort finishes their program they are on fire and ready for more,” said Jessica Hernandez, diocesan coordinator of Hispanic youth ministry. “It’s inspiring and motivating.”

Before completing the program, all students work with their pastor, identifying a need in the community. Their class project uses those assessments to create a new ministry in their parish.

“That’s the goal in making sure leaders are actively participating in growing their community at each parish,” Hernandez added.

Arreola created a men’s group for those already in the pews but also for those who maybe have not been to church in a while. They’ll meet twice a month.

“We will offer resources to help them out too, if they are struggling – alcohol, drug addiction or mental health issues,” Arreola said.

Graduate Elizabeth Balcarcel of St. Anthony Parish in Des Moines has been working in ministry for a number of years. But she wanted more knowledge to better help the people she was serving.

Her project entails unifying previous graduates, pulling faith leaders together to better serve the community.

“Many have really good ideas, but everyone is working on their own,” Balcarcel said. “And to be connected and pull resources together is essential.”

The methodology of the Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral is rooted in culture and geared specifically for the Hispanic community.

The next cohort begins in January 2022. To learn more contact Moriel de Bañuelos at mmoriel@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5011.

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## Centennial celebration in store at Perry school

St. Patrick Catholic School in Perry is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the end of this month.

A semiformal dinner will be July 23 at St. Patrick School's gymnasium. On July 24, supporters and alumni will gather for 4 p.m. Mass at St. Patrick Church with a meal afterward at St. Patrick School.

St. Patrick School was founded by a mother who insisted that her sons get a Catholic education. Nora O'Malley was persistent and started a campaign in the parish. She visited with Bishop Thomas Drumm seeking his support, and brought to Perry religious women and priests who oversaw schools elsewhere to talk to her community. O'Malley never saw her sons graduate.

The school was ultimately approved and built. It was dedicated on Feb. 21, 1921, the same day O'Malley was buried.

Before dying, she asked her husband, George, to ensure that their sons graduated from the school. Indeed their son George graduated in 1929, Martin in 1931, Charles in 1933 and Bernard in 1935.

"If Nora and George W. were alive today, they would be very proud knowing that our mother's persistent hard work together with their prayers and religious fervor brought about this beautiful educational project," wrote their son, Dr. George O'Malley.

The O'Malley children continued to keep their mother's legacy alive by contributing to an endowment to support St. Patrick Catholic School.

## Summer time means construction time at schools



Cheerleaders Dani Head, MacKenzie Pierson, Grace Julian, Molly Cormier, Ryan Doner and Olivia Gardner helped to host St. Albert Catholic School's open house in June.

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

As students are vacationing, construction workers are busy at three diocesan schools this summer.

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School in Ankeny is building a 14,000-square-foot addition to accommodate a growing student body.

Six new classrooms for both school and religious education are being constructed along with a flexible meeting room. More parking and storage are also being added.

"Things are going pretty well at this point," said Father Ken Halbur, the pastor.

The school, in one of the fastest growing communities in the state and country, saw a 35 percent enrollment growth this past year.

At St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs, officials found a way to better use space without adding to the school building.

During a July 11 open house, the community could see a new athletic training room, spirit store, concession stand, restrooms, flooring and updated lighting. The project includes the removal of existing walls to open up the main entrance.

"Our community isn't going to recognize it when they walk in," said Kevin White, communications director. "It's going to be a game changer for our school."



Progress is moving along at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School in Ankeny, where a 14,000-square-foot addition is being construction.

An open house July 11 was planned to show the community the renovated gathering space, where the community can hold special events, Mass, athletic events and concerts.

"We have been looking at this project for a number of years, and we had a wonderful team of contractors who are alumni that got together and decided to make this project a go," said St. Albert President Anne Rohling. "We had a 'Raise the Paddle' at this year's virtual auction ded-

icated to the project which was very successful. It's just a wonderful expression from the St. Albert community in backing and supporting our school."

St. Pius X Parish and School is extending its facility by adding a new multipurpose space, additional classrooms and upgrades to the kitchen and parish center.

The two-story addition will connect the current school building and the parish center.

THE CATHOLIC

# MIRROR

## Renew subscription

*The Catholic Mirror* invites readers to support its annual subscription campaign.

The Diocese has maintained a longstanding tradition of delivering the newspaper each month to every registered Catholic household. In this way, it is an evangelization tool that delivers Bishop William Joensen's monthly column on faith, inspiring stories of hope and love, and news about the Catholic Church.

The publication was vital during the historic pandemic, helping the faithful stay connected.

The newspaper sparks awareness and kindles faith and hope. More parishes are offering prayer opportunities through Holy Hours, adoration and Benediction and other devotions.

Building projects in parishes and Catholic schools illustrate growth and commitment to the future of the Catholic Church in our Diocese. And the ordination of five young men ordained this summer to the priesthood gives us reason to rejoice!

*The Catholic Mirror* recently expanded its distribution outreach so it can be received digitally or through the mail. To get the digital version, sign up at [dmdiocese.org/catholic-mirror](http://dmdiocese.org/catholic-mirror).

Renew your subscription and if you are able, supplement your offering in order to make a subscription possible for someone who cannot afford one. Go to [dmdiocese.org/giving](http://dmdiocese.org/giving). Questions can be directed to [communications@dmdiocese.org](mailto:communications@dmdiocese.org).

## Policies are in place to protect children

After a review of clergy abuse within the Catholic Church in Iowa, the Iowa Attorney General's office concluded that since the U.S. bishops put reforms in place in 2002, "the Dioceses have put policies and procedures in place for the protection of children from clergy abuse."

The report also noted that for years, all four Dioceses have reported any complaints of sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities, and that "the Dioceses have become more responsive to victims of clergy abuse."

The Diocese of Des Moines is committed to safety, transparency, and accountability regarding the protection of children and young people. If even a single act of sexual abuse of a minor is admitted or established, the offender is removed permanently from ministry and their name is added to those listed in the disclosure section of its website at [dmdiocese.org/victim-assistance/priest-abuse-list](http://dmdiocese.org/victim-assistance/priest-abuse-list).

Since 2003, the Diocese of Des Moines has mandated background checks, including those for a sex offender

registry, for all who spend any time with children through the parishes, schools and institutions.

The Diocese has maintained the practice of immediately notifying law enforcement of any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor.

The Diocese remains transparent with the public while respecting the rights of victims and accused.

"The report brought to light that policies and procedures are in place to protect people and ensure justice is served so the Church achieves a high standard of integrity in the ministries it offers," said Bishop William Joensen. "We, as a diocese, are committed to rigorous standards of accountability. I want to ensure that the Diocese is committed to the safety of children."

A full statement from the Diocese of Des Moines can be found at <https://www.dmdiocese.org/news/news-diocese-issues-response-to-report-from-iowa-attorney-general>

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# New ministry connects baby essentials with mothers who chose life amid crisis pregnancy

By Kelly Mescher Collins  
Staff Writer

Lauren Burke has lived in Iowa just shy of two years.

And her life was busy – unpacking and settling into a new state with a full-time job, husband, three kids and, very soon after, a fourth child.

But when the Holy Spirit tapped on Burke’s heart asking for more, she listened, quickly throwing herself into her new community and finding a way to help other mothers with newborns.

“I just had my fourth baby at the end of December, and I was thinking, ‘I need to find a good place [to donate] my baby items,’” said Burke, a native of Virginia who moved from Charlotte to be closer to her husband’s family.

It would have been easier to bring everything to Goodwill and be done with it, admits Burke, a member of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines.

“I swear the Holy Spirit kept coming,” she added, pressing her to find a way to get gently used baby clothes and other essentials into the hands of mothers in need.

“I did a lot of research and contacted a lot of organiza-

tions. No one would take donated goods,” Burke said. “No one here wants to deal with the recycled goods. When I lived in Charlotte they allowed moms to come [to a center] and get whatever they needed for baby and themselves.”

With her plate already overflowing, “it was the last thing I felt I could take on,” Burke said. But because of the Holy Spirit’s persistence, she did.

“I rallied some troops and had several meetings,” Burke said. “We put together our first donation drive at Sacred Heart after school.”

Volunteers organized items according to gender and size.

When all was said and done, they had nearly 12 truckloads of donated baby items in very good condition, which are organized and kept in a climate controlled storage unit.

“It’s really incredible – almost 8,000 items have been donated in three months,” Burke said.

Sacred Heart parishioner Mary Kay Suckow, a retired public health nurse who worked with mothers and babies, is a volunteer.

“We meet at the storage unit and have a list of all the things that we need to get ready for other families – and there’s probably around 14 or 15 differ-

ent families that need our help this week,” Suckow said. “It’s kind of amazing what a need there is. One day last month I met one of the moms at the parking lot at Sacred Heart... I saw her little baby. They are so humble and so appreciative.”

The Holy Spirit’s persistence was with good reason.

“These are mothers who have nothing who are choosing life,” Burke said. “I have had the privilege of meeting 10 of these moms and they are so grateful.”

One young mother told Burke she was “so scared.”

“I told her we were here to support her,” Burke said. “It’s incredible what you can do with so much excess. People are so disenchanted to the women out there who are fearless. A lot of them are neglected by friends and family. They don’t have jobs or cars.”

One such mother was a refugee who did not speak English, living in a two bedroom apartment with her six kids.

“Her oldest didn’t even have shoes,” said Burke, who collected items for the newborn but the other kids as well.

This new ministry, called Mary’s Helping Hands (named after the Blessed Mother), works with a number of agencies around town to help mothers in need.



InnerVisions HealthCare client received Mary’s Helping Hands bag.

These include Agape Pregnancy Center, Alpha Women’s Center, Des Moines Refugee Support, Embrace Grace, Every-Step – Maternal Child Health Program, InnerVisions HealthCare, Iowa Total Care – Start Smart for Your Baby, Program 211, Ruth Harbor Ministry and Maternity Home and St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store.

The agencies receive

first-year bags loaded with all the items a mother would need for the first year of baby’s life, including baby clothes, baby towels, diapers, wipes, bottles, bottle brush, toys, teethingers and more.

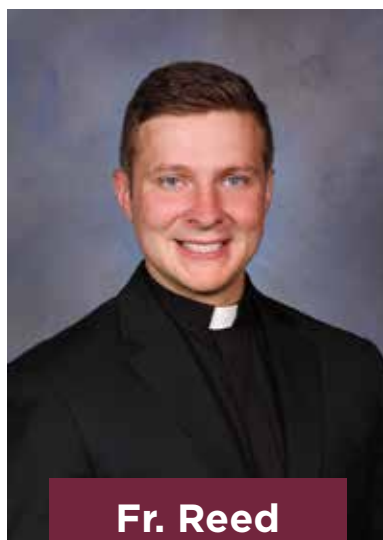
Brooke Van Bruggen, director of patient resources at InnerVisions HealthCare, said these one-year bags make the world of difference to new mothers who

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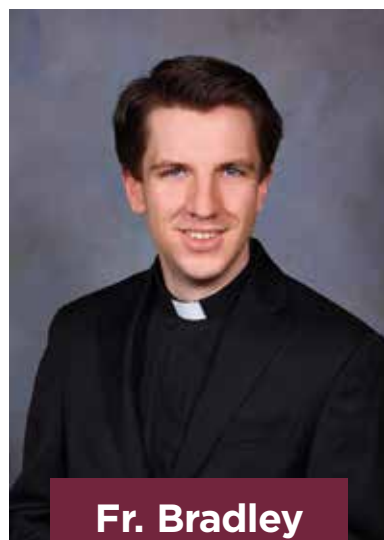
## CONGRATULATIONS FROM DOWLING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



Fr. Max Carson '12



Fr. Reed Flood '13



Fr. Bradley Robey '13



Fr. Nick Stark '13



**DOWLING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL®**

The DCHS community celebrates Fr. Max Carson '12, Fr. Reed Flood '13, Fr. Brad Robey '13 and Fr. Nick Stark '13 on their ordination to the priesthood by Bishop William Joensen.

May God bless our alumni as they fulfill the mission first established in 1918 by Bishop Austin Dowling, the school’s founder, to educate and develop Christ-centered leaders.

## Around the Diocese

### July 22-24 Saturday Rummage Sale

ANKENY – A rummage sale will be held at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish as follows: July 22 from 4-8 p.m. (early bird entrance is \$5 from 4-5 p.m.); July 23 from 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. and July 24 from 8 a.m. – noon.

### July 31 Saturday Ignatian Retreat

WAUKEE -- Join us from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at St. Boniface Catholic Church for the sixth annual Ignatian Retreat (also accessible through Zoom). Presenter Father Dan Krettek will share his reflections on experience of Ignatian Spirituality, as both a spiritual director and directee, and then invite us into our own reflections on experience. No prior experience with Ignatian Spirituality is required. All are welcome. Visit the Emmaus House website at [theemmaushouse.org](http://theemmaushouse.org) to learn more and register. Please contact us with any questions.

### August 1 Sunday Anniversary celebration

WEST DES MOINES -- Monsignor Ed Hurley will celebrate his "50<sup>th</sup> + 1" anniversary of priesthood with a reception hosted by friends from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at St. Francis of Assisi in the parish hall. The re-

ception is open to the public. Cards of congratulations can be sent to 280 S 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Unit 1308, West Des Moines, 50266.

### August 8 Sunday 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration

ANKENY – Father Larry Hoffmann will be celebrating the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Luke the Evangelist Church. There will be a reception at St. Luke's from 2-5 p.m.

### September 25 Saturday Memorial Mass for the Unborn

DES MOINES – A memorial Mass for all the lives lost through abortion will be held at noon at the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & Divine Mercy, just north of St. Anthony Church. Chairs will be set up, but feel free to bring your lawn chair in case seating is full. For more information contact Tom Hanson, [tehanson4@msn.com](mailto:tehanson4@msn.com), 515-770-7648.

### September 25 Saturday Friends of the Poor Walk

CARLISLE – This walk that benefits those who seek help at St. Vincent de Paul will take place from 9-11 a.m. on Scotch Ridge Nature Trail in Carlisle. Money raised helps others & stays local. For more information go to [www.fopwalk.org/event/2603](http://www.fopwalk.org/event/2603)

### Faith Journey Catechetical Institute

DES MOINES -- Do you want to be strengthened in your understanding of our Church's teachings? If so, then the Catechetical Institute is for you! Contact [John Huynh](mailto:John.Huynh@dmdiocese.org), [jhuynh@dmdiocese.org](mailto:jhuynh@dmdiocese.org), 515-237-5006, to begin your faith journey into the heart of our Catholic tradition. More information can also be found at [FaithJourneyCI.com](http://FaithJourneyCI.com)

### Cathedral Holy Hours

DES MOINES -- All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen at St. Ambrose on Monday late afternoons for an hour of Eucharistic adoration and evening prayer. These Holy Hours will be hosted from 5-6 p.m. Evening prayer is livestreamed at [Facebook.com/dmdiocese](https://Facebook.com/dmdiocese).

### Friends, Romans, Iowans

Be sure to check out the Diocesan young-adult focused podcast "Friends, Romans, Iowans." Currently in the second season, this podcast aims to connect the Diocese by hosting casual conversations with Catholic leaders from around southwest Iowa. Episodes can be found wherever you get your podcasts, or at [dmdiocese.org](http://dmdiocese.org).

## Selfless Sister Ramona remembered for her kindness

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer



Prayerful. Compassionate. A deep thinker. A gentle spirit. Focused and considerate.

Those are just a few of the ways friends remember Humility Sister Ramona Kaalberg, who died July 3 at age 83.

Her 65 years of ministry ranged from teaching to servant leadership, from civic involvement to pastoral ministry and solidarity with the poor.

"She loved life. She loved people. She loved her family and her community, but she especially loved her God," said former classmate and fellow Sister of Humility Jeanie Hagedorn.

Born in 1938 in Iowa City, Sister Ramona entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1956 and professed vows in 1959.

She earned a master's and doctoral degrees in education and psychology from George Peabody College in Nashville and a certificate in spiritual direction from Creighton University.

Her ministry of education took her to St. Joseph School in Neola and St. Anthony in Des Moines, plus schools in Davenport and Ottumwa. She was an associate professor at Marycrest College in Davenport, and she assisted Father Tim Fitzgerald at the St. Joseph Educational Center in West Des Moines.

She worked with Father Larry Hoffmann in pastoral ministry at St. Anthony Parish.

"She was a wonderful person," he said. "Very, very compassionate, outgoing, considerate helpful – all those things that you'd really want in anybody."

Sister Ramona served her religious community as president from 1984-1988. She also served its House of Prayer, Project Renewal and as a formation coordinator in Davenport.

She served as a member of the Davenport Citizen Advisory Committee, which worked to achieve racial balance in public schools.

She wanted to be in solidarity with the poor. She served breakfast with a food truck that delivered to the poor in Des Moines, assisted the poor through Catholic Worker House and lived in the Des Moines River Bend neighborhood while initiating the New Hope Community, a place of caring presence and spiritual renewal.

"She lived in an area where the poor lived and was present to them," said Sister Hagedorn. "She always reminded us, when she was in leadership especially, to be of service to the

poor. She kept that in the forefront of our minds."

She will be remembered for her kindness.

"Her walk upon the earth was so gentle and so sweet and so purposeful," said Humility Sister Cathy Talarico.

Though she was quiet, she was also "a powerful, pioneering woman," said friend Jessica Hernandez.

"She always encouraged me to study, to keep going in higher education, and to never stop learning," Hernandez said.

She'll also be remembered for her appreciation of nature.

Mary Kunkel, a spiritual director, and Sister Ramona would drive around the state together for spiritual director peer group meetings.

During those drives, Sister Ramona would look out the window and be grateful for God's creation in the different seasons.

"She was a Humility sister, but she would have done very well as a Franciscan," Kunkel said.

And her gratitude to others was noted.

"Whenever we would have a little party or gathering for the sisters, we'd get back to the office and there would always be a handwritten note there from Sister Ramona thanking us for what we had done," said Jennifer Worley, service coordinator for the Sisters of Humility at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center. "She's going to be missed very much."

Servite Sister Joyce Rupp visited Sister Ramona regularly until the pandemic, then returned recently.

"The two words that just come to me constantly are dedicated and selfless," she said. "I never heard her complain about anything. She was always trying to do something for other people."

To watch Sister Ramona's vigil service, contact [sisters@chmiowa.org](mailto:sisters@chmiowa.org).

A private Mass of Christian Burial was on July 10 with burial in Mt. Calvary Cemetery in Davenport.

Memorials can be made to the Congregation of the Humility of Mary.



## Congratulations Fathers!

Reverend Max Carson (SJV '16)  
Reverend Reed Flood (SJV '17)



SAINT JOHN VIANNEY  
COLLEGE SEMINARY

*Men in Christ.  
Men of the Church.  
Men for Others.*

## The Sunday Mass obligation dispensation will be lifted July 24-25.

Reinstating the Sunday obligation is an encouraging step forward; it is being taken in response to a much improved public health situation, and the widespread accessibility of effective vaccines against COVID-19. For more information, go to [dmdiocese.org/coronavirus](http://dmdiocese.org/coronavirus).

## Father Gehler dies at age 61

Continued from page 1

Parish in Des Moines for two and a half years.

Father Gehler was ordained a priest June 3, 2016. This followed his ordination to the permanent diaconate in 2010. He entered seminary in 2011 after realizing he was being called to more – comparing this revelation to God hitting him across the head with a 2x4.

Chris Corrice worked closely with Father Gehler at St. Anthony Parish as first a youth minister and then the director of religious education.

He and Father Gehler often talked about life and faith over lunch. Corrice sought Father Gehler's counsel, who offered insight or advice into where God might be calling his friend.

"He was very kind and very giving, just a good person to talk to," said Corrice. "He was very humble."

Father Gehler was always willing to drop whatever he was doing to lend a helping hand, Corrice added, often going above and beyond wherever assistance was needed. Though not required, he often attended evening meetings at St. Anthony because he felt it was important to be with the parishioners.

Sandy Riesberg, administrative assistant at the Diocese of Des Moines for the Office of Worship, Communications and *The Catholic Mirror*, was a longtime friend of Father Gehler.

He was a great help to her in preparing diocesan liturgies for many years.

"He went above and beyond," Riesberg said.

As a later-in-life vocation, he could relate to the struggles of working people.

Growing up on a farm and studying agriculture at Iowa State University, he could relate to the farmers in his rural parishes, often chatting with them about weather and crops.

"His rural background put him in a good position to relate to his parishioners in small communities," said friend, former roommate at ISU and one-time co-worker Jim Hayward of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines.

Hayward knew Father Gehler for nearly 40 years. He often came to the Hayward household for gatherings and holidays if he wasn't with his own family. Father Gehler was an usher at Jim and wife Mary's wedding, godfather to their daughter Anne, and married his son Grant to wife Katie. He also baptized Grant and Katie's first child.

He was a salt of the earth type of guy with a quiet, calm and steady personality, Hayward said.

He could relate well to others.

"When we went to confession, he had empathy for us. I remember going to confession and I said, 'I'm really nervous Father.' And he said, 'I have to go to confession and I get really ner-



Father Dan Gehler at the reception following his ordination to the priesthood in 2016 with good friends Jim and Mary Hayward of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines

vous, too."

But his composure seemed to touch almost every area of his life.

"He was diabetic and sometimes his blood sugars would go up," Corrice said, recalling the alarming noises coming from his beeper, alerting him to taking action. It often left bystanders feeling nervous and rattled. "He wouldn't make a big deal about it though and would calmly say, 'Well, I have to go take care of this.'"

His sense of calm was a great attribute for working with others, said Stephanie Howard, administrative assistant at St. Anthony parish in Des Moines, while Father Gehler was assigned there.

"He had such a good

way of working with difficult people," Howard said. "He always had a way to figure that out.

"I thought he took his role as a priest very seriously," Howard continued. "People would call or come in and want confession and he would go over and do the confession right on the spot. He was very accommodating for that. He truly was just a great priest."

Father Dan Kirby, pastor of St. John Parish in Norwalk and vicar for newly ordained priests, said Father Gehler was open to others.

"He was a servant leader...," Father Kirby said. "People felt comfortable that they could approach him, and that's a tremendous grace. And he's a tremendous listener. People knew

he would respond in a loving way. I just think that was one of his strengths."


His love for Jesus helped him keep moving forward when faced with challenges, Father Kirby added.

"He persevered," Father Kirby said. "I think that's another thing about his spiritual life – even though he had those challenges with his health, he persevered. He gave it his all."

Though quiet and gentle, Father Gehler made a mark.

"The love that he had for us was his biggest impression," Corrice said. "Some people try to impress you with their theology and how wordy they are. And his love and humility is what impressed us."

## 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/)

Visit [dmdiocese.org/holyhours](http://dmdiocese.org/holyhours) to find out about  
your parish's opportunities for Adoration and Holy Hours





## Congratulations Fathers!



**SAINT PAUL  
SEMINARY**

The Seminaries of Saint Paul

Rev. Jake Epstein (SPS '21)  
Rev. Brad Robey (SPS '21)  
Rev. Nicholas Stark (SPS '21)

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about the faith. Tune in Saturdays at  
noon to La Reina 1260AM, 95.5FM, or  
[Lareina1260.com](http://Lareina1260.com).

## Priest remembered for kindness

Continued from page 1

an School in Pine Ridge, South Dakota for nearly 20 years.

Then he served at the Creighton Retreat Center in Griswold in the Diocese of Des Moines, where he served for nearly 12 years.

In 2014, he was named pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Panama, St. Mary Our Lady of Fatima in Portsmouth and St. Boniface in Westphalia.

He'll be remembered for his humble nature.

"He was the first one to admit he'd never been a pastor before and he was learning as he went," said Lorene Kaufmann, of St. Boniface Parish. "He didn't just assume that he knew what a pastor should be doing. He was very open to listening to what the needs of his parish were."

He was known for his devotion to God.

"The best way to describe Father David is a very kind, gentle and caring priest who devoted his whole life to serving the Lord," said Hank Hughes of St. Mary in Portsmouth. "He showed his love for God and his people."

And he'll be remembered for his thoughtfulness. Kaufmann had nominated him for a local "Champion of Joy" award.

In the nomination form, she wrote: "He goes above and beyond when it comes to serving people. Father David has been



**Father David Smith**

known to cancel vacations and days off if someone is in need. He has a kind heart and a gentle soul and puts everyone else's needs before his own. Father David is kind of a quiet man, but when he speaks, his words have great wisdom. He helps us to try to be the best people we can be and encourages us to put others before ourselves. Father David is truly a gift from God."

He shared his faith with anybody who was interested, said Marilyn Schwery, of St. Mary in Panama.

When asked what Father Smith was like, Franciscan Sister Joyce Blum said, "Perfect."

He was a gentle giant in terms of his tremendous faith, she said.

"He'll certainly be missed," she said. "He's so humble and so honest."

Mass of Christian Burial was scheduled for July 14 at St. Mary Church in Portsmouth.

## Hibernians support two schools

A local division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians continues to provide support for education and vocations in the Diocese of Des Moines.

The Polk County division one group was established in the fall of 1992. It actively supports Holy Family School with monetary donations to the teachers, reaching \$60,000 as of 2020.

The Hibernians also provide money for scholarships to Dowling Catholic High School in West Des Moines.

The group provides funds for a seminarian and, since 1992, has hosted a St. Patrick's Day Dinner for members, priests and religious women.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians is a Catholic, Irish American organization founded in New York City in 1836.

The order can trace its roots back to the parent organization which has existed in Ireland for more than 200 years.

The order evolved from a need in the early 1600s to protect the lives of priests who risked immediate death to keep the Catholic faith alive in occupied Ireland after the reign of England's King Henry VIII.

Similarly, the Ancient Order of Hibernians of America was founded May 4, 1836, in New York's St. James Church, to protect the clergy and church property from the "know Nothings" and their followers.



**Top photo: The Father James Kiernan Polk County Division Number 1 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians recently awarded two \$500 scholarships to students at Dowling Catholic High School. Presenting the award to Dowling Catholic President Dr. Dan Ryan are Mike Fleming, president (left) and John Langin.**

**Above: Holy Family School was recently awarded \$2,000 from the Hibernians. Pictured (l-r): John Langin financial secretary; Mike Fleming, president; Martin Flaherty, principal; and James Duffy.**

Active across the United States, the order sought to aid the newly arrived Irish, both socially and politically. The many divisions and club facilities located throughout the United States traditionally had been among the first to welcome new Irish immi-

grants.

Here, the Irish culture – art, dance, music and sports – were fostered and preserved.

The group came to Iowa sometime before 1879, a year in which they were represented at the national convention.

## Ministry connects crisis pregnancy mothers with baby essentials

Continued from page 5

chose life after an unplanned pregnancy.

"It's a way that we can communicate support for her..." Van Bruggen said, noting that all mothers want to put their babies in nice, cute clothing, regardless of their situation.

When mothers come to the clinic to pick up their first-year bag, nurses are able to meet the baby and also check in on the mother to see how she is doing medically, but also mentally and emotionally.

"The nurse is able to see that patient and any signs of potential post-partum," Van Bruggen added.

Mary's Helping Hands is

constantly accepting donations as they are unable to keep up with the demand from expectant mothers in need.

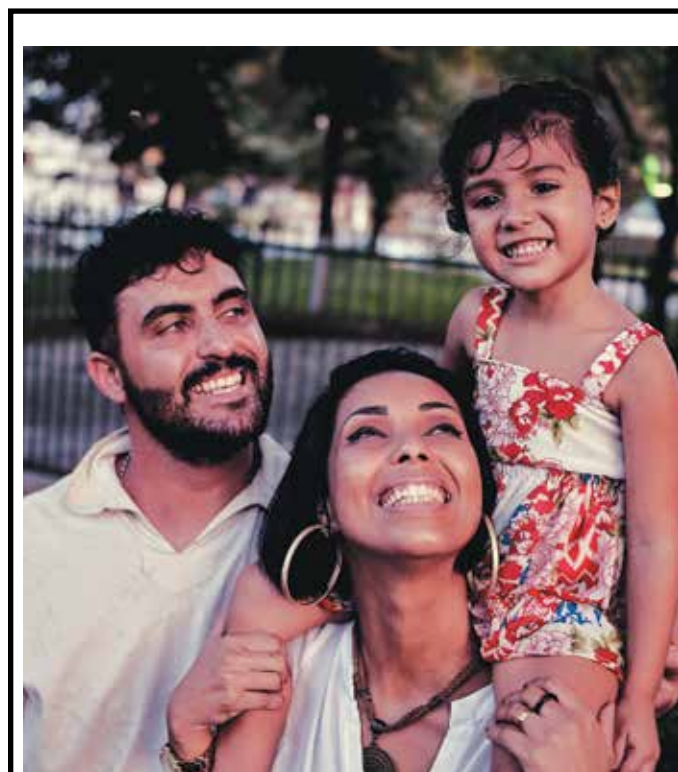
"I'm grateful to be a mother to four amazing children," Burke said. "It's not easy and some days are a circus around here, but I wouldn't have it any other way."

"Every time I've been blessed with a new life (pregnancy), I've found myself more in love with the miracle of life itself and what that means," Burke added. "The ministry of Mary's Helping Hands exemplifies this and we want every mother to feel this love."

To volunteer or make a donation, email Burke at maryshelpinghandssh@gmail.com.



**The Mary's Helping Hands drive Laura Burke (left) held at her parish, Sacred Heart in West Des Moines, was successful. Burke is planning future drives. To get involved or make a donation contact Burke at maryshelpinghandssh@gmail.com**



### Conferencia para Padres de Familia

Tendremos una conferencia para padres de familia con temas de gran interés especialmente después de los estragos de la pandemia. Una de las presentadoras principales es la Doctora Dora Tobar, ella es la directora de la Oficina de Matrimonio y Familia y de la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano en la Diócesis de Lafayette en Indiana.

Tendremos otros consejeros locales que no apoyaran con temas de interés para nuestras familias.

Marque la fecha en su calendario: sábado 28 de agosto de 8:30am a 2:00pm en el centro pastoral (601 Grand Avenue. Des Moines)

Para mas información comuníquese con Mayra Moriel de Banuelos al 515 237-5011.

Renew your subscription to The Catholic Mirror today. Go to [dmdiocese.org/giving/](http://dmdiocese.org/giving/)

Questions? Email [communications@dmdiocese.org](mailto:communications@dmdiocese.org)



## REFLECTIONS

# If God is a God of justice, then why is life so unfair?

I must confess, I am a State Fair Junkie, carnie, Wax Hands Man.

There was no Iowa State Fair last year because of the pandemic.

As a gift of consolation, I was given a fun T-shirt to help me process my personal disappointment. It read: *2020-No Fair* -- which carries various meanings about the year 2020.

But the T-shirt was correct, there was no fair last year. For some that was a relief; for some that was a disappointment. Those feeling the latter might say "That's not fair." But wait a minute, should we be so shallow so as to think that life has or hasn't been fair?

Locally, as well as around the world, there is an incredible level of grief that will not be forgotten. So many people have lost loved ones and have been deeply wounded by the COVID-19 virus. Disappointments range from grievously large to seemingly miniscule, yet continuously consequential in our daily lives.

While history recounts for us stories of many similar world tragedies such as weather disasters, other pandemics, and wars, this pandemic has been a new experience for our current generations to live through, for whatever "live through"

## Let's Get Psyched!

Deacon Randy Kieli



means.

As a mental health clinician, I have seen a larger struggle than ever before from people wondering where the fairness of God is during a time like this.

"If God is a God of justice, then why is life so unfair?"

Let's do a comparison between fairness and justice. In the book of Wisdom, we read that "Justice" is a name for God. As Christians, we are to pursue a life seeking God, a life in which we act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. (Micah 6:8.) When we accept this as our way of life, we will be able to see more clearly that *fairness* is man's pursuit in life without God and *justice* is the fruit or benefit of walking with God.

Spiritually speaking, the pursuit of justice then leads us to the pursuit of wisdom. "Wisdom" is one of the titles

prophesied by Isaiah of the coming King. Jesus is Wisdom. Both words, justice and wisdom, have taken on many different social meanings that have evolved past the original spiritual meaning of these words.

In modern day interpretation, justice commonly means giving each person what he or she deserves. Or, in more traditional terms, giving each person his or her due. Justice and fairness are closely related terms that are often used interchangeably.

We can see that the concept of fairness is closely related to that of justice. In distinguishing the two, fairness involves voluntary interactions with other individuals, whereas justice is issued or handed out by an impartial third party.

Even since before the creation of man, this third party has been, and is, and forever will be God himself. The ethical dilemma of life not being perceived as fair will remain a lifelong battle.

The conflict of unfairness began with Lucifer's approach to God for fairness in the heavens. He thought it was not fair that he could not be a god also. To say the least, this was not a good day for Lucifer. In full wisdom, God demonstrated himself as justice and sent Lucifer and his pursuit of fairness down to the bowels of the earth.

Therefore, saying that justice is giving each person what he or she deserves does not take us very far. How do we determine what people deserve? What criteria and what principles are to be used to determine what is due to a specific person, cause, or idea?

This is where we, as humans, can become stuck. Fairness is a measurement to judge a concrete object or experience between mankind. The fight for fairness can take goodness away from others for the sake of oneself and can "take away from life."

On the other hand, justice is God's connection of love with mankind and is "life giving." Life giving is God. He doesn't simply grant justice as a system might pronounce; God is justice through the gift of wisdom. Cautious use of this gift is how humans can work towards justice in this world. While we grieve the unfairness perceived in life, it is God who grieves the injustice brought into this life.

Thank you, Lord, for carrying this burden for us. Amen.

*Deacon Randy Kiel is the founder of Kardia Counseling and serves Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines. To connect with him, email randy@kardiacounseling.com*

# What is love asking of me now?

Several years ago, a colleague of mine suffered a crushing disappointment. Her instinctual temptation was towards anger, towards shutting a series of doors and withdrawing. Instead, wounded in spirit, she asked herself the question, what is love asking of me now? In answering that, she found that despite her every instinct to the contrary, love was asking her to move away from bitterness and withdrawal, asking her to stretch her heart in ways it had never been stretched before.

What is love asking of me now? That is the question we need to ask ourselves every time the circumstances of our lives are shaken (by wound or by grace) to a point where we no longer want to respond graciously and lovingly because everything inside of us wants to shut down and withdraw.

Thus ...

- When I have just been through a bitter divorce, when I feel my heart hardening and find myself growing hateful towards someone I once trusted, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I have lost a loved one to suicide, not just to death but to a manner of death that becomes a prism that recolors every memory of that person so that my love turns to anger, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When a colleague humiliates me at a meeting with insinuations that are untrue and my blood literally boils at the unfairness, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When my own child rejects my faith and values, complete with the hint that I am naïve and out of step with the world and my temptation is to self-pity and (however subtle) to withdraw my love and support, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When a medical diagnosis reveals that my health will be forever compromised and every fiber in my body and spirit wants to sink into anger and depression, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When the church that is my

## Guest Column

By Father Ron Rolheiser



mother-tongue, that gave me the faith, is found to be unfair, to be the bearer of sin, when I see its flaws and am left to ponder the question of how I can stay in a church with that history and those dysfunctions, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I am betrayed in a relationship, lied to by someone I trusted, when I am tempted in bitterness never to trust anyone again, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I myself betray a trust, when out of weakness I sin, when I want to wallow in self-hatred or rationalize or deny my weakness, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When an election in the country produces a leader whose personality and policies go against everything I stand for, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When the parochial world I grew up in begins to give way to a multilingual, multicultural, multiracial, and multi-religious world that leaves me feeling left behind, when paranoia and defensiveness have me desperately trying to hang on to what once was, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I live with someone in my family who is dysfunctional and my every desire is to avoid him and live my own life, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I have to deal daily with someone who hates me and everything inside me wants to respond in kind, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

However, it is not only negative things that upset us in this way, tempt us

towards hatred and withdrawal, and leave us in a space that forces us to respond in a new way, huge grace can do the same thing.

Thus ...

- When I finally get that long longed-for promotion, complete with the big salary and a voice in decision-making and the temptation is to inflate and feel superior to those around me, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

- When I am invited to be the valedictorian for my graduating class and am on the podium basking in the adulation of the crowd (aware of the jealousy of my classmates) multiple temptations will beset me, most of them unhealthy. The question then becomes, what is love asking of me

now?

- When someone blesses me in a deep way with love, gratitude, and affirmation and my temptation is to feed my ego with that blessing, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

We cannot protect ourselves against the spontaneous feelings that beset us, both when things go well and when they go badly – and most of those feelings tempt us away from love. So, whenever either a depression or an inflation is tempting us away from what is best and most noble, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.*



## I've Been Wondering...

Father John Ludwig

*Q. I am wondering when the handshake of peace became part of the Mass and why. Before the pandemic, the handshake gave me the "ick" factor during the cold and flu season - especially when someone sitting near was coughing or blowing the nose. Do you think we will resume the handshake? -Bridget Brass*

**A. WHO KNOWS AFTER A PANDEMIC** what some of our previous customs will look like? The sign of peace has long been a part of the Mass. During solemn high Masses in the past, the celebrant and the deacon and the subdeacon exchanged a formal sign of peace.

After the reforms of the Second Vatican council the faithful were invited to exchange some sign of Christ's peace. In our country, it often took the form of a handshake.

The Roman Missal gives this instruction: "If appropriate, the priest or deacon adds: 'Let us offer each other the sign of peace. And all offer one another a sign in keeping with local customs that expresses peace, communion, and charity.'"

If people have a cold or the flu, they should be cautious of spreading it to those around them. They can simply smile and speak words of peace without touching their neighbor.

*Father John Ludwig is a retired priest of the Diocese of Des Moines. To send a question to him, email it to communications@dmdiocese.org or mail it to The Catholic Mirror, Diocese of Des Moines, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50309.*

# Diocese begins new visioning process

Continued from page 1

missionary discipleship.

Ebener will collaborate with Bishop Joensen and a Steering Committee that is being formed this summer. The committee will have representation from across the Diocese. Members will prayerfully engage the people of the Diocese, invoke the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discuss ideas for the future of the Diocese, collaborate on the generation of a new vision, and craft the new vision. The committee will look at best practices in evangelization, and consult papal and other primary Church documents.

“My hope is this vision will navigate our path forward, align our efforts on behalf of Christ’s Kingdom as we accompany one another as a pilgrim people, deepen the bonds of communion and draw others to join us as committed disciples of Jesus,” said Bishop Joensen.

“I believe the words of the prophet Habakkuk speak

powerfully to us: ‘For the vision is a witness for the appointed time, a testimony to the end; it will not disappoint. If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late,’” he said.

Why now? As the pandemic wanes, it’s time to take a fresh look at where the Holy Spirit is leading the faithful, said Bishop Joensen.

The visioning process will consist of intense listening to people across the Diocese through a series of focus groups, interviews and a survey.

Ebener will ask a wide array of people about their thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the Diocese of Des Moines. He’ll be talking with leadership, those active in a variety of ministries and those who are not engaged in the life of the Church to learn their perspectives.

A report from Ebener on this phase one of the process is expected by Advent 2021.

In January 2022, a second phase of the process

will begin in which the Steering Committee will review the data, the feedback from interviews and focus groups and prayerfully discern the vision of the Diocese moving forward.

Strategic goals will be determined and action steps will follow with a plan outlined during the Easter season.

The Catholic Church faced many challenges prior to the pandemic. The Diocese of Des Moines is planning for a future that adapts to the needs of the faithful, accents the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the community, engages and welcomes persons seeking a relationship with God, and accompanies people on their faith journey.

Ebener said: “Many in the Church feel it is time to be more proactive about the future, to read the signs of the times and to plan a brighter future for the Catholic Church.”

# Una Renovación Gentil y Ordinaria

Continued from page 2

llamados al sacerdocio, pero no fue sino hasta que recibí lo que

él llamaba su momento “dos por cuatro” cuando perdió su empleo que tuvo la motivación de su director espiritual y compañeros de clase del diaconado para aplicar para estudio del seminario para el sacerdocio. Se ordenó sacerdote en la Catedral de San Ambrosio el 3 de junio del 2016, y cumplió eventualmente su deseo de ser párroco rural en el condado de Shelby como un “joven sacerdote” a quien el padre Dan Kirby declaró, un día antes de que muriera, que se había “graduado” luego de cinco años en el programa de sacerdotes recién ordenados.

El camino del Padre David Smith al sacerdocio le llevó a unirse a la Provincia de Wisconsin de la orden religiosa jesuita. Él recordaba con mucho aprecio el tiempo que pasó sirviendo a los pueblos nativo-americanos en la escuela Red Cloud Indian School en la Reservación de Pine Ridge en Dakota del Sur antes de haber sido asignado directamente a nuestra diócesis para dirigir el Centro de Retiros de la Universidad Creighton en Griswold. Él se convirtió en párroco en el condado de Shelby en el 2014 y esperaba permanecer allí mientras su salud se lo permitiese

La fe tanto del Padre Dan Gehler como del Padre David Smith, así como sus personalidades, no eran nada llamativas. Su incansable dedicación a la

gente con quienes estaban presentes, así como sus sonrisas, podían iluminar la habitación.

Ellos eran – y seguirán siendo – ordinariamente en el mejor de los sentidos y, por esa razón, fueron acogidos calurosamente por lo miembros de sus parroquias y por sus hermanos sacerdotes. Sus debilidades, así como su deseo de cuidar de todos excepto de sí mismo, eran también evidentes, pero eran igualmente entrañables, ya que revelaban cómo la gracia es suficiente, ya que entonces la presencia y el poder de Dios están aún más expuestos. Y ahora, Dios ha levantado los frascos para que las luces del Padre Dan y el Padre Dan puedan elevarse al cielo.

Ambos sacerdotes permanecerán como figuras gentiles y ordinarias en la historia narrativa de la Diócesis de Des Moines, Les honramos con los ritos de la Iglesia y con nuestras continuas oraciones, así como con las historias y tributos con que los seguiremos recordando. Pero honramos más tanto al Padre Dan como al Padre David por vivir día a día nuestra ordinaria y familiar fe, que es todo menos vacía; es la gran aventura que nos ofrece la gracias de Dios. No buscamos el ser maravillados per salvados por el Dios hombre que vino de Nazaret, Jesucristo. Es en el hogar de María y de José y en nuestros propios hogares, en donde se revela el misterio de nuestra redención y en donde todos los ingredientes necesarios están en las alacenas de nuestros corazones.



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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.

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# Hundreds gather to greet recovering pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pilgrims and well-wishers gathered at Rome's Gemelli hospital to greet Pope Francis as he made his first public appearance in a week after undergoing intestinal surgery.

Appearing on the 10th floor balcony of his suite of rooms at the hospital July 11, the pope was greeted with applause and shouts of "Viva il papa" ("Long live the pope").

"I thank you all," the pope said. "I have felt your closeness and the support of your prayers. Thank you very much."

Pope Francis arrived at Gemelli hospital July 4 to undergo "a scheduled surgical intervention for a symptomatic diverticular stenosis of the colon," the Vatican said.

The pope has recovered steadily from his surgery and resumed working from the hospital. In his address, the pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Mark, in which Jesus sent out his disciples to anoint the sick with oil and heal



CNS photo/Vatican Media via Reuters

**Pope Francis greets the crowd as he leads the Angelus from a balcony of Gemelli hospital in Rome July 11, 2021, as he recovers following scheduled colon surgery.**

them. The oil, he said, not only represents the comfort given through the sacramental anointing of the sick, but also symbolizes "the closeness, the care, the tenderness of those who take care

of the sick person." "It is like a caress that makes you feel better, soothes your pain and cheers you up. All of us, everyone, sooner or later, we all need this 'anointing' of

closeness and tenderness, and we can all give it to someone else, with a visit, a phone call, a hand outstretched to someone who needs help," he said.

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### Part-time Piano Accompanist

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# N.J. cardinal speaks on Hyde Amendment

NEWARK, N.J. (CNS) -- Taxpayer-funded abortion "represents a failure to recognize the sanctity of human life and promotes a culture in which human life in its most vulnerable moment is perceived as disposable," said Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark.

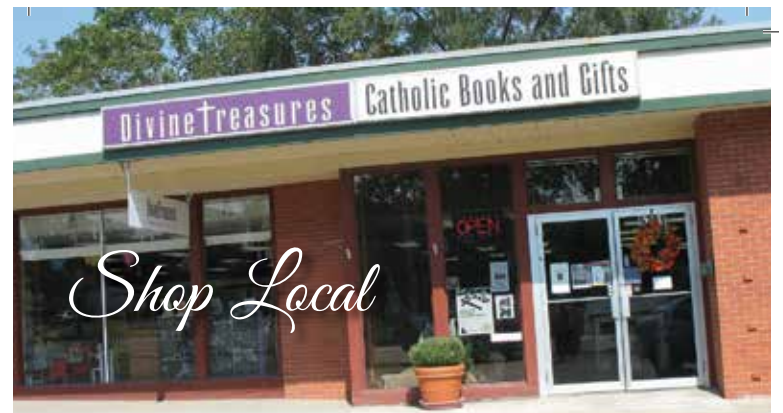
A federal budget that "would eliminate" the long-standing

ing bipartisan Hyde Amendment is a proposal that "targets poor women as needing an expedient solution to a complex problem," he said July 6.

Cardinal Tobin made the comments in a letter to the faithful of the Newark Archdiocese following moves by President Joe Biden and members of Congress to leave the Hyde Amendment out

of spending bills. He encouraged the faithful to sign a petition by July 16.

"It is crucially important that we send a strong, clear message that the Hyde Amendment has far-reaching public support and should not be repealed," Cardinal Tobin said. The Hyde Amendment was first passed in 1976.



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# Temporary stop of federal executions

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Activists who oppose the death penalty said the Justice Department's temporary stop of federal executions is a step in the right direction, but not enough.

The order, given by Attorney General Merrick Garland in a memo to senior officials and announced publicly the night of July 1, reverses the Trump ad-

ministration's decision to resume executions of federal death-row inmates after a 17-year hiatus.

"While a moratorium on federal executions has symbolic value, we've seen the danger of half-measures that do not fully address the fundamental brokenness of our death penalty system. More is required" tweeted Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Jo-

seph of Medaille, who is a long-time death penalty opponent.

The chairmen of U.S. bishops' domestic policy and pro-life committees July 3 called the Justice Department's action a "welcome step" but also said the death penalty must be eliminated "from both our state and federal laws as we build a culture of life."

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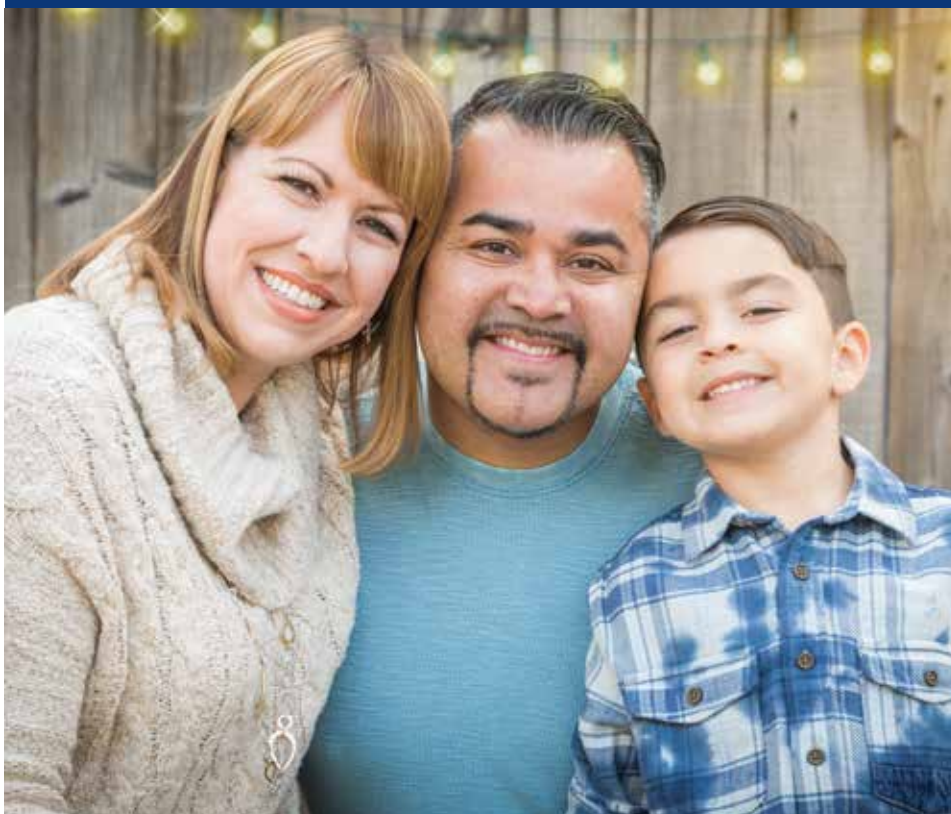
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