Blessed beyond measure
Diocese of Des Moines celebrates the ordination of five new priests

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

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.

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

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

Culpe Mark Peake rose through the ranks in the kitchens of famous restaurants in Paris, West Hollywood, and other hotspots before opening La Campanile con su 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 Peake 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 “un-glamorous” 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 uncontrollably close range. His tender care and love must come to us in gentle fashion, not with a bang, but rather a whisper, allowing God to reach 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 but an endearing, for they revealed how the diaconate, parroquia de St. Joseph en Earling en el Diocesano de Des Moines. We honor them para la gente de la Parroquia de St. Peter en Defiance y de St. Mary en Fulton, Sikeston, Missouri, and in our own homes, where the mystery of our redemption is revealed, and all that we have is abundant enough to share in the cupboards of our hearts.

The El Chef Mark Peake se elevó en los rango culinarios en las cocinas de restaurantes famosos, parroquia de St. Joseph en Earling en el Diocesano de Des Moines. We honor them para la gente de la Parroquia de St. Peter en Defiance y de St. Mary en Fulton, Sikeston, Missouri, and in our own homes, where the mystery of our redemption is revealed, and all that we have is abundant enough to share in the cupboards of our hearts.

Una Renovación Gentil y Ordinaria

El Chef Mark Peake se elevó en los rango culinarios en las cocinas de restaurantes famosos, parroquia de St. Joseph en Earling en el Diocesano de Des Moines. We honor them para la gente de la Parroquia de St. Peter en Defiance y de St. Mary en Fulton, Sikeston, Missouri, and in our own homes, where the mystery of our redemption is revealed, and all that we have is abundant enough to share in the cupboards of our hearts.
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 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 learning 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 moment had a profoundly positive impact on their children, motivating them to go to college.

“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 moment 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.

“My name is a meaningful one; it’s a name that I was given to serve,” 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 Mortel de Batauelos at mmoriel@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5011.
Deacon Obradovich and his wife, Kathie, are the directors of Permanent Diaconate Counseling services. She can be reached at 515-286-2024.

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Centennial celebration in store at Perry school

St. Patrick Catholic School in Perry is celebrating its 100th 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 a 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. 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 St. Patrick Catholic School.

Summer time means construction time at schools

As students are vacating, 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 constructed.

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 dedicated to the project which was very successful. It’s just a wonderful expression from the St. Albert community in backing and supporting our school,” said 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.

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 accountabil- ity 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 dm dioceee.org/victim-assistance/priest-abuse-list.

Since 2003, the Dio- cese of Des Moines has maintained the practices of im- mediately notifying law en- forcement 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 pro- cedures 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 account- ability. 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-di oceee-isues-response-to-re- ports-to wa-attorney-gen- eraal

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.

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.

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. Questions can be directed to communications@dmdiocese.org.
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 organizations. 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 different 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.

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, teethers 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

Continued on page 8

CONGRATULATIONS FROM 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.
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 4-4.5 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 director, 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 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 + 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 reception is open to the public. Cards of congratulations can be sent to 280 S. 79th Street, Unit 1308, West Des Moines, 50266.

August 8 Sunday
50th 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 Hamon, thamon@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 stay local. For more information go to www.topswalk.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, 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

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/dmdiocease.

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.

Rummage Sale
Ankeny
**An amount of $5 for early bird entrance is available until 4:45 pm on July 22nd.**

**Volunteers needed:** To help with setup, run the rummage sale, and clean up.

**Date:** Saturday, July 22nd from 4-8 pm

**Location:** St. Boniface Catholic Church

**Information:** The rummage sale will be held at Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish. All proceeds go towards Capital Renewal at St. Anthony Parish.

**Contact:** Please contact our Parish Office at 515-724-1166 for more information or to volunteer.

**Pricing:**

**Early Bird Admission:**

- Monday, July 22nd: 4-4.5 pm – $5 admission

- Tuesday, July 23rd: 8 am-7 pm – $2 admission

- Wednesday, July 24th: 8 am-3 pm – $2 admission

**General Admission:**

- Monday, July 22nd: 4.5-8 pm – $2 admission

- Tuesday, July 23rd: 8 am-7 pm – $2 admission

- Wednesday, July 24th: 8 am-3 pm – $2 admission

**Main Items:**

- Clothing
- Books
- Toys
- Kitchenware
- Furniture
- Electronics

**Items Not Accepted:**

- Food
- Used car parts

**More Information:**

- Visit the Emmaus House website at theemmaushouse.org to learn more and register.
- Contact us with any questions.

**Volunteer Opportunities:**

- Help with setup and run the rummage sale.
- Assist with cleaning up.

**Contact:**

- Parish Office: 515-724-1166
- Emmaus House: 515-267-4987

**Address:**

280 S. 79th Street, Unit 1308, West Des Moines, 50266

**Hours:**

- Monday, July 22nd: 4-8 pm
- Tuesday, July 23rd: 8 am-7 pm
- Wednesday, July 24th: 8 am-3 pm

**Volunteer:**

- Contact: Emmaus House Volunteer Coordinator at 515-267-4987 or volunteer@theemmaushouse.org

**Funds Raised:**

- Capital Renewal at St. Anthony Parish

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**Special Note:**

- Early Bird Admission is available until 4:45 pm on July 22nd.
- General Admission will be $2 per person after 4:45 pm on July 22nd.

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**Thank you for your support!**

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**About the Emmaus House:**

The Emmaus House is a Catholic, non-profit organization that provides housing and support for people experiencing homelessness in the Des Moines area.

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For more information, go to 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 Des Moines for the Office of Worship, Communications and The Catholic Mirror, was a longtime friend of Father Gehler. “He had such a good heart. People knew there. While Father Gehler was assigned to St. Ambrose Parish in Des Moines, 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. “He could relate well to the farmers in his rural parish, often chatting with them about weather and crops.”

Father Gehler was a salt of the earth 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.”

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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 everyone thing about his spiritual life – even though he had those challenges with his health, he persevered. He gave it 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.”
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 Loren 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 the Order of Malta for his thoughtfulness.

“He’ll certainly be remembered for his thoughtfulness,” Kaufmann said. “Perfect.”

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.

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 Schwyer, of St. Mary in Panama.

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

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“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.

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 immigrants.

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 maryshelpinghands@gmail.com.

Conference 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 Hispánico 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 Buelos al 515 237-5011.

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

Deacon Randy Kiel

Let’s Get Psycho!

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 live 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 can only exist within the sphere of justice, and the question becomes, what 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 justice, have taken on many different social meanings that have evolved past the original spiritual meaning of these words.

In modern interpretation, justice commonly means giving each person what he or she deserves. Or, in more traditional terms, giving each person his or her due. But 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

Several years ago, a colleague of mine suffered a crushing disappointment. Her instinctual temptation was towards anger and depression 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 generously 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 lose a child, a family member, a close friend or beloved pet, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

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

• When someone blesses me in a new way, huge grace can do the same.

• When a colleague oversteps the bounds of their role, the question becomes, what is love asking of me now?

• When I am betrayed in a relationship, related 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 an election in our 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 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 family in my own home and find 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, temp 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 am tempted with the desire 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?

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What is love asking of me now? Therefore, saying that justice is
Diocese begins new visioning process

Continued from page 1

missionary discipleship.

Eben will collabo-
rate with Bishop Joensen and a Steering Committee that is being formed this summer. This committee will have representa-
tion from across the Diocese. Members will prayerfully en-
gage the people of the Diocese, invoke the guidance of the Holy
Spirit, discuss ideas for the fu-
ture of the Diocese, collaborate on the generation of a new vi-
sion, 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 accom-
pany 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 pan-
demic 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.

Eben 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 per-
spectives.

A report from Eben 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 Steer-
ing Committee will review the
data, the feedback from inter-
views 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 cen-
trality of the Eucharist in the
life of the community, engages
and welcomes persons seeking a
relationship with God, and ac-
companies people on their faith
journey.

Eben 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 recibió 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 pár-
roco 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 Da-
vid Smith al sacerdocio le llevó a
unirse a la Provincia de Wisconsin
sin de la orden religiosa jesuita.
El 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 Creigh-
on en Griswold. Se convirtió en
párroco en el condado de Shelby en
el 2014 y esperaba permanecer
allí mientras su salud le permi-
tiese

La fe tanto del Padre Dan
Gehler como del Padre David
Smith, así como sus personali-
dades, no eran nada llamativas.
Su incansable dedicación a una
gente con quienes estaban pre-
sentes, así como sus sonrisas,
eran igualmente entrañables, ya
que revelaban cómo la gracia es
e evidente, pero que entonces la pres-
encia 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 iluminar la habitación.

Ambos sacerdotes per-
manecerán como figuras gentiles y
ordinarias en la historia narrativa de
la Diócesis de Des Moines, los
horaríamos con los ritos de la Igle-
sia y con nuestras continuas ora-
ciones, así como con las historias
y tributos con que los seguiremos
recordando. Pero horaría 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 hombree
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 re-
dención y en donde todos los in-
gerentes necesitados están en las
alacenas de nuestros corazones.

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Victim Assistance Advocate

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@polkcountyioawa.gov.

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The Catholic Mirror July 16, 2021
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 tend the sick.

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.

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.

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 eliminates the long-standing Hyde Amendment is perceived as disposable,” he said July 6.

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

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 the Justice Department’s action a “welcome step” but also said the administration’s decision to resume federal 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. Joseph of Medaille, who is a long-time advocate for a death penalty.

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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—last stanza from Star Spangled Banner

The Catholic Mirror  July 16,  2021

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