The Diocese of Des Moines is launching a $45 million fundraising campaign to meet the growing needs of schools, parishes and diocesan ministries well into the future.

Bishop William Joensen, in consultation with pastors and other diocesan leaders, approved the campaign last January after a diocesan-wide feasibility study showed 72 percent of 1,200 Catholic participants were willing to support a fundraising effort.

The campaign theme, “Ignite! A Life. A Church. A Community,” aims to enhance the capacity of the diocesan family—priests, women religious, deacons, mothers, fathers, teachers, catechists and, especially, our children—to bear and communicate the message of Jesus within and beyond the Church to the larger society.

“As one body of Christ, we are seeking to boldly ignite the faith with the apostolic zeal and spirit of the first Christians to settle Southwest Iowa. We want everyone to claim and reflect our God-given dignity to others who may not yet know that they are unconditionally loved by God. Our greatest joy is found when we enable our neighbors to discover the freedom and beauty that are too easily clouded by the challenges families face and the many voices that would distract us from hearing God’s personal invitation to friendship,” Bishop Joensen said.

The campaign goals include the establishment of an endowment to provide more financial aid to Catholic school families. It will also provide additional funding for the Diocese’s growing number of seminarians, parishes and diocesan ministries well into the future.

Bishop Joensen said.

“Classrooms begin soon in the 16 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines. “The challenges we faced last school year have changed our goals for the better,” said Diocesan Schools Superintendent Donna Bishop. “We are more agile, collaborative, compassionate, and inspired. I am confident that we have the resources and support in place so that our more than 6,300 students will experience the levels of achievement, growth and development they need for the next stage of their educational journey and beyond.” Pictured above are students at Holy Family Catholic School in Des Moines.

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Our August celebrations of the Feast of the Assumption and the displaced feast of Mary, Queen of Heaven—the patronal feast of our Diocese—spur some sunny musings on what it means to become gracefully united with our Diocese of Des Moines. While we may take our proper place in the company of God’s children, we may feel the disruption of our personal identity, and are tempted to divide persons within ourselves or the church. We are the rising attention of those who suffer gender-identity disorder, who belong to Christ, with the body of Christ within us. We will mark the Feast of the Assumption and the displaced feast of Mary, Queen of Heaven, the patronal feast of our Diocese of Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

Nuestra celebración de Agosto de la Femia de la Asunción y la desplazada fiesta de María, Reina del Cielo – la fiesta de anuncio en la vida – nos invita a ser conscientes de la unión consciente con la Diócesis de Des Moines. ¡Feliz cumplices hermanos y hermanas en Cristo! La asunción de María, el pasado de esta gracia en la tierra, la carne y la maldad a pesar de la carne de su propia carne hasta el último aliento terrenal de Jesús en la Cruz.

“Lo que significa que el alma se pierde cuando muere José, cuándo su hijo empieza a ministrar a los lazos del Espíritu de su hijo Resucitado, y cuándo se cumple la intención de Dios en el germen de una nueva vida en donde ella estaba protegida del pecado sin ser vista. María es la portadora del mensaje de esperanza de que los obispos de Davenport y su sucesor James Da- vis no estaban en una relación. Él fue el único que pudo salvar la vida de su hija. Pero con la ratificación de los obispos de Davenport y su sucesor James Davis, el nuncio papal Guglielmo, con el papa, y el Obispo del papa a las solicitudes de for- mar parte de la Asunción de María, Reina del Cielo – la fiesta de anuncio en la vida –, con el papa, y el Obispo de la Cruz.

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Schools keep busy over the summer

St. Albert Falcons win state baseball championship

The Council Bluffs St. Albert baseball team claimed the school’s fourth summer state championship on July 29 with a 7-5 victory over Kee High of Lansing in the Class 1A title game at Merchants Park in Carroll. The Falcons added to championships in 1981, 1996 and 1999 by going 12-0 in the month of July to finish with a 35-8 record. At state, they beat Lisbon 9-3 and Alburnett 10-0 to set up the championship meeting with Kee. Seniors Cy Patterson (pictured pitching) and Isaac Sherrill, and sophomore Brendan Monahan were named first-team all-staters by the Iowa Print Sports Writers Association.

Perry school celebrates 100 years of providing Catholic education

St. Albert Falcons win state baseball championship

St. Patrick Catholic School in Perry celebrated 100 years of providing a Catholic education with a special Mass and semi-formal dinner in July. Nora O’Malley campaigned to bring a Catholic school to the community and, despite many challenges, her dream came true.

Dowling Catholic erects memorial

Dowling Catholic High School in West Des Moines recently added a memorial to its campus to honor the faithfully departed members of the school community.

MEMORIAL MASS
FOR THE UNBORN

A Memorial Mass for all the lives lost through the violence of abortion. Together we will plead to the Lord to stop the evil of abortion.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

Diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & Divine Mercy

GROTTO
NOON
ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Join us for this important Memorial Mass to remember and pray for the millions of babies whose lives were lost through abortion. At this Mass, we will pray for the unborn and for the women and men suffering from the tragic effects of abortion. The Mass will be held at the Grotto, just north of St. Anthony Church. Chairs will be set up but feel free to bring your own in case they are filled up.

All are invited, please bring everyone to join in this important Mass.

More information contact Tom Hanson tehanson4@msn.com 515.770.7648
If the weather is bad, the Mass will be moved into the church.

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 12482

We’re looking for stories of inspiration!

Send your ideas to Kelly Mescher Collins at kcollins@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5054.
Des Moines Olympian’s family grateful for community support

Left: Karissa Schweizer, a 2014 graduate of Dowling Catholic High School, competed in the finals for both the 5,000 and 10,000 meters at the Olympics in Tokyo. Top: Longtime members of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale, Mike and Kathy Schweizer with their children Karissa, Kelsey and Ryan. Bottom: Family and friends attended the watch party on Court Avenue on Saturday, Aug. 7 to watch Schweizer compete in the 10,000 meter final.

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

In the months, weeks and days leading up to the Olympics in Tokyo this summer, all sorts of variables loomed, potentially snuffing out Dowling Catholic High School alumna Karissa Schweizer’s opportunity to compete there.

After the Olympics were postponed from 2020 to 2021 due to COVID-19, all possibilities seemed to be on the table.

“I was more disappoint for her,” said Karissa’s mother, Kathy, a longtime member of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale. “She was so ready and focused and then everything got shut down.”

But Schweizer and the rest of her team at the Bowerman Track Club – an American training group for professional runners sponsored by Nike and based in Portland, Oregon – kept focusing on their next step.

It paid off. Karissa competed in the women’s 5,000 meter track and field event at the Tokyo Olympics.

“Running in Tokyo today is an achievement in and of itself,” he said.

Early on, there were concerns the Olympics would again be postponed due to the pandemic, or athletes would test positive for COVID-19.

“I was always praying that the Olympics would still just happen,” Kathy said. “I was even mentally preparing myself [for the Olympics to be cancelled].”

Kathy continued. “So for her to fight through all of the barriers, I kind of see her as Wonder Woman.”

Another challenge for Karissa was losing Bowerman Track Club teammate, training partner and friend – fellow Iowa native Shelby Houlihan – who was banned from track and field events for four years after testing positive for an anabolic steroid. (Houlihan has gone on record stating she believes the steroid came from pork she consumed hours before her drug test and continues to appeal her case.)

“Her season’s appeal was denied, and she was the only one,” Kathy said. “We’re very proud of her.”

Pam and Lou Fiori, of St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines, were at the pre-dawn gathering on Court Avenue in Des Moines on Aug. 7 to watch Karissa race on a Jumbotron TV. Their son, Jack, runs cross-country at Dowling Catholic.

The love and support from the community has been extraordinary.

They texted back and forth with Karissa, though the 14-hour time difference made it challenging, Mike and Kathy said.

“We have a great group of people – and they were there. It was a great celebration. And that’s one thing that I really appreciate about the church and school and Dowling Catholic community is really that togetherness and the support.”

Free Citizenship Class by telephone

This free citizenship class will prepare you to pass your US immigration citizenship interview.

Experienced teacher will conduct this class bilingual – English and Spanish. Please contact local instructor Jim Supina at (515) 961-2026.

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@polkcountyiowa.gov.

We’re looking for stories of inspiration! Send your ideas to Kelly Mescher Collins at kcollins@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5054.
On a hot afternoon in July, a 36-year-old man stood looking at a table full of donated bread stationed at the front of the Catholic Charities Food Pantry. Clutching a white grocery bag loaded with zucchini, grapes, potatoes, and a container of chocolate milk, he selected a loaf of Italian bread.

“When I became homeless, I had nowhere to go. I would come by, and I knew that I could find something to eat when I was hungry,” he said. “It’s important to me that I have some stability… and the guys here are really nice.” He revealed that he became homeless after his girlfriend died three years ago. He now lives near the fairgrounds and relies on “the dailies” from the food pantry.

Earlier in July, an 89-year-old woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo landed in the United States after enduring life in a refugee camp in Rwanda for over 20 years. Family and friends prayed and celebrated as she, a daughter, and three grandchildren (age 23, 19, and 17) descended the stairs at Des Moines International Airport.

Catholic Charities Refugee Services program manager, Kelyn Anker, greeted the family and guided them through the airport for their luggage and on to their new life in Iowa.

Last year in Council Bluffs, a Catholic Charities Sexual Assault Advocate met with a survivor of human trafficking. The advocate helped unravel a lifetime of abuse and neglect from family and others and arranged legal assistance, medical care, mental health services, and substance abuse counseling.

The client would eventually tell her advocate, “You are like a best friend, a mom, a sister, an advocate, and a saving grace—all in one. You have played the role of nearly every person I have always needed in my life.”

These are just a handful of stories that illustrate the impact Catholic Charities programs make through direct service to thousands of people in the 23 counties of the Diocese of Des Moines each year. The organization’s mission and values are rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amid the challenges of modern society. Support through Catholic Charities Annual Appeal ensures programs and services can help now and into the future.

“To those who donated to the Annual Appeal in the past, we thank you,” said Barbara Decker, Catholic Charities executive director. “We hope that you continue to find the programs and services of Catholic Charities a worthy investment of your charitable giving. Please consider an increase in this year’s contribution and sharing our mission with friends and family.”

To become an Annual Appeal donor, go to catholiccharitiesdm.org. Click the “Donate” button in the upper right corner of the screen. The website is full of information about Catholic Charities programs, volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, and more.

For help with your contribution, contact Catholic Charities Development Director Debra Powers at 563-275-9643. She can help set up a giving plan, event sponsorship, or find the best way to make your contribution have the most impact.
Aug. 28 Saturday  
Conference for Parents in Spanish  
DES MOINES – A conference for Spanish for parents is 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center. We will have Dr. Dora Tobar, director of Family Life and Hispanic Ministry Office at the Diocese of Lafayette in Indiana as a key speaker. For more information contact President Mayor Moriel de Barcelona at 523-257-0011 or moriel@dmdioecese.org.

Aug. 29-Sept. 1 Sun-Wed  
Parish Night  
ANKENY – Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish is sponsoring a parish mission called “Re-Becoming the Body of Christ” at 6:30 p.m. Come to one night or all four. Additionally, morning sessions available on Mon & Tues (using Lectio & Visio Divina) are 9:10-30 a.m.

Aug. 30 Monday  
Golf Outing  
Ottumwa  
Golf outing to be held on Monday Aug 30 at 12:45 p.m. Proceeds benefit the mission of Catholic Charities to empower individuals and strengthen families. Sign up today! www.catholiccharitiesiow.org/2021-golf. For questions or sponsorship, please contact Holley at hackemannj@charisst Phát nh143.com.

Aug. 31 Sunday  
Memorial Mass for the Unborn  
DES MOINES – A memorial Mass for all the lives lost through the violence of 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, tehsan4@msn.com, 515-723-5066, or by phone at 515-237-0609.

Sept. 5 Monday  
Theology of the Body  
DES MOINES – You are invited to a celebration of the 50th anniversary for Father Bob Aubrey at St. Joseph Church. There will be an open house from 3-4:30 p.m. with evening prayer at 4:15 p.m.

Sept. 19-21 Sun-Tuesday  
Parish Mission  
ADEL – All are welcome to join us for St. John’s parish mission “To The Heights!” with Katie Patrizio. Come hear this fast-paced retelling of the Scripture story and discover your unique role in salvation history. Join us in our mission to refresh our minds and hearts with new insights. Learn more about our presenter at kattpatriziocom.com. The schedule is: Sept. 19 - 9:30 dinner & speaker; Sept. 20 - 6:30 speaker & reflection; Sept. 21 - 5:30 Mass, fellowship, speaker & adoration.

Sept. 25 Saturday  
Memorial Mass for the Unborn  
DES MOINES – A memorial Mass for all the lives lost through the violence of 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, tehsan4@msn.com, 515-723-5066, or by phone at 515-237-0609.

Sept. 25 Saturday  
St. Vincent de Paul “Friends of the Poor Walk”  
CARLISLE – This walk 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 fowalk.event/2603

Sept. 26 Sunday  
Chicken and Ham Dinner  
LEONOX, 670 W. Michigan, is hosting its annual grilled chicken and ham dinner from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. in its parish center. We missed you last year because of COVID-19 so we are looking forward to seeing everyone again this year.

Faith Journey  
Catechetical Institute  
DES MOINES – Are you a Catholic who wants to fall deeper in love with Christ and his Church? Do you want to learn more about how your faith fits into greatest love story in the history of world? If you answered yes to these questions then the Catechetical Institute is for you. Contact John Huysen, 515-237-5066, to begin your faith journey into the heart of our Catholic tradition. More information can also be found at FaithJourneyCTI.com.

Sept. 28 Sunday  
Catholic Holy Hours  
All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen from St. John’s for Holy Hours on Mondays for an hour of Eucharistic adoration and evening prayer. These Holy Hours are 5-6 p.m. Evening prayer will be livesreamed on the Diocesan Facebook page.

Friends, Romans, Iowans podcast  
Check out the Dioce-

Support The Catholic Mirror  
We encourage you to take a subscription to our diocesan newspaper, The Catholic Mirror. Whether you receive it digitally or through the Post Office, The Catholic Mirror brings us to a monthly message from Bishop William Joensen, news and inspirational stories of faith. You can call us at 515-237-3666, use the QR Code or give online at: dmdioecese.org/giving/special-collection-giving.

Aug. 23 2021  
Around the Diocese

Former St. Albert School educator dies  
Former St. Albert Catholic School educato-

She also served as an archivist assistant for the Congregation of the Humility of Mary.

At Bishop Drummond in Johnston, Sister Micheline served as president of the Resident Council. In an on-line memorial, Humility Sis-
ter Mary Rehmann wrote: “Some of us recall Sister Micheline, just days before her last hospitalization, participating in Zoom sessions for preparation for upcoming community elections. Now she directs us from her vantage point in heaven, where her voice is restored to its full volume and she continues to speak with authority.”

Private services took place at Bishop Drummond. Our Lady of Peace Chapel and at Humility Memorial of Center for Congregation of the Humility of Mary.

Micheline, just days before her last hospitalization, joined her line memorial, Humility Sis-
ter Mary Rehmann, Humility Sis-
ter Margaret Rehmann, Humility Sis-
ter Elizabeth Riedman, Humility Sis-
ter Margaret Kalkman, Humility Sis-
ter Anna Zachary, Humility Sis-
ter Mary Cummins, Humility Sis-
ter Angela Rauch, Humility Sis-
ter Marguerite Kuyper, Humility Sis-
ter Margaret Rehmann, Humility Sis-
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ter Angela Rauch, Humility Sis-
ter Marguerite Kuyper, Humility Sis-

Neola garden blessed  
Father Sylvester Okoh, of St. Patrick Parish in Neola, on June 25 blessed a new groto surrounding a statue of the Blessed Mother at a rosary walk near the church. The rosary walk was created by Eagle Scout Tim Spiker about three years ago. The parish prays the rosary most Thursdays at 8 a.m., celebrates Mass at 8:30 a.m. and has a yearly hour of adoration until closing at 10 a.m. with Benediction and a special blessing. All Catholics are invited to attend. Those who are not Catholic are invited to visit and pray, attend Mass and then call the church office for more information.

CDA express gratitude  
Regent Carol Holle-
benke and treasurer Jan Roth, of Catholic Daughters Court St. An-
thony #330, thanked Fa-
ter Tom Thakadiparam for his service at Corpus Christi Parish during a July 7 Mass and recep-
tion before he moved to his new assignment serving parishes in Shenandoah and Ham-
burg. Father Thakadipu-
ram served as chaplain for the CDA court for four years. Pictured: Father Tom Thakadiparam and Hol-
lenbeck with a gift she gave him on behalf of the CDA

Regent Carol Hol-
lenbeck introduced the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #330 new chaplain, Deacon John Penning, of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs. With them is Father James Ahenko-
ar, pastor of St. Patrick Parish.

By Carol Hollecken

Deacon John Penning, of St. Patrick Church in Council Bluffs, was installed June 28 as the new chaplain for Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #330 of Council Bluffs.

The court’s membership of 61 Catholic women includes rep-
resentation from the three Council Bluffs parishes of Corpus Christi, St. Peter and St. Patrick.

CDA Court #330 will celebrate its 101st anniversary in Oc-
tober. The court planned to celebrate with its annual grilled luncheon fundraiser on Aug. 11 at St. Peter Parish.

CDA group installs new chaplain  
Regent Carol Holle-
benke, of Des Moines, introduces the new chaplain for Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #330 new chaplain, Deacon John Penning, of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs.

Photo by Jessica White
Biking for Babies local ride

Thirty-four bike riders hit the trail in Ankeny with Biking for Babies on Aug. 7 to raise awareness of crisis pregnancy centers and raise funds for their effort.

Biking for Babies cofounder Jimmy Becker and Bishop William Joensen joined the last leg of the ride at Springfield, Illinois.

The profile organization has three main goals: to build up the next generation of prolife missionaries, to build awareness of pregnancy resource centers and to raise financial support for those centers.

This year, the group decided to do local rides in seven communities, Becker said. In the future, it’s hoped the group will have a local ride in every state.

“By doing the local rides, we have the opportunity to achieve the goals that God set out for us to accomplish and get more families and communities involved on a local basis,” Becker said.

The Des Moines metro area cyclists could choose from three options: a five-mile, a 23-mile and a 48-mile ride, said organizer Peyton Dueling.

The workshop helped school administrators develop a social-emotional framework for their schools that includes restorative practices.

School administrators continue learning in summer

When Diocese of Des Moines administrators were invited to attend the workshop, they jumped at the opportunity to learn more about restorative practices as part of a SEL framework.

“This workshop was an exceptional experience that provided an opportunity to collaborate with other administrators outside of our diocese,” shared Halligan. “The restorative practices we explored during the workshop will allow us to be more proactive when addressing student behaviors as we implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in the coming school year.”

What are restorative practices?

Restorative practices view wrongdoing or problem behavior as a violation of people and relationships rather than a violation of the rules. The focus is on the victim(s). The offender must accept responsibility for his or her actions and the damage caused by those actions.

All humans desire to be treated with dignity, have a voice and be heard. These qualities are core to our humanity. Thus, there is considerable value in shifting from a punitive approach to promoting social bonding and community.

Restorative practices align with Catholic social teaching by protecting the dignity of every person involved, teaching collective problem-solving, building community, and promoting forgiveness.

Initially, the five schools in attendance at the June workshop will begin implementing restorative practices this fall. However, the goal is to have all diocesan schools using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports to employ restorative practices in the classroom.

Join Avoca, Walnut parishes for first Saturday Mass

Father Seth Owusu, of St. Mary Parish in Avoca and St. Patrick Parish in Walnut, shows a Divine Mercy sign with the words “Jesus, I trust in you!” at the Walnut parish before a First Saturday Mass honoring the Blessed Mother on Aug. 7. He rotates his first Saturday Mass between the two parishes. Prayer begins with a rosary at 8 a.m. followed by Mass. All are invited to attend. To get a Divine Mercy sign, contact Kathy Graeve, of Neola, at 402-680-4370 with a call or text.

Photo by Kathy Graeve

Catholic Charities, MercyOne and St. Ambrose Cathedral partnered to offer a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the Catholic Pastoral Center on Aug. 8. Marbat-Gabrab was among about 40 parishioners who became vaccinated that day. There were multi-generational and multicultural representation from St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish.

The second shot will be offered Aug. 29. “We appreciate the nurses, priests and all volunteers who helped to coordinate and support this activity. We were blessed by the presence of all,” said Barbara Decker, executive director of Catholic Charities.

Vaccination clinic aims to protect more people in the community

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Immigrants overcome challenges in new life

After Jesus was born, an angel appeared to St. Joseph in a dream, warning him that the infant’s life was in danger (Matthew 2:13-23). St. Joseph took Jesus and Mary and fled to Egypt. Today, there are people who flee their countries for various reasons and have to start over. In this Year of St. Joseph and with Labor Day approaching, here are two stories of families that had to start over in a new land. They believe God has been guiding them on their journey.

‘Angels’ show family the way to safety

Monica, Sabrina, Laura and Javier Mejia feel safe and secure in their new home in Iowa.

By Anne Marie Cox

Six years ago, Javier Mejia had his own car mechanic shop in Colombia, where his wife helped him with the books and his two young daughters had friends, pets and a comfortable life.

“One day, everything changed suddenly,” he said. His brother-in-law was murdered and his family no longer felt safe. They had to leave.

As he looks back on a journey that tested their faith, Javier sees God working to help his family every step of the way though they may not have realized it at the time.

“I learned to meet angels and demons,” he said, pausing as tears slide down his face. “I learned that God changes our lives with purpose. We don’t know what it is, but every day in my new prayer, I add in a new phrase and that is: ‘Show me the way.’”

When he and his wife, Monica, decided they needed to leave their homeland, Javier put his resume on the internet, intending for it to go to Spain where he had a friend.

Instead, a woman from Cedar Rapids saw it and invited him to Iowa.

The family moved. They had no family here, they didn’t know the language and they didn’t know how the hiring process works in the United States.

The woman who contacted Javier didn’t know the hiring process for newcomers, either, he said. She moved them from a hotel to an apartment, and then to a motel.

“She realized she made a big mistake,” Javier said.

The Mejias had no car, couldn’t communicate and were running out of money as they were paying for food, clothes and motel expenses.

The family moved to a park in the Des Moines metro area, a shelter and then with another family.

The family wanted to go to church. Someone took them to Sacred Heart in West Des Moines.

“In Colombia, we went to Mass every Sunday. But just because of our problem, we don’t even know where we can find a Spanish Mass and nobody tells you where to ask,” Javier said. Monica had purchased some candles and carried them with her every time in case they found a church. Javier paused.

“I never got that,” he said. “My family and me were struggling to find a better place to live.”

Javier, Monica, and daughters Laura and Sabrina lit the candles in front of an image of the Sacred Heart.

At the church, they met someone who connected them with a lawyer, who said the family would qualify for political asylum. They faced multiple challenges: He didn’t know how the hiring process worked for it to go to Spain where he had a friend.

Eventually, they were able to get an apartment.

“It was an empty apartment,” Monica said. “We were sleeping on the carpet, but it was good because we felt safe and we had a place to live,” she said.

Leslie Van Der Molen, of Catholic Charities, has helped many families who find themselves homeless.

“That is reality. The harsh truth is when people leave a shelter, they often have nothing or very little,” she said.

The Mejia family met Sacred Heart parishioner Joe Herrity, who they affectionately call “Mr. Joe.”

While he met them in July a few years ago, Herrity knew the family needed winter weather clothes. He looked around and realized they needed a lot more: food, kitchen supplies, bedding, jobs.

“At that point, I realized that this was a lot bigger than what I was about so I started calling around to friends,” Herrity said. They provided necessities.

Herrity learned Javier is a skilled mechanic. He helped Javier get a job, made sure the family understood what school officials were saying, assisted at doctor appointments and more.

Joe and Jean Herrity have become family to Javier, Monica, Sabrina and Laura.

When Monica and Javier had their marriage blessed by the church, Joe walked her down the aisle at her father’s request.

“They’re just wonderful people,” Herrity said. “They’re part of us. I guess the attitude I’ve taken is that in order to help them, I’ve had to change my mindset and say, ‘They’re family and I have to treat them as family.’ I laughingly refer to Laura and Sabrina as my two adopted daughters.”

Today, Javier has a job as a mechanic with a trucking firm and proudly says he’s a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Monica has her own in-home daycare. Laura is a junior studying computer engineering at Iowa State University. Sabrina just graduated high school and will enter a paralegal program through Des Moines Area Community College.

The family is grateful for their angels, the people who guided and helped them the last few years.

“Never stop trusting God,” Monica said. “I thank God for all the people who appeared, all his angels. God wanted to show us that he is real and he does exist. The changes he makes in people’s lives have purpose.”

One of Sabrina’s angels was a teacher who helped her learn English and motivated her to keep learning.

“Be kind to everyone,” she said. Laura: “You don’t know what they’re going through. A word, a gesture, a look can mean so much to someone.”

His dream came true with hard work, a mentor and faith

By Anne Marie Cox

While Emilio Nieto was growing up in Mexico, he dreamed of finding a better life in the United States.

He didn’t realize, at age 15, how difficult his life would become.

“That’s all I wanted to do was to get to work and get some money and then go back to my country,” he said.

“I thought that was the simple way to see this dream come true.”

Upon arriving in Iowa to be with a relative, he faced multiple challenges: He couldn’t speak English, and he didn’t have a way to get to a job.

He went to school during the day, working fast food jobs at night. Once he learned English, he could get better paying jobs and could help his family back in Mexi-co.

While he worked to make ends meet, he realized something was missing in his life.

“I never smoke or drink, thanks to my mom and dad. I was a good boy. But then you realize that is not enough. Somebody has to wake you up and say that is not enough.

Catholics, it’s not about not drinking and not smoking and not doing drugs. We are about doing good things. And then I realized I was not doing any thing good, and my life didn’t have real meaning. My pri orities were not straight. God was not in the first place. I was more about work or money or different things. But since I got my time with the Lord, then I realized that he was kind of giving me a chance.”

His wife, Paola, arrived in Iowa at age 13 with her mother and two younger sisters. They joined her father and brother who were already here.

Paola remembers the fear she experienced on her journey to the United States.

Emilio and Paola Nieto

Definitely God protected us the whole way and guided us,” she said.

Emilio and Paola met and married. She attended Iowa State University. They shared a dream of helping others.

Emilio approached his boss and said he either needed a big raise or he needed to go out on his own to try and earn more money. The owner helped Emilio start his own business.

“Helped me to start up. Then I brought my brother to work with me. Then I hired someone else. Little by little, I hired someone else and I got more customers. We were able to get our own apartment. Three years later, we were able to get our own home. About three to four years ago, we were able to get a nicer home.”

Emilio speaks as if he’s won life’s lottery.

“Once upon a time, I had a dream and God has given me a chance to see it,” he said.

“I have my own business; I can employ people. I love my wife. We have five kids. It’s not just blessings on my work, it’s blessings on my family. I’m an active person in the church. I try to do my best to be a good Catholic. I just want to say that I’m really thankful for all the opportunities that I got in this country. It’s a great country and I think anyone who wants to make their dream come true, if they’re here they can get it done but they have to work really hard and I’m sure they’ll get it.”

Emilio now has a son who is 15 years old.

“I told him that he just has to look back to me and see that I didn’t have a lot of opportunities when I was 15, and he has double the opportunities than I had,” he said. “If he re ally wants to fulfill his dreams, it can be done.”
“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” (Matthew 25)

The following is a recent statement from the Texas Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities USA.

ALEXANDRIA, VA – Catholic Charities USA and its 167 member agencies have a long history of serving their communities to help the most vulnerable find affordable housing, access vital food assistance and nutrition, receive mental and integrated healthcare and achieve economic self-sufficiency and stability.

When disaster strikes, its agencies provide emergency and long-term relief to help individuals and families rebuild their lives. Additionally, since its founding in 1910, Catholic Charities has provided immigration and refugee services. Catholic Charities’ work with migrants is rooted in the Gospel and in Catholic social teaching.

Agencies along the southern U.S. border, including in Texas, and around the country have provided these services in coordination with the federal government for decades across multiple presidential administrations. Catholic Charities’ efforts are humanitarian, not political.

Federal agencies and local border cities turn to Catholic Charities and other faith-based and local nonprofit organizations to aid them in caring for migrants. This role is as critical as it is time-consuming. Once migrants have been granted permission by the federal government to be present in the United States, they are sent to Catholic Charities for transitional care.

This care is threaded with the dignity we believe should be afforded to every person — a warm meal, a shower, clean clothing, medicine and other supplies. Usually, within two days, the migrants leave the Catholic Charities centers to continue their journey while they await their immigration court process.

Many migrants are poor and in need of extended services, and Catholic Charities partners with a variety of agencies to attend to those needs. Additionally, some migrants are tragically victims of human trafficking, and our ministries work closely with the appropriate federal, state and local public safety departments to ensure their protection and well-being.

The staff and volunteers of Catholic Charities have the utmost concern for the health of the communities where they live and do everything they can to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

They work with government officials to separate individuals and families who test positive to allow for isolation until a negative test is returned. There is a concern about the ability of Catholic Charities and agency partners to care for the growing number of newcomers while recognizing the immigration system in the U.S. is in dire need of being revamped.

While those laws and trajectories remain outside of their control, Catholic Charities humanitarians work continues in full congruence with U.S. law. We are grateful for the ability to work in many border communities in an ecumenical, interfaith way so that together we can serve those in need and keep our local communities safe.

We praise the tireless efforts of the Catholic Charities member agencies at the border and throughout the country in their ministry to migrants. With constantly changing conditions, surges in border crossings, limited facilities, the media spotlight, and the pressures of regulatory efforts designed to curtail their humanitarian work, they march on caring for one human life at a time — whether it be a fearful child, a parent seeking to provide for his or her family or a potential victim of human trafficking.

In caring for the stranger, they are the hands of Jesus Christ.

Catholic Charities and its related agencies help and create hope to more than 15 million people a year regardless of religious, social, or economic backgrounds. To learn more about CCUSA, visit their website at www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.

Crowd gathers for perfect weather on Feast of the Assumption of Mary, Consecration to St. Joseph

The weather was perfect for the consecration to St. Joseph event. Bishop William Joensen celebrated the 4 p.m. Mass on the Feast Day of the Assumption of Mary and the consecration to St. Joseph, which was followed by a picnic.

Bishop William Joensen celebrated Mass and led the consecration to St. Joseph outside St. Patrick Church in Irish Settlement on Sunday, Aug. 15. The event also celebrated the 110th anniversary of the Diocese of Des Moines.

A Three-Part Short Video Series on Faith and Immigrants

Part 1 focuses on the Italian immigrants who helped found St. Anthony Church in Des Moines. Monsignor Frank Chiodo, pastor and descendant of Italian immigrants, describes how the Catholic faith is extremely important to immigrants.

Part 2 of this series focuses on Jessica Hernandez, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Des Moines, who is an immigrant, DACA recipient and Hispanic Ministry Coordinator at the Diocese of Des Moines.

Part 3 of this series features focuses on Sisters Elaine and Jeanie Hagedorn of the Congregation of Humility of Mary, who helped Jessica Hernandez and her mother get settled in Des Moines as they sought a better life away from crime, violence and poverty.

Watch at dmdiocese.org/brothersandsisters

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 live streamed on the Diocesan Facebook page: www.facebook.com/dmdioese

Visit dmdiocese.org/brothersandsisters to find out about your parish’s opportunities for Adoration and Holy Hours.
Joe and Dorothy Gezel have always lived out their faith in many ways at their parish, St. Thomas Aquinas, in Indianola. Joe went on parish youth mission trips for nearly 14 years, serving as a chaperone and helping the kids serve those in need. Both have been involved in a number of endeavors and committees.

They even started Heal House – a homeless shelter in Indianola. The Gezels raised money, purchased an old hotel and sought out donors to refurbish the rooms, which now houses individuals and families, providing shelter until they get back on their feet. But the Gezels’ faith was put to the ultimate test in November 2019 when Joe had a massive heart attack, followed by a stroke the next day.

The pouring out of love, prayers and support from the Indianola community was quick. “People went to church to pray the rosary and also a lot of them came up to the hospital.” Dorothy said, estimating maybe 120 people at either church or the chapel in the hospital. “We were on the intensive care floor for a couple of weeks.”

After being moved to a rehabilitation center, Joe’s condition worsened, and he was moved back to the hospital for surgery. “The doctors said, ‘Joe has a severe vascular disease…’,” Dorothy said. “They told us that he’s got an artery that is closed off that goes to his colon, and his colon is dying. We need to do surgery, and he’s probably not going to make it. But if we don’t do surgery he definitely won’t survive.”

In fact, it was just before Christmas when the family thought they might lose him. Daughter Amanda Merema remembers leaving Mass early that day after getting the call. Clergy, including their pastor, Father Chris Fontanini, Deacon Dave O’Brien and Father George Komo walked with the family, offering prayers of healing. “Everybody at the hospital kept asking if I was ok,” Dorothy said. “And I can’t explain why I felt at peace like I did.”

Dorothy credits the Holy Spirit for inspiring her to ask family, friends and the parish community to pray and fast for Joe one Friday just before Christmas. And then things started looking up. “The week of Christmas Eve and Christmas – it all shifted,” Merema said.

Father Fontanini agreed, noting “tremendous results.” Joe’s steady improvements came as a relief to friends and family, and a surprise to some doctors, who even commented that he was a miracle. Their daughters are grateful to God for their answered prayers. “[Our parents] have always been huge role models for us,” Merema said. “But on top of that, to witness how strong my Mom was through everything was beyond amazing.”

Dorothy spent months taking care of Joe at home after he was released from the hospital. “And she still is amazing,” Merema continued. “Today we are out in the 100-degree weather and my Mom is pushing him through the fair and we’re all dripping with sweat. But she continues to be there in every way she can for him.”

Joe was in the hospital for five months. The family lost track of the number of surgeries Joe had, but one of them included the amputation of his right leg. (Joe now hopes to find a way to use his experiences as an amputee to help others living under similar circumstances.) When he finally came home, a crowd lined the streets, blowing foghorns, waving and welcoming him back.

“To be quite honest, I wouldn’t be here it if weren’t for my wife and kids – period,” said Joe, who was unconscious for a large amount time while in the hospital. “The only one I had to talk to was God [during that time].”

“People say that they were praying for me,” Joe continued. “I heard your prayers. I honestly, truly did. I know for me, the power of prayer is what brought me through.”

Joe Gezel survived a heart attack, stroke, countless surgeries - including an amputation - and five months in the hospital. Joe is pictured with his wife Dorothy and their family. The Gezels are members of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianola.

Joe Gezel survived a heart attack, stroke, numerous surgeries - including an amputation - and five months in the hospital. Joe is pictured with his wife Dorothy and their family. The Gezels are members of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianola.
Retired farmer drives over 100 miles a week to donate

Deacon Marvin Klein, of St. Patrick Parish in Dunlap, drives 50 miles one way to Omaha every week to donate blood platelets. Listen to the full interview with Bishop Joensen at iowacatholicradio.com/making-it-personal.

Deacon Marvin Klein of St. Patrick Parish in Dunlap, has been donating blood since he was 18 years old. Marvin Klein of St. Patrick Parish in Dunlap, has been donating blood since he was 18 years old.

Deacon Klein continues. “It’s something I can’t buy. But if you’re dying of cancer, it’s something you could sure use.”

Continued from page 1

Deacon Marvin Klein of St. Patrick Parish in Dunlap, has been donating blood since he was 18 years old.

Deacon Klein seems to have been blessed with a plethora of platelets, enabling him to give greater quantities each time, more than the typical donor.

Deacon Klein said on M

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Deacon Klein said on M
Want to reduce abortions? Start by reducing contraception

By Maggie DeWitte

If we want to reduce abortions, we should start by reducing contraception. I know that sounds counterintuitive.

People assume that the way to reduce abortion is to promote comprehensive sexual education and increase access to contraception.

According to the research by the Guttmacher Institute, people who go into the clinic for an abortion were using some kind of contraceptive method the month they became pregnant.

Contraception is clearly not the solution to the problem of abortion. Quite the opposite is true. The abortion industry has figured out that in order to keep women coming back for abortions, they need to keep women coming in for contraceptives.

Contraception gives women a false sense of security and that false sense leads to greater risks. According to a British Medical Journal Study, individuals will be sexually active when they think they are protected. The irony of Health Economics provides even more proof. Economics Professor David Patton, who is an author of many studies on contraception, states there is “no evidence” that access to family planning reduces the abortion rate.

People say teens need contraception in order to prevent pregnancy, as if teenagers are incapable of controlling themselves. The real solution is abstinence. Teenagers are less likely to use contraception properly, and when they do become pregnant, they are more vulnerable and less equipped to handle the consequences than adults.

Also, there are severe health risks associated with contraceptive methods that affect men and women. The list goes on.

Growing up on a farm, my siblings were (and still are) some of my closest friends.

We entertained ourselves with our imagination and farm “props.” It always seemed to involve dramatic tales of chase and capture, and escape. The kids who lived on the farm next door and the farm across the road were always welcome.

Sometimes these adventures occurred on parallel rows of large, round bales of straw. We’d help each other scramble up top before leaping and sprinting an hour away. Or we’d climb the ladder into the barn, which was named the “hay tower.”

The climb up the hay tower was a mind game, but they kept us coming in for more.

It was a combination of imagination and a real life encounter that inspired my sister Jody and I to pen a letter, put it in a bottle and send it down the Nishabotna River, another favorite spot for adventure.

We enjoyed meeting my Mom’s Australian pen pal, and enjoyed meeting the finder of our message in a bottle, who read our letter asking: “Need a friend?”

I reflect on how as kids we seemed to know something we busy adults too easily forget – the value of friendships and importance of community. It’s undoubtedly been friends, family, co-workers and community that have helped you through this past 18 months (and beyond).

For those feeling isolated or alone, grand gestures are not required. A phone call, a letter or a short visit (when possible) can have tremendous impacts on those in need of positive, human interaction. And lest we forget – we all need positive, human interaction.

In our families and relationships is to address the issue of contraception.

The only way we are really going to reduce the abortion rate is by taking back our God-given sexuality. It’s by teaching our children from an early age that they matter, that they have inherent dignity, and they are made to have achieved. And that dignity follows from the fact that they are made in the image of God. It means teaching our children what it means to be a man and a woman and how members of each sex are intended to complement the other. Maggie DeWitte is the executive proof of Iowans for LIFE.

Adam Storey is the diocesan director of Marriage & Family Life. He can be reached at astorey@dmdioce.org or 515-237-5066.

The making of a champion

Faith that Conquers

By Kelly Mescher Collins

The making of a champion

Some see needing others as weak- ness. But it’s better to be perfect than to lose, right?

Studies have found post-war soldiers and firefighters with post-traumatic stress disorder show the mere presence of a spouse, family member or friend helps them re- duce intrusive thoughts and other negative effects. In fact, just knowing they had some one they could rely on or call improved their mental health.

Reflecting on my own life, the challenges I overcame or accomplishments I achieved were often because others encouraged me or walked by my side.

In 2016, I decided that if I was ever going to run a marathon again, I needed to take the training seriously, to get good at it.

On race day, though, I was on my own. (Or so I thought.) During one of my training runs, I stopped at the 20 mile mark, feeling overwhelmed, stretched out, that I couldn’t go on. I decided to run the last mile.

“You can come with me on my long runs on your bike?!” I asked. (More like pleaded.)

The training runs were very long and hot, and having him by my side kept me going. I fully admit I never would have trained for two marathons without him.

I saw him from the sidelines. I knew he would catch me. I was sure of it.

When we don’t sing we’re not avoiding embarrassment; we often look to the laws and legislation that will impact the abortion rate. At the same time, we are constantly preaching the need to “change hearts and minds.”

And both things are needed. But I genuinely believe that the key to unraveling the mess we have made in our families and relationships is to address the issue of contraception.

The only way we are really going to reduce the abortion rate is by taking back our God-given sexuality. It’s by teaching our children from an early age that they matter, that they have inherent dignity, and they are made to have achieved. And that dignity follows from the fact that they are made in the image of God. It means teaching our children what it means to be a man and a woman and how members of each sex are intended to complement the other.

Maggie DeWitte is the executive proof of Iowans for LIFE.

The making of a champion

Some see needing others as weakness. But it’s better to be perfect than to lose, right?

Studies have found post-war soldiers and firefighters with post-traumatic stress disorder show the mere presence of a spouse, family member or friend helps them reduce intrusive thoughts and other negative effects. In fact, just knowing they had someone they could rely on or call improved their mental health.

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Decades passed, and Mary's favorite childhood book, Tasha Tudor's "Snow Before Christmas," was a flash of recognition. "It looked just like the Tuska Tudor picture I had been carrying with me," she told me. The house had been sitting empty for 40 years, ensnared in estate issues. So, Mary Lyn waited, just as the house had waited. In 1984, five years later, she finally bought it, working with her father and his friend. She knew that she would make it livable while honoring what the builder had understood nearly a century and a half ago.

Never marrying, Mary Lyn would live there alone. As she settled in, she found a drawer built into the wall. Underneath, written in pencil, were two initials:

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HJ
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Her initials.

"It gave me shivers," she said. "It seemed the house had known my name before I came. I felt as if maybe I had been expected."

Her education began.

"The farm taught me how to be open to story," she said. "It gave me the space, and as I began to listen and look and be present, it taught me to see how story happened where I lived and what story was needed."

What poured out, in the ensuing decades, was nearly 50 acclaimed children's books, including "Pumpkins," "Three: Sleep, Little Farm" and "Christmas Farm."


And perhaps for a new family finally buys The House of Grass and Sky, they respect its history: "They listen to what it's listened to for many years. They take time to notice and to wonder."

It is a beautiful book for all ages, well timed for a wild housing market, as America's pastures and front porches are turning into townhomes in droves, as parents reconsider what kind of childhood they want for their kids and empty houses rejoice.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

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**Q. Why do some people not like Catholics?**

**A.** We also said, as some Catholics don’t like people of other faiths. Of course, neither one is particularly honest. Often enough, dislike stems from misunderstandings. Sometimes dislike comes from insecurity. Like many situations, once people get to know a Catholic personally, they change their minds. It happens with ethnic groups as well. For example, people of German or African-Americans or Italian or Spanish or you-name-the-group. The challenge, of course, is that some who might at first seem unlikeable. The more we can do that, the more peace we’ll have in the world. We can’t make others like Catholics, but we can live our lives in a way that speaks well of ourselves in our tradition.

**Q. Is it wrong to steal even if you do good with it?**

*Dan, West Des Moines*

**A.** Yes. Taking something that doesn’t belong to you can’t be justified by the mere fact that you use what is stolen for good. Otherwise, we’d have no security in our dealings with others. We can’t simply rob a bank because we want to use the revenue for a favorite charity. Robin Hood was known for robbing the rich and giving to the poor. There is not an absolute right to property. The common good needs to be weighed in our dealings. So, we have the responsibility to be good stewards with our material goods, and we have to respect the property of others.

**Q. Where was Mary when she was awa**

**A.** The short answer is “we don’t know.” Some traditions refer to the Assumption as the Dormition — X.: that St. Thomas Aquinas used. When a new family finally buys The House of Grass and Sky, they respect its history: “They listen to what it’s listened to for many years. They take time to notice and to wonder.”

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Aún Juntos después de Todos Estos Años

Continued from page 1

Las desafortunadas instancias de anomalías físicas o genéticas tales como el hermafroditismo o la intersexualidad.) Cada uno de nosotros somos creados por Dios desde el primer momento de nuestro ser – como con María y José – para ser esta alma en particular con la intención de activar este cuerpo sexual en particular, cuya raíz es nuestro llamado vocacional a acompañar a los unos a los otros en el peregrinar en que tomamos nuestro lugar apropiado en compañía de los hijos de Dios. Los datos médicos que están surgiendo confirman que las llamadas cirugías de alteración de género y la disrupción química del desarrollo sexual que es un paso próximo no cumplen con el alivio terapéutico a largo plazo que prometen. Tristemente, la tendencia al suicidio por parte de estos pacientes no ha disminuido. Nosotros no queremos ser cómplices con el pensamiento cultural que simplemente se cruzan de brazos y sigue al ritmo irregular de las voces que demandan que se cumpla con lo que es un error fundamental de nuestra personalidad humana.

En el umbral del cielo, Cristo es por siempre el primer fruto de la vida eterna, seguido por aquellos que pertenecen a Cristo, con María su madre principalmente en el grupo de los santos ya que ha sido anuniciado en el cielo, y es luego coronado con las estrellas de la más hermosa hija de la humanidad. Probablemente para las personas que sufren discordancia de identidad de género, el yugo de sufrimiento con el que cargan no pueda ser totalmente apagado hasta que Cristo drechina toda autoridad y poder, incluyendo a la humana misma, y nos entregue al Padre como la más preciada de su Reino. Nos conformamos en la verdad Evangélica de que aquellos quienes comparten más plenamente el cárdal del sufrimiento de Cristo serán saciados hasta rebozar con el vino nuevo del Espíritu del gozo. Mientras tanto, en este lado del valle de lágrimas, nos comprometemos a amarnos los unos a los otros en el peregrinar en que tomamos nuestro lugar apropiado en compañía de los hijos de Dios.

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Shrine honoring Blessed Stanley Rother hits milestone as dome set in place

OKLAHOMA CITY (CNS) -- Construction of a shrine honoring an American priest who was killed while serving in Guatemala reached a milestone with the installation of a massive dome.

Workers Aug. 12 carefully lifted the 43,000-pound dome onto the chapel in Oklahoma City memorializing Blessed Father Stanley Rother Aug. 12. Construction is expected to be completed in summer 2022.

This was a momentous moment in construction of the shrine that will become a visible beacon of faith for thousands of people around the world. Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul S. Coakley said of the dome’s placement, “They will come to visit our state and city, and come to learn about our ordinary priest from Okarche who lived an extraordinary life.”

The archbishop in an archdiocesan news release also expressed gratitude for everyone who has played a part in this project and look forward to dedication next year. The $40 million shrine is the highest profile project undertaken as part of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City’s first capital campaign.

Oskaloosa women form first Columbiettes auxiliary in Iowa

By Lindsay Steele
Contributing Writer

Last month, a group of 24 women from St. Mary Parish in Oskaloosa officially became the first Columbiettes auxiliary in Iowa. The international Catholic women’s auxiliary is affiliated with and supportive of the Knights of Columbus.

The initiation ceremony was “a big reminder of how many Catholic women want to make a difference in our church and our community,” said Julie Yachera, a parishioner who spearheaded the effort to form a Columbiettes auxiliary in Oskaloosa.

Yachera, whose husband is a Knight of Columbus, began researching Catholic women’s organizations a little over a year ago, as the Oskaloosa parish did not have a women’s service organization. “I saw what they (KnC) were doing in the community and I wondered if there was a similar women’s group. I looked online and found the Columbiettes.” She contacted the Columbiettes Supreme Council to find out what would take to start — at least 20 members and the support of the parish’s Knights council.

Knights of Columbus Marian Council 4108 in Oskaloosa was quick to support the formation of a Columbiettes auxiliary. Grand Knight Steven Phillips said he views the Columbiettes as an organization of Catholic women who support the Catholic Church and its teachings. “I see the Columbiettes as an umbrella for Catholic women who support the Catholic Church and its teachings. “I see the Columbiettes as an umbrella for Catholic women who support the Catholic Church and its teachings.”

Though the Columbiettes organization has been around since the 1930s, it is not the only female auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus. Ladies Auxiliaries are more common in Iowa and usually require members to be closely related to a KnC, though this isn’t always the case. Columbiettes auxiliaries are open to women 18 years of age or older who are in good standing with the Catholic Church. About 270 Columbiettes auxiliaries exist, primarily in Florida and the northeast.

For more information, contact Mary Jane Sullivan at mjs4756ce@gmail.com or Julie Yachera at jyachera@gmail.com.

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New media entertainment sets the stage for new evangelization

CNS photo/The Chosen

Catholic actor Jonathan Roumie, who plays Christ in the series “The Chosen,” is pictured in a scene depicting the Sermon on the Mount. Roumie, whose husband Yachera, whose husband is a Knight of Columbus, began researching Catholic women’s organizations a little over a year ago, as the Oskaloosa parish did not have a women’s service organization. “I saw what they (KnC) were doing in the community and I wondered if there was a similar women’s group. I looked online and found the Columbiettes.” She contacted the Columbiettes Supreme Council to find out what would take to start — at least 20 members and the support of the parish’s Knights council.

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CNS photo/The Chosen

Catholic actor Jonathan Roumie, who plays Christ in the series “The Chosen,” is pictured in a scene depicting the Sermon on the Mount. The series was launched in 2019 as a media project with the aim of showing Jesus in a new way, and it became the highest crowd-fund-project of all time. It is available for free on an app.
REFUND SUPPORT VOCATIONS (RSVP)

Keep the faith alive by supporting our seminarians and postulants. As the strong right arm of the church, the Knights of Columbus are committed to providing moral, financial and spiritual support to future priests and religious at all stages of their formation. The Knights of Columbus stand in solidarity with our priests and religious. Through this program, council and parish families will raise funds to support seminarians in their area. Though financial support is vitally important, it is not the only aspect of RSVP. Councils are also called to provide their “adopted” seminarian or religious aspirant with moral support and prayers for their success. The Iowa Knights sponsor both the annual seminarian conference, the newly ordained priest conference, and financial support every diocesan seminarian throughout the state.

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