Celebrating marriage milestones rooted in faith

By Beth Samson
Contributing Writer

It was 1956 when Betty Lustgraaf, her sisters and friends were piling into the back of Ed Reinig’s car near Neola late one night after a dance. “Don’t everybody get in the backseat!” he said and he had Betty sit up front with him. Ed and Betty have been riding through life side by side ever since. On Oct. 19, they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. From day one, there was an element of faith in their relationship.

The carload of young people sped off from the dance to a late-night dinner in Avoca for food. Ed and his brother bought sandwiches for the girls, but the brothers wouldn’t eat. It was a time when a faith

Parish Renewal, Vibrancy initiative empowers catechists

By Beth Samson
Contributing Writer

One conversation with Stephanie Geraghty, coordinator of Religious Education and First Communion teacher at St. Mary in Avoca and St. Patrick in Walnut, will leave anyone inspired about religious education in her parishes – it certainly did for Bishop William Joensen.

Her creative passion for engaging children in their faith is palpable and effective. Over the summer, she gave her second graders a challenge to read the entire Bible. The sweet reward for the kids who rose to the challenge - an ice cream party!

By the end of the summer, most of them had completed the challenge.

Geraghty’s goals for religious education are centered around growth, continuity, and engagement. When asked about the Ignite! Campaign, she is already thinking about how her parishes will benefit from the Parish Renewal and Vibrancy initiative.

They now have five teachers for religious education, and she plans to use the new endowment to help fund a retreat or workshop for teachers to continue learning, praying, and forming themselves so they can, in turn, continue doing that for the kids.

“When we revitalize teachers, that trickles down to the kids in religious education and then to their families, and ultimately our whole community,” Geraghty said. She continued by expressing hope that their efforts will result in bringing families back to Mass that haven’t returned since the pandemic.

“We want our pews to be full and the church to be noisy,” she said.

St. Patrick Parish in Imogene is another community focused on growth and engagement.

Continued on page 10

Bless this harvest

“While all of you who are farmers and all who are associated with agricultural production I want to say this: the Church highly esteems your work,” said St. John Paul II during his visit to Iowa in 1979. Pictures above and right were taken on the Witt Farm in Harrison County.

Betty and Ed Reinig, of St. Michael Parish in Harlan, celebrated 65 years of marriage.

Stephanie Geraghty, coordinator of Religious Education and First Communion teacher at St. Mary in Avoca and St. Patrick in Walnut stands with her second graders.
Cross Walk

[Note: Inspiration for this column comes from the recent “Christ Our Life” conference homily based on Luke’s Gospel: 16:19-31.]

February 3, 1998, was not a shining day for America or for Americans living in Italy. Tragedy struck when a U.S. Marine Corp EA-6B Prowler aircraft based at Aviano Air Base in northern Italy struck a cable in a narrow valley in the Dolomites mountains. The severed cable resulted in a cable car carrying twenty Europeans to plummet over 100 meters to the death. The accident was dubbed the Cermis massacre.

There are those who rebel against complacent egotists who live by the rules, without regard for those who are at risk and vulnerable. Even if they did not around them who were at risk and vulnerable, they still might have ignored it. The pilot and navigator, who shall remain nameless, were put on military trial in the U.S. and acquitting of negligent homicide and involuntary manslaughter, though they were dis-honorably discharged in part for destroying the video evidence.

The cross is a gossipy, tragic, one-off event. Yet in a Gospel reading last month, Jesus says that even ordained clergy and others who are the glee of others who have a claim on our care and compassion is a high stakes affair. You remember the reading of the rich man, traditionally called “Dives” and the poor man. Dives lives in a bubble of excess and ego. Jesus tells us that if we are the Dives, the poor man will take him to task.

In God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, which has become a communion of will, even affecting my feelings. When I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ. His friend is my friend. Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than I could even affect my feelings. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, an encounter which has become a communion of will, even affecting my feelings. When I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ. His friend is my friend. Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than I could ever imagine.

Jesus tells us the name of the poor man, Lazarus, but it is likely the rich guy never inquired. Dives is the antithope of the Good Samaritan. He has not even to cross over or go out the back door to avoid Lazarus; has pride propels him on his mer- rily way, heedless of the peril be- fore him. The rich man digs a spiritual chasm between himself and his fellow human being into which he plummets to death.

Dives thinks he has friends, but they are of the sort that the Kardashians and Crazy Rich Asians would covet; even we can succeed to fascination and fandom when it comes to wealth. Franciscan University theologian Regis Martin reminds us of GK Chesterton’s wry obser- vation that “he who could never understand the necessity people felt to heap honors upon a man simply because of some point in his life he had managed to corner the soybean market.”

After death, Dives finds out how very alone, how very thirsty his soul is. The saddest thing of all is that even as he craves relief from the netherworld flames, he still wants others to march to his music; he has no qualms ordering Lazarus and Abraham around: “Send them,” he implores. He doesn’t realize he’s not in a position to keep any and there are those who, following his footsteps, will find the road to hell is paved by.

“In God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God...” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

We are not obliged to ratified all inclinations as inherent- ly good, or say that all choices are created equal in God’s sight. But God helps us if we do not accom- pany these persons, intentionally inviting and including them into our families, our church circles, our own communi- ties; I can give them the look of which they crave” (Deus Caritas est n. 18).

Dives was pathetically arrogant in speaking to God, “Send him.” We are humble and boldly prepared to say to Jesus, each and every morning, with gratitude and holy fear of the Lord, “Send me.” SEND ME wherever you will, Lord: into whatever gaps I encounter, what- ever chasms I discover—espe- cially those I have been a party to in the past. Help me to cross from death to life, for they are my brothers, my sisters, my friends, my friends. SEND ME. SAVE US. And our joy will be complete.

Crucifix of Peatones

Epulón is the opus of the Buen Samaritano. Él no tiene pecado de querer cruzar el miragro calle o de salir por la puerta trasera para evitar a Lázaro; su or- guullo le lleva a continuar en su egoísmo y orgullo. Él es el causante del sufrimiento de él, de él, de él, de él... Él es el hombre rico que es el opuesto de Lázaro. Dives thinks he has friends, but they are of the sort that the Kardashians and Crazy Rich Asians would covet; even we can succeed to fascination and fandom when it comes to wealth. Franciscan University theologian Regis Martin reminds us of GK Chesterton’s wry observation that “he who could never understand the necessity people felt to heap honors upon a man simply because of some point in his life he had managed to corner the soybean market.”

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Religious education kicks off across Diocese

Nearly 12,000 youth from pre-K through high school are involved in religious education programming in the Des Moines Diocese. Most are in a classroom model of learning while a growing number are experiencing a family-based model of catechesis. The programs teach the rubrics of the faith, prepare youth for sacraments, and help young people grow in their relationship with God.

“Our work is about creating the environment for an encounter with Jesus to occur,” said John Gaffney, diocesan director of Evangelization and Catechesis.

“Our formation sessions are really supportive small Christian communities with everyone – catechist and participant – on a journey of letting the Holy Spirit touch their hearts and transform them from the inside towards a deeper holiness.”

Nearly 3,000 volunteers help 345 pre-kindergarten students, 5,695 elementary and middle school students, and 2,979 high school students.

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IOWA

Anointed altar a visible sign of the mystery of Christ

Bishop William Joensen consecrated a new altar, and blessed a new ambo and statue of St. Patrick at St. Patrick Church in Council Bluffs on Sept. 3. At left, the bishop anoints the altar, thereby setting it apart for sacred use. He poured Chrism oil in the middle, and in each of the four corners of the top of the altar, then rubbed the oil around the entire top. Pictured with him is Father James Ahenkora, pastor of the parish. Above, Father Trevor Chicoine, diocesan Worship director, assists the bishop.

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Council Bluffs Knight advocates for dignity

By Liam Dale
Contributing Writer

Since Tony Jordan started asking for luggage for homeless families at Micah House in Council Bluffs, he’s been stopped in the grocery store by folks with suitcases for him in their car trunks. He’s had truck deliveries from western Nebraska.

Others have said they can’t stop by, but they’d be happy to order luggage online and have it delivered to the shelter.

Over time, he’s watched people grow in awareness of the needs of the less fortunate.

Now, the parishioner of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs says people bring him their luggage plus a box of diapers or food or other supplies.

“It’s an unexpected by-product. The luggage program made people more familiar with the receiving hours of the homeless shelter and what the shelter actually needs,” he said. “Some people didn’t know where the shelter was, what they needed or when to bring it. By bringing luggage, they say ‘Oh, you need diapers, food,’ and it has become a more regular thing. It was really great!”

It all started with an idea Jordan had while working at Micah House. A local Knight of Columbus, he noticed a need among the families.

“I saw that a lot of people were bringing in all their stuff in trash bags when they moved in, which is fine for when they come in, but what I noticed is that when they left, they were still moving everything in trash bags and that sparked the idea,” he said.

Leaving a homeless shelter with a job lined up can be a more dignified way of tot ing around their things,” he explained. “That’s when I asked the other Knights if they had spare luggage to donate.”

The response from his council was well received.

Following the local success, he presented his effort at the Fourth Degree meeting at the state convention of the Knights of Columbus earlier this year.

“The state convention was very helpful for banding together different councils’ efforts in all areas,” Jordan said. “We even saw some councils that are wanting to start their own luggage programs for shelters.”

So far, the effort has had a big impact at Micah House with thousands of donations received and distributed to residents. The shelter has 23 rooms, each one capable of housing a family. Jordan figures there’s an average of 75 people at the shelter each night.

“We’re so happy that it’s turned out the way that it has,” Jordan said. “And while our program has been successful, we look forward to seeing other Knight councils and shelters start up similar programs in their own cities.”

Jordan hopes that by promoting this type of service, there will be an increased effort to offer dignity to the homeless and vulnerable.

“He’s proud of his community.

“Council Bluffs is such a beautiful place,” he said. After high school, he moved away and returned about six years ago.

“The Catholic community here is just so giving. Every time someone is in need, the community comes together,” he said. “I wouldn’t live anywhere else. I’m glad I’m back here to raise my family.”

Victim Assistance Advocate

The diocese’s Victim Assistance Advocate, Sam Porter, is a staff member at Polk County Victim Services. He helps people who are or were minors when they were victims of abuse by the clergy through a complaint process. He also helps them seek support and counseling services. Porter can be reached at 515-286-2024 or Sam.Porter@polkcountyiowa.gov.

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Photo by Michael Gaspars

Tony Jordan shows some of the luggage that’s been donated to residents of Micah House, restoring some of their dignity as they move on.

Photo by Michael Gaspars
Feast of St. Francis celebrated

Twice a year, interfaith leaders gather to build relationships with each other, talk about some of the pressures they’re seeing impacting their congregations, and imagine how they want to act together. Bishop William Joensen and Father Nicki Scinta, rector of St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish, joined the most recent discussion of A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy, also known as AMOS.

Clergy Caucus for the common good

PRAY WITH US

For the last year, Bishop William Joensen and the Diocese of Des Moines have been praying to renew Eucharistic faith and worship among God’s people and to ask the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance for the Diocese of Des Moines. As a strategic visioning process continues, Bishop Joensen invites everyone to join in praying that we will fulfill our share of God’s mission in Southwest Iowa, so that every person might encounter Jesus Christ and experience his call to friendship and communion.

Diocese of Des Moines Visioning Prayer

O God, you share with your people, your church, the mission to be the saving love of your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

As a people of faith in southwest Iowa, send the Holy Spirit to ignite in us:

- Father Joe Pins, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines, is greeted by his dog, Francis. Father was blessing pets in celebration of the Feast of St. Francis.

Diocese of Des Moines Oração de Visión

Oh Dios, tu compartes con tu pueblo, tu iglesia, la misión de ser el amor salvador de tu Hijo y nuestro Salvador, Jesucristo.

Con un pueblo de fe en el santuario de Iowa, envía al Espíritu Santo para que encienda en nosotros:

- una sincera conversación para ver, oír, pensar y actuar como Jesús;
- una mayor unidad y lazos de paz;
- un afán missionero para compartir la buena nueva encendiendo al mundo con amor;
- un ganar cariño unos a otros, especialmente con aquellos que se sienten perdidos o excluidos; y el deseo de cargar juntos con el yugo que se hace ligeramente con Cristo.

Que nuestra visión estratégica en la Diócesis de Des Moines nos haga aún más enfocados, discípulos y libres para cumplir con nuestra misión como pueblo que encuenra en voluntad plena del Corazón de tu Amado Hijo.

Acompañanos en el Camino que nos lleva al cielo, rodeados de la María Santísima, José y todos los Santos con quienes esperamos habitar por siempre en comunión contigo.

- Padre, Hijo, y Espíritu Santo. ¡Amen!

Around the Diocese

Oct. 21 & 28 Fridays
Fall Fish & Chicken Dinner
INDIANOLA – The Indianapolis Knights will be hosting their annual Fall Fish & Chicken dinners. Serving hours are 5:30 to 7 p.m. Adults & take-outs are $13. Children (6 to 12) $6. Children 5 and under are free.

Nov. 5-6, Sat.-Sun.
Fall CraftBash!
DES MOINES – Join us for our annual fall craft show on Nov. 5 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Nov. 6 from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Christ the King Parish. We will also give away four $50 Visa/Mastercard gift cards just for visiting our vendors.

Nov. 6 Sunday
Staley's Braasted Chicken Dinner
COUNCIL BLUFFS – Come to Corpus Christi Parish’s annual Staley’s Braasted Chicken dinner held at St. Albert School, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dine in and take out available. Ages 9 and up; $10; ages 4 to 8; ages 3 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased at the parish office 712-323-2916 or at the door on the day of the event.

Cathedral Holy Hours

DES MOINES – All are welcome to join Bishop William Joensen at St. Ambrose Cathedral on Monday nights for an hour of Eucharistic adoration and evening prayer beginning at 5 p.m. Evening prayer will be livestreamed on the Diocesan Facebook page.

Friends, Romans, Iowans podcast

Be sure to check out the Diocesan podcast “Friends, Romans, Iowans.” Hear casual conversations with Catholic leaders from around southwest Iowa.

St. Jude’s Novena

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be admired, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, please pray for us; St. Jude, worker of miracles, please pray for us; St. Jude, help of the hopeless, please pray for us.

Say this prayer 9 times a day, with a sincere heart, by the 8th day your prayers will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised.

Thank you, St. Jude.
By Carol Hollenbeck

Catholic Daughters of the Americas in Council Bluffs held their annual Summer Salad Luncheon on July 13 for more than 110 guests. Court St. Anthony #330 drew the crowd at St. Peter Catholic Church’s social hall.

Ticket prices included two free raffle tickets for donated gift cards, Scentsy candle basket, dog basket, free haircuts, discount cards or centerpiece arrangements.

The 102-year-old court has held this fundraiser at the same location for many years. The motto of the international CDA organization is “Unity & Charity.” All proceeds fund the charitable causes of the court, which include local, statewide and national non-profit organizations.

Member Kathi Markel brought two of her grandchildren to help with serving and clean-up. They were helpful and kind, and they look forward to helping again next year.
It has been 150 years since the establishment of Lenox. As farmers settled in the southwest Iowa area, they brought their faith with them. Two priests from Conception, Missouri – Father Placidus McKeever and Father Euvene Phalen – came to celebrate Mass in homes or the country schoolhouse. With the community of Lenox celebrating sesquincentennial this past summer, so too was St. Patrick Parish of Lenox celebrating the roots of the Catholic faith in the community.

On the weekend of Sept. 17-18, the parish marked the milestone occasion with a bilingual blessing, and a holy hour of adoration and benediction on that Saturday, according to the pastor, Father Emmanuel Bassey. There were games, a free meal for everyone in the Lenox community and surrounding areas, traditional Hispanic food and pinatas, and fireworks, said parishioner Kathy Ecklin. Several former pastors came for the festivities. On Sunday, a bilingual Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated. Pictured above are parishioners at the Sunday Mass.

One-of-a-kind faith center celebrates 50 years

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

A Des Moines regional adult faith formation center is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a slight name change, the addition of a consultant who specializes in executive director of the center.

“The creation of the SJEC pivoted from primarily providing parish workshops to focus on serving parish staffs and councils in their leadership roles. With the addition of consulant and longtime local catechetical leader Paulette Chapman, the center offers support to parishes as they move from a classroom-based model of religious education to a more family-focused approach. SJEC, which assists 24 Des Moines metro area parishes is unique, said Deacon Matt Halbach, a former director of the SJEC. “It’s a vision that is true, beautiful, and good,” he said. The creation of the SJEC came at the behest of Bishop Maurice Dingman, who led the Des Moines Diocese after Vatican II with the task of promoting renewal in the Church, said Father Tim Fitzgerald, also a former SJEC director.

Bishop Dingman saw a need for more resources for the Catholic community to help adults grow in their faith. And so while a new coeducational Catholic high school was built in West Des Moines to replace a boys’ high school operated by the Diocese and a girls’ academy operated by the Sisters of Charity, known as the BVM sisters, the SJEC was founded. “Preparing disciples for mission: This was revolutionary stuff in a diocese that had never been available in the diocese. It was directed by lay people and providing print resources and book resources that had never been available in the diocese. It offered the first theological library collection in the diocese. The center was a founding partner of an ecumenical project called January Thaw and it sponsored resource days for parish staffs, school personnel and adults seeking greater understanding. In 1986, it began a collaborative venture with Creighton University in Omaha for bachelor’s level theology courses offered in Des Moines to give adults a solid grounding in the Catholic tradition. Those classes, begun by Father Jim Polich, existed for 25 years.

The faith center has been led by those who know “that a changing church requires new and different approaches,” said Father Fitzgerald. “What are the needs? What are the gifts? Those ever-old, ever-new questions guide the center to this day,” he said. “A changing church requires new and different approaches.”

Quinlan hopes the emphasis on evangelization and boosting skill development among faith leaders will create systemic change that will benefit the Des Moines metro area for many years to come. “God is calling the center to a renewed strategic vision though its ultimate goal remains to proclaim the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ to the world,” he said.
Support offered for caregivers

Who is caring for the caregivers?

The parents of a sick or disabled child may need someone to talk to. A nurse or adult child of a loved one with dementia or cancer can grow tired in offering care.

Deacon Jim Houston, of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale, remembers feeling exhausted while he and his wife, Mary, cared for a sick child.

He is working with Deacon Dan Maxey, of Holy Trinity and St. Mary of Nazareth Parishes in Des Moines, to bring a Chicago-based support group called Nourish for Caregivers to the Des Moines metro area.

About a year ago, the diocesan coordinator of Disability Ministry, called a meeting of pastoral care ministers so they could become familiar with their work and they could get to know her.

In the meeting, someone asked if all of the faithful at nursing homes, independent living and assisted living centers were getting their sacraments. The nursing homes were beginning to let parish ministers visit again as covid cases fell.

They found that some of the care centers didn’t know who to call. And, they learned not all parishes may be served this year, caring for 20-25 families to 55 last year.

Deacon Dan Maxey, of Holy Trinity Parish and St. Mary of Nazareth in Des Moines, and Deacon Jim Houston, of St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale, teamed up with Patty Origer, diocesan coordinator of Disability Ministry.

“They’re in the process of cataloguing all of the care centers in the Des Moines metro area and figuring out in which parish geographic boundaries they belong. They’re also creating a flyer for the care centers showing where the parishes are located, what services they can offer and when to call them such as when someone might want or need the anointing of the sick sacrament.”

The hope is that someone in each parish will become familiar with someone at each of the care centers in their parish so that the centers know who to call and the parishes can extend pastoral care.

Just in the last few of weeks, Deacon Houston said he’s received calls from a couple of care centers reaching out to ask for a Catholic minister to visit.

“People are starting to come back to nursing homes,” Origer said. “It’s a perfect time to revamp what we’re doing and offer visits from Catholic representatives.”

Strategic approach taken to pastoral care for those in nursing homes, care centers

Three agencies with roots in Catholic Social Teaching are partnering to serve the common good on the west side of the state.

A West Des Moines-based outreach called Mary’s Helping Hands provided infant and baby supplies and Gabriel’s Corner in Council Bluffs provided a much needed supply of diapers for the ninth annual Catholic Charities’ community baby shower in Council Bluffs.

Last year, Mary’s Helping Hands, which started at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines, donated 50 packs of items for Catholic Charities to include in the bags of supplies they gave away to new or expecting parents.

This year, Catholic Charities received 85 bags of bottles, baby clothes and more from Mary’s Helping Hands and 80 packs of diapers from Gabriel’s Corner, said domestic abuse advocate Nicole Gurnon.

In addition to these agencies, a YMCA club, Walmart, Sam’s Club, local community members as well as 10 service providers in the community provided informational and baby items and information on community resources to be included in the gift bags.

“It’s been a huge success,” she said.

The community baby shower on Oct. 21 is scheduled to be at the Salvation Army parking lot in Council Bluffs. Mary’s Helping Hands, along with Iowa Total Care, helped sponsor the event with Catholic Charities.

The community baby shower is in its ninth year and helps strengthen families and empower individuals. It has grown from serving 20-25 families to 55 last year. Registrations indicate 80 families may be served this year, Gurnon said.

Catholic Charities serves nine counties in southwest Iowa.

The donation from Mary’s Helping Hands is a big help.

“It allows us to focus on getting those donations to the community and adding to the bags” for the pregnant or new parents, Gurnon said.

“Clearly, the need is there and we’re here to serve and help those who need,” said Shelby Lane, Mary’s Helping Hands client operations and donation drive coordinator.

Donations that come in from individuals around central Iowa are now benefitting expecting and new moms around the state.

“We want to make sure this continues because of the success,” Gurnon said. “We see this as something that is years and years in the making only to expand and get bigger.”

Last year, an expecting mom wrote: “I’m a first time mom and work a job to help support our selves. These things helped us out so much and I couldn’t be happier!”

Catholic Charities baby shower grows

Catholic Charities baby shower grows

Catholic Charities baby shower grows

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Catholic Charities baby shower grows

Catholic Charities baby shower grows
Part of the Parish Renewal initiative is to empower catechists.

Laughlin is also excited about how St. Patrick’s will benefit from the Parish Renewal and Vibrancy initiative, particularly in developing faith leaders who are on fire with the Holy Spirit and passionate about bringing people closer to Jesus.

“We have a long list of parishioners who fit that description, and we are excited about the opportunities provided through Parish Renewal and Vibrancy,” Laughlin said. “We will bring committees together to create a common vision for our parish to grow in our faith together.”

Campaign surpasses $25 million

Most Wave 3 parishes kicked off their campaigns in early October. Meanwhile, parishies from Wave 2 have started to make huge strides, helping the campaign surpass $25 million.

St. Peter and Paul Parish in Atlantic, with 248 registered families, recently went over its Ignite! goal of $285,000.

“We made a difference for us was our people – not only our strong leadership team, but also our engaged group of volunteers. Their positive attitude was infectious,” said Father Trevor Chicoine, pastor of St. Peter and Paul.

“It helped that our leadership identified a project our parishioners were excited about and motivated to support. The funds from our parish share will lay the foundation to modernize our parish center,” he said.

St. Anne Parish in Logan has 140 families has also recently eclipsed its goal of $100,000.

Father Raphael Massahwikwa, pastor of St. Anne’s, and Mike and Cindy O’Kane, the campaign chairpersons, embraced their role and recruited a team of six volunteers who set out to contact every registered family in the parish.

St. Anne Parish will primarily use their “parish share” to replace the heating and air conditioning systems and reduce debt.

“The parishioners of St. Anne’s in Logan are wonderful people who have listened to the call of the Holy Spirit, praise God!” said Mike and Cindy O’Kane.

Now that St. Peter and Paul and St. Anne Parishes have exceeded their campaign goals, they get to keep 75% of any gifts they receive going forward.

To learn more about Parish Renewal and Vibrancy and support the Ignite! Campaign, visit https://www.dmdiocese.org/giving/ignite

Faith at the center of milestone anniversaries

Mary and Larry Hagener of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish in Des Moines, celebrated 60 years of marriage at a Mass for couples with milestone anniversaries.

Continued from page 1

ful Catholic didn’t eat after midnight if he planned to go to communion the next day. The brothers were fasting.

The next day, Ed took Betty to a home show.

They dated for about a year before marrying at St. Patrick Church in Neola. She was 18 and he was nearly 21 years old.

“I remember when I took her hand in church,” he said. “It was such a wonderful feeling.”

Betty laid flowers before a statue of Mary, as was the tradition for a bride, praying that she be a good wife and mother.

“She certainly has guided me all my life, I know that,” Betty said.

Betty and Ed settled on a farm and began their family that grew to include four children.

How did they make it to 65 years of marriage?

Now parishioners of St. Michael Parish in Harlan, the couple relied on God. They had good role models in their marriages, and they were involved in church activities from Eucharistic ministry to teaching religious education. They went beyond the church by serving as foster parents.

“Ed and I have tried to put God at the center of our lives,” said Betty. “When God is at the center of your life, there’s a strong peace.”

Bishop William Joensen honored more than 40 couples celebrating more than 5,350 years of marriage with a Mass at St. Michael Church in Harlan and St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines for those with milestone anniversaries.

At the Des Moines Mass, Mary and Larry Hagerla of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish, celebrated 60 years of marriage.

“It takes a lot of commitment and Christ behind you,” said Mary. “It’s love and you have to make that commitment that God’s given you the grace to stay.”

Larry recommended couples not give up.

“When there’s hard times, you know better times are ahead. You hang on. There’s always better times ahead,” he said.

Also celebrating 60 years of marriage were Marie and Sue Foerster, of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines. The couple met in junior college in Marshalltown.

“She had great eyes,” he said.

The trick to a long marriage, she said, is to keep working at it and to be forgiving.

He joined the Catholic Church shortly after they were married.

For the couple, faith has provided “a moral compass. A line has been set and we pay attention to that,” Steve said.

Fred and Jo Ann Kimmel of St. Mary of Nazareth Parish, celebrated 65 years of marriage. She dedicated her life to Catholic education first as a teacher for 33 years at All Saints School then for six years as a director of religious education at St. Anthony Parish and a director of religious education at her home parish for 11 years.

“We’ve had one big philosophy all our lives, and it’s what we told our daughters,” Jo Ann said. “God has to be at the center of your life.”

“Marriage is a 50/50 proposition,” Fred said. “I think you have to share your life and I think you have to be there for one another. And of course, God has to be at the center of your home. I just don’t think you’ll ever be happy unless you put God and the teachings of Jesus and the Church.”

John and Nancy Appe1 marked their 25th anniversary by attending the Mass. The parishioners of Sacred Heart Church in West Des Moines met at a company picnic at Adventureland.

“And so we’ve been on a rollercoaster ever since,” John said. “It’s been a great ride!”

Why celebrate at the Mass? It was a recognition of their shared faith.

“It felt right,” Nancy said.

Reflecting on their 65 years together, Ed Reing said: “You wonder where the time went.”

Continued from page 1

Bless Our Heritage” celebration to bless their Heritage Garden, which honors the priests and families who have been a part of their community throughout their 142-year history and includes a stepping-stone rosary used by children in their Youth Faith Formation program.

“Our program spiritually guides kids as young as three years old through high school seniors in Catholic teachings, sacramental preparation, and prayer,” according to Rita Laughlin, director of Religious Education at St. Patrick.

The program meets in a 100-year-old former convent across the street from the church. The parish is using some of their parish share from Ignite! to update the original windows in the convent.

“This will not only provide a more welcoming and safe environment for our youth,” Laughlin said, “but also sends a clear message that our youth matter, and the efforts of our catechists are important.”

Contemplative Prayer Retreat

Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m. – Nov. 20, 1:00 p.m.

Schuyler, NE

In contemplative prayer, we divest our minds of all thoughts and images in order to receive the pure and simple light of God directly into the summit of our souls. This retreat involves breath practice. It is for those who have begun the practice of non-conceptual prayer. Father Thomas Leitner, O.SB, directs St. Benedict Center.

Register now at www.StBenedictCenter.com

Prayer to St. Joseph for a Happy Death

O blessed Joseph who died in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me, I beseech you, the grace of a happy death.

In that hour of dread and anguish, assist me by your presence, and protect me by your power against the enemies of your salvation.

Into your sacred hands, living and dying Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I commend my soul.

Amen

John & Mark Parrish, parishioners of St Francis of Assisi

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**Christ Our Life conference draws crowd**

Vendors sold religious books, t-shirts, jewelry and more to the many faithful who came to the 2022 Christ Our Life Catholic Conference in Des Moines on Sept. 24-25.

**With Roe overturned, march will focus on Congress, laws to end abortion**

By Kurt Jensen
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Jeanne Mancini wants it to be clear: The national March for Life in Washington will continue even with the U.S. Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade, its 1973 ruling that found a right to abortion in the U.S. Constitution and legalized it nationwide.

The court overturned Roe June 24 in its ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, a challenge to a Mississippi law banning abortion after 15 weeks. The court affirmed the law 6-3 but also voted 5-4 to overturn Roe as well as 1992’s Casey v. Planned Parenthood ruling, which affirmed Roe.

The Jan. 20 March for Life will be the 50th rally and march since the first such event Jan. 22, 1974. Organized by Nellie Gray, a government lawyer, and the Knights of Columbus, it took place on the first anniversary of the Roe ruling.

This January there will be one difference: The march up Constitution Avenue, which has always ended at the Supreme Court building, will end at the East Front of the Capitol instead. This reflects the pro-life movement’s focus on politicians instead of Supreme Court justices, and support for a national abortion ban, at 15 weeks of gestation, in a bill proposed by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

Mancini, in her capacity as head of March for Life Action, the organization’s lobbying arm, added her support for that measure in September.

“Limiting abortions after 15 weeks is the least we can do to protect women, as well as babies who at this stage are already fully formed in their mother’s womb and can feel pain,” her statement read. “It is consistent with what we know from science about the harm of late abortion, as well as in line with where Americans stand on the issue.”

On Oct. 13, Mancini announced the theme for the Jan. 20 rally and march: “Next Steps: Marching in a Post-Roe America.”

“We are going to celebrate,” she said. “History is shifting now, and we have to take stock of all that has happened.”

Mancini called the national march “critical to our strategic plan.”

Looking for story ideas

The Catholic Mirror is looking for story ideas. If you know of a faith program that strengthens one’s relationship with God, or an inspiring witness to the faith, call 515-237-5046 or email communications@dmdiocese.org.
By Tom Klein

A few weeks ago, my 84-year-old uncle was killed in a traffic accident up in rural northwest Iowa. He’d been driving his antique farm tractor down a highway early one evening, and was struck from behind. Details are still unknown; authorities are investigating yet.

Tonight, I phoned one of his sons, a cousin that my three brothers and I became close to while growing up on the farm.

My cousin Deny was doing well, but the hurt was still present and painful. We talked about the grieving process. It’d taken me a full year after my Dad died to finally embrace him. Both our dads had been farmers. Their livelihood was based on whether or not they prayed, and was genuinely a pleasure to visit with. Always hospitable, he explained how to reflect God’s love to those around us. George loved and enjoyed people.

After the accident, his son, Ray, collected his thoughts. Father Hogan felt they were quite proud of it, happily aware that the local farming community and townfolk had done so in numerous small town parades previously.

George was the last of the Great Generation born in 1918. He grew up as a baby of the depression, he’d grown up in a devout, faithful Catholic home. His parents instilled in him a deep faith. Two of George’s aunts were Franciscan Nuns, working as Missionaries in China during the Japanese invasion. They were captured and placed under house arrest until the end of the war. From a young age, George witnessed how to practice his faith unwaveringly, his close family members as role models. That example would follow him through his formative years and all throughout his life.

The shock of George’s death affected Deny and his siblings deeply. There was no opportunity to say goodbye. Children, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren experienced loss. Uncle George was active, in decent health, and fully enjoyed his extended family. Even now, losing his wife to sudden illness, George remained upbeat, happy to talk to people, involved with family, and was genuinely a pleasure to visit with. Always hospitable, he explained how to reflect God’s love to those around us. George loved and enjoyed people.

To honor his dad’s memory, Ray reiterated we are to take in all God’s goodness, and be grateful for all the blessings he bestowed. We are not to sink into resentment, vengeance, or hate. We are instead to continue in love and gratitude for the time George was with us. Even in grave death by another, Ray said George would want the family to exercise God’s love and grant his peace. In Matthew’s Gospel, Peter asks how many times we must forgive a sin even up to seven times? Jesus replies not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Our forgiveness is to be limitless and infinite.

The days since the accident and funeral have given me time to think and reflect on all this. George had provided a lifelong example of how to spread God’s love. His accident allows us to experience God’s power and love directly, by practicing his immeasurable forgiveness. We are to share God’s love with others. Christ Jesus tells us to love one another as he loves us. And so we must. Goodbye George.

Thomas Klein is a parishioner at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines.

Goodbye George

George waves to those watching a parade on the sidewalk just a few days prior to the accident. Cheering on George are: Tom Klein’s brother, his son-in-law, and two young grandchildren. One of the boys is named Henry, in honor of his great-great-grandpa. The family believes that, with his warm smile and a big wave, George was unconsciously bidding everyone farewell.

By Kara Storey

Allowing God to write my saint story

Every night during bedtime prayers, our two-year-old daughter, Marigold, insists on leading our family’s Litany of Saints. As she recounts the names of each saint, she moves quickly, listing one saint after another. As she jumps from saint to saint, the reminder of the goal and hope Adam and I have for our family: to one day be counted among the saints in heaven.

That may sound lovely and upbeat, but I’m often intimidated by our universal call to sainthood. The beloved saints we call to sainthood are hopelessly trying to imitate something not us. They are the典范 who never lose their love, in those men and women who work to contemplate the holiness present in the “everyday holiness,” again writing, “I like to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God’s people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile. In their daily perseverance, I see the holiness of the Church militant.”

Some days I persevere, but more often I hit the ground under the weight of the tiniest cross. Fortunately, he’s there to pick me up when I fall.

As we look ahead to the feasts of All Saints and All Souls Day, may we all have the courage to pray, “Lord, make me the saint you want me to be. Make my family the saints you know we can be.”

Kara Storey is a freelance writer who worships at the Basilica of St. John, Des Moines.

By Kenan Bresnan

The tough prayer

If you would look in my book of prayers that I have both collected and written, you would find one entitled “the tough prayer.” The inspiration for this prayer came one day as I was a bit frustrated by some world leaders. I really don’t like them, I really don’t like their politics, and I really don’t like what they stand for. Richard Nixon had a famous enemies list. That is not what I am after but it made me think that I am to pray for all. Even if I don’t like them.

So, who does that mean that I should pray for? Today, Vladimir Putin tops my list. And Mitch McConnell from China would also be on my prayer list.

Now I am going to stop with proper names. Why would I want to tell all of you who I am on my list? Some of these might be on your list of people to be thankful for.

There is no right or wrong list for everyone. Each of us will have our own. The purpose of this prayer is to pray for those who offend you, whose views and personalities rub you the wrong way. God’s love is for all.

This is one way to look at tough love. If you open our Lord’s prayer book and go to this prayer, all you will see is “The Tough Prayer.” There is no list of people; that page is blank. I want to pray for people, not make enemies of them. Some people might be on my tough prayer list for a while and then not be.

The fact that my list is blank, means that I have to remember who I want on this list by each name it each time I pray it. When I consciously have to call their name to memory, it reminds me that they have been named by God, that they are a person just like me. They need our prayers.

Who might make your list?

An in-law or two, your governor or mayor, a city councilperson or school board member, your senator or congress person, members of your parish who approach religion differently than you, a person with a social media presence that offends you or the person who really ticked you off yesterday. Your list will be different than mine, but I wanted to give you an idea of who needs your prayers.

The tough prayer is not necessarily a prayer for others to change, although I have no objection if they do. I am praying to God that he helps them. I might also suggest the following if you need your own words to pray for them.

“Lord, bless and keep you.”

The Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you! The Lord look kindly and Give you Peace!” (From the book of numbers)

I hope that you are getting the message, that we pray by name for all kinds of people. As we get into the habit of doing this, hopefully, it will help us open wider our door to civility to them or talking about them.

I think that it is important that we think about people on our list, or an encounter that we have with one of them, that we also look at ourselves and think about how we are acting.

Are we gaining a place on their tough prayer list?

Ken Bresnan is a parishioner at Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis.
By Christina Cappucci

The novelist John Hassler found it helpful to read his old journals. “Between novels,” he said, “I will browse through my 30 years of journal entries looking for topics to write about, and this, together with my memory and imagination, produces the fiction. I need him [journal] before the language rolling,” he’d craft a letter to a friend.

Achemist described the central rule of Catholic faith when he’s stuck in a scientific experiment. “Then I turn to God for guidance and I am amazed,” he said. “I begin to see things in my head that are not yet problems. I am very appreciative and I thank God—sometimes out loud.”

Movement can shake out a new idea, getting outside your head. “I get some of my best ideas in the morning when I’m thinking in the shower, or outside, or in the garden,” the artistic director told me. “Maybe it’s a scene I’m not satisfied with and I’ll rub my scalp really hard and something will pop up.”

Unloading the dishwasher helps me. My fingers are free from the keyboard, but my mind keeps turning an idea. Developing an entrepreneurial concept requires a lot of testing. If you involve a deadline or any degree of mastery—can get the juices flow. Einstein called this tactic “combinatory play”—the act of moving the pieces around, trying experimenting in another. That’s why he’d play the violin when he was struggling to solve a mathematical puzzle. It worked.

John Hassler sought comfort knowing that the body, mind and soul are intimately connected. We can spark one by tapping into the others. The health of one dimension often leads to the health of another. A long walk, a clearer mind. An active prayer life, lower blood pressure.

Creativity fills us with hope. We are creative beings, made in the image and likeness of the Creator. We are capable of beautiful things. And a brilliant new idea may arrive any second.

Christina Cappucci is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.
Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas

El consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas es un empleado de Polk County Victim Services. Ella Ayuda a víctimas de abuso sexual por parte del clero durante el proceso de la queja y buscando servicios de apoyo y consejería. Pueden comunicarse al 515-237-5046.

Coordinator of Adult Evangelization

St. Cecilia Catholic Church is looking for a Coordinator of Adult Evangelization to form and engage parishioners of a diverse Catholic community in the implementation of the New Evangelization. This position will be part of a vibrant Faith Formation Team passionate about advancing the Gospel in collaboration with each other and the faithful.

We are a parish of approximately 1,500 families and are located in Ames, Iowa - a mid-size city that is home to Iowa State University. This is a 12 month, full-time exempt position. Please visit stceciliaparish.org to view the job description. Submit Cover Letter & Resume to Father Don Zapla at dczapla@stceciliaparish.org

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Maintenance Custodian

All Saints Parish in Des Moines is seeking a part-time (average 20 hours per week) Maintenance Custodian. Hours to work are flexible and will vary weekly (Sunday through Saturday), as needed. Main duties include assure that the parish grounds and facilities are maintained in good condition and in a safe manner; perform some maintenance repairs as needed; and perform all janitorial cleaning duties of the facilities including deep cleaning. Skills and/or abilities desired, but not required, include able to lift or move heavy objects, basic electrical and plumbing knowledge, and able to operate basic tools and equipment needed to perform the job. Compensation is based on candidate’s experience and skills. Resumes may be sent to Fr. Harris at the parish no later than November 1, 2022.

The Catholic’s

DIOCESE SURVIVAL Guide

Is anyone in your family DIVORCED? Please give someone a copy of this ad or invite them to The Catholic’s DIOCESE SURVIVAL Guide 12-week group, which begins Oct. 17 at 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart Parish, 1627 Grad Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265. Cost of $30 per person includes a “Personal Survival Guide” and all materials for 12 weeks. Find comfort and counsel consistent with Catholic teachings. Call Bill and Ann Moore for more information, or to register, at 515-480-3314 (Bill) 641-425-0109 (Ann) or email moorefamilydsm@gmail.com

Crucé de Peatones

Benedicto XVI al reflejar en el Amor que es Dios: “en Dios y con Dios, amo también a la persona que no me agradece o no siquiera conoce. Esto sólo puede llevarse a cabo a partir del encuentro íntimo de Dios, un encuentro que se ha convertido en comunión de voluntad, llegando a implicar el sentimiento. Entonces aprendo a mirar a esta otra persona no ya sólo con mis ojos y sentimientos, sino desde la perspectiva de Jesús de Nazaret. Al verlo con los ojos de Cristo, puedo dar al otro mucho más que cosas externas necesitan: puedo dar al otro una llamada y un testimonio de amor que es necesaria” (Deus caritas est n. 18).

Epulón fue patética- mente arrogante al decirle a Abra- ham, “envíalo.” Estamos humildes y audazmente preparados para decirle a Jesús todos las maneras, con gratitud y santo temor de Dios, “Envíame.” ENVIAME a donde tú desees, Señor: a cualquier brucha que me encuentre, cual- quier tarea insignificante, a lo especialmente a esos de los que he sido parte en el pasado. Ayúdame a ayudar a otros a cruzar de la muerte a la vida, porque ellos son mis hermanos, mis hermanas, tu amigo, mis amigos. ENVIAME SÁLVANOS. Y nuestro gozo es- tará completo.

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The Catholic Mirror
October 21, 2022
**Pope to young artists: Don’t copy superstars; be original, authentic**

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis told young musical artists to be original, creative and true to themselves and to use their talents to promote peace.

"Do not try to copy the big 'stars' of show business. Do not follow the trends and patterns of success," he said Oct. 14 during an audience with organizers and participants in a Christmas music contest promoted by the Pontifical Foundation Grassvismian Edcucations.

"Do not be afraid to be yourselves. Will they criticize you? Yes, but be yourself, original, creative, (inscribing) your own personality in art," he said.

The contest invited people between the ages of 16 and 35 to produce new songs inspired by Christmas and its values: life, love, peace and light, according to the initiative’s website, christmasscontext.it/en/. Contestants were competing in three categories: lyrics, music and interpretation. The best three pieces will be performed during the 2022 edition of the annual Christmas concert at the Vatican.

The pope told the young artists, "Do not repeat the clichés of a fake and corny Christmas that has nothing to do with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and its meaning for humanity today."

"Above all, he said, their work must be based on a sense of wonder, amazement and awe. "We have lost the sense of awe and we must regain it," he said.

Christmas amazement is rooted in the unthinkable, he said: "a god who became flesh, who became a helpless baby, born of a virgin, in a grotto and whose cradle was a manger for animals. Awe. If one does not feel awe, the song does not speak to the heart, it does not communicate."

"With this creative style of amazement and simplicity, you can make your contribution to the cause of peace, which is the great gift God wanted to give the world with the birth of his son," the pope told them.

"In recent months, the thunder of war has been growing in Europe and the world," he said. "Let us not give in to this exortion, please! Let us not fall into this trap!"

"Let us continue to dream of peace and work for peace, sowing seeds of fraternity and friendship! by always keeping one’s hand outstretched to others, he added.

"One way to do that is with music, which is "very valuable" as a universal language that crosses borders and barriers," Pope Francis said.

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The Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa can assist you with questions related to your estate, will or planned giving. If we can't answer it, we will find someone who can.

Let us help you ensure that your generosity will serve well into the future.

In case you need anything else, here is a link to a free personal estate planning kit.

This comprehensive estate planning kit will help you protect loved ones, organize everything in one place and save on taxes.

Here is a link: https://plannedgiving.cfia.org/personal-estate-planning-kit

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<tr>
<td><strong>Insurance Policy</strong></td>
<td>• Name Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa as policy owner and/or beneficiary with a specific fund designation if desired</td>
<td>• Not for profit receives full face value of policy upon death of the donor, or may receive current surrender value prior to donor’s death</td>
<td>• Opportunity to make substantial future gift to Church at current manageable cost • Income tax deduction for value of policy when transferred • Premium payments may be deducted as gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)</strong></td>
<td>• Cash • Stocks/securities • Real estate</td>
<td>• Foundation receives substantial future gifts to support the work of the church and the charities names by the donor</td>
<td>• Variable or fixed income • Option to defer income • Income tax deduction • Reduction of estate taxes • No capital gains tax on appreciated gift (or deferral, in some instances)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charitable Lead Trust (CLT)</strong></td>
<td>• Cash • Stocks/securities • Real estate</td>
<td>• Income for duration of trust helps Church meet spiritual educational and social needs that exceed the capabilities of most parishes, schools and organizations</td>
<td>• At end of trust period, principal returns to donor or heirs • Principal can pass to others with little or no shrinkage • Tax deduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retirement Plan/IRA</strong></td>
<td>• Name Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa as beneficiary of death benefit</td>
<td>• Significant gift upon death of donor</td>
<td>• Opportunity to make a major gift • Estate and income tax savings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It’s Much More than a Tootsie Roll

When you see Knights in uniform visiting that read “Helping People with Intellectual Disabilities,” you should smile. When those Knights are holding that bright container collecting donations around town, they are helping to make people the display of every person.

For every donation, each donor is offered a piece of candy by the Knight present, most commonly a Tootsie Roll. Because of these little gifts of appreciation, the “Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities” has frequently referred to it as the “Tootsie Roll Drive.” It is a popular and successful fund-raising conducted by Knights of Columbus councils.

The campaign, which began back decades, is about more than just candy—it is about serving those with intellectual and physical disabilities. Council’s participation in this campaign, as well as many other fund-raising endeavors last year contributed to the $385 million and volunteered over 11 million hours last year helping various causes.

The Knights of Columbus not only conducts the “Tootsie Roll Drive” that offers to help people with intellectual and physical disabilities, but that also partnered with the Special Olympics since its founding along with other programs.

So the next time you see a Knight in a yellow vest asking for donations outside a grocery store, and you receive a Tootsie Roll, remember it’s more than a “Tootsie Roll Drive.” You have the opportunity to provide people with intellectual and physical disabilities more resources to live a happy life.

Secure the future of your most precious gifts with Insurance from the Knights of Columbus.

Life Insurance, annuities, long-term care insurance and disability income insurance products are offered through Knights of Columbus, One Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06515-5203. For costs, terms, conditions and complete details regarding these products, please contact your agent or the Knights of Columbus. Products may vary by state.

LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE • LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES

Michael Bormann
General Agent
663-689-6921
michael.bormann@kcfc.org

Pete Beutgens
Field Agent
716-860-0044
peter.beutgens@kcfc.org

Gregory Waddy
Field Agent
515-228-3560
gregory.waddy@kcfc.org

Neil Plotter
General Agent
402-370-0180
mail.plotter@kcfc.org

Donal Kenkel
Field Agent
712-572-9069
donald.kenkel@kcfc.org

Justin Wade
Field Agent
515-972-2688
justin.wade@kcfc.org

Walter Bormann
Assistant General Agent
663-298-4100
walter.bormann@kcfc.org

Dan Girather
Field Agent
515-660-3411
daniel.girather@kcfc.org

Rob Ryan
Field Agent
515-460-8753
robert.ryan@kcfc.org

Dorothy Kenkel
Field Agent
712-572-9069
donald.kenkel@kcfc.org

Knights of Columbus

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