WASHINGTON (CNS) – In a 5-4 decision June 24, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned its nearly 50-year-old decision in Roe v. Wade that legalized abortion in this country.

The court’s 213-page ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization was not totally unexpected due to the leak of an opinion draft a month earlier. The ruling emphasizes that there is no constitutional right to abortion in the United States.

The Dobbs case focused on Jackson Women’s Health Organization, an abortion clinic in Mississippi that challenged the state’s law banning abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

The court’s reversal of its long-standing abortion ruling brings abortion policy decisions to the state level. At least half of states plan to ban or restrict abortions with this decision in place, and 13 states have trigger laws put in place set to ban abortions right away upon Roe’s reversal.

“We hold that Roe and Casey must be overruled,” Justice Samuel Alito wrote in the court’s majority opinion. Casey v. Planned Parenthood is the 1992 decision that affirmed Roe.

Alito was joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett.

The vote to uphold Mississippi’s abortion restriction was 6-3, with Chief Justice John Roberts voting with the majority.

Alito, writing for the majority, said: “The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of Roe and Casey now chiefly rely -- the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment.”

U.S. Catholic bishops

Congratulations!
Three ordained priests

By Carol Zimmerman
Contributing Writer

Three men were ordained priests on June 24: Father Nick Smith, Father Alex Kramer, and Father Rodrigo Mayorga Landeros. Top left: Bishop William Joensen lays hands on Father Smith to ordain him as a priest. Top: Bishop Joensen presents the gifts to be offered at Mass to Father Kramer. Above: Father Mayorga Landeros makes a promise of obedience to Bishop Joensen. Left: For the first time following their ordinations, Fathers Kramer, Mayorga Landeros and Smith join other priests of the Diocese after communion.

Photos by America Duran / America Duran Photography and Video

World-class lineup set for Christ Our Life

By Lore McManus Solo
Contributing Writer

Since its debut in 2010, the Christ Our Life Catholic Conference at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines has grown from a regional gathering to an international event.

The seventh biennial (every two years) event will be held Sept. 24 and 25. This will be the second time that the conference will offer the choice of in-person or livestream tickets.

In 2020, despite COVID, livestream participants represented some 18 countries. Total attendance was estimated at 2,500 in-person and 4,200 livestream.

A world-class line up of speakers is confirmed, online and print ticket sales are underway and Catholic vendor spaces are filling up.

The conference is expected to attract more than 8,000 in-person attendees and see growth in livestream participants from across the world.

The Christ Our Life Catholic Conference will feature seven internationally renowned presenters.

• Father John Riccardo, a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, is the founder and executive director of ACTS XXIX, a nonprofit apostolate designed to equip clergy and lay leaders to witness the power of the Holy Spirit to transform individuals and parishes. He hosts a podcast and “Christ is the Answer” radio program.

• Patricia Sandoval, host

Continued on page 8

Don’t Forget!
Please take a subscription to The Catholic Mirror.
Este día de verano es un momento propicio para unirse en el hogar, con el Papa Francisco, al reconocimiento de las personas mayores.

**THE CATHOLIC MIRROR**

**Bishop William Joensen**

**Anne Marie Cox**

**Kelly Mescher Collins**

**Editor, Staff Writer**

**kcollins@dmdiocese.org**

**SCOPE:**

- **Dioses para la mayoría de la generación mayor de edad**
- **Joya de julio como el Día Mundial de los Abuelos y los Ancianos,** ya anualmente el cuarto domingo de julio como el Día Mundial de los Abuelos y los Ancianos.
- **Estos días de verano es- tan llenos de seres perezosos y bruscos para la mayoría de la gente, incluidos nuestros agricultores que todavía están trabajando de día a día para que las cosechas crezcan.**
- **El Tiempo del Día:**
  - **Comienza el tiempo de las aldeas:**
    - **24 de julio como un día de luz en el campo:**
      - **Día Mundial de los Abuelos y los Ancianos,** ya anualmente el cuarto domingo de julio como el Día Mundial de los Abuelos y los Ancianos.
      - **Estos días de verano son un momento propicio para unirse en el hogar, con el Papa Francisco, al reconocimiento de las personas mayores.**
      - **El Papa Francisco ha llamado a todos a manifestar nuestro afecto en su día, a ser pacientes y darles el reconocimiento de que son personas importantes para nuestra vida.**
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Parish moves from maintenance to mission

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

The seeds were planted about four years ago at a breakfast meeting.

Two parishioners and Father Chris Hartshorn talked over a cup of coffee about how to engage people to build a more vibrant parish at Sacred Heart Church in West Des Moines.

Around the same time, Father Hartshorn had been reading Divine Renovation, by Father James Mallon, and other books about innovative ways to be a parish.

“Covid put a magnifying glass on a lot of things,” said Father Hartshorn. “People are not responding to the faith in the way they used to. We need to be thinking and doing things differently.”

Sacred Heart began re-envisioning parish life following the model of Divine Renovation. Research was done and groundwork laid. Now, the parish is preparing to draw its 2,800 registered families together for a July 23 summit to talk about innovative ways to be a parish.

“The ideas aren’t intended to be carried out by staff but by parishioners who propose them or will serve as leaders and can help find resources to execute the ideas, said Loralee Chase, parish business manager. It’s a bottom up approach, rather than a top down approach.

As the parish continues its effort, it’s understanding of mission work is evolving. “I think we started thinking about Divine Renovation as a continuous improvement thing,” Chase said.

For each parish, the plan will look different. “Each parish has its own charism and what they’re good at. It has to be reflective of what makes each parish who they are,” she said.

Halterman is hoping for a big turnout at the parish summit. “We need to harness the presence of the Holy Spirit that’s there,” he said. “I think Father Chris and the clergy assigned have been helping us develop a greater vision of what we could be and I think that’s the most exciting part.”

Staff at Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny is exploring Divine Renovation and how it might apply to the parish.

“We recognize that this is not a program,” said Becky Robovsky, OLIH’s business manager. “It’s an attitude, a way of being.”

What attracts OLIH’s Adult Faith Formation Director Patty Mayer is that it’s about thinking outside the proverbial box. “It’s not doing what we’ve always done. It’s making us re-envision ministry and reaching out to our parishioners,” she said. “By doing that, our goal is to be able to engage our parishioners in the life of discipleship and mission.”
Deacon from 1st formation class celebrates 50 years

By Deacon Monty Montagne
Peggy McClellan
Contributing Writers

A Cursillo retreat in the 1960s led to a new role for clergy in the Diocese of Des Moines.

Ten men who attended that Cursillo all felt called to “something more” in the Catholic Church and wrote a letter to Bishop Maurice Dingman, asking him to consider initiating a formation program for the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Des Moines.

This began their journey through a three-year formation process, which included instruction by professors at Creighton University, to become the first class of permanent deacons.

Deacon Larry Knotek was one of that group, nine of whom were ordained permanent deacons on June 4, 1972, at the Harlan Civic Center with Bishop Dingman presiding.

One of the group of ten was too young according to the guidelines to be ordained at that time. He waited and was ordained in 1977. Deacons did not wear the albs and dalmatics we see current deacons wear, but rather wore suits and ties. Deacon was not readily available then, so suits for these special men were sewn by the Creighton University Drama Department.

Deacon Larry remembers the early years as having a lack of guidance and direction for these newly ordained deacons. Soon a community was formed, holding regular meetings and receiving ongoing education.

A constitution and ministry plans for each deacon were established.

Deacon Larry served at St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs as the choir director, but his liturgical functions were minimal. The main focus of diaconate ministry at the time was charity outside the parish.

This emphasis led Deacon Larry and his wife, Marianne, to begin a ministry to homeless families in the form of a shelter which they titled Micah House, based on God’s command in Micah 6:8 “Only to do the right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God.” These words epitomize the life of Deacon Larry and Marianne.

Deacon Larry recalls that he was attending a meeting with priests to discuss what to do with the old St. Francis Parish convent, and he burst out with “It should be a homeless shelter,” an idea he said was truly an inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

For him and Marianne, this was a huge leap of faith since neither knew anything about the lives of homeless families or running a shelter. The idea was presented to Bishop Dingman, funds were raised and Micah House became a reality in 1987.

The facility could house 8-10 families. The Knoteks believe God had his mighty hand on the ministry, for whenever a need arose and money was needed, the exact amount would always arrive, either by donations or by a grant being approved.

A big example of this was Marianne being in the right place at the right time. She was attending a meeting in Des Moines, and the governor was present. Iowa had up to $60,000 available for individual project reimbursements.

The governor said, “If you need help of any kind, just let me know.” The money was much needed at Micah House, since there were fewer issues and other needs. Marianne contacted the Governor’s Office, reminded him of his promise, and he cut through the “red tape” and gave Micah House the money.

Deacon Larry and Marianne retired from Micah House in 1996. Micah House continues to shelter homeless families in the Council Bluffs area.

The Knoteks have been married 65 years and have six children, two of whom are deceased.

After retirement from his career as a mechanical engineer, Deacon Larry served as a deacon at Corpus Christi Parish’s Family Holy site.

Deacon Larry will be honored on Saturday, July 23, at the 4 p.m. Mass at Corpus Christi Church, in Council Bluffs with Bishop William Joensen presiding.

A reception will be held in the church’s Great Hall that evening from 5-7 p.m. All are invited and welcome to attend this evening of thanksgiving and celebration.
Dan Dombrowsky
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
West Des Moines

Dan Dombrowsky, of St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines, will be ordained a deacon on July 16 along with five others. He felt called to the diac- omate while at a men’s confer- ence in 2010, where he was in- spired to go to confession for the first time in more than 20 years. He was overwhelmed by the grace he received through sacramental absolution.

“The experience caused me to reevaluate what was most important in my life, moving God to the forefront,” he said. “It was on fire for the faith, volun- teering for everything and loving it. But God called me to do more.”

His wife, Evette, was ini- tially surprised by his interest in the diaconate. But when his attrac- tion to it persisted, she realized he was answering a call to serve in a unique way. “As Dan’s passion grew through volunteering, I knew God’s call was impossible to ig- nore,” she said.

Now, after four years of formation, the couple is amazed by the ways God has drawn them to serve.

“It’s been transforming. The way I interact with people and the way I see the world has changed,” Dan said. He has added more gentleness and patience to his daily interactions.

“It’s been incredible to be pushed in new ways,” he said of his pastoral experience. “We’ve dived into situations we had not imagined being a part of.”

He pointed to his expe- rience with prison ministry and hopes that he’s able to continue it. Dan said: “No matter what we are called to do for the Diocese, we hope to serve God joyfully and bring others closer to Christ.”

We spoke about it for a month and confession much less than that.”

“Monica and Eric Pugh might receive the Eucharist once a month and confession much less than that.”

“We have no idea how good we have it with continual ac- cess to Mass and priests,” he said. “As a deacon, I hope I can help others realize the opportunity they have with their faith.”

“It has been a privilege and honor to accompany Eric through formation,” Monica said. “Everything we’ve done in the program has deepened our faith and it’s been so wonderful learn- ing all the things that we have.”

Every part of the Pughs journey has been about taking steps in the right direction even when it was difficult. The time commitment didn’t seem possible until God closed doors and opened others for the Pughs.

“We’re just continually hoping to grow our faith,” Mon- ica said. “I didn’t know anything about the diaconate when Eric first brought it up over 10 years ago. But I knew if he was being called, I needed to support him and get out of God’s way.”

Dan Maxcy
St. Mary of Nazareth Parish
Des Moines

After attending the ini- tial Faith Journey Catechetical Institute, Dan Maxcy, of St. Mary of Nazareth in Des Moines, asked his wife, Kelly, what she’d think if he were to look into becoming a deacon.

Kelly said she was wait- ing for him to ask.

At about the same time, the couple found themselves be- ing asked by other people if they had ever thought of the permanent diaconate.

“They went to a diacon- istic meeting and prayed,” Dan said. “I had an epiphany and realized that it wasn’t my job to decide to be a deacon or not,” Dan said. “Instead, I have to trust Christ and trust that he will take me where I need to go.”

The couple’s faith, prayer and works of service have changed over the last few years.

“I am a cradle Catholic and much of my life has includ- ed works of service both through my school and family. It has been a blessing to have Dan embrace serving others.”

As a part of the diacon- ate formation, the candidates pick an “icon of Christ,” which is a specific ministry that allows them to model Christ. Dan and Kelly chose one they could do together: InnerVisions HealthCare, a pro- life crisis pregnancy center.

“Being there in any ca- pacity for those mothers has been transforming for us and we hope we can bring those same skills into our ministry,” Dan said. The Maxcys have grown.

“If Dan and I had not done this as a couple, both learn- ing and growing together, I do not see that Dan would have complet- ed the training,” Kelly said. “This journey is an ongoing changing formation that we do together.”

Steve McGee
St. Joseph Parish
West Des Moines

Steve and Vivian Mc- gee, of St. Joseph Parish in Des Moines, attended an informational meeting four years ago about the permanent diaconate and decided to officially enter formation.

This wasn’t an overnight decision though, Steve explained.

“There were a lot of doubts tied up in it, but through testing the waters a bit, we figured out that it was the right place for us.”

Steve’s call started mysteriously.

“It popped into my head one day out of nowhere and I was surprised to find myself attracted to it. I had never really thought about it before then, but it seemed like a real movement in my heart,” he said. “I had felt the calling, I needed to support him for the journey.”

As Dan’s passion grew through volunteering, I knew we were meant to be together. It has been a privilege and an honor to be part of this journey.”

Steve Tatz
Basílica of St. John
Des Moines

Steve Tatz, of the Basílica of St. John Parish in Des Moines, has admired priests since he was a child at Sacred Heart Catholic School and Dowling Catholic High School.

He worked as a voca- tions specialist for the Diocese of Des Moines in 2001, when he be- came more aware of church min- istries including the diaconate. “It was then that I started sensing a nudge from God that maybe he was calling me to serve as a deacon,” Steve said. “I spoke about it for years, but the timing didn’t seem quite right, especially with young children at home,” said his wife, Lisa. “The calling continued to grow through the years. We had been turning more and more of our lives over to God, so we final- ly decided to respond to the call.”

“There was never an ‘epiphany’ moment but, rather, a loving and growing relationship with God and the recognition of a broken world still very much in need of the Savior, Jesus Christ,” Steve said. “I want to help and serve his people.”

The Tatzes said they’ve grown spiritually intellectually, pastorally and personally.

“I’m so thankful to be able to have taken part in the for- mation with Steve and the others in the cohort,” Lisa said. “I cannot say enough of the value and importance of jour- neying together with our wives, the core team, and the bishop,” Steve said.

Humans were meant for relationships, for communion. This definitively is not something that could ever be done exclu- sively by book or online.”

He added: “And our marriage has grown even stronger as a result. I pray that love spills over into my diaconal ministry.”

Kelly and Dan Maxcy

Meet your future deacons
Six will be ordained deacons on July 16

Steve and Vivian McGee

Oran Struecker
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
West Des Moines

Oran Struecker, of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines, converted to the Catholic faith about 25 years ago.

The desire to become a permanent deacon has been on his mind for about 15 years.

Oran was positively in- fluenced by the ministry of Dea- con Dave O’Brien. His passion for bringing people to Christ had a profound effect in Oran’s faith journey.

“A pilgrimage to the Holy Land played an important part in my faith journey,” said Oran’s wife, Marilyn. “To be that close to the life of Christ brought the bible alive for me.”

The process of forma- tion helped the couple discern God’s call to the diaconate.

“I didn’t think I’d be smart enough or be able to speak in front of people, but I trusted and it was a blessing to see how God took all of my strengths and weaknesses and used them,” Oran explained.

The Streuckers are in- volved with several healing min- istries in the Diocese and look forward to other ways that they will be called to serve in the
Around the Diocese

July 20 Wednesday
Healing Prayer Service
DES MOINES – Every third Wednesday of the month, there is a prayer service for healing held at St. Ambrose Cathedral. The start time is moving up to 5:30 p.m. each month. All are welcome to the cathedral to ask God for spiritual, emotional and/or physical healing.

July 21–23 Thursday-Saturday
Parish Rummage Sale
ANKENY – Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish’s annual rummage sale, at 510 E First St., benefits Our Lady’s Little Learners Pre-School. Remaining items are welcome to the cathedral to ask God for spiritual, emotional and/or physical healing.

The Catholic Mirror subscription appeal
Help us continue to provide news and inspiring stories of faith to you each month by taking a subscription for The Catholic Mirror.

Each year, all registered and active parishioners within the Diocese of Des Moines are asked to support The Catholic Mirror monthly newspaper with a $25 voluntary subscription.

Funds raised help offset the cost of producing and distributing The Catholic Mirror – a cost of about $140,000 annually. Subscriptions can be purchased by check payable to The Catholic Mirror (601 Grand Ave. Des Moines, IA 50309) or online at dmdioce.org/giving/special-collection-giving.

Your support is instrumental in bringing important news and inspirational stories of faith to central and southwest Iowa and beyond. Thank you!

Christ Our Life conference
Continued from page 1
of “De Don en Don” on EWTN, shares her compelling testimony that leads us to understand the love and mercy of Jesus. Sandoval focuses on how Christ can bring to light hidden wounds and heal us.

Susan Tassone leads a worldwide movement on behalf of the souls in purgatory. A renowned Catholic speaker and award-winning author of 13 books, her work has been endorsed by more than 12 cardinals and bishops.

Keith Nester, of Cedar Rapids, is a Harley motorcyclist-driving husband and father of three adult children who spent 20 years in Protestant ministry. A discernment process in 2017 led him to the Catholic Church. Today, he is the executive director of Down to Earth Ministries, and creates social media content, including his “Catholic Feedback” podcast and The Rosary Crew, a livestream prayer community.

Matt Fradd is known for his “Pints With Aquinas” podcast and has authored several books. After a profound conversion in 2000, he became a missionary, serving in Australia, Canada, Ireland and Texas, sharing his personal story of sin and salvation.

Maggie MacFarlane-Barr’s life calling began over a pint of beer amid brotherly brainstorming on how to help war refugees. From there, he ultimately became the founder and CEO of Mary’s Meals. He’s been part of the conference’s lineup from the first conference, continuing to give updates and thank sponsors. Mary’s Meals feeds more than 2.2 million children in 20 countries.

• Steve Angrisano is a joyful, energetic missionary who combines singer, songwriter and storyteller talents. Featured at dozens of World Youth Days, National Catholic Youth Conferences and national pro-life marches, he serves as the conference’s worship leader since 2012.

• Jon Leonetti will serve as emcee. He entertains and evangelizes with wit, anecdotes, interesting introductions, and prayerful segues. He’s also a nationally known Catholic speaker, author, radio, and podcast host, parish mission presenter and pilgrimage guide.

• Bishop William Joensen, of the Diocese of Des Moines, will provide a welcome to conference participants and celebrate Mass on Sunday, providing a homily.

The conference, a nonprofit organization and comprised of hundreds of volunteers, is based in the Diocese of Des Moines.

Tickets / Event Fees
Online ticket sales are available at: www.christourlifeio wa.com/tickets. Tickets will be available at dozens of Catholic parishes across Iowa. Nearly every parish in the Des Moines Diocese hosts an outreach person selling paper tickets.

The cost, whether in-person or livestream, is $25 for the entire weekend for adults and $15 for college-age students and younger. Children under the age of 5 are free of charge. Priests, religious, and laypersons may attend free of charge. Hard copy tickets will be sold after Masses in parishes approximately one month prior to the Sept. 24 and 25 event.

Accommodations
Sign language interpreter will be available at the conference.

Speaker Patricia Sandoval will lead a break-out session in Spanish at 1:15 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 24, in Hy-Vee Hall, which is adjacent to the arena.

Sister celebrates silver jubilee
Sister Joan Clare Silas, of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, is celebrating her silver jubilee as a religious woman.

Born and raised in Kenya, Sister Silas came a nurse and has ministered in health care in Kenya and the Diocese of Des Moines. Currently, she serves at MercyOne.

Her thanksgiving Mass will be at St. Pius X Parish in Urbandale on Sept. 11 at 11 a.m.

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.

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:

Sincere conversion to see, hear, think and act as Jesus; Greater unity and bonds of peace; Missionary zeal to spread good news that will spark a world aflame with love; Genuine care for each other, especially those feeling lost or left out; and May our strategic visioning in the Diocese of Des Moines make us ever more focused, discerning, and free to fulfill our calling as a people made whole by the Heart of your Beloved Son.

Accompany us along the Way that leads to heaven, surrounded by Holy Mary, Joseph, and all the saints with whom we hope to dwell forever in communion with you.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Amen.
Leaders share a passion for Catholic education

Administrator of the Year - Des Moines Metro
Jennifer Raes, St. Anthony Catholic School, Des Moines

Jennifer Raes is the administrator at St. Anthony Catholic School, where the learning environment began in 2010 to include Two-Way Language Immersion and bilingual development.

“I love to walk the halls and enter the classrooms hearing Spanish and English spoken—it's what a gift to all of us,” Raes said.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in education with a middle school endorsement and a minor in mathematics from the University of Northern Iowa. Raes also earned an endorsement in coaching from Drake University. She continued her education and earned a master’s degree in educational leadership from St. Ambrose University in 2003.

Her career in education began at St. Pius X Catholic School where she served as a middle school math teacher for 20 years and as an assistant principal for three years. She spent six years as the assistant principal at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School before joining the team at St. Anthony Catholic School in 2018.

“Jennifer models faith in action through her passionate leadership as principal of St. Anthony’s,” said Sheila Thurston, a St. Anthony parent. “She engages effectively with teachers and inspires students. She has built a growing, thriving school community based on Christ’s love for each of us.”

Administrator of the Year - Rural
Jennifer Simmons, St. Malachy Catholic School, Creston

Jennifer Simmons, the administrator at St. Malachy Catholic School in Creston, has more than 20 years experience in education.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in science from Northwest Missouri State University and a master’s degree in educational leadership from Viterbo University.

She taught fourth grade in Liberty, Missouri beginning in 1999. Prior to moving to Creston, Simmons spent 14 years in Des Moines at St. Joseph Catholic School teaching middle school math and science, and serving as assistant to the principal.

“Catholic schools are a very special place to work and St. Malachy is a huge piece of the Creston community puzzle,” shared Simmons. “We provide students with great opportunities to learn about God and to take care of our community. Our amazing teachers provide our students with a wonderful education where we try our best to reach the needs of all our learners.”

Simmons has made STEM education a priority for St. Malachy Catholic School. Today, the school boasts a 1:1 student-to-device initiative and robust STEM programming where students in all grades have the opportunity to explore problem-solving and critical thinking using the latest technologies.

For over 13 years, Janet Peter has volunteered at St. Theresa School nearly every weekday.

Volunteer of the Year - Des Moines Metro
Janet Peter, St. Theresa Catholic School

For over 13 years, Janet Peter has volunteered at St. Theresa Catholic School nearly every weekday.

Whether it’s reading to the school’s youngest learners, organizing the lost and found bin, or helping out in the front office, Peter serves with a generosity of spirit and kindness to all. Her strong personal commitment to meeting the needs of the school and its students has made a lasting impact on the entire St. Theresa community.

“Janet has a true servant’s heart. She makes herself available to the staff to help wherever needed,” said Elaine Oursler, a St. Theresa staff member. “She will clean the teacher’s lounge first thing each morning and even helped to take student temperatures each morning throughout the pandemic, even before vaccines were available.”

Peter and her husband are members of St. Theresa Parish where the couple attends Mass every week. Well-known and loved by those in the St. Theresa community, Peter openly talks about God and inspires others to volunteer leadership by sharing her Catholic faith.

“[Janet] is dedicated to helping anyone in need. Janet does all the ‘little things’ around school that others don’t notice,” said Mary Baker, a St. Theresa staff member. “She is our very own St. Theresa.”

Educators focus on forming well-rounded students

Teacher of the year - Des Moines Metro
Cyndi Hofmeister, Christ the King Catholic School, Des Moines

Cyndi Hofmeister earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a master’s degree in teacher leadership, curriculum, and instruction from Bemidji State University.

She is a product of Catholic education, her commitment to it is evident in her efforts to provide opportunities for her students to learn and grow while recognizing their value as God’s creation.

“It is important to realize that every student learns differently and our jobs as teachers are to access their strengths to help them be successful and well-rounded human beings,” shared Hofmeister. Hofmeister has taught middle school religion and social studies at Christ the King since 2013.

“Cyndi is an example to her students in every interaction with them. She treats each student with love, empathy and compassion. She models treating others as you would want to be treated,” said Renee Vuper, a Christ the King parent.

Teacher of the Year - Rural
Amy Smith, St. Patrick Catholic School, Perry

St. Patrick Catholic School first grade teacher Amy Smith earned her bachelor’s degree in early childhood education with a special education endorsement from Indiana University. She has taught in Perry for the last four years.

She is known for her passion for Catholic education coupled with the value she places on students’ backgrounds, interests, and familial values.

“I choose to teach in a Catholic school because my entire heart is Catholic education. I desire to answer God’s call to make disciples with every class I encounter. Although my students are young, the depth of their faith and their desire to know Christ is astounding,” said Smith. “By choosing to teach in a Catholic school, I can directly take part in fostering their love of Jesus.”

Smith recently attended the English as a New Language program at the University of Notre Dame. Through her experience with the E.N.L. program, Smith integrates experiential activities that help students practice the language in each subject.

“I looked forward to having my son in her class because I have always admired the way she so calmly and lovingly teaches children,” said Mindy Farmer, a St. Patrick parent. “Students blossom under her care academically, personally, and spiritually.”

Volunteer of the Year - Rural
Nancy Kilbride, St. Albert Catholic

Nancy Kilbride has been a steadfast volunteer at St. Albert Catholic for decades. She served as an RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) sponsor and team member for three years with her late husband, John. Together, Kilbride and her husband were founding members of the St. Albert Ambassadors program in 2002, acting as chair couple for five years. They also hosted the Bishop’s dinner for the St. Alber Benefit Auction for 10 years.

Kilbride sat on the Board of Education for the Diocese of Des Moines for nearly a decade and her family established the John and Nancy Kilbride Science Scholarship, which awards a St. Albert student interested in science a $1,800 tuition scholarship annually.

In her continued efforts to support the school, she frequently volunteers her time in the school’s Business Office.

“Nancy exemplifies the dedication needed to keep our Catholic schools alive and thriving. She has championed St. Albert Catholic for decades,” said Anne Rohling, the school’s president. “Her presence in the school, volunteering at many, many functions, is an inspiration to all of us. We truly admire her deep faith in the Catholic religion, her ability to serve others and her desire to serve St. Albert.”
Historic day at the court: Roe reversed

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who have supported a reversal of Roe immediately reacted pos- itively to the court’s decision that comes at the end of this year’s term.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called the decision a “historic day in the life of our country, one that stirs our thoughts, emotions and prayers.”

“We pray that our elected officials will now enact laws and policies that promote and protect the most vulnerable among us,” said the June 24 statement by Los Ange- les Archbishop José G. Gomez, USCCB president, and Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

“We give thanks to God for today’s decision ... This just decision will save countless inno- cent children simply waiting to be born,” said the New York Catho- lic bishops in a statement shortly after the court’s opinion was re- leased.

Those on both sides of the issue were outside the court when the ruling came down.
Grandparents Day celebrates ‘teachers of tenderness’

Catholic Church celebrates World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on the Sunday closest to the feast of Jesus’ grandparents, July 24

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The elderly can find purpose in their old age by teaching future generations about the value and importance of tenderness, Pope Francis said.

Elderly men and women often have “a special sensitivity for care, for reflection and affection” that is sorely needed in today’s war-torn world, the pope said in a video message released by the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network June 30.

“We are, or we can become, teachers of tenderness. And indeed, we can!” he said. “In this world accustomed to war, we need a true revolution of tenderness.”

At the start of each month, the network posts a short video of the pope offering his specific prayer intention. For the month of July, the pope dedicated his prayer intention to the elderly.

The Catholic Church celebrates the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly each July on the Sunday closest to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents. The celebration itself:

- The Holy Father’s message, along with one by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See, is published on the Vatican website.
- The elderly are the focus of the day and all that surrounds it. A specific Sunday Mass should be identified for the celebration. We know that participation by many seniors in Sunday Mass has declined, in part due to fear of contagion and lockdowns.
- For many in our region, the health emergency has ended. This can be an opportunity to invite them to rejoin the habit of attending Mass, which may also require the need to coordinate transportation.
- The Holy Father’s message can be shared by young people with grandparents and the elderly at the celebration itself — https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/nonni/documents/20220523-messaggio-nonni-anziani.html.
- If seniors remain at home or in other residences, it is a gesture of closeness and consolation to visit them — especially those who are most isolated — to communicate love and to deliver the Holy Father’s message, along with a gift, flowers, etc. The encounter itself and the deepening of relation and friendship is itself a great fruit that may result. But there’s an added blessing:
- Visiting a lonely elderly person in the days preceding and following July 24 has been recognized by the Apostolic Penitentiary of the Holy See as a work of mercy that enables persons to obtain a Plenary Indulgence, which is the remission of temporal punishment associated with sin already forgiven.
- Elderly persons who are able to attend Mass, or who, if unable, who take part in Mass through television, radio, or the web, may likewise obtain this Plenary Indulgence.
- The collection from the Day’s Masses can be dedicated to support projects in favor of poor elderly people in one’s community.
- And, of course, any associated social gathering, and the posting of images and comments connected with the day on social media, can highlight the joy and blessings that come from being together in the same “canoe,” the Church, where the dignity of every season of life and the beauty of relation and friendship is itself a great fruit that may result.

Bishop Joensen’s Column

Prayer for second annual Grandparents & Elderly Day

I give thanks to you, Lord, For the blessing of a long life For, to those who take refuge in You, Grant always to bear fruit.

Forgive, O Lord, Resignation and disillusionment, But forsake me not When my strength declines.

Teach me to look with hope To the future you give me To the mission you entrust to me And to sing your praises without end.

Make me a tender craftsman Of Your revolution, To guard with love my grandchildren And all the little ones who seek shelter in You.

Protect, O Lord, Pope Francis And grant Thy Church a gesture of closeness and comfort — to visit them — especially those who are most isolated — to communicate love and to deliver the Holy Father’s message, along with a gift, flowers, etc. The encounter itself and the deepening of relation and friendship is itself a great fruit that may result. But there’s an added blessing:

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Canoeing with grandparents and company

Continued from page 2

The June 16 Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ — also known as Corpus Christi — was celebrated with processions around the Diocese. Above, a depiction of the Last Supper at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs. Far left, a procession begins at St. Augustine Parish in Des Moines. At left, Father Chris Hartshorn, of Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines, blesses a monstrosity holding the Eucharist.

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Suicide and our misunderstandings

Margaret Atwood once wrote that sometimes a thing needs to be said, and said, again, until it doesn’t need to be said anymore. That’s why I write a column annually on suicide, mostly saying the same things over and over again. The hope is that, like a note that’s written and floated out to sea, my little message might find someone needing consolation after losing a loved one to suicide.

First, that it’s a disease and perhaps the most misunderstood of our diseases. We tend to think that if a death is self-inflicted, it is voluntary in a way that death through physical illness or accident is not. You can’t just blame the person – can’t you?

A person who dies by suicide, dies as the victim of a terminal illness or fatal accident, not by his or her own choice. When people die from heart attacks, strokes, cancer, AIDS, and accidents, they die against their will. The same is true for suicide, except that in the case of suicide the breakdown is emotional rather than physical – an emotional stroke, an emotional cancer, a breakdown of the emotional immune system, an emotional fatality.

This is not an analogy. There are different kinds of heart attacks, strokes, cancerous tumors, terminal illness, and fatal accidents. However, they all have the same effect; they all take someone out of this life against his or her will. No one who dies through suicide actually wants to die. He or she only wants to end a pain that can no longer be endured, akin to someone jumping to his death out of a burning building because his clothes are on fire.

Second, we should not worry un- duly about the eternal salvation of a sui- cide victim, believing (as we used to say) that suicide is the ultimate act of despair and something God will not forgive. God is infinitely compassionate and merciful, and God’s hands are infinitely safer and gentler than our own. Imagine a loving mother having just given birth, welcoming her child onto her breast for the first time. That, I believe, is the best image we have to picture how a suicide victim (most often a young person) is received well. If she or he picked the moment, the spot, and the means precisely so that we wouldn’t be there. Perhaps it’s more accurate to say that suicide is a disease that picks its victim precisely in such a way as to exclude others and their attentive- ness. This is not an excuse for insensitivi- ty, especially towards those suffering from dangerous depression, but it should be a healthy check against false guilt and fruitless second-guessing.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theolo- gian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his web- site ronrolheiser.com, via email at lore@www.dmdiocese.org, or by finding him on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser.
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una historia humana con líneas aún por escribir, por injertar en el relato del amor salvífico de Dios por todos y cada uno de nosotros, habitualmente desplazado. Dejando de lado la confusión, las mujeres y los hombres en ambos lugares ya no tenían que estar “encendidos” para “actuar”; experimentaron el efecto liberador de ser queridos en sí mismos, dignos de atención y afecto. Sin duda, había mal humor derivado del dolor crónico, o la pérdida de inhibiciones para decir lo que realmente sentían y pensaban que no siempre era agradable. Pero con qué frecuencia puede hablarse de una cierta dulzura agradable. Pero con qué frecuencia puede hablarse de una cierta dulzura agradable. Pero con qué frecuencia puede hablarse de una cierta dulzura agradable.

Dios tiene la intención de que el vínculo de las generaciones atraviese las corrientes que fluyen en ambas direcciones entre los jóvenes y los viejos. En su mensaje de hace varios años, “¡Cristo está vivo!”, el papa Francisco invoca la imagen de la Iglesia como una ranilla, “en la que los ancianos ayudan a mantener el rumbo jugando la posición de las estrellas, mientras los jóvenes siguen remando, imaginando lo que les espera por delante.” Para que esto suceda, los jóvenes no pueden descartar a los ancianos como representantes de un pasado do sentimiento, y los adultos mayores no pueden perder el tiempo quejándose de cómo deben actuar los jóvenes. Juntos, las ansiaciones sobre el futuro se pueden disipar, fragilidad y sabiduría se pueden mezclar, y las lecciones de vida se pueden compartir de una manera no sermonera que amplia la perspectiva y nos libera de la preocupación por nosotros mismos. Bueno, tal vez a estas alturas ya ha superado su capacidad de atención cuando se trata de que me exprese en términos elevados del honor, la presencia y las bendiciones que le debemos a los abuelos y a los ancianos. Así que volvamos a los detalles prácticos sobre el Día Mundial de los Abuelos y los Ancianos, que está designado oficialmente para el 24 de julio, pero bien podría promulgarse en cualquier domingo o incluso en varias ocasiones. Aquí hay algunas sugerencias directamente del Dicasterio del Vaticano para los “Laicos, la Familia y la Vida”.

• Los adultos mayores son el centro del día y todo lo que se rodea. Se debe identificar una misa domínical específica para la celebración. Sabemos que la participación de muchas personas mayores en la misa domínical ha disminuido, en parte debido al temor al contagio y los aislamientos. Para muchos en nuestra región, la emergencia sanitaria ha terminado. Esto puede ser una oportunidad para invitarlos a recuperar el hábito de asistir a Misa, lo que también puede requerir la necesidad de coordinar el transporte.

• El mensaje del Santo Padre puede ser compartido por los jóvenes con sus abuelos y ancianos en la misma celebración.

• La Jornada Mundial de los abuelos y de los mayores, 2022: “En la vieja seguirán dándose frutos” | Francisco (vatican.va)

• Así los mayores se quedan en casa en otras reuniones. Es un gesto de cercanía y de consuelo visitarlos, especialmente a los más aislados, para comunicarles amor y entregarles el mensaje del Santo Padre, junto con un regalo, flores, etc. El encuentro mismo y la profundización de la relación y la amistad es en sí mismo un gran fruto que pueden resultar. Pero hay una bendición adicional: un anciano solitario en los días anteriores y posteriores al 24 de julio ha sido reconocido por la Penitenciaría Apostólica de la Santa Sede como una obra de misericordia que permite a las personas obtener indulgencia Plenaria, que es un regalo temporal asociado al pecado ya perdonado. También podrán obtener esta indulgencia Plenaria las personas mayores que puedan asistir a Misa o que, en su defecto, participen en la Misa por televisión, radio o Internet.

• La colecta de las Misas del Día puede ser dedicada a apoyar proyectos a favor de los ancianos pobres de la propia comunidad.

• Y, por supuesto, cualquier reunión social asociada, y la publicación de imágenes y comentarios relacionados con este Día en las redes sociales, pueden resultar la alegría y las bendiciones que provienen de estar juntos en la misma “buhca”, la Iglesia, se puede presentar la dignidad de cada etapa de la vida y la belleza que irradian en medio del vínculo de las generaciones.
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