‘Be Welcoming’: New sculpture inspires Man’s journey with God comes full circle with baptism

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

At first glance, the figure looks like a lonely stranger, huddled and frightened. Look again. As you walk around Timothy Schmalz’s stunning bronze sculpture, a new image emerges: an angel with an outreached hand. The angel’s message—and the title of the artwork: “Be Welcoming.” Schmalz’s inspiration is Hebrews 13:2. “Be welcoming to the stranger, many have entertained angels unawares.”

“The angel is represented welcoming the viewer to have a seat beside him,” said Schmalz, who describes himself as a visual translator of the Bible. “This is the type of sculpture I love where it’s interactive. It beckons you to become a part of it,” he said in a YouTube video about the artwork.

Anyone walking or riding by the east side of St. Ambrose Cathedral will be able to experience the sculpture’s fascinating transformation, thanks to the generosity of Charlotte and Bob Janeczko, of St. Francis Parish in West Des Moines.

Inspired by Schmalz’s other sculpture focused on Hebrews 13:2, which rests in St. Peter’s Square in Vatican City, the Janeczkos made it their mission to bring one of his works to the Des Moines Diocese. “We want everyone to see it and think about it,” Charlotte said. “What does it say to them, and how does it bring people to Christ?”

The life-size image will be installed on the east side of St. Ambrose Cathedral along busy Charlotte and Bob Janeczko hope a new sculpture installed at St. Ambrose Cathedral will bring people to Christ.

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By Carol Hollenbeck
Contributing Writer

Delbert “Del” Settles made a lifelong commitment to the Catholic faith. He married a Catholic girl, raised six children in the Church, and helped found Our Lady of Carter Lake (now part of Corpus Christi Parish).

Though he lived the life of a devoted Catholic parishioner, parent and husband, Del hadn’t received any of the initiation sacraments—baptism, confirmation and first Eucharist—to be in full communion with the Catholic Church.

“He was on the edges,” said Deacon Monty Montagne. The deacon learned of Del’s situation: “I said, ‘You go to church every Sunday. You know much of the Catholic faith. Is there anything that would keep you from joining the Church?’” and he said ‘No.'”

Deacon Montagne invited Del to be baptized. “He welled up with tears in his eyes and he said he would like to do that,” Deacon Montagne said.

Father Jacob Epstein visited the Settles home several times and brought Del through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults program, also known as RCIA.

Last Oct. 23, at age 87, Del came into full communion with the Catholic Church, celebrating the sacraments during a Sunday Mass at Corpus Christi Parish/Our Lady of Carter Lake worship site. His son Donald was his sponsor. Del’s walk with God began at an early age. Born the youngest of six, his mother died when he was a baby. His father, a newspaper typesetter, was not able to take care of the children. Five were sent to a home for children, but the home did not accept babies.

Del, then an orphan, was placed in the foster care system, growing up on various family farms. Throughout his younger years, Del would attend the closest house of worship to the country home in which he was living.

Continued on page 10
By Bishop William Joensen

These days it seems devo- tion to the Eternal Mother is springing up around us like tulips and irises coming into bloom. The month of May is an especially- significant time for us to ponder, pray, and honor the Blessed Vir gin Mary. Beyond the designation of Mary’s month and the initial May crowning of Marian procession such as the impressive scale of the one that took place at Dow ling Catholic High School, there are the commemorations of Our Lady of Fatima (May 13), the celebra- tions of Mary, Mother of the Church (which this year falls on May 29), the day after Pentecost, where Pope Francis instituted the memorial on the Roman liturgical calendar before concluding on May 31, the Feast of the Visita tion. Add to this Marian feast table the secular designation of the Second Sunday of May as Mother’s Day, and we readily feel like we are being buoyed up both by the spiritual mother Mary and by the prayers, tenacious faith, and even the weakness of our own naturally God-given moms.

As I feel ever more at home in the Church of Des Moines, I likewise sense I am connecting with my mom Marilyn Joensen’s roots. She grew up with her parents and her younger brother Ralph in Holy Trinity Parish before her Dad died when she was five years old. Her widowed mother, Marie, was left to provide as a single parent for her kids, thus being a symbol of perseverence of moves that passed through St. Augustin and Visitation Parish es before heading back to draw upon supportive presence from relatives in Waterloo, Iowa.

Though material needs were lean, as Grandma worked long hours in her own “beauty shop,” my Mom’s and uncle’s lively faith was fostered by their attendance at Mass, their education at Our Lady of Victo ry Academy run by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BCMs), and by the close knot bonds of extended family that transcended that “dirt poor” (my late Dad’s description) con ditions in which they grew up.

Later in life, after she was well on the way toward raising her five kids, someone once asked my Mom: “If you weren’t Catholic, what church would you belong to?” Mom’s rejoinder: “Asking what religion I would join if I left the Catholic Church is like asking me which child I would give up.”

Some hypothetical prospects simply beggar the imagination, especially for those rich in faith.

When the death of her Son on the Cross must have come close to tapping out the reservoir of her undying faith, the Mother whose heart had been searingly pierced did not despair or promises Jesus had made that he would rise again. Her son embraced mortal weakness; she certainly did not want to be given to wondering if the Risen Christ in his great mercy and filial affection for his Mother might have made a swift and uncoordi nated visit to her private chambers to console and anoint her with his tender Spirit prior to appearing in the locked upper room to gener ate the Pentecost event.

Did she experience the lu minous truth of the Resurrection but hold it in her heart until she and the apostles and others gath ered with them could bank in the peace he breathed upon them and be stirred to compose a new ren dition of her visitation Magnifi cat? Together, did they magnify the Lord with burning souls at the marvelous news that death had no more sway, that fear would melt in the face of the Son who went to hell and back in order to call us to be united by the Spirit as the Church against whom the gates of the netherworld cannot prevail?

The Blessed Virgin Mary is Mother of the Church because her stark material poverty is the prelude to her spiritual largesse; ev ry grace she receives is placed at the disposal of the children whom she gladly gathers under her ma ternal mantle. Every human need, male and female alike, is a child of God, a child of Mary, who loves us and spares no expense or energy in our behalf. ShePriceless devotion.

consoled us that we might never for sake trust that God is with us, that our knotty life can be unravel led, and that there is a designat ed place for us in the household of Christ’s Father’s house.

The late Holy Father Bene dic 61 reflected on Mary’s role throughout her life as a beacon of hope and as the nucleus of a church community coming-to-be, thanks to her abiding presence and maternal solicitude for each of us. In his message, “Saved by Hope,” the pontiff speaks directly to the Blessed Mother: “From the Cross you received a new mission. From the Cross you became a mother in a new way: the mother who defeat is not our end, where the Church who once suffered becomes sim ply the Church who shines in joyful mutual presence, and a song to which we all know the lyrics as we together magnify the Lord.

In this way we were in the midst of the community of believers, who in the days following the Ascension prayed with one voice for the gift of the Holy Spirit and then received that gift on the day of Pentecost. The ‘Kingdom’ of Jesus was not as one might have imagined. It began in that hour, and this ‘Kingdom’ there will be no end.”

Mom’s life situation has changed dramatically in the last couple of months. She suffered her third and most serious stroke, and remains incapacitated on her right side, which has necessitated a move to a care facility in Ankeny as she undergoes therapy and rec eives the loving care of many people and cannot provide. In so many ways, she who was the stalwart caregiver, the mom who looks after and protects her children from the spiritual and natural well-being of her children, is now on the receiv ing end of the humbling, human support that tends to her basic bodily needs. It is a transition that many of us have faced with our parents and that we have compassion towards ourselves. It is a transition that I witnessed up close in my three years as chaplain at the largest care facility in the daily and Sunday celebration of Easter was populated by adult children sitting close to their par ents and accompanied by elder ly priests themselves in various states of cognitive and physical decline. It was always a poignant, sacred affair; now it is even more eminently personal.

For now, even though my brothers and I have been wonderfully, beautifully committed to visit ing and accompanying her, Mom still sits in her wheelchair in her room, ponder ing the staggering cross the stroke has introduced, the reconfigura tion of her into a voca tionally upon the image of Mary that adorns her wall as she prays ever more simply, more child like, the Rosary clutched in her left hand that still can grasp and function. She remains both moth er and daughter of the Mother whose heart and soul will to help us say “yes” to whatever God proposes, whatever befals us. No one suffers beyond the pale of Mary’s maternal attention, her solidarity with our felt poverty.

The woman who is perpetually deepening the living bond of the spirit, the center of all communion, re mains Mother of the Church for us. Though we are conscious of certainty of faith and unwavering hope that our suffering will one day end, Mary draws us ever more into the mystery that will never end, where the Church who once suffered becomes sim ply the Church who shines in joy, mutual presence, and a song to which we all know the lyrics as we together magnify the Lord.
Spring brings May crowning of Mary

The Church honors Mary as the Mother of God, looks to her as a model of perfect discipleship, and asks for her prayers to God on our behalf. Parishes and schools around the Diocese celebrated the crowning of Mary in May. Above: Father Seth Owusu looks on as a statue of Mary is crowned at St. Patrick Parish in Walnut. Top center: Father Owusu and parishioners of St. Mary Parish in Avoca crown Mary. Above: Father Max Carson and youth of Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs crown Mary. At left: All Dowling Catholic High School students honored the Blessed Virgin Mary by processing around the school and praying before crowning a Mary.

‘Be Welcoming’ sculpture inspires

Continued from page 1
Sixth Avenue, where it will face a multitude of people every day: walkers, cyclists and drivers. It will be lighted at night and accessible to all.
Bishop William Joensen will bless the new sculpture on Friday, May 26.
Welcoming strangers is a foundation of Christianity. Jesus, along with Mary and Joseph, were strangers in a new land when they fled King Herod’s wrath by going to Egypt. When Jesus began his public ministry, he encouraged his followers to welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35), and St. Paul encouraged Christians to welcome the stranger. (Galatians 3:28)
The Janeczkos first saw Schmalz’s work during a gathering two years ago of Legatus, a group for Catholic business people. They were so inspired, they invited Schmalz to speak to the Des Moines chapter of Legatus and began an effort to bring one of his sculptures to Des Moines.
Their primary reason for placing the sculpture on the campus of St. Ambrose Cathedral is so that it could be seen by as many people as possible. A secondary reason is that it is close to the legendary Pappajohn Sculpture Park, which draws visitors from across the country.
The Catholic Church has a long history of producing beautiful artwork such as paintings, stained glass windows and sculpture. In some ways, it seems sculpture has become a lost art, he added. “I think it’s another three-dimensional, tactical art that people can use to practice their religion and see God,” he said. “Sculpting seems to have disappeared. Now, (Schmalz) is bringing it back.”

Sisters crown Mary

The St. Augustin Altar and Rosary Society hosted on May 4 The Real Sister Act, their spring event which included the recitation of the rosary, the crowning of Blessed Mother Mary, Mass celebrated by Father Christopher Pisut, pastor of St. Augustin, and a dinner with speaker presentations. The honored guests this year were Nazarene Sisters Rosalia Njura and Joan Clare Nyoroka, and Sacred Heart Sister Eisy Xavier. Also attending were: Franciscan Sister Joyce Blum, co-vicar of the religious sisters, Humility Sister Jude Fitzpatrick, and Sister Pat Scherer.
Caring About Your Loss and Sharing In Your Faith

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

By Tom Chapman
Contributing Writer

The Catholic Mirror   May 19, 2023
www.dmdiocese.org

Most of the spending goes towards K-12 education. The legislature also completed work on a $100 million property tax cut.

Budget

The budget bill for the Department of Health and Human Services spends more than $2 billion. The ICC was pleased that the final version, Senate File 561, included $1 million for the Iowa MOMS (More Options for Maternal Support) program. This is an increase of $500,000 from last year.

MOMS will provide services to pregnant women and families with infants through non-profit pregnancy resource centers.

Education

Because the Students First! Education Savings Account program was passed earlier in the session, legislators cut the usual $852,000 allocated for purchase of textbooks for nonpublic school students.

The legislature continued the funding of transportation services for nonpublic school students at $8.9 million.

The final version of House File 430 is being sent to the governor. The bill prohibits schools from entering into employment agreements that would prevent discussion of abuse incidents by former staff with potential employers.

The bill also grants immunity to school authorities for such discussions. The ICC has worked on this bill for years in different forms so it’s good to get it over the finish line.

Work rules

The Senate and House passed the final version of Senate File 542, adding to the work activities and hours available to those under age 18.

The House added an amendment which requires sexual harassment training for 16 and 17-year-olds who will be allowed with parental permission to serve alcohol in restaurants.

Any harassment incidents involving a juvenile will be reported to the parents and the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.

The amendment also narrowed the ability of the state to grant exceptions in workplace learning programs.

Tom Chapman is the executive director of the Iowa Catholic Conference, the official public policy voice of the bishops of Iowa.

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Heltons reflect on state wrestling experience

By Kevin White
Contributing Writer

St. Albert Catholic School seniors David, John and Anna Helton are triplets who have attended St. Albert Catholic since they were in kindergarten. David and John both earned eighth-place medals at the Class IA state wrestling tournament in their careers, becoming only the 11th and 12th wrestlers in school history to earn state medals, and Anna was a team manager the past two seasons.

David finished with a career record of 146-58, which is the fourth-most wins in school history, and John finished 126-50, which ranks ninth on the school wins list.

The following are some thoughts from the triplets on state wrestling, growing up a triplet, and their time at St. Albert Catholic.

Q: David, you weren’t close to qualifying for state in your first two years of high school. What changed in your junior year, when you qualified for the first time and placed eighth?
DH: I went up two weight classes (from 138 to 152), so that definitely helped me out with my strength, because I was cutting a lot of weight and it wasn’t paying off.

Q: John, you had an elbow injury that prevented you from competing for most of your junior year. Why do you feel you realized your potential as a senior, when you placed eighth?
JH: I’d say just the new coaches, Colton and Cory Lear, they had a big impact. I’d say that’s what flipped the switch for David junior year, too. They’ve been wrestling for a long time, so they know all the tricks.

Q: Anna, what was it like for you to watch your brothers wrestle?
AH: There were a lot of times I was really anxious, because both of them had injuries… It was just a fun experience going up with them. I was kind of happy that John got eighth this year and David got eighth last year, so they couldn’t really hold bragging rights over one another.

Q: Anna, most of your siblings eventually transferred to another parochial school. Why did you stay at St. Albert Catholic, and boys, what have you enjoyed about the experience?
AH: My parents kind of wanted me to stay with John and David, and I didn’t have a strong desire to go. … Our whole grade is close and so is our friend group, so I just decided to stay at St. Albert. I don’t regret that decision.

I just like the environment of St. Albert. We know everybody. It’s just where we’ve been since we were in kindergarten.

JH: I really like the close-knit environment here and the community. You have middle school parents, elementary parents congratulating you in the hallways. You see the elementary students in the hallway, and they’re like, ‘Oh, he’s a high schooler. I know him. He wrestles.’ I really like that aspect of it.

DH: We wouldn’t change it for anything. We really loved our time here.

By Nicole Evans
Contributing Writer

Now a faith-based education is within reach for more students in Iowa.

The Iowa legislature approved a proposal to create Education Savings Accounts to help fund nonpublic education.

Gov. Kim Reynolds signed the Student First Bill on Jan. 24 surrounded by supporters of school choice.

This law makes state funding available for eligible Iowa K-12 students who choose to attend accredited private schools. It also provides public schools additional funding for students who live in the school’s district but attend private schools.

“It is with great excitement that we celebrate a win for children in Iowa – the ability for families to choose the school that best fits their child’s needs,” said Donna Bishop, superintendent of schools.

How do ESA’s work?

Parents who enroll their eligible children in an accredited private school will receive $7,635 per child for the 2023-2024 school year. Funds are deposited into the student’s ESA (managed by a state contractor) yearly and the parent pays the school through an app. Funds remain available until the student graduates high school or turns 20. The remaining balance is returned to the state general fund.

The new law will be phased in over three years beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

Year 1 - School Year 2023-24
- All students entering kindergarten
- All students enrolled in a public school
- A student enrolled in a private school with a household income at or below $90,000 for a family of four.

Year 2 - School Year 2024-25
- All students entering kindergarten
- All students enrolled in a public school
- A student enrolled in a private school with a household income at or below $90,000 for a family of four.

Year 3 - School Year 2025-26
- All K-12 students in Iowa regardless of income

“The funds will be transferred from the state’s general fund directly into a special state savings account most likely accessible by an app,” said Tom Chapman, executive director of the Iowa Catholic Conference. “The parent will use the app to pay approved vendors such as accredited nonpublic schools. Balances in student accounts will remain in their account until high school graduation or up to age 20.”

This legislation will not change the core mission of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines to be collaborative communities of spiritual formation and academic excellence where students grow in faith and wisdom and emerge as responsible citizens dedicated to lifelong discipleship.

“The Student First Bill was written to maintain the independence of our Catholic schools,” said Superintendent Bishop. “This bill will not restrict or make changes to the current Iowa core and faith-based curriculum we offer today as accredited schools in the state of Iowa. Faith will continue at the core of all we do and who we are as we remain rooted in Christ.

“The new education savings accounts will not affect the Catholic Tuition Organization grants or tuition assistance provided to families through the Diocese. Donors to the CTO are encouraged to continue to support tuition assistance for families that want a Catholic education for their children.

There were 397 donors who contributed more than $3.4 million in 2021 for tuition assistance this academic year.

Thirty-seven percent of the student population in the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic schools received tuition assistance this school year.

Learn more and apply

Applications open May 31, on educateiowa.gov/pk-12/student-first-education-savings-accounts. Applications for the 2023-2024 school year must be submitted by June 30.

Only one application is needed per household.

Parents/guardians can add multiple students attending multiple schools from their household.

The application process should take no more than 10-15 minutes and results will be available immediately.

Applications are valid for one year; a family must apply annually to remain eligible for the program.

Parents are invited to send their questions to studentsfirst@iowa.gov or call 515-281-5211 for more information.
May 25 Thursday
St. Vincent de Paul Golf Outing
PLEASANT HILL
The St. Vincent de Paul golf outing will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. and a shotgun start at 10 a.m. at Copper Creek Golf Community. The registration fee is $150 per person which includes hosted food and beverages. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Contact Randi Radosevich at randi@diocesemds.org for more information.

May 31 Wednesday
Nourish For Caregivers
URBANDALE – All caregivers – whether you are caring for an aging parent, spouse, disabled child or are a professional that cares for all – are invited to Nourish for Caregivers on June 6 at 5 p.m. at St. Pius X Church in Urbandale in the Archangels meeting room. Use the east entrance. For more information, contact Deacon Dan Macx at danny@holymotivindym.org or Deacon Jim Houston at pastoral-care@saintpiuschurch.org.

June 3 Saturday
Training for Sponsor Couples
DES MOINES – The Office of Hispanic Ministry will be offering a training for sponsor couples using the “Fully Engaged” program from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Center. Please identify some couples in your community that would like to be part of this ministry. Call us if you have any questions: 515-237-5011 or 515-237-5051.

June 4 Sunday
Corpus Christi Procession
DES MOINES – St. Augustin Parish’s Corpus Christi procession with bagnpipes begins at 4 p.m., with dinner to follow in the parish hall. Everyone is welcome to join us as we process through the neighborhood. All area Knights of Columbus are invited to dress in their regalia and First Communion classes are invited to come in their First Communion attire. Golf cart assistance will be available to those with difficulty walking.

June 16 Friday
Sacred Heart of Jesus Festival
WEST DES MOINES – A Sacred Heart of Jesus Feast Day Festival starts at Sacred Heart Parish with Mass at 5:30 p.m. and then a party in the parking lot at 6:30 p.m. with food trucks, live music, family activities, etc. It’s free and all are welcome.

June 16 Saturday
Sacred Heart of Jesus Festival
HOUSE OF MERCY – Mark your calendar for Emmaus House’s Annual Ignatian Retreat Day with presenter Amy Hooyer, former director of the Creighton University Retreat Center and lay minister at Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart in Ankeny. Held at St. Pius X in Urbandale, all are welcome to join us for a day of retreat. Go to th Emmaushouse.org for details.

June 24 Saturday
March for Life
DES MOINES – The Iowa March for Life will begin at 1 p.m. on the west steps of the Capitol with prayer and a rally. The group will walk to the Iowa Supreme Court building.

Biking for Babies
ANKENY – Biking for Babies annual ride begins at 7 a.m. Mass at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. Riders of differing lengths will begin at staggered start times.

July 22 Saturday
Ignatian Retreat Day
URBANDALE – Mark your calendar for Emmaus House’s Annual Ignatian Retreat Day with presenter Amy Hooyer, former director of the Creighton University Retreat Center and lay minister at Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart in Ankeny. Held at St. Pius X in Urbandale, all are welcome to join us for a day of retreat. Go to th Emmaushouse.org for details.

Now through Sept. 28
Bishop Drummond Garage Sale
JOHNSTON - This garage sale will be held each Thursday morning until Sept. 28 on Bishop Drummond’s campus from 8:30-12:30 p.m. Donations are accepted on the Thursdays of the sale at the garage located on the campus or by calling Helen Thull at 515-669-4621. No computers, baby cribs or car seats, old electronics or TVs will be accepted.

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:

- Missionary zeal to spread good news that will spark Greater unity and bonds of peace;
- Sincere conversion to see, hear, think and act as Jesus;
- Genuine care for each other, especially those feel-
ing lost or left out; and
- Willingness to bear together the yoke that Christ makes light.

Our strategic visioning process continues, Bishop Joensen invites everyone to join him in prayer that we will fulfill our 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 Oración de Visión
Oh Dios, te compartes con tu pueblo, tu iglesia, la misión de ser el amor salvador de tu Hijo y nuestro Salvador, Jesucristo.

Como un pueblo de fie, 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 lazo de paz;
- Un amigo misionero para compartir la buena nueva extendiéndola al mundo con amor;
- Un guía que comparte los otros, especialmente con aquellos que 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, discernidos y libres para cumplir con nuestro llamado como pueblo que enciende en el corazón de tu amado Hijo.

Acompañamos en el Camino que nos lleva al cielo, rodeados de la María Santísima, Jesús y todos los santos con quienes esperamos habitar por siempre en comunión continua.

Padre, Hijo, y Espíritu Santo. Amén.

School sisters celebrate jubilees
On June 17, 15 U.S. School Sisters of St. Francis will celebrate milestone anniversaries of service as women religious. These are the sisters who served in the Diocese of Des Moines who will be celebrating Jubilee this year.

75 YEARS
Sister Theresa Panther was born in Cedar Falls, Iowa. She received a bachelor’s degree in education from Alverno College in Milwaukee and a master’s degree in education from the University of Nebraska in Omaha. In the Diocese of Des Moines, she served as principal of All Saints School in Des Moines (1981-1987). Sister Theresa now ministers in prayer and presence at Trinity Adult Family Home in Madison.

60 YEARS
Sister Patricia Thoeren was born in Osmond, Nebraska. She has a bachelor’s degree from Alverno College (1967) and a master’s degree from the University of St. Thomas (1973). In the Diocese of Des Moines, Sister Tess served as pastoral associate in St. Boniface Parish in Waukee (1991-2002); was an organizer for AMOS (A Multicultural Organizing Strategy) in the Des Moines Diocese (2002-2003); and served as director of intergenerational faith formation for team parishes in Fort Dodge (2005-2012).

Sister Patricia now ministers through prayer and presence at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee.

60 YEARS
Sister Theresa Engel was born in Westphalia, Iowa. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Alverno College (1966) and a master’s degree from the University of St. Thomas (1973). In the Diocese of Des Moines, Sister Tess served as pastoral associate in St. Boniface Parish in Waukee (1991-2002); was an organizer for AMOS (A Multicultural Organizing Strategy) in the Des Moines Diocese (2002-2003); and served as director of intergenerational faith formation for team parishes in Fort Dodge (2005-2012).

Second place photo honors Paralympian
By Carol Hellenbek
Catholic daughters of the Americas member Mary Sue Wickham, of Council Bluffs, won second place at the statewide CDA semi-annual convention recently. Wickham captured Paralympian Josh Turek at the Council Bluffs YMCA. Turek is a member of the Iowa House of Representatives from the 29th District.

The Council Bluffs native is a four-time Paralympian (2004, 2012, 2016 and 2020.) He is a three-time Paralympic medalist, winning two gold medals and one bronze medal.


After he and his USA Paralympic basketball team won the 2020 Gold Medal, he retired from the sport. Turek is pictured in front of Wickham’s quilt display of the Olympic rings and her own smiley face basketball “to represent the USA.”

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

PRAY WITH US
Retiring DRE grateful to accompany families

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

Theresa Romens says after 24 years of serving as the director of religious education at Holy Rosary Parish in Glenwood it’s time for her to step back and encourage someone else to lead the parish’s faith formation program.

She and her husband, nearly 45 years want to travel, visit kids in Minnesota and spend time with grandchildren.

Romens has been a gift to the parish.

“Theresa brings years of experience” to Holy Rosary, said the pastor, Father Dan Siepker. “She’s very creative, very spiritual."

“I really consider it a ministry, I was called to do this,” she said.

Romens started as a catechist in Protivin, Iowa, where a Franciscan sister encouraged her to teach sixth grade. With her husband in the military, the family moved to Germantown, Illinois where she served as a catechist and helped coordinate the faith formation program.

The Romens family moved to the Twin Cities, where she became a parish administrative assistant and helped with their Generations of Faith model of faith formation.

As she moved to Glenwood, she contacted Holy Rosary and she was hired by the former pastor, Father Paul Monahan, to do religious education for youth ranging in age from three to high school.

In her time there, though, she branched out to offer lifelong faith formation. Not only does she serve the youth, but she leads retreats, a book study and more.

“She’s been teaching or leading religious education ever since. This spring, she’s retiring after serving 25 years in leadership at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines."

After teaching at Sacred Heart, she became a part-time director of religious education at the Basilica of St. John Parish in Des Moines. Then, a full-time director position opened up at her home parish, where she and her husband, Deacon Bill Richer, were married 52 years ago.

“How many people can say they have a full-time job in their home parish? I’ve been very, very fortunate,” Kayla said.

Over the years, her philosophy for sharing the faith has been simple.

“I think that faith that lasts a lifetime is rooted in the knowledge that we are beloved and cherished children of God and sharing how we know that is what catechesis is all about,” she said. “That’s where it begins: sharing that God loves you.”

The accidental DRE

Kayla Richer

Kayla Richer her gift of faith with our children and families,” he said. “Kayla has gone the extra mile to meet people where they are on their faith journey and walk with them to help them grow in faith and knowing they are loved by God and our community of faith.”

As she prepares for retirement, Richer has advice for young parents.

“Everyone who is thinking about being a catechist but they’re afraid they don’t know enough, I have found that there’s just no better way to grow in your faith than by sharing your faith and teaching it,” she said.

In retirement, Richer plans to sit for a while.

“I’m looking forward to spending more time with her grandchildren and reconnecting with friends.

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 family through a complaint process. He also helps them seek support and counseling services. Porter can be reached at 515-286-2024 or Sam.Porter@polk.countyiowa.gov.

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Rome: Beneath the surface

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St. Francis of Assisi Parish, West Des Moines,

With Deacon Omar Gutierrez

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Catholic Charities: Activating compassion for 99 years

By Bobbi Jo Smith Contributing Writer

Catholic Charities USA is a national organization founded over a century ago by men and women who believed that the collective efforts of the church to feed the hungry and help those in need could change the course of poverty in our nation.

While each of the 167 local Catholic Charities agencies serves that mission, each is unique in the programs and services offered depending on the needs within its diocese.

Founded in September of 1924 by Bishop Thomas W. Drumm, Catholic Charities of Des Moines has grown and expanded in its 99 years of social ministry service to those in need within the Diocese.

Five cornerstone programs exist to empower individuals and strengthen families and are delivered with care and compassion.

Refugee Services
Catholic Charities Refugee Services works through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the U.S. State Department. Our partnership with these entities affords us 90 days to resettle families who have family or close ties affords us 90 days to resettle and the U.S. State Department.

Family Shelter
Often when individuals and families least expect it, life takes a turn and a roof over your head is no longer something that can be guaranteed. Shelter is a basic need that can often be taken for granted.

Food Pantry
Without basic nutrition, it is difficult to think beyond day-to-day needs. Catholic Charities wants to help our clients fulfill their basic needs and help explore other barriers that our clients face. Nearly 20% of all people living in central Iowa are food insecure.

Counseling
The Catholic Charities Counseling Program offers help and hope. Our licensed, professional therapists work with clients of all ages and backgrounds to address issues including depression, anxiety, stress, marital issues, relationship problems, child behavior problems, trauma, abuse, and more. We deliver services from a trauma-informed perspective and our clinical staff are trained in evidence-based practices and interventions. We provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere for clients in Des Moines and Council Bluffs and offer telehealth for those in need of services in more remote areas of the diocese. Bilingual services are available.

A 24-hour crisis phone line, emergency shelter, court advocacy, educational classes and materials, counseling, and support groups are a few of the ways we help men, women and children feel safe and empowered.

Catholic Charities’ program serves nine counties in southwest Iowa: Audubon, Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie, and Shelby. Our 24-hour crisis line is 888-612-0266.

Food Pantry
Without basic nutrition, it is difficult to think beyond day-to-day needs. Catholic Charities wants to help our clients fulfill their basic needs and help explore other barriers that our clients face. Nearly 20% of all people living in central Iowa are food insecure.

Those in need can receive a three-day supply of food once per month at no cost. Additionally, our daily food counter is open to anyone during our business hours: Monday—Thursday 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. and Friday 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. We distribute approximately 35,000 pounds of rescued food every month. Visit us at 1815 Hubbell Ave. in Des Moines.

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The infrastructure we have is unique, and requires a variety of services ranging from health exams to job placement assistance to school enrollment, language classes, and bus training.

Between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, we resettled 452 refugees. Because we are devoted to ensuring the entire family has a great start in their new lives here in Iowa, the post-settlement program, which cares for refugees beyond the initial 90-day service, is a critical component of Catholic Charities’ programs that elevates our level of service.

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
Abusive, violent or threatening situations happen in every part of the community to men and women of all backgrounds. The Catholic Charities Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program, located in Council Bluffs, provides services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

Accompanists
Assumption Catholic Church is accompanying to seek additional resources to bring help and hope to survivors. If interested, please contact Lori Ancona, Music Director, at lancona@assumptionogranger.org.

Biking for Babies
Local ride is June 24

Biking for Babies is hosting its third annual local ride June 24 in Ankeny.

The national organization proclaims the dignity of every life and forms young adults into missionaries of Jesus. Beginning with 7 a.m. Mass at St. Luke the Evangelist with Bishop William Joensen, rides of various lengths will begin at staggered times throughout the morning. There’s a family 5-mile ride, a 22-mile ride and a 46-mile ride.

The number of participants and volunteers is growing.

“The number of people supporting the planning has ballooned,” said Nikki Biese, executive director of Biking for Babies. "It’s growing tremendous-ly,” said Biese.

For more information or to register, go to bikingforbabies.com.

InnerVisions a partner of Biking for Babies

Prolife medical clinic gala June 1

InnerVisions Healthcare has partnered with Biking for Babies to promote life. InnerVisions, a crisis pregnancy medical clinic in the Des Moines metro area, has received grants from Biking for Babies for its work serving women with unplanned pregnancies.

Biking for Babies, a national organization, holds summer bike rides to raise awareness and funds for prolife efforts. Biking for Babies will be a sponsor at InnerVisions’ annual gala June 1 as a means of raising awareness both of its national ride in July and its annual local bike ride to be held June 24 in Ankeny.

“It’s a wonderful way to partner,” said Bryan Gonzalez, director of development for InnerVisions. “We’re helping to promote their mission and efforts. They’re helping to promote our programs and services. It’s a great symbiotic relationship.”

InnerVisions provided medical services to 673 individual pregnant women, who visited 983 times at one of two clinics last year.

“We’re serving more and more abortion-seeking pregnant women in need,” Gonzalez said. “While we don’t perform or refer for abortions, we provide free, compassionate medical education to them so when they leave our doors they’re at least able to make a fully informed decision. We hope they choose parenting or adoption.”

InnerVisions tries to identify the obstacles that stand in the way of a woman choosing life for her child.

“We want to do what we can to remove that obstacle so she can make a decision without those obstacles interfering in that decision-making process,” Gonzalez said.

In 2022, about 70 percent of InnerVisions patients walked through their doors before they were seven weeks pregnant, said Gonzalez.

“That means InnerVisions has a unique opportunity to play an important role in that decision-making process. We take that responsibility seriously.”

InnerVisions HealthCare is holding its annual gala with the theme “Miracle of the heartbeat” at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines on June 1. Dr. William Lile, who practices in obstetrics and gynecology, opened a pro-life clinic more than 20 years ago in a former abortion building in Florida. He is a nationally known speaker and has assisted the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in promoting life.

For information on the clinic or to get tickets to the gala, go to ivhcare.org.
**Laying the foundation**

**Supportive approach expands affordable housing to Council Bluffs**

By Anne Marie Cox

Staff Writer

Des Moines-based Anawim Housing is expanding into the Council Bluffs area, forming a community to help address homelessness.

A recent study on the issue in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area provided some eye-opening news: “A huge amount of philanthropic support goes to address homelessness without addressing the root causes of homelessness,” said Brenda Mainwaring, president and CEO of the Iowa West Foundation in Council Bluffs.

The community has two excellent homeless shelters, but needs to address those root causes, she said.

After much discussion, the community turned to an organization with a proven track record for serving the vulnerable homeless population: Anawim Housing.

In the past 13 years, Anawim Housing quietly increased its footprint across the state developing affordable housing for families. Founded by Mercy Sister Stella Neill in 1987, Anawim has developed affordable housing in Polk County, Ottumwa, Cedar Rapids and Sioux City, said Executive Director Cynthia Latcham.

“Anawim has been terrific in integrating their services into what’s already been done in the Council Bluffs area,” she said.

Iowa West Foundation is financially supporting the expansion of Anawim to Council Bluffs.

“When we think about how we want to fund programs, it’s about supporting our neighbors and creating a community where people love to live. If somebody doesn’t have shelter, they can’t even begin to think about all of the other ways to succeed,” Mainwaring said.

**Martha’s House benefits from Biking for Babies**

Todd and Johna Clancy, who are strong supporters of Martha’s House of Hope in Ames, are grateful that Biking for Babies helps the maternity home for women in crisis pregnancies.

The two organizations are a good match. The bike ride raises awareness of the need to support women in crisis pregnancies and offers grants to organizations like Martha’s House that support pro-life efforts.

“Our visions align and we dovetail well,” said Todd Clancy. He and his wife, Johna, supported Martha’s House shortly after it was launched in Ames and, after the couple moved to Indianola and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, they continued to support the maternity home.

“It’s an extension of our faith,” he said.

Martha’s House of Hope began after a fire took the life of a young woman from Boone named Martha. In memory of Martha, the community identified a need for women in crisis pregnancies and created a safe home where pregnant women and parenting moms can stay until their child is one year old.

The home is meant to help women who have no support system: no family, and the father is not around to help.

“It’s tough to get on your feet,” Todd said.

The home does have some criteria the women need to meet.

“We have an expectation that our residents attend some sort of church service every weekend,” Todd said. “And we work with different organizations to provide financial skills, jobs and education.”

The four-bedroom home is filled with love for the mothers-to-be, and at capacity. In fact, it has a waiting list.

Organizers first thought Martha’s House would serve college students given its location near Iowa State University. However, many women who come needing help are in their mid-20s.

“They realize they need help and want to move forward with their lives,” Johna said.

Martha’s House is at the cross of three dioceses: Des Moines, Sioux City, and Dubuque. It has support in all three and organizers are grateful.

“It’s been hard at times, but it’s been really neat to see the success now,” Johna said.

**Consejo sobre Asistencia de Víctimas**

El Consejo 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 515-286-2028 o en advocate@dmdioocese.org.

**REMEMBERING FATHER JIM KIERNAN**

“Don’t Just Make The Sign of The Cross. PRAY IT!”

Passed into eternal life on May 15, 2016
Father Daniel Adjei, of St. Fran- cisc of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines, earned his doctorate degree in systematic theology from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. System- atic theology is the study of all the different branches of theol- ogy and bringing them together.

Man’s journey with God comes full circle with baptism

Continued from page 1
He remembers walking to a Lat- ter-Day Saints church and a Bap- tist church. He joined the U.S. Air Force and was stationed in Lincoln, Ne- braska, then in his early 20s, he met the love of his life, Peggy, at an outdoor movie.

They were married by a priest in a Catholic Church on Feb. 9, 1957. At the time of their marriage, the priest urged Del to go into a side chapel to worship. "I am not willing to take that step at this time." He remembers walking to a Lat- ter-Day Saints church and a Bap- tist church.

While he had the keys to the door of his Catholic Church on some Sundays for work, he would go into a side chapel to worship.

Del and Peggy, now married 66 years, have six grown children: Cheryl, Patty, Barbara, David, Donald and Jim. The children were raised in Peggy’s Catholic faith. For all those years while his family grew, Del attended Mass with them. He supported their religious educa- tion.

The family belonged to Our Lady of Carter Lake since the first Mass there in 1970. Del did yard work and helped choose their new pews, removing the old and inst- alling the new. He actively and consistently supported his church over the years.

Peggy’s Catholic faith. For all those years while his family grew, Del attended Mass with them. He supported their religious educa- tion.

The family belonged to Our Lady of Carter Lake since the first Mass there in 1970. Del did yard work and helped choose their new pews, removing the old and install- ing the new. He actively and consistently supported his church over the years.

While he had the keys to the church, “I would drive by during the day and go in and talk to the Lord,” he said. “I felt he was sit- ting there beside me.”

Del sought and walked with God throughout his life from this challenging childhood through adulthood and parenthood. A lifetime of honoring God finally came full circle to full commu- nion in the Catholic Church.

Del is clearly a man of God, Deacon Montagne said. “I suspect over time, he did some soul searching. He just needed that last step. I’m con- vinced the angels were rejoicing.”

“Del was great to have him baptized in their local church at Carter Lake. It was a happy mo- ment.”

SAVE THE DATE!

In honor of Bishop Joensen’s passion for education, we invite you to join us for the Bishop’s Celebration of Catholic Schools on August 26 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Norwalk. Catholic education, a cornerstone of our Diocese of Des Moines community in celebration of the life- changing impact our faith-centered education has provided for more than 150 years. During the event, the diocese will recognize special honorees, educators, administrators, and volunteers for their impact on our Catholic schools. Learn more at dmdiocease.org/catholic-schools/support or scan the QR code below.

Call 515-237-5046 or email communications@dmdiocease.org.

Get your message out to 30,000 Catholic households in central and southwest Iowa. Advertise in The Catholic Mirror. 

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515-237-5046

MADRE DE LA IGLESIA, NUESTRA SEÑORA

Priest earns doctoral degree

Continued from page 1
 criar a ocho hermanos, algunos le pre- guntaron en una ocasión a mi madre: “Si ustedes no fueran católicos, ¿a qué iglesia asistirían a mis Rigoberta?” Algunos de sus hijos abandonaron. “Algunos padres hipotéticos simplemente se preguntaron si el Reino del Padre de Cristo, deidad con gusto bajo su man- do, pasó por medio de la comunión de los creyentes.”

La Santísima Virgen María, la Madre de la Iglesia porque murió al reinar, fue la imagen de María que adorna su pared y ora con más sencillez, más como los niños, el Rosario que sostiene firmemente en su manos izquierda, es la que a ella le funciona. Ella permanece tan- to madre como hija de la Madre, cuyo corazón y alma nos ayuda a decir “Sí” a cualquier cosa que nos proponga Dios, a lo que nos deparan. Nadie sufre más allá de la protección de la atención mater- nal de María, su solidaridad con nuestra pobreza terrenal.

La condición de vida de mi mamá ha cambiado dramáticamente en el último par de meses. Ella acaba de sufrir un tercer y mayor infarto cerebral y está prácticamente incapacitada de su lado derecho, lo cual la ha forzado a vivir en una institución de asis- tencia en Ancón en donde ella recibe terapia y el apoyo que mis hermanos y yo no podemos of- recerle. De muchas formas, ella, quien era la firme responsable de nosotros, la madre quien nos cuidaba y oraba por nosotros con- stantemente por el bienestar natu- ral y espiritual de sus hijos, está recibiendo ahora humildemente el apoyo humano que se encar- ga de asiilar a sus hijos en una de sus caminos más búsicas. Es una transición que muchos de nosotros hemos enfrentado con nuestros padres, o que estamos enfrentando nuestros mismos. Es una transición que se enfrentado muy cerca de mis años como capellán en la in- stitución de cuidados más grande en Iowa, donde la celebración diaria y dominical de la Eucaristía se llena de hijos adultos quienes se sientan cerca a sus padres y acompañando a los sacerdotes y mayores que están en sus propios estados de declive físico y cogni- tivo. Siempre fue un asunto sa- grado y de importancia y ahora es un momento eminentemente más personal. Pero ahora, mi hermano David está firmemente compro- metiendo a sus hijos a la visita- rial y acompañarle. Mi mamá aún se puede sentar por largos períodos en su silla de ruedas en la cama o paseando por el balcón, cruz que le ha causado la embolia, la reconfiguración de su esperanza.

Ella observa con amor y amorosa la imagen de María que adorna en el interior de nuestra iglesia, en donde la celebración de la Constitución de cuidados más grande, sacerdotes y mayores que están en sus propios estados de declive físico y cognitivo. Así, en esa hora, y este ‘Reino’ no ten- dría fin.

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Father Ron Rolheiser

Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. These are the words of Jesus. They apply not just to those who are ordained to ministry and administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but to everyone inside the body of Christ. All of us have the power to bind and to loose.

What is this power? How do we bind and loose each other on earth in a way that engages the power that Jesus gave us?

One part of this allows for some easier explanation. Here’s an example: If you are a member of the Body of Christ and you forgive someone, Christ forgives that person and he or she is loosed from sin. Likewise, if you, as part of the Body of Christ, love someone and remain connected to him or her, that person is connected to the Body of Christ and through you (biflically) touches the hem of Christ’s garment, even if he or she is not explicitly confessing that. That is one of the incredible gifts we are given in the incarnation.

The other part of this allows for some more difficult explanation. Why, you might ask, should I forgive someone who has wronged me so badly? What if I hold a grudge against someone who has wronged me, keeping him constantly aware that he has done wrong, I am keeping that person tied to their sin – but God isn’t endorsing this. Heaven will not go along with my mercy, because my wife and I have tried to embrace the forgiving love of Christ all that are welcomed to worship him.

You might not deeply offend if they realized that within many of the pews around them or even in the sanctuaries, there were people secretly mocking them, belit- ting them, ridiculing them, and judging them with terms such as the CEOs (Christ-denying executives) and those who have “sold out people.” These are not funny words; they are sad punches. This is really sad!”

When I refuse to forgive another, when I hold a grudge against someone who has wronged me, keeping him constantly aware that he has done wrong, I am keeping that person tied to their sin – but God isn’t endorsing this. Heaven will not go along with my mercy, because my wife and I have tried to embrace the forgiving love of Christ all that are welcomed to worship him.

There is a God-given ability with us to be humorous and to laugh. Some even possess a talent for humor. We have all known really funny people. Humorous people innately know that humor has key elements: timing, safety, knowing your audience, and knowing that humor is a two-way street. If it is only funny to the speaker, then it isn’t humor. We need good humor, but in reality, not all humor is good humor. While humor is an innate talent, wrongful humor is a de-veloped skill; it’s not funny.

Some types of wrongful humor are sarcasm, cynicism, judgmentalism, pass- sive aggressiveness, inside jokes, and in- sults. None of these are relationally funny.

Humor can be used as a great dis- guise, to cover up an awkward situation. People who possess a wrongful type of humor can go too far. When people hold the notion that in order to be funny, someone must be mocked, teased, rudi- culed, belittled, discriminated, or judged, humor becomes not a tool to bring about laughter, but rather a vehicle to cause harm.

As a result from someone’s need to hide their true inner selves, these harmful types of humor can range from hurt feelings to seri- ous casualty. Relationships can end, crimes
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