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Vol. 58, No. 5

THE CATHOLIC  
MIRROR

May 16, 2025

*We Sow God's Spirit by Cultivating Connections in Christ.*

Pope Leo XIV

*First American-born pope*



See story on page 13

CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV, the former Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, poses for a portrait in the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican May 8, soon after his election in the Sistine Chapel.





Bishop William Joensen

It is the season of high school and college graduations, met with the dramatic news of the election of the native born American Cardinal Robert Prevost as the next Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, Pope Leo XIV. Here I offer some counsel for graduates, and some words of gratitude as we look to our new Roman pontiff to guide us as a truly one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, including the Diocese of Des Moines.

My late uncle, Msgr. Ralph Simington, used to joke in his latter years that given his added girth, there was about 100 pounds of him that was not ordained to the priesthood. He attributed the roots of this gain to his college days working on the dessert line at the cafeteria.

As I approach my sixth anniversary as bishop, I confess that there are about 15 pounds of me that have not been ordained to the episcopacy. I chalk up this increase to the claims of office that have reined in my passion for cycling which formerly found me in the summer months on my road bike for hours at a time. Now, I'm fortunate to put in 45 min-

# Bicycle Spirituality and a New American Pope!

utes on my indoor trainer with the Zwift app before getting back in the saddle of being shepherd and pastor of souls.

Though the amount of time spent cycling has been reduced, I'm still captivated by what the late, Venerable Madeleine Delbr  l, calls, 'bicycle spirituality'. Delbr  l, who lived in Paris through the global pandemic of 1918 and two World Wars, trained as a nurse and then social worker. She self-identified as an atheist for five years before being drawn to Catholicism. She became a poet and mystic in her own right. Her bicycle spirituality is expressed in the form of a dialogue with Jesus, but I suggest that it is eminently, pointedly human:

'Go' . . . you tell us at every turn in the Gospel. To be in your direction, we have to go, even when our laziness begs us to stay. You have chosen us to be in a strange balance, a balance that can establish and sustain itself only in motion, only with momentum. Rather like a bicycle that cannot stay upright without moving, a bicycle that stays leaning against a wall as long as we have not mounted it to make it speed along the road. The condition given to us is an insecurity, vertiginous and universal. As soon as we begin to look at it, our life tilts, gives way. We can only remain standing to walk, to race, in a momentum of charity (The Dazzling Light of God, pp. 61-62).

Delbr  l's Christ-inspired bicycle spirituality cautions us against inertia or paralysis. It

serves as an antidote to easy comfort as laziness that settles into the security of like-minded relationships and established credentials, even the credential of a college degree, that give us a certain measure of security. Even apart from others, we ourselves become the source of internal friction where momentum eventually peters out for lack of direction, growth or reliance on grace—the preconditions for self-transcendence, for fulfillment and happiness.

The ancient Greeks highlighted a specific kind of internal change that's a form of motion distinct from change in physical location or in quantity (such as 15 pounds!). Change either enhances and perfects our being, or results in a diminution, a reduction in our capacity to act in ways essential to realizing our human potential. Class of 2025, consider the innumerable changes you've experienced in your +/- four years in high school or college:

- The weaning away from certain relationships once integral to your life as you met and formed new friendships;
- The likely one, two, three or more changes in your major and minor, as you encountered new bodies of knowledge, confronted certain cognitive limits, were awakened by mentors and peers in collaborative projects, or service learning opportunities.

Further, how has your own spiritual life changed, matured, or waned? Are you able to perceive traces of the Kingdom of God in our midst, a reign of justice and charity where no bent reed is broken, no smoldering wick extinguished, no recent arrival to our community treated as anything other than a sister or brother

whose bloodlines are ultimately traceable back to the Creator of the Universe?

And while we might have various stances toward the fact of global climate change, are you ever more adept at articulating and doing your part to help cultivate a truly human ecology in your niche in life? Do you bear a deeper sense of solidarity with local communities and larger society that is geared toward a common good achievable only as we listen and collaborate with one another? Do you enable others to take part in conversations and activities that reflect our diverse capacities and gifts, enjoying goods and fruits that are not diminished in being shared?

I hope you can answer 'yes' more than 'no' to these questions, and even more foundationally, that this is not the first occasion these questions have occurred to you. For this whole dynamic of change and personal development of young persons and those who take part in their formation is very much in keeping with the mind and heart of the Church.

At every level of education, especially at the college or university level, the bond between teacher and student optimally should awaken and cultivate a felt connectedness with reality in all its truth, goodness, and beauty. This dynamic should happen regardless whether one is pursuing physics or engineering, literature or music performance, kinesiology or philosophy.

A tremendous mystery unfolds before us, but is only accessible for those who linger long enough to observe, who can stand the strain of staying with one object, one image, one person for

more than a nanosecond instead of flitting aimlessly from one thing to another in the fashion of what the late Pope Francis, citing Thomas    Kempis, calls "spiritual voyeurism" (see Evangelii Gaudium n. 91).

Or alternatively, we can complacently lean our life's bike against a wall, which is different than leaning on others in times of challenge or trial or even joy-filled celebrations. Time does seem to stand still when we experience genuine communion, when we lean on one another for friendship, love, and life. We become vulnerable enough to be transparent, and bold enough to embrace the tension that if we lean on others, they are sure to lean back to an extent that their needs, their priorities, their sense of direction about where we should aim take precedence.

To let others, and to let God, not only accompany us but help chart our destination, means allowing for insecurity, a form of unknowing that cannot be remedied by crunching numbers and amassing more data that will drive our internal processors. This is an insecurity that calls for trust, for natural and supernatural faith, where we walk, run, or race toward places, performances, and people—ultimately, SOMEONE, who is only disclosed in the course of life's pilgrimage.

One key bit of instruction I received when I was getting into cycling some 25 years ago is to always keep one's eyes on where one wants to go and not where one doesn't want to go. For if one does the latter, inevitably the bike

Continued on page 14

##   Espiritualidad Ciclista y un Nueva Papa Americano!

Es la temporada de graduaciones de preparatoria y de universidad, acompa  adas de la dram  tica noticia de la elecci  n del Cardenal Robert Prevost, nativo de los Estados Unidos, como

el siguiente Vicario de Cristo y sucesor de San Pedro, Papa Le  n XIV. Aqu   les ofrezco un consejo a los graduandos y algunas palabras de agradecimiento al esperar c  mo nuestro nuevo pont  fice romano nos guiar   como Iglesia que es una, santa, cat  lica y apost  lica, incluyendo la Di  cesis de Des Moines.

M   difunto t  o, Monse  or Ralph Simington, bromeaba en sus   ltimos a  os que, dado a su aumento en robustez, hab  a como 100 libras de   l que no se hab  an ordenado al sacerdocio.   l culpaba como la causa de su aumento

de peso a sus d  as en la universidad en que trabajaba en la l  nea de postres en la cafeter  a.

Al acercarme a mi sexto aniversario como obispo, les confieso que hay como 15 libras de m   que no se ordenaron al episcopado. Culpo este aumento a las demandas de mi puesto que han limitado mi pasi  n por el ciclismo en que anteriormente pasaba horas en mi bicicleta en los meses del verano. Ahora, si tengo suerte, dedico 45 minutos en mi bicicleta interior con la aplicaci  n Zwift antes de regresar a mi funci  n como pastor y guardi  n de almas.

Aunque ha disminuido el tiempo que paso en la bicicleta, me cautiva a  n, lo que la difunta, Venerable Madeleine Delbr  l, llama 'espiritualidad ciclista. Delbr  l, quien vivi   en Par  s durante la pandemia global de 1918 y las dos Guerras Mundiales, se entren   como enfermera y luego como trabajadora social, se identificada como atea durante cinco a  os antes de sentirse atra  da al catolicismo, convirti  ndose en poeta y m  stica en su propio estilo. Su espiritualidad ciclista la expresa en la forma de un di  logo

con Jes  s, pero sugiero que es eminentemente, marcadamente humano:

'Vayan' . . . nos dices en cada oportunidad en el Evangelio. Para ir en tu direcci  n, tenemos que ir, incluso cuando nuestra pereza no dice que nos quedemos. Nos has elegido para estar en un extra  o equilibrio, un equilibrio que puede mantenerse y sostenerse por s   mismo solamente cuando est   en movimiento,

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### THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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## Sioux City bishop installed

Bishop John E. Keehner, Jr. was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Sioux City on May 1.

Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Bishop Ralph Walker Nickless, 77, from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Sioux City, and appointed Rev. John E. Keehner, Jr., as Bishop-elect on Feb. 12.

Bishop Keehner was a priest of the Diocese of Youngstown and had been serving as pastor of four parishes in Ashtabula County, Ohio

Bishop Keehner was born in 1965, in Youngstown, Ohio. He pursued studies at the Pontifical

College Josephinum in Columbus, where he received a bachelor's degree in English. He also studied at Saint Mary's of the West Seminary in Cincinnati, where he received a master of divinity and a master of arts in biblical studies. Additionally, Bishop Keehner received a licentiate in canon law from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 12, 1993.

He served as a pastor; in diocesan administration; in multiple capacities for the diocesan tribunal; and director of campus ministry.

## Omaha archbishop installed

Archbishop Michael McGovern was installed to serve the Archdiocese of Omaha on May 7.

Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Archbishop George J. Lucas, 75, from the pastoral governance of the Archdiocese of Omaha, and appointed Bishop Michael G. McGovern of the Diocese of Belleville, as his successor on March 31.

Archbishop McGovern was born in 1964 in Evergreen Park, Illinois. He attended St. Ignatius College Prep in Chi-

cago, Loyola University in Chicago, and Mundelein Seminary. He earned a bachelor's degree in theology in 1993 and a master's degree in divinity in 1994. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1994.

Archbishop McGovern served as a pastor at several parishes and in administrative roles for the Archdiocese of Chicago before being ordained and installed a bishop in 2020 for the Diocese of Belleville.

He serves the U.S. bishops on the Subcommittee for Healthcare issues.



# Rural Imogene grateful for support following tornado

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

When 88-year-old Ann Owens was a child, her mom taught her to pour some holy water around her home before a storm arrived.

She did that just before an April 17 storm tore through her community, ripping the side off of her home.

She and her son, who huddled in the basement until the storm passed that Thursday afternoon, emerged to find broken glass, insulation strewn about, and a wall that had been torn off by the tornado.

Yet, just a few feet away, there was a crucifix still affixed to a wall.

“It means the dear Lord was with us,” she said. “It was amazing.”

The community of Imogene and the Diocese helped and supported those affected by the storm.

The local community jumped into action, with parishioners of St. Patrick Parish in Imogene calling on other parishioners to see how they could help.

“On Saturday morning, volunteers gathered at church at 9 a.m. and were sent to the homes of the people impacted by the tornado,” said Maryanne Dailey. “The clean up mostly consisted of picking up debris/tree limbs/metal from around the homes of those impacted. Several members of the parish prepared meals and brought them out to the families and volunteers who were helping with the cleanup.”

The newly formed Catholic Pastoral Response Team stepped forward to address the spiritual and emotional needs of the community.

Father Jacob Epstein and Deacon Monty Montagne, both of Council Bluffs, were dispatched to Imogene, representing the Church in its mission of compassion and support. Their visit marked the response team’s first opportunity to actively assist a community in need.

Upon surveying the damage, Father Epstein and Deacon Montagne provided blessings for the damaged farms and prayed fervently for planting season and future safety.

“Parishioners George and Laurie McGargill lost much of their roof and several windows and out buildings,” Deacon Montagne said. “They were very appreciative of our visits and the concern of the Diocese for them.”

Rita Laughlin, director of Faith Formation for St. Patrick, expressed her gratitude for the pastoral team’s presence.

“We are very grateful for your quick response, and taking time to visit and offering pastoral care to our parishioners who were affected by the tornado,” said Father Michael Acquah, who is serving St. Patrick in Imogene and St. Mary in Red Oak.

“Acts of faith and compas-

sion are often the greatest tools for healing,” said Deacon Tom Bradley, who helped create the Pastoral Response Team following last spring’s devastating tornadoes in Iowa. “Their presence in Imogene is a testament to the enduring bond between the Church and the communities it serves. This response not only aids in recovery but also strengthens the spiritual foundation on which lives can be rebuilt.”

Deacon Montagne said he was blessed by the resiliency and faith of the community.

“I hope I lifted them up as much as they did me,” he said.

Owens is grateful nobody in



George and Laurie McGargill are grateful for the visit of Deacon Monty Montagne (left).

the neighborhood was hurt and appreciates that everyone nearby checked on one another to see who needed help.

“Everybody is healthy, that’s the main thing,” she said. “We’re definitely blessed.”

Deacon Tom Bradley contributed to this article.



An April 17 tornado that swept through rural Imogene tore a wall off this home, yet left a crucifix in place. Homeowner Ann Owens says the community is blessed by the outpouring of support and that no one was injured in the storm.

[dmserra.com](http://dmserra.com)

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Rev. James Livingstone – May 2

Rev. Livinus Anweting – May 4

Rev. Michael Antoh – May 6

Rev. Gregory Leach – May 13

Rev. Felix Onuora – May 13

Rev. David Polich – May 14

Rev. Nick Stark – May 16

Rev. Julius Itamid – May 17

Rev. Thomas DeCarlo – May 25

Rev. Jomi Manikombel Joseph – May 25

Rev. Christopher Reising – May 25

Very Rev. Aquinas Nichols – May 27

Rev. Leonard Kenkel – May 28

The Saint Serra Club of Des Moines is so grateful for you and your service to the Church.

Rev. Vincent Rosonke celebrating 50 years on May 24

Rev. John Dorton celebrating 55 years on May 30

Msgr. Edward Hurley celebrating 55 years on May 30

Msgr. Robert Chamberlain celebrating 61 years on May 31

## HAPPY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY!

May God continue to bless your ministry with strength, wisdom and love.



# Msgr. Bognanno celebrates 60 years as a priest

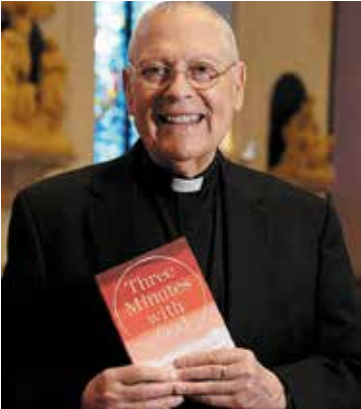
By Lore McManus Solo  
Contributing Writer

Divine Providence is God’s extraordinary intervention in our lives.

As Monsignor Frank Bognanno prepares to celebrate his 60<sup>th</sup> ordination anniversary, he says he didn’t have a grand plan for his priestly life other than to serve where God and his bishop planted him.

He believes any success he’s achieved is due to the intricate workings of God’s constant guidance and care.

Msgr. Bognanno said every major accomplishment in his life clearly came because of God’s divine providence. For example, in coordinating Pope John Paul II’s Iowa visit in 1979, he had only six weeks to form and lead a team to welcome him safely and reverently to Living History Farms. Some 350,000 of the faithful gathered for this historic outdoor Mass in an endeavor that united city, state, federal, and religious leaders.



Even though he would never wish for cancer, that journey led him in 2012 to climb 19,341 feet up Mt. Kilimanjaro with Dr. Richard Deming’s organization Above & Beyond Cancer. Since Msgr. Bognanno had been a triathlete, his training allowed him to experience this once-in-a-lifetime adventure, in which he celebrated Mass each day of climbing, another opportunity to evangelize.

While in Tanzania, Msgr. Bognanno met the local bishop, who told him of the thousands of school children who die annually due to contaminated water. Upon returning to Des Moines, he and



Msgr. Frank Bognanno celebrates Mass near Mt. Kilimanjaro, a trip that taught him about the need for clean water. Now he raises funds for the Purify Project to provide clean water in Tanzania.

fellow Christ the King parishioners created the Purify Project, which to date has installed 45 water filter systems at schools there. He’s been told the rate of sickness among the children has been cut in half.

He continues to support this nonprofit as author of *Three Minutes with God, Reflections to Inspire, Encourage, and Motivate*, which has sold more than 14,000 copies. The book, released in 2022, is based on daily reflections he’s written and taped for WHO-TV as well as a local radio

station, Star 102.5. Franciscan Media collected the content from 260 of his recordings while he added a Scripture reading and a prayer for each one.

Early in his priesthood, he hosted an EWTN-TV show for a decade and developed the Emmaus spirituality program for priests for priests. The training was conducted in 104 dioceses in the United States as well as in Canada and England.

Over the years, he’s served as a pastor or associate at six parishes.

Like many other retired priests, he stays busy. He assists at St. Thomas Aquinas in Indianola and is spiritual director for the Christ Our Life steering committee, which holds a conference every two years.

He holds book signings to benefit the Purify Project at fish fry Fridays in Lent, at local bookstores, and other locations.

He invites everyone to celebrate with him on Friday, June 6 with noon Mass at St. Augustin in Des Moines followed by a reception in the parish center.

### Send congratulatory cards to:

Msgr. Frank Bognanno  
Diocese of Des Moines  
Communications Office  
601 Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

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# A century of service

## Father Fitzgerald celebrates 50th anniversary of ordination

By Ryan Johnson  
Contributing Writer

As a Catholic priest celebrating 50 years of service to the Church, Father Tim Fitzgerald has made a significant impact on the Diocese of Des Moines and in the lives of many individuals.

Originally raised on a farm near Altoona, Father Fitzgerald attended Dowling High School in Des Moines and was one of a dozen young men who, upon graduating high school, enrolled at Loras College in Dubuque to study at the college seminary and discern the priesthood.

After completing his undergraduate degree in philosophy with a minor in biology, Father Fitzgerald pursued his vocation and eventually attended major seminary in Europe.

“I had the great opportunity to study theology at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium for three years,” he said.

### Dedication to the Liturgy

He returned to the United States after he was ordained to the transitional diaconate and spent his final year of seminary studying liturgy at St. John’s University at Collegeville, Minnesota. That experience sparked an interest that he carried with him throughout his career as a priest.

Father Fitzgerald spent six years at Notre Dame on the staff of Center for Pastoral Liturgy from 1993 to 1999. The cen-

ter sponsored workshops and a pastoral liturgy conference each summer, published liturgical books, articles and other writings, and served as a resource for dioceses around the country.

One memorable experience for Father Fitzgerald was helping with preparations for Pope John Paul II’s visit to Iowa in 1979. Father Fitzgerald served on the Diocesan Worship Commission and worked with Mary Ann Simcoe, the new director of worship for the Diocese. She recounted her first diocesan staff meeting and Bishop Maurice Dingman telling the group, “I want to confirm that the pope is coming in six weeks.” Some people in the room nearly fell out of their chairs when the bishop made the announcement.

Bishop Dingman was a profound presence for Father Fitzgerald and supported him as a mentor and a leader.

“Bishop Dingman served the Diocese for nearly 20 years and, in some ways, was much like Pope Francis,” he said. “Bishop Dingman arrived on the heels of the Second Vatican Council and took the council’s call to renewal of the Church very seriously. He put a high priority on starting from the ground up and not operating from the top down. I am always grateful for that methodology.”

### Implementing RCIA

Implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

(RCIA, now called Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, or OCIA) in 1980 was a “hugely significant experience” that led Father Fitzgerald to want to study liturgy further. As part of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate for 20 years, he helped with workshops in dioceses seeking to implement the new rite.

His experience led him to be an ideal candidate for the staff of the St. Joseph Educational Center, where he served for six years.

“We did a lot of teaching and resourcing in adult faith formation, sacramental preparation, and Scripture,” he says.

After St. Joseph Educational Center and his six-year assignment at the University of Notre Dame, Father Fitzgerald began a position in the new Office of Adult Faith Formation at the Diocese of Des Moines.

“It sprang from the U.S. bishops’ document *Our Hearts Were Burning within Us*, declaring that ‘Adult growth in faith is to be front and center in all faith formation efforts,’” he said. “The document began a revival of faith formation and growth of adult formation that is still underway.”

### Back to His Roots

The last 12 years of Father Fitzgerald’s priestly ministry led him back to parish life as pastor at Ss. John and Paul Parish in Altoona.

“When I grew up in that



Father Tim Fitzgerald helped dioceses and parishes across the country learn and implement the Rite of Christian Initiation, or RCIA, now known as the Order of Christian Initiation. He also led the Des Moines Diocese in Adult Faith Formation, and served as a pastor. Above, he baptizes a girl during the Easter Vigil in 2014.

part of the county, there weren’t enough Catholics to count,” Fitzgerald says. “When I joined the parish as pastor in 2009, there were about 700 households. It’s grown steadily since, due to all the new housing in the area.”

While pastor of the parish, he oversaw the construction of a new parish hall and an addition on the faith development center and youth ministry center. Father Fitzgerald retired as pastor on July 7, 2021. Today, the parish has more

than 850 registered households and continues to grow.

Now retired, Father Fitzgerald enjoys hobbies like beekeeping and reading. He also celebrates Mass at Emmaus House in Urbandale, and St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church and Student Center on the campus of Drake University.

## Celebrating 60 years

Monsignor Frank Bognanno’s 60th anniversary as a priest on Friday, June 6. Everyone is welcome to attend Mass at noon at St. Augustin in Des Moines with a reception immediately following in the parish center.

## Celebrating 50 years

Fathers Tim Fitzgerald and Vince Rosonke will have a joint celebration marking their 50th anniversary of ordination. It will be Aug. 3 at St. Boniface in Waukee beginning with an open house at 12:30 p.m. and concluding with a 2 p.m. Mass. All are invited.

## Longtime pastor, Father Vince Rosonke, celebrates 50th anniversary of ordination

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

When Father Vince Rosonke was 18 years old, he thought he’d get married someday.

But when he was in high school, a priest from his home parish of St. Joseph in New Hampton, Iowa, took him to see Loras College in Dubuque.

He decided to go there.

“Pretty soon, I was in the seminary building,” he said. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Father Rosonke is celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to priesthood on May 24.

Looking back, the most rewarding times were when he could be with people during sacramental moments: a hospital room, a nursing home, a family gathering, or with loved ones after a death. He also enjoyed working with young people and those

who decided to come into full communion with the Catholic Church.

“I’m a cheerful person when it comes to ministry,” he said. “I like the engaging part of that.”

After Loras College, he studied at St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, and was ordained a priest in his hometown by Bishop Maurice Dingman in the summer of 1975.

### Service as Pastor

He went to Creston, where Immaculate Conception and St. Malachy Parishes were joined and became Holy Spirit Parish.

Then he went to St. Mary in Portsmouth in Shelby County, an area that produced many priests



and religious women for the Diocese and beyond.

Father Rosonke moved to Christ the King Parish in Des Moines for five years.

After a sabbatical, he moved to Ss. John and Paul Parish in Altoona, where his goal was to build a new church by the year 2000.

He served one year at Sacred Heart in West Des Moines before going to St. Boniface Parish in Waukee. At the time, the parish was in a small church and Father Robert Shoemann was working to build a transitional, larger church.

Father Rosonke picked up where Father Shoemann left off, and built a new church, office space, and faith formation wing. He served 17 years, retiring from the parish in 2019.

He enjoyed working with parish staff on themes for the Advent and Lenten seasons and preparing for weekends.

### Service as Missionary

While ministering in Waukee, Father Rosonke was approached by a pastor at Heartland Presbyterian Church, who asked if he might be interested in a mission to El Salvador.

Father Rosonke invited him to speak at the weekend Masses and provide some literature.

He told the pastor: “I’ll see if people want to get together for a committee. If they do, we will. If

people don’t, we won’t. That’s all I can guarantee you.”

Forty people appeared for the first informational meeting, and four months later, 14 parishioners went to El Salvador in 2004. Last year was the parish’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its relationship with the people of the Central American country.

Father Rosonke himself has been there 35 times, though he confesses he knows little Spanish. A translator helps him when he’s visiting a little town and church. He’s made lifelong friendships and continues to keep in touch when he returns home to Iowa.

### Service in Retirement

In retirement, Father Rosonke has helped at a few parishes. He has time to see movies, he paints, creates folk art, and volunteers at Joppa, an organization that helps the homeless.

### CALLING ALL FARMERS

A daylong, statewide seminar at Iowa State University on Saturday, May 31 will focus on the 1980s Farm Crisis and how it informs the challenges facing rural communities today.

Hosted by A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy, also known as AMOS, the event will feature ISU historian Pamela Riney-Kehrberg.

Go to AMOSIowa.org for details.

### Send congratulatory cards to:

Father Tim Fitzgerald  
669 36th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50312

Father Vince Rosonke  
835 NE Boston Pkwy, #2207  
Waukee, IA 50263



AROUND THE DIOCESE

**May 18 Sunday**  
**Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy**  
ALTOONA – There will be a Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy at 4 p.m. at Ss. John and Paul Church. The congregation has been meeting once a month at that location. If you have any questions, call Father Bruce Riebe at 440-227-5037.

**May 22 Thursday**  
**Parent Support Group**  
DES MOINES – A new support group for parents of children with disabilities and mental health challenges is launching this fall. Help plan for the new Nourish for Caregivers group. Meet at Holy Trinity Parish at 6:30 p.m. Questions? Contact Patty Origer, poriger@dmdiocewse.org or 515-237-5073.

**May 26 Monday**  
**Memorial Day Mass**  
DES MOINES - Many parishes celebrate Mass on Memorial Day at their local cemeteries. Please check with your parish. The diocesan Memorial Day Mass will be at 10 a.m. at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines. If weather becomes uncooperative, the event will move indoors to St. Theresa Parish. A choir is forming through the local chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians to sing a cappella at the diocesan Mass. A brief rehearsal will precede the Mass. For more information, reach

out to Julie Curry at desmoinesia@npm.org.

**May 27 Tuesday**  
**National Eucharistic Procession**  
DES MOINES – This summer’s National Eucharistic Procession, the St. Catherine Drexel Route, comes through Des Moines for a Holy Hour and adoration at St. Ambrose Cathedral at 11 a.m. followed by Mass at 12:10 p.m. All are invited to spend time with Jesus in the Eucharist.

**May 30 Friday**  
**Don’t Just do Something; Sit There**  
DES MOINES – An inspiring event for women led by singer, songwriter, recording artist, speaker Lorraine Hess will be at St. Ambrose Cathedral from 7-9 p.m. The event is free but please register at sjeciowa.org/lorrainehess.

**Camino de San Lorenzo**  
PERRY TO ANKENY – The Way of St. Lawrence is a 3-day pilgrimage of 13 miles each day going from St. Patrick Church in Perry to St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Ankeny using the High Trestle Trail. Go to dmdiocese.org/events to register.

**May 31 Saturday**  
**Gold That’s Tested in Fire**  
URBANDALE – An inspiring event for women led by singer, songwriter, recording artist, speaker Lorraine Hess will be at St. Pius X

Church from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The suggested donation is \$20; lunch will be provided. Please register at sjeciowa.org/lorrainehess.

**June 1 Sunday**  
**Corpus Christi Processions**  
DES MOINES – The St. Augustin procession with bagpipes begins at 4 p.m., with dinner following in the parish hall. Everyone is welcome to join as we process through the neighborhood. All area Knights of Columbus are invited to dress in their regalia and 1<sup>st</sup> Communion classes are invited to come in their 1<sup>st</sup> Communion attire. Golf cart assistance will be available to those with difficulty walking.

DES MOINES – St. Anthony Parish’s Corpus Christi procession will begin with Mass at the grotto at 11:30 a.m. followed by a procession through the neighborhood. Free lunch afterward at the parish.

**June 6 Friday**  
**Ordination**  
DES MOINES – All are invited to the transitional diaconate ordination of seminarian Stan Asjes starting at 5 p.m. at the Basilica of St. John. The ordination marks the last stage in seminary formation before ordination to the priesthood.

**June 11-16 Wed. - Mon.**  
**Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis**  
DES MOINES – Christ the King Parish, a pilgrimage site for this Jubilee Year of Hope, invites you to venerate the 1<sup>st</sup> degree relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis. Also view a display (in English and in Spanish) of the hundreds of Eucharistic miracles compiled on the internet by Blessed Carlo. Check the website, christthekingparish.org, for the hours of public viewing.

**June 21 Saturday**  
**March for Life**  
DES MOINES – Iowa March for Life will begin with educational booths and music at the Iowa State Capitol rotunda, followed by a rally at 1 p.m. and the march at 1:45 p.m. Questions? Contact Pulse Life Advocates at 515-255-4113 or mdewitte@pulseforlife.org.

**June 22 Sunday**  
**Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy**  
ALTOONA – There will be a Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy at 4 p.m., at Ss. John and Paul Church. The congregation has been meeting once a month at that location. If you have any questions, call Father Bruce Riebe at 440-227-5037.

**June 28 Saturday**  
**Christ the King Garage Sale**  
DES MOINES – Christ the King is having its garage sale from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. in the Christ the King Parish Hall. Sales are by donation only. All proceeds help support the Altar and Rosary Society and CTK Parish Library.

**August 28 Thursday**  
**Benefit Concert for Mary’s Meals**  
DES MOINES – Heartland for Kids will present a benefit concert for Mary’s Meals at Jasper Winery, from 6-9 p.m. Enjoy a fun evening with Nashville musicians Phoenix Mendoza, John Leo (born in Iowa & raised in Kansas City) and Kitty Steadman, lead singer for Drop Dead Dangerous. The MC is Des Moines native and comedian Willie Farrell. Free-will donation for burgers, chicken, meatballs, chips, desserts, drinks. Wine and beer available to purchase.

**Rosary Rally**  
DES MOINES - Join fellow Iowans to pray a monthly rosary the third Sunday of every month at 1:30 p.m. (rain or shine) at the Iowa State Capitol – west side steps. For more information contact Diana Balmaceda, 515-974-7691 or Jeff Pierick, 515-778-6087.

Consejero Sobre Asistencia de Víctimas

El Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas es un empleado de Polk County Victim Services. Ella ayuda a víctimas de abuso sexual por parte del clero durante el proceso de la queja y buscando servicios de apoyo y consejería. Pueden comunicarse al 515-286-2028 o en advocate@dmdiocese.org.

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<https://friendsofcatholicworker.com/>

# FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

**MASS AND EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION**  
**SUNDAY JUNE 22, 2025**  
**11:30AM**  
**ST ANTHONY GROTTO**  
**15 INDIANOLA AVE, DES MOINES, IA**

**ST ANTHONY**

All are invited to join as the Eucharist leads the procession through the neighborhood pausing at each altar for a brief adoration. Stay for free lunch after the procession.



# Technology strengthens sense of community

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

Kids and parents alike are focusing more on lessons during the family faith nights at Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs.

The key to increasing attention was the purchase of 25 headsets. A translator speaks into one with a transmitter, and everyone else with a headset can hear that interpreter.

So when Father Luis Mejia or Father Luis Cabrera talks to a packed gym at St. Albert School filled with 150 youth, parents, and grandparents once a month, a translator interprets the short lesson by speaking into their headset and everyone wearing a headset can understand what's being said.

With a faith formation program that's was 60% Hispanic last summer (now, it's up to about 80% Hispanic) the headsets have been transformational for the Faith Formation program.

"The flow of conversation is a lot better. The priests have less of a headache from having to switch back and forth between languages, and people can focus more because it's all in one language, said program director Kendall



Father Luis Mejia and Faith Formation Director Kendall McGrath, of Corpus Christi Parish in Council Bluffs, say new headsets funded with a grant from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa have helped navigate issues with multiple languages in a way that resulted in increased focus and attention of families and youth, and created a greater sense of one community.

McGrath.

The parish did classes bilingually before acquiring the headsets. Father would speak in English for about two minutes, then switch to Spanish for about two minutes, and continue switching languages. Leaders observed people disconnect every few minutes when the speaker would switch to another language, said Father Mejia, pastor of the parish.

"Now that it's all in one language, people feel more connected," he said.

The parish bought 25 headsets with the help of a grant from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa, which makes funds available each year to help parishes with projects that enhance their mission of sharing the gospel.

At first, the parents took the headsets. Now, both parents and children take the headsets.

"We run out of headsets every session. It doesn't matter if it's taught in English or Spanish," said McGrath. "We're looking at investing more in the headsets. The kids love them. The kids use them just as much as the parents."

The headsets have moved the parish a long way from having separate or bilingual faith formation sessions toward becoming one community, said Father Mejia.

For more information on grants from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa go to catholicfoundationiowa.org.

# Catholic Charities directors lobby for funding for poor



Iowa Catholic Charities directors Mike Sheehy, of the Des Moines Diocese, Amy Block, of the Sioux City Diocese, and Tracy Morrison of the Dubuque Archdiocese.

Mike Sheehy, Catholic Charities Diocese of Des Moines executive director, attended a three-day advocacy event in Washington, D.C. in April with 90 other Catholic Charities' directors. They encouraged support for the people and programs working along the margins in Iowa to bring much-needed resources for those in need. Catholic Charities will continue to advocate for those struggling in the community.

# Parish mission



St. Patrick Parish in Imogene hosted Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers for a parish mission March 30 - April 1. He gave five different talks. On his radio show, he referred to the sense of family he felt while at the parish. He is pictured above at a book table with parishioners.

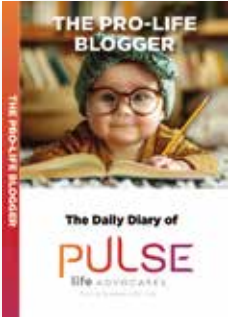
## Full time Music and Liturgy Coordinator

St. John's Catholic Church in Adel is hiring a full time Music and Liturgy Coordinator. The Coordinator facilitates the worship and sacramental life of the parish community through music and liturgical planning, preparation, and coordination. The qualified candidate will be a practicing Catholic with knowledge of scripture, liturgy and liturgical music and be proficient in at least one performance area, keyboard, choral, voice, etc. Personal or professional experience in music leadership preferred. Please send your resume, cover letter and references to Rev. Michael Hutchison, office@stjohnsadel.org

## Parish Business Manager

St. Anthony Catholic Church in Des Moines, IA seeks a Business Manager who supports the mission of the parish by managing the day-to-day business operations including finance, human resources, facilities, and general administration. Working closely with the pastor and parish leadership, the Business Manager ensures responsible stewardship of parish resources and the smooth functioning of parish operations. Hours negotiable. Complete job description available on request. Send resume and letter of interest to:

Fr. Michael Amadeo  
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Des Moines, IA 50315.



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(9am gather) 9:30am-4pm

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lorrainehess.com

# Cultivating connections th

New deanery structure will help parishioners, parishes,

Deaneries foster greater collaboration, helping parishes thrive while cultivating connections in Christ and with one another.

By Anne Marie Cox  
Staff Writer

Father David Fleming has found opportunities for greater collaboration to help parishes thrive while cultivating stronger connections with God and with one another.

In looking at how other dioceses collaborate internally, Father Fleming, who oversees pastoral planning for the Des Moines Diocese, learned that many have regions, called deaneries. For example, the other three dioceses in Iowa have deaneries.

“It’s time for our Diocese to establish deaneries,” said Father Fleming. “There are many benefits that spring from having this kind of organizational structure for our parishes.”

Within each deanery, there will

be one priest responsible for supporting and guiding the pastors with pastoral care for parishioners at all of the parishes within his deanery: both the individual parishes, and the clusters of parishes (several parishes served by one pastor) there. He will be called a dean and serve in that capacity while continuing to serve his parishes as pastor.

“The role of the dean is to be a bridge person between the Bishop and the local area; to help support and ensure good governance, or oversight, of processes and services; to encourage parish life and vitality; to be an encouraging voice and presence; and, to be a resource for local priests,” said Father Fleming.

Each deanery will be comprised of individual parishes, or clusters of parishes.

Moving forward, groupings – with individual parishes or clusters of parishes – will be called families of parishes.

In consultation with the Presbyteral Council, diocesan leadership, and priests of the Diocese, the plan to establish deaneries has been approved by Bishop William Joensen. He is expected to formally establish the plan by issuing a decree this month. This summer, Bishop Joensen will appoint a dean for each deanery.

There are several benefits to forming groups of parishes in close proximity to each other.

• For parishes and parishioners, the groupings foster greater collaboration, thereby forming a stronger communion. While some parishes currently share staff or programs, the hope is that the parish family design brings people closer for encounters and friendships in faith.

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## New Deanery Structure for

### ATLANTIC DEANERY

Adair, Audubon, Cass, Dallas, Guthrie,  
& Pottawattamie Counties

Total Households: 2,226

#### Parish Family #1

Ss. Peter & Paul (Atlantic)  
St. Mary (Anita)  
Our Lady of Grace (Griswold)  
St. Timothy (Reno/Cumberland)  
St. Patrick (Audubon)  
Holy Trinity (Exira)  
St. Mary (Avoca)  
St. Patrick (Walnut)

#### Parish Family #2

All Saints (Stuart)  
St. John (Adair)  
St. John (Greenfield)  
St. Patrick (Massena)

#### Parish Family #3

St. Cecilia (Panora)  
St. Mary (Guthrie Center)  
St. Patrick (Bayard)  
St. Patrick (Perry)

### COUNCIL BLUFFS DEANERY

Pottawattamie & Mills Counties

Total Households: 3,795

Corpus Christi (Council Bluffs/Carter Lake)

St. Patrick (Council Bluffs)

St. Peter (Council Bluffs)

Holy Rosary (Glenwood)

#### Parish Family #1

St. Patrick (Neola)  
St. Columbanus (Weston)

### DES MOINES DEANERY

Polk & Dallas Counties

Total Households: 4,184

Ss. John and Paul (Des Moines)

St. Luke the Evangelist (Des Moines)

Our Lady's Immaculate Conception (Des Moines)

All Saints (Des Moines)

St. Joseph (Des Moines)

St. Mary/Holy Trinity (Des Moines)

Assumption (Des Moines)

### DES MOINES WEST DEANERY

Polk & Dallas Counties

Total Households: 8,184

St. John (Adel)

St. Boniface (Waukee)

Sacred Heart (West Des Moines)

St. Francis of Assisi (West Des Moines)

### RED OAK DEANERY

Adams, Fremont, Montgomery,  
Page, & Taylor Counties

Total Households: 746

#### Parish Family #1

Sacred Heart (Bedford)  
St. Clare (Clarinda)  
St. Joseph (Villisca)  
St. Mary (Hamburg)  
St. Mary (Shenandoah)  
St. Patrick (Imogene)  
St. Mary (Red Oak)

#### Parish Family #2

St. Patrick (Lenox)  
St. Patrick (Corning)







Candles in the dark

# Finding faith in Catholic schools

By Jake Shama  
Contributing Writer

The lights were low in the sanctuary, the silence punctuated by prayer and anticipation. For Braylen Thomas, a sixth grader at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Des Moines, the Easter Vigil Mass was unlike any he had experienced. Holding his own lit candle, he felt the weight and wonder of the moment.

“Getting baptised felt good as we realized what a big deal it was to become a member of the church,” Braylen said. “It was really neat to be able to get the bread and the wine ... carrying our own lit candles felt like a big responsibility.”

That responsibility – embracing the Catholic faith – wasn’t shouldered alone. Braylen received his first sacraments alongside his brother, Bryson Thomas-Hamrick, a second grader at Holy Trinity.

Braylen was moved by the unexpected wave of support from classmates, who not only made posters but showed up at the Vigil Mass to witness the boys’ entrance into the Church.

Adding to the profound sense of community, four generations of their own family were present, surrounding them with love as they received the sacraments.

Braylen and Bryson’s journey, culminating in that candlelit ceremony, is a powerful symbol of a quiet but significant movement happening within the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools.

During the 2024-25 school

year, no fewer than 45 students, from second graders to high schoolers, and four dedicated teachers chose to become fully initiated members of the Catholic Church through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) or related processes.

Their stories reveal that these schools are far more than centers of academic learning. They are vital spaces of spiritual discovery and belonging.

**Seeds of Faith in the Classroom**

For many students, the decision to explore Catholicism arises naturally from their daily experiences within the school walls. It’s not necessarily one single event, but rather a collection of moments – a compelling lesson, an authentic witness, a sense of community – that opens the door to deeper questions.

Ellis Vaughn, a sixth grader at Sacred Heart Catholic School who entered the Church alongside his brother, Grayson, attributes his decision directly to his school experience.

“From being in Catholic school this year, I learned more about God and became more engaged and interested in the faith,” Ellis explained. “I learned from my classmates, my religion teacher, and from going to Mass each Wednesday.”

Their mother, Michelle Vaughn, watched their journey unfold with admiration.

“As their parent, I have been impressed and inspired by their journey,” she said.

At St. Malachy Catholic School in Creston, students express similar ideas. Third grad-



**Bryson Thomas-Hamrick (left) and his brother, Braylen Thomas (right), were baptized at the Easter Vigil at Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines. They learned about the Catholic faith while attending Holy Trinity School.**

er Natalie Miller said religion classes helped her decide to become closer to God. Second grader Bryson Berry said he was becoming Catholic because his family and friends are also part of the Church. And sixth grader Hank Shinn saw it as a source of strength.

“I decided to join the church because it would make my life and challenges easier through Christ,” Hank said.

The impact was perhaps seen most prominently at St. Theresa Catholic School, where 15 students have or will soon join the Church through the sacraments of baptism and first Commu-

nion. Jane Ann Becicka, director of Evangelization and Formation at St. Theresa, said it’s unusual to have so many school children baptized during the year.

“Most of the children have attended St. Theresa School since they were in preschool ... Some are adjusting to life in Iowa as refugees, some have had difficulty securing suitable godparents, and some of the parents were not raised in the Catholic faith,” Becicka said. “Seeing the fruits of living the faith in the lives of other families and at school, and encouraged by one another, parents sought baptism for their children.”

**Teacher Becomes the Student**

The path into the Church isn’t solely walked by students. Educators, immersed daily in the schools’ faith environment, are also learning about the faith and finding themselves drawn to full communion. Sam Vos, a first-year kindergarten teacher at Holy Family Catholic School in Des Moines, is one of them.

Having been confirmed in another denomination years ago, Vos felt something was missing. Taking a position at Holy Family wasn’t initially planned, but it felt right. Soon after, she started attending Mass.

“The Catholic church felt like the missing puzzle piece in my faith journey,” Vos said.

Now, having entered the Church this Easter alongside colleagues Stefanie Mueller (second grade) and Liz Weiss (prekindergarten), Vos feels her own faith journey enriching her teaching.

**A Welcoming Church, A Growing Trend**

This influx of new Catholics within the school communities mirrors a broader trend observed both locally and nationally. Parishes like Christ the King in Des Moines, which welcomed around 30 people into the Church this Easter season (including children from its school and parish programs), offer insights into why

this growth might be happening now.

Father PJ McManus, pastor of Christ the King, suggests several contributing factors. Some of it involves “covid clustering,” as the Church helps individuals catch up on sacraments missed during the pandemic years. There’s also been a renewed emphasis on retreats and faith experiences in many parishes.

Crucially, there’s a strong emphasis on intentional welcome and personal invitation. Christ the King cultivates a “natural charism for hospitality,” ensuring fellowship opportunities after every Mass. Staff and volunteers actively look for newcomers and extend personal invitations to explore the faith.

There are cultural changes as well.

“Ten years ago, you just didn’t have unbaptized Hispanics,” said Fr. McManus. “Children might be one or two years old when baptized, but there was a deep understanding of the importance of baptisms. Families often would wait until everyone could go to their homeland, or family from their homeland could come here for the celebration.”

But secularization is occurring in Latin America, like in the United States, and there is a pool of people ages 18-25 who are not baptized. Therefore, there’s a larger pool of adults interested in OCIA, and information about formation programs like OCIA is shared widely in welcome packets and special Masses.

But parish leaders know the importance of sharing the faith in schools too. Fr. McManus visits classrooms every year to chalk an Epiphany blessing on doorways. Jason Feeney, coordinator of evangelization, invites school parents who haven’t completed their own sacraments to talk about continuing their sacramental journey.

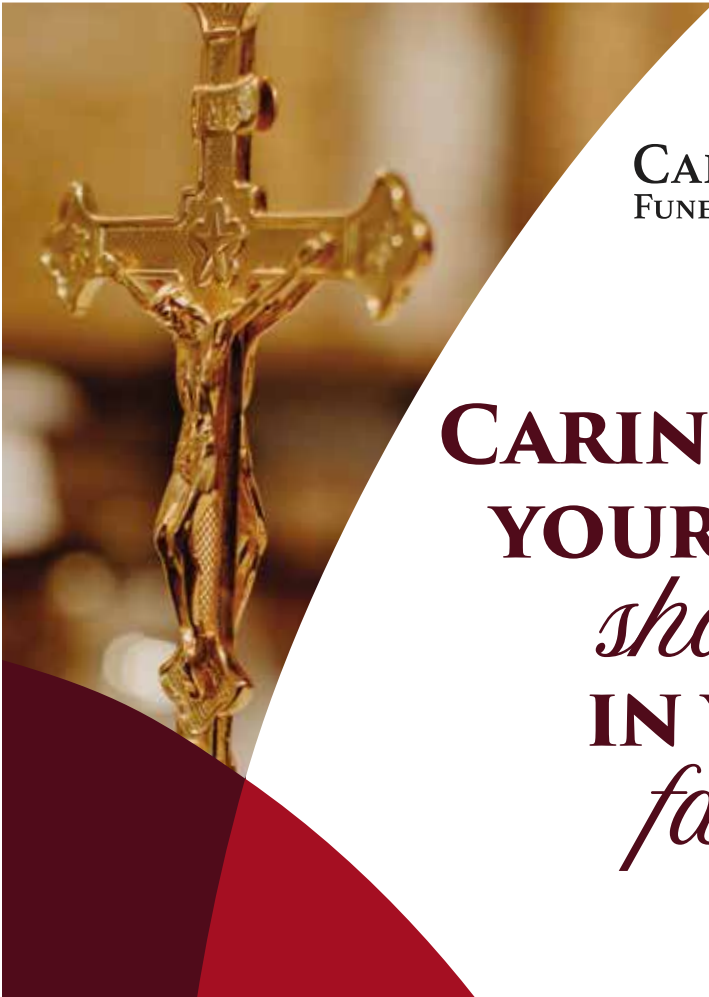
This culture of invitation resonates deeply within the schools themselves. They embody this welcome, creating environments where questions are encouraged, and faith is presented as a relationship, not just a set of rules.

**Nurturing Faith, Fulfilling a Mission**

Superintendent of Schools Donna Bishop emphasizes that fostering this environment is central to the schools’ identity.

“Our goal is to create an environment where students feel safe asking life’s biggest questions and can encounter the living Christ,” she said. “We strive to integrate the beauty of the Catholic faith authentically and joyfully into everyday learning, allowing the Holy Spirit to work in each individual’s heart while respecting each person’s journey.”

Diocese of Des Moines Catholic schools are demonstrating they are more than educational institutions. They are communities where faith is actively lived, questions are explored, and individuals are finding a place to belong – body, mind, and spirit.



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# Children learn about Jubilee of Hope



Teacher Sabrina Cogdill and the Kindergarten-first grade religious education students at St. Patrick Parish in Dunlap made their own Jubilee door in honor of the Jubilee Year of Hope. They drew pictures of themselves as “Pilgrims of Hope.”

This class also started a Prayer Buddy program. Students were matched with a parish member for the year and made their own prayer journals.




## SPECIAL UPCOMING JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

- May 30-June 1**  
Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents, and the Elderly
- June 7-8**  
Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations, and New Communities
- June 9**  
Jubilee of the Holy See
- June 14-15**  
Jubilee of Sport
- June 20-22**  
Jubilee of Governments
- June 23-24**  
Jubilee of Seminarians
- June 25**  
Jubilee of Bishops
- June 25-27**  
Jubilee of Priests





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### Victim Assistance Advocate

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



## On Prayer

By Monica Pugh

# Rosary draws us closer to Christ

The poem, *Song for a Fifth Child* by Ruth Hulburt Hamilton, ends with the lines, “So quiet down, cobwebs. Dust, go to sleep. I’m rocking my baby and babies don’t keep.”

As a young mother, I did not know anything about our Holy Mother, Mary.

But by the time my fifth child arrived, I knew the gentle times spent rocking my babies were precious. It is those memories I draw upon to understand our gentle mother, Mary. But Mary is also the powerful woman who crushes the head of the serpent with her bare heel. She is Theotokos, or God-bearer, the Mother of God and the reason we have the way to salvation through Jesus Christ.

May is devoted to our Holy Mother, Mary. Parishes and parochial schools begin the month with a May crowning to honor Mary’s “Yes” to the angel Gabriel. Parishioners sing Marian hymns at Mass and place flowers at her feet or visit a rosary prayer garden. May is the perfect month to focus our prayers on the rosary.


The parts of the rosary prayer are explained in depth in the Catholic Catechism beginning in section 2673. History documents the rosary with roots traced to monks praying all 150 Psalms while counting pebbles or scratches to keep track. Some literate monks began praying the Psalms from scrolls. Other monks were tasked to field work and began substituting the Psalms for 150 Our Father prayers easily repeated in Latin while they worked and prayed in unison. Counting pebbles eventually turned to strung beads.

The rosary we know today began to take shape in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Hail Mary prayer combines the greetings written in the gospel of Luke spoken by the Archangel Gabriel and Mary’s cousin, Elizabeth. The tagline, “Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death,” was a popular prayer and added to the end. In 1597, Pope Sixtus V inserted the word “Jesus” into the Hail Mary to give the prayer its final form.

St. John Paul II, known for his deep devotion to the rosary, called it his favorite prayer and added the Luminous Mysteries. In 2002, his apostolic letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* says, while it is Marian in character, it is a prayer centered on Christ. She carried Jesus in her womb and gave him his human characteristics while developing the most spiritually profound closeness and understanding. This spiritual closeness can be understood by everyone while contemplating the mysteries as they gaze into the face of Christ and ponder his saving grace in their hearts.

Mary’s “Yes” to be the God-bearer brings us the hope of salvation through her son whom she nurtured gently as an infant. She held Jesus’ entire life in her heart at the foot of the cross and became our powerful intercessor. We can stand at the foot of the cross and feel her gentle caress as she intercedes for us and points us to her son. Pray the life of Jesus Christ through the mysteries of the rosary and know the power of her bare heel. The rosary prayer is a powerful weapon.

*Monica Pugh is the Faith Formation director at St. John the Apostle Parish in Norwalk.*



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# I am a confiteor, how about you?

The Confiteor. This prayer blows me away.

When I was outside the Church in the Evangelical side of things, this prayer (which begins “I confess to Almighty God...”) would have been seen as a cheapened disgrace to God, because it was written by someone other than the speaker, therefore not representing any authenticity from the heart.


When I first heard this prayer (anew), as an adult, I knew my heart was being set straight again. I say “anew” because I had been raised in the Catholic Church but left it during my teen years to seek Jesus. I know, this sounds ludicrous now, but it is true. In trying to discover more, I got lost for quite a while. I’ll bet that many of you readers have known similar stories like mine.

During my junior year of high school, I ended up at a Billy Graham revival with friends where I learned that the non-Catholic view of my faith was that I wasn’t really a Christian after all. This was because I had been raised Catholic and baptized as a baby. The folks there went on to tell me that Catholics don’t really know Jesus and that I should pray like them for salvation.

I began to pray the Lord’s Prayer out loud when I was stopped and told, “You

Let’s Get Psyched

By Deacon Randy Kiel



never have to pray that prayer again. You must pray from your heart.”

I was stunned, but did not want to go to hell as they told me I would, so I prayed what they told me to pray: the four spiritual laws. I was told that night that I was saved and would go to heaven now if I died.

Whew! What a relief that was.

From that point on, for the next 25 years, I spent my life serving the Lord from many skewed theological perspectives that eventually ran their course. I had gone to Bible college (seminary, for you Catholic folks), become a Southern Baptist minister, “witnessed” on the beaches of southern California, saved members of gangs, and traveled many states singing Gospel songs.

It was many years later that I told my wife that I didn’t like church anymore, but I still believed in Jesus.

“So, let’s keep trying new churches

until we find one that we like,” she said. It was in this statement that I discovered a problem. I was looking for what I liked, not for what Jesus was asking of me.

It was then that I knew he was asking me to come back home to the Catholic Church. It was time to study. I read everything I could get my hands on. If you think I was shocked by this, you should have seen the look on my wife’s face. I’ll graciously save that story for another time.

We finally made it into a local Catholic Church to try a Mass with our four children. A few things from the Mass felt familiar to me, but not much. As for my family on the other hand, they knew nothing. My littlest two daughters were used to dancing in the aisles during the worship music at their “other” church, so they felt quite restrained. One of them even yelled out, “I hate this church!” I wanted to run but the pews were full.

Then another prayer began. Everyone prayed it at once. They said that they all confessed their sin to one another regardless of what they had done.

This was so foreign to me as evangelical because at the “other” churches, nobody would ever even think to admit that they sinned, let alone freely confess a sin. In fact, admitting to a sin was shameful and

left people ashamed and more afraid of sin rather than what I saw when people freely confessed their sin in this prayer.

It seemed to me that as we progressed through the Mass, people’s hearts got softer with each passing prayer until the big finale. Everyone walked toward the altar in common union. They were experiencing communion. I felt as though I had never seen this before.

One thing I knew for sure was that a message came from deep within myself, “I want more of this!”

I asked the priest later for the name of that beautiful prayer at the beginning and I tried to explain it to him as the sinner’s prayer and he told me it was called the Confiteor, meaning the confessor.

Internally, I heard the word resound, “Yes”, and I knew I was on my way back home.

So, I tell you all from the bottom of my heart, I am oh so glad to be home with all of you. May we all be good confiteors!

And truly, if any of you, young or old, feel like leaving the Church, please give me a call first! My love to you all!

*Deacon Randy Kiel serves at Christ the King Parish in Des Moines. He can be reached at [randy@kardiacounseling.com](mailto:randy@kardiacounseling.com).*

## Traveling mercies: Over the river and through the woods

The journey from a suburban Home Depot to our new country home spanned 11 miles and three helpers, winding over the river and through the woods. In the end, three crabapple trees successfully reached their destination.

It started in the parking long, where I collapsed seats and unrolled windows in my Honda Accord. I tried one configuration after another, but the trees weren’t fitting. I was about to return them to the lot when a man walked up and posed four blessed words: “Do you need help?”

He asked if I lived in town, offering to drive them to my house for me, then helped me devise a plan for the trees, clearing out my trunk and suggesting a back-roads route home. Soon I was on my way. The crabapples were mine because of

Twenty Something

By Christina Capecchi



a stranger’s kindness. Helper No. 1

A mile later the trees began sliding precariously. I was about to pass a friend’s home, so I made an emergency exit. Being able to unload the trees there brought such relief. Helper No. 2: an old friendship coming through in a pinch.

For the last leg, I was armed with confidence and a larger vehicle. I called my

grandma as I crossed the river, knowing how much she loves her crabapple. “Could you do me a small favor?” she asked. “Would you let me buy them for you?” Helper No. 3.

This spring has been a time of change. Moving a family takes enormous work and many helping hands. I feel God inviting me to grow in humility, to accept the help with an open heart and no ledger.

Hardworking Catholics are often led to believe that self-sufficiency is a virtue. I remember hosting a big Christmas party where a guest offered to serve food. It felt like the correct answer was “no, thanks, I’ve got it.”

I had to pause and re-examine that instinct. Would she have offered to help if she didn’t want to?

I smiled brightly. “Yes, please!”

When we allow someone to help us, we instantly feel closer to that person. And the next time that person needs help, he or she will be more comfortable asking for it.

It is good to be the helper, and it is holy to be the helped.

That’s the crux of it, the big opportunity: How can we be a vessel of God, letting others in and allowing them to grow? It takes humility, transparency – acting as a window for God’s light to shine through. In the process, we are all made better.

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


## A needed reminder

A Benedictine monk shared this story with me. During his early years in religious life, he had been resentful because he was required to ask permission from his Abbott if he wanted anything: “I thought it was silly, me, a grown man, an adult, having to ask a superior if I wanted a new shirt. I felt like a child.”

But as he aged his perspective changed: “I’m not sure of all the reasons, though I’m sure they have to do with grace, but one day I came to realize that there was some deep wisdom in having to ask permission for everything. We don’t own anything; nothing comes to us by right. Everything is gift. So ideally everything should be asked for and not taken as if it were ours by right. We need to be grateful to God and the universe for everything that’s been given us. Now, when I need something and need to ask permission from the Abbott, I no longer feel like a child. Rather, I feel that I’m more properly in tune with the way things should be in a gift-oriented universe within which nobody has a right to ultimately claim anything.”

What this monk came to understand is a principle which undergirds all spirituality, all morality, and every one of the commandments, namely, that everything comes to us as gift, nothing can be claimed as if owed to us. We should be grateful to God

By Father Ron Rolheiser



and to the universe for giving us what we have and careful not to claim, as by right, anything more.

But this goes against much in our instinctual selves and within our culture. Within both, there are strong voices which tell us that if you cannot take what you want then you’re a weak person, weak in a double way. First, you’re a weak personality, too timid to fully claim life. Second, you’ve been weakened by religious and moral scruples and are unable to properly seize the day and be fully alive. These voices tell us that we need to grow up because there is much in us that’s fearful and infantile, a child held captive by superstitious forces.

It’s precisely because of these voices that today, in a culture that professes to be Christian and moral, leading political and social figures can in all sincerity believe and say that empathy is a human weakness.

We need an important reminder.

The voice of Jesus is radically antithetical to these voices. Empathy is the penultimate human virtue, the antithesis of weakness. Jesus would look on so much that is assertive, aggressive, and accumulative within our society and, notwithstanding the admiration it receives, tell us clearly that this is not what it means to come to the banquet which lies at the heart of God’s kingdom. He would not share our admiration of the rich and famous who too often claim, as by right, their excessive wealth and status. When Jesus states that it is harder for a rich person to go to heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, he might have qualified this by adding: “Unless, of course, the rich person, childlike, asks permission from the universe, from the community, and from God, for every new shirt!”

When I was a religious novice, our novice master tried to impress upon us the meaning of religious poverty by making us write inside every book that was given to us the Latin words: *ad usum*. Literally: for your use. The idea was that, although this book was given to you for your personal use, you didn’t own it. It was only for your use; real ownership lay elsewhere. We were then told that this was true as well of everything else given to us for our personal use, from our toothbrushes to the shirts

on our backs. They were not really ours, merely given to us for our use.

One of the young men in that novitiate group who left the order is today a medical doctor. He remains a close friend and he once shared with me how today, as a doctor, he still writes those words *ad usum* in every one of his books. His rationale is this: “I don’t belong to a religious order. I don’t have a vow of poverty, but the principle our novice master taught us is just as valid for me in the world as it is for a religious novice. We don’t own anything. Those books aren’t really mine. They’ve been given to me, temporarily, for my use. Nothing ultimately belongs to anybody and it’s best never to forget that.”

No matter how rich, strong, and grown-up we are, there’s something healthy in having to ask permission to buy a new shirt. It keeps us attuned to the fact that the universe belongs to everyone, to God ultimately. Everything comes to us as gift and so we may never take anything for granted, but only as granted!

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website [ronrolheiser.com](http://ronrolheiser.com).*



## Pope Francis remembered as tireless shepherd



CNS photo/Paul Haring  
Pope Francis in 2016

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis, who died April 21 at age 88, was remembered as someone who was determined to live out the mission entrusted to him and serve others, even when his health deteriorated.

Presiding over a memorial Mass May 4, French Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, protodeacon of the College of Cardinals, said Pope Francis “remained faithful to his mission to the very exhaustion of his strength.”

“I was close to him on Easter Sunday, on the balcony of blessings of this basilica, as a witness to his suffering, but above all to his courage and determination to serve the people of God to the end,” Cardinal Mamberti said in his homily in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The main concelebrants at the memorial Mass, which marked the final day of the “novendiali” -- the nine days of official mourning and Masses for the late pope -- were Cardinal Leonardo Sandri and Cardinal Robert F. Prevost. Cardinal Prevost was elected to be the next successor of St. Peter.

# Chicago native elected pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, the Chicago-born prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops under Pope Francis, was elected the 267th pope May 8 and took the name Pope Leo XIV.

He is the first North American to be elected pope and, before the conclave, was the U.S. cardinal most mentioned as a potential successor of St. Peter.

The white smoke poured from the chimney on the roof of the Sistine Chapel at 6:07 p.m. Rome time and a few minutes later the bells of St. Peter’s Basilica began to ring.

French Cardinal Dominique Mamberti appeared on the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at 7:12 p.m. He told the crowd: “I announce to you a great joy. We have a pope (‘Habemus papam’),” saying the cardinal’s name in Latin and announcing the name by which he will be called.

Twenty minutes later, the new Pope Leo came out onto the balcony, smiling and waving to the crowd to give his first public blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city and the world).

The crowd shouted repeatedly, “Viva il papa” or “Long live the pope” as Pope Leo’s eyes appeared to tear up.

“Peace be with you,” were Pope Leo’s first words to the



CNS photo/Lola Gomez  
Pope Leo XIV appears on the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican May 8 following his election during the conclave. He is the first American-born pope in history.

crowd.

“My dear brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the risen Christ, the good shepherd who gave his life for God’s flock,” he said, praying that Christ’s peace would enter people’s hearts, their families and “the whole earth.”

The peace of the risen Lord, he said, is “a peace that is unarmed and disarming.”

Signaling strong continuity with the papacy of Pope Francis, Pope Leo told the crowd that God

“loves all of us unconditionally” and that the church must be open to everyone.

Telling the crowd that he was an Augustinian, he quoted St. Augustine, who said, “With you I am a Christian and for you a bishop.”

“Together we must try to be a missionary church, a church that builds bridges and always dialogues, that is always open to receiving everyone like this square with its arms open to everyone, everyone in need,” he said.

The new bishop of Rome told the people of his diocese and of the whole Catholic Church, “We want to be a synodal church, a church that journeys, a church that seeks peace always, that always seeks charity, that wants to be close to people, especially those who are suffering.”

A longtime missionary in Peru, the 69-year-old pope holds both U.S. and Peruvian citizenship.

The new pope was serving as bishop of Chiclayo, Peru, when Pope Francis called him to the Vatican in January 2023.

During a talk at St. Jude Parish in Chicago in August, the then-cardinal said Pope Francis nominated him “specifically because he did not want someone from the Roman Curia to take on this role. He wanted a missionary; he wanted someone from outside; he wanted someone who would come in with a different perspective.”

He served as prior general of the Augustinians and spent more than two decades serving in Peru, first as an Augustinian missionary and later as bishop of Chiclayo.

Soon after coming to Rome to head the dicastery, he told Vatican News that bishops have a special mission of promoting the unity of the church.

## Statement from Bishop William Joensen

Our sadness in the wake of the death of Pope Francis, mingled with great anticipation, now yields to joy and gratitude at the news of the election of his successor, Cardinal Robert Prevost, who has taken the name, Pope Leo XIV.

He has already been a devoted missionary to the people of Peru and South America. He is familiar with the workings of the Church, having overseen the appointment of bishops throughout the world, identifying priests with an evangelical spirit.

Now, he is the chief Shepherd of the Church and the Vicar of Christ. We have particular pride in this election in that Pope Leo XIV is a native of Chicago, of the Midwest, and of our country. He has, as Pope Francis said, the smell of the sheep, one who is among us, one who is able to identify with us. He is endowed with all the grace he needs to guide the People of God.

Nuestra tristeza en el funeral por la muerte del Papa Francisco combinada con una gran anticipación y esperanza, ahora abren el camino al gozo y la gratitud por la noticia de la elección de su sucesor, Cardenal Robert Prevost, quien ha asumido el nombre, Papa Leo XIV.

Él ya ha sido un devoto guía y pastor del rebaño de Cristo como Prefecto de del Dicastorio para los Obispos, y ahora está llamado a ser “servidor de los servidores de Dios” como Obispo de Roma y cabeza del Rito Latino de la Iglesia Católica. Aunque el proceso del cónclave seguirá siendo un misterio, tenemos plena confianza de que el Espíritu Santo fue el agente principal en el discernimiento y selección de los cardenales. La elección del Papa Leo XIV demuestra la universalidad de la Iglesia a seguir observando el llamado de Jesús de salir y a enseñar a todas las naciones, anunciando la Buena Nueva y bautizando a las personas para lograr su salvación.

Read the complete statement from Bishop William Joensen (Leer en espanol): [dmdiocese.org/news/pope-leo-xiv-announcement](https://www.dmdiocese.org/news/pope-leo-xiv-announcement)

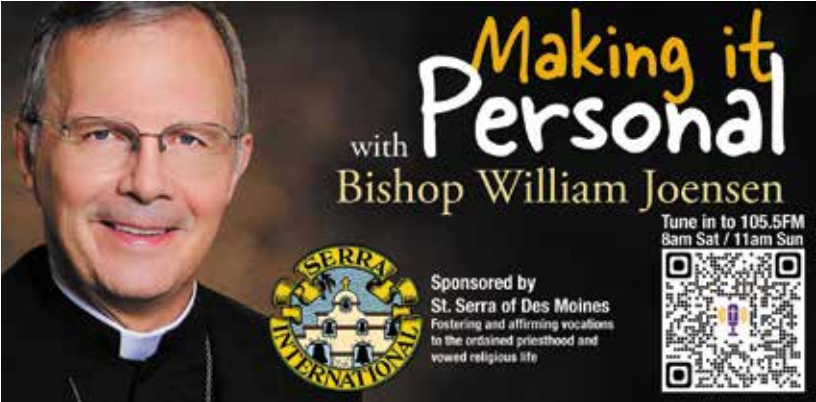
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## 2025 St. Katherine Drexel Route

As the three-year National Eucharistic Revival in the United States draws to a close on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage is excited to launch the **St. Katharine Drexel Route** from Indianapolis to Los Angeles.

The 2025 Drexel Route opens with a Mass of Thanksgiving in Indianapolis on Sunday, May 18th. The St. Katharine Drexel Route will be stopping in Des Moines on **May 27th** for a Holy Hour with Eucharistic Adoration followed by Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral.

**May 27, 2025**

St. Ambrose Cathedral, Des Moines, IA 50309

### Eucharistic Adoration

**11:00 AM - 12:10 PM**

You are invited to join the Perpetual Pilgrims for Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in downtown Des Moines at the St. Ambrose Cathedral.

### Mass

**12:10 PM - 12:50 PM**

Following Benediction you are invited to stay for the celebration of the Holy Mass.



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## Providing help and hope for all in need

By Kendall Begnoche  
Contributing Writer

In response to a rising need, Catholic Charities is creating a new service to help connect community resources to clients.

This service will help clients navigate local systems of support, linking them to housing, employment, healthcare, public transportation and other critical services that promote long-term stability and self-sufficiency.

Every day, individuals and families face challenges that threaten their stability and well-being.

In these moments of struggle, hope often comes through a helping hand. Catholic Charities, Diocese of Des Moines, offers that hand by serving those in need with care and compassion.

For more than 100 years, Catholic Charities has remained a vital resource for the people of central and southwest Iowa by offering vital programs that not only provide relief but also hope, dignity and empowerment. Guided by the core principles of Catholic Social Teaching, the organization addresses some of the most pressing challenges facing our community. Its mission to empower indi-

viduals and strengthen families comes to life through comprehensive programs and services, including counseling, domestic violence and sexual assault programming, an emergency family shelter, a food pantry and support for those navigating community resources.

In this Jubilee Year with a call to become “[Pilgrims of Hope](#),” the work of Catholic Charities takes on renewed significance. The programs and services offered through the organization provide real help to our neighbors in need when it matters most. At its heart, Catholic Charities is rooted in a deep belief in the inherent dignity of every person and the vital importance of building strong, resilient communities.

Catholic Charities invites everyone to join this pilgrimage and encounter Christ at the margins, where the struggling are often found. With needs continuing to grow, Catholic Charities welcomes individuals, parishes, and organizations to get involved through advocacy, financial support, donations or volunteering.

To learn more about Catholic Charities, to find help or offer support, visit [catholiccharitiesdm.org](https://catholiccharitiesdm.org).

## Bicycle Spirituality

Continued from page 2

will deviate from the straight and secure path and one will likely get a flat and be stopped dead in one’s tracks. So, too, for those of us embracing a form of bicycle spirituality, we are in constant need of people who refine our vision, who keep us fixed on our destination, and who bring the personal passion, faith, and integrity to their

vocation as leaders and guides.

Isn’t that who our new Pope Leo XIV is called by Christ to be for the entire Catholic Church? Isn’t he the leader for keeping us focused on our mission as Church to foster unity, to be champions of peace and reconciliation, to cast aside fear and boldly build bridges among people like us and unlike us? We are startled and exhilarated by the fact of a pope born in America, yet who freely undertook a missionary vocation in Peru, who worked both with the poor and with seminarians, embracing the charism of the Augustinian order. From Chicago to Chiclayo, Peru, and then to Rome as one who helped guide the process of choosing our world’s bishops—and now is the first among equals as bishop of Rome and servant of the servants of God—what a life’s bike ride indeed!

For all who are graduates, my concluding encouragement to you is in the key of Delbr l’s bicycle spirituality: Don’t stay here. Go! Get and keep moving, growing, being formed and forming others in your own right! The road will be steep at times, and you may feel yourself tilting, but know those to whom you can turn to keep your balance and your vision, your course set on what matters most. The God of communion who loves you and needs you has set in store good things for women and men like yourselves. May you become who God has called you to be!

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# ¡Espiritualidad Ciclista y un Nueva Papa Americano!

solamente con el impulso. Parecido a una bicicleta que no puede permanecer de pie sin moverse, una bicicleta que se mantiene reposando contra una pared siempre y cuando no nos montemos en ella para acelerarla en el camino. La condición que se nos da es una inseguridad vertiginosa y universal. Tan pronto comenzamos a verla, nuestra vida se inclina, se abre. Nosotros podemos mantenernos de pie para caminar, para correr, con el impulso de la caridad. (The Dazzling Light of God, pp. 61-62).

La espiritualidad inspirada por Cristo en las bicicletas de Delbrêl's nos previene contra la inercia y la parálisis. Nos sirve como un antídoto contra la conformidad de la pereza que se asienta en la seguridad de relaciones con personas que tienen ideas similares y credenciales establecidas, incluyendo la credencial de un título universitario, que nos dan cierta medida de seguridad. Incluso cuando estamos alejados de los demás, nosotros mismos nos convertimos en la fuente de fricción interna en el impulso que se desvanece por falta de dirección, crecimiento o confianza en la gracias – las condiciones necesarias para la auto trascendencia, la plenitud y la felicidad.

Los antiguos griegos hacían hincapié en un tipo específico de cambio interno que es un tipo de movimiento distinto al cambio de posición física o en cantidad (¡algo así como 15 libras!). El cambio puede tanto mejorar y perfeccionar nuestro ser, como causar una disminución, una reducción en nuestra capacidad de actuar en formas esenciales para alcanzar nuestro potencial humano. Clase de 2025, consideren los innumerables cambios que han vivido en sus más o menos cuatro años de preparatoria o de universidad:

- El desconectarse de ciertas relaciones que alguna vez fueron integrales en sus vidas conforme conocían y encontraban nuevas amistades;
- Los tal vez uno, dos, tres o más cambios de carrera y especialidad, cuando encontraban nuevos campos de conocimiento, se enfrentaron a ciertos límites cognitivos, tuvieron un despertar por parte de sus mentores o compañeros ya fuera en proyectos de colaboración, o en oportunidades de aprendizaje en servicio.

Más aún, ¿cuánto ha cambiado, madurado o disminuido su propia vida espiritual? ¿Pueden ustedes percibir aspectos del Reino de Dios entre nosotros, un reino de justicia y caridad en donde no se rompa caña doblada alguna, ninguna mecha humeante se apaga, los recién llegados a nuestra comunidad son tratados como hermanos cuyas líneas sanguíneas se pueden seguir hasta el Creador del Universo? Y mientras podemos tener diversas posiciones respecto a los hechos del cambio climático global, ¿son ustedes más adeptos para articular y hacer su parte en ayudar a cultivar una verdadera ecología

humana en su propia vida? ¿Tienen un sentido más profundo de solidaridad con sus comunidades locales y la sociedad en general hacia una meta común que solamente podemos lograr si escuchamos y colaboramos los unos con los otros? ¿Promueven que los demás tomen parte en las conversaciones y actividades que reflejan nuestra diversidad de dones y capacidades, disfrutando de bienes y frutos que no disminuyen cuando se comparten?

Espero que puedan responder ‘sí’ más de lo que dicen ‘no’ a estas preguntas, e incluso más fundacionalmente, que esta no sea la primera vez que estas preguntas los aprontan. Porque toda esta dinámica de cambio y desarrollo personal de los jóvenes y aquellos que toman parte en su formación es en buena parte la mente y el corazón de la Iglesia.

En todo nivel de educación, especialmente en el nivel universitario, la conexión entre el maestro y el alumno óptimamente debe despertar y cultivar un sentido de conexión con la realidad en toda su verdad, bondad y belleza. Esta dinámica puede suceder sin importar si alguien estudia física o ingeniería, literatura o música, kinesiología o filosofía.

Se descubre ante nosotros un tremendo misterio, pero está solamente disponible para aquellos que permanecen el tiempo suficiente para observar, que pueden soportar la presión de mantenerse en un solo objeto, una imagen, una persona por más de un nanosegundo en vez de cambiar constantemente de una cosa a otra del modo en lo que el difunto Papa Francisco, citando a Thomas à Kempis, llama “voyerismo espiritual” (ver Evangelii Gaudium no. 91).

O alternativamente, Podemos complacidamente recargar la bicicleta de nuestras vidas contra una pared, lo cual es diferente a recargarse en otros en los tiempos de retos o difíciles o incluso celebraciones llenas de gozo. El tiempo no parece detenerse cuando experimentamos una comunión genuina, cuando dependemos unos de otros en amistad, amor

y vida. Nos volvemos lo suficientemente vulnerables para ser transparentes y suficientemente atrevidos para acoger la tensión de tener que, si dependemos en otros, ellos seguramente se inclinarán al punto que tome precedente el compartir sus necesidades, sus prioridades, su sentido de dirección sobre a donde debemos dirigirnos.

El dejar a los demás y el dejar a Dios, no solamente acompañarnos sino ayudarnos a planear nuestro destino, significa el permitir la inseguridad, una forma de lo desconocido que no se puede remediar resolviendo números y acumulando más datos que manejen nuestros procesadores internos. Esta es una inseguridad que llama a la confianza, a una fe natural y sobrenatural, en donde caminamos, corremos o nos apresuramos hacia lugares, acciones y personas – ultimadamente, ALGUIEN, quien se descubre solamente en el curso del peregrinar de la vida.

Una pequeña y valiosa enseñanza que recibí cuando empecé a andar en bicicleta hace 25 años es el de siempre mantener la mirada hacia dónde queremos ir y no hacia donde no queremos ir. Porque si hacemos lo segundo, la bicicleta se desviará inevitablemente del camino recto y seguro y terminaremos con

una ponchadura o completamente varados. Así también, para nosotros que acogemos la espiritualidad ciclista, estamos en constante necesidad de personas que refinen nuestra mirada, que nos mantengan fijos en nuestro destino, y que traigan la fe, pasión e integridad personal de su vocación como nuestros líderes y guías.

¿No es a eso lo que nuestro nuevo Papa León XIV está llamado a ser para toda la Iglesia Católica? ¿No es él el líder para mantenernos enfocados en nuestra misión como Iglesia promoviendo la unidad, siendo campeones de la paz y reconciliación, el hacer a un lado el miedo y construir puentes con determinación entre quienes son como nosotros y con quienes no son como nosotros? Estamos sorprendidos y emocionados por el hecho de un papa nacido en Estados Unidos, quien asumió libremente una vocación misionera en Perú, que trabajó tanto con los pobres como con los seminaristas, acogiendo el caris-

ma de la Orden de los Agustinos. De Chicago a Chiclayo, Perú, y luego hacia Roma como alguien que ayudó en dirigir el proceso para elegir a los obispos del mundo – y que ahora es el primero entre sus pares como obispo de Roma y servidor de servidores de Dios – ¡vaya ruta ciclista de vida!

Para todos los graduandos, mi motivación final para ustedes es la enseñanza de la espiritualidad ciclista de Delbrêl's: No se queden aquí. ¡Vayan! ¡Levántense y sigan moviéndose, creciendo, formándose y formando a otros en su propio estilo! A veces el camino estará inclinado y pueden sentir que se tambalean, pero sepan de quienes pueden ayudarles a mantener su equilibrio y su visión, a establecer el rumbo sobre lo que es más importante. El Dios de la comunión que los ama y los necesita tiene preparadas cosas buenas para hombres y mujeres como ustedes. ¡Que puedan convertirse en lo que Dios los ha llamado a ser!

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## 2025 Biking for Babies Central Iowa Ride for Life

Join Bishop Joensen in supporting this year's Biking for Babies Ride for Life.

Are you ready to ride for life? Join the Central Iowa Ride for Life on June 28th at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church in Ankeny. There will be a 5-mile children & family ride, a 23-mile ride, and a 48-mile ride.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit the financial support and public awareness of local pregnancy resource centers and maternity housing including: **Agape Pregnancy Resource Center** in Des Moines, **InnerVisions HealthCare** in West Des Moines, **Martha's House of Hope** in Ames, and **Ruth Harbor** in Des Moines.

### Bishop William Joensen's Story



An avid cyclist and pro-life proponent, the relationship with Biking for Babies was a natural and passionate fit for Bishop Joensen.

In a letter to Vocations Directors, Bishop Joensen shared: "I speak for the entire Biking for Babies Board in affirming our conviction that together we can, by God's grace, advance the mission our Savior Jesus Christ entrusted to us, and do "even greater works" that will glorify our Triune God."



Scan the QR code to learn more and register or visit [dmdiocese.org/BikingForBabies](http://dmdiocese.org/BikingForBabies)





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