

THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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

Taking a 'faith-cation'

Whether it's Vacation Bible School or roadtrips to see our five Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage churches, we're blending faith and fun this summer



Fourth grader Jonathan Yock, of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish in Atlantic, and fourth grader Will Kanning, of St. Mary Parish in Anita, are working together on a craft activity matching animal tracks to the correct animal during their parishes' joint Vacation Bible School. Because of the Atlantic parish's center renovation, their VBS "Great Big Beautiful World" and 21 children went on the road to visit the four different parishes in their pastorate: Ss. Peter & Paul in Atlantic, St. Mary in Anita, Our Lady of Grace and Creighton University Retreat Center in Griswold, and St. Timothy in Reno/Cumberland.



Photo by Phillip Grothus

Campers at St. Francis Vacation Bible School had a trailblazing time helping their counselors cross the court without getting tagged. The game reminds us that when the path gets tricky, we can always trust Jesus to guide us through.



Des Moines' St. Mary of Nazareth parishioner Elvira "LV" Peace helps Ria Molitor with a project during "True North" Vacation Bible School.



Holy Trinity Catholic School seventh grader Lainey Naylor had her artwork on display at the Des Moines Arts Festival.



Father Seth Owusu, pastor of St. Patrick in Avoca and St. Mary in Walnut, joined parishioners on a trip to see the three Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage churches in Des Moines: Basilica of St. John, St. Ambrose Cathedral, and Christ the King.



Denise Mulcahy, director of teaching and learning for diocesan Catholic schools, organized a pilgrimage for school administrators to the Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage churches.



Father Max Carson gets in a game of gaga ball at Catholic Youth Camp with high school youth this summer.

Holy Day

The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Friday, Aug. 15, is a Holy Day of Obligation.

On this date, the Catholic Church commemorates that, at the end of Mary's life, she was taken up body and soul to heaven, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (974).

Three more faith & fun opportunities

JULY 19 - Praise in Park. Starts at noon and ends after the 6 p.m. Mass, at Jamie Hurd Amphitheater in West Des Moines. Praise bands, inspirational speakers, games, food trucks, and more. Bring the whole family, lawn chairs, and sunscreen for a fun day.

AUG. 4 - Concert for Life. Join Father Max Carson, of St. Patrick Church and St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs, and an all-priest band at the Val Air Ballroom in West Des Moines for music ranging from rock to ballads,

good for the whole family. Get tickets at dmdiocese.org/ConcertForLife.

AUG. 16 - Eucharistic procession. Starting at 8:20 a.m. take a shuttle from Albert the Bull in the park in Audubon to St. Patrick Church in Audubon for 9 a.m. Mass, then join Bishop William Joensen for a Eucharistic procession back to the park. Benediction will conclude the procession followed by a reception and fellowship. Get more information at dmdiocese.org/events.



Bishop William Joensen

Estirando el Alma en el Verano

Pidiendo disculpas a George Gershwin, estamos en verano y la vida puede ser o no ser fácil. Mucho depende de nuestra familia y situación laboral, así como los hábitos y estilos de vida que adoptamos. Pero aún así con las tareas y compromisos que inevitablemente prevalecen sobre nosotros, en este mes que celebramos la independencia de nuestra nación, se nos recuerda que es la responsabilidad de personas de fe como nosotros el poder ejercer nuestra libertad y ser más creativos y disciplinados al buscar nuestros momentos de santo reposos en donde dejamos que nuestras almas se relajen.

El Espíritu de Dios nos llama más allá de lo que nos lleva hacia el ajetreo y la productividad que nos dan satisfacción, pero que a la vez nos deja exhaustos y agotados. Nos asombramos con el mundo que nos rodea, contemplamos los momentos de la belleza y del poder de la naturaleza – que a la vez puede ser en veces terrible. Ya sea que nos invadan los aromas de las carnes

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THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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Summer Soul-Stretching

With apologies to George Gershwin, it's summertime, and the livin' may or may not be easy. A lot depends on our family and work situation, as well as the personal habits and rule of life we adopt. Yet even with the necessary tasks and commitments that prevail upon us, in this month when we celebrate our nation's independence, we're reminded that it falls to persons of faith like ourselves to flex our own freedom and be both creative and disciplined in claiming moments of holy leisure where we let our souls loose.

God's Spirit nudges us beyond the drive toward busyness and productivity that can be self-validating, but can likewise leave us feeling spent and frazzled. We behold the world around us, contemplate glimpses of nature's beauty and power—as terrifying as it may be at times. Whether or not the background aroma of barbecued mammals wafts over us, we savor conversations punctuated by silence and laughter with

friends and cherished loved ones where we are not arguing for our point of view or sinking to the lowest common denominator of gossip and detraction.

We open our hearts to the Source of Life, the Author of Creation in whose image we were created. God's seventh-day sabbath rest is enjoined upon us not so we can slink into passive semi-consciousness (though I'm a big believer in power naps!) or self-medicated torpor, but so that we might be refreshed, re-created, restored to life and stirred to praise and thanksgiving simply for the fact of being the only creatures after God's own heart. Josef Pieper, the Thomistic German-Catholic philosopher, in his classic work, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, captures this mindset: "Leisure, it must be remembered, is not a Sunday afternoon idyll, but the preserve of freedom, of education and culture, and of that undiminished humanity which views the world as a whole."

In any given season, taking a formal vacation may seem to be a luxury we can't afford, but three

individuals whose lives might seem to be located at very different points along the contemplative-active continuum reveal in their own ways the freedom and good sense that should inspire us to pursue and preserve a Sabbath spirit of holy leisure and contemplation.

The first is St. Thérèse of Lisieux, whose 100th anniversary of canonization is celebrated in this Jubilee Year 2025. Thérèse was admitted to the Carmelite monastery when she was only 15 years old. It was an answer to her heart's great desire to be with her own older blood sisters who had entered before her, to contemplate the Lord day and night, to behold her soul's beloved, Jesus. Yet wherever you go, there you are—she could not escape herself, her own psychological weakness and limitations. Her flawless obedience to the community's rule, her inclination toward extreme perfectionism resulted in a refractory tendency to treat faith with a sort of therapeutic obstinacy.

Yet, in retrospect, how rapidly God transformed her desire for

holiness into an abiding humility and trust in God's mercy. In relatively short order, Thérèse let go of her perpetual discouragement in herself and fixed her sights, her desires on Jesus, both Infant Child and Suffering Servant of the Holy Face.

Thérèse's great insight and wisdom purchased at the great price of her own total abandonment to God in trust and hope is that Jesus is loved fully when we allow ourselves to be loved by him. A pure heart is the fruit not of a program of self-denial, though this certainly takes place for love's sake, but of complete trust and hope born of prayer which consists primarily, as her namesake Teresa of Avila observed, in the exchange of friendship.

The second person is our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. From the moment of his election to the Chair of Peter, he hit the ground running and has sustained a formidable schedule of administering sacraments, hold-

Continued on page 14

Deans are appointed to deaneries

Bishop William Joensen recently created nine deaneries to better serve the people of the Diocese of Des Moines.

A deanery is a grouping of neighboring parishes which assists in the coordinating of pastoral care, the facilitating of common pastoral action, the implementing of diocesan policies, the sharing of pastoral concerns, and the communicating of information. See details in the May edition of *The Catholic Mirror* (dmdiocese.org/catholic-mirror).

Bishop Joensen has appointed a priest to serve as a dean within each deanery to act in his name by providing general oversight of the administration and pastoral ministry of local churches.

The dean has the following responsibilities:

- Ensures people receive genuine pastoral care,
- Creates opportunities for parishes to collaborate on shared concerns, goals, and ministry, and
- Supports the life, ministry, and well-being of the priests within the deanery.

The dean serves as a bridge of communion and channel of communication among the pastors and parish communities within the deanery, and between the deanery and the Bishop.



Official

Bishop William Joensen has made the following appointments for a three-year term effective July 15, 2025.

ATLANTIC DEANERY

Very Reverend Trevor Chicoine, while continuing as Pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul (Atlantic), St. Mary (Anita), Our Lady of Grace (Griswold), and St. Timothy (Reno/Cumberland); as well as the Diocesan Vicar for Divine Worship, is appointed Dean of the Atlantic Deanery.

COUNCIL BLUFFS DEANERY

Very Reverend Joel McNeil, while continuing as Pastor of St. Patrick Parish (Council Bluffs) is appointed Dean of the Council Bluffs Deanery.

DES MOINES NORTHEAST DEANERY

Very Reverend Dominic Assim, while continuing as Pastor of Assumption Parish (Granger), is appointed Dean of the Des Moines Northeast Deanery.

DES MOINES CENTRAL DEANERY

Very Reverend Raphael Assamah, while continuing as Pastor of St. Theresa Parish (Des Moines), is appointed Dean of the Des Moines Central Deanery.

DES MOINES SOUTHEAST DEANERY

Very Reverend Nicholas Stark, while continuing as Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Carlisle); as well as offering pastoral service at Christ the King and to the Hispanic community throughout the Diocese, is appointed Dean of the Des Moines Southeast Deanery.

DES MOINES WEST DEANERY

Very Reverend Christopher Hartshorn, while continuing as Pastor of Sacred Heart (West Des Moines), is appointed Dean of the Des Moines West Deanery.

HARLAN DEANERY

Very Reverend Samuel Danso, while continuing as Pastor of St. Patrick (Dunlap) and Sacred Heart (Woodbine), is appointed Dean of the Harlan Deanery.

NORWALK DEANERY

Very Reverend Daniel Kirby, while continuing as Pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish (Norwalk) and Administrator of the Shrine of the Assumption (Churchville); as well as Director of Junior and New International Priests, is appointed Dean of the Norwalk Deanery.

RED OAK DEANERY

Very Reverend Lazarus Kirigia, while continuing as Pastor of St. Mary (Red Oak) and St. Patrick (Imogene), is appointed Dean of the Red Oak Deanery.

Faithfully in Christ,
Most Rev. William Joensen, Ph.D.
Bishop

Jason Kurth
Chancellor

Parish advocates welcome everyone

New initiative trains liaisons who invite those with disabilities to participate in the life of their parish

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

Author and disability rights activist Judy Heumann once said, “Disability is a natural aspect of the human condition... We should accept it. Plan for it. Build our society around it.”

That “building” is happening in eight parishes that are in the process of introducing Parish Advocates, a program first brought to the Diocese in 2024.

A parish advocate serves as a liaison on behalf of people with permanent or temporary disabilities to promote full participation of people with disabilities in their parish.

The work of the advocate is helping to build a network to support people with disabilities, especially by forming relationships, and intentionally welcoming those with disabilities into a parish, said Patty Origer, diocesan coordinator of Persons with Disability Ministry.

The parish advocate fosters a welcoming presence in their parish for all people to share their unique gifts in four ways.

Two of the ways are collaborating: assisting the pastor in his ministry and working alongside other parish advocates in the community.

Lisa Arechavaleta is a parish advocate at her parish, Ss. John and Paul in Altoona. She became a parish advocate because of her passion for helping people who struggle silently, calling on her experience of advocating for her son with autism when he was a child. She says collaboration is essential.

She meets with a group at her parish, which includes a staff member from the parish, and they work and share ideas with one another. A parish advocate’s work is always done within the context of a parish, and working with the pastor is an essential element. “It’s never an island,” Arechavaleta said.

The Diocese also hosts quarterly meetings where parish advocates from different parishes meet and share their experiences, said Patty Origer, diocesan coordinator of Disabilities Ministry.

The parish advocate also works to welcome people with disabilities and their families and evaluates the needs of their parish communities.

Mary Clarke is a parish advocate at her parish, St. Boniface,



Photo by Ann Pierson

Lisa Arechavaleta and Father Mark McGeary, of Ss. John and Paul Parish in Altoona, with John Gaffney, diocesan director of Evangelization and Mission, and Bishop William Joensen, at the recent grant awards ceremony of Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa and Parish Mission Renewal.

in Waukee. She became a parish advocate because of her empathy for those who struggle with different challenges, especially challenges that seem hidden to others. Clarke draws from her own experience with blindness to better empathize and minister to other people’s needs.

Clarke emphasized the importance of creating a welcoming culture for people to share their needs. “Unless we know the needs, we have a hard time addressing the situation,” Clarke said.

The work of advocacy is important in two ways – for building and educating a community, she said. Her parish puts these two fundamentals into practice by hosting listening sessions. There, individuals have a space to share their needs, like the need for accessible pews for those with wheelchairs.

The mission of a parish advocate is to listen to the needs of their parishioners and help meet them rather than meeting a certain number of criteria.

“Be open to receiving the call to hear people where they are,” Arechavaleta said. “[Ask] what else can we do to make sure people feel like they are involved here too?”

Clarke also emphasized the need for love and compassion in the ministry, as Jesus taught, and not lose the “heart” of being a parish advocate by focusing solely on an agenda.

“Jesus gave us his example ...

He showed what it means to be inclusive,” she said.

By living that example, parish advocates can deepen their faith and the faith of others.

“Building relationships with others builds relationships with Jesus, and that’s what we want,” Origer said.

For more information on becoming a parish advocate, visit dmdiocese.org/ministries-and-faith-formation/deaf-disability-ministry/parish-advocate.




Photo by Ann Pierson

Mary Clarke, (left) the parish advocate at St. Boniface Church in Waukee, draws from her own experience with blindness to better empathize and minister to other people’s needs. She is pictured here with Sara Krohnke, the pastoral associate at St. Boniface.

Legacy gift continues donor support

You can support the Church’s effort to promote full participation of people with disabilities in our parishes with a gift to the Diocese’s Disabilities Ministry Fund, created in honor of Jeanine L. Rothermel. It serves Disability Ministry in perpetuity in her honor.

To learn more about the Rothermel fund, make a gift to this endowment, or learn how you can leave a legacy gift that continues the mission of your parish, Catholic school, or the Diocese by contacting the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa at cfswia.org or contact@cfswia.org.



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[Forbes.com](https://forbes.com)

Taking the Lord out as public witness to the faith



Father Daniel Adjei holds up the Eucharist during a procession around St. Pius X Church in Urbandale celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi.



Father Thomson Thomas processes through Osceola in celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Father serves St. Bernard Parish in Osceola, St. Patrick Parish in Grand River, and St. Joseph Parish in Mt. Ayr.

The U.S. bishops in 2022 launched a three-year Eucharistic Revival to emphasize the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

As part of the revival, there has been an emphasis on Eucharistic processions. The Diocese has begun a tradition of summer processions, now in its fourth year. A national procession came through the western part of the Des Moines Diocese last year.

Father Trevor Chicoine, director of the diocesan Office of Divine Worship, answers questions about Eucharistic processions and why the Catholic Church holds them.

Q: What is a Eucharistic procession?

A: A Eucharistic procession is a way of remembering the Lord is always with us. We take the Lord out into the street into the highways and byways of life, which is both a public witness to our faith and a reminder to us that faith doesn't stop at the door of the Church.

Q: What is the purpose of a procession?

A: We hold processions to be witnesses and to remind us that the Lord is present everywhere. He is not only to be worshipped on Sundays.

Q: How should people approach participating in a Eucharistic procession?

A: Usually there is walking involved with the faithful following the Eucharist. Sometimes there are structured prayers like the rosary, or there may be quiet prayer.

Q: What should people's take-aways be from Eucharistic processions?

A: We should have the courage to publicly witness to our faith. People can see that we are Catholic without imposing anything.

Also, faith should matter at home, work, and school as much as it does at church.

Celebrating Rural Life

Bishop William Joensen will lead a Eucharistic procession on Saturday, Aug. 16 in Audubon. All are invited.

- 8:20–8:50 a.m. – Shuttle from Albert the Bull in the park to St. Patrick Church.
- 9–9:45 a.m. – Mass at St. Patrick.
- 9:45–10:25 a.m. – Eucharistic Procession to Albert the Bull.
- 10:25–10:30 a.m. – Benediction.
- 10:30–11:30 a.m. – Reception and fellowship.

For more information, contact St. Patrick Church in Audubon.

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All-priest band comes to West Des Moines

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

On Aug. 4, you can hear an all-priest band sing original, Christian-friendly country, rock, and even rap songs at the Concert for Life, which is coming to Iowa for the first time.

The Concert for Life comes to the Val Air Ballroom as the first leg of a week-long tour. All proceeds from the West Des Moines concert benefit Pulse Life Advocates of Iowa and Gabriel’s Corner in Council Bluffs.

The band started in 2012 when Father David Michael Moses of the Archdiocese of Houston played at the Concert for Life in Houston to raise money for pregnancy centers as a seminarian. Before his ordination, Father Moses invited other priests and seminarians to play in the band.

By 2024, the band went on their first week-long tour with six priests playing in the band.

Father Max Carson of St. Patrick Parish in Council Bluffs joined the all-priest band as the lead guitarist in 2022.

Father Carson first encountered Father Moses through his social media presence earlier that year. Father Carson saw one of his friends, Father Joseph White, in one of Father Moses’ videos. The joy those priests have with their vocations stuck with Father Carson as he prayed that he might receive the graces to be a happy priest.

When Father Joseph White invited Father Carson to be a guitarist for the 2022 Concert for Life, he recognized the leader of the band as Father Moses. Remembering his prayer for graces, Father Carson saw the opportunity as an answer through doing something he loved – playing guitar.

The other members include Father Victor Perez from the Archdiocese of Houston, who plays the drums; Father Kevin Lenius from the Diocese of San Angelo, who plays the violin; Father Mike Elsner from the Diocese of San Angelo, who plays the bass; and Father Armando

Alejandro from the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, who plays the keyboard.

Father Moses writes all the songs while the other priests compose their respective instrument’s parts. All the songs reflect truths of the Catholic faith through fun and creative lyrics.

The Concert for Life shows another side of priests beyond what people usually see on Sunday: priests enjoying hobbies and glorifying God through them. Playing in the concert is an example of how anything that is good, true, and beautiful can be ordered towards the Lord, Father Carson said.

The concert has also been a means of outreach, even sparking vocation discussions with young men after the concerts.

“Seeing priests do something they like adds to the humanity of the priests,” said Father Carson. “And music breaks down social barriers.”

Father Carson invites everyone to pack the Val Air Ballroom



Photo by Ann Pierson

Father Max Carson, who serves both St. Patrick and St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs, is at Catholic Youth Camp this summer.


to hear great music, support a worthy cause, and witness priests offering their talents to the Lord.

“[Playing in the band is] one of the greatest joys of my priest-

hood, and I want to share it with the people of my diocese,” Father Carson said.

The Concert for Life is on Monday, Aug. 4 at the Val Air

Ballroom in West Des Moines. The concert will begin at 7:30. Tickets are \$10. You can purchase tickets at dmdiocese.org/ConcertForLife.



dmserra.com

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Msgr. Robert Chamberlain - July 3
Rev. Raphael Assamah - July 4
Rev. Charles Kottas - July 6
Most Rev. William Joensen - July 8
Rev. Alex Kramer - July 8
Rev. Lawrence Hoffmann - July 12
Rev. John Ludwig - July 13
Rev. Reed Flood - July 19
Rev. Seth Owusu - July 19
Rev. Thomas Dooley - July 30

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

Rev. Tim Fitzgerald - 50 years on July 25
Very Rev. David Fleming - 35 years on July 27
Rev. John Owuzu-Agyemang - 10 years on July 25

HAPPY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY!

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Knights serving others



Knights of Columbus in Council Bluffs presented a check to St. Albert Schools, Lewis Central Schools, and Council Bluffs Schools each in the amount of \$1,000. The gifts were collected through the Knights’ annual Tootsie Roll drive that supports people with intellectual disabilities. Pictured (left to right) are: Grand Knight Dennis McEneaney, St. Albert Principal Pat Ryan, Deputy Grand Knight Russ Sindelar, and St. Albert Director of Development Jonathan Quigley.



Knights of Columbus, 4th degree, Bishop Drumm Assembly 270 in Council Bluffs purchased and presented a traveling Mass kit for Father Emmanuel Offiong to take with him as a hospital chaplain. Pictured above (left to right) are: Dennis Shea, 4th degree Knight; Dennis McEneaney, 4th degree Knight; Father Offiong; and Russ Sindelar, Faithful Navigator of Assembly 270.

Make your own icon

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

All are invited to an icon making workshop this August. Drazen Dupor, a renowned iconographer, will lead the workshop. Dupor spent several years studying classical artists in Greece and has lived in Madison, Wisconsin since 2003, teaching iconography and painting commissioned icons across the Midwest. His icons can be seen locally at St. John the Apostle Parish

in Norwalk and Ss. John and Paul Parish in Altoona. During the workshop, Dupor will walk participants step-by-step through painting their icon of Archangel Raphael. Dupor makes the process approachable for those of all artistic abilities, said coordinator Samantha Fernholz. The workshop, in addition to teaching participants about iconography, is also designed for encountering the saints. “[Think of it] not only as a painting workshop but a mini retreat. Pray to the saint you are

painting. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you,” Fernholz said. Those interested in art or who want to learn more about iconography and the Eastern Church are encouraged to attend. The icon workshop will be held from Aug. 1-3 at St. Augustin’s Catholic School in Des Moines. The cost is \$270 to attend. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Samantha Fernholz at sclaman21@hotmail.com.

Making It
Personal
With Bishop Joensen

Tune in to Bishop William Joensen’s podcast to hear his latest guest sharing about their personal & spiritual life. Find Bishop’s podcast at iowacatholicradio.com/on-demand/



AROUND THE DIOCESE

July 19 Saturday Praise in the Park

WEST DES MOINES – Celebrate the Jubilee of Hope with a day of fun, praise, and worship from noon to 6 p.m. at the Jamie Hurd Amphitheater. Array of Hope will provide music, two speakers are scheduled, and Mass is at 6 p.m.

July 21, Monday Catholic Daughters

WEST DES MOINES – Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 302, invites all Catholic women 18 years and older to join them for their monthly meeting in the Serra Room at St. Francis of Assisi Church. Rosary is at 5:40 p.m., Mass at 6 p.m., light supper and meeting follow. If interested, contact Rosie at rohaver611@msn.com.

Catholics in Recovery

WEST DES MOINES – Catholics in Recovery provides resources and support for Catholics struggling with addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments. CIR aims to help individuals and families find freedom from these challenges through the 12 Steps and the Catholic faith. Group meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m. in Room 4 at St. Francis of Assisi. Questions? Contact Taylor at taylorbennett123@gmail.com.

July 23 Wednesday Tommy Leto Poker Run

DES MOINES – Join Catholic Charities for a poker run in honor of the late Food Pantry Program Manager Tom Leto. All proceeds benefit the food pantry. Visit four locations between 3 and 5 p.m. to collect a playing card. After collecting all four cards, gather at the Catholic Pastoral Center at 5 p.m. to collect your final card. See who has the best poker hand. Prizes and refreshments. \$75/individual ticket, \$100/couples ticket.

July 24-26 Thurs.-Sat. Rummage Sale

ANKENY – Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart will have its annual rummage sale: Thursday, 4-7 p.m. (\$5 early bird entrance from 4-5 p.m.); Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. – noon.

July 31 Thursday Summer Catechism

ATLANTIC – Join Deacon Stan Asjes for a special series that begins with exposition, a brief presentation on the catechism, Q&A session, time for private prayer and reflection, followed by benediction from 7-8 p.m. at Ss. Peter and Paul Church. Bring your Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage passport, or pick up one there, to get it stamped, as this is one of the pilgrimage churches in our Diocese.

July 31-Aug. 2 Thurs. -Sat. Garage Sale

DES MOINES – The Holy Trinity summer garage sale will be July 31 and Aug. 1 from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Aug. 2 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., which will include a bag sale. Items for sale include holiday décor, furniture, clothes, and toys.

Aug. 1-3 Friday-Sunday Icon Workshop

DES MOINES – Drazen Dupor, an iconographer from Wisconsin, will be at St. Augustin School

to teach how to paint an icon of Archangel Raphael. Workshop is \$270. Supplies will be provided. Contact Samantha Fernholz for more information and to register at sclaman21@hotmail.com.

Aug. 3 Sunday Chicken Dinner

ST. MARYS, IOWA - The 80th Annual Chicken Dinner will be held at the Immaculate Conception Church Hall in the town of St. Marys. Opening prayer will be at 12:30 with serving hours from 12:30 -5:30 p.m. Games for all ages, face painting, Farmers Market, and raffle items. Carry-out dinners are also available. The cost of the dinner is \$15/ adults and \$5/children ages 3-10. **50th Anniversary**

WAUKEE – Celebrate the 50th anniversary of priestly ordination of Father Tim Fitzgerald and Father Vince Rosonke at an open house at 12:30 p.m. followed by Mass at 2 p.m. at St. Boniface Church.

Aug. 4 Monday Concert for Life

WEST DES MOINES – Enjoy family-friendly music – everything from rock to ballads – performed live by an all-priest band (including our own Father Max Carson) during the Concert for Life at the Val Air Ballroom. Tickets are \$10 and proceeds benefit Gabriel’s Corner in Council Bluffs and Pulse Life Advocates. Get tickets at dmdiocese.org/events.

Aug. 9 Saturday Ignatian Retreat Day

URBANDALE – Emmaus House is holding its 10th annual Ignatian Retreat Day from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at its Urbandale location. Hear Lisa Kelly, of the Jesuit-founded Discerning Leadership Program, facilitate a day of understanding and experiencing four types of discernment. Register at theemmaushouse.org/tenth-ignatian-retreat.

Aug. 15-17 Friday-Sunday Family Camp

PANORA -- Bring the family for a summer camp weekend and reconnect with God through fun and faith formation at the St. Thomas More Center. Get details at dmdiocese.org/events.

Aug. 21 Monday Catholic Daughters

WEST DES MOINES – Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 302, invites all Catholic women 18 years and older to join them for their monthly meeting in the Serra Room at St. Francis of Assisi Church. Rosary is at 5:40 p.m., Mass at 6 p.m., light supper and meeting follow. If interested, contact Rosie at rohaver611@msn.com.

Aug. 28 Thursday 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. featuring Nashville musicians Phoenix Mendoza, John Leo (born in Iowa) and Kitty Steadman. The MC is Des Moines native and comedian Willie Farrell. Free-will donation for meal. Wine and beer available to purchase.

Invitation to encounter God benefits everyone

By Phillip Grothus
Contributing Writer

Each Lent at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines, the pastor, Father Joseph Pins, and director of Faith Formation, Katie Patrizio, invite parishioners to dedicate one percent of their day—about 15 minutes—to prayer.

While many find it difficult to sustain the habit, one parishioner accepted the challenge, and what followed was nothing short of extraordinary.

Larry Laughlin, a member of the parish, began participating in Eucharistic adoration, committing to a weekly hour on Mondays at 7 a.m. As a newcomer to adoration, he initially came prepared with books, prayer cards, and other devotional aids. Like many, he returned to the same seat each week, establishing a familiar rhythm. But one morning, when the chapel was unusually full, Laughlin realized he would need to shift seats to make a timely exit for work.

“A room full of adorers is a great problem to have,” he said. “But I needed to get to work.”

From that point on, he began sitting a few seats to the left—closer to the door. That small change would lead to something much bigger.

That first morning in his new seat and just a single prayer card in hand, Laughlin had a moment of clarity. As he prayed, he experienced a vivid spiritual prompting—a vision of a task God was calling him to undertake. When he opened his eyes, they fell upon a small olive wood sculpture of the Pietà, tucked into the corner of the chapel.

“I closed my eyes again, and the vision became clearer,” he said. “I knew what God was asking me to do.”

Laughlin felt called to bring a life-size replica of Michelangelo’s Pietà to St. Francis. He contacted Arte Divine, a group that has produced posthumous original editions of Michelangelo’s works since 2001, and brought the idea to Father Pins.

The pastor was immediately enthusiastic and envisioned placing the sculpture in the reservation chapel. Laughlin, however, felt strongly that the Pietà should be housed in a space that would invite deep personal prayer and



Photo by Fritz Nordengren
Larry Laughlin had a prayer experience that resulted in artwork that will aid others in prayer.

reflection—an adoration chapel.

Father Pins embraced the vision and encouraged Laughlin to begin the work of making it a reality. Over the next eight months, Laughlin secured donors and worked with Arte Divine to arrange delivery.

On Friday, June 20, the Pietà was unveiled to the parish. For now, it is housed in the main church, but its permanent home will be behind the altar in the



Photo by Phillip Grothus
Father Alex Kramer (left) and Father Joseph Pins (right) show a life-size replica of Michelangelo’s sculpture, the Pietà, which was gifted to St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Des Moines by a parishioner who decided to spend one hour a week in adoration. The parishioner, Larry Laughlin, hopes the image invites others to deep personal prayer and reflection.

St. Francis Day Chapel, a sacred space that will seat 150 for daily Mass, small weddings, and Eucharistic adoration.

All are welcome to view the sculpture daily between 6 a.m.

and 8 p.m.

More than just a work of art, the Pietà is a testament to the power of prayer—and a reminder of what can happen when we say “yes” to the quiet call of the Lord.

BLOOM: Because Loving Ourselves and Others Matters
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WITH LIVE MUSIC FROM **ARRAY OF HOPE**

AOH Music is the music division of Array of Hope, led by Brianne Nealon and Jack Garno. AOH Music performs around the country leading audiences of all ages in fellowship. In addition, the band has performed at various large events such as the One Life LA event in Los Angeles, Abbey Fest in Pennsylvania, the DFMC Conference in Denver, and the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis.

About the Speakers



ALANIS VEGA | "WHO AM I?"
Alanis Vega is a content creator for Array of Hope. Alanis started with The Culture Project as a missionary and currently is the face and voice of all of its social media platforms. She can be seen daily praying the "Divine Mercy Chaplet" live on Instagram to its thousands of followers. In addition, Alanis appears on many of the Array of Hope films and the popular Saint videos.



JOSHUA ROSA | "HOPE & HOME"
Joshua Rosa is a co-founder of Agnus Dei Ministry, published author, Catholic speaker, and passionate follower of Jesus Christ. Joshua has been blessed to travel around the country as a dynamic speaker sharing the Gospel and love of Jesus to youth, young adults, and adults alike, most notably at the recent National Eucharistic Congress.

FREE ENTRY

July 19, 2025 | 12PM - 6 PM

4100 MILLS CIVIC PKWY, WEST DES MOINES, IA 50265

Celebrate the Jubilee of Hope with a day of Praise in the Park. There will be live praise & worship from Array of Hope, Catholic speakers, Eucharistic adoration, food trucks, and games, ending with the celebration of the Mass at 6 PM.

www.dmdiocese.org/PraiseInThePark



Catholic foundation celebrates 10 years of grants

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

Worthy causes were celebrated and funds were awarded at the 2025 Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa grants ceremony held in Des Moines at the Catholic Pastoral Center on Wednesday, June 25.

Seventeen organizations benefitted from the grants, including 10 parishes, two schools, one youth group, and four faith-based non-profit organizations.

This year, the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa shared \$122,199 in grant money – its highest grant distribution to date.

The Catholic foundation is a non-profit organization that began in 2012, with the intent to provide a connection of our Catholic faith to investment options and planned giving for parishes,

organizations and individuals. The foundation began distributing these grants in 2016, making this year the 10th anniversary of the grant awards ceremony.

Grant applications are submitted electronically and then reviewed based on several criteria, including innovation, replicability, the number of people impacted by the grant, and the legacy the grant may have on the organization or greater Diocese.

This year’s grants came from two categories: Catholic Foundation General Grants; and Parish Mission Renewal Endowment Fund Grants. Awards came from either of the categories, or a bit from each.

The Catholic foundation grants are funded through the organization’s annual budget.

Parish Mission Renewal Grants are funded via the Parish Mission Renewal Endowment

Fund, established thanks to generous gifts to the Ignite! capital campaign.

Four organizations benefitted from foundation grants, including Catholic Charities in Council Bluffs, Mary’s Helping Hands, Shelby County Catholic School in Harlan, and St. Patrick Parish in Missouri Valley.

Ten parishes and schools received Parish Mission Renewal grants for a variety of projects, including technology upgrades, funding for faith-based lecturers and speakers, and educational resources in our schools.

Christ the King Parish and School received the largest grant to date from this category: over \$33,000 to implement a collaborative project of white boards for use by the school as well as the parish adult and youth Religious Education programs.

Additionally, Iowa Catholic

Radio, Pulse Life Advocates, and Council Bluffs Youth Group benefitted from grants funded both by the foundation and Parish Mission Renewal.

Previously, the foundation categorized the grants into three groups: General Grants, Cornerstone Grants, and Parish Mission Renewal Grants.

The Cornerstone and General Grants were funded by the Catholic foundation.

The removal of the Cornerstone Grant category now allows recipients who receive grants from the foundation up to \$10,000 in any year moving forward to re-apply the following year.

The generosity given to the 17 organizations relate to the Catholic foundation’s mission of connecting the Catholic faith with investing and planned giving.

“It is our core mission to connect our faith to investing and

planned giving. How better to do that than to reinvest in programs and services in our diocese?” said, Sue McEntee, the foundation’s executive director.

Organizations that wish to learn more about the application process for a grant are encouraged to visit catholicfoundationiowa.org/organizations/grant-program.

(See a full list of grant recipients on page 9.)

2026 Grant Program

- Jan. 26 - Grant portal opens and webinar trainings begin.
- April 24 - Grant applications are due.
- May 22 - Applicants learn the award outcomes.
- June 24 - Grant awards ceremony.



Photo by Ann Pierson

Pictured above are representatives of Catholic organizations that were awarded grants on June 25 to cultivate connections in Christ. The Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa began distributing grants in 2016. This year \$122,199 was distributed through foundation funds (\$48,334.55) and investment growth of the Parish Mission Renewal endowment (\$73,864.45). The foundation connects the Catholic faith with charitable giving and investing. For more information, go to cfswia.org.

Grants awarded to parishes and Catholic organizations since the founding of the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa.

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Lifetime total
\$50,000.00	\$51,629.00	\$50,100.00	\$50,000.00	\$30,850.00	\$49,870.00	\$70,000.00	\$75,415.00	\$186,341.27	\$122,199.00	\$736,404.27

Note: Availabile funds were down in 2020 due to the pandemic.



ICR 2025 Team: Tony Valdez (left), Joe Teeling, Brian Sweeney, Leslie Teeling, Bo Bonner, Mark Campbell, Elise Kerr, Ayden Pugh, Belle Marasco, Matt Willkom, August Farruggi. Greg Richwine and Peggy Moffet (not pictured). photo credit: Laura Wills



The Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa has awarded Iowa Catholic Radio a grant to build a video podcast studio. Thank you CFSWIA for furthering our expansion into new mediums so we can connect more people to Jesus Christ. Learn more about the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa on their website! <https://www.catholicfoundationiowa.org/>



Awards from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa & Parish Mission Renewal

Organization	Grant’s Purpose	Awards	Details
Iowa Catholic Radio	Podcast Room	\$3,500 Foundation \$1,000 Parish Mission Renewal	Iowa Catholic Radio seeks to evangelize through a media platform designed to help people discover the full truth about themselves and the relevance of the Catholic faith. ICR is in the process of amplifying that message and its outreach with an expansion plan to ultimately establish a statewide network.
Pulse Life Advocates	Video Conference Rm	\$3,500 Foundation \$1,000 Parish Mission Renewal	Pulse hopes to reach parishes with pro-life ideas, support and resources using the educational tools they developed by hosting quarterly meetings with parish and school pro-life groups throughout the Diocese. Their primary focus this year is reaching more youth with the pro-life message.
Council Bluffs Youth Group	Space for multi-parish use	\$973.55 Foundation \$4,026.45 Parish Mission Renewal	The Fully Alive Youth Group was born from a trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference in 2023. The young disciples built strong friendships and wanted to continue their faith growth together. We currently meet twice a month and rotate between parishes in Council Bluffs. They would like to move into a permanent space at the St. Francis rectory.

Awards from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa

Catholic Charities Domestic Violence Shelter	Mattresses & bedding	\$5,000 Foundation	This request is to replace the mattresses in Catholic Charities’ Emergency Shelter in Council Bluffs. Their goal is to provide a safe and clean living environment in the shelter for women, men, or children who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking. The mattresses in the shelter are over 12 years old and need to be replaced.
Mary’s Helping Hands	1st yr necessities	\$15,544 Foundation	The purpose of this grant is to sponsor 21 infants by providing essential clothing for their first year of life, ensuring they have the necessary items to thrive during their earliest, most formative stages. The cost to support one baby for an entire year is \$702.
Shelby County Catholic School	Start Transitional Kindergarten	\$9,917 Foundation	To provide the very best foundation for the youngest learners in Shelby County, they sought grant funding to help cover the cost to get a Transitional Kindergarten Program up and running.
St. Patrick Parish, Missouri Valley	Security Upgrades	\$10,000 Foundation	They sought support to install livestreaming equipment, commercial-grade security cameras, and a fob-entry door system with remote access for three key entrances to their facility. These upgrades are essential to better serve their 206 registered families—comprising 640 individuals—and meet their spiritual and practical needs.

Awards from the Parish Mission Renewal fund, supported by the Ignite! capital campaign

Sacred Heart Parish, West Des Moines	NCYC Support for Students with Need	\$4,500 Parish Mission Renewal	They hope to increase the availability of the National Catholic Youth Conference for an encounter with Jesus for teens who would otherwise not be able to attend.
Assumption Parish, Granger	TVs & Computers for Adult & RE Programs	\$6,678 Parish Mission Renewal	The parish will purchase Smart TVs and laptops for their Faith Formation staff serving people of all ages, and to assist with the technology strategy as defined by the parish.
Christ the King Parish & School, Des Moines	White Boards for Adult & Youth Programs	\$33,610 Parish Mission Renewal	The parish and school will get 10 interactive boards to transform learning and engagement. This technology will impact students, youth, and adults, bringing lessons to life and creating more inclusive, dynamic, and participatory environments across all their educational programs.
Holy Trinity Parish Des Moines	Hearing Assistive Devices	\$2,650 Parish Mission Renewal	Holy Trinity will purchase hearing assist devices that work within its existing sound system to aid parishioners and other Mass attendees in fully participating in the Mass.
Ss. John & Paul Parish Altoona	Hearing Assistive Devices	\$5,887 Parish Mission Renewal	Ss. John & Paul Parish wants to address the unintentional exclusion of valued parishioners—particularly their founding members and others with hearing loss—by improving accessibility across their parish facilities.
St. Catherine of Siena Des Moines	Dialogue Series Support	\$5,000 Parish Mission Renewal	This grant will support the second iteration of the St. Catherine of Siena Dialogue Series, a catalyst for transformative spiritual growth, inviting all participants to enlarge understanding, deepening spirituality, and working for the common good.
St. Columbanus Parish Weston	Speaker Support	\$814 Parish Mission Renewal	This grant request will support the cost of a speaker to engage parishioners. The request included support of the equipment needed for this event and for bible studies.
St. Mary Parish Red Oak	Summer Movie Series	\$1,500 Parish Mission Renewal	Their vision is to create a family friendly event to engage both existing parishioners and facilitate connections with prospective parishioners. These events would have a bring-your-own lawnchair or blanket-type atmosphere with their religious education youth selling concessions to raise funds for National Catholic Youth Conference.
St. Patrick Parish Bayard	Lenten Retreat Series	\$5,000 Parish Mission Renewal	St. Patrick’s Ladies Guild will support a series of Lenten retreats in 2026.
St. Theresa Parish Des Moines	Projector for Worship Space	\$2,199 Parish Mission Renewal	St. Theresa needs a projector for its worship space in order to better meet the needs of some of their parishioners in the experience of Mass and other programs hosted in that space.

Myosotis: I’ll never forget this word

Myosotis. Is this a rare new disease? Is it contagious? While the word “myosotis” does sound like something dreadful, it is actually a thing of beauty. It is a flower. In fact, it is the official state flower of Alaska.

Years ago, I was on a mission trip in Monterrey, Mexico hiking with a youth group high up in the mountains. At our altitude, the land was dry desert and rock; drought-stricken trees and tumbleweeds were the sign of a time long ago when enough rain had produced vegetation. But no signs of life were coming from this mountainous land during our hike.

As the youth minister, nothing put me into teaching mode more than nature. So, I began sharing insights and lessons from a newly discovered author which I was reading on the trip down from Iowa. I shared the author’s name as Francis De Sales. I left out the word “saint” because this was an evangelical mission trip and, at this time, I was studying Catholicism incognito (little did I know why). The book I was reading was called Introduction To The Devout Life.

I was teaching the teens about how God never forgets his people, even in the deserts of a foreign land upon a mountain with no sign of life nearby.

One of the kids shared how she felt so insignificant compared to the view of the city from so high up the mountain.

Let’s Get Psyched

By Deacon Randy Kiel



I tried to convey the message from my newly discovered (Catholic) author of God’s ever-presence and of his validation of each person’s significance, when my eye caught sight of something growing between a crag in the rocks. It was a periwinkle-colored five petal flower, no larger than the tip of my finger.

When I showed the kids, one immediately said, “Let’s pick it!”

“Absolutely not!” I insisted. It was from this little flower, that (Saint) Francis De Sales’ message came alive to me. This little flower was a sign that the beauty of God ALWAYS exists. Whether it is in the expansive view from the mountain top or the delicate intricacy of the tiniest of flowers, or even in his most prized creation, all of us.

We, as his children, can never be forgotten by the Father because forgetting is only a human quality, not a quality of the Father’s divinity.

Yet, after returning home to Iowa, I couldn’t forget that tiny little flower. So, I searched through many local nurseries and finally found it. I looked on the tag to discover its name and read: Myosotis. I had never even heard the word, and it did not sound pretty. Then, I read further on the tag and saw that it had a nickname, “Forget-me-not.”

Wow!

The thoughts of that day atop the mountain in Mexico raced through my mind, “I’ll not forget you” “I’ll never leave you or forsake you.” No wonder I couldn’t forget about this little flower. It is in the smallest of creation that we are able to see the grandeur of God. This was the message of St. Francis De Sales.

It is so human of us to be impressed with earthly grandeur, high achievement, popularity, and large donations, but Scripture teaches us differently. It teaches us of the power of a mustard seed that could move a mountain, of the sacrifice of a widow’s mite that was able to sustain the financial need of the temple treasury, and of a little boy’s lunch that was able to feed 5,000.

In the eyes of God, nothing is small.

At times we feel small. This is commonly due to poor comparisons.

Comparison is thought to be the by-product of original sin. It evokes shame. It is in this human struggle that

we are taunted to pursue worldly success, accolades, and prestige. Proverbs 30:24 teaches us of four things that are small but wise.

1. Ant. They have little strength, but they store up their food for a winter.

2. Hyraxes. They have little power but are able to make their homes and survive in the most desolate of rocky crags.

3. Locusts. They have no king, yet they advance in ranks.

4. Lizards. While they are able to be caught by the human hand, they are placed in king’s palaces.

It is our mental health that makes us feel small and insignificant, never life. Life is our most common scapegoat to blame.

But maybe we ourselves, along with the teachings of St. Francis De Sales, could demonstrate that even in the smallest of things, we could learn that God’s beauty always surprises, and his strength is always mighty, yet delicate.

Let’s allow ourselves to be as unassuming as the Myosotis flower. And, may we continually realize, that without God, we would all be forgotten.

But with God, He will forever “Forget-Me-Not”.

Oh, thank you Lord!

Deacon Randy Kiel serves Christ the King Parish in Des Moines. He can be reached at randy@kardiaccounseling.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Diocese of Des Moines Parishioners:

On behalf of everyone at Link Associates, I want to thank you for your support through the 2024 Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Link received a \$1,400 grant designated to support persons with intellectual disabilities to live in a home in the community. Thank you so very much for the financial assistance!

I can’t tell you how much I appreciate your choosing Link. Your contribution was used to make necessary basement repairs to one of our homes, resulting in both keeping the basement dry and treating radon thus ensuring a healthy and quality home living environment to individuals needing support.

Link offers supported community living services to individuals with intellectual disabilities and special needs in central Iowa.

Twenty-three homes where persons we serve live are maintained by Link, while other individuals receiving services live in apartments or with family. Link’s team of caring professionals learn and address the needs and concerns of each person receiving services.

For nearly 50 years, Link has been offering residential supports to those with a disability. Presently, 126 individuals are supported in the community while many who need services wait on the referral list. By financially supporting advancements to one home, you are helping us to maintain all homes in good quality, support all 126 participants in our program and to expand our services to address the needs of more individuals in the community.

Thank you for partnering with us to meet the needs of our vulnerable community members.

Linda Dunshee
Executive Director of Link Associates

Poetry and spirituality

By Father Ron Rolheiser



Who still reads poetry? In a digital age and in a time when the empirical has for the most part replaced the spiritual, what’s the value of poetry? What does it bring to the table?

One of the intellectual giants of our generation, Charles Taylor, in a recent book *Cosmic Connections, Poetry in the Age of Disenchantment*, answers that question. Poetry is meant to reenchant us, to help us see beyond the tedium of everyday ordinariness, to see again the deep innate connections among all things.

For Taylor, as children, we are in touch naturally with the deep innate connections among all things; however, our normal growth and development work away at dissolving our original inarticulate sense of cosmic order. But we sense this loss and have an inchoate longing to recover that sense of wholeness.

And that’s where good poetry can help us.

When we experience something, we don’t simply receive it, like a camera taking a photo, we help define its meaning. In Taylor’s words, “We do not just register things; we re-create the meaning of things.” Thus, like any good work of art, the function of poetry is to transfigure a scene so that the deeper order of things becomes visible and shines through. The French poet, Stephane Mallarme, suggests that the function of art is not to paint something, but to paint the effect it is meant to produce.

For Taylor, a good poem can do that. How? By helping us see things from a bigger perspective.

Wrapped up in our own lives, we are too close and so absorbed that we cannot properly name what we are going through. “Poetry gives it a plot, a story, and this in a way that gives it a dramatic shape. We can now see our life as a story, a drama, a struggle, with the dignity and deeper meaning that it has. For example, by giving poetic expression to a distressful emotion, poet-



ry allows us to hold it at a distance. The business of the poet is to make poetry out of the raw material of the unpoetical.” As William Wordsworth once said, poetry is “emotion recollected in tranquility.”

And to do that, the poet needs to employ a different language.

Here’s how Taylor puts this: “Poetry is the ‘translation’ of insight into subtler languages. What cannot adequately be understood in instrumental language, namely, value, morality, ethics, love, and art, require explorations which can only be carried out in other vocabularies. The language of empiricism is essentially an instrument by which we can build a responsible and reliable picture of the world as it lies before us, but that world is no longer seen as the site of spirit and magic forces. Rather the universe is now understood in terms of laws defined purely by efficient causality.”

And he goes on: “So a crucial distinction comes to the fore, between ordinary, flat, instrumental language which designates different objects, and combines these designates into accurate portraits of things and events, all of which serve the purpose of controlling and manipulating things. ... [while] on the other hand, truly insightful speech [good art] reveals the very nature of things and restores contact with them. Poetic language gives us a sense that we are called, we receive a call. There is someone or something out there.”

Poetry parallels music as a *paralinguistic practice*. But what has any of this to do with spirituality, not least Christian spirituality? Aren’t poetry and art pure-

ly subjective and, as such, often amoral? Taylor would sharply disagree in so far as this pertains to good poetry and good art. Good art, he suggests, is never a matter “of shifting taste”.

Taylor suggests that the meanings we experience in good poetry and art have their place alongside moral and ethical demands. Why? Because, for Taylor, in good poetry and good art “the experience is one of joy and not just one of pleasure.” The difference? “You experience joy when you learn or are reminded of something positive, which has a strong ethical or spiritual significance, whereas intense pleasure tends to enfold you even more in yourself.” For Taylor, joy awakens a “felt intuition” which is not merely subjective. It is an opening to the ontological, to God.

Finally, quoting Baudelaire, Taylor leaves us with this insight: “It is both by poetry and through poetry, by and through music, that the soul glimpses the splendor beyond the grave; and when an exquisite poem brings tears to the edge of the eyes, these tears are not the proof of an excess of enjoyment, *they are rather the testimony of an irritated melancholy, of a postulation of the nerves of a nature exiled in the imperfect and which would like to seize immediately, on this earth, a revealed paradise.*”

So, what has poetry to do with spirituality?”

To recast St. Augustine: *You have made us for yourself, Lord, and when poetry and music stir our hearts with irritated melancholy, we recognize that ultimately our rest lies in you alone.*

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a professor of Spirituality at Oblate School of Theology and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website ronrolheiser.com. Follow on Facebook at facebook.com/ronrolheiser.

Hope against hope in small acts of love

Jubilee of Hope

By John Huynh, D.Min.



We live in a world saturated with symbols, but few of them actually mean what they show. For example, a Facebook “like” can suggest friendship, support, or solidarity. Often, though, it requires nothing from us and does little for the other person. It gestures without truly giving.

Karl Rahner, the Jesuit priest and theologian, insisted that symbols are not merely signs pointing to something beyond themselves. True symbols, like the sacraments or acts of love, make present what they signify. In this way, Christian charity is never just a gesture of goodwill or a sign of inner affection. When we serve our brothers and sisters in charity, we enfold our love for them through our actions.

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Des Moines, is a symbol of Christ’s love for the thousands of brothers and sisters we serve each year through our different programs. While financial gifts are crucial to sustaining our mission, the physical, human act of being present to prepare and serve a meal, or to drive to Hy-Vee and pick up rescue food to hand out for the day is a sacramental witness to love in action.

In a time when despair often runs deep, presence is a grace-filled antidote.

And the greatest teacher for us when it comes to the power of being present is Mary, Mater Spei—the Mother of Hope. At the foot of the cross, she stood, likely torn by anguish yet did not turn away. Surely, she could have shouted the same doubt we all feel when the world around us falls apart. Yet she believed that her beloved son would rise again.

This July, the Church celebrates the Jubilee of Hope for young adults and youth; we are reminded that the fire of hope is active in our young faithful. They are hope in a world marked by deep wounds: war, social and political division, hunger, and human trafficking, etc. The Church calls them to have the courage to believe that small acts of love can still matter. The Church and the world need their energy, their presence, and their love.

J.R.R. Tolkien, through Gandalf the wizard in *The Hobbit*, puts it this way: “I have found it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love.”

Hope against hope finds itself in quiet persistence: small acts of love, a patient presence, a hidden act of mercy. These are not naïve gestures. They are a refusal to allow despair to have the final word. They say, as Mary believed, that love would rise again.

So I urge you, and especially the young adults and youths of the Diocese, to join us during this Jubilee of Hope. Sign up to serve at our food pantry. Volunteer to cook a meal for the individuals and families in our emergency shelters in Council Bluffs or Des Moines. Organize a parish service project to support victims of domestic or sexual abuse by collecting and assembling comfort kits with toiletries, blankets and journals. Advocate for our programs. Or donate items that directly meet people’s needs. Visit catholiccharitiesdm.org/get-involved to learn more.

Hope has hands. Let them be yours.



A volunteer serves a meal at the Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter in Des Moines for families in need of housing.



Volunteers at Catholic Charities’ Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program in Council Bluffs helped plant a garden earlier this year for those who seek shelter and safety.

On Prayer

By Monica Pugh



Pencil in a novena

I love to sit with my planner and a freshly sharpened Dixon Ticonderoga No. 2 pencil. I plan, count weeks and days, and look ahead a month at a time writing everything in pencil just in case. Those pencils have the best lead and erasers and remind me of happy school days.

We are halfway through our Jubilee Year of Hope focusing on prayer. School is out for summer and the humid days have arrived. Perhaps it is time to pencil in some time for special prayers. But as I look for space on my calendar, penciling in prayer seems vulnerable.

Prayer is vulnerable. Prayer is learning to live every day in what we cannot see. Prayer teaches us to move away from the visible knowing God’s calendar is better than our own. Our lives are moving closer to or farther from God depending on our daily choices. Hopefully, our desire is to move closer to God when times are good and bad. Sometimes, in order to move closer, it helps to make a plan. Attending Mass and studying about God is the first step in being vulnerable to deepen our faith. Planning time for prayer might be the next step in vulnerability and trusting God’s will for our lives. Sometimes I pencil in a novena.

Novenas are prayers designed for calendars. Novena comes from the Latin word “novem” meaning nine. It is reflective of the nine days between the Feast of the Ascension and Pentecost where the disciples and Mary gathered in prayer waiting. These nine days of their prayers are considered the first novena. Today the list of novenas is extensive and could easily fill our calendar for a length of nine days, weeks or months.

The Surrender Novena holds a special place in my heart. The Surrender Novena was given to Servant of God Father Dolindo Ruotolo (1882-1970) who was a contemporary of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, more commonly known as Padre Pio. Padre Pio had a devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Surrender Novena was given to Father Dolindo by Jesus. It is often prayed during times of difficulty as a way to seek peace in God’s will.

I prayed my first Surrender Novena in September 2020 at the suggestion of a faithful friend who offered to lead me in prayer each morning by phone call. We prayed the daily prayers and repeated 10 times “Oh Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything” in unison for nine days. God answered by bringing me a deep abiding peace even though I could not see what was to come. Vulnerability in prayer showed me my strength not my fragility.

Search for novenas or locate one on your favorite app, pencil it in on your calendar and make a plan. Perhaps ask a friend or spouse to participate for accountability. We are free to plan and hope we plan in God’s will in all areas of our lives. Proverbs 19:21 says, “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.”

In prayer we can know our strength through our surrender.

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

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Local youth heads to synodal delegation in Ghana

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

Catherine Wilwerding of Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines will see faith in action – from the opposite side of the world this August.

The senior from Dowling Catholic High School in West Des Moines is heading to Ghana for a synodal delegation with Catholic Relief Services and The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

She is among 10 delegates from the federation’s youth leadership council, National Youth Advisory Council, to attend.

Wilwerding has been a member of the council since October 2024. She has worked on addressing the needs of young people in the Diocese, especially through her work reestablishing Teens Encounter Christ, a retreat experience for high school juniors.

The synodal delegation will give the council members the chance to see the Church’s universal mission of ministry firsthand. The experience is designed to “deepen their understanding and witness the Catholic Church’s vital efforts in advancing justice and human development” according to a press release by NFCYM.

“The goal,” said Natalie Ibarra, communications manager for NYAC, “is for [the council] to see service and faith in action, seeing the Gospel and corporal works of mercy.”

The members of the council, including Wilwerding, will observe the work of Catholic Relief Services in Ghana through the non-profit’s initiatives such as clinics and clean water resources. Members will also meet with young people in



Catherine Wilwerding

Ghana, listening to them and discussing their faith together.

Wilwerding is preparing for this experience by bringing a piece of Iowa with her. She plans to talk with her friends and peers regarding their questions about CRS and the Catholic Church in Ghana so she can address them at the synodal delegation.

After the meeting, Wilwerding’s council will reflect and show their takeaways from the synodal delegation in a documentary. The completed documentary will be played for the viewing of thousands of teenagers later this year at National Catholic Youth Conference in November. The council will also release a statement, using what they have learned from the synodal delegation to call fellow young people to action.

Looking forward to the retreat, Wilwerding anticipates spending time with her fellow council members. She normally only sees them during their monthly Zoom meetings. She’ll have answers for her peers’ questions about the CRS and the Catholic Church in Ghana.

“I’m really excited,” said Wilwerding. “There will be lots that I’ll want to bring back and share with people.”

Blessed Biker Ministry takes faith on the open road



Photo by Ann Pierson

Blessed Bikers pictured from left to right: Sandy Dirks, Scott Dirks, Rick Oberembt, Scott Diebler, and Kevin Pendraus.

By Ann Pierson
Staff Writer

Motorcycles and spirituality are not a usual combination.

For the Blessed Bikers of St. Boniface parish in Waukee, however, that combination has served as a Monday night staple for 20 years.

The Beginning of a Biking Ministry

The Blessed Bikers ministry began under the direction of St. Boniface parishioner Bruno Andreini shortly after St. Boniface moved to its current location on Warrior Lane. During that time, there was an influx of new families.

Andreini found himself unfamiliar with many families at his parish.

Andreini, who has been an avid motorcyclist his entire life, thought providing a motorcycle community would be an ideal way to meet newcomers at his parish.

He was right.

The group informally began in 2003 with a small group of riders and grew. By 2005, the group called themselves Blessed Bikers.

Every ride begins with a prayer in the St. Boniface parking lot, with each year having a different prayer, says Rick Oberembt, the current director of Blessed Bikers.

Andreini attributes the beginning prayer as part of the group’s longevity. “I think the prayer is involved in [the group lasting this long],” Andreini said.

After the prayer, the group rides about 40 or 50 miles to their weekly destination – often a restaurant or gathering spot for a picnic.

In the past, annual rides included trips to religious sites around the state, like The Shrine of the Grotto of the Redemption in West Bend, rides to Spurgeon Manor in Dallas Center to visit with the residents, and “mystery rides” where one biker would lead the group to an undisclosed location.

“I never had a disappointing day. I’ve always had a good time,” Andreini said, reflecting on riding with Blessed Bikers.

A Brotherhood and a Bikerhood

The people of Blessed Bikers community, includes Catholics and Christians, has been the bedrock of the group staying strong two decades later.

They care for another’s needs, whether they be from their biking community or the parish community. When a member of the community brought a need to the group, whether it was fundraising or assisting a family in need, the group was willing to step up and help.

When Oberembt lost his brother and fellow rider Randy Oberembt a few years ago, the other bikers supported him and checked in on him.

“It’s a fellowship,” Oberembt said.

Andreini recalled the group helping a fellow parishioner’s daughter who was injured in a car accident and required extensive

treatment. The group responded quickly, raising the amount needed to aid her recovery. The parishioner’s daughter recovered and now lives in Washington, D.C.

“I was just so proud of those people,” he said, recalling the Blessed Biker’s generosity a decade later.

“Doing Things Together”

Although people may not naturally associate motorcycle riding with their faith, for Andreini, the connection between the two was evident.

“If you are out riding and you have a beautiful day out and you are looking at the surroundings... it’s not very hard to think about your religion,” Andreini said.

The connection one has with nature while riding is different when shared with people. The bond they share through their experiences riding – and being with one another through all seasons – is what brings Blessed Bikers back year after year for rides.

“The riding is good, the camaradery between the members is nice. We’ve known each other for a long, long time and just getting back together periodically is really good,” said Scott Diebler, one of the Blessed Bikers leaders.

“It’s not about the riding all the time. It’s about doing things together,” Andreini said.

Blessed Bikers meet every Monday, except Labor Day, until Oct. 27. For information on each week’s destination or to join Blessed Bikers, visit stbonifacechurch.org/blessed-bikers.

Faith Formation Coordinator

St. Cecilia Catholic Church in Ames is looking for a Coordinator of Elementary Faith Formation to form and engage parishioners in particular in grades PreK through 5th Grade, of a diverse Catholic community in the implementation of the New Evangelization. This position will be part of a vibrant Faith Formation Team passionate about advancing the Gospel in collaboration with each other and the faithful. The coordinator is responsible for traditional faith formation in grades K-5th, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for ages 3-12 and sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. This is a 12 month, full-time exempt position. Please visit <https://www.stceciliaparish.org/> to view the job description. Submit Cover Letter & Resume to Father Don Czapl at dczapla@stceciliaparish.org.

Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund

Do you have an upcoming Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA? Do you have a donor advised fund? The Des Moines Catholic Worker House Fund is a 501c(3) non-profit. Your donations would be used to support the hospitality ministry of the Des Moines Catholic Worker House by providing food and other necessities to the homeless population of Des Moines.

Donations can be sent to:
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P.O. Box 1386 Ankeny, Iowa 50021

Or go to our website to give online at:
<https://friendsofcatholicworker.com/>

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.

A marriage of two Catholic universities

Strategic combination aims to break new ground for Catholic higher education

By Barb Arland-Fye
Contributing Writer

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — St. Ambrose University in Davenport and Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids reached a major milestone June 27 in their journey to fully combine, one that their presidents believe serves as a model for Catholic higher education. The two universities are located about 85 miles apart in eastern Iowa.

Presidents Amy Novak of St. Ambrose and Todd Olson of Mount Mercy signed their historic agreement during a news conference in Mount Mercy's University Center Commons. Witnessing the signing were board members, faculty and staff of both institutions, alumni, Archbishop Thomas Zinkula of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Bishop Dennis Walsh of the Diocese of Davenport, other clergy and Sisters of Mercy, whose religious community founded Mount Mercy.

"We are here to celebrate the successful completion of step one in a two-step process that will bring our two historic Catholic universities into one shared circle of mission, vision, and service," Novak told the gathering. "With the conclusion of this first step, St. Ambrose University now serves as the corporate owner of Mount Mercy University. This action is not a diminishment of one university or the other, but rather, a bold affirmation that together we are stronger."

The two universities anticipate fully combining in summer 2026, pending approval of the U.S. Department of Education. Novak and Olson, acknowledging the challenges facing higher education — such as a shrinking population of traditional college-age students — chose to



OSV News photo/Barb Arland-Fye, The Catholic Messenger

Amy Novak, president of St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and Todd Olson, president of Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids, sign documents related to completion of the first step of their universities' strategic combination June 27, at Mount Mercy. Witnessing are Bishop Dennis G. Walsh of Davenport, and Julia Cavallo of the Conference for Mercy Higher Education.

take a proactive approach. The two leaders established trust and rapport early on.

"What we're doing is highly unusual," Novak said. The "secret ingredient" that makes it work: "First of all, you always start conversations at Perkins. Secondly, you make sure there's plenty of cottage cheese and pineapple, we both like that. It's a real Midwestern thing," she quipped. "And lastly, you enter a conversation in a place of humility and respect."

Buttressing their collaboration are more than 20 integration teams represented by faculty, staff, students, alumni members

and community leaders. Diocesan leaders also are crucial partners because St. Ambrose is the Davenport Diocese's university. "So many of us have persevered — have labored together, and we know that God is laboring with us as we craft a new and exciting and sustainable future for Catholic higher education in eastern Iowa and beyond," Olson said.

Paving the way

"As we now move toward step

two, a full institutional combination following federal approvals, we remain rooted in the belief that our combined strength can more powerfully serve students, uphold our Catholic identity, and extend mercy and justice to the margins of our society," Novak said.

"Last August, we stood together in this room and made a commitment to travel this road together. Now, nearly a year into that promise, we have crossed a transformative bridge — and

Mount Mercy has become a vital part of St. Ambrose," Olson told the gathering. "As we join together, we keep our mission and our students at the center of our vision and our plans."

The integration of the two universities also provides new opportunities for meeting the needs of healthcare, business, education and public life.

"A number of initiatives are being launched that we believe position this part of Iowa to be a foothold, a stronghold if you will, for Catholic higher education," Novak said in a promotional video aired during the news conference. "This is a model of how Catholic higher education could strengthen itself across not just the ecosystem of eastern Iowa, but across the larger region and probably across the country."

The Catholic voice

Catholic education, rather than being "the mere education of workers ... is the human formation of persons — made in the image and likeness of God — a God who loves us," said Bishop Walsh.

"It is the unrelenting pursuit of the truth. It is knowledge informed by faith — not in contradiction. Who will help humanity to find its heart again, unless the Church is the one to proclaim it in all of her ministries, missions and apostolates? The Catholic voice is a necessary one in higher education. It is worth preserving," Bishop Walsh continued.

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Davenport vicar general appointed bishop of Baker, Oregon

WASHINGTON (OSV News) -- Pope Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of Bishop Liam S. Cary of Baker, Oregon, and named as his successor Bishop-Elect Thomas Hennen, current vicar general of the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa, and pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

The Vatican announced the appointment July 10.

Bishop Cary, 77, has led the diocese since 2012. His successor, Bishop-Elect Hennen, 47, is a native of Ottumwa, Iowa, and the youngest of 11, he was ordained in 2004 after seminary studies in Rome.

Known for his campus and vocations ministry, Bishop-Elect Hennen has emphasized building relationships and inviting young people into "something more complete and beautiful" in the faith.

He is known for his work with Courage International, an apostolate for men and women who experience same-sex attractions.

Davenport Bishop Dennis G. Walsh said in a statement that as a priest, the newly named bishop "has been a most generous and dedicated shepherd" and "a true blessing" to the diocese.



Bishop-Elect
Thomas Hennen

By Renee Webb
Contributing Writer

In late May, it was announced that a letter of intent was signed by the two hospitals in Sioux City for UnityPoint Health to acquire MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center.

If that acquisition comes to fruition, it will mark an end of an era for Catholic hospitals in the city that has served numerous communities in the tri-state area.

The roots of MercyOne Siouxland date back to 1890 when the Sisters of Mercy were asked to establish a hospital in Sioux City. For the last 135 years, the community has been served by at least one Catholic hospital.

In the 43 years Martha Burchard, a graduate of St. Vincent's School of Nursing, worked in healthcare in Sioux City, she saw various mergers and name changes.

Initially, Burchard worked for a number of years in the emergen-

cy room at St. Vincent's before that Catholic hospital merged with St. Joseph's Hospital to form Marian Health Center which later was renamed Mercy Medical Center, followed by MercyOne Siouxland in 2019.

"A lot of change can be difficult to go through, but it all went well," she said.

Dr. Gerald McGowan, a retired family physician and one of the founders of a family practice residency program for physicians that continues today, worked for nearly 55 years in Sioux City and from the beginning joined a practice with well-respected Catholic doctors.

A native of Sioux City and graduate of Bishop Heelan High School, he pointed out that in his early years of practice, religious women ran the Catholic hospitals in Sioux City.

"At that time, the nuns were administrators and I got along very well with them. A lot of physicians were also Catholic," said Dr. McGowan, who through

the years was affiliated with both Mercy and UnityPoint. "I really appreciated having a Catholic hospital to go to and practice in. I think it will be missed."

Dr. Michael Jung, a family physician with Family Medicine Center and professor with the residency program, not only served on the ethics committee at Mercy but did so at UnityPoint. In the last 10 years or so, there have been changes at both hospitals and he believes the facilities currently have fairly similar ethical standards.

"The majority of physicians do practice at both hospitals," he said.

In the end, many of these longtime healthcare professionals said this acquisition comes down to a business/management decision — not a religious decision — at a time when both Sioux City hospitals are facing some stressors.

Reprinted with permission from The Lumen.

Estirando el Alma en el Verano

Continued from page 2

que se asan a nuestro alrededor, saboreamos más aún las conversaciones acentuadas por el silencio y las risas con amigos y seres queridos en donde no debatimos nuestros puntos de vista ni caemos en el común denominador del chisme y detracciones.

Abrimos nuestros corazones a la Fuente de Vida, al Autor de la Creación en cuya imagen hemos sido creados. El día de descanso del Señor el séptimo día se nos concede, pero no para que caigamos en una semi consciencia pasiva (¡aunque soy un ferviente creyente de las pequeñas siestas!) o un adormecimiento selectivo, sino para que nos refresquemos, nos rectifiquemos, restaurados en vida y motivados a la alabanza y agradecimiento por el simple hecho de que somos las únicas criaturas que buscan el corazón mismo de Dios. Josef Pieper, el filósofo alemán Tomista católico, en su clásico, Descanso: La Base de la Cultura, captura este tipo de pensamiento: “El descanso, debemos recordar, no es un domingo en la tarde sin hacer nada, pero la preservación de la libertad, de educación y cultura y de una humanidad plena que ve el mundo en su totalidad.”

En cualquier temporada, el tomarse una vacación formal parece ser un lujo que no podemos costear, pero para tres individuos cuyas vidas parecen ubicarse en puntos muy diferentes en la revelación continua contemplativa, revelan a su propio estilo la libertad y el buen sentido que nos debe inspirar a seguir y preservar el espíritu del Día de Descanso de descanso santo y contemplación.

La primera es Santa Teresa de Lisieux, de quien celebramos en este Año Jubilar 2025 los 100 años de su canonización. Teresa fue admitida en el monasterio Carmelita cuando tenía solamente 15 años. Fue una respuesta al gran deseo de su corazón de estar con sus hermanas mayores quienes habían entrado antes que ella, para contemplar al Señor

día y noche y para estar junto al amado de su alma, Jesús. Pero no importe a donde vayamos, no podemos escapar de nosotros — ella no pudo escapar de sí misma, sus propias debilidades y limitaciones psicológicas. Su obediencia impecable a las reglas de la comunidad, su inclinación hacia el perfeccionismo extremo resultó en una obstinada tendencia a tratar la fe con un cierto tipo de obstinación terapéutica.

Aún así, en retrospectiva, qué rápidamente convirtió Dios su deseo por la santidad a una constante humildad y confianza en la misericordia de Dios. En un corto periodo, Teresa dejó a un lado su perpetuo desánimo y fijó su mirada, sus deseos en Jesús, tanto en el Santo Niño y en el Sufriente Servidor del Divino Rostro.

La gran visión y sabiduría de Teresa compraron a un gran precio su propio y total abandono a Dios con la confianza y esperanza de que Jesús es amado plenamente cuando nos permitimos ser amados por él. Un corazón puro es el fruto, n de un programa de auto negación, aunque esto se lleva a cabo por el amor, pero una confianza y esperanza plenas que nacen de la oración y que consisten principalmente, como lo observó su tocaya Teresa de Ávila, en el intercambio de la amistad.

La segunda persona es nuestro Santo Padre, el Papa León XIV. Desde el momento de su elección a la Silla de San Pedro, se encarró rápidamente y a llevado a cabo una formidable agenda en donde administra sacramentos, lleva a cabo audiencias públicas y privadas, coordina las respuestas a las 220 libras de correspondencia que recibe diariamente y tomando la estafeta de su predecesor, el Papa Francisco, para las celebraciones del Año del Jubileo.

Pero, en contraste con su predecesor, León retomó una antigua tradición papal de aventurarse a las hermosas Montañas Albanas al sureste de Roma a la residencia veraniega de Castel Gandolfo en semanas intermitentes de relajamiento y descanso, lo cual in-

cluye celebrar Misas Dominicales en las parroquias locales. Probablemente jugará algunos sets de tenis, o aproveche para nadar en la piscina que instaló San Juan Pablo II quien, en respuesta a las críticas por su costo, dijo que “fue más barata que tener otro cónclave.”

Finalmente, él no sea probablemente candidato para esta columna, pero el letrado chileno del siglo XX, diplomático y ganador del Premio Nobel de Literatura en 1971, Pablo Neruda, a pesar de no ser muy religioso, portaba un espíritu casi infantil de maravilla y contemplación que radiaba en sus poesías, ensayos y demás obras. Su amada residencia en la costa chilena, Isla Negra, fue su viuda en el Océano Pacífico y el mundo de donde recibió sus inspiraciones diarias. Junto a su esposa Matilde, durante décadas recaudó numerosos objetos de arte e incluso más amigos y conocidos quienes lo recibía en ese punto de retiro ideal del resto del mundo.

Un objeto curioso en Isla Negra la casa de Neruda no tiene valor alguno, pero es una vieja prensa mecánica que se utilizaba para hacer ostias Eucarísticas. Uno se preguntaría por qué le llamó la atención esta pieza, pero ese es un secreto que Neruda se llevó a la tumba. Podría suponer, sin embargo, que la prensa sirve como un símbolo que puede ser punto de referencia para todos nosotros en nuestro propio ritmo de vida, trabajo y santo descanso. Porque ya sea que seamos granjeros, padres en casa, artistas o empleados en los sectores de informática, construcción u hospitalidad en nuestra sociedad, todo lo que hacemos nos lleva ultimadamente a “eso” que forma e integra la base de la vida Eucarística. Porque es sagrado en la Alabanza, preeminente en la Misa como una expresión del día de descanso, en donde todos lo que somo y hacemos tomas su lugar correspondiente como el acto que corona la verdadera vida humana, en donde la imagen de Dios se impregna en nosotros y nos alivia, dentro y fuera de las

estaciones.

La Diócesis de Des Moines se une al pueblo de la Diócesis de

Davenport y de toda la Provincia de Iowa para felicitar el Obispo Electo Thomas Hennen, nativo de Ottumwa y vicario general de la Diócesis de Davenport y a la vez rector de la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón, a quien el Papa León XIV ha designado como sucesor del Obispo Liam Cary como el próximo obispo de la Diócesis de Baker, Oregón. Baker es considerada como una diócesis misionera, y nos da gusto que el “Padre Thom” asumirá esta mis-

ión que le ha confiado el Señor y su Iglesia que, aunque vemos que tiene 47 años (¡y es nacido el 4 de julio!) esperamos en Dios que el Obispo Electo Hennen pueda servir más de tres décadas como sucesor de los apóstoles. Parece que el estado de Iowa no solamente provee el 10% de los alimentos del país, ¡pero también produce obispos! Por favor sigamos en oración — tal vez hacer un sexto misterio en el Rosario por las vocaciones — para que Dios siga dándonos sacerdotes de las cuatro diócesis de nuestro estado, y ¡que algunos puedan ser llamados a ser misioneros más allá de nuestras fronteras!

Summer Soul-Stretching

Continued from page 2

ing public and private audiences, coordinating the responses to the 220 pounds of correspondence he receives every day, and picking up the baton of Jubilee Year celebrations from his predecessor, Pope Francis.

Yet, in contrast to his predecessor, Leo is resuming a long-time papal tradition of venturing to the charming Alban Hills southeast of Rome to the summer residence of Castel Gondolfo for intermittent weeks of relaxation and repose, which will include celebrating Sunday Masses at local parishes. Perhaps he will get in a few sets of tennis, or maybe even avail himself of the lap pool installed by St. John Paul II, who in response to criticism of the cost entailed, quipped that “it was less expensive than another cónclave.”

Finally, he is not a likely candidate for this column, but the 20th century Chilean man of letters, diplomat, and 1971 Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda, though not overtly religious, embodied a childlike spirit of wonder and contemplation that irrigated his poetry, essays, and other works. His beloved home on the Chilean coast, Isla Negra, was his window on the Pacific Ocean and the world from which he drew daily inspiration. Along with his wife, Matilde, over decades they collected numerous objects of art and whimsy and even more friends and acquaintances whom they hosted at their idyllic retreat from the world.

One curious object in Neruda’s Isla Negra home that is worth noting is an old mechanical press used for making Eucharistic hosts. One wonders why this piece captured his fancy, but that is a secret Neruda carried to his grave. I might propose, however,

that the press serves as a symbol that should be a reference point for all of us in our own rhythm of life, work, and holy leisure. For whether we are a farmer, a stay-at-home parent, an artist, or a worker in the IT, construction, or hospitality sectors of society, all we do should

ultimately converge as the “stuff” that is shaped and formed into the basis of a Eucharistic life. For it is in sacred worship, preeminently in the Mass as an expression of sabbath rest, where all we are and do takes its proper place as the crowning act of a truly human life, where the image of God instilled in us is raised in relief, in season and out.

The Diocese of Des Moines joins the people of the Diocese of Davenport and the whole Province of Iowa in congratulating Bishop-Elect Thomas Hennen, an Ottumwa native and Davenport Diocese vicar general and rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, whom Pope Leo XIV has chosen to succeed Bishop Liam Cary as the next bishop of the Diocese of Baker, Oregon. Baker is regarded as a mission diocese, and we rejoice that the former “Fr. Thom” will undertake this mission entrusted to him by the Lord and his Church, though we note that at 47 years of age (born on July 4th, no less!), God-willing, Bishop-Elect Hennen may well serve three decades as a successor of the apostles. It seems that the State of Iowa not only supplies 10% of our country’s food, but also grows bishops! Please continue to pray—perhaps adding a sixth decade of the Rosary for vocations—that God will continue to raise up priests from all four of our state’s dioceses, some of whom might be called to be missionaries beyond our borders!

Bishops ask senator to support pro-life approach to international aid

The four Catholic bishops of Iowa asked U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst for support for international humanitarian and development assistance funding provided by the United States.

In a June 10 letter from the Iowa Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the Catholic Church in Iowa, the bishops said, “A Catholic pro-life approach to U.S. international assistance goes beyond charity. It is a strategic investment that has a profound im-

pact on human life, dignity, and global stability.

“As Americans, we believe our government has a moral responsibility to assist the most vulnerable. We believe that ending life-saving programs would mean our government would not only neglect our nation’s moral responsibility, but also weaken the foundations of peace, stability, and prosperity,” they said.

Catholic Relief Services, the official international relief and

development agency of the U.S. Catholic community, has assisted communities around the world.

A proposal to rescind previously appropriated funds for humanitarian aid and development programs would reduce overall funds for lifesaving and poverty-reducing programs.

“As Catholic bishops of Iowa, and CRS supporters, and on behalf of our vulnerable sisters and brothers, we strongly urge you to oppose rescissions of previously appropriated funds for lifesaving humanitarian and development assistance, and to maintain current funding levels for poverty-reducing international assistance in fiscal year 2026 appropriations,” wrote the Iowa bishops.

The letter was signed by Dubuque Archbishop Thomas Zinkula, Davenport Bishop Dennis Walsh, Des Moines Bishop William Joensen, and Sioux City Bishop John Keehner.



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.

Pope: Caring for others, serving life is ‘supreme law’

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Serving life by caring for others is “the supreme law” that comes before all of society’s rules, Pope Leo XIV said.

“Imitating the example of Jesus, the Savior of the world, we too are called to bring consolation and hope, above all to those who are experiencing discouragement and disappointment,” he said before reciting the Angelus with thousands of visitors gathered in the square in front of the papal summer villa of Castel Gandolfo July 13.

Pope Leo arrived at the small hilltop town south of Rome July 6 for a brief vacation until July 20. He celebrated Mass in the Church of St. Thomas of Villanova July 13, and then recited the noonday prayer from the steps in front of the papal villa under a sky that oscillated between dark rainy clouds and bright bursts of sun.

In his reflection before the prayer, Pope Leo spoke about the human yearning for eternal life, that is, “for salvation, for an existence free from failure, evil and death.”

Eternal life is “not something to be gained by force, begged for or negotiated,” he said. It is some-

Village of Dolton buys Pope Leo’s boyhood home as pilgrims visit and pray

DOLTON, Ill. (OSV News) – The Village of Dolton, Illinois, has bought Pope Leo XIV’s former childhood home for \$375,000.

A village spokesperson confirmed the purchase of the home closed on July 8.

“We are currently working to have the property solicited as a historical site,” Nakita Cloud told OSV News.

“This can open the door for federal and state funding opportunities tied to historic preservation, tourism development, and community revitalization. It also provides us the opportunity to attract philanthropic and nonprofit partnerships that support cultural and educational initiatives.”

The village, just south of Chicago, has a poverty rate of 20% -- almost double that of the state of Illinois -- according to the 2023 U.S. census community survey. It was once a suburb where manufacturing jobs were plentiful. Donna Sagna Davis, a resident who had been living next door for more than eight years, said the sight of people continuing to visit and pray before the pope’s boyhood home was an answer to her prayer for the neighborhood to show increased reverence to God.



CNS photo by Lola Gomez

Pope Leo XIV greets visitors at the conclusion of his first Angelus prayer in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, July 13.

thing to be “inherited” by God alone, as parents do with their children.

“That is why Jesus tells us that, in order to receive God’s gift, we must do his will,” the pope said, which is to love “the Lord your God with all your heart” and “your neighbor as yourself.”

“In order to live eternally, we do not need to cheat death, but to serve life, by caring for others in this, our time together,” the pope said. “That is the supreme law that is prior to all society’s rules and gives them their meaning.”

“God’s will is the law of life that the Father himself was the

first to follow, by loving us unconditionally in his Son, Jesus,” Pope Leo said.

Jesus “shows us the meaning of authentic love for God and for others,” he said. “It is a love that is generous, not possessive; a love that forgives without question; a love that reaches out and never abandons others.”

“In Christ, God made himself a neighbor to each and every man and woman. That is why each of us can and should become a neighbor to all whom we meet,” he said.

By opening one’s heart to God’s will, he said, “we will be-

come artisans of peace every day of our lives.”

After greeting the many groups present in the square, including members of the pastoral community of Blessed Augustine of Tarano from the Colegio S. Augustin in Chiclayo, Peru, the pope shook hands with a number of special guests who were by the wooden barricades between the villa’s entrance and the square.

It was the first Angelus address at the summer villa by Pope Leo, who returned to the tradition of taking a summer break at the villa in Castel Gandolfo.

Pope Francis, instead, had

spent his summers residing at the Vatican and had led just one Angelus from the papal villa July 14, 2013.

Rather than giving his address from the villa’s balcony, like his predecessors, Pope Francis had addressed the crowd at street level from the open front door of the villa. Pope Leo did the same.

“Dear brothers and sisters, I am pleased to be with you here in Castel Gandolfo,” Pope Leo said to great applause and cheers. He greeted those present and thanked “all of you for your warm welcome.”

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